

November 2003



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

The cover picture this month is my K5 and Steve Watson of Offroad Design's Blazer/buggy attempting one of the many steps on the Pritchett Canyon trail in Moab from October 4, 2003.

October Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m., followed by the pledge.

Members present were: Charlie and Becky Babcock, Steve Graham, Ron Couch, Ted, Gersztyn, Marty Boetel, Bob Spacy, Dan and Jennifer Egge, Gary and Mary Bennett, Glenn McConnell, Sean and Lynette Murphy, Ed Lyons, Don Munzer, Scott Nixon, Nick Sesma.

Treasury Report - Ed reported that we have \$3934.09 in our checking account.

Old Business - Glenn and Don gave a very funny and colorful description of the Jamboree. Scott gave a trip report about the Black Mesa trip.

Gary reported that there were 130 people registered for the Spook rally.

New Business - It was mentioned that we should combine the November and December club meeting. Becky made a motion and Glenn seconded it. The club meeting is scheduled for Wed. December 17, 2003 at 7:00 p.m.

Scott mentioned that we needed to set a date for the club Christmas party. A motion was made to have the party on Saturday, December 13, 2003 in Bull Dog Wash. More information to follow.

Charlie Babcock will lead the November club run. We will be running Trail 42. Meet at the intersection of Cave Creek Road and Bartlett Dam Road at 8:00 a.m.

Ted is still working on the web page. He's experiencing a lot of snags in getting it set up.

Glenn mentioned godaddy.com has very reasonable rates but not much MB space. We will give the current avenue until the end of the year and make a decision after that.

Ed brought club T-shirts.

We will be holding club elections at the next meeting. If you are interested in being President or Secretary make sure to attend the meeting.

Don mentioned that he would like have a club concealed weapons license day. If you're interested in the permit talk to Don.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Calendar of Events

November 15 – Trail 42, for details see below or call Charlie Babcock @602-361-1517
December 13 – Christmas party at Bulldog Wash RSVP to Scott Nixon @602-361-1517
December – 17 – Club Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray
January ?? – Club run
January 28 – Club Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

Trip Report

Black Mesa (Trail 41) October 25, 2003

Participants:

Nixon family, 89 Chevy 1 ton
Sean and Lynette Murphy, Ford 1/2 ton pickup
Babcock family, 73 Blazer 1 ton
Don and Samantha Munzer, Jeep
Steve Graham, 91 Dodge 1 ton

Just after pulling into the meeting spot parking area, I noticed two newer Super Duty's coming up from Bartlett Lake with a tow strap stretched between them. Coasting to a stop, the second truck cranked the starter some, resulting in nothing but a cloud of grey smoke. Slamming the door in disgust the driver uttered two words starting with the letter "F", the second of which was Ford. I wandered over to chat and offer assistance, but since I don't carry a spare crankshaft position sensor there was little I could do.

Once everyone had arrived and aired down we headed out. I was rather disappointed to see that they have paved quite a bit of FR24, which is rather ironically posted with numerous "Great Western Trail" signs. We had to share it with a lot of bicycles, few of whom seemed interested in moving to the right or riding single file. About this time I noticed my CB was once again broken, which explains why nobody else saw the Javelina I tried pointing out.

A quick blast down FR24 took us to gravel at last and then Seven Springs campground, which was mostly full. Continuing on we turned west on FR41 and bumped along till FR17. Turning back to the south the road was in pretty good shape until just at the base of Black Mesa. We saw our second Javelina along the way. The steep, overgrown and rarely used road proved a formidable challenge for my low-riding, stiff sprung Chevy. At one point I came to a halt and had to get out and look around. After a quick hike to make sure forward was better than backing down, I jumped back in. A bit of spotting and a stacked rock or two got me passed the worst of it and we quickly bounced to the top.

Everyone else made it up easily. The road on top was almost perfectly level if you discount the numerous baseball sized rocks embedded in the dirt that made for a bouncy, jarring ride.



Lions view of the caravan.

A little ways in I gave up and parked next to a small duck pond.



Looks more like a watering hole in the middle of Africa, I expected lions to pounce on us at any minute.

We stood around snacking and tossing rocks into the water before heading back down.

