

FJc MAGAZINE

JULY 2013 • VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 3





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FROM THE PUBLISHER

For the first time in our history, we published an issue of FJC Magazine a few days late. It's totally 100% completely worth it though, since we just welcomed Alana Carol Williams to our family. It's been great to spend her first few weeks of life at home with our angel, and I'm very excited to finally get this issue out.

This is an amazing issue in many ways. First, it's the first issue since the news of the FJ Cruiser being discontinued after 2014 has been confirmed. Obviously that news didn't go over very well around here, but I'd be lying if I said I didn't see it coming. If you're worried about great FJC coverage in the future, don't, we plan to continue bringing you great content for many years to come.

Our cover photo & feature article come to us from a legend within the FJC Community: Mr. Ryan Millen, yes, THAT Ryan Millen. Taupo 1000 winner in and FJC and Baja 1000 FJ driver (I KNOW you saw both Two Roads movies). Ryan's new venture, Millen Adventures, provides great custom guided trips to many locations including Baja and the Mojave, so learn more about what Ryan is up to at his website.

Jim Akers was kind enough to take the FJC TRD to Moab for the Cruise Moab event and has great coverage for us. Our old friend Tomas Dawson from MyFJCruiser.org has a great story of Hole in The Rock trail – Solo, and Beau Johnston is back sharing tips on using TrekPak for kitchen organization.

All in all, another amazing issue and we're stoked to be able to continue to publish great content for you. As always, leave comments on our site and/or the forums or Facebook, and let us know how what you'd like to see more of.

Until next time, Stay the Trail, Tread Lightly, and HAVE FUN!

Shane



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For FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts
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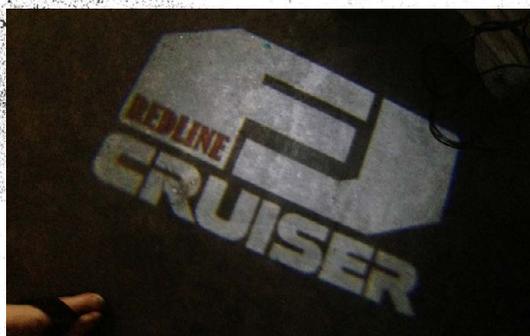
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New & Noteworthy

FJ Cruiser Door LED Redline Land Cruisers New Bling

We just caught a glimpse of these little babies when we were dropping our FJC off with Redline so they can clean her up for the Summit.



We've all seen 'in-door' convenience LEDs before, but these are super special with the FJC logo & Redline embedded in them. While a little pricey at \$150 for a pair, they're very cool and will make a great final touch for our LED lighting project (see the October Issue).

Justin will have a few sets available at the FJ Summit in Ouray, so get them before they're gone!



SOURCE: RedlineLandCruisers.com

Baja Designs ONX LED Light Bar

What you see here is the all-new Baja Designs OnX LED light bar (in a 20" version). These new state of the art bars feature CREE XM-L2 LED, 5000 K bulbs for true daylight emissions and fully serviceable optics and lenses.

Like all Baja Designs lights, the OnX is available in High Speed Spot, Standard Spot, Driving Combo and Wide-Driving Combo patterns and feature a life expectancy of nearly 50,000 hours.

We'll be adding an OnX 40" version as the final piece of our Extreme Makeover FJC: Lighting Upgrade project. The 40" version will fit perfectly on our BajaRack Utility Rack and will put out around 17,200 lumens.



