



# Newsletter

September/October 1999

Issue 14



# ***News, Clues and Rumors***

Any correspondence should be addressed to:

Northern California Rover Club

P.O. Box 14961

Berkeley, CA, 94712-5961

Members are strongly encourage to submit articles, notes or letters for publication.

## **Club Decals**

Additional club decals are currently available for \$4 each. The decals are approximately 2 inches by 4 inches and bear the club logo as it appears on the newsletter cover. To obtain additional decals please forward a letter with a mailing address, number of decals desired and a check for the appropriate sum to the club address.

## **Newsletter Back Issues**

Newsletter back issues may be obtained on an as available basis for \$2 each. The \$2 includes postage.

## **Membership Application**

A membership application form is located on the rear page of each newsletter. Please feel free to copy this form for anyone you may know who is interested in joining the Northern California Rover Club. Application for membership need not be made using the application form. Membership application should include: Name, Mailing Address (inc. zip code), Telephone Number, type of Rover owned.

## **NEXT NCRC MEETING**

Club meetings are usually the 3rd Friday of alternating months (even months). Location will rotate occasionally. Until locations are formalized Contact Bruce 415-468-5000 x3009 or Jeremy 510-233-3167 for meeting locations and details.

## **Meeting Minutes**

The October meeting of the NCRC occurred on October 15 at PE Biosystems. After brief introductions we launched into a discussion of the newsletter costs. The editors (ahem) promised to turn in receipts Real Soon Now and estimate that costs are running approx \$200 per mailing. This was considered to be within expectations.

There was a discussion of the Fall Colors Trip. A good time was had by all.

There was a discussion of the Holiday party. Jeff rogers volunteered to check into the particulars of the party.

There were further discussions of the upcoming

events:

-the Mud Rum will happen next year.

-Ben Smith is organizing a New Years Mojave Road Trip

-Bruce suggested that we have fewer club trips and more privately organized trips. A suggestion was made that some of the club trips (such as the Urban Adventure) occur every other year also.

-Several other members describe various recces and trips that they have planned over the next year.

-Ben Mitchell and Chris Dow then entertained with an overview of the issues and considerations for folks who are considering the purchase and use of a GPS system for land

## **Newsletter submissions...**

The editors are ALWAYS fabulously grateful for any and all submissions to the newsletter!!! We called out to you, our faithful readers, and you RESPONDED!!!!

NEATO!

A suggestion was made that we include deadline for submissions to the next newsletter. So...

Issue	Submission Deadline
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Nov/Dec99	Dec 31
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Jan/Feb00	Feb 15
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Mar/Apr00	April 15
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and so on....

We would also like to request...no... **beg**. That all articles be submitted as PLAIN TEXT. Submitting articles in the body of an email message is perfect! Images can be in any reasonable format such as jpeg, tif, pic etc.

Submissions can be emailed to:

leslie@thelen.org

ben@mitchellfamily.com

Our Eternal Thanks go to Joe Ernest, Gina Figueroa, Jeff Rogers and Jeremy Bartlett for the pictures that are found in this issue. Keep em coming!

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## **Cover Photo:**

**Thanks to Jeff Rogers for this issue s cover photo. What a great pic of the 1999 Hells Half Acre convoy!**

# ***News Clues and Rumors...***

## **NCRC Events**

**..NCRC Holiday Party.** Friday December 3

Pyramid Brewery, Berkeley

A social gathering for the whole family. Eat, drink (moderately of course), and be merry with your Rover friends.

..Ben Smith is organizing a New Millennium Eve (aka New Years Eve) Mojave Road trip. This is a great trail suitable for all expedition style vehicles. this trip is scenic not challenging. Contact Ben for more information. <bens@guinness.fourfold.org

..Jan. 29-30, 2000 Annual NCRC Mud Run

Contact Jeremy for information

510-233-3167 or

bartlett@slip.net

Participation in NCRC events is open to all members, their guests, and prospective members. Everyone is required to sign a liability waiver and all vehicles must pass a basic tech inspection.

Calendar items should be sent to Bruce Bonar at least 2 months before the event.

brbonar@wenet.net

415-468-5000 x3009

For more information, or if you want to organize a trip, call Bruce or Jeremy.

## ***Trail Maintenance and Access***

by Rob Kerner

The Rules and Regulations for using California State parks, as printed at <http://cal-parks.ca.gov/travel/faqs/faq14.htm>. There are more laws and regulations, but these seemed to be the most applicable. For more information see the <http://cal-parks.ca.gov/travel/faqs/index.htm>. As you can see California State Parks are more restrictive compared to National Forest Service land.

**NATURAL SCENERY, PLANTS AND ANIMAL LIFE** are the principal attractions of most state parks. They are integral parts of the ecosystem and natural community. As such they are protected by Federal, State and Park laws. Disturbance or destruction of these resources is strictly prohibited.

**LOADED FIREARMS AND HUNTING** are not allowed in California State Parks. Possession of loaded firearms or air rifles is prohibited. Exceptions are for hunting in recreation areas that have been designated by the State Park and Recreation Commission. Contact a Park Ranger for additional exceptions and restrictions.

**DEAD AND DOWN WOOD** is part of the natural condition. Decayed vegetation forms humus and assists the growth of trees and other plants. For this reason the gathering of down wood is prohibited. Fuel is sold in the parks for your convenience. (When considered a hazard, down wood is removed by park personnel.)

**FIRES** are permitted only in facilities provided for this purpose. Portable stoves may be used in designated areas. It is the responsibility of every visitor to use

extreme caution with any burning materials, including tobacco. All fireworks are prohibited.

**DOGS AND OTHER DOMESTIC ANIMALS** are not permitted to run at large in any unit of the State Park System. Dogs or cats must be in a tent or vehicle during nighttime hours. Dogs must be controlled on a leash no longer than six feet during the day. Dogs, other than those that assist the permanently disabled, are prohibited in some parks, on all trails, and on any beach adjacent to any body of water except in designated areas.

**NOISE - ENGINE DRIVEN ELECTRIC GENERATORS** which can disturb others, may be operated only between the hours 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Loud disturbing noise is prohibited at all times, as is that which disturbs those asleep between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

**ALL VEHICLE TRAVEL** must be confined to designated roads or areas. The speed for all vehicles is 15 miles per hour in camp, picnic, utility or headquarters areas and areas of general assemblage; in no event shall any vehicle be driven at a speed greater than 25 miles per hour in other areas unless otherwise posted. All vehicles and all drivers must be licensed. Parking is permitted only in designated areas. Blocking parking spaces is prohibited.

**CAMPSITE USE** must be paid for in advance. To hold a campsite, it must be reserved or occupied. To prevent encroachment on others, the limits of each campsite may be established by the District Superintendent. Checkout time is 12:00 NOON.

# ***Trail Maintenance and Access***

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In order to provide for the greatest number of visitors possible the CAMPING LIMIT in any one park is 30 days per calendar year.

