

March 2006



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

Aaron, Eric and Kirk making their way up Martinez Canyon. Aaron's Jeep is very flexy after the rear 4 link conversion. We didn't make it much further then this thanks to Blazer problems.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m.

Members present were: Jerome Gill, Matt Parkes, Ed Lyons, Scott Nixon, Ted Gersztyn, Charlie Babcock, and Steve Smith.

Guests present were: Will Martin

Ed and Charlie agreed to stay in office yet another year as Treasurer and Editor/Secretary.

Steve Smith volunteered to be President, hail to the chief, we instantly voted him in, before he could change his mind.

Steve talked about Red Picacho Loop. Rick and wife joined Jim Sanford and Steve Smith on the run. Jim put out potato chips for the squirrels at lunch. Lots of side trails off of the main road. Sandy was type of road.

Jerome went on a run and ran the loop around Porter Mountain. They cleared three different trees. They saw parts of a dead horse, a deer and gray hounds.

Jerome saw an ad for a rock crawling event in Globe.

Matt talked a lot about his big backyard event. He thought about 20 people showed up for the event. Matt talked about his shop, which is 36' x 72' x 16' walls, and 14 ft. doors at each end. He brought his 16-foot snake out to show everyone (all the girls fainted). Ted talked about the quarterly meeting. Newspapers will be bulk shipped to the president of each club.

It's also available online. Dues are due to ASA. One day ramp contest instead of the Jamboree. Raffle off a set of tires. ASA is hurting for money. They're talking about using the special copper sticker registration for ATV's and Buggies. There is still problems with the Charleau Gap Access. The next meeting is at Voyager RV Park. There is talk about closing trails due to pending fire danger. The next club run is March 18th on Montana Mountain Pass. Steve Smith has volunteered to lead this trip so meet at Queen Valley Road and US 60 at 9 am. March 25th and 26th Shooting event at Ben Avery Range. Will was voted in as a member.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm.

Calendar of Events

March 18 – Montana Mountain Pass call Steve Smith @ 480-838-5394
 March 29 - Meeting at 7pm location La Belle Pizza, same address as Round Table
 April 1/2 – Charlie wheelin and camp out call me @ 480-812-9101
 April ? – Club run TBD
 April 26 - Meeting at 7pm location TBD

Trip Reports

Matt's Backyard 2/11/2006

1966 FJ40 – Matt Parkes
 1989 K3500 – Scott Nixon and Charlie Babcock
 1993 Tacoma – Nick Sesma
 2000 Denali – Jerome, Logan and Zoë Gill

Scott, Kirk and I pulled into Matt's backyard after lunch. Several rock truggy's were on the boulder field having fun. In all about 20 people showed up. Matt's garage is huge; the kids had fun with his scale modeled tube buggy. Thanks Matt for the invite.

Red Picacho Loop 2/18/2006

1996 XJ – Jim Sanford and Steve Smith
 2005 Liberty – Rick and Diane (guests)

Jim led this trip north west of the valley. Jim said it was an easy trip and everyone had a great time. I wish I could have made this run but I had another commitment.

Martinez Canyon Campout/Run 2/24-25/2006

1966 FJ40 – Matt Parkes and Will Martin
 1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock
 1973 Bronco – Kirk Rundle
 1980 CJ5 – Aaron McCarthy and Friend
 19?? XJ – Eric, wife and son
 2000 Denalli – Jerome and Logan Gill

I swung by Jerome's house and he and Logan jumped in the Denali and followed me out to the parking lot at Cottonwood Canyon road. I aired down to the sounds of cannon fire. There was live fire training going on to the south of us. The red flag was flying at the parking lot. We took off for the cabin at a good clip passing the military camped near the Jamboree site. I found my way ok to Box Canyon but made the turn too early and ended up traveling up a road past some ruins. Back tracking we got back into Box Canyon just as the last streaks of light disappeared to the west. We quickly arrived at the yellow arrow sign and headed towards Martinez Cabin. Jerome the Denali master somehow snuck the luxury cruiser past all the big boulders guarding the cabin. We were the only ones there so we set up camp, built a fire and had a late dinner. It was beautiful just cool enough to need a fire, the light helped to since we were lantern less. Logan wanted to see a gun, fire at night so Jerome did some late night target shooting with his trusty 22. We then turned in for the night, next morning I got up early as usual and went for a walk in the brilliant day light. As I turned back I could see a dome tent on the overhang above us. I assumed someone had left it there. Later it turned out that a couple had camped there before we had arrived. I came back