SOURCE: BajaDesigns.com

EVENTS

Coal Mine Cruiser Classic
July 17-20 2013
Rausch Creek Off-Road Park, Joliet, PA

Black Hills Cruiser Classic
July 17-20 2013
Black Hills, SD

FJ Summit #7
July 18-21 2013
Ouray, CO

2013 Thrill on the Hill
Labor Day Weekend
Cloudcroft, NM

Tall Corn Cruiser Classic
August 23 - 25, 2013
Hamilton, IA

Rising Sun Rally
August 2013
Jefferson County Stadiums,
Lakewood, CO

Cruisin' The Woods 2013
Sept 27 - 28, 2013
Brown's Camp, OR

SMOR Fall Crawl'N with TAC
September 12 - 14, 2013
Seymour, MO

Southern Cruiser Crawl
October 10 - 13, 2013
Hot Springs, AR



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Why I Love Baja

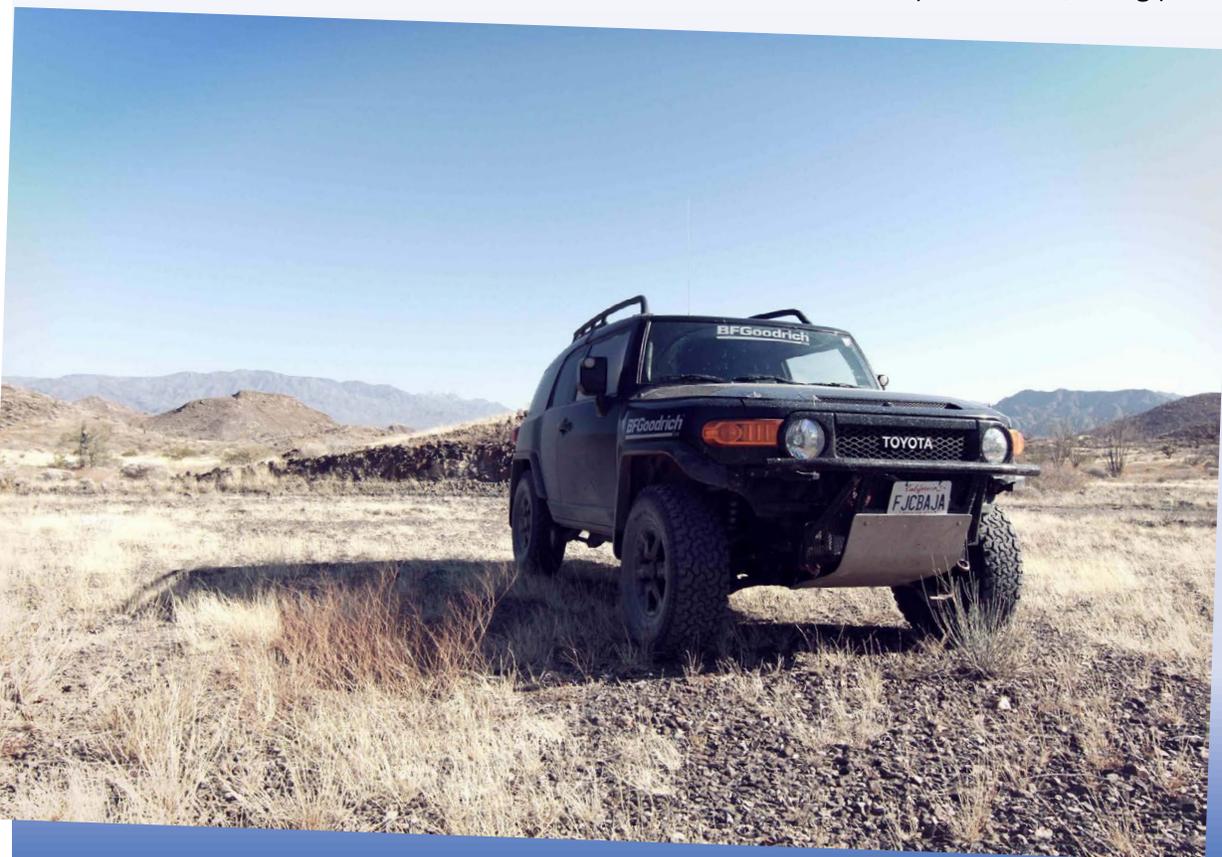


By Ryan Millen, Millen Adventures • <http://www.millenadventures.com/>

I've been asked many times why I go down to Baja. I'll be honest, it's really hard for me to put into words why I love crossing the border so much. We've all heard how dangerous it is in Mexico, but Baja has a special allure that keeps drawing me back. It's simple freedoms, strong pull of history, and mixture of terrains

create a love for Baja that only those who have seen can truly understand.

My love for Baja began with trips as a kid to chase Ivan Stewart with my dad in the Baja 1000. Then, ten years ago, I strapped myself into a race car. The first three years I drove a Wide Open Buggy with Centrix Financial. Then early in 2006, Toyota approached my Dad and I and proposed racing, the then new, FJ Cruiser. We went on to finish second in our first outing with the FJ. Speed Channel made a documentary about our experience called "Two Roads to Baja". I raced that FJ in Baja for a total of





three years. I never quite got a chance to taste victory, but I learned a lot! I think one of the things that I enjoyed the most, was how challenging racing Baja is. It's not the type of place that you can show up and win straight away. It takes years of experience and preparation.

Much of my experience up until recently in Baja, had been racing. Over the years, this developed into a love of Baja and a joy of pre running and exploring. Although I enjoyed going down to race, my fondest memories were of those weekend trips with great friends and no agenda. With all the off-road appeal, I get to pack up and get dirty, discover seemingly never before driven trails then find out they've been driven for decades, just not often. Whether on 4 wheels or 2, motorized or not, there is a spot for you somewhere in Baja. Filled with miles of open space and even a single track you will never run out of new dirt roads to cover. There is a sense that you are blazing trail just like the pioneers did. It's like 3 days of isolation and relaxation, only without the rangers bothering you about registration, spark arrestors or campfire permits.

There is a feeling that you get as soon as you cross the border. It can only be described as freedom. The sense of being cut off from the rest of the world with no TV, cell phone, and traffic give you a sense of adventure. It allows you to completely let go and relax. A mini vacation that forces you to forget about the everyday life you left at home. Close enough for a weekend trip with the feel of traveling





across the world and the history to explore old ruins, cave paintings, and trails that have worn only from hundreds of years of use gives you a confidence to explore and find new and interesting places to visit.

Its untouched landscapes, ranging from mountains, deserts, washes, and beaches, are only occupied by small local towns and scattered ruins. The images of beautiful landscapes, that can no longer be found in California, remain untouched. With washes that stretch for miles and beaches so beautiful you will never want to