**REFUSE**, including garbage, cigarettes, paper boxes, bottles, ashes and other rubbish, shall be placed only in designated receptacles.

## ***Neato Science Trivia***

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### ***Iridium Flares***

by John Hess

I know that the NCRC has a wide variety of members and I think most of us enjoy getting out on trips. One thing everyone does while out camping is look up in the sky and marvel at the number of stars and how much there is to see.

So, in that spirit I hope folks will be interested in Iridium flares. What are Iridium flares? Brief, very bright flashes of light up in the sky. But let me explain a bit more.

Iridium is a company that had an ambitious

idea: make a cell phone that worked anywhere in the world. Their plan was to use special cell phones and satellites to bypass the typical cells. Over the past few years, they spent a ton of cash to launch satellites up into the sky and sell phones. The system worked. Sometimes not great, and the phones were bigger and heavier than normal, but it worked. And the satellites provide an interesting show if you know where to look.

Iridium satellites have large solar collectors. When the sun, the satellite and an observer are in the correct position, a bright flash (day or night) can be seen from sunlight bouncing off the solar collector. These flashes are known as Iridium flares. I don't

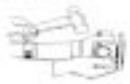
know whether these flashes were predicted before the satellites were launched, or why they are so bright compared to other satellites that may be visible but they quickly gained the scorn of astronomers and

have slowly gained attention in the media.

The easiest way to figure out when and where to look for a flare is to use a computer. I have been using the Heavens Above web site in Germany. From the following URL, (<http://www.heavens-above.com/>), you should be able to determine when and where to look for Iridium flashes. The



process goes like this: go to the web site and find the appropriate link and search for your location [for me, Davis] from a BIG list. Using your location as listed, determine its longitude and latitude in metric coordinates [for Davis, 38.545, -121.739]. Then, enter your time zone [Pacific Daylight Time]. With this info, you will have a long customized URL that can be loaded anytime [in my case, <http://www.heavens-above.com/main.asp?lat=38.545&lng=-121.739&loc=davis%2Cca&TZ=PST>]. After loading the custom URL, I do a predict Iridium flares in the next 7 days search. Then I print out the results and hope I remember to go outside and look up.



## Home of the Range - A Tour of and Thoughts on Land Rover

By Jeremy Bartlett

While on vacation in the UK in June, I was very fortunate to have a tour of a portion of the Land Rover factory (Photo 1).

I say very fortunate because public tours have sadly been cancelled for the foreseeable future. However, an employee of LRNA arranged a tour for me through a friend at Special Vehicles.

(Thanks Renee and Rob!).

Unfortunately I can't provide you with any photographs of the line or any part of the factory interior or newer models since, understandably, photographs were not

allowed. I will relate some of what I saw that might be of interest, but you'll have to make do with photos from elsewhere and a bit of imagination (but the pictures are probably better there anyway J).



### Special Vehicles

I have the impression that club members who know of Special Vehicles (SV), mostly believe the division's primary job is modifying Defenders for specialized commercial/utility use or producing particular off road vehicles such as the Camel Trophy or TRex vehicles.

I was somewhat

surprised to learn that this is not the case. While SV certainly has this function, the reality is that Defenders and off road modifications only make up about 30% of their intake. Much of their work is actually luxury customization based on Range Rover, Discovery, and now even Freelander (Photo 2). For example, while I was there some Freelanders were in the work bays receiving full leather interiors and the like. I had the distinct impression that on any given day at SV you're likely to see more Rolls Royce grade leather (the same leather supply firm is used) than winches, although both will be present. For an example of this closer to home look around at some of the early '95 or '96 new Range Rovers with full leather interiors and wood trim packages. Under the hood near the catch release will be a riveted plaque bearing the Special Vehicles stamp and contract number. SV did the leather work on the interiors. Although it's not available in the North American market, SV handles the Autobiography options for Range Rover. Autobiography is basically shorthand for installing whatever you'd like installed (TV sets in the rear of seat head rests, custom wet sanded paint work, GPS, etc.). Nice if you're Gulf royalty. Overall I subtleties of paint finish struck me as are more important at SV than the subtleties of







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articulation. For the workers, upholstery and leather working are probably some of the most important skills.

The positions in SV are reportedly the most desired in the factory probably because of the variety of the tasks and uniqueness of the product. Work at SV is carried out in bays much like a dealer's service facility. In fact SV seemed to be only about twice to three times the size of a typical such facility. The jobs are mostly tear down and rebuild to luxury specifications rather than build from scratch. Most of the vehicles seem to be essentially taken from the production line and altered rather than worked on from the bottom up. SV takes its parts from the line as needed. Working in Special Vehicles is not without its own frustrations though.

Schedules are tight and the quality expectations of the finished vehicles are high. The North American market in particular is apparently very rushed in its requests with examples of two month rather than the more typical three month lead times for projects not being uncommon.



The TReK vehicles you read about in the last newsletter are a good example of some of the typical headaches SV encounters with limited quantity, specialized materials. The TReK seats had a multi-color, Gore-Tex based upholstery (Photo 3). This fabric turned out to be too thin for the standard machinery upholstery machines to handle and involved a lot of hand work. If schedules get pushed too tight, SV has the ability to subcontract work out, but they prefer to do everything in house and generally appear capable of it.

I saw a few examples of the latest batch of customized Defender products due out soon. No, they will not be coming to the US. These will be tagged as Heritage vehicles (a label guaranteed to make some Series owners cringe). Both 110 and 90 versions will be available. They have some interesting cosmetic features. They will be painted in the original pastel cockpit green. The seats are upholstered in a

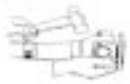
material that is a reasonably close match to the original Rhinohide. At first glance you will think you see galvanized trim on the bodywork, but a closer look will reveal something else. Powder coating. Actual galvanizing was judged to be too rough in its finish to be worth applying. Land Rover looked into galvanizing the frames but apparently didn't consider it worthwhile for a number of lesser technical reasons and factors such as increased weight. So in the end trim parts were powder coated a silvery color to resemble galvanizing. Not all the trim was done, for example the top of the body tub was left painted because this comes from the body-in-white stage already riveted on. It was judged too much effort/cost to undo the rivets for powder coating. Unlike the original Series vehicles the

hinges will take on the galvanized look.

I have recently learned that as part of reorganization at Land Rover, Special Vehicles is likely to be divided into two with one branch focussing on brand and the other on production. I'm not sure myself exactly what this will translate into.

## The Production Line

In many ways Land Rovers are still hand made vehicles. The vehicles are not produced in batches based on configuration. Each unit heading down the line potentially differs from its predecessor, even, it appears, as far as engine type. Vehicle configuration is tracked both on computer and paperwork attached to the vehicle. The Series and Defender vehicles have always been described as basically being hand built, but in many ways this still holds true for the Range Rover line. I didn't see much of Discovery or Freelander but suspect similarities there too. There are very few automatic/robotic systems on the assembly line. The rare exception to automation that I saw was a machine automatically applying sealant to windscreens prior to installation in the chassis. I found this rather interesting as briefly watching the machine in operation I persuaded myself that some of the leaks



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that occur in the lower windscreen corner are due to the manner in which the sealant applicator moves around the corner. But that could have just been my imagination. In some ways the lack of automation might place Land Rover in a good position. One of the ideas floating around the automotive world is that of factories moving toward custom vehicle production even for day to day models. In other words, you order your car and it is built to your specifications. In some respects, Land Rover is almost already doing this.

