

March 2004



# Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

## Cover Picture

The cover picture this month is Ron Couch in his Cherokee making one of the Terminator obstacles look easy.

## February Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m., followed by the pledge. Members present were: Don Munzer and kids, Charlie and Becky Babcock, Ron and Brenda Couch, Matthew Parkes, Marty Boetel, Gary Bennett, Sean and Lynette Murphy, Dan and Jennifer Egge, Nick Sesma, Sandee McCullen, and Ed Lyons.

**Treasury Report-** We have \$4307.61 in our account at this time. Ed will send a check to ASA4WDC soon for our yearly dues. We pay \$20 a member and currently have 16 paid members. If you haven't paid your dues please do so as soon as possible.

**Old Business-** Ron reported on the club run to Raw Deal. A good time was had by all. Ron smashed the front and rear fender. See elsewhere for a full report of the day's events. Ron reported on his run to Terminator with Mike and Roy. Ron and family also went to the Parker 400.

**New Business-** Sandee McCullen has State Land Permits for sale. As a club we have a permit that allows our club to enter and drive on State Trust Land for Club Runs but if you are on State Trust Land, and not on a club run, you must have an individual permit. The cost is \$15 for individual and \$20 for a family. Clubs can get a Conservation Patches, from ASA4WDC, for work that they do to help in the conservation of the environment. There will be a clean up at Lower Sycamore on Saturday, February 28, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. We are hoping that by helping with the clean up, the powers that be, will see how important this area is to us and will budget monies for improvements next year. The Arizona Game and Fish Dept is in charge of this clean up. CAL Rocks is March 19 – 21<sup>st</sup> near the El Cajon, California area. They are still looking for judges and are willing to pay gas, lodging, and food. Contact Sandee McCullen if you are interested. Sandee is the chairman for the Jamboree this year. It is scheduled for October 14 – 17, 2004. Trails will be run on Thursday in Florence Junction and Friday, Saturday, and Sunday runs will be in the Table Mesa area. They are working on 4 new 3 – 3.5 rated trails. Sandee is hoping that our club will volunteer to run Tech one day. Sandee took on Washington DC., by way of Las Vegas. See the Wheeldust for a full explanation. It was discussed that we (4 wheelers) really need to try and support ORBA and ORBA businesses. 4 Wheeler Supply and 4 Wheel Parts Wholesale are members of ORBA. ORBA is an organization that fights legal battles to keep land use in existence. It was suggested that we could help support a small business so that they could join ORBA. Marty will check with Off-

Road Unlimited to see if they would be interested in joining ORBA. Marty is now the manager at Off-Road. Ted G. said that we needed to look for another place for Web postings. ASA just didn't pan out. Sandee said that changes are being made. Don will make copies of the club permit so those trip leaders will have them when they do the runs.

Club Run for March will be led by Don Munzer- we will be doing one of the new found 3 – 3.5 trails located near Table Mesa Exit. Plan on meeting Don at the Table Mesa Exit at 9:00 a.m. SHARP on Saturday, March 20, 2004!

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

## Calendar of Events

March 20 – Club run on new trails at Table Mesa area contact Don @ 480-839-9096.

March 31 – Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

April 3&4 – 4<sup>th</sup> annual Coves BBQ/Overnighter contact Charlie @480-812-9101.

April ? – Club run to.

April 28 – Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

## Trip Report

Terminator, February 1st (Super bowl Sunday) @ 9:00 AM

Ron, Mike, Gail and I met at the Table Mesa parking lot to make the Lower Terminator run. It seems that the day before there had been an organized clean up of the area, there were three large dumpsters filled to capacity and the remains of several burned cars piled in the middle. The car pile was enough to make any red blooded Lo-Ranger's heart start to race, what would be more fun than climbing your 4x4 over a pile of wimpy street machines?!? Unfortunately, the vision of my Jeep sitting atop the pile on four flat BFG's kept me from the temptation.

