

May 03



# Trail Tales

**MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB**

## **Cover Picture**

The cover picture is Steve Graham in his 1980 Scout II on FR410 off of the Young highway scouting out a snow run February 2003.

## **April Meeting Minutes**

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

Members present were: Charlie Babcock, Steve Graham, Mike Tutor, Ron Couch, Norm and Carol Harris, Dan and Jennifer Egge, Roy and Terri Conner, Ted, Loran, and Jake Gersztyn, Matthew Parkes, Marty Boetel, Sean Murphy and Lynette Lyman, Ed Lyons, Don and James Munzer, Jack and Sandee McCullen, Nick Sesma, and Scott Nixon.

Welcome to guests Kirk Rundle who drives a 1973 Bronco and Nick Sesma who drives a 1993 Toyota.

### **Treasury Report-**

Ed reported that we have (Ed. Didn't hear how much) in our account.

### **Old Business-**

Coves Birthday run – see elsewhere for report.

Mud Springs trip report given by Scott Nixon. See elsewhere for report.

Martinez trip report given by Matt. Scott said a good time was had if you dent the hood.

### **New Business-**

May Trip- Cherry Creek Run- meet at the Texaco in Florence Junction at 9:30 am. Contact Charlie at (480) 812-9101 for more information.

ASA Meeting in Tucson at Voyager RV Park on Mother's Day.

June 26 – 28, 2003- United Convention meeting and runs around Flagstaff. The meeting will be held at Little America.

Land Use- Game and Fish didn't find it necessary to give up any of their \$900K. Only 4 out of 8 projects will be funded.

Tammy Pike is the new OHV Manager for Tonto Forest.

Appeal for Jawbreaker is not going well. The appeal will probably be dismissed. It is believed that Coronado Forest Service is lying about damage done to Jawbreaker trail since 1993.

Kirk Rundle and Nick Sesma were voted in unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

## Calendar of Events

May 24-26 – Cherry Creek overnight Club Run – Call Charlie @ 480-812-9101

May 28 – Club Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7:00pm, northwest corner of Rural and Ray

June ??? – Club Run

June 25 – Club Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7:00pm, northwest corner of Rural and Ray

### Trip Reports

#### Coves Birthday BBQ - 4/5/2003

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

1976 Cherokee – Ron, Brenda, Jordan, and Maggie (dog) Couch

1976 K5 – Sean Murphy and Lynette, Erin, Tara, Hannah, and Emma Lyman

1979 Bronco - Mike Tutor

1980 Scout II – Steve Graham

1989 K3500 – Scott, Lynn, Sydney and Steven Nixon

Two of the last 4 years I've celebrated my birthday by wheeling out at the Coves of Saguaro Lake with family and friends. This year it ended up being just a few Lo-Rangers, next year I think I'll just invite the whole club. We arrived at the meeting spot and everyone was there already. We jumped out, I aired down the Swampers and we said are hellos. I took the lead and we were sailing down the sandy wash towards the first hill. The hill was even more moguled out then before with a decent ledge two-thirds of the way up. Everyone made it up and we headed down the main ridge. We had decided to take the longest route for Scott's sake. We made it over the smaller hills into the wash that leads to Cove two, our destination! The flowers and greenery were incredible. I bonsai'd it down the wash with the Bronco right on my tailgate. Mike yelled out that he had a flat. He had hit an ottoman-sized boulder on the side of the road and destroyed the rim. The Swamper went flat and came off the bead. While the pit crew changed the tire the rest of us checked out the Cove. Two groups were already camped there so I left the family at the lake and took off for the Cove-one ridge above us. Passing the tire changers I quickly made it to the ridge between coves one and two. Fifteen to twenty vehicles were in cove-one so I headed back to the group.