leave, you can find yourself going farther and farther

Fort's TOYOTA OF PEKIN

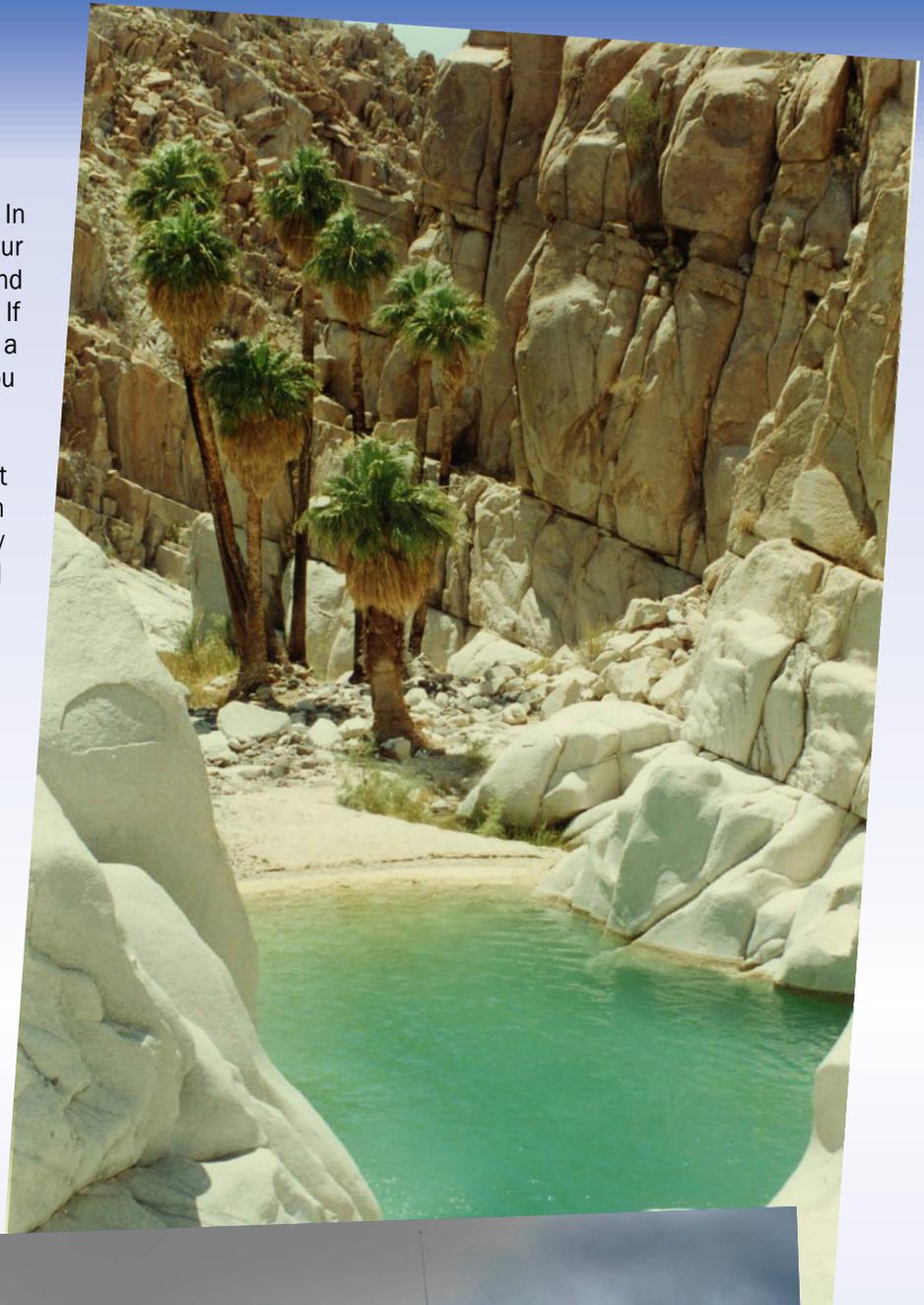


south into more and more diverse and majestic places. In a day you can pass through deserts with cactus twice your size, mountains with cliffs that drop hundreds of feet and still make it to that little fishing village on the water. If you're lucky, you may pass a rancher on horseback or a few cars on the highway, but the vast emptiness give you that freedom you were really looking for.

The locals south of the border towns show their support for the off-road industry with taco stands covered in team stickers and posters. Their welcoming and friendly attitudes make stopping for some authentic tacos and homemade tortillas an absolute must.

The most enjoyable memories of Baja are taking down a group of off-roaders, looking to explore, use their vehicles to the max, and have a good time. The friends and camaraderie developed from one trip will create memories that beg you to come back again and again.

Ryan Millen's passion for off roading began young as he watched his father Rod Millen compete world-wide and become a racing legend. His older brother Rhys is also a professional driver that competes globally in rally-cross, drifting, and hill-climbs. With racing in his blood, Ryan pursues the difficulties of long-distance endurance races. His desire to share his love for dirt is evident in the time he dedicates to learning as well as teaching the trying craft of being an off road expert. You can find him spending countless hours personally working on projects and friends vehicles, or spending way too much time on his mountain bike with his machine of a dog, Benson. ●





2013 Overland Expo

By Shane Williams

The Overland Expo this year turned out to be quite the adventure for my 3 year old and I. You see, my lovely wife (and our Editor) Angie was planning on joining us at the event, and even spent three days in Ridgway to break up the trip a little (that's a very good idea when you're 7 months pregnant). Unfortunately, Angie got called back to Colorado Springs to work at the last minute, so it was Brenden and I for the rest of the journey.



HAVE to see the Falken FJC



The scene early Thursday



Equipt 4Runner - Great Build

Not wanting to fight the influx of campers like we did last year, we arrived at Mormon Lake early on Wednesday to a completely empty field. It was actually kind of nice to have a little freedom of movement to stake out the FJC/Tacoma camping area in advance. By noon on Wednesday, we had the Manley Explore model setup and ready for the event. We were able to spend a good bit of time exploring the grounds (Brenden is a budding Overland Rider with his Strider bike), and helping others get set up when needed.

year, the excellent Overland Expo staff had their work cut out for them. Despite my official badge not making it to

many, many attendees) were checked in by early Thursday evening.



New Overlander In-Training

Keeping the three year old entertained by looking at trucks and exploring works fairly well, albeit for a limited amount of time. Brenden and daddy spent plenty of time on a couple of mini-adventures into Flagstaff for supplies, and exploring some of the local hiking trails. I'll also admit that giving the lad a break from the wind with his iPad inside the FJ happened on a few occasions, but he really is a trooper and with 4 countries (and over 40 airplane flights) under his belt, he travels very well.



The view from Tacoma/FJC Camp

By noon Thursday the calm, peaceful grounds became a whirlwind of activity. With over 110 vendors at the event this

the event, registration went as well as can be expected and nearly all the vendors (and



Lightning McQueen chilling with the Falken FJC

Friday was supposed to be the big day for us: we expected huge crowds like we saw in 2012, and with so many vendors to chat with we figured it would be a challenge to see everything. We ended up spending quite a bit of our Friday visiting with the team



FJC with a nice teardrop



Blacked out FJ



Middle rows were a little barren

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from Expedition Overland at their booth, catching up on their new adventure and letting Brenden hang out with Clay and Rachelle's oldest boy, Cy.

While there were plenty of people at the event Friday, it seemed a little slower than the previous year. It could be due to the odd way the grounds had to be organized. Since there were so many vendors this year, each of the main 'rows' between the roads in the vendor area was split. Instead of a vendor on each side of the row, an additional column was added down the middle to accommodate more vendors. It's a good plan, and using railroad ties on one end to define the rows was a good step. Unfortunately, most attendees would rather walk on gravel roads than down a bumpy grassy area. As a result, the middle rows



Tomas FJC MyFJCruiser.org



40-inch bar is plenty bright even in daylight

didn't see much traffic at all, and many of the vendors used it as a parking area, further blocking access and restricting traffic. We've heard rumors that Overland Expo will be looking for a new facility for the 2014 event, and hopefully they can find something that's a little larger and more vendor friendly (a little less wind would be OK too).