After airing down we headed out for Lower Terminator. Even though it was a beautiful day, we had the whole area practically to ourselves, it was the football national holiday and most people were at home preparing for the big game. That was fine with me, a ton of open trails and not a quad in sight, Perfect! Once we got to the trail and started over the obstacles I had heard so much about, I was wondering how things could get better. Then we hit the Terminator obstacle. When I first saw it I think my eyes must have bugged out like a cartoon, this thing was great! Normally, I probably would have figured there was no way we could get through, but I remembered I was running with Ron and Mike, if they said it could be done then there were no worries. Ron went through first. He expertly maneuvered the full-size Cherokee down, around the curve and repositioned for the climb out of the other side. As he was crawling out, I found the perfect photo op, the Cherokee was nearly vertical and the driver's side front tire had enough air under it that I could have walked under without a problem. As I clicked the camera for what would certainly have made a great newsletter cover, nothing happened. My old camera and alkaline batteries strike again. After Ron's great pass, it was Mike and Gail's turn. As the big Bronco pulled up for the decent, I got to see the look on Gail's face as she got her first glimpse of what they were getting ready to drive through, priceless! There was nothing to worry about though, as usual, Mike made squeezing the Bronco through

another impossible area look easy.



Mike and Ron then helped me guide my Wrangler through one of the most memorable obstacles I've had the pleasure of driving through, my adrenalin was flowing, muscles clinching and other parts puckering. After getting through, I had to fight the kid in me back because all I wanted to say was "let's do it again!" After a few more challenging obstacles we came to the end of the Lower Terminator.

There was still plenty of time left for 'wheeling so the only question was "what's next?" After a little discussion the Upper Terminator was agreed upon. Since none of us have ever run this trail before, we were not sure what to expect, I had heard rumors that it was more challenging than Lower Terminator and there was some concern that it may have been too narrow for the full size rigs. Of course that wasn't going to detain this group so we pressed on. Just about the time we were thinking this trail was way over rated (boring really), we came up on a real nice, mostly dry waterfall. Ron found a line up the side and made it without too much trouble. I followed him up the same one. Mike picked a much more difficult line right up the middle, making it look like he'd done it a hundred times, no trouble at all. There were a few more difficult spots further on down the line and we found what had to be the rumored narrow spot, but none of them proved to be of concern. The day had warmed up nicely by then and we found a good spot for lunch.

Although my GPS made the trail look like it continued on for quite a ways, I was disappointed to find that it ended just a couple of hundred yards from where we ate lunch. Although it was not terribly late, traffic concerns with freeway closers and the FBR (Phoenix) Open forced us to head back to the parking lot, air up and hit the road. All and all, it was a great trip. We got to run a couple of the more infamous 4+ trails in the area and even though the Upper Terminator did not live up to all of the hype, it was still a challenging trail that would be worth doing again sometime.

Roy Conner

#### Raw Deal: February 21st

Participants:

Ron Couch, Jeep Cherokee

Mike Tutor, Bronco

Gary Bennet, Jeep Grand Cherokee

Scott Nixon, Chevy Crew Cab

Steven and I pulled into the meeting spot about a quarter till 9. Table Mesa is a lot closer to my house than most runs we do, it only took 30 minutes from my front door to the parking lot. Gary was already there. We stood around and marveled at the lot full of 3/4 and 1 ton pickups with trailers. There must have been 20 or so trailer queens out playing on the trails. While we waited, a one ton TJ came rolling up with smoke billowing out the rear. Apparently a restrictive exhaust system built so much heat it started a fire. As he loaded it back on the trailer I had to admit, being a trailer queen would have its advantages.

Just about the time I was calling Charlie to get Ron's number, he and Mike rolled up. Ron wasn't late; I just wanted an excuse to call and hassle Charlie for spending a gorgeous Arizona spring day welding on his Blazer instead of driving it. We chatted a bit, aired down, and hit the road. The turn-off to Raw Deal was only about 1/2 mile or so from the meeting spot. One by one we dropped into the wash.