## Team Work and Quality Control

Of course no discussion of a production line is complete in this

day and age without mentioning quality control and improvement. I must say that quality of the Land Rover products seems to have improved just based on what I see coming through the service bays and the number and type of service bulletins issued.

This corresponds to what my guide told me about BMW's clout with suppliers leading to improved quality of supplies. So, to the extent that quality improves with market clout and engineering design Land Rover is improving. In the area of internal quality control, however, there may still be gains to made.

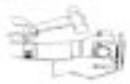
One of the interesting aspects of the Land Rover production line is it appears to have a personnel structure that could provide a very strong foundation for internal quality control techniques which, from my limited perspective, are not currently in use. For example, the assembly line is organized in work teams. I was told that teams are periodically moved to different work stations which seems like a good idea from the perspective of maintaining interest and exposing people to all aspects of the vehicle. I wonder if there is increased feedback on vehicle assembly or the like from this. More importantly, self directed work teams are central to quality control approaches such as quality circles used by other manufacturers,

particularly the Japanese ones. I was almost expecting to see evidence of this approach but I saw none. For example, when I asked at the engine component machining area I was told that the teams were not self directed but were periodically inspected by 'independent' personnel. Machining output on the engine production line is apparently checked four times per day. I suspect four times a day is probably not adequate to maintain statistical control of the assorted machining operations. I suspect it is also unlikely to supply sufficient feedback to the machinists on the machine's performance to allow adjustment prior to exceeding tolerances. I was specifically looking for evidence of statistical control charts in the team work

areas but saw none. Given the 'external' quality control practiced in the machining operations this was not surprising. I did see some charts but these were mostly productivity related charts apparently used to judge a work team's performance. Glancing as I walked by, I saw these at most work stations. The measurements seemed to be classic bulk rate



measurements and measurements of rework. I did not see any true quality control charts or measurements of improvement (statistical process control and the like). Those of you who have some exposure to the quality control field will be familiar with terms like six sigma, continual improvement, statistical process control, charts, and the like. They are fundamental to the total quality management (TQM) approach which doesn't seem to have reached Land Rover. Given what must have been horrendous warranty costs in the mid 90s, I'd wager that such an approach could yield significant internal cost savings from both manufacturing rework and warranty. I wonder if BMW is looking at that. So, as near as I can tell, Land Rover still maintains a traditional quality management program emphasizing after the fact inspection and rework. They currently have in place a quality control program with the catchy title of QZ. From what assorted people within Land Rover have told me it remains fundamentally a post production inspection and remediation program and not



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a true revision in approach to quality control. For all the gains made in quality control I suspect inspect and fix is probably still typical of many European (and even many American) views of quality control. This after the fact approach stood out clearly on the production line where I saw an area labeled as the Quality Assurance area. This appeared to be at the end of the line, and, as I recall, I was told that problems detected at this point would be sent back to the line for remedy. Certainly, the Discovery in this area appeared to be nearly complete. Obvious problems like scratches are handled by small booths for paint touch up work scattered along the line. Harley Davidson aficionados will know that the internal costs associated with the after the fact approach to quality was one of the major factors that nearly killed Harley Davidson before their adoption of TQM approaches. Will Land Rover catch on in time? In my opinion, quality control really needs to be integrated into production and supply to have any beneficial effect. I have no idea what sort of QA program exists with supplied parts but I suspect it too is along traditional lines based on what my guide told me about quality improving with BMW's clout.

## Defender/Wolf

But back to the vehicles. I saw a number of Wolf vehicles around the countryside and on the line. Wolf vehicles come through the same line as the assorted civilian vehicles and there were a few there when I went through. The production line is apparently slowed down by about thirty percent during Wolf production since I was told the parts are heavier and take a bit more time to manipulate into place. The difference in weight of the Wolf rims compared to the stock steel rims certainly corresponds with this. Wolf vehicle components and military options are treated as something of a hush/hush operation at the factory with not a lot of information available. However, the vehicles are common enough on the streets and motorways around the country. Photograph 4 shows a 90 soft top example leaving Windsor castle (either after cleaning up after the Royal wedding or preparing for a state visit from Hungary). From sources outside the factory, I acquired some information about some of the Wolf components. Given that the Wolf is supposed to have a certain degree of ruggedness, those of us with NAS D90s can take solace in the fact that the Wolf uses the same 1 piece rear axles supplied to us. Interestingly the 110 variants have ditched the Salisbury axle in favor of the Rover pattern differential. However, the 110 Wolf rear differential uses a 4 spider gear set up; I recently confirmed this is the same as the

4.0/4.6 differential. I've been told there's not really anything to prevent this differential being swapped into any other axle. All that is supposed to be needed is a bit of grinding of the casing. If you're interested in one of those composite tops you might want to think again; perhaps they're cheaper than the version offered in the US for the 90s, but they won't work straight up on soft top D90s because all the composite roof Wolf vehicles use a full tailgate door. You would also require a number of small little pieces to mount the top and you'd be abandoning your Safety Devices roll bars. If you're seriously interested I can get you the parts numbers, but I don't know if anyone can supply them. I've been told that it is probably possible to obtain them but they are likely to be expensive. For those of you who are interested, the part number for the Wolf rims (black painted steel) is ANR4583PM; these are supposed to be the heavy duty rims. I've not ordered one to confirm it though. The part number does show up in the North American system although it would have to be special ordered (cost around \$110 per rim?).

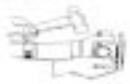
## Guessing at the Future

So what does the future hold for Land Rover in the US and from the off road perspective?

There's a lot of talk among enthusiasts about a possible return or remodeled Defender. Personally from what I've seen and heard I think this is just rumor. I've been told that the Defender line is likely to continue for another 5 to 10 years although production may move overseas to South Africa and or Mexico. I recently heard or read that the South African production facility is just about to start; I don't remember where I came across this. There is also a rumor (from LRW?) of possibly fitting Discovery II style axles.