Kirk's sweet Bronco making it's way down the canyon.

to camp to check the power steering fluid level, I had a small leak. My battery tray had

snapped in half tossing the battery upside down between the motor and the frame. Luckily it was an Optima. With a chunk of wood to prop the tray back up and some duct tape to hold it together everything was as good as new. After breakfast we checked out one of the mines and soon the sounds of trucks echoed down the canyon. Matt's Cruza was the first in sight. The rest pulled in behind. We started the usual chat about events past and present. Suddenly 1, 2, 3 shotgun blasts in a row were heard close by, followed by the rain of tiny pellets all around us. Somebody back down the canyon had fired a semi-auto shotgun into the air. Kirk yelled for Dick Chaney to quit shooting at us. The rest of the gang all armed with hand guns ran toward the idiots. Eric shouted that they'd better quit shooting or we'd be shooting back. They said they didn't think anyone was at the cabins??? The trucks had just driven by.

Matt led the way down the canyon and I jumped into second position the rest fell into line. We made it through most of the first minor obstacles with ease. Everyone's rigs were well set up. Jerome and Logan left the Denali at the cabin and rode with me. We got to the area with four paths: easiest path to the left, giant boulders on the second left, a tight v-notch in the center and slightly easier path to the right. I'd tried the center before and got caught on my rocker panels pretty hard. Matt took the centerline and had a little difficulty and then made it through. I tried next with encouragement from Matt. I told everyone I didn't think I could make it but I'd sure give it hell. I tried three or four lines getting hung up each time before I got stuck real good. Both front tires were through the obstacle hanging in the air, the driver rocker stuck on a rock and the rear tires with no traction. I was working the front tires when suddenly the steering wheel was incredibly easy to turn. Something was busted! Spectators looking underneath said everything was fine as my steering wheel made three revolutions with no movement of the tires. I hopped out and could see the steering arm had sheered three of the four 1/2" studs holding it to the knuckle.



Eric and his Jeep, what a pose!



These are big rocks, Matt's tires are 3 1/2 tall.



Beautiful Martinez Canyon

Aaron got his CJ around the immobile Blazer and parked off to my left front and hooked up his winch to the front shackle. Matt hooked up his strap while parked almost straight in front of me. Both pulling and me driving pulled the Blazer forward. We unhooked Matt and Aaron continued to pull me back towards the easy return route while everyone helped steer my bum front tires. The Blazer ended up with shade in the front so we all sat there and stared at the carnage. I removed the remaining stud which was bent and replaced it with a stud Jerome found!?! I tried to spin the broken studs out with a hammer and punch but Kirk had a drift we tried to sharpen into a punch that didn't work and Aaron had a cheaper pointed punch that preferred to bend rather than penetrate a grade 8 stud. Everyone started a brainstorming session to try and fix the impossible damage. Lots of suggestions were flying but I think Eric suggested putting a Hi-Lift jack bar across the tie rod with the end turned up so we could attach the drag link to it. We used hose clamps, duct tape, and bailing wire (actually metal coat hangers) to strap the jack bar to the tie rod. Then we bolted the drag link end through the Hi-Lift top. We then used a chain clamp from Aaron to help strap the drag link to the steering arm to the drag link. I could actually steer but right only and not very far. I made it 500-1000 feet or so and then had to get out and tighten things up. This went on from the breakage point to the parking lot at the Florence Highway.

While my truck was stuck Eric had determined that his alternator was shot which then drained his battery. He borrowed one of Kirk's batteries but had to drive like a mad man to get out before the battery went dead. He wasn't sure about the way out so Aaron led him out. Jerome, Kirk and Matt stayed with me. After picking up the Denali we continued on out. Kirk needed to get home and couldn't really help us so I told him to head on out. We lost the chain clamp at some point, adding my Vise grips to the contraption. Most of the bailing wire



The repair master piece.



The red Hi-Lift bar almost looks factory.



Good as anywhere to park.



