

## TURK gets some love... in case you're feeling sorry for yourself maintaining your old Cadillac! Or, "Ordeals of a Cadillac Geezer."

Back in November 2018 I realized I should have been driving the Turk more. When I brought this dude home back in 2005, I drove it ALL the time, without regard to mileage. It's a driver-quality sedan, a nice-looking driver, but not a convertible or even a coupe. However, I've spent the past four+ years getting the '66 Eldorado up to speed, and I admit it – I've been neglecting the '58 since 2015. (I seriously cannot understand those guys who own more than two or three collector cars. How do they pay enough attention to them all without a curator?) At any rate, I was getting a little lifter ticking. I mentioned that to Forrest Ward, who thought I ought to switch to 20w50 VR-1. You know Forrest: The way he put it was, "You don't really run that *sewing machine oil* in there do you?" I considered using a little tranny fluid to loosen up the valve train some, by adding half a quart to the oil. But I decided only to do that if the heavier weight oil AND driving it more didn't help. I drove it to the mountains 100 miles round trip for the members' appreciation picnic at Jasper wineries, and again to the Alpharetta VFW for Veterans' Day meet. I drove it weekly for a month, and then drove it to the Labor Day "Holy Smokes" event in



Cobb County. It was better. But, I drove it on Christmas Eve for almost an hour around town and I got lots of ticking again. I think it was also burning surface oil that's leaked from valve cover gaskets. Turk was showing 143,850 miles. I changed to a heavier motor oil, using Valvoline VR-1 in 20-w50 weight.

Then, in May 2019 I was driving Lucille to show her how a '58 runs and stops when the horn started sounding – it was grounded out. I pulled the horn wires, but not the relay. (I had rebuilt this a few years ago.) I left town for mom's funeral and when I came back it was dead. Jumping with a trickle charger AND a jumper battery got it going again. The horn repair required opening up the steering column because the horn was grounding inside the column. The time to fix that is while the steering box is out of the car.

**In early August 2019:** I took it to Randy at Peach State Classics again. The big job this time was the rear axle, which was leaking on the left wheel. It wasn't soaking the brake shoes, but it required a new wheel bearing and seal. The brake shoes on both sides were cracked and broken, so Randy replaced both rear sets of brake shoes and turned the rear drums. It was also leaking power steering fluid slightly at the pump, which meant it was time for a rebuild.



**In September 2019:** I sold Michael Marr the old steering box to use as a core for a rebuild in his '58 Eldorado, and I sent the spare steering box I'd bought about ten years ago to LARES (in Cambridge MN) for a rebuild. Randy installed the rebuilt steering box, and fixed the horn using a copper collar fabricated by Buster's friend, James. (I have more collars for sale to reimburse James if you need one.) I drove the Turk to Rydal GA for Lee's memorial service. No flaws. Ran great, steered sort of like before, but very reliable. I got about 15 mpg! Front brakes squeak some.

I bought a replacement rear door interior panel from a guy on FB for \$60. I had to sand and paint it. I used Revell model spray paint in turquoise! Looks like exact match! This repaired a boo boo I had put in the door panel a couple of Christmases ago, toting an old sign for the club's holiday auction. This was the best interior repair I'd made since I installed that new headliner back in 2006!

**Oil leaks continue:** The rear main seal has been leaking motor oil for ten years, but it may be leaking more now than in recent years. Now's still not the right time for this major work, however.



It's also seeping at the valve covers, but without pulling them to determine if the drain holes are clear, we won't know. Thicker gaskets don't work, and there's really only one brand out there now (Felpro I think). The engine has well under 150k miles and it's never been opened up; it's not losing much oil, so we're not going to fix the valve cover gaskets or rear main seal just yet. I talked with Randy, who's ready to tackle the Hydramatic as soon as I am. That will be a complete set of new seals and service out of the car. Fairly significant piece of work, that.