Late Friday afternoon we decided to do a real-time install of a BajaRack Utility Rack and Rigid LED light bar on Jim's Tacoma (See June 2013 issue of Tacoma Magazine). After another quick trip to Flagstaff for a T-Mobile hotspot, we moved Jim's truck to the BajaRack booth so the install could be tackled first thing in the morning.

Luckily Jeff Downer from Expedition Overland and the

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Icon FJC Looking great



Doug is sporting a new Maggolina Tent this year

guys from BajaRack were on hand to help get both items installed, since I was busy manning the hotspot and cell phone to keep the live stream going. They were more successful than I and as it turns out, UStream from an iPhone in the middle of the mountains is not the best way to stream an installation. A few hiccups with the Rigid light

were quickly solved by Valerie Douglas, and Jim's new light was good to go.

Fortunately, between running around helping with the Tacoma Mag install and keeping my boy entertained, I was able to gather a few great pics of various Toyota Cruisers of all kinds at the event.



Always plenty of classics at the Expo



Dons new 13TT in the Baja Designs booth

Unfortunately Brenden and I had to start our trek north around noon on Saturday, so we missed the rest of the expo and the final dinner Sunday. Having a cracker-jack Tacoma Mag Managing editor worked out though, he managed to cover more of the event and get a few additional photos.

worked out differently than expected, but it was a great chance for Brenden and I to spend some quality time in the FJ and checking out cool trucks and meet with other adventurers. We're looking forward to the 2014 event, hopefully in a new venue that works well for both vendors and attendees. ■

Our adventure for the 2013 Overland Expo definitely

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NESTAH *Edition*

By Nestor Angeles

The abundance of WWII US Army surplus vehicles in the Philippines, where I was born and raised, gave me my taste of the off-roading (make your own road as we called it back then) activities. Our town was near the longest mountain range in the country, Sierra Madre mountains, with the highest peak at 6,069 feet. The main industry when I was growing up was logging because of the abundant growth/supply of the Narra tree—a termite resistant, rose-scented, purplish hardwood.

We had a fleet of weapons carriers for hauling goods and supplies and a Willys Jeep for transporting the family members and workers. Mechanical parts were hard to find back then and we learned how to fabricate or improvise so that we could overhaul the engines, transmissions and differentials.

The logging concessioners had several FJ40s that they used to monitor the whereabouts of logging trucks or pull them when they got stuck. I was fascinated with their off-road capabilities at early age and dreamed about owning one someday. I did not get the opportunity to fulfill my dream to drive an FJ40 because at that time only rich people could afford to import them.

My family migrated to the USA in 1983 for better opportunities to move ahead in life. After several movements within the San Francisco Bay Area, our family settled in Vallejo in 1989. I had an engineering background but was lured to the computer industry and information technology. For the last 12-years, I have been a contractor/technical consultant for the DoD—Army/Navy/National Guard.

I was thrilled to learn that Toyota was going to make a retro of the FJ series as the FJ Cruiser. I've been a Toyota

fan ever since I learned how to drive. My first car was a 1979 Corolla lift-back, followed by a pickup truck and then a Sienna minivan as the family got larger. So in March of 2007, I bought my FJC—a Silver Titanium 4x4, almost a base model.

Here is a picture of my FJ Cruiser at Day 1, from the dealership with 15 miles on the odometer.



My first set of mods I think were the TRD gunmetal rims, TRD exhaust, black horse brush guard and the FJ checkered (taxi) decal as shown from this picture. Then followed by the ARB ½ rack and standalone roof light bar with Hella Micro DE lights.

Picture after about 3-months of ownership.



After additional mods and many upgrades later, this is how she stands now.



My first off-roading trip took place in Ukiah, CA where they have the 52,000-acre Cow Mountain Recreation Area. It is here that I got the first set of stripes on the pristine body of the FJ because the Manzanita trees and shrubs are all over the trails.



The much needed lift and better tires came about. These were followed by the installation of under chassis/body armor.

Additional trips after that and I was no longer worried about the paint getting scratched or fender benders or parts being damaged on the trail.

The latest trip was at Hollister, CA at Hollister Hills SVRA.



Building my dream FJ became a hobby and I wanted a unique truck, mostly from out-of-the-box ideas.

My time and effort paid off when Toyota hired my truck to be used on their "Let's go places" commercial. The commercial shoot took place in Redding, CA at Chappie Shasta Dam-OHV Area.





The muddy FJ after the commercial shoot.



The HID retrofitted headlights with projector lens kit with custom shrouds/halos made of LED angels are now all over the US, Middle East and Australia.

Over the course of my build, friends and forum members wanted to get a hold of some of my unique mods. So my FJ became a money generating rig to support more upgrades.

The Firestik AM/FM replacement radio antenna and matching CB antenna in the front cowl panel are hot items.



Local FJ Cruiser and Tundra enthusiasts are now asking for my service to do the installation of the upgrades that I have done.



Most FJ owners call their rigs "the money pit," but I call mine "the money generating rig."

See Nestah Edition & other awesome rigs at <http://www.nestahedition.com/>



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Free Membership!

Cruise Moab 2013

• By Jim Akers •



I was very stoked about going on my first trip to Moab and the 2013 Cruise Moab event! The drive to get there was an eventful journey all on its own. I-70 was closed due to a blizzard and accidents so we decided to go through Buena Vista, Montrose, and get back on the freeway at Grand Junction.



Finally, we got off of the interstate and made our way down highway 191 and into Moab. The scenery along the way was unbelievable to say the least. Driving past the entrance to Arches National Park set the scene for what was sure to be an epic adventure.

