

Our trip to Redmond and the 2012 EFV8 Western National Meet

By George Garrett & Tom Shields – Southern California Regional Group 11

"Driving an Early Ford V-8 to a distant location is an adventure. If you don't like adventure, drive a modern car..." *Unknown EFV8'er*

Tom Shields and I had been talking for some time about going to the 2012 EFV8 Western National Meet to be held in Redmond, OR. We had such a great time at the 2008 Grand National Meet in Dearborn, MI, that we made as part of our Lincoln Highway tour, and we wanted to repeat the experience. So, we contacted the sponsoring club, the Columbia River Regional Group and made our reservations. The next step was to plot out the route we planned to follow.

Driving up from Southern California, we had several choices to get to Redmond including I-5, US-395, and US-99. We could have also gone up the coast route on CA-1 but that would've added a lot of distance. We picked I-5 and US-99.

We decided to take our time and cover about 250 miles per day. This meant we didn't have to get up in the middle of the night and we could still get to our destination at a reasonable time in the afternoon. And it was also easier on our flatheads. Our planned stops were Fresno, Chico, Klamath Falls, and then into the Bend/Redmond area.

Both of the wives (Jan Shields and Carole Garrett) had decided to make the trek as well... Soooooooooooooo, on Saturday, September 8th, we met on Pacific Coast Highway in Huntington Beach, CA about 8:15 AM and took off heading north. We knew that traversing the Grapevine on the first day was going to be a challenge, little did we know that wasn't the only challenge we would face that day...

We took I-5 up through the Grapevine and then turned on US-99 as it veered over into Bakersfield. The temperatures were mild that morning in the mid 70s and we started climbing the hill as we crossed CA-14. We maintained about 50-55 mph and stayed in the right lane whenever we could. We were overtaking some big trucks but mostly, we were getting passed a lot by regular traffic.

We both were watching our temperature gauges and of course they started to climb. Neither one of us boiled although we did lose the "bubble" at the top of the instrument. We were alternately dropping out of overdrive (Columbia) and then back into overdrive as the road conditions permitted. We were both very happy to see the top of the hill in our rear view mirrors. Coming down the north side into the San Joaquin Valley, both of our temperature gauges plummeted and I was showing about 150° at the bottom of the hill. OK, great, the worst is behind us... Hmmmmmmmmmmm...

We proceeded down the road, through Bakersfield, and stopped in Tipton to get some gas. I went to pull up the emergency brake and felt no tension on the cable. The car would roll. It wasn't working. That's funny. Now what...?

I got out and looked underneath the car watching for something hanging down but all seemed well. No cables and no fluids. A quick look under the dash showed the cable was still attached to the handle. I figured I could still drive without the emergency brake so I pumped the gas into my car and we got back on the road.

Well, about 30 miles down the highway we started to hear some loud clanking and banging noises coming from the rear of my coupe so I pulled over to the side. I honked at Tom and he pulled over as well. I drove the car forward in first gear while Tom walked along side and he said it was definitely coming from the right rear wheel.

The next town, Travers, was about a mile down the road so I idled there in first gear. It was still making noise but not as loud as before. Travers is a real one horse town, it's only on one side of the road, but there was a truck stop. And they had a pit that they used to service big trucks. I asked if I could drive my car over their pit and they said fine.

Tom and I went underneath the car and there was just nothing obviously wrong. We didn't know what the problem was but we knew it had something to do with the emergency brake. Something was definitely broken.

OK, when the going gets tough, the tough get going...!! We broke out the National EFV8 Roster and started calling people that lived in the area. I was looking for a shop or someone who was open on a Saturday afternoon that could help me out. Most of the numbers we called went unanswered and I left over a dozen messages with these strangers explaining my problem. The wives had walked down the street and found a Subway restaurant and brought back some food. Then I got a phone call...

It was from one of the numbers I'd called earlier and it was Doris Williams from Porterville. Doris' late husband was an EFV8'er and she has two sons that currently run a speed shop in Tulare. She gave me their numbers and told me if I couldn't find them to call her back and she's track them down...!! I already liked this lady...

I reached Mike Williams via phone and explained the situation to him. I said I knew his shop wasn't open on Saturdays but could he possibly take a look at my car and see if we could determine the problem. Mike said that was no problem and to bring the car

down to his shop. I contacted AAA and had the car towed 25 miles back down US-99 to the shop in Tulare...