Bouncing back toward FR41 we spotted a Mule Deer. Making a left onto FR41 I drove to a

spot I had visited seven years ago that had running water and natural granite pools. Sadly, the drought had taken its toll and there was no water to be seen. Don made sarcastic splashing noises as he drove by me, so I tossed the contents of my water bottle at them. Sam was not amused.



I was envious of Sean and Lynette, this was a nice camping area and they were the only ones that stayed.

We all enjoyed lunch in the shade of some nice Cottonwood trees. Everyone decided to head on west to I17, except for the Murphy's who were camping out for the night. It turned out to be shorter distance wise but not time wise going home this way due to the bumpy condition of the road. Anything faster than five miles per hour and my truck would bounce uncontrollably. At one point the front end even became airborne.

I soon recognized the spot where I had gotten my Dodge stuck the last time through here. Although it was dry this time through, I got stuck again in almost the same spot. By the time Don spotted and stacked me out, I had cut a tire. The Babcock/Munzer pit group leapt into action and had it changed in the blink of an eye.

Far too many miles of bumpy road later we crested the mountains. Starting down toward I17 we passed a two wheel drive Chevy pickup hanging precariously off the side of the mountain. Figuring he got stuck at night and then hiked out, the Babcock's jotted down his plate number. We finally reached some decent gravel and we flew along at a blistering thirty miles per hour. Coming to the final gate I pulled up behind a Sheriff. He wandered over to my truck. Mentally going over the likelihood I had a valid State Trust permit in the truck with me I put on an innocent smile and rolled down the window. He started asking about the Chevy pickup. His only concern was that it was blocking the trail. The driver apparently called in a friend who took him into town for more help. After pointing out the location to him on the map and assuring him we drove passed it easily he thanked us and headed out.

While everyone else stopped to air down we said our good byes and headed for a birthday party. One of the guests there used to do Jeep tours in the area and had camped up on Black Mesa. Apparently further down the bumpy road is a nice view of Phoenix and a five room Indian ruin. Sounds like an excuse for a return trip!

Scott Nixon

Items of Interest

Remember the club meeting is not the last Wednesday of this month, it's on December 13th, 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.

November Club Run

Trail 42 - on the 15th I'll be leading this run north of the valley. We'll meet at the intersection of Cavecreek road and Bartlett Dam road at 8:00am. The trail is sand and gravel path leading from Bartlett Lake to Horseshoe Lake near the Verde River. We'll make several side trips to the river stopping on one of them for lunch. There are plenty of optional loose moguled hill climbs and deep water/mud crossings for the more modified rigs. This trail is suitable for most stock 4wd vehicles. Bring lunch, drinks and enjoy the best time of year in the desert. Call Charlie Babcock @480-812-9101 if you're going.

December Club Run

Club Christmas Party at Bulldog Wash on the 13th of December. Meet at 9pm at the BLM gate off of Bush Highway just past the Blue Point Bridge. The trail is doable in a minivan (Marty did it last year) but I wouldn't recommend it. There's 4wd stuff to do there and optional routes out of you want to wheel. The club will provide hamburgers, dogs and sodas. Everyone should bring some kind of side dish or dessert to share. You can buy something if you can't cook like me, so no excuses. In the past we've played 4wd games such as:

- Obstacle course with the driver blind folded and the passenger giving directions
- Balloon obstacle course, timed
- Tug of war (with trucks of course)
- Crawl off (who's rig can drive the slowest)
- 2 vehicles go through an obstacle course one forwards one backwards with a rope between the passengers

There are also boulders to ramp your truck on. Or you can come just to eat, talk and watch the fun. Call Scott Nixon @602-361-1517 if you're going so he can buy enough grub.

Member of the Month

I got very poor response to this feature so I'm axing it.

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

I know other people in the club must go wheeling, so take a picture and send it in to me so I don't have to keep putting my own truck on the cover, because I will.

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.

If you take any pictures during a club run please email, snail mail, or hand them to me and I'll include them in the newsletter.

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 - 1995 Dodge Ram, ready for wheelin', for details call Scott Nixon at (602) 482-8973.

Quote

Always listen to experts. They'll tell you what can't be done and why. Then do it.

Robert Heinlein

Enthusiastically Created by Charlie Babcock