As to the overall off road capabilities of Land Rover products such as the Defender I think we can anticipate a continued migration towards the asphalt and away from the dirt. The new Td5 engines available in the UK are a continuation of this trend with power bands that need higher low speed revs than are ideal off road. The July issue of one of Land Rover World had a good summary of this engine's performance. The consensus seems to be that basic off road performance has been sacrificed for on road performance. Since Land Rover is unlikely to generate another new engine in the near future, even if we saw a Defender replacement it would almost certainly not be as mechanically capable off road as the existing model. The trend also seems to be toward electronic sophistication rather than mechanical basics. I've been told it is very likely that in a few years the Land Rover's driveline will basically be BMW and





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the body shell will be Land Rover. Imagine the current BMW off road offering with a Discovery body. Ironically, although Land Rover relies heavily on its image as a the vehicle of choice in remote areas, Land Rover is also moving away from its traditional overseas sales to developing countries. In fact, sales to a large portion of the developing world in Africa and the Caribbean are now handled through a third party company, CONRICO. (See Land Rover World, July, 1999 for a good description of this company.) CONRICO has even had to hoard Tdi equipped Discoveries for sale to remote areas since the new Td5 engine is so electronically sensitive that they judge it too high risk in such locations, regardless of parts supply or the powerband issues.

I have been told that there is currently a strong argument going on between Land Rover and BMW on the direction that the range will take. BMW has some ideas that Land Rover thinks inappropriate and likely to

seriously threaten the marque. The outcome of this debate is, of course, uncertain. The current trends still leave me wondering, are we really that far off from ad copy that might resemble the following? :

Land Rover/BMW introduce their all new luxuriously rugged all wheel drive sedan. A sleek combination of BMW road performance with Land Rover's legendary four wheel drive dominance. A vehicle that not only says you've arrived but that allows you to arrive!

Those of you with solid, floating axle Land Rovers might do well to hang on to them. If off roading is not de facto outlawed in the next decade, they might be one of the few vehicles actually capable of going off road.

## Trip Report

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### FROM PARADISE TO HELL IN 6D

By Joe Ernest

#### Part 1.....The Adventure Begins...

It was well past midnight by the time we pulled into the sleeping, darkened, campsite at Jones Camp, running on only our parking lights. The long, hard crawl over very dusty, bumpy dirt tracks had caused the oil in the Vanagon to over heat, leading to rough running, noisy valves and setting off the low oil pressure warning buzzer every time the rpms dropped below 2000. So, as quietly as I could I kept the revs up, between a 3000 rpm howl and a 4000 rpm wail and used the moonlight to select and occupy a nearby spot for the night. Though we did wake up Zack, he was kind enough not to immediately inform us of our dubious accomplishments. Saturday we awoke to find ourselves sandwiched between Zacks 109 IIA SW and Robs LWB Range Rover. The battered but not beaten battleship grey SIIA was in sharp contrast to the pristine, leather trimmed, air suspended LWB. Neither the presence of Lucas electronics nor the absence of emission controls altered the joy and pride of ownership of each vehicle. For me the pride was in the ownership of a battered 89 Range Rover, but on this trip, the joy was partly in the comfort provided by the camping amenities of the VW Vanagon Westfalia Syncro.

Camp tables and chairs were removed from the luggage racks and set up, stoves fired up, and hot

chocolate and coffee was brewed. More Rovers drifted in and a line began to form for the days trail ride. Our Range Rover was resting at home as we had been more intent on camping and maybe scrounging a ride on the trails, and there were plenty of rides to be had. Chris had space in his 110 as did Rob in his RR LWB. Though our son Mackie was desperate to go off-roading, we opted to hang around at camp and relax with Zack and his dogs.

After the convoy set off we fixed our selves a hearty if not healthy breakfast and settled down to do little or nothing. Not long thereafter we heard the purring of a finely tuned 21/4 headed our way, and soon a lime-stone SIII 88 SW came into view. As Mehdi climbed out of his Landy, Zack called out Do you need 90 weight or 20W50? I have both. Mehdi was stunned that Zack could have divined the cause of his woes and early return from his chair over 100 ft. away. For his part, Zack modestly claimed no clairvoyance, simply experience with Rovers and an understanding of probability and statistics. After Mehdi topped up his drivetrain we returned to our campsite to lunch on cold-cuts, cheeses and bread. Mehdi contributed an unusually spiced (fennel) salami and very tasty hard baguette. He also shared his strong, flavorful coffee with us, richened with heavy doses of cream.

After Mehdi headed home we returned to doing more

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sweet bugger all. Or is it bugging more sweet all? Sweetly bugging more all? Though I did attend a British public school, none of the teachers there ever adequately defined the proper usage of the past continuous form of the phrase sweet bugger all. The inconsiderate bastards have left me with an incomplete education, but all is not lost as the Americanisms I have since added to my vocabulary transcend tense, grammar and culture even.

As the shadows began to lengthen thoughts turned to the evening potluck. Meals were prepared and held at the ready for the appropriate signal from the not-a-host. There was shrimp salad, Caesar salad, Thai chicken and rice, steak, sausage, as well as an assortment of barbecued this and that. Whatever your pleasure, you were likely to find it there. Then Granny and Melanie

showed up and whipped up some Navahoagies - a formless semi-non-vegetarian meat/meat substitute mass stuffed between two halves of a toasted bun. Zack immediately christened them loose meat sandwiches. Those unfamiliar with this particular culinary delight may do well to

visualize the classic Shit on a shingle, with the stuffing taking on flavors and textures borrowed from Custer's military foes of yesteryear. Kind a like a sloppy Joe, or a sloppy Navaho Running Joe in this case, which of course begs the question is there a cause-effect relationship between Navajo Joe consuming the Navahoagie and subsequently running for the woods?

Fortunately there was none of that, so the question need not be answered. It need not ever have been posed. After dinner Chris Dow brought out a bottle of Glen Morangie and passed it around. After the bottle of single malt had made a few circuits around the campfire things began to slow down and quiet down, and many began to show signs of thinking about heading

for bed. Some of us were fondly remembering the camaraderie at Mendo V and wishing that Scott Dickinson, Dheva, Raj and some of the others had been able to make it to Paradise for an encore. Within minutes the peaceful semi-somnolent campsite was roused by the arrival of a twin Range Rover mini convoy. It was Scott, his brother Roger along with their mate, Dave, all of whom had suddenly realized that a small deviation from their hastily unplanned expedition would deliver them to the Paradise-not-a-Rally.

To the dismay of many and the obvious displeasure of a few, the level of activity at the campsite suddenly picked up a notch or three. The Noisy Buggers had arrived. And true to their name, they were noisy indeed. To them a dying fire was a fire in need of more wood. So off they went into the woods in search of fuel. The

flashlight danced out into the darkness of the great beyond. Soon after the light went out the noises commenced: the crashing of brush, the occasional ouch! The frequent piss and or shyttle! They arrived at the campfire carrying a 6 foot section of a large tree, and a couple of its major limbs, all of which were immediately

tossed onto the fire, generating a glorious shower of sparks which caused most of the camp chairs to be moved a foot or two backwards.