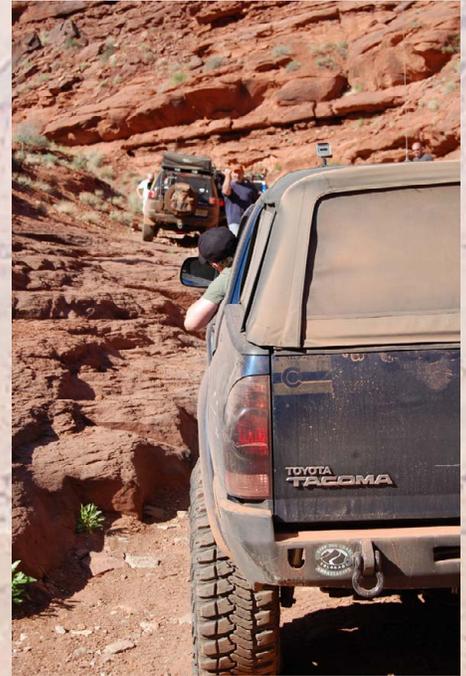


I drove through the middle of town, turned right at McDonald's and out Kane Creek Road for about 15 minutes. Being my first trip to Moab, I wanted to camp somewhere with a real Moab feel. I set up camp in a BLM area that was surrounded by shear walls and views that were simply amazing. I picked a pretty good place for my first time.



After setting up camp, we headed back into town to get our tech inspection done. We then headed over to the Slickrock Campground for a while to hang out with everyone at the.

The first day was pretty long. The first trail I decided on was Fins and Things, easy enough for an introduction to "Wheeling in Moab." It was a typical gorgeous, blue sky day and the views were stunning. For the most part it was a pretty mild ride. There were only a couple of slightly tricky spots along the way. I ended up standing the FJ on its front bumper on one steep descent in the first half of the trail. With a little effort and a really good panic moment, I brought it back down on all four and off we went. Our trail leader had picked out a great spot for us to take our lunch break with no shortage of views. In the middle of the second half of the trail we had another entertaining encounter. All of the sudden, I looked left and saw a bunch of Jeepers coming up behind us. Of course, we are in the middle

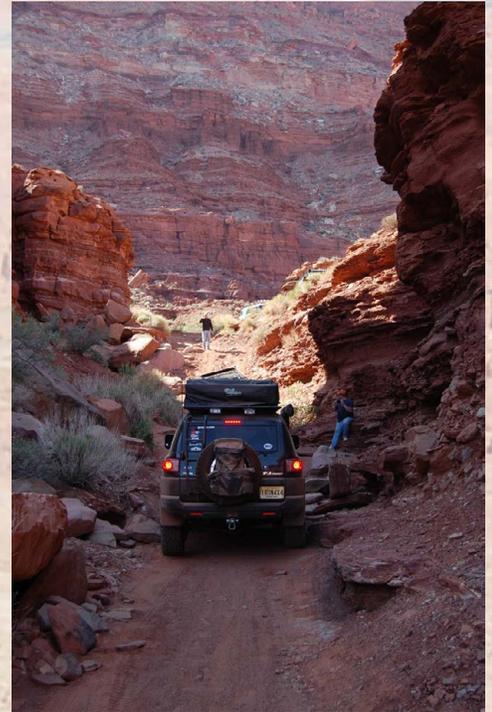




of Moab and we run into someone we know . . . Nena, the owner of Barlow's Jeep School and Rentals located in Sedona Arizona. She spotted the FJC Magazine FJ, put her Jeep in park and came running across to say hi! I didn't hear the end of that one for a while. "Why is a Jeoper running over here to say hi to a guy in an FJ?" That's how we roll!

Thursday evening was the vendor night at the Slickrock Campground. Other than being dusty and a little windy, it was a pretty good time. It's always nice to see the usual vendor faces. It was only made better by the new people that we met throughout the evening.

Friday morning came early. This time I chose to take on Porcupine Rim, which is rated as a 5. This trail has some of the most amazing views in the region. Porcupine Rim is a little harder than Fins and Things with slightly taller steps to climb and more of a rocky ledge for the trail. I think that the locker was used on one, maybe two of the steps. All in all, it was a good intermediate trail. The lunch spot was up at the rim where lots of people like to sit on the edge of a huge cliff overlooking Castle Valley. After taking in the view and eating a bit, it was time to get a picture of everyone with their truck on the rock overhanging the cliff. Talk about looking and feeling like you are on the edge of the world! The way back down was just as entertaining as the ascent, dodging all of the mountain bikers and the rescue team on their way to pick up a downed biker.



Friday evening was the raffle, the award dinner, and what turned out to be our last night hanging out at the event. The raffle was a great time for everyone there. It went on for quite a while and just about everyone there went home with some kind of prize. The dinner was well done. You can't go wrong with burgers and brats. After dinner came a few adult beverages and talks of going off the grid for the next day.

Saturday morning came and we met up with Eli from Ironman 4x4 and a few of his friends to take a day to ourselves. There were ten of us in five rigs and it was simply a spectacular day on the trail, from the obstacles to making new friends. We had Brian and his 80 Series with Scott as his navigator, Paul and his 100 Series with Jimmy and Mike navigating, Eli with the Ironman 4x4 FJ, Joe in his FJ and his brother Dale navigating, Bob with his Tacoma, and I was all over the place taking pics. Definitely a motley crew, but man it was a good time. Everyone told us that Lock Hart Basin was going to take us for a ride, and that it was going to take us 12 hours . . . Well, we did

the trail in under eight hours and made it back to town in under nine. Lock Hart did give us a run, though. We came to one dead end but luckily it took us less than five minutes and we were on the right trail again. We came across some difficult obstacles with steps and a few tight squeezes. We made it through all of them without much more than a scratch. We all thought that we were going to lose Eli and his FJ at one point when a rock shifted under his front tire on the edge of a cliff. Unfortunately I didn't get a picture of this because I was downhill from him running for higher ground. There were some really incredible views along the way, including a little hike to see a tailpiece of a plane wreck from 1952. We never did find the engine that was supposedly around there.



I now know why Cruise Moab is such a popular event in the Toyota off-road world:

Great People + Great Venue = Great Event

Well done Cruise Moab, well done!

Thank you to the organizers of the event, all of the vendors, and all of the attendees for making my first Cruise Moab trip a really great time! I can't wait for next year! ●

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Stefan Barycki sent this great
pic of his FJC inside Reward
Mine in California - a very cool
place to explore!

CENTERFOLD



Kitchen Drawer Nirvana

Using TrekPak Dividers to Turn Chaos into Order

By Beau Johnston, Living Overland
www.livingoverland.com



We often find ourselves pulling into camp late at night, or pulling to the side of the road, needing to make dinner. We built our drawer system specifically for this task, providing storage for our stove and cooking equipment. While the setup has worked well over the years, it was disorganized and we often found ourselves pulling multiple items out to find the item we needed. Our cooking arrangement was chaos and we needed to make a change.