We convinced Scott he could make it up the hills to Cove 4 and I recommended it as the most likely to be sparsely populated so we were off again. I took the right branch of the cove-two wash and the rest of the group lost me and took the left branch the way we came in. I was trying to save Scott a trip up one of the ridges, oh well. The family and I sat up on the ridge above the cove-three wash and hunkered down against the cold wind that was buffeting us while waiting for the others. The rest of the group caught up and we made our way into the wash, over to the next ridge leading to the cove-four wash. I took a middle of the road route up and Scott took the easiest path we could find. I started heading down the wash when I heard Lynette yelling that Mike needed my help, what the? I turned around and drove back to where Mike was stranded. Both the driveshafts were broken at the weld between the male spline and the tube. It looked like the welds had been turned down on a lathe at "Arizona Drivelines". He rolled the truck back down the hill. I pulled up in front of him and we hooked up the strap. I took off and was making great progress until the Bronco's rear tires reached the hill.



My Swampers dug for all they were worth, straight down instead of forward. We needed more grunt; Sean backed his Blazer down the hill towards me. We hooked a strap to the front of my K5 and let her rip. With dirt flying off of 8 Swampers and 789 cubic inches screaming, the Ford anchor made it up the hill. We unhooked Sean's truck and drove into the Cove-three wash and up the next hill towards Cove-four. This time I gave it hell with more silly-pedal and the exact same result. I couldn't tug the Bronco up the hill. Sean hooked up again but this time we needed to hang a sharp right when we got to the top of the ridge. Sean turned right and as he drove down the ridge it pulled my truck sideways as it was going up. Eventually we made it up, over and then down the wash.

Cove-four had a couple groups camped in it too, so Scott made a Presidential decision to camp where his truck was parked, a few hundred feet up the wash from the cove. We all agreed and there was plenty of room there for the happy campers to set up their tents. The girls all headed for the lake while the men set up the tents. Steve offered to weld one of Mike's driveshafts and bring it back the next day. So Mike removed his driveshaft and gave it to Steve. We broke out 3 hibachis and had a grand ole BBQ. Tara used the wood that I brought and built a beautiful fire. Sean had spotted a large dead and down branch on the way in so he took off with his chain saw. Mike brought some serious, burn-all-night kind of wood. After we ate Becky broke out the birthday cake and ice cream. Unfortunately the dry ice did too good a job on the ice cream and it was hard as a rock.





Some of the group sang happy birthday and I got a tear in my eye or was that a mosquito. After a while Sean and Steve left for the evening, as they weren't planning on camping. The rest of us sat around the fire (it was pretty chilly) and told funny stories of past trips. One by one everyone headed for bed until just Mike, Ron and I were sitting around the campfire. Soon after we heard a strange animal cry and decided it was time for sleep.

The next morning we had community breakfast, which included the still frozen ice cream and cake. After breakfast I took Shelby and Hailey for hikes along the ridge above us where we could see the lake and a tree full of vultures. We then decided to break camp and head down to the lake. Everyone packed up and we drove down to the lake, leaving the dead Bronco at camp. The kids all had fun playing in the icy water at 9ish in the morning. After a while the sounds of a small farm implement diesel engine could be heard echoing down the wash and around the bend came Steve in the Scout. He wasn't sure if we had abandoned the Ford and headed out or went for a swim.



We all loaded up and headed back to the Bronco where Mike quickly had the rear driveshaft installed again.



The trip out was pretty uneventful; the hill out of the Cove-three wash stopped Mike



with rear drive only. He backed down and found another route up that was easier and we were on our way again. On the main ridge out just before we got to the last moguled down hill we saw a bunch of street trucks parked over on one of the hills that is supposed to be fenced off. We stopped to watch a blazer winching a 2wd small pickup up the steep hill. I was wondering if the forest service could block off some of these new roads with boulders or steel pipe barriers. I could see them closing this area eventually due to the destruction of the desert. Cleaning up the area isn't enough; they need to block off some of the alternate routes. We continued on, stopping at the green gate for me to air-up and the rest to say goodbyes.

Thanks everyone for making this a great birthday.

Thanks Scott for the tarp I forgot to bring.

Thanks Sean for helping me set-up my tent.

Thanks Steve for fixing Mike's driveshaft so I didn't have to tow the Bronco out of there.

Note: Mike I would've been happy to tow the Ford all the way to your house if you wanted me to.

