

July 2005



# Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

## Cover Picture

Sean's Blazer making it's way through Upper Ajax on its new shoes, 40" IROK's. This was the day after the night run.

## Meeting Minutes

Don Munzer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members in attendance: Ted, Loran and Jake Gersztyn, Stephen Smith, Jim Sanford, Don Munzer, Linda and Steve Graham, Nick Sesma, Charlie Babcock and Matt Parkes.

Guests in attendance: Jennifer Cline

Treasurers Report: Ed reported that we have \$3,759.91 in account.

A number of T-shirts were sold before the meeting got rolling.

**Trip Reports:** Matt Parkes gave a report for the trip to Upper Ajax, July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Steve and Linda went to Dupont Cabin two weeks ago. It was very nice. There was very little traffic.

**Future Trips:** July 1 – Martinez Canyon/Martinez Cabin – Matt Parkes, trip leader, Meet at Highway 79 and Arizona Farms Road, Friday at 8:00 p.m.

July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend - standing invitation to the Adcock (Gersztyn) ranch in the Bisbee area.

No firm plans were made for an official July club trip. When one is decided on an e-mail will be sent out.

August 19-21 – Steve and Linda Graham, trip leaders, Camping trip to Mingus Mountain, Meeting time and place to be announced.

Ed Lyons gave an abbreviated report from the ASA4WDC quarterly. A motion was made and a vote taken to discontinue full membership with United Four Wheel Association. The money is to go into the Land Use Fund instead. Look for full details in the ASA newsletter. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

## Calendar of Events

July 3-8 – Marty will be in Flagstaff call him @ 480-926-3977

July TBD – Club run. Your suggestion goes here.

July 27- Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

August 19-21 – Mingus Mountain Club run and camp out (details next month)

August 31- Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

### Trip Report

Upper Ajax Night Run 6/17-18/05

1966 FJ40 – Matt Parkes

1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock, Jerome and Logan Gill, and Brandon Tomblin

1976 K5 – Sean, Rick, and Kevin Murphy and Patrick (friend)

2005 Rubicon Unlimited – Steve Smith

Jerome and kids arrived at my house and we packed their stuff. Sean and his gang rolled in soon after and we were off. We had preplanned to camp out at the end of the trail because of previous outings of this sort. The sun was most of the way down as we pulled out. Sean's Blazer looked sweet riding on his new foh-dee IROK's. The air had cooled off as the trucks blasted through the desert evening. Matt was just unloading the Cruiser with Steve looking on as we pulled into the meeting spot at 8pm. There was nobody else around, who would a thank it.

I asked Matt if I could lead the way down Cottonwood Canyon Road not wanting to eat dust all the way. The aired down Swampers road like a caddy over the wide graded washboard road. The area was deserted as I made the turn at Mineral Mountain Road. I waited a while for Matt to catch up to me and took off again. As I was cruising along beside Lower Ajax Jerome shined his three million-candlepower spotlight down into the wash looking for the start of Upper Ajax. I stopped again not seeing enough headlights behind me. Matt pulled up and then Steve, but Sean was MIA. Soon we spotted headlights off to the south a couple hundred feet up on a ridge, had to be Sean. We shined the beacon at him and he got the idea, Steve drove back to make sure he made the right turn. We continued on and I soon dropped down into the start of Upper Ajax.

Steve decided to leave the Jeep at this spot so that Matt could bring him back after the trail. They weren't camping out but returning home. It was the first time I had been on a run with my 38" Swampers being the smallest tires on a rig. I let Matt take the lead and we proceeded through the boulder filled wash to the first main obstacle. Three tough passages and an illegal bypass cut through the desert. Some people just don't get it. Matt took the hardest line lifting a front tire but made it with out a problem. I decided on the middle path, I had made the far right before with out too much trouble on previous runs. The middle was a 'V' type passage made by two large boulders. The front tires made it no problem as they came down the boulders crunched both rockers and I was stuck. After a bunch of maneuvering and some High-lift action Matt gave me a tug and the fat bodied Blazer was free. Sean had seen enough and took the route to the right catching his functional but anchor like bumper as he got through. He was also experiencing "my stock steering isn't going to steer 40" Swampers locked and aired down" no matter how hard you pull on the steering wheel.

Crawling down the wash the trucks easily made their way over the myriad smaller boulders that make up the Ajax creek bed. We came to the bend around a cliff wall where there's pretty much one path. Matt again took the hardest line through and as his rear tire dropped into a hole the front tire reached for the sky. It was no match for the Cruiser; Matt's got his rig set up beautifully. I've been through this obstacle before but I chose a path a little too far to the right and that made all the difference. The front right tire slid off a 5' long boulder that was slopping towards the cliff wall. The front drive shaft and transfer case cross members landed on the peak of the boulder. This left all four tires traction free. Out came the High-lift and I managed to move a little to the front and back but mainly closer to the cliff wall. Everyone pitched in and moved several tons of rocks to the front then the back

again, but nothing helped. I suggested that Sean use his Blazer behind me to pull the rear of the truck over to where it might get traction. As I backed up Sean pulled the rear over until the left rear Bogger caught a rock and psssst, ca-powee. The air blew out as the tire came off the bead.