Seeing our lack of organization, TrekPak offered to step in and help get our kitchen drawer organized. After starting in 2012, the Denver based company has developed a line of customizable inserts for hard-sided cases, photography backpacks, and is now branching into the world of overland travel by providing custom drawer inserts. Their design utilizes a foam padded insert that can be cut and pinned into a limitless number of organization solutions.



We made the trip to Denver three weeks ahead of the 2013 Overland Expo to meet with the TrekPak team and begin work on our custom drawer inserts. We started by removing all of our cooking equipment from the drawer and measured its length, width, and depth. These dimensions are used to cut the inserts later on in the build. To help reduce vibration, and the noise it creates, we placed a layer of foam in the bottom of the drawer.

The next step was to lay out the equipment as we wanted it to be organized. We chose to keep key items we use most often toward the front of the drawer. This meant placing our plates, bowls, cookset, and utensils where we can easily gain



access to them to make a quick lunch on the trail. We were constantly thinking about how the dividers might be used as we laid the equipment out. We also looked at items that could be nested to save space and grouped similarly shaped items together. Our camp frying pan, pots, bowls, plates, mugs and spices all nested in a single column, leaving plenty of room for utensils and other tools. Because of their length, we chose to place our kitchen knives running across the width of the drawer and chose to place our bottles of cooking oil and vinegars in the back.

We then cut the divider sheet to form a perimeter around the inside of the drawer. Cutting the divider slightly shorter than the remaining drawer sidewall height created a gap between the top of the divider and the top of the drawer, allowing room for the dividers to be pinned together. We worked from one end of the drawer to the other, cutting and pinning dividers, until we had all of our cooking equipment secure. It took us roughly 2 hrs, from start to finish, to put the drawer organizer together, including cutting the dividers to the custom height.

We have been running the system for two months now and absolutely love it. I really cannot say enough about the versatility and quality of this product. The increased organization was a blessing during the cooking classes we taught at Overland Expo, allowing us to easily transition from one recipe to another. We can now quickly find all of our cooking equipment and there is a place for everything. As of writing this article, TrekPak has not priced these systems for retail. ●



DIY: HOTBOX BUILD



BY SHANE WILLIAMS

You may have seen some of our livestream of the build we accomplished last week. I've been told that the audio was sub-par so please accept my apologies for that. This build went pretty much as expected and I can't wait to try out the heater later this summer and into the fall, I really think it will make a huge difference (especially for the little explorers) in the CVT RTT on our Manley Trailer.

to buy printed copies of FJC Magazine for the next 13.75 years ;)

Just for comparison, the Propex USA distributor sells the HS2000 heater by itself for \$760. Our guess is that the Hotbox kit adds substantially to that cost mainly due to the all aluminum construction and custom fabrication involved.



The kit comes very well packaged in one large box, and each of the aluminum pieces are individually wrapped. The hardware is divided among several plastic bags and was 100% accounted for upon inventory. The black & white instructions included with the kit are great, but we prefer the color instructions the guys from A/T e-mailed over.

When assembling the panels with sheet metal screws, I can't recommend a drill with screwdriver bit enough. It literally saved us a good hour on this build, so make sure you have one on hand. Other required tools are pretty standard items,

but make sure you have pipe dope and high-temp silicone before you begin.

At \$1231 directly from Adventure Trailers, this kit saves you \$550 over the fully assembled Hot Box portable heater. If you have a little skill with hand tools, are comfortable with a little electrical and propane gas work, and have about 4:15(ish) to complete the build, this may be the perfect kit for you. Plus by saving that kind of dough you'll be able

While the instructions are complete, they do require you know a little about what's going on with each step, as some of the minor details are not included for brevity's sake. The photos aren't super detailed, but it's easy enough to figure out how things go

together. If you're used to IKEA style "Insert A into B" instructions, you'll miss that feature with this kit. It definitely takes a little mechanical know-how to get everything matched up properly.

One note is that one of the first steps in the instructions is to "Time Save" the panels with a scotch guard pad in order to hide blemishes from manufacturing, luckily all new kits from A/T have this done already so you don't have to worry about it. All edges of the panels need to be deburred and dulled as well, so take the time to prep each panel before moving on.



This kit relies on most of the HS2000 components to get everything setup properly, as a result, working on the intake & exhaust tubing on the bottom of the box is a bit of a pain. They're not exactly 'pliable' and have to be routed exactly as specified.



Once the HS2000 is installed to the box, the final assembly can begin. Again this is an area that a little mechanical know-how is necessary. There is a hinge that must be pop-riveted to the lid & the bottom portion of the case, so getting all these pieces lined up correctly was a little challenging. Luckily I was able to get everything riveted in properly (although I ruined one rivet in the process). The other two items to be riveted to the case were

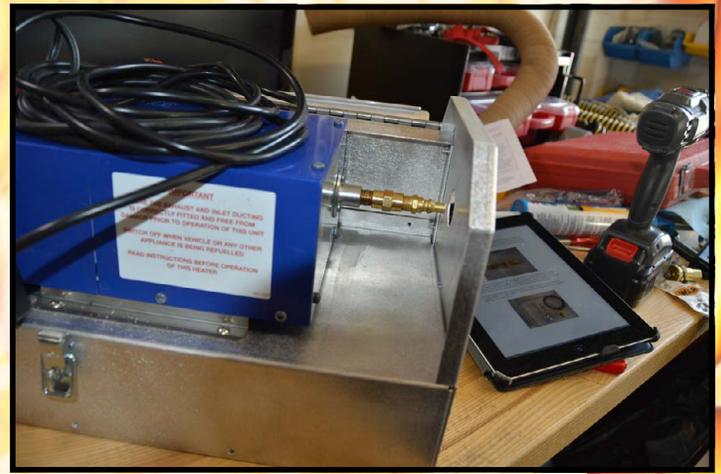
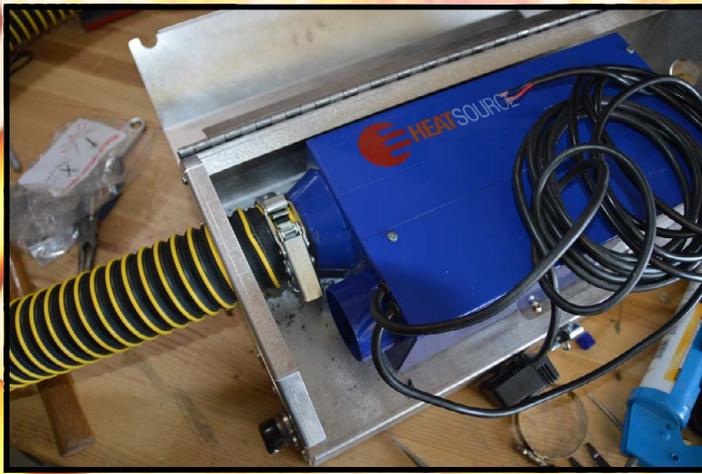
the latch pieces (top & bottom) and the handle for the top. I managed to install the top of the latch upside down, ruining two more rivets & requiring a little drilling to remove.



