

April 2006



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

The lunch stop in the pass on Montana Mountain, I was told this is ~5400' elevation. This is a week after the snow storm; the snow must have been really deep the day after.

Meeting Minutes

Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Then the pledge was said.

Members present were: Steve Smith, Ed Lyons, Marty Boetel, Charlie Babcock, Steve Graham, Scott Nixon, Matthew Parks, Nick Sesma, Sean and Lynette Murphy. New members were voted in Andy and Melissa Armstrong.

Ed gave a treasurers report.

We have about 15 members now that people have paid. Charlie gave a description of Martinez Canyon Run.

Steve Smith gave a description of Montana Mountain Pass and the back way to Minnehaha and Crown King.

Scott described changes to webpage.

Do we want a banner? Scott will talk to Loran.

Scott talked about May run on Turkey creek or Mud Springs.

Martinez Canyon run April 22. Meet at 8 am at Cottonwood Canyon Rd and Highway 79.

Marty's going to do a Moab trip this summer for a week, maybe May/June timeframe.

Steve declared the meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm.

Calendar of Events

April 22 – Matt's leading Martinez Canyon call him @ 480-888-9581

April 26 - Meeting at 7pm location La Belle Pizza, same address as Round Table

May – Turkey Creek and or Mud Springs Club run

May 31– Meeting at 7pm location La Belle Pizza

Trip Reports

Montana Mountain Pass 3/18/2006

Participants:

Steve Smith: Jeep

Nick Sesma and daughter Tara: Toyota

Steve Graham: Scout

Charlie Babcock, daughter Shelby and passenger Scott Nixon: Blazer

The Blazer rolled up to the meeting spot right on time, but everyone else had been waiting for a while. As soon as Charlie shut off the ignition they fired up their trucks and headed to the dirt road turnoff. We soon caught up, aired down, and headed for the mountains. There were a lot of RV's camped in the area, all being orbited by packs of ATV's, dirt bikes and other assorted motorized toys. Traffic thinned out as we started the climb up towards Roger's Trough.



Steve Graham stopped at Roger's Trough Trail head.

It's quite a distance from the turn off to the start of Forest Road 650. You start out following a wash, and then start climbing up the side of the mountain. We could see lots of evidence of flowing water over the past few days, and as we climbed patches of snow became visible. We stopped part of the way up to take pictures and let the girls throw snow balls and build a 10 inch high snow man. We took the left at the T intersection and pulled into the hiking trailhead parking lot. The snow was over a foot deep in some spots; Tara and Shelby broke out the boogey board and tried sledding.

Headed back to the T we stayed straight and started on FR650. The road was muddy with patches of snow here and there. Everybody fish tailed a bit as we drove through the slop. After waiting for a large group of ATV's to clear the road we drove about four or five miles to a wide area and stopped to let the girls play in the snow. I hiked up to the top of a hill, occasionally stepping in knee deep drifts. We ate lunch while the girls played. After about forty five minutes their hands and feet went numb, so we loaded up and headed for the switch backs.



Steve Smith stopped at the lunch spot on top of the mountain.

As the trail started losing altitude, it got really slick. While Charlie and I watched Steve Smith fishtail towards the edge, Steve Graham radioed that Charlie's rear tire appeared to have hung out over the edge for a bit. We made it safely though, and the lower we went the drier it got. All at once the snow and mud disappeared and we were on a dry, dirt road.

A little lower down and we came to the switchbacks. Several of us commented on how we used to think these were a challenging obstacle. With a few years experience though, it was just a twisty section of road. Charlie showed off his turning radius, swinging wide and squealing up against the steering stops to avoid backing up.

Down in the wash, we headed left to the cabin. It is still in great shape, and appears to be regularly maintained. Some of us explored a mine shaft, but it only went in 20 feet or so till a cave in made it too narrow to squeeze through. A group of guys from Superior were there on ATV's; one had lived in the area his whole life and had "never seen it snow so much, so fast." A lot of the big trees in the wash had limbs down from the weight.

Heading towards US60, I directed the pack up a fun optional hill climb. It was long, steep and loose. Half way up Charlie even had to finally lock in the hubs. Everyone made it fine, with big grins on their faces. We got out admiring the view. Out in the bushes I found an ancient bottle of cheese wiz; so old it had a screw on cap. To my horror, it not only had some left but the bottle even had pressure. I carried it back to the group and squirted some out. No one was brave enough to even smell the brownish-green goop, let alone taste it.



