

May 2005



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

Jerome's Denali, Nick's Tacoma, and Scott's Chevy 1 ton make their way up one of the many moguled hills on Forest road 42. I think I have more pictures of Jerome's truck with the canoe on then with it off.

Meeting Minutes

Ron Couch called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members in attendance: Ron Couch, Ed Lyons, Jerome Gill, Charlie Babcock, Sean and Lynette Murphy, Aaron McCarthy, Steve Graham, Jim Sanford, Scott Nixon, Stephen Smith, Ted, Loran and Jake Gersztyn.

Guests in attendance: No guests in attendance.

T-shirts are in and were handed out to members. There are extra shirts and hats available, contact Loran Gersztyn for availability and price.

Trip Reports:

Jerome Gill gave trip report for Sycamore Creek trip.

Charlie Babcock gave a trip report for his birthday weekend trip of Trail 42.

Steve Graham attended the International Scout rally in Prescott Valley the first week of April.

Sean and Lynette Murphy did Bulldog Wash.

For Mr. Ed's rally/memorial there were only 20-30 trucks which showed up. A temporary plaque was dedicated with a permanent one to be installed at a later date. There were many stories told.

Future Trips:

May 20th - 22nd – Chiva Falls, Tucson – Scott Nixon, trail leader. Scott is planning to leave Phoenix on Friday around 3:30-4:00. Call Scott for directions and meeting places. Ron Couch will be leaving Saturday morning. Contact Ron or Scott for meeting time and place.

April 30th Upper Sycamore Creek cleanup sponsored by the Good Gun Foundation and other clubs.

April 30th Meet at Bush and Beeline highways at 8:30 a.m. For Mud Springs trail ride and cleanup.

May 20th is the ASA4WDC Convention and Delegate meeting at the Voyager RV Park in Tucson. Ted, as delegate, will be unable to attend. Ed Lyons volunteered his and Nancy's services to act as delegates for this meeting. As a club we need to designate delegates and substitute delegates for future.

Rock Ratz Offroad Equipment is sponsoring the UROC Pro-National at Firebird Raceway on May 13-14. They are looking for clubs and individuals to accept and distribute \$5.00 off coupons to possible attendees. Each club will receive \$1.00 back for each coupon redeemed which has our club name and address on the back. This could be a quick and easy fundraiser for our club. It was voted that we would get 1000 ticket/coupons for distribution. Ted Gersztyn will follow up.

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

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Calendar of Events

May 21/22 – Scott’s birthday run/camp out on Chiva Falls call him @ 602-482-8973

May 25 – Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

June ?? – Club run

June 29- Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

Trip Report

Trail 42 Birthday Campout 4/2-3/05

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

1989 K3500 – Scott, Lynn, Sydney, and Steven Nixon and dog

1993 Tacoma – Nick and Tara Sesma

2000 Denali – Jerome, Logan and Zoë Gill

I packed all the camping gear into the K5 and we headed for the meeting spot. This is a time when it’s nice to have a big rig to wheel. We were a little early but Scott and Jerome showed up soon after we did. Nick drove up Bartlett Dam Rd from the lake. He thought the meeting time was 8:30am so had been there a while, we met at 10am. It was a beautiful morning just warm enough for shirt sleeves. We made our way to the trail and aired down.



We sped our way down the winding dirt road towards the river. The banks of the road are truck high in some places and barely wide enough for a full size. The road itself is washed out gravel which flexes most vehicles to their limits. I get tire on fender contact if I take the right lines. I turned and headed for the engine block cove. We might have hit a cove before but it's been a while and I really don't remember. The water was higher then I'd ever seen it. Several hundred feet across littered with fishermen in small boats. There were a couple camped out at the end of the road, which continued on into the water. We got out and looked around finding a path leading along the shore towards the old road. The problem was the trail was only ATV wide due to over growth. The group decided to try it so I led the way driving until a branch to big to push aside blocked my path.