We got the rear end of the car up on jack stands and removed the right rear brake drum. Parts fell on the floor as the drum was removed. Great...! At least we've found the problem...!

There appeared to be three issues, (1) the pin holding the emergency brake lever had come loose and the lever was rattling around inside the drum, (2) the emergency brake cable had disconnected from the lever, and (3) the retaining clip for the emergency brake lever had been damaged. Did #1 cause #2 which caused #3, or vice versa...? Tough to tell... Luckily, all of the parts were there on the floor.



I now had a plan "A" and a plan "B". Plan "A" was to get it fixed and plan "B" was to cripple the emergency brake mechanism so it wouldn't do any more damage.

Mike Williams is a street rodder and what you have to like about these guys is that they're innovative...! In very short order, Mike figured out why the pin holding the lever had come loose, it looked like there was a portion of a former keeper still left in the pin groove. The existing keeper looked to be OK. He reconnected the brake cable to the lever with no problems.

Finally, the retaining clip for the emergency brake lever was partially broken and we couldn't connect it to the backing plate. Remember I said that street rodders were clever...? Mike took a small hose clamp and secured the retaining clip to the backing plate in the exact location where it was supposed to reside. The emergency brake lever slid inside the clip perfectly and the rest of the mechanicals were reassembled.



We spun the wheel with the motor running and could still hear a slight ticking so we removed the brake drum again. The retaining clip has been bent slightly and was making contact with the drum. Mike flattened out the clip and the ticking went away. I was back on the road...!! Repair time was about 60 minutes.

The total time involved here from the first problem detection, getting the car over the pit, finding Mike Williams, calling AAA, towing the car back to the shop in Tulare, and getting the car fixed was about 5 hours. I have to say that during that five hours, I thought I had two chances of getting my car to the Western National Meet... Slim and none...!

Now however, I was very confident that had the emergency brake issue resolved but you know how that it is. I found myself driving the car and waiting for the next shoe to drop (no pun intended).

Tom and his wife and my wife had continued on up to Fresno in Tom's car, and I rolled in about five hours late. What a first day...!!

Sunday, September 9th... We left the hotel about 9:00 AM and proceeded up US-99 on our way to Chico, CA. This was one of the flattest portions of the trip as we had no "Grapevine" to contend with. We went through Chowchilla, Merced, Stockton, Sacramento, Yuba City, before pulling into Chico. The only issue we had was that Tom hit a loose tire tread that was in the road. It probably came off of a truck earlier in the day. You see these scraps all the time on the road and it makes you wonder why the recappers can't do a better job of affixing new rubber to old tire casings.

Tom didn't suffer any mechanical damage to his car but it did leave a minor dent in the right rear fender. It's always something...!!

Monday, September 10th... We left the hotel under chilly conditions with the temperature in the mid 40s. The destination today was Klamath Falls, OR. We went through the Trinity Mountains and started going through the south end of the Cascades. We were gaining altitude so we were both watching the temperature gauges. The countryside



was beautiful and the roads were good. Past the town of Weeds and in the Klamath National Forest we drove through the corner of a forest fire. The flames had gotten down to the road and you could feel the heat as we drove by and we were 50 yards away from the fire. Imagine the heat the firefighters feel. We crossed the Oregon border and headed towards Klamath Falls.

This time of year, the Klamath Falls area is inundated with small green flying bugs called "Midges". The nutrient rich waters in the Klamath Falls area support these kinds of bugs. They're not harmful to humans and they are tolerated by the locals because they actually help control mosquito infestations in the area. That's nice but when we drove into swarms of these Midges, it sounded like it was raining...!! They were "pitter-pattering" on the windshield. Once we arrived at the hotel in Klamath Falls, the front of our cars had a distinct "light green" tint to them. I spent 10 minutes with a bottle of Windex getting them off the windshield.

Tuesday, September 11th... Today the plan was to get to Bend and our hotel but we wanted to drive by Crater Lake. We'd all been there before and the deep blue color of the lake is always a treat to see. We noticed something in the newspaper that morning about a bicycle event called "Cycle Oregon 2012". This was the 25th anniversary of this event and it's basically a bike ride that covers a good portion of the state. Today, all 2200 participants were going up to... Crater Lake...!!