Submitted by Charlie Babcock

### **Mud Springs – 4/19/2003**

1995 Ram – Scott Nixon

1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock

1993 Bronco – Dave Laracuenta (Guest)

1980 Scout II – Steve Graham

1993 Toyota – Nick Sesma (Guest)

1979 Bronco – Mike Tutor

1972 K5 – Dan and Jennifer Egge

1995 YJ – Norm and Carol Harris  
1994 YJ – Roy and Terri Conner  
1976 K5 – Sean and Lynette Murphy  
1976 Cherokee – Ron and Jordan Couch  
2003 Rock Buggy – Jay and Sandra Kopycinski (Guests)

Pulling into the meeting spot a few minutes late, I was delighted to see I would have trouble finding a parking spot. No less than 11 other vehicles were waiting, three of them guests. After a few minutes of chitchat and introductions, we pulled out onto the pavement and headed north. Our slow moving, Swamper clad convoy made it to the turnoff after twenty minutes or so. The trail starts just past a small, unimproved camping area. I've had trouble in the past finding my way through, but this year the brush was so high and thick I lead the group back and forth and round and round for almost ten minutes before I found the cattle guard that marks the beginning.

Everyone aired down and picked up the many beer cans, shotgun shells, and other campsite litter that was strewn about. I had finally remembered to bring some club logos and tape, so I took the opportunity to attach one to the carsonite sign. Once we had the area scrubbed clean, we loaded up and started climbing. The first two or three vehicles in line stopped now and then for the odd can or bottle, but that was about it for trash. People towards the back started complaining, so Charlie offered to throw some of the stuff he found back.



(Dan heading up the trail)

After two or three miles, we reached the first tight turn where the trail starts to get a little rougher. It was a lot more washed out than it had been in years past, but with a bit of spotting and careful line choices everyone made it up and onward. Our guest from Tucson, Dave, was pleased to note we live up to our club name. Apparently the guys he normally wheels with blast along at a good clip, while we were idling along in lo-range, enjoying the incredible weather and glorious scenery. The desert was green everywhere you looked, and quite a few of the cactus were in bloom.





(Blooming cactus)

Farther up the trail, Norm had a bit of difficulty on a steep climb. Limited wheel travel and street tires left him hung up a bit, but a quick tuck from the Egge's big Blazer yanked him free. A short while later the CB announced the torquey Cummins in Steve's Scout got hungry and had a little driveshaft snack. He pulled it and continued on in two-wheel drive.

Turning left at an old corral and bumping down a hill we finally arrived at the infamous hill. The first half looked easier than in years past, but the top half was chewed up good and strewn with big boulders. Determined to make it to the cabin this year, I headed up. I made good progress for a while, but the boulders got the best of my low hanging rear diff. With a bit of back and forth and some excellent spotting by Ron I crawled to the top, threw it in park, and headed back to enjoy the show. Everyone else who tried it made it up no problem. As it was a bit after noon, we stopped at the top to eat lunch and load up the passengers who left their stock or broken rigs at the bottom of the hill.





(Charlie playing on the big hill)

Bouncing down the backside of the big hill we crawled over numerous basketball and larger sized rocks. Next was a series of big crumbly hills. One in particular was real steep and loose near the top; I crested it with both rear Swampers spinning, the Detroit sliding the truck back and forth as it struggled for traction. Nearing my goal after all these years, I began to neglect my trip leader duties and raced ahead towards the cabin. The others caught up when I parked my truck to chase a big orange and black Gila monster.



(Sean getting friendly with a boulder on the big hill)



(Crawling down the boulder hill)



(Gila monster!)

Just as I was backing up to take a different line across the rocky wash that is the last obstacle I heard on the CB that Dave's Bronco was hung up further back up the trail. As they had plenty of help, Charlie and I sat and chatted with the Harris's as the big Ford was carefully winched and hi-lifted back onto the trail. A few minutes after the group caught up, we pulled into the corral around the cabin. After 5 years and four attempts, I had finally made it!





(Finally!)

We ate a quick snack, poked our heads in the somewhat fragrant cabin, and headed back down the trail. Carefully crawling up and out of the creak and past the spot where the Bronco got hung up, we made good time back to the boulder crawl hill. I was about half way up it when my front passenger tire hit a big rock with a bit too much wheel speed. The resulting metallic clang echoed back down the canyon. An hour or so later we had a fresh u-joint installed. Ron spotted me up past the rest of the boulders, and the group followed with no major problems.



