

January 2008



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

Everyone enjoying the beautiful weather at the annual club Christmas party this year we picnicked on Cottonwood Creek just south of the ranch.

Meeting Minutes

No meeting in December.

Calendar of Events

January 1 – Club run at Florence Junction contact Charlie for info @ 480-231-4565

January 19 – Club adopt-a-trail Mud Springs contact Steve S for info @ 480-838-5394

January 30 – Meeting at 7pm location TC Luigi's

February ? – Club run

February 27 – Meeting at 7pm location TC Luigi's

Trip Report

Rocker Panel Pass 12/8/2007

Participants

1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock and Sean Murphy

Saturday's run on Miner's Revenge was canceled due to rain but the day actually turned out nice. Sean and I thought it'd be nice to go out Sunday to see all the water but weren't sure how far we'd be able to get. So we didn't contact any of the club members. We arrived at the turn off to upper Sycamore to see quite a few ATV's, motorcycles, and a few rock buggies. I cruised passed them and found a clear spot down the road to air down. We soon enough arrived at the first river crossing; it looked drivable although there was a brand new Jeep Liberty abandoned in the middle of the river. It was sprinkling off and on but looked threatening. We went ahead and crossed without any difficulty just as the 4 buggies caught up to us. They followed right behind me. I stopped one of them and chatted. He said they were the Undertakers (rock crawler club, they have cool stickers) heading to a trail called "No Limits". They took off and we were right behind. The next crossing we found them hunting for a good place to cross. As they crossed we could see the 40" tires dropping underwater here and there, doh! They were waiting on the other side so I went across, no problem. We moved on and were soon at a third crossing the buggies tried different spots until they found a good one and then went across. On the far bank each one caught there rear differential on a submerged rock while driving up the far river bank. I made a mental note

and put a tire on the rock when I drove through without hitting it. It looked like the light buggies were having more trouble in the water with their milder treaded tires then I was with



Stuck Jeep Liberty, no owners around and no keys in it or we would have moved it for them.

the Swampers. We moved on again and the Undertakers headed up a canyon and we made our way to Rocker Panel Pass.

Surprisingly I had never been down this trail before. Sean had been on the trail many times and had just driven it in his Blazer the week before. We stopped at a high spot for the view to the east of SR87, Mesquite Wash, Mount Ord covered with snow, and Four Peaks clouds covering the top and snow below the clouds. It was a beautiful sight as we munched on snacks and had the place to ourselves. The annoying ATV's, Motorcycles and golf carts can't make it across the flood water so it isolates this trail. I made it down hill through the boulders with a couple scrapes "on the rocker panels". One spot I made a sharp right turn while dropping off a rock ledge and got the driver side rear tire up in the air along with the passenger front. We sat there teetering for a second and each time I nudged it forward the rear lifted higher. So I decided to turn the wheel left which lurched the rear higher yet giving us that special feeling in our stomachs. I told Sean as I was looking down on him that I didn't mind laying the truck on its side but that I didn't think we could right it very easily by ourselves. I put it in reverse and started to back up when all of a sudden the Blazer sat down on all four tires making us laugh hysterically.

I continued on to the river and started to sink into mud the further I went. Again the all by ourselves and no winch thing. So I backed the truck up in its tracks and we got out and walked down the river. It was raging pretty good so we decided we had had enough fun. We drove back up the pass and the last tough spot the tires decided to play in the sand. As the

K5 got really twisted up in a tight spot the fan started hitting the shroud making an awful racket. I shut off the engine and the truck body was twisted enough that I had trouble



The mud got deep so I backed up and we walked to the raging 4th Sycamore crossing on Rocker Panel Pass.

opening the door and then the hood. I cut a couple pieces off the fan shroud and started it back up. It made less of a racket so I tried a few more backwards and forwards maneuvers. We both got out and looked the situation over. I took my sweatshirt and hat off, took a break, got back in and drove right out of the wedgy.

Off and on the fan still complained but not so much, it could be checked at home. I also noticed that I had a small leak in the passenger side Bogger. It was gravel shoved under the bead of the tire. Everytime it went around it would let out a little pst; no big deal. We got back to the river and it looked to be at least a foot lower. We could see the submerged rock that had caught the buggies. We crossed this and the next crossing with no problems. We got to the last crossing and the Liberty was still there. On the road back we stopped two guys in an Exploder and asked if they had seen the owners of the Liberty. They had but thought they had already returned to it. Oh well we tried. I stopped near the road aired up and headed for civilization. What a perfect day.