A little ways into the trail we came to an optional step. Gary drove around it, deciding his 33 inch tires weren't big enough for the 38 inch ledge. I gave it a shot, hoping my 8 inch

lift springs would make up for 35 inch tires. Just about the time I thought I had cleared it, the back of the bed came down on the ledge with a loud bang. No harm done, just need to remember there is a lot more truck behind my seat than there was in the Dodge.

The wash made a hard left and got rougher. A good sized puddle of water before a two foot high step didn't help either. I needed a bit of spotting from Ron to get through here. Pulling forward I got to watch Ron do a fancy bit of wheels-up wheeling. Mike was next on this optional line. After watching him abuse the sidewalls on his big Swampers and drop a 38 inch tire into a crevasse that swallowed it whole, I decided to take the bypass off to the right. We stopped and walked around for a bit and then continued on. There was one more optional obstacle that Mike and Ron played on, and then we were done with the 3.5 part. Steven, Gary and I walked the next part of the trail. It got pretty nasty, but the full sized Jeep and the big Bronco blew through it in record time with just a tweaked fender flare and some more Swamper scuff marks.

It took us a while to exit the trail as there is now a sand-and-gravel operation at the end. We had to drive between and on top of a big pile of gravel to get out. Luckily the gate that was there to keep people from shooting up the equipment was unlocked. It was just now getting to be noon, so Ron suggested a quick blast down to the river. It didn't take long on the well graded road and we were there. After lunch, the kids (Steven, Mike, and Ron) threw rocks in the river. I was getting sleepy, so I loaded up and headed home while the others got ready to head down a wash looking for more wheeling. Fun trip, I can't wait to go back with bigger tires and try the obstacles I bypassed.

Scott

### 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.

### March Club Run

Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> the club's going to run 1-3 of the 3 new trails opening up in the Table Mesa area. They're in the 3.0-3.5 range if you want to go call Don Munzer @ 480-839-9096. Meet at the parking lot off of Table Mesa road at 9pm.

### April Coves Birthday BBQ

For the last few years I've spent my birthday out at the Coves of Saguaro Lake wheeling, barbequing and camping. Last year some people just came for the day and some camped out. I'll supply the hamburgers, hotdogs, cake, and ice cream for evening dinner; everyone else can bring something to share, lunch and or breakfast if you need it. We'll meet at 9am Saturday morning April 3<sup>rd</sup> just inside the green gate at Butcher Jones Beach. We'll make our way to the 4<sup>th</sup> Cove to set-up camp and then decide where we want to wheel. We'll be leaving on the 4<sup>th</sup> sometime before lunch. If you can't make it for both days, just join up with us anytime

Saturday or Sunday, call Charlie Babcock @ 480-812-9101 if you're going. Hope to see you there and don't bring gifts just your truck.

### **Land Use Issues**

Please send any land use issues that you want included in the next newsletter to the editor at: <mailto:charles.h.babcock@intel.com>.

### **Editors Corner**

If you haven't paid your dues by the next meeting You won't get another newsletter.

If you're going to go on a club run make sure to call the trip leader. If the meeting time or location is changed or canceled then he can call everyone that's going and let them know. If you don't call then it's your own fault if you miss the run.

### **Classifieds**

If anyone has anything for sale just type it up and email it to me at <mailto:charles.h.babcock@intel.com> and I'll put it in the newsletter.

For Sale –

### **MAKE SURE YOU PAY THE CLUB DUES.**

You can pay at the next meeting or send your \$40 to Ed at:

Ed Lyons

936 E Wesleyan Dr

Tempe, AZ 85282

Make sure you tell him what it's for.

### **Quote**

I couldn't repair your brakes, so I made your horn louder.

Steven Wright

**Enthusiastically Created by Charlie Babcock**