Superior from the northwest on top of the loose hill.



The last ranch house we stopped at.



Scott is a wood Nymph at heart.

The trip down was uneventful. We made a stop at an old corral, nosing around in the barn and dropping a few rocks down the deep well. I climbed a tree and posed for a few pictures. We quickly finished the last of the trail and aired up. Back on US60 we soon wound up parked in a traffic snarl caused by the intersection of the Renaissance festival with a pro golf event; in hindsight it was rather humorous how irritated we were that it took an hour to go 8 miles, when we had spent the last four hours going even slower than that.
Scott Nixon

Coves Birthday Party 4/1-2/2006

1973 K5 – Charlie, Becky, Shelby, Hailey, and Reilly Babcock

1976 K5 – Sean, Lynette, Hannah, and Emma Murphy

19XX FJ40 – Andy Armstrong and Jman (guest)

1989 K3500 – Scott Nixon

2000 Denali – Jerome, Logan and Zoë Gill

2005 Rubicon Unlimited – Steve Smith

I rolled the Blazer through the green gate at 8:30am, the meeting time was 9am, I wanted to be early for this run. As I was airing down the Swampers, some kids walked by across down the wash. I asked them what they were doing and they said walking. With an odd look I asked where? One of them said he had blown the rear axle of a 2wd 4 door Tahoe and abandoned it in the wash to Cove 1. I told him we could help pull it back but he said his girl friend was coming to help get him out. Next thing I see is the same guy going buy in a Jeep Liberty with a girl driving. I'm thinking yeah that'll pull it out.

Sean pulled in behind me followed by Steve Smith, then Scott. Just before I was about to head out Andy Armstrong pulled in. We waited for him to de-trailer and then headed out. We made it up on the first ridge and passed the Liberty. I asked the guy if he

wanted help and he said no he was going call the police and report it stolen to collect on insurance. We worked our way down the play hills leading into the wash to Cove 1. There sat the abandoned Tahoe. It looked like a 2000-2006 model, no visible signs of distress. We all made it to the top of the ridge and Scott got out and made a call to the Sheriff's office. He told them the whole story and gave them the license plate number, hehehe. I'd like to be listening when he reports that.

It was a beautiful day; we had heard Cove 1 was full of people so we stopped at Cove 2, one guy, one samurai, and one dog. I decided to head to Cove 4. At camper shell hill we noticed a 70's Blazer stripped to the sheet metal and frame. Scott mentioned we should come back another time and haul the abandoned Chevy out. We all made it over the crazy moguled dirt hills to Cove 4. An empty camp site with no vehicles, turned out to be boaters. We made our way to the far side of the Cove under a giant Mesquite tree. Sean and I parked under the tree and Scott took the next one over. Steve pulled in right beside me. We had lunch; the girls hit the water while the guys talked trucks. Andy and Jman headed out. We did the usual clean up of the area, picking up garbage from the previous tenants. We set up camp, watched the kids play in the frigid water and enjoyed the weather. We had lots of visitors to the Cove, boats, Jeeps, ATV's, motorcycles, even supped up golf carts. Those things crack me up, I'm sure they do fine off road but they still look like a golf cart. I even asked one of them if he lost his golf course. I don't know if he didn't get it or didn't think it was as funny as I did, he kind of blew me off.



The whole gang with the abandoned Tahoe on the left.

Jerome showed up soon after lunch he had come in at 2am from California the night before and stopped at every Cove looking for us on the way in.



Andy and Jman making it over a ledge.



Big Ugly coming up the first hill out of the Cove 1 wash.



Sean's Blazer looking good with the 40" IROK's.



The Rubicon making it's way up the first hill climb.



Enjoying the sun, the breeze, the company and the...chairs.



You can't tell in the picture but my truck is suffering from tire envy sitting next to Sean's.

He said Cove 3 had no campers and had very nice scenery but we were already settled in. Jerome also parked and pitched his tent under the same Mesquite tree, did I mention it was big. I tied a rock to some rope I had and threw it over a high branch in the tree for the kids to swing on. They had a blast swinging in the shade. We hiked up the ridge and we could see the lake was full of boats. The women actually got cold sitting in the sun with the breeze coming off the lake. The lake was 93% full within 4' of capacity.