The minor wiring tasks needed are very easy for even those new to electrical projects, but pay very close attention to the instructions (especially those that come with the HS2000) to make sure you don't cross wires. The electronics are very sensitive and won't react well to a backwards connection. Any mistake in this area could be very costly.



The final stage of assembly is the most important: ducting & propane supply. The ducting that comes with the HS2000 is OK but not very sturdy, so A/T provides UV resistant black/yellow ducting to ensure a good supply of warm air for your tent. In order to use these two ducts together though, you must cut & insert the heat-resistant duct to the UV resistant duct. This process took me a good 20 minutes and definitely doesn't look professional. I plan to replace this duct as soon as I can manage it.



Finally, the gas connections require adapters since the HS2000 is British made & uses different threads than we have in the states. All adapters are included and it's just a matter of doping the threads & attaching everything. It's simple but I can't stress enough the need to leak test all fittings prior to igniting anything. In fact, it's probably better to have this portion done by a professional.

Overall the kit is well worth the money, we just wish some of the housekeeping type items were done before the kit was packed. Cleaning edged, trimming & prepping tubing would cut off a good 30 minutes from the build and make it much easier for the end user.

We'll be testing this heater with our little ones this summer & fall, so stay tuned to the website, facebook, and future issues for details on how it's working.

Source: A/T Overland ●

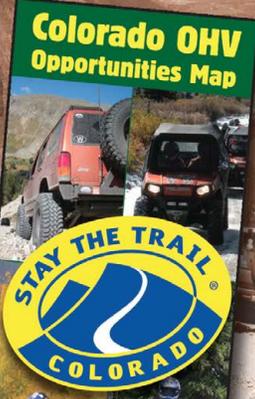
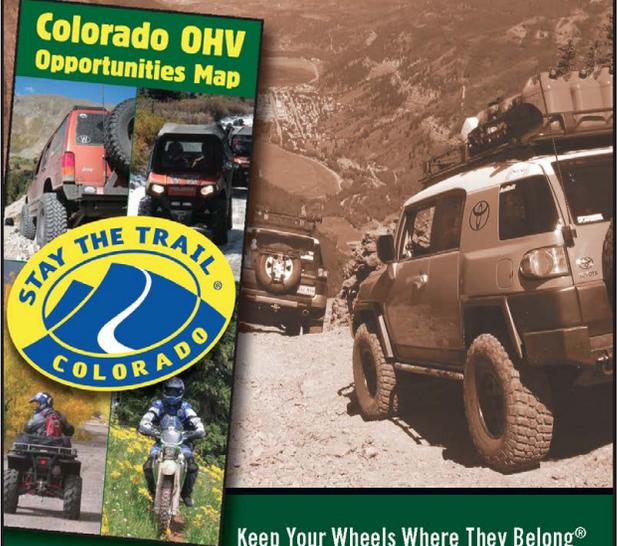



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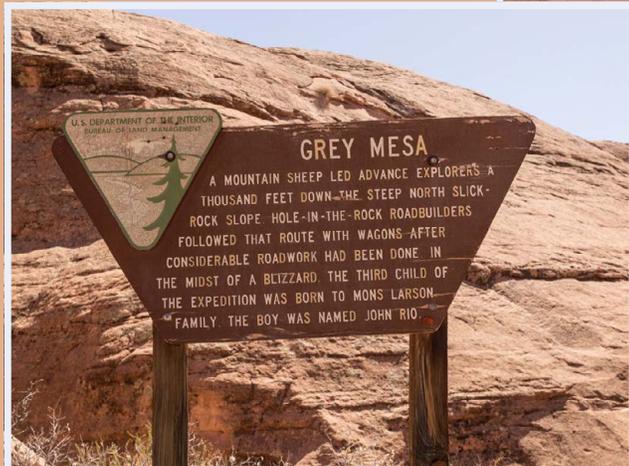
Hole in the Rock



Both spring and fall vacations in recent years have lead us to adventures in the southern part of Utah. For spring of 2012 we chose to venture out to Hole in the Rock Trail on a solo trip. Going solo adds another level of challenge to a trip like this. Break something and it gets a lot more complicated and Hole in the Rock is known for causing problems.



Hole in the Rock Trail is part of a Mormon immigrant trail that runs from Escalante to Bluff in Utah. The entire route runs for 180 miles; however, what we today call The Hole in the Rock Trail is just a small segment. The trail is named for the place where the San Juan Mission of Mormon Pioneers constructed a descent to the Colorado River to the east side of what is now Lake Powell. This trail is evidence of the hard work and determination



Grey Mesa Sign

of the Mormons to establish additional settlements in their chosen home of Utah.

From our home in Colorado Springs we took most of a day for the journey to the trailhead. Our route passed through Moab with a short break for lunch and a visit to the fantastic independent book seller Back of Beyond Books, a great source for anything Utah.

We chose to camp at the trailhead so we could complete the drive and camp at the end of the trail. With this in mind we arrived at the trailhead near Halls Crossing with plenty of time to set up camp and have a leisurely dinner. The evening finished off with a classic Utah sunset and a great view of the surrounding sandstone formations.

