

MVCC 1944 M29 Weasel Restoration Diary



Ord Serial # 8325; MFRS Serial # 8325; Gross Weight 5970; Max Payload 1200
Max Speed 32; Gasoline Octaine 72 minimum
Hull markings; 3BCT 3 HQ 5 and 68GP2IE C52

2/13/11. The M29 was recovered. It was located on the East end of Vega Reservoir, Mesa County, Colorado, about 45 miles North East of Grand Junction. The MVCC recovery crew used Jonathan's 1 ton Dodge Cummins, Randy's 18' tandem axle vehicle trailer, and some rigging equipment to haul it to Lew Ladwig's place. Bill Monroe and Kent Hill of Delta Petroleum, assisted in the recovery with Kent helping to drag the weasel out of the barn and down the hill with his front-end loader.

2/19/11- Had another good work day today. I had Jared and Joe from my scout Venturing crew there today and we pulled the weasel into the driveway and flushed the rat crap out. We got the fuel tank out and got it flushed out. It's an aftermarket rubber tank and in good shape.

The interior of the radiator looks nasty. The more I look at the weasel, the more I am leaning toward pulling the engine, dropping the suspension and doing a complete sand blast. That will take more effort than I can do by myself for the technical stuff as I am trying to get the jeep done also. I sure could use a few "weasel work weekends" to help make real progress.

John said he could bring over an air compressor. I have a chain hoist we can attach to the ceiling beam for pulling the engine. I bought some oil and a filter for it today and will work toward a test fire on the engine so I can give it a compression test after it's warmed up.

Phil said we can borrow his 12 volt battery until we buy a set of 6V Willard repros with the optima guts. The Venturing crew guys who have done a lot of work so far are:
Carl Ladwig, Jared Schroeder, Joe Douglas and Erik Wilk

3/5/11 - I pulled the plugs which were all brand new. Never fired. I will give each cylinder a shot of lube before I try turning it over. The fuel tank has an electric pump so I'll need to work with that to see if she runs. The boys came to the shop today but spent most of their time working on painting some plywood sheets so I can get the hand tools hung up on the wall. Right now all hand tools are in a big pile!

I attached a picture of Jared who was getting set to drain the engine oil. As you can see, he has learned to act like a mechanic and not a scout in short order. I guess someone there is number one!!



3-13-11. The fuel tank is a rubber one. I am learning that these were added post WWII to replace the metal tanks which rusted out. The view of the radiator shows it's missing the linkage for the big door to the radiator. This was used to adjust the air flow. The steering controls picture shows the hole in the wall where the control for the radiator door should be. The side of the engine shows how complete it is. Have not tried to fire it up yet. Waiting for a few details first. The last picture shows the cleaned out tub.

Sounds like we will have compressed air soon and a 12v battery soon thanks to Phil and Jonathan. I am currently trying to hang some plywood on the walls so I can hang my tools up and get organized before I start having a big pile of small parts with tools mixed in! Slow but sure I am getting my tools transferred to the shop and getting my power tools over there. Now that the weather is warming up, my heaters don't need to be running to make the place nice for working.







3-26-11 - Good news today on the weasel!!!! With the help of young MV enthusiast Jared Shroeder, Several weeks ago we soaked the cylinders with oil. Today we lubed them up again and tried to see if the motor was loose. We rocked the drive shaft back an forth a few times. Without much effort the engine turned. We soon had it spinning freely. I think this may mean that the cylinders are not rusted and should work fine. We then changed the oil and filter. Once that was done, with the spark plugs still out, we jumped wired the engine and the solenoid and starter worked just fine. It turned the engine over very well. We ran the starter just enough to pressure up the oil. Now if we can check out some loose wires and get a method for supplying fuel (she has an electric pump in the tank which is out right now.) then we could see if the engine runs!

Once we run the motor and warm it up, we can do a compression check and see if she needs rebuilt. Right now, I think the odds are good that the motor is good.