Did I mention that the trail was overgrown; the water is a couple feet to the passenger side of my truck.

We had three hatchets and a bow saw to clear the path with. We cleared the path with a lot of chopping, some bleeding, and help from another wheeler in a Jeep behind us. I made my way several hundred feet into the jungle and then Lynn brought the big Chevy through the same path. Why not they're both the same width? The Big Ugly is 5' longer then the K5. It got hung up on all kinds of things, bushes, tree trunks and branches we had already cut back once to clear the Blazer. At one point the Big Chevy bumped a 6"-8" diameter tree that fell over onto Scott. Luckily it fell slow, we all yelled and Scott caught it above his head and was barely able to divert its path out into the water. I think these desert trees weren't designed to grow in the river. Lynn made it to a clearing where I had parked but not after taking out the front passenger side window, a passenger side rear fixed window, gouged a door and the cab, and broke the CB antenna.



Scott's truck squeezing through the trail

Jerome and Nick mad it through without too much trouble once the trail was Scott's truck wide.

It took us two hours to go a hundred feet or so and stopped for a well deserved lunch. The clearing had a path that led into the water again or continued through the jungle. A couple hundred feet across the water we could see the road continue on out of the water. I voted to try the shore line to make it over to the road instead of cutting our way through two more hours of jungle. I drove in and then found a short path back onto shore which curved around and back into the water. I then followed the shore again making my way towards the main road. Coming to a tree stump out in the water I first tried towards the shore, the water came over the bumper so I backed up. I went around the stump the "out to sea" path and the water got to my headlight so I backed up and took the shore line path. I drove up onto the main road and called for the others to follow. Scott blasted across with no problems; his truck sits up pretty high. I was concerned about Jerome's Denali. We found a chain sawed path from where I sat back part way to the others. This enabled Jerome and Nick to avoid the deeper water and make there way over to the main road. Jerome Bonsai'd the Denali across the water creating a windshield high bow wave. The Chevy kept running and he crashed his way towards us through the original trail. Avoiding a branch on one side of his truck he ran the other side into a stout branch which gouged a path across both doors. The canoe made it through unscathed. Nick followed the same path with no troubles.

Yeah we were on our way again. We were soon at Indian springs which had quite a few drunken Billy bob's hanging out there. The concrete crossing over to the best camping

area was pretty deep. I drove in about a Blazer's length and water was pouring into the floor. I had to back up with my feet completely under water. There are no drain holes in the floor of my K5 so I had to back up fast and slam the brakes to get the water to slosh out of the foot well. I looked for fish as the water poured out, didn't see any. Everyone thought it was quite amusing; I really didn't like the soggy boots. After a short discussion we decided to make our way to a Cove Marty told us about. It was next in line on FR 42 on the way to Horseshoe Lake.



This trail has some of the best panoramic views

Nick decided he'd had enough since he had to work at 5am the next morning and wasn't camping out with us anyway. We said our goodbyes and headed up the road. Nick drove out on Indian Springs road. I think it was getting towards 4pm. After one wrong turn we found the path down to the river again. Finally we'd found an unoccupied cove that was small enough that we blocked it off with Scott and Jerome's trucks. We set up camp while the kids hit the water. The river here was slow moving on our side of the shore, and then there was an island in the middle and fast moving wider section of river on the far side. It was time for happy hour. The kids (Jerome and I) couldn't wait to get the canoe in the water. We could paddle up stream to where the two paths converged but then the current got to fast and no more forward progress could be made. We'd then drift back to the camp. After numerous rides with different combinations of kids we started dinner. Thanks Becky for the great birthday cake. We had a fire with plenty of drift wood. There were a bunch of bugs but it wasn't too bad.

Later in the evening Jerome broke out the light sticks for the kids. One of them somehow got in the fire. Becky tried to retrieve it just as it exploded sending glow in the dark liquid everywhere. Everyone around the fire was covered with little tiny spots of glow in the dark. It was hilarious! It was beautiful by the river with the sound of the water and just cool enough for sleeping in a tent.