Charlie Babcock

Christmas Party 12/15/2007

Participants

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

1976 K5 – Sean and Lynette Murphy

1978 Cherokee Chief – Markus Kuck
1992 Ram - Steve Graham
2000 Denali – Jerome and Logan Gill
2005 Rubicon UL – Steve Smith

The Blazer pulled off of the Beeline highway just before 10am and we could see Steve's Jeep in the parking lot. I couldn't see Steve but I could see the tell tale puff of cigar smoke rising above the back of his Jeep. After everyone arrived we made our way towards the creek. Soon we stopped for stragglers??? While waiting we noticed fluid dripping out of the Chief. Popping the hood we could see that the transmission coolant line had popped off. Markus fixed the line and I grabbed the Peatsorb.



Doing my part to make the world a better place.

It's a material that eats the oil and is biodegradable; it renders the oil harmless for the environment. If you need some to carry in your rig and you're a Lo-Ranger, contact me. We were off again and soon made it to Cottonwood Canyon Ranch passing dozens of ATV'ers and campers. I led the group on a long and winding road back to a wide spot in the bushes along the creek and declared it the perfect spot. The kids bailed out and we set up the chairs. It was cool enough we soon had a fire going and cooked up the food. We explored the creek, sat around eating, told stories of past wheeling adventures and about missing friends that were no longer in the club.



That looks like a post card, well maybe a Charlie post card.



We parked like to this to keep the pesky ATV'ers away from our picnic area, they still thought about it.



This says it all, the guys getting ready to cook the meat, Shelby wearing a stocking cap, Jerome telling a story and me with my mouth hanging open.

Soon enough people started heading off for home. Jerome and I with our gangs went back to the ranch to explore the area looking for treasure (so to speak). Jerome decided to drive up the creek but changed his mind after getting stuck on the rocks lining the creek. The kids yelled for me to drive through the creek so I obliged and drove the couple hundred feet up the creek, with out a paddle, back to the ranch. We looked around for a while and then headed out to end the day. Jerome and Logan not having their fill headed off for more exploring.

Charlie Babcock

Items of Interest

January run

New Years Day run, we'll meet on January 1st at 10am at the Cottonwood Canyon road turn off, south of Florence Junction (the usual spot). We'll see who shows up and decide what trail to run.

Clean up and run on the Club adopt-a-trail Mud Springs on Saturday January 19th. We will meet at the Four Peaks turnoff from SR87 at 8:30 a.m. The first half of this trail can be run by any 4wd. The 2nd half is pretty gnarly and requires a modified vehicle. Call Steve Smith to let him know you're going and for more info at 480-838-5394.

Land Use Issues

WESTERN SLOPE NO-FEE COALITION

P.O. Box 135, Durango, CO 81302

www.WesternSlopeNoFee.org

DEAR PUBLIC LANDS SUPPORTER,

The day has finally arrived when we can begin to see the end of access fees for public lands. A bill has been introduced in the U.S. Senate, with bipartisan sponsorship, to repeal the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, also known as the Recreation Access Tax, or RAT.

Please take a few moments to celebrate, and pat yourself on the back for all the effort over the last 10 years by every one of you that has brought this about.

Then get ready to go to work. This landmark legislation is going to require an all-out grassroots effort to achieve passage. We do not yet have a bill number assigned, so hold off briefly from contacting Congress, as having a number will be important when you ask for their support.

We will be sending more details about the bill and how you can help get it passed in the coming days and weeks.

THANK YOU for your support, which is what made this happen.

Kitty Benzar, President

Editors Stuff

Scott Nixon's done an excellent job of putting pictures up from our previous runs. Check out the webpage at: http://www.azlorangers.org/images_new/index.html

Things you need but didn't know it

Free for the taking:

* Non-tilt steering column from a 1980 J20. It has the ignition key and GM-style wiring. The steering wheel is pretty generic. It doesn't say "Jeep" or AMG so it won't be embarrassing to put in any vehicle.

* A flywheel for an AMC 360 engine. Weld some legs on it to make a nice little patio or accent table. Just kidding! It's in good shape. Call Steve or Linda Graham @ 480-834-1171

Quote

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.

Henry David Thoreau

Created by Charlie Babcock