Unsatisfied with their efforts they once again headed off in to the woods. This time they returned with major timber, an even longer section of an even bigger tree. Just as the log was launched towards the fire, someone intent on heading to bed commanded That had better be for sitting on, but it was already much too late for thoughts of sitting in peace and quiet. Dave did not verbally reply but he did take a rather sudden and unceremonious seat upon the log. His backside landed rather heavily on the center of the log as it randomly rearranged the lesser combustibles below. He sat there



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contemplating his new found seat as Zack grabbed his arm and yanked him out of the fire. It was at this point that Dave began to hot foot around the campfire as others tried to stamp out the flames flaring up from his shoelaces. His Nike s which had just recently been snow white were now various shades of red from the dry, dusty soil, and shades of brown from the decaying organic undergrowth he had waded through in his search for fire wood. Over both these earthtones was a grey, ashy texturization with patches of sooty black streaks. And to top it all off there were ever widening circles of shriveled nylon, glowing red at the circumference, like runway lights for micro aliens or thermophilic insecta.

We discussed many topics that evening, including off-roading in Rovers, Rover maintenance and Rover restoration. There was the obligatory discussion on the various types of wrenches and their associated thread pitches, as well as the relative benefits of aluminium, galvanization and stainless steel. I glanced over at my wife to find her eyes completely glazed over, and the only semblance of non-comatose brain activity taking place when she savored her glass of single malt. Her lack of interest in the minutiae of Roverdom was more than counterbalanced by my son s enthusiastic misunderstandings of the same. The conversation turned to employment and Rogers association with Pizza Hut. He described how some of his employees had been improved after being placed on Prozac. He lamented that while the employee s lives may have been improved, their performance and that of Pizza Hut had not, which meant that Roger s life had not been improved one bit either. Maybe they needed more Prozac.

He then switched to the topic of his ex-wives, and their universal need for Prozac. Each time he mentioned the word Prozac his eyes would cross, and his right forefinger would find its way into the corner of his mouth, much like a fish hook, dragging his lower jaw downwards, and a slimy string of drool would work its way to the ground as he lisped the slurred word Projzshazck . As the night went on we realized that in Roger, Scott and Dave s world there were only 2 types of people: those on Prozac and those desperately in need of Prozac. To be fair, they did not see the world as black and white: there were many people in that middle grey area who just needed to have their Prozac dosage doubled, tripled or quadrupled, before they could attain the appropriate cruising altitude to become productive members of society. They claimed to be in a double-blind-leading-the-blind AMA sanctioned study to determine the maximum Prozac dose that would still

permit the sensations of pleasure while off-roading. They were still trying to resolve whether complaining that the whitecaps were rather choppy while bouncing over logs in a Range Rover was evidence of over dosage. The counter argument was that as long as the driver tacked to port and starboard at the appropriate times, and enjoyed doing so, his dosage was spot on. Was Dave concerned about the potential for burns and blisters on his toes? Not really, he had just taken another Prozac, and all was right with the world once again.

We talked on into the night, frequently returning to a pharmaceutical topic. Heck, we solved the world s problems that night, we decided to Let them all eat cake laced with Prozac . (AMA, I later found out was not the American Medical Association, but the Oregon Chapter of the American Moron Assembly, and an Oregon issued birth certificate together with a Pizza Hut paycheck is considered adequate justification not just for admission into that venerable organization, but for immediate elevation into the select rarified ranks of their ABM - the Absolute Bloody Morons.)

Cry havoc and let slip the Three Bad Men ! To quote the renowned Zack e e Arbios:

Three bad men,  
Three bad men,  
See how you are.  
See how you are.

You build up the fire and you make Bob mad,  
You are real loud and did I say Bad?  
Three bad men

Three bad men  
Three bad men,  
Boy are you loud  
Boy are you loud  
A white trash cookbook and a fine cabernet  
A six pack or four and a morning of pain,  
three bad men.

Three bad men  
three bad men  
Your Rovers are covered with dust and they re white,  
all good people you ve met think that you are a fright,  
three bad men.

They each had their wine glass at the ready, and of course they each had a bottle of wine to share. The three bottles of wine chased the bottle of Glen Morangie around the fire. I apparently felt obligated to sample each container heartily and frequently. I

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suddenly realized that the aliens that had been attracted to Dave's shoes had somehow messed with the variable frequency drives regulating the earth's angular velocity. They had also managed to cause the surface of the earth to move vertically, horizontally and spin about an ever-moving rotational axis that was itself demonstrating all the traits of Brownian motion of the most spastic kind. Acknowledging defeat, I cursed the aliens and begged my wife's support for the arduous trek across the road to our campsite. And then it all went dark.....

I awoke feeling much better than I had expected, less like death lightly warmed over, more like death subjected to 30 seconds in a microwave at full wattage. The obvious thing to do was to climb down from the top bunk of the van and make coffee. Pumping up the stove was perhaps more taxing than I had bargained for, as it immediately became evident to me that aliens had managed to kick start the carousel inside the microwave, and the stove, the coffee pot and the whole world started spinning again. I opted for 2 Tylenol instead of the Prozac that was joyfully offered.

The trip home was swift and fairly uneventful. We were entertained by a never-ending stream of consciousness treatise on the metallurgy and other finer points of Rover design, all from the perspective of a 7 year old. Dad do you know why Land Rovers are so strong?

No, why?

Well, first they take the Lumium and they make it straight. Then they bend it. Then they galvanize it so it won't ever rust. And because it never rusts it will always be strong. See?

Yes, son, I see. But, quietly please

Which is better at off-roading, a Hummer or a Uni Mog?

Yes.

Is it made of galvanize too?

Yes, yes, speak softly, please.

Cool, do they have snorkels?

Yes, quiet ones.

Dad, When are you going to put the lights on the brush guard?

When it's quiet.

Look! LOOK!!! A new Rangie!!!!

Moan...yes, a nice black one, bet it's quiet in there

I wound down the window for a dose of fresh air, but the buffeting from the air rushing in at 70 m.p.h. only caused unwanted and unnecessary head movements, deepening and prolonging my self-inflicted agony. By the time we left I5 and joined I680, I was reaching for the cellular phone, wishing that I had Roger's phone number, because I just knew he would have had

some Projzshazck .

## PART 2 : THE HIGHWAY TO HELL'S HALF ACRE AND BEYOND.

OK, so it wasn't exactly 6 days, 6 hours and 6 minutes later that we began our trip to Hell's Half Acre, but our average speed had been pretty close to 66.6 m.p.h.. I had left work an hour early picked up Mackie from school and arrived at Patti's office in Pleasanton by 4:30 p.m. After parking her car directly under a lamppost towards the front of the parking lot, we headed for Angels camp. Either traffic had been unusually light or we had beaten that beast. Yep, we had his number.

It was shortly after 7:00 p.m. when the precise and detailed directions provided by Eric lead us to an oasis of green in an otherwise tan and arid landscape. In the centre of this lush lawn was a sizeable, quaint, deep redwood colored cabin. We disembarked from the Range Rover, passed through an archway with





revolving wagon wheel turnstile and arrived at a heavy wooden front door. The door bell was answered by a young lady who invited us in. Pretty soon Brig appeared, and as she was obviously in the middle of her preparations for the trip, we took her suggestion and while there was still light, set up camp under a tree. By the time Brig came out into the back yard to make sure we were comfortable, we had set up our tent, table and chairs, fired up the Pyramid and were enjoying some Cajun sausage, Brie and Toscano salami, with a little Valpolicella to wash it all down. Satisfied that we had made ourselves at home, Brig returned to her preparations.