Sooooooooooooo, as we trekked up US-97 and then turned on OR-62 towards the lake we found we were sharing the pathway with all of these bicyclists. By and large it was fine but on occasion on this narrow two-lane road the bicyclists had decided to ride three abreast...!! GIVE ME A BREAK...!! It was easy to spot these riders, they all had the same signs on their backs, "As a matter of fact, I do own the whole road..."

We finally made it to the top and the rim of the lake and the view was beautiful.



I raised my hood just to make sure everything was still in place and noticed something that looked like a rubber seal sticking out between my radiator and the electric fan mounted on the forward side. I pulled it out and discovered it was one of the blades off of the fan. After poking around a little, I remove four other blades...!! OK, I decided NOT to use the fan anymore... I never heard them come loose. Strange...

We also noticed that there was a Classic Car Club tour at the lake today. Many beautiful Packards and Cadillacs to look at.

We dined at the Crater Lake Lodge and then proceeded to drive around the lake and head back down to US-97 via OR-138. OR-138 is about 20 miles of the straightest road we traveled on this trip.



We made it into Bend and found our hotel. Tom and I then went over to the Fairgrounds in Redmond to check in for the Meet. We were pleased to bump into Bob and Mary Jane Teitsworth, they'd brought their '40 Ford Deluxe Coupe and toured up with the Jay Harris group from the San Diego area. We more or less got the lay of the land and headed back to the hotel.

Wednesday, September 12th... Tom and I went to the fairgrounds to attend the lecture on steering boxes. The talk was given by Greg Edwards of Gaston, OR and the Columbia River Regional Group. He really knew his stuff. He had a number of visual aids of old steering boxes and parts and gears from all years of EFV8s plus Model As and Model Ts... It was well attended well received.

After the lecture, Tom and I washed our cars to get them cleaned up for the Concours the following day. Tom went on the tour of the Vintage Auto Wire Factory in Bend later that afternoon. It was a great tour once they got everyone inside. Vintage Auto Wire makes most of the old Ford wire harnesses supplied to our favorite vendors. I had decided to pass on that. Tom and I then sat in on the National President's talk where he gave the "State of the Club". Ken Bounds talked about membership and how it's been relatively stable (9400+) for the last several years. But the truth is that no one expects the membership to rise. It's a fact of life.

He also talked about the Grand National next year in Lake Tahoe and how they're going to do a tour from the east coast on the Lincoln Highway (which runs through Lake Tahoe).

Tom and I looked at one another and smiled. I'd like to think our Lincoln Highway experience and V-8 Times article helped with that decision. 😊

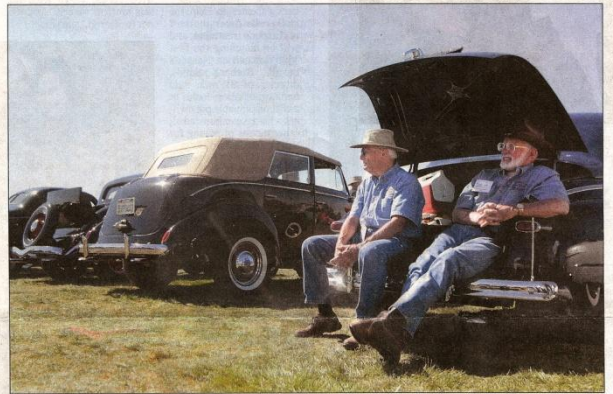
Thursday, September 13th... Concours Day. Most of the attendees arrived about 8:00 – 8:30 AM and parked in the Carnival Field where they had the various classes laid out. There were about 300 entrants. Cars weren't arranged by year in the Touring Classes, so it was time consuming to find all of the "same year" cars for voting consideration. There was no shade so umbrellas and hats were the order of the day. In addition to the Concours, Rouge, and Touring classes, they had a Display class set up on the same field – not some remote parking lot. I even found a couple of overhead engines in this class... Interesting...

At the conclusion of the day, the sponsoring club put on an "Engine Seize" demonstration. A junked Subaru was brought on the field and all of the water and oil was drained out. The engine was started and the idle was set to about 4500 RPM and it ran for a little over seven minutes. Lots of smoke for the last few minutes. At least they didn't use an old flathead...!!