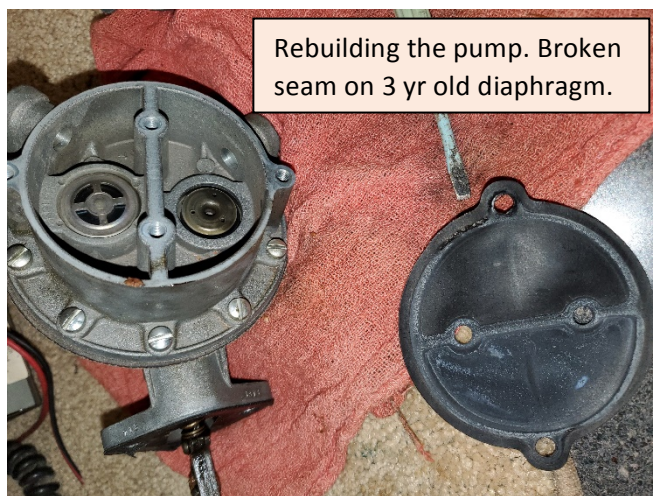
**October 4, 2019:** I drove it to Canton to First Friday. It was bucking in second gear as I tried to climb hills. The fluid levels were fine, but it wasn't running like it ought to be. Sounds like a winter project!



**February 9, 2020:** Because it was bucking on my way home from Canton last fall, I thought it was the transmission slipping. (We had just been planning a transmission job.) I stopped driving it over the winter because I thought I couldn't afford a transmission job right then. I surveyed Buster, Forrest, and Tom - and they agreed it sounded more like a fuel issue. So, I bypassed the mechanical fuel pump and replaced the fuel filter, using the electrical pump. Still bucking, but it was shifting okay. I began to think it was more like a firing thing, like plugs or maybe even that Pertronix ignition... Amazon delivered Pertronix parts. I replaced the coil but decided not to replace the ignition module on the theory that the car would not have fired at all without that working. Buttoned it up, took it for a ride. Still bucking, although not as bad. Back to the garage. I figured I would put the fuel pump back in line since I'd ruled out the fuel delivery issue. While looking around I found the front driver's side spark plug hanging down, off the plug. Returned it to the plug. Was this the original culprit? I hope not... After reinstalling the lines to the mechanical pump I put the negative cable back on the battery. It was spinning on the post, so I tightened it down... and the clamp **BROKE**. I removed the negative (ground) cable from the frame rail and found an older cable hanging in the garage. I reinstalled it by taking the battery out and turning it around because the old cable wasn't long enough. Went back to start it up and ... No fire. Cranked but wouldn't fire. Plus, the fuel filter was now leaking from the gasket. (I'd had it off and on a few times, and without a new gasket the old one was leaking.) I went inside to think. I called Forrest to get some advice and another set of brains. While describing it, I hit the jackpot. I'D FORGOTTEN TO REINSTALL THE COIL WIRE! I ran back outside, took the air cleaner off to get to it, and sure enough, there was the coil wire, dangling in space. I put it back



Fuel issues!



Rebuilding the pump. Broken seam on 3 yr old diaphragm.

on and returned the breather to its spot. I jumped in, **KNOWING** it was going to fire. Boom! First try. It ran like a top. Pulled into the driveway so I could go get Barb and Eastwood so we could take a ride. Power steering pump was grinding, so I got out, and got the PS fluid. When I took off the pump's lid I found that (a) the PS pump was full and (b) the PS belt was hanging loose, broken. Next project: Replace the PS belt and fan belt, because the fan belt has to come off to get to the PS belt, and you might as well replace them both at the same time. I'll have to take that ride another day...

Barb and I visited northern California to see our boy and his wife during February and early March.

**March 10, 2020:** We got back just as the COVID 19 thing was hitting. Time to stay home for a while. Turk projects continue... I worked all afternoon on the Turk. First, I went to Advance Auto to buy a

replacement negative battery cable and fittings and hose for the fuel line. I began with the fuel line: I removed the fuel filter (again) and cut off the old lines. I replaced the ugly brass joints with a piece of new hose and bent the steel line to fit. I had to replace the hose down to the input steel line too as it didn't reach any longer. Tested for leaks, and for fit of the air cleaner. Then I removed the battery, removed the old negative cable, replaced the cable, moved the battery to fit, and reinstalled the battery. When I tested after start-up the mechanical pump was leaking from the top gasket. I tightened down the four screws and the leaks stopped. Test drive next weekend!