As we sat there enjoying the sunset we heard the sound of another Series vehicle. It was John Hess in his beautiful Dormobile with 6 cylinder power. He joined us at our campsite for a while and sampled some of our comestibles. Having completed her preparations, Brig came back out, sipping on a glass of wine, ready to relax. Shortly after 10:00 p.m. Brig invited us to join her in their hot tub. As Patti and Mackie were rather tired, they climbed into the tent to go to sleep, while John, Brig and I drifted over to the hot tub. I sat there marveling at the stars above a crystal clear sky, for the most part oblivious of the conversation around me. In the back, behind our tent I could see Bubba, Eric's 101 FC, as well as the pristine deep bronze-green 109 SW he had restored for his sister, and another grey 109 SW. This last 109 was a well used example and was not accorded a space under the roof of the covered garage. What couldn't be seen from the hot tub was a bare 109 chassis, perhaps awaiting conjugation with the grey 109. Somewhere around midnight I headed back to the tent, John to his Dormobile and Brig turned out the porch lights and went to bed.

I woke early the next morning and brewed coffee. Eric drove in from SFO, having just flown in on the red eye from Hawaii. After exchanging brief hellos, Eric headed indoors for some much-needed shut-eye. A couple of hours later we were all packed and ready to head for Angels Camp. By this time I had discovered that I did not have any of my diabetic medication with me: In our camper van I have some stashed in the driver's door pocket, in the first aid kit and in Patti's toiletries bag, to ensure that I would never be without. But we were not in the van. We were on our first camping trip in the Rover, sans van, and in the Rover I could find none. I had counted on having the pills in Patti's makeup kit, but unbeknownst to me, she had downsized and repacked her toiletries bag and my medication was a victim of the shuffle.

I, like most men, take certain things as natural law: sewage flows down hill, the sun comes up in the morning, momentum and energy are conserved and, entropy and the size of women's makeup kits are always increasing. In addition to feeling betrayed by Newton, Keppler, Darwin and Freud, the declining blood sugar level in my bloodstream was exacerbating the serious anguish I already felt. Thoughts of calling Roger flashed through my mind, but I knew that even multi-mega-doses of Projzshazck could not cure what ailed me that morning.

Our best bet seemed to be the pharmacy in Angel's Camp, and as luck would have it, we would be marshalling in the parking lot directly in front of the local Rite Aid. The pharmacist was most understanding and helpful, but before he could even give me one pill he had to have authorization from my HMO. When I tell you that my HMO is Kaiser Permanente, you will understand why the convoy left without us 30 minutes later. Eric and Yung in a D90 were asked to stay behind to guide us to the trailhead and along the trail if necessary. Armed with my Kaiser number, my prescribed drug and dosage, the pharmacist placed about 3 calls to Kaiser before he spoke to someone who was willing to verify my prescription. Kaiser claimed that they would call back, but they did not go so far to say that it would be soon. After watching us cool our heels in the store for an additional 10 minutes, the pharmacist asked his assistant to contact Kaiser to see if she could extract any information from them. Fifteen minutes later, with his assistant still on hold, the pharmacist tried a new approach. He called a different Kaiser number to have my prescription transferred to his pharmacy in Angel's Camp. Once he had the prescription transferred, he provided me with a weeks supply, and with Kaiser still on the line, asked that the prescription transfer be reversed. He advised me to visit the pharmacy at Kaiser immediately upon my return, to ensure that my prescription had been properly transferred back to Fremont. I was so grateful that I wrote the pharmacist a thank you letter as soon as I got back home. I also wondered how many idiots like me clogged up Kaiser's systems with their unthinking carelessness. My guilty conscience was soothed to a very minor extent when our extended stay in the parking lot did allow us to collect the last straggler who arrived in his Discovery, later than late.

Our mini convoy of three V8 powered coil sprung vehicles made good time. The temperature gauge on our Range Rover began to rise, and then seemed to stabilize at about 3/4 of full scale. Even a long downhill run into a valley did not bring the temperature back

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down to normal. But the gauge held steady, and soon the CB transmissions from the main convoy breaking through on our CB's indicated that we had almost made up the lost time.

Almost immediately after the blacktop ended, so did the temperature gauge needle's inactivity. It quickly rose to within a needle's width of full scale. Wisps of steam from under the bonnet indicated that this was not a case of a malfunctioning temperature gauge. We

had caught up with the main group just as they were backed up, turning off onto one of the minor trails. Once Eric was apprised of our situation over the CB, he called the convoy to a halt. I popped the hood on the Range Rover and freed the steam from its restraints, allowing it to fulfill its destiny by rising directly skyward to make its little contribution to global warming.

I had in the back of the Range Rover four and a half gallons of potable water, plus 2 gallons of radiator water and one gallon of antifreeze. Deciding that adding the antifreeze at this juncture would not be cost effective or environmentally conscious, I opted to pop the radiator cap and add the needed amount of radiator water. Cliff Watts, who also has an 89 Range Rover, walked back down the trail to lend a helping hand. As we were just a few miles uphill from a little town, I advised Eric that I felt the wisest thing I could do was to head back down, effect whatever repairs I could and then limp home. Eric had other thoughts. An overheating Rover was not an excuse to shrink away with one's tail between one's legs, no, it was an opportunity for Roverers to overcome adversity through cooperation and sacrifice. They were willing to recycle their drinking

water into my radiator, and if necessary tow me to Hell's Half Acre and back. Eric jokingly suggested that after reading the Los Padres trip report he felt compelled to drag me through as long as his efforts yielded another trip report. Everyone gathered around my Range Rover

was of the same opinion - soldier on. And so we did.

I installed an overflow recovery bottle on the end of the line out of the expansion tank in an effort to reduce the water losses, and then joined the convoy. The trails were not particularly difficult, but there was a lot of climbing to be done, at very low speeds. For

a while the temperature gauge read normal. Then it rose to 3/4. Fortunately it stayed there for quite a while; then as we climbed further, so did the needle on the temperature gauge. I was getting rather concerned but did not wish to further inconvenience the rest of the group. Fortunately the convoy came to a halt a few minutes later, just as steam was beginning to rise from the hood, and I was able to pop the cap on the radiator and infuse it with its much needed aqua vitae. A pattern was beginning to become evident, and maybe I could use it to stick with the convoy while still protecting my engine from total meltdown. Several kind souls offered me water for the radiator, and I accepted, saving what little water I had left for the highly probable breakdown following my eventual separation from the convoy.