**Believe it or not I drove the K5 back 8' on this tire and then we resealed it without removing it from the axle.**

We tried to High-lift the K5 up to get to the tire but every time it slid over towards the cliff wall. The front passenger side fender/hood was now smashed up under a rocky out cropping. It was getting late and we were all standing around saying hmm, now what. I decided to screw the tire, we needed to get going so I had Sean use his Blazer to pull me straight back. I backed it up slowly as Sean pulled and suddenly the tire was almost back on the bead and in the air. So we got a ratchet strap on it and cranked it down. I got my air hose out and went to hook it up when Murphy's law struck again (according to Matt, I don't think he realized what Sean's last name is) I saw that there was no way the hood would open under the cliff wall. Sean made a comment joking about reaching up underneath to hook up the air. I wedged myself between the boulder and the front bumper reached up between the fan shroud and the engine and I could just barely reach the quick connect of the air compressor, success! As the air compressor ran it was soon obvious that the \$25 onboard air wasn't going to reseat the bead on the 38" Interco. Jerome had the next great idea; he suggested taking the valve core out of the stem. The tire pumped right up, I always wondered if I could reseat a bead with that compressor. With the other Chevy pulling I was finally able to break free of the rocks.

Sean had made his way through the rocky canyon with a few bangs and crashes that I could hear but I never did get to watch his Blazer in action.



**This was Sean's shake down run for the new 1 ton axles and IROKs. The exhaust needed a little adjustment but otherwise the big Swampers rolled over everything.**

Now the decision, after some discussion we decided that Sean, Jerome and I were going to camp right where we were parked. While this was going on the reseated tire had gone flat, or had it? Matt talked me into pumping it back up to street pressure to watch it. It was close to midnight when Matt and Steve said their good-byes and drove down the trail. Jerome set up the tent while Sean and his gang set up cots to sleep under the stars. The temperature had to be in the low seventies by now; it was a beautiful peaceful night. Twenty minutes after he had left Matt drove by fifty above us on the road out, we waved. The kids went to bed; the guys had a snack and talked about the night's events and life in general. We were soon yawning and hit the sacks sometime after 1am. The temperature had probably hit low sixties that night.

The next day came quick bright and sunny. As I made my way to the nearest bathroom around the corner there was a small mud puddle with thousands of wasps flying around. I kept one eye on the swarm and the other on the job in hand. We had a leisurely breakfast while breaking camp just as the sun hit the area. It was near 8am Saturday morning. I asked Sean which way he'd prefer to leave and he chose to turn around rather than fight his steering through the obstacle that had trapped the beast. I agreed and flipped the K5 around and drove back through the only major obstacle we had come through.



The first major obstacle you come to driving through in the conventional direction. We were driving backwards through it to get out.



Scenic Upper Ajax Trail.

Taking the far-left line, the tight squeeze, I made it through with no issues. Sean took the by pass and we were soon driving out onto the main road. I passed a bunch of vehicles on the way out. We made good time back to Cottonwood Canyon road at which point I made REALLY good time. I checked in the mirror and surprisingly through the rolling dust cloud I could make out the gray Blazer. Sean was tailing me only a dozen-truck lengths back. Just ahead of us was a bright shiny yellow Land Cruiser and equally pretty red CJ. Highly modified and parade quality paint jobs. They pulled out at the old Jamboree sight to load onto their trailers pulled by big buck tow rigs. Sean told me as he passed them; they happen to be on the same CB channel as us and were talking about how gross it was for the four sweaty guys in the Blazer to drive home. Some people just don't get it.

At the parking area we stopped to air down, it was 9:15am. We said our good-byes and drove home. Thanks Matt for leading a great trip, I had a blast. I had 68 pictures from my 2 camera men Jerome and Patrick and not one of them was of your Cruiser Matt. You got to stay with the camera men or bring your own. Thanks to everyone else for helping in the K5 extractions, I couldn't have done it without you.

Submitted by Charlie Babcock

### Items of Interest

Remember the club meeting is the last Wednesday of every month, 7:00pm at

Round Table Pizza

9920 S Rural Rd

Tempe, AZ

It's located on the northwest corner of Rural and Ray. If you visit

<http://www.roundtablepizza.com/> you can get discount coupons on pizza to use at the next club meeting. Come early and eat with the gang.

To get a state trust permit go to:

[http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec\\_offroad\\_permit.htm](http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec_offroad_permit.htm) at the bottom is the link to the form at: [http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec\\_permit.pdf](http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec_permit.pdf).

