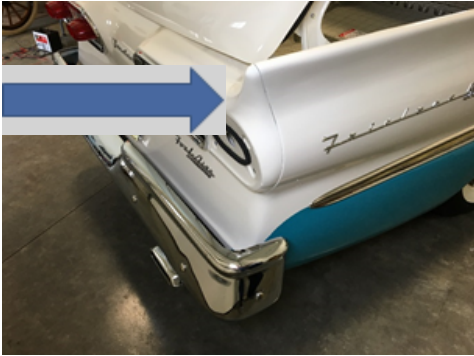


PAC MEMBER CAR STORY

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN! by Dave Owens



If you're around cars enough eventually you will be involved in and witness an accident. These things happen. It's just part of the game. Sometimes it's a ding from a runaway shopping cart. Other times it may be something bigger caused by a runaway teenager sending a text about the color of fingernail polish. Or maybe a car rolling out of an enclosed trailer,



across a parking lot, thru a locked chain link gate, across a busy street and stopped by a fiberoptic pedestal. In my case it was the trailer, parking lot, chain link kind of accident. Some of you may have heard the story and others are actually part of it. On May 12th 2018 North Dakota was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the North Dakota Department of Transportation with a big expo. One of the events was to showcase a vehicle from each decade showing the history and progression of transportation. I was asked if I could help provide vehicles and agreed. I told the organizers I would bring 3 vehicles each representing something different. Our 1915 Model T to represent the beginning of modern transportation. Next our 1972 Ford LTD convertible which showcased the era of big, heavy, luxury cars before the bottom fell out during the gas crisis of mid 70's. Last was our 1958 Ford Skyliner which was to showcase the space race, American exceptionalism, and resulting styling.

My plans that morning were to deliver each car with our trailer and then go back and get another from our shop. After I dropped off the 15, I headed back and loaded the Skyliner. Twenty minutes later I was back at the civic center with the 58. I lowered the ramp on our enclosed trailer, then removed the rear straps. Next, I went around the front and removed one of the front straps. The morning was quickly about to change when I disconnected the 2nd front strap. As I placed my hand on the headlight to help myself up, the car started to roll backward. Out of the trailer it went with a great deal of speed. I could only watch as it made its way across the sloped parking lot towards an entry gate. The chain holding the gate shut was no match for the 2 ton retractable as it hit it dead center. Both sides of the gate flew open as the car proceeded through the gate and across the city street. It's rear really bounced high as the tires hit the curb and rolled over. The car came to rest with the front tires still on the street and the rear bumper against a fiber optic pedestal.

In disbelief I ran over to the car yelling something about manure over and over. As there was plenty of early morning traffic now congesting quickly I just said sorry to the driver of the closest car and got in the 58. I drove it back into the lot and then tried to wrap my head around what had just happened. Did not take long to find out the pulley on the parking brake had split in 2. Guess Ford's design was only good for a 60 year duty cycle.

I called Patty who was already at work and told her what happened. She asked gently if I was ok then proceeded to explain to me that stupid manure stuff always happens to me when I do stuff without asking for help. She asked what I was going to do. I said I had made a commitment to display the cars so that was what I was going to do. I drove the car in and parked it in its designated space. Didn't take long for folks to start asking what the %\$#@ I did to the car and then proceeded to give me a full damage report.

Not until I returned to the shop, picked up the 72 and delivered it to the expo did I do my own inspection. There was no major structural damage to the car, a testament to Ford's engineering. The left taillight housing had broken into pieces. There was a dent in the quarter panel behind the housing, chips and scratches on the quarter panel. The Right taillight chrome was smashed and the taillight housing cracked with some chipped

paint at the mating to the quarter panel. The bumper had sprung in far enough to dent the quarter panel and the bumper had some paint scuffs. Only 1 plastic tail lamp had chipped.

Later that morning I posted on FaceBook I had an accident and was in need of tail light housings. This is where the brotherhood of the IRFC shined bright. It was not long at all and I got a message from Gregg Fracassi letting me know he had seen I had an accident and the housings were heading my way. Incredible, repair parts coming before I even ate lunch or had called my insurance company. That night I pulled a used tail light from my stock and shipped it to Terry Miller to have rechromed with a note stating I needed it back in 6 weeks max.

Let me tell you Hagerty insurance was fantastic to work with. I called and said I needed to file a claim and was quickly transferred. They asked first if everyone was ok, then asked me what I wanted to do. I sent a text with a picture of the damage and I told them I would likely be fixing the car myself as I did the restoration. The reply was not a problem, go ahead and proceed. All they needed was an estimate from a restoration shop on their preferred list and they would cut me a check for that amount. Dale's did that the following Monday and by Thursday I had a check.

That weekend, May 19th I started taking the car apart. Everything from the doors back needed to come off so out with the rear interior and seat. Next the decklid, trunk panels, taillights, rear bumper, moldings, scripts, etc. There was no access to the backside of the quarter panel dent so I started calling around to see who may have a stud puller. Took another 2 weeks but I did locate one and with less than ½ hours work had the dent pulled.

As always life and work got in the way and I was not ready for the final paint process until the weekend before July 4th. Saturday, I primed the spots and on Sunday July 1st sprayed the base and clear. Then waited 2 days before starting wet sanding the orange peel and dust nibs. Instead of watching the 4th of July parade with Patty and family, I was instead buffing. Oh, did I mention we had somewhere to be the 3rd week in July?

By July 9th I had the car back together good as new (even the parking brake) with exception of the taillight I had sent off to Terry which finally arrived on July 12th, looking beautiful. That evening I mounted the taillight and buttoned up the trunk. Friday, July 13th we loaded the 58 into the trailer and headed east. On Monday, the 58 was shining brightly, parked along with other retractables in Lexington. That's my accident story and I'm sticking to it.



Note: We would LOVE to hear your 'car story' ... please submit your story to Don Roloff at rolnon@bis.midco.net or to Laura Engwicht at lengwicht@yahoo.com and we will publish in the newsletter as soon as we are able! Thank you!