The next morning we canoed some more, I took by oldest two over to the island and we had a little adventure. It was overgrown with reeds and maybe 1000' long. We found Raccoon, Bobcat, and maybe a small deer tracks. Strange enough when we got back to civilization the news reported that a Forest Ranger near Horseshoe Lake had to shoot a Bobcat that attacked the tire of his truck. It had rabies. We set up the awning I had brought and enjoyed the morning in the shade next to the river.

The 7 kids never tired of playing near the river, digging and exploring. There was a great rock ramp next to our camp sight that Jerome and I tested out. He had no trouble driving up it until his bumper made hard contact with the ground. We tore down the tents and had lunch then made our way back down Indian Springs road. I'd had enough but Scott stopped at the three path play hill but couldn't get it up the hill. I stopped to air up and said our goodbyes.

Thanks everyone for making it a great birthday weekend. Sorry about the big delay in getting to the camping spot

Submitted by Charlie Babcock

Mr. Ed's Memorial 4/16/05

1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock and Scott Nixon

1984 CJ7 – Glenn McConnell

Scott and I headed out to FJ in the Blaze-a after burning through his to-do list on the Big Ugly. It was a little warm driving there but it was beautiful by the time we turned off onto Cottonwood Ranch road. There were a few trailers at the flag pole; we drove past 10-15 trailers at the jamboree sight. We arrived at Mineral mountain road after seeing no one in Lower Woodpecker, the designated meeting spot. We passed a few vehicles as we drove

past Upper Woodpecker and on to Upper Ajax. We turned around and headed out Mineral Mountain road thinking everyone might be out that way. Half way through we met up with Glenn and his wife driving in. He insisted they must all be down in Lower Woodpecker so we drove back. Everyone was there, doh!



I don't know the rig but it was the only pic I found with the gathering in it.



I think Mr. Ed's son flipped the Jeep for old time's sake rather than lack of driving skill.

There was still water in the normally dry creek bed. Glenn slid around for awhile and then put his jeep in 4wd and made it through. There were maybe 20 rigs and 30+ people gathered around chit chatting amongst themselves. Several rigs made their way through the tougher obstacles and then things calmed down. We signed in and wrote a few words and then headed out.

“The world would be a better place with more Mr. Ed’s in it.”

Submitted by Charlie Babcock

Mud Springs 4/30/05

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

1976 Cherokee – Ron Couch

1979 Bronco – Mike Tutor

1984 CJ7 – Jim Sanford

1989 K3500 – Scott Nixon and Kyle (neighbor)

2005 Rubicon Unlimited – Steve Smith

We stopped to fill up the petrol tank and paid \$2.39 a gallon. At the gas station on SR87 it was \$2.49 a gallon. We pulled into the dirt lot just before 8:30am with everyone waiting for me. There were three Jeeps from the Roadrunners on their way to Eloy(?) Mine which is their adopt-a-trail. As we made our way to the turn off further down the Beeline the morning air was perfect for an open top and shirt sleeves. Exiting the highway we crossed Sycamore which had a decent amount of water in it. I led the group to the cattle guard to air down upon Scott’s insistence.

We aired down and picked up a handful of garbage. Usually this spot is the worst. I think some other group must have cleaned it up not too long before we got there. There is a couple hiking trails leading off of this area so maybe the non-mechanized travelers cleaned it. I continued the run up the trail with Shelby and Hailey jumping out to grab the rare piece of trash we saw along the switchbacks. The trail was rockier then I remembered, I think the loose fill was washed away by the rains we’ve had. It wasn’t anymore difficult at this point but a much rougher ride. On the way we saw three mule deer running on the hillside across the canyon from where we were driving. We dropped into valley before the big hill and there was water running through the creek. The water had made a deep drop across our path. The Rubicon and CJ7 got pretty tippy dropping into the creek and decided to park their rigs next to Scott’s and hitch a ride through the tough stuff.