**March 21, 2020:** I took a 40-minute run in the Turk, anticipating a run to north GA that afternoon. It started hesitating, like a vapor lock again! Trouble shooting with Forrest – we think it's not likely the Pertronix rotor, since his info is that if that's bad it won't run at all. *Seems like fuel – again.* Maybe the bent steel fuel line is bad, crimped or pinched? I replaced it with rubber hose. If that works then I can do a new bent steel line, or just leave the rubber hose. I went back to Advance Auto to buy those fittings (two brass nipples, two clamps) and an 18" length of fuel hose.

**March 28, 2020:** With Barb turning the key, I tested the mechanical pump's strength. It pumped *2 ounces of gas in eight cranks*. It's supposed to be 8 ounces! I bought new fittings and fuel hose at O'Reilly's and replaced the bent steel fuel line that's been in the car for 15 years. I ordered a new Carter mechanical pump from Summit Racing, then drove the Turk to Ball Ground and Jasper. It was weak, but the new fuel line apparently ensured good enough flow that it compensated for the weak pump. (I figured I would hobble home on the electrical pump if I got stranded. But it never needed the auxiliary pump.) New pump is supposed to be here on the 31<sup>st</sup>.



**March 31, 2020:** I got the Carter pump from Summit and installed it in an hour. Started right up, no leaks – but then I remembered I still had the electrical pump running. I tested the new pump without the auxiliary. NO FLOW! April Fool's Day? The new Summit pump was bad and had to be sent back. I should have known because it came in a substitute box – probably a returned item re-boxed for me. I ordered a new Carter pump from Amazon.

**April 10, 2020:** I installed the old Terrill Machine pump with a new diaphragm I took out of the Summit (non-functional) pump before I sent it back. All worked great, except the fuel filter housing leaked. Was talking with Forrest, who had put a new gasket in the mail to me, when I found one I had in a box here. I replaced the gasket and all was well. I drove the car about 40 miles that day, and it behaved really well. No hesitation, good acceleration! Turk is BACK!

**April 25, 2020:** *ARGGGHHH!* It bucked again today after a 45-minute drive around town (warmed up). It hesitated, stumbled, as I gunned it up the hill into my neighborhood. It's still starving on acceleration. It's almost certainly *once again* a weak pump. I hit the electric pump and backed off the throttle, and it made it home up the bigger hill okay.

**May 22, 2020: I give up!** I thought I was a decent enough mechanic on little tasks like these, but I have been tweaking the fuel issues since last October. I took it back to Randy at Peach State Classics. It was



still stumbling under load. He replaced three plug wires and replaced the rubber fuel line with a new bent steel line. He also replaced my boogered up fuel fittings from pump to filter. Months of my work had to be undone. Hard on the ego, but it seemed to be running better now.

Turk also needed front brakes. But I finally caught a break: Randy said it didn't need drums turned, and the shoes were great. They just needed adjusted. They are stopping straight and smooth now. (All new brakes since August 2019.) Now the only thing left is a broken speedometer cable. We had trouble finding a speedometer drive gear. It had an 18-tooth GREEN gear, which I knew was the wrong gear because Wolf Rudolph, who sold me the car, had used the wrong gear back in 2000. A green gear with 18 teeth registers slower than the car's actual speed by about 10%. So, we bought a 20-tooth white gear – the only one available from Fatsco Transmission in New Jersey, and that was the right one!

**June 2, 2020:** Randy installed a new drive gear (20 teeth) for the speedometer. The old one, 18 teeth, was intended for 1959-64 Hydramatics. He took about 5 minutes, and he didn't charge me. Because the danged thing chugged under load again, I mentioned it. Randy found a badly clogged fuel filter back at the electric pump and replaced it. *I think this has been the cause of the stumbling for months and months!* He gave me a new filter to carry in the car. Am I good to go? We'll see! I've driven the Turk every day for a week now, and it seems like we have this fuel thing conquered!