The men decided to gather firewood, the area had been picked pretty clean so we headed back up the wash to a dead tree trunk we had seen on the way in. It was lying beside the road uprooted from somewhere else, maybe water. Jerome hooked his Denali to it, Scott and I stood on the log as Jerome took off. I stayed on for .8 seconds, Scott was the clear "broke back log" winner staying on for 3 seconds. Jerome stopped near the camp when the log caught between 2 trees. Sean got his chain saw but it was no match for the old Mesquite. This thing was hard. We got Sean's axe and took turns wailing on the log. Once we got to the center of the log the axe rang out like it had struck steel. The wood was well cured. We strapped the log again and Jerome pulled on the end with no luck. We were half way through the trunk and his truck couldn't snap it. I went to get the Blazer and 10' from my tent the power steering fluid filter blew in half. So I stopped playing with the firewood and repaired my truck. The rest of the gang managed to break off three 3' sections of the log and then gave up.

We had dinner supplied by Becky; Chalupa with all the fixings then built a fire out on the beach. By adding smaller branches to the big, 10" diameter logs, the wood lasted all night. Everyone sang happy birthday to me, we ate cake. Steve headed back to civilization and the rest of us retired around the fire. We took turns telling stories of past adventures.



Having a great dinner, as you can see we did a great job cleaning the area.

One by one the kids started nodding off. We heard fireworks, boats were still cruising the lake. Jerome would shine his 5 million candlepower spotlight at them. We all turned in around 10:30pm to the sounds of trucks and ATV's long after we crashed. I woke up to the sound of an engine and tires on gravel. Some drunken idiot was driving through the cove at 3am in the morning. That's why I park my truck blocking my tent and the road past our camp. Scott said the guy was at one time pointed at his truck and then turned around.

The next morning was sunny and cool; I climbed a different ridge to check out the view. A blue Herron was nesting in the reeds near our camp and we could see it take flight. Sean and Lynette cooked a fabulous breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage and muffins. The kids were in the water right after breakfast, yikes! Everyone started packing up and by 11:30am Scott, Jerome and Sean were ready to leave. We said our good byes and then the Babcock's finished packing. We ate lunch under the old Mesquite tree and then made our way out. The trip out was uneventful. We passed the abandoned Tahoe and the rear window had been broken out already. At the parking lot I stopped to air up as a Sheriff drove down the wash. Before I was finished airing up the Sheriff drove past again heading out, weird.

Thanks everyone for coming out to wheel, camp and celebrate my birthday with me. I had a great time.



I knew Scott had a hard head but jeez.

Charlie Babcock

Items of Interest

Dues are over due! Bring \$40 to the next meeting or send a check to:

Ed Lyons
936 E Wesleyan Dr
Tempe, AZ 85282
Make sure you tell him what it's for.

Remember the club meeting is the last Wednesday of every month, 7:00pm at La Belle Pizza & Pasta (used to be Round Table Pizza), north west corner of Rural and Ray in Tempe.

April run

Matt is going to try again and lead a trip up Martinez Canyon. Meet at 8 am at Cottonwood Canyon Rd and Highway 79. I'll probably camp out at the cabin again; it breaks up the long day. I promise I'll go around the d*m wedgy this time. It's a 4.0 rated trail, but most of the tough stuff can be bypassed. It's a beautiful trail with lots of optional insane obstacles. For those that don't want to drive the entire trail the drive to the cabin is a nice easy trail and then they can ride/walk with the other rigs. The trail loops back to the cabin. Bring lunch and drinks it's a most of the day kind of trail, or into the night if you mess your rig up good enough.

Land Use Issues

Send a letter like the one below to every Senator you can, email and officer for the list. I got this sample from Ed Lyons.

Honorable Senator,

I respectfully request the newly opened HB 2686 (aka SB1508) be killed once and for all. This bill is not supported by the OHV community as a whole and does nothing to help the issues involved with OHV's in the state. This position for HB2686 is NOT presented nor supported by the OHV community as a whole nor has the collaborative task team been apprised of this replacement bill.

Thank you for your support in killing HB2686 to allow time to bring our shared efforts back to the table with legislative, agency and user support within a true collaborative process.

Sincerely, (your name)

Editors Stuff

If you didn't pay your dues this will be your last newsletter/notice, I'll assume you have taken a different path.

Things you need but didn't know it

Nothin!

Quote

If we have learned one thing from the history of invention and discovery, it is that, in the long run - and often in the short one - the most daring prophecies seem laughably conservative.

Arthur C. Clarke

Created by Charlie Babcock