Most of the family got out of the K5 and walked up the hill with just Shelby and I crawling over the boulders. I took the worst line I could over a 5’ long teeter totter like boulder. Just as I was about to make it over, the boulder would tilt up and catch between the frame and the tire in the front. After a bunch of tries I backed up and went around. There’s a boulder in the middle of the hill that leaves only a small space to get by and the more I tried to stay away from it the more the hill tilts you back towards the certain sheet metal damage. I made it by with only scratching the new tail light housing, it survived the rock test. Just past the big boulder is a hole which sends the front drivers side skyward when the rear tire goes into it. Another off camber section follows with some suitcase sized boulders and I was at the top. I jogged/slid out of control down the hill to watch the other two rigs. Mike was already going around the teeter totter when I got there. I think he made it around the boulder without a scratch and up the rest of the way with no issues. Ron followed dodging everything except the big boulder which just barely scraped his passenger rear quarter panel.

We moved on with Scott, Kyle and Steve riding in the Bronco with Mike, Jim riding in the Jeep with Ron and all of my gang in the Blazer. I came around one corner and smacked the front diff on a boulder in the middle of the road. Mike and Ron said they hit the same rock. We made it past the two really narrow spots with only extreme puckering to show for it. It took us to ~12pm to get to the creek just before the line shack. I declared this the lunch spot. We ate, the kids played in the water, and Scott found some nice pools up stream. The water was crystal clear with several small waterfalls cascading down the hill side. Shelby and Hailey did cannonballs fully clothed into one of the deeper pools.

Realizing how long the trail was we took off for the end of the trail. Fifteen minutes up the trail we passed under the low barbed wire gate to the line shack. Mike's CB antenna bent over under the wire and smacked Scott (riding in the rear seat) in the head. We checked out the place while Ron removed one shock from each side in the front due to a missing bolt on one. We were off again, the desert was beautiful, it was just on the edge of pleasant, a little warmer and it'd be too hot. Bouncing back along the trail we went a little faster. Did I mention that this is a bumpy trail? We stopped for one rattle snake, crossing the road but that was the only snake sighting of the day. We were soon back at the long boulder hill and I crawled down in double low. I snuck past the big boulder just touching it with the rear quarter panel. Funny enough it scraped off the oxidized blue paint Ron had left on the way in. Mike again made it by without touching. Ron approached the big boulder; hit the hole next to it and the brakes at the same time. This caused the whole passenger side of his rig to leave the ground teeter at the balance point and then flip back over blue side up. We stopped at the other rigs, talked for a bit then were on our way again. Part way up the road out I looked back and saw Steve having trouble getting out of the wash out. I wondered if maybe he didn't have the lockers engaged on the Rubicon.

Without any other mishaps I set a blistering pace back to the highway. I was tired of the bumpy road. Maybe we could change adopt-a-trails; this one looked pretty clean when we got there. We pulled up to Sycamore to air up and let the kids play some more. After chatting for a while we took off for civilization about 4pm. That's the earliest I've ever been off that trail. I had a great time and it was a great day wheeling.

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.

May club runs

The club run for this month is Chiva Falls near Tucson 5/21-22/2005. Scott's celebrating his birthday by wheeling and camping. The trail is drivable by any stock 4wd and there's a beautiful waterfall near the camping spot. Call Scott for more information and to RSVP @ 602-482-8973.

Land Use Issues

Editors Stuff

If you'd like to run a trail that you've heard about but you don't want to lead it you can still bring it up at the meeting. I've lead many runs where I didn't know where I was going. There are several people that would be happy to lead a run and I'm sure someone knows where the trail is. My trail to do list in no particular order looks like this:

- That trail that Steve and Linda ran in south east AZ that is too flooded to run
- White Tanks trails
- Axle Alley
- Salton Sea
- Colorado
- Moab again
- Chile Challenge trails

Things you need but didn't know it

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

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

- Mahatma Gandhi

Created by Charlie Babcock