Matt's u-joint came apart following me on the dirt road, it must have been damaged back on the rocks.

and hose clamps tore off so we added nylon friction straps and later rope. Each time we stopped I re-taped the mess with more duct tape. We decided that Jerome should drive ahead and get some tools from our houses and meet us at the parking lot so he took off. Once it got dark Will held the flashlight while Matt and I repaired the steering. It started getting cold so I lent Will and Matt my sweatshirt and jacket. I was too wired up to be cold. During one of the stops three trucks caught us they were driving just slightly quicker than we were. One of their group had rolled, messing up the Forunner. They lent us some ratchet straps, but we never needed them. Once we burned out the first flashlight I pulled out another. We got near Lower Woodpecker trail and I could see city lights in the distance. I called Becky and she answered. She was gathering stuff and heading our way in the Suburban with Jerome. Jerome in his haste had somehow torn the exhaust system off the Denali. Kirk had helped him wire it up out of the way so he could get home. We drove on again every time the road made a left I had to stop, back up turning right to get the K5 pointed left. Then I drove straight-ahead plowing through branches hanging into the road. Because of the lack of rain the bushes were filled with dirt which was thrown into the air as I drove through. Once I made it to the ranch house Matt had figured out how to tie knots in the straps tight enough that I made it from there all the way to the parking lot without stopping. I drove as fast as I could in the dark, in the dust, with very little steering input. Pulling into the parking lot I felt a great relief. It was 10:30pm eight and a half-hours after we had started back to the parking lot. I quickly pulled off the front tire as Matt loaded the Cruiser. He left his side ground light on which nicely lit up my work area. Becky and Jerome arrived soon after with tools and parts. My cordless drill worked for a couple minutes then died just when I guy showed up

asking about the live fire and then what we were doing. He had a welder, generator and a compressor on his trailer. Soon he pulled out a massive drill and I was quickly drilling into the broken studs and removing them with my easy outs. I replaced them with more studs Jerome had found as he removed the tie rod contraption. We needed nuts for the studs and out pops a bucket of nuts from the guys truck. His name was Ken, thanks Ken if you ever read this. I aired up and was ready to head home. The steering wasn't perfect but I made it home just fine.

Kirk was the only one to make it through the trail with no damage. Aaron's fan came off on the dirt road in. Thanks to Matt, Will, Jerome, Kirk, Aaron, Eric and Becky for helping me get my baby back home again. We'll have to try the trail again but next time I'll skip the wedgy.

Items of Interest

Remember to re-member dues are 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.

Walapai 4 Wheelers

26th Ghost Town Jamboree & Rally

April 7, 8,9th 2006

It is time for the 26th Walapai 4 Wheelers Ghost Town Jamboree & Rally April 7-9. This year we will be just outside of Kingman AZ. We will have new trails, A Off-Road Rally, 4X4 Games, Raffle, Dinner, Awards, and more. There will also be a 50/50 Drawing in which \$5.00 of all Pre- registered entries will go to the ASA4WDC Land Use Fund.

Register by March 15 and save \$5.00.

There are a lot of opportunities for side trips from this location, Please plan to join us in a weekend of fun.

Please call or email for more information.

Steve Strain Rally Master

Marty Helton President 928 753 5360

walapai4wheelers@yahoo.com

March club run

Was...Montana Mountain Pass, last weekend but I did send out a reminder.

April run

Since the Forest Service closed my first choice of trail 42 I'm camping out for my birthday at the Coves of Saguaro Lake. Meet inside the green gate at Butcher Jones Beach on Saturday morning at 9am 4/1/2006. We'll head to cove 3 or 4 and hang out for the day. We'll also probably go wheel on some of the hills nearby during the day. Dinner's on me but let me know if you're coming so I can bring enough chow. We'll be spending the night there, but if you want to come for the day feel free to leave when ever. Call me if you're coming on my cell or 480-812-9101.

Land Use Issues**Editors Stuff**

Check out my new project, a 55 Willy's Pickup. No I haven't gone over to the dark side; I'm working on this for someone else. At least it'll have a Chevy driveline.

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

Nothin!

Quote

One night I walked home very late and fell asleep in somebody's satellite dish.
My dreams were showing up on TV's all over the world.

-- Steven Wright

Created by Charlie Babcock