We took off again and I have to confess that I barely noticed the trail, the terrain or the scenery. My attention was focused on the temperature gauge, with just enough of the peripheral vision of one eye left to track the Black D90 in front of me to ensure that I did not slam into the rear of it, forcing both of us off the trail. The next time the temperature gauge moved past the point, I got on the CB and informed Eric, who promptly decided it was time for a lunch break, as soon as a



suitable opening could be found. When I arrived at the clearing most of the Rovers were parked under trees circling a wide spot in the trail so I took the first spot I could find and quickly shut off the engine as it had now started making squealing noises. The Range Rover had stalled a few times in the last few minutes, and I could feel that it was severely down on power. To maintain forward and upward progress I had been forced to rev the engine up pretty high, and this of course upped the volume and pitch of the squeaks and squeals emanating from under the bonnet. I tried to restart the engine to move the Rangie closer to the rest of the group and their water containers, but that option, as they say, had been dis-selected on the pull down menu.

I calmly went about pulling out the ice chest and chairs so that Patti and Mackie could have lunch, then I scrounged more water and topped up the radiator. Panic was beginning to set in as we were now several kilometers of difficult towing away from any semblance of a maintained road. The shrieks of the dying engine ricocheted around my skull: Eeeek, Eeeek, Eeeek. As I had poured on the revs it switched to a more strident staccato Eek, Eek, Eek, to which was added a rough, grinding Prr, Progh, Prr, Progg, Prr. Combined and synchronized as they were, the resulting cacophony sounded like

Eek, Prr, Eek, Progh, Eek, Progh-z-Eek, Progh-z-eek, zak, eek, zak, Pro-eek-zak, Pro-z-eek, Prozeek, zak, PROZAC! Prozac, prozac

I suddenly realized what my Range Rover had been trying to tell me. It didn't really want the water! the water was just to help it swallow the Prozac it needed. How deaf, dumb, blind and stupid could I have been. Maybe it was trying to tell me that I too needed Prozac. I furtively glanced around, in the hope that the Dickinson expedition might show up unexpectedly once again. But it was not to be, so I kept my theories to my self, while Cliff, Eric, Rick, Eric, Fil, Armando and others pondered the gremlins residing in my engine. The theories offered revolved around the radiator, the water pump, the thermostat, head gasket and bad karma. I was approximately 100.00 percent certain that one of those listed components was the offending part. Even the karmic factor could not be ruled out: though I am of eastern origin, from birth I had been indoctrinated in the ways of Cardinal Richelieu, the inquisitors and their successors. I had no Om, no Eck, no Ank, and a non-running Kar. I was even in grave doubt that I could make it.

Ome. Om mani bloody padmi om indeed.

Eckankar to you too, I vainly attempted to telepathically convey to my Range Rover.

Patti walked over to Cliff's Range Rover and continued her conversation with Sharon while I pondered the wisdom of my earlier decision not to turn back. Once again the outpouring of support and water had been most heartening. Eric offered to change the thermostat right there, right then, but I did not want to delay the convoy any further. Cliff was most keen that we should continue along, as he had used Patti's presence in the group to convince Sharon to join him on this trip where she would have initially had no acquaintances, let alone friends. Eric and Rick assured me that 2 easy kilometers up the trail was Liberty Hill, our campsite for the night, and from there it was an even easier downhill run on USFS maintained roads back into town. All things considered, at that point it just made more sense to go on, but only barely so. With much trepidation I tried to start the engine again. With an Eeeek, eek, Proz, eeaak! it sputtered back to life, and then ran smoothly and quietly.

A few minutes later, beside a 15 foot vertical embankment we stopped, for reasons that most of us could not immediately ascertain. We all climbed out, and Eric, Rick and the others in the know scaled the embankment which had been created while cutting the road into the side of the hill. As they climbed they moved rocks, logs and other solid obstructions out of the way. It began to dawn on some of us that this was the climb that might require winching that had been mentioned in one of the posts on the Mendo list. Many in the group had not seen this post and were dismayed that such a daunting obstacle would be sprung announced upon them. I promptly reversed my decision to continue with the group and began asking for directions to the escape route. Sharon was not at all pleased, and our threatened departure was almost enough for her to consider threatening Cliff and the convoy leaders with I don't quite know what. As the animated discussions continued at the toe of the slope, the trail clearing continued above. An eerie aura descended upon the group when significant skeletal remains of a large vertebrate were discovered on a stump 2 feet behind us.

The climb itself was initially an almost vertical 15 feet with a berm on top, a sudden 90 turn to the left followed by a further 20 foot climb curving to the right, on very loose soil. At the top there was a larger berm that severely tested the vehicles break over angles. Rick in his Black super D90 was the first to go. With a little momentum to clear the first steep section, Rick broke through the berm, and slowly worked his way up the second part. The D90's short wheelbase made short

work of the berm at the very top. Next to go was Eric in his 101 FC, but first he shared with us what he and Rick had learned of the embankment lock your differentials, stay to the left on the second part of the climb, and get a good run up. It took Eric a couple of attempts to clear the first part, but Bubba did not seem happy, rocking and bucking and spinning its wheels like a 2 year old in the middle of a temper tantrum. Bubba's performance on the second part of the climb was even worse. After several attempts, Rick walked over to Bubba and spoke to Eric, and suddenly on the next attempt, with cool, calm, collected grace, Bubba nonchalantly walked to the top and over the berm. Eric sauntered down the embankment with a sheepish smile on his face and announced Aaaahm, don't forget to lock your diffs.

Armando and his modified Disco were the next to go, and with a huge shower of dust, he reached the top, with only a second attempt required at the upper berm. As the climb was expected to get easier with the passage of vehicles, the plan was for the more capable or shorter wheelbase vehicles to ascend first, followed by the Range Rovers, and finally the 109 and 110. A small group of spectators had gathered at the top and were entertaining themselves by evaluating the performances of drivers and their vehicles. Eric had already awarded himself the Duh! award, Armando received the Grace under Pressure award, KC the Chauffeur award for making it all look so easy. Another Eric (? Silver Range Rover) was awarded the Perseverance award, because even though it took him about a half a dozen tries to get up the first part of the climb, he eventually did master the concept of momentum and the conversion of kinetic energy to potential energy, and he did zoom right up to the top. The irrepressible Mark Hagen was awarded Best in Show as even though by the time he faced the embankment, much of the sting had been ground out of it, he, in his inimitable style, with wheels and hands spinning, made it appear much more challenging than it ever had been, thereby putting on

a show to thrill the youngsters and strike fear into the hearts of their parents.

John Hess had never really taken his Dormobile off road, and this was a stiff challenge indeed, especially for a first one. A four cylinder 88 had been one of the earliest vehicles up the embankment, so it seemed likely that, on balance, a 6 cylinder 109 ought to cope. And it certainly did. Chris Dow fully expected his 110 to require towing, but it too sailed up and over without a problem. Even my sick Range Rover, suffering as it was from Malarial fevers and Prozac withdrawal symptoms, cruised on up and over. The dust clouds generated were horrendous, essentially obliterating the view for the spectators below, but from the engine note we could divine the rate of progress, and the cheers of the crowds above signaled each success.