Friday, September 14th... We started the day with the morning paper ("The Bulletin") with an article about the meet and a picture of club member Jim Golightly on the cover. Jim was sitting in the trunk of Darryl Tuggle's '42 Deluxe Coupe. This was "Grand Tour Day" and with about 200 cars at this event, we

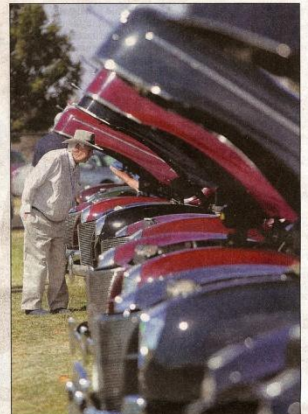


VINTAGE ON DISPLAY



Photos by Joe Kline / The Bulletin

Darryl Tuggle, of Montague, Calif., right, and Jim Golightly, of Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif., sit in the back of Tuggle's blue 1942 Ford during the Early Ford V-8 Club of America's 2012 Western National Meet on Thursday at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds in Redmond. Today's events include a grand tour starting at 8:30 a.m., in which club members will cruise around Central Oregon, and a swap meet at the fairgrounds from 8 a.m. to noon. At right, Bill Macaulay, of Henderson, Nev., looks under the hood in a row of 1940 Fords on display at the fairgrounds.



toured around Central Oregon with stops at Smith Rock and the Oregon Trunk Railroad Bridge. This bridge crosses over the "Crooked River Gorge" that's about 300 foot deep. The visitor's area allows one to walk right up to the edge. Smith Rock is a state park located in central Oregon's high desert near the towns of Redmond and Terrebonne. Its sheer cliffs of tuff and basalt are ideal for rock climbing of all difficulty levels. Smith Rock is generally considered the birthplace of modern American sport climbing, and is host to cutting-edge climbing routes. It has hundreds of climbing paths, many are advanced. We drove about 40-50 miles this day. Very scenic.



When we returned to the Fair Grounds for lunch the organizers had marked up the field with chalk in a pattern of the club logo "V8". We all parked our cars over the chalk lines and a plane flew overhead and took some photos. The logo was about 800 feet tall. I'm anxious to see how that turns out.



That night we attended the awards banquet back at the Fairgrounds. All things considered the food wasn't bad and service was good. Steve Lemmons was the MC for the awards presentations and I remember he had some nice things to say about the Touring and Touring "A" classes...



“These are the fun classes where the owners get these cars out and drive them and enjoy them.” Tom and I both agreed with those comments and... We both won third place trophies in Touring and Touring “A”. It’s always nice to be recognized by your peers. After the awards ceremony it’s back to the hotel and get ready to leave the next morning...

Saturday, September 15th... The plan was for Tom and Jan to go to the Eugene, OR area and visit with some friends and Carole and I were going to Silverton, OR to likewise visit some friends. Jan had decided to fly home on Monday morning, the 17th. Carole and I would then meet Tom in Florence over on the Oregon coast later on Monday morning and head for home from there. Well... That wasn’t meant to be...

Carole and I were on our way that morning and got a call from Tom saying he was off the road in Sisters, OR. The town of Sisters was on our path so we got their location information and headed there to find them. Sisters is nestled at the base of the majestic Three Sisters and is named for these distinct volcanic peaks in the central Cascades Range. First settled as the Camp Polk military outpost in the mid-1800s, the town of Sisters was built on a foundation of ranching, farming, logging, and accommodating travelers crossing over the Cascades. The city was incorporated in 1946.

When we got there, it wasn’t pretty. Tom’s car had suddenly developed a loud clunking noise coming from the transmission or the rear end. The racket was bad enough that he decided not to try to cross an unfamiliar mountain range.

Tom called AAA and the plan now was to flatbed the ‘37 to their friend’s place in Eugene where there was a better chance of finding a mechanic to take a look at the car. The other thing that happened that morning was a forest fire, that had broken out the area, was approaching Sisters and



we were advised later that the town was going through a “voluntary” evacuation. As we were waiting for the tow truck, our cars began to get covered with ash. Wonderful...!!

Carole and I continued on without incident to Silverton to see our friends and had a nice visit.