I found this on the internet:

### The Rules of Phoenix, AZ

1. You must learn to pronounce the city name. It is: "FEE niks."
2. The morning rush hour is from 5:00a to 10:00a. The evening rush hour is from 3:00p to 7:00p. Friday's rush hour starts on Thursday morning.
3. The minimum acceptable speed on all freeways-I-10, I-17, U.S. 60, & Loop 202 is 85 mph. You may only exceed that speed on Loop 101, where the speed is allowed to match the highway number. Anything less is considered wussy.
4. Forget the traffic rules you learned elsewhere. Phoenix has its own version of traffic rules.
  - a. Cars/trucks with the loudest muffler go next at a four-way stop.
  - b. The truck with the biggest tires goes after that.
 (Note: East Valley, SUV-driving, cell phone-talking moms ALWAYS have the right of way.)
5. If you actually stop at a yellow light, you will be rear ended, cussed out and possibly shot.
6. Never honk at anyone. Ever.....Seriously!
7. Construction is a permanent fixture in Phoenix. Detour barrels are moved around during the middle of the night to make the next day's driving a bit more exciting.
8. Watch carefully for road hazards such as drunks, skunks, dogs, barrels, cones, cows,

horses, cats, mattresses, shredded tires, squirrels, rabbits, crows, vultures, javelinas, roadrunners, and the coyotes feeding on any of these items.

9. You must know that "Maricopa Freeway, Papago Freeway and the I-10" are all the same road.

10. To find anything in Phoenix, it is required to know where Central and Washington are located in relation to you. This is our Alpha and Omega-the beginning and the end.

11. If someone actually has their turn signal on, wave them to the shoulder immediately to let them know it has been "accidentally activated."

12. If you are in the left lane, and only driving 70 in a 55-65 mph zone, you are considered a road hazard and will be "flipped off" accordingly.

13. Ground clearance of at least 12 inches is recommended for city driving.

14. You are allowed to wear potholders to protect your hands and fingers during the summer driving months without fear of being called crazy. In fact, to attempt grabbing said steering wheel without said protection is grounds for commitment to a hospital then a padded room.

### July club run

No one at the meeting could figure out where to go so we decided to send out a notice later in the month when some one came up with a run. The other problem is a lot of trails are closed. I think it's time for a milder run since we've been running the tough trails lately. Don suggested FR300 on the Rim and I suggested the Coves (but they're closed). If you have a suggestion send me an email or phone call and I'll mass email it to everyone.

### August club run

Linda's going to lead our annual trip to Mingus Mountain August 19-21. Last year people left Friday afternoon, Friday night and Saturday morning to go up. Come up for the day or camp out Friday and or Saturday night. We'll probably do a light wheeling trip from camp Saturday and then return. I'll be going up Friday sometime and returning Sunday morning. I'll have more details next month.

### Land Use Issues

FYI from Sandee:

I'd suggest everyone write comments regarding the extreme stretch of lands being proposed as "critical habitat"..... wonder when we will get "land designated to us"?????

If this process continues we'll not be allowed off pavement..... pygmy owl, willow flycatcher, snakes, rats, bugs, and weeds will "rule". When we get "critical habitat" eliminated or down sized they make a new designation..... "recovery habitat" that has stricter parameters than the critical or potential !!!!

It's going to take ALL of us to fight this kind of take over..... YOUR voice / letter DOES COUNT !

Sandee

**Subject:** Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Criical Habitat Comment Period to Reopen Briefly

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The current comment period for our proposal to designate critical habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher is scheduled to close May 31, 2005.

However, for a 10-day period in late June, we will be reopening the comment

period to publish our certification under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

This reopening will provide an additional opportunity for you to submit comments and flycatcher management plans to assist in our critical habitat determination. The reopening will apply to the proposed rule, draft environmental assessment and draft economic analysis. We will notify you when the new dates are available.

If you have already submitted comments, you do not have to resubmit them during the June comment period.

The proposed designation and supporting documents are posted at <http://arizonaes.fws.gov>

### **Editors Stuff**

It's a dry heat!

### **Things you need but didn't know it**

**For Sale:** 1948 Civilian Willy's Flat fender, front narrowed Dana 44 with locker, rear narrowed Ford 9" with locker, Dana 20 Transfer case with adapter (\$450), SM420 Tranny-new rebuild, power steering, hydraulic clutch, 33" TSL tires, complete soft top plus bikini top, Rhino lined tub, diamond plate rear corners, 2 1/2" body lift, new springs all around, set up for small block Chevy - some assembly required, hood and fenders needed to be extended 3", asking \$5500.00. Call Ken Phillips @ Work- 520-432-1203 or Home- 520-432-3679

**For Sale:** Chevy TH350 transmission \$50 obo call Scott for more information @602-482-8973

**For Sale:** 3 camper jacks 1000 # capacity that I had for my Alaskan camper, they'll lift high enough for a 4x4 truck. Also have a 36" cab high sleeper that fits a full size Ford '75 - '97, or Dodge up to '84, or Chevy / GMC up to '87. It's solid, has a roof vent, 4" foam mattress, and a lift gate. Made of 1"x1" framing, 3/8th Plywood, and covered with .030 silver aluminum, & lockable. Best offer on them. Want to get them outta here! Call Ed Lyons @ 480-921-1171.

### **Quote**

The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun.

--Ralph Nader

**Created by Charlie Babcock**