(This is your u-joint; this is your u-joint on Swampers....)



The last major obstacle was now in front of us, the descent down the big hill. As the full size vehicles eased their way down the unmistakable sound of sheet metal being rearranged by rocks was heard over and over again. Standing on the largest body shaping rock, I watched Mike squeeze by unharmed and turned to watch Nick's Toyota just as it laid over on its door. Sean, Charlie and I hurried to climb on and ease it back onto its tires. Concerned about Nick I finally looked in his passenger window. He was sitting there as calm as can be, a lit cigar clenched in his teeth. He turned his head and asked "OK, now what?" He crawled a few feet further down and all of his ballast jumped off.

It was now just a long, bumpy ride back to the highway. We finally pulled into the camping area a little after 6:30pm, almost nine hours on the trail. Everybody had fun, and we could not have asked for better weather. All in all we probably picked up less than a full garbage bag worth of refuse. The trail doesn't appear to be traveled very often, and the campsites looked unused. Thanks again to everyone for coming out!

Ed. Note: written by Scott Nixon

### **Martinez Canyon – 4/26/2003**

1976 FJ40 – Matt Parkes

199? TJ – Micah Cokeman

Jeep – Tucson guys

Micah damaged the oil pan and the hood. They turned around early and Matt welded the pan back up at his house. They had a great time.

*Editor's note: Take ten minutes and scribble out a trip report if you go wheeling, I'll make up the rest. Take some pictures and give them to me at the meeting.*

### **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

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 Run – 5/24-26/03, Saturday through Monday, Cherry Creek. We'll be leaving from the Texaco in Florence Junction at 9:30 am on Saturday 5/24/03. We'll head towards Globe and then make are way to the Young highway. Our initial destination will be Workman Creek campground, a primitive campsite. There's one pit toilet and some spaces along Workman Creek. We'll set-up camp and then decide on day trips from there. We'll return to civilization Monday 5/26/03. You can camp out with us the two nights or just come out for one or two of the days. The elevation is around 6000' so it should be real nice. Last time we ran this trip with John Tash the rain god, it rained both days and we had a great time. The road to the campsite can be driven with just about anything. Contact Charlie at (480) 812-9101 for more information.

## Land Use Issues

A few volunteers signed a huge area along FR201 just before Wednesdays deadline. Special recognition goes out to Sandee and Jack McCullen, Glen McConnel, and Ted and Jacob Gersztyn all members of the Lo-Rangers that helped with this giant project. Thanks guys for sacrificing your spare time to help preserve this land for OHV use.

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 take any digital pictures during a club run please email them to me and I'll include them in the newsletter. If you have a new modification to your truck and you're really proud of it send me a picture and I'll put it in the newsletter. If you don't have a digital camera scan the pictures and send them to me. If you don't have a scanner bring the pictures to the meeting and I'll scan and return them. If you don't come to the meetings then mail the pictures to me and I'll scan and return them. The point is if you have some cool wheelin' pictures, let's share them with the club.

## Presidents Corner

I think Charlie hit the nail on the head in his Cottonwood Creek trip report when he wrote "...it reminded me of the club that I joined a few years ago." The last couple of runs have had great attendance, and I'm pleased to see some new faces mixed in with the old timers. If you've just joined the club, or if you are a guest thinking about joining, I encourage you to come out on a run with the club. It's the best way to get to know everybody, and the only way to see what we're all about. It doesn't matter how well built your vehicle is, or if you even do most of the trail in it. As long as you have fun, you're in the right club!

Scott Nixon

## Classifieds

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

1 285-75-R16 AT, 40% tread left, on 16"x8" chrome steel wheel, 8 lug, \$40.  
2 30-spline axles from a FF Dana 60 rear, \$30 each or \$50 for both.  
4 15"x8" steel GM 4x4 Rally wheels, 6-lug, with center caps and trim rings, \$100.  
Call the Babcock's at (480) 812-9101.

Enthusiastically Created by Charlie Babcock