4-2-11 Had the monthly MVCC meeting here at the shop and we attempted to start it for the first time. After rigging a up a water bottle fuel supply and getting a jump from J3's truck we cranked her over with almost an immediate sign she might run. Smoke, mouse carcasses, nesting and other crap was blasted out of the exhaust pipe. Took awhile but we did get her running without stalling. The motor sounds very good and some run time should be fine. Also moved her on her own power back and forth a few feet. Clutch and drive train seem OK. See the slideshow on page 2 of the event albums for some of the meeting and first start pictures.

4-10-11 Had a work party today. First drive!! Go to the Newsroom Page for a link to a short video of the M29 running around the parking lot. Engine runs ok. Has a bit of dirt in the carb that wants to starve it for gas at times. Dan ran up to Russ's place to buy a gasket kit for the carb. I'll do a rebuild on it. I think it also needs a pressure reducer on the fuel line as the modern pump is pushing too hard. We added oil to the tranny and diff. Tranny was not bad but diff was very low. We also flushed the radiator and filled it with fresh anti freeze. The fill spout on the radiator needs some work. Need a pipe flair kit to fix it right. I drove it around the yard several times and in every gear. It steers fine. I think the bands are in good shape. I repaired the broken ear on the seat back and it came out perfect. Looks factory. The work crew today was Hugh, Ray and I. We found that the exhaust pipe does not leak. That was just mouse crap burning. Once it burned off, she was fine. She leaks a little oil from the valve cover. The 12v battery only cranks for a few seconds and dies. We had to jump start it most times. The Genny does seem to be charging the battery up though.

4-17-11 With a ton of great help from Ray Fernandez the weasel is now running much better. We had to wrench on her a bit trying to figure why it did not run right at mid to high revs. Ray dug into the electrical system after we found the spark plug wires were leaking lots of spark. So we stole a set of plug wires from my son's 240z engine. Perfect fit from one six banger to another. Ray found the point set was missing one of the two contact pads! A new set of points took care of that. Then the only problem is that the temporary fuel pump over pressures the carb. She runs great when the fuel bowl is full but no pump on. She runs until the bowl get's low so then if you pump some more fuel she runs fine. I think this will all go away once we get the tank and factory pump back in place. We displayed the weasel at the big Boy Scout show in Longmont. (Pictures follow) It was a huge hit. We may get some new members out of this. There were several dads who asked for club info. Folks could not believe it was made by Studebaker. She ran fine loading and off loading from my trailer. Did not really have to drive any distance so don't know how she will do for a longer run. One item we need is a proper radiator cap. The one in use is too short. The weasel radiators have a tall neck and take a special cap with a longer plunger. Without, the fluid can escape thru the overflow. Pictures of the Boy Scout show follow on the next two pages.





4-24-11 Great progress has been made on the weasel. Many thanks to Ray for his many hours of help. Fuel system redone so we can use the rubber tank and in tank pump. Carb cleaned out. Had some dirt in the float valve that cause over fueling. Used a gasket kit from Russ. That fit perfect. New steel fuel lines made so we can use the original fuel filter. Carb mounts were loose allowing air to suck past gasket. Dan Emick talked to his battery guy, Walters Auto Specialties, and got 2 nice batteries donated to the project. Value of \$267.90! If you need a battery or other auto stuff, contact Walters at 303-783-3818 and in Colo. Springs, call 719-391-1288. Be sure to spread the word to support this outfit! The new batteries start the weasel real fast. She now runs perfect! Smooth idle and tons of power! I cut out the Bubba tow ring in the bow of the weasel and replaced the original skin. The previous owners had punched a couple of holes in the body and a hat channel to attach a tow chain. Under the 1/4" plate they welded over the damage, it was ugly. She is all repaired there now and looks factory. With all of that done, the club needs to decide what the next step is. She could use some back seats. Dan thought that whoever donates enough for a back seat could have their name stenciled on the seat back. She also needs some correct controls on the dash, and the radiator flap repaired with proper controls. Since she runs so well, we don't think the mechanicals need any repair. She could use a correct wire harness for the bubba electrical work done. She also needs the panel between the engine and the fuel/ battery area. And she needs the tube between the carb and the air cleaner. Dan was talking about a BBQ at my shop on Saturday the 7th as a fund raiser for this project. He has set up his field kitchen in my yard. More to come on this. A few pictures follow.