Sunday, September 16th... I spoke with Tom and there wasn't going to be a quick fix for his car. We agreed to alter our course and meet them at their friend's place in Eugene to survey the situation. Their friends have a lovely, multi-acreage home in the hills outside of Eugene. This is where it's nice to have the GPS to guide us to these remote places.

When we arrived, Tom had the floorboard out and the top off of the transmission. We looked at the teeth trying to find something broken. We bumped the starter spinning the gears and there was nothing obviously wrong. We removed the inspection plate for the clutch assembly and again spun the motor and nothing looked out of place...

Tom had made calls to local EFV8 club members, who were helpful with "phone" diagnosis, but didn't have any local repair shop references. Through friends, Tom was pointed to a Eugene mechanic who had NASCAR and engine building experience. Tom made arrangements for this mechanic to look at the car on Monday morning. Carole and I decided to continue on to Florence, OR. The plan was to stay in touch via cell phone. I didn't want to leave Tom and Jan but it seemed that they were in good hands...

We had a nice drive over to Florence on OR-126. This picturesque route had been written up in the LA Times just a few weeks earlier and we enjoyed the scenery. There must've been a Corvette meet or show in Florence as we met no less than 40 Vettes coming the other way. We made it to Florence about supper time and had a nice sea food dinner at a restaurant on the wharf in town. It was chilly that evening getting down into the low fifties.

Monday, September 17th... I'd been fighting off a cold for the whole trip so before leaving Florence, I stopped by the emergency room at the local hospital and saw the doctor. He checked me over and gave a prescription for some antibiotics. I got the script filled at a local pharmacy and the last thing the pharmacist said as he was handing me the pills was... "This can cause diarrhea." Oh Great...!! That what I need driving down an unfamiliar highway feeling the urge and seeing the sign, "Next Services 25 miles"... I never took the pills.

Meanwhile, back in Eugene... Tom dropped Jan off at the airport and then, using a trailer that his Eugene friends have, proceeded to get his car to the mechanic's location. A drive around the block with the mechanic using his probe/stethoscope and the

diagnosis was "somewhere behind the transmission". He could start work on Wednesday OR the car could be put on a U-Haul. The decision was made to (try) and fix it in Eugene...

We departed Florence late in the morning on our way to Crescent City, CA. We headed down the "Redwood Highway". Lots of hills and dales on this route (US-101) and the scenery was quite pretty. There was lots of construction on the road and that slowed us down from time to time. We pulled into the coastal town of Bandon and did some touristy shopping. We drove into Crescent City later in the afternoon.

I noticed that there were "tsunami" warning signs in the hotel (which was right on the beach) saying if we heard the warning sirens to GET OUT OF THE HOTEL...!! Wow...!!

If there was a quick fix for Tom's car, our plan was to wait in Crescent City for him to catch up. A phone call that afternoon indicated there wasn't going to be such a fix. Our plan then was to continue to Ukiah, CA the following day...

Tuesday, September 18th... Off to Ukiah and driving through the Redwood National Forest. I've always associated redwoods with areas like Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks but there were plenty of them in this area. The road (US-101) shifted back and forth from the coastline to a mile or so inland going in and out the forested area. It was very scenic. Again, more construction on the road slowed us down from time to time. We passed through McKinleyville, Eureka, Garberville, and Legget.

Legget is where CA-1 branches off and continues down the California coast. We'd decided to stay on US-101 for the rest of the trip so we steered to the left. We drove through Willits where the eastern end of the "Skunk Train" terminates. There's a track that runs from here through the Mendocino area over to Fort Bragg. There are actually two trains that leave the eastern station and the western station at the same time and meet in the middle. Our family had done this tour years ago and it was quite nice. The "skunk" name comes from the diesel exhaust fumes put out by the engines. We motored in to Ukiah later in the afternoon.

Meanwhile back in Eugene... No work today on the '37

Wednesday, September 19th... We departed Ukiah on our way to Salinas. The air was crisp and cool and there were some high clouds. As we neared San Francisco, our GPS wanted to take us around the town and over into the East Bay. I wanted to take our Ford across the Golden Gate Bridge so I got a lot of those "recalculating" messages but I persevered. The weather was perfect crossing the bridge and we had a nice view

of the city by the bay. Going through town of course exposed us to a lot of traffic but we stayed on US-101 which turns into Van Ness. We drove very close to Lincoln Park, the western terminus for the Lincoln Highway that Tom and I drove on in 2008. We picked up the US-101 freeway and proceeded south.