We started the day early knowing we had a long 30 miles ahead of us. It was a typical sunny and windy spring Utah day. The drive started on relaxed graded roads and we were able to make good time; however, this soon ended and the true adventure began.

With LJ needing to gain experience behind the wheel she took over once we reached the start of the rougher double track. The slow methodical driving is very good experience for her, she is quickly learning to pick the correct line and then get correct tire placement. LJ skillfully navigated the FJ until the road became a little too technical for her neophyte driving skills. We did make a stop at Flat Track Junction which provides quite a novel photo opportunity.

Once to rock crawling began the forward progress slowed even more. Pulling the trailer raises the technical aspect of each obstacle knowing that in most cases I cannot back off and make a second attempt. The traction and the ability of the FJ goes against our instincts so we just have to trust and go. Our forward progress now slowed to a crawl. Endless sandstone, climbs and descents, all at a snail's pace. For most of the first technical section the views of the Red Cliffs are spectacular and many stops are in order to enjoy the view.

Approaching the climb to Gray Mesa, we entered a short section where it follows a cool little wash. This section finishes with a sloped drop of about four feet—an indication of what is to come. I already thought the trail was getting very technical. Going down this ledge reminded me why I should always get out and inspect the trail. I kept going without a stop and took the ledge where the drop was steepest. This resulted in a good slam of the hitch



This CAN be climbed in an FJ with a trailer



Careful tire placement with the trailer



Just a little technical



Wide open camping



on the rock and a reminder to look before leaping, especially with the trailer in tow.

The climb to Gray Mesa is where we found the trail started to get even more technical. The route follows a section of road that was blasted out by prospector's years ago. This section took some inspection to pick the best line. It is a long climb and with the trailer I had to be fully committed. The climb starts with a nice steep ramp that the FJ walked up and then we entered the rough blasted section. Things got interesting a few times during the climb, once where I had to climb around a little washout and got a little off camber and the second being a spot where I lost traction. Once traction was lost I had no choice but to backup. The hairy part was when the FJ did a little tail stand with the drive rock rail resting on the inside cliff. With both front and rear lockers engaged and a little change to the line I was able to complete the section with no additional problems.

Once at the top of Grey Mesa we had a fast run across the top. To the east of Gray Mesa there is a fantastic view of the San Juan River. Once across Gray Mesa the route again drops into the sandstone and becomes even more technical. In this section there are many small ledges and some steep descents and climbs. We finally arrived at the Chute, this is the section that everyone talks about being the most technical so it had my attention.

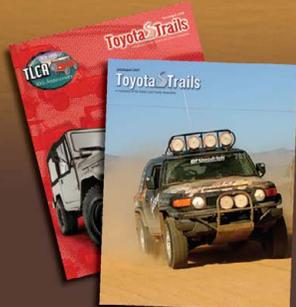
The section begins with a large ledge, once the ledge has been negotiated the line takes you straight down a nice chute right between two sandstone walls. At the bottom there is a section that goes by a deep pothole that the front end could get lost in. For me the hardest section was the first ledge. I could not approach it straight on due to it being too steep and dug out at the bottom by others. I chose to go around and to the left dropping the ledge a little off camber. At the bottom it was on the gas keep the FJ moving forward rather than the right

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Tricky shelves along the trail

front sticking and causing us to roll. With that over I was breathing a little easier. Then it was down the chute and past the large holes at the bottom. Some spotting from LJ helped keep me on the right line.

Past the bottom of the chute it was time to climb back out. Once again the FJ impressed me with its ability to keep climbing even when I don't think it will be able to.

The trail finally came to an end with a great campsite and the isolation we always seek on these trips. The view was fantastic with lots of sandstone formations and of Lake Powell down Cottonwood Canyon, our hiking route for the next day. With dinner made, it was time to rest and reflect on the day's drive. My thoughts about this trip: trust the FJ and don't let my nerves get the best of me. The FJ earned high praise on this day for sure. The active traction control in the front worked exceptionally well pulling us up many of the technical climbs. Even though I had to remember the trailer was there, the FJ could have cared less pulling it though all the obstacles with little additional effort.

Follow Tomas and his adventures throughout the west, including tips, mods, and reviews at his FJ Cruiser Blog: <http://www.MyFJCruiser.org> ●



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The FJ Bruisers MudFling VII

By Holly Dobrynski ● Photos by Brian Mauck

Over Memorial Day weekend, the FJ Bruisers, a non-profit off-roading club in the mid-Atlantic, held their seventh annual spring event, MudFling, at Rausch Creek Off-road Park in Tremont, PA. Despite the chilly weather and occasional blustery winds, everyone had a wonderful time, enjoyed some great trails and food, and some even went home with a few great raffle prizes.

The weekend started out at the pavilion with check-in and a brief driver's meeting. Soon everyone broke off into groups to hit the trails, some tackling the more





aggressive blues and others sticking with the greens to get their feet wet. No one suffered any severe trail damage, aside from a broken mud flap or perhaps a tire popping its bead. The Jeep in our group encountered a rock stuck by one of its rotors and was making extreme shrieking noises all through the park. A quick tire removal to discover and remove the rock and we were back on the trails.



After a day of wheeling, the group was treated to a wonderful Italian meal, complete with lasagna, pizza, salad, and subs. During dinner,





guests were encouraged to peruse the many product donations we were offering up for raffle and to purchase raffle tickets. Items included a new set of coilovers donated by ToyTec, a set of rock rails donated by Trail Gear, a Hi-Lift jack, ARB recovery kit, and two sets of Hella fog lamps donated by the club, and many other great donations from our sponsors. After the raffle, everyone disbursed to either get a good night's rest before another great day of wheeling or head home.

On day two of the event, with our group numbers a bit

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smaller, we explored the other section of trails in the park, which made for an exciting day for everyone involved. Soupy mud, challenging rock gardens, and steep hills taxed our skills and added a new level of excitement to the day's wheeling. After about five hours on the trails, our exhausted group aired back up and went our separate ways, looking forward to the next event that would bring us together for fun and fellowship.

For more information on the FJ Bruisers and to join, please visit www.fjbruisers.org. ●



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