We went through San Jose, Gilroy (garlic capital of the world), before stopping in Salinas.

Meanwhile back in Eugene... Tom and the mechanic started disassembly, focusing on the center bearing in the torque tube, until talks w/ Dan Krehbiel and Carl Kniza persuaded them that the center bearing does not create those kinds of noises when it fails. Also, just try to find a new center bearing...! It was always digging a little farther in to try and find the "smoking gun" – an actual gear with damage. They also discovered the LR brake shoes soaked with gear oil.

Thursday, September 20th... The plan today was to make it all the way home and that's about 340 miles, a long jaunt for the '39... So we got on the road early at 7:20 AM. Trucks seemed to be an issue today and I no sooner got on US-101 and I had a big semi barreling down on me. I speeded up a little and slowly pulled away from him.

The drive through this area is pretty flat with lots of farming activity on both sides of the road. We went through Soledad, King City, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo. The road gets a little up and down here as we start to go through the Los Padres National Forest and the hills that surround that area. I was watching the temperature but the car was fine. We motored down through Santa Maria, Buelton, and



Goleta before stopping in Santa Barbara for a late lunch. We have a favorite sea food restaurant there in town on the coast near the pier.

Back on the road and approaching Oxnard, I made the decision that I'd climbed enough mountains on this trip so we got off of US-101 and picked up CA-1 and took that around the hills into Malibu and Santa Monica. The traffic was actually very good, we got stopped and some signals but motored into Santa Monica without incident.

The plan was to stay on CA-1 (Pacific Coast Highway) all the way down to Huntington Beach and home but... Lincoln Blvd at this time in the afternoon was a parking lot...! It was taking 5-6 signal cycles to get through an intersection. Recall that I wasn't using the electric fan so the temperature started to creep up. I turned on to Washington Blvd and went down to the I-405. It was also a parking lot but not as bad as Lincoln Blvd. I was concerned about getting in the carpool lane but saw that it was only moving about 20 mph and I thought, what the heck, I can keep up with that...

And that was where we stayed for the next 90 minutes or so working our way down to Huntington Beach. We pulled up in front of our home at 5:30 PM. That was a long day...

Meanwhile back in Eugene... Tom continued disassembly and inspection, and then placed a parts order with C & G.

Friday, September 21st... *Parts arrived before Tom's coffee was cold (UPS overnight, C&G was great) so the day was spent putting rear end together w/new bearings, and fitting new brake shoes. A lot of extra grinding on the "new" shoes to make them work – see V8 Times (July/August 2012-Page 91).*

Saturday, September 22nd... *Tom talked the mechanic into working today and they got most of everything back together, but not enough to finish & test drive...*

Monday, September 24th... *They finished reassembly a little after noon-time and went for a test ... Same noise!!! It has to be in transmission or U-joint... But by this time Tom had decided to take the car home and called U-Haul for a truck and trailer. He left Eugene Tuesday AM, arrived home in Corona del Mar Wednesday*



evening.

Epilog... *After working on this issue further at home, Tom reached the conclusion that the culprit was the transmission tower spring that holds the shift forks in proper relationship to each other. The shift forks were flopping around with no control. If Tom had known this was the problem from the get-go, this would've been an easier (and much shorter) fix than what he went through. Anyway, all is fine now...*

Sooooooooooooo, wrapping this up... The trip to Redmond and the Western National Meet was definitely worthwhile from my perspective, in spite of my car troubles. Tom may feel differently about this. We were able to attend a well organized and fun event. Kudos to the Columbia River Regional Group.

This was the first extended trip that Carole had been on in our '39. The previous longest trip she made with me was to Santa Ana (15 miles). And I must say she held up quite well. As many of you know, the cab on the '39 Deluxe Coupe is quite narrow and we were sitting almost shoulder to shoulder and it was nice to have her there. She turned out to be a real trouper, surviving the hot afternoons sans air conditioning, helping out with the maps, the GPS, and those always hard to read street signs. I was very glad she was there. And while some of the days were better than others, I think she had a good time too...

On a personal note, I lost six pounds on the trip. Was that because of the cold I encountered or the 2500 miles of non-power-steering and non-automatic transmission driving I did. I dunno... 😊