Flushed with our recent victories, after a work party had repaired the damage to the berm, the convoy reformed for the short run up to Liberty Hill. Progress was halted almost immediately, and this time it was not caused by Steam Joe the Sri-Lankan hydrophile. It was Hagen, Mark Hagen, Special Agent for gratuitous stucks and winchings. In his Disco, shaken, not steered. Apparently satisfied that he could get himself stuck in even the firmest of footings, Mark had decided to indoctrinate his wife, Patti, in the same fine art. With adequate space between a boulder and the trees on either side, Mark had chosen to guide his wife over it. Unfortunately, onto it was as far as they got. Patti H was not happy, but she smiled a brave smile, as she sat behind the wheel of her stranded Disco. The tension in her lips and forehead increased steadily as Mark repeatedly recounted their

experience to each newly arriving curious carload. After some initial uncoordinated attempts, Eric Cope appeared and took control of the situation. A plan was developed and implemented. Using Marks own High-Lift jack his Disco was jacked and pushed sideways and backwards such that the rock was now supporting a front wheel instead of a chassis member. Patti H was then directed to reverse till a better line over the rock could be selected. As she reversed, from off to the





side we could see the sharp trailing edge of their steering guard catch on the rock. With much grinding the rock sheared instead of the steering guard bolts as we had feared. With great care the Disco was guided first off, and then around and partially over the rock. Patti Hagen should be commended for her grace under pressure. While all this was going on KC had come bounding towards the front of the convoy. As he stepped on a fallen redwood, the bark separated from the trunk and shot rearwards from underfoot, almost causing him to fall. Under the bark was a large, very busy nest of big white bodied wingless termites. As I looked at the squirming mass I hoped that my engine troubles would not leave me stranded out here, reducing me to sustaining my family on sauteed termites and termite stew. I consoled myself with the hope that they might taste better with a light dusting of the Dickinson secret spice Prozac.

As we prepared to leave, I noticed that the CB antenna on Mark's Disco was drooping down to the ground, forming a loop just waiting to get snagged on a log, or another rock. Once he was made aware of the problem, he started looking around for a way to secure the wire. At an earlier stop, while digging in the dirt as 7 year old boys are wont to do, Mackie had uncovered a short bungee cord, and he reluctantly relinquished it to Mark. After all, Mark is the father of his good friend, fellow Roverer and esteemed bug and worm aficionado, young Melissa.

As we drove on the temperature stayed in a somewhat acceptable range. At one point we found ourselves behind Bubba. Suddenly there appeared above the tailgate a small blond haired head. This head continued to randomly reappear in different places, sometimes accompanied by a second bobbing head. Mackie complained that it was not fair that the Dow boys got to ride in Bubba while he did not. As I prepared my response to him, I saw the temperature gauge start to rise from its new home at the mark. Before I could grab the microphone for the CB I heard comments from the front of the convoy indicating that they could see the nights camping spot from where they were. I decided to just press on, and suddenly we were at the top of a peak with a beautiful view all around. The choice spots under the trees had already been taken so we selected a spot across the trail, near Bubba and the Watts Range Rover. With the windows open it had become very dusty inside the Range Rover, but I was unprepared for the deluge of dust that inundated me as I started to unload the roof rack. Off came the tent, the sleeping bags, the chairs and several nylon coated poles. As I had not packed these poles I wondered

what they might be for. It appeared that my Thule luggage rack had disintegrated, and now I understood why their catalogue listed an Expedition Rack. Fil helped me reassemble the rack, and with careful redistribution of bungee cords I would be able to hold the rack together and strap my luggage down with the limited cords on hand.

After we set up camp, I drifted over to the main camp to enjoy the views, find out if there were any plans for a potluck, and generally hang with the other Roverers. Eric again offered to provide a new thermostat from his spares box, and install it while we were stopped atop Liberty Hill. I was seriously tempted to take him up on his offer, but it did not seem fair to have people doing repairs well into the darkness of the night. I was also concerned that a minor mishap leading to a lost nut, or split hose or who knows what, which would have necessitated a 5 minute run to a FLAP if at home, would turn into a major abandonment and recovery project out in the bush. So, instead, an accounting of the disposable water was made, and much of it was transferred into my Range Rover's radiator and jerry-cans. Mark and Patti Hagen were saying their goodbyes as they had not come prepared to camp. Fil and Gina were preparing their famous barbecued chicken while Chris was chasing his dogs and feeding his kids. The next time I saw him he was chasing his kids and feeding his dogs such are the joys of parenthood and pet ownership. Apparently soon thereafter one of Chris's dogs joined in the chasing game and took to chasing John, who sought refuge on one of the upper limbs of a tree. As there was no planned pot luck, we returned to our campsite and dragged out the cold cuts, breads and cheeses. Patti had expected that there would be a potluck so preparations for Thai chicken and rice were well underway. Cliff and Sharon brought over a glorious pate, some bread and a beef and vegetable rice dish. The rice dish was subtly flavored, but the flavors were quite unusual. Sharon had searched the Bay area to find the spices and ingredients for that dish, and the results were certainly rewarding. We shared our bottle of red, and their bottle of white wine, while Mackie enjoyed some apple cider.

While Patti was packing up and cleaning up, I took our chairs over to the fire and returned to take our campstools over for the Watts to use. When we finally returned to the fire, we were unable to find our chairs because they were occupied by derrieres other than our own. On past trips we had patiently waited for the seats to be vacated, but this time we lacked patience, probably because we had been steamed, literally, Roverly and figuratively. And we felt that having pro-

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vided seating for four, we should be entitled to the use of at least 2 of the seats. So the squatters were gently ousted and our thrones were regained. Chris brought out another bottle of Glen Morangie, and Eric and a few others lit up some cigars. I played hot potato with the bottle of scotch, ensuring that it would not attack me again. We went through a couple of bottles of wine and I did finish off the evening with a shot of single malt, but it all added up to nothing painful. As we walked back to our campsite we marveled at the scenery, now visible in an entirely new light brilliant moonlight from a very large and fully round moon.

There had been a heavy dew overnight and the copious amounts of dust that had coated the Rovers and tents had formed streaks of parallel mud encrustations on the bon-

nets, and radial streaks on the tents. When Mackie discovered that we were leaving for home that morning, he was more than disappointed, he was crushed. He pleaded, he argued, he cried, he bawled. Cliff finally offered to take Mackie along with them, and before I could discuss it with Patti, he was sitting in their Range Rover with his backpack on his lap. He was going off-roading with his hero from Hollister (Land Rover 50 Anniversary Bash). Patti and Sharon worked out the details, and then we were off, on the heels of the convoy, with only John Hess behind us. He had kindly offered to be our support vehicle, also enabling him to get home to his family a little sooner. We looked for a third head in Cliff's Rover, but found only two. As panic began to grip Patti, she saw an overabundance of little heads bouncing in the back of Bubba. Patti almost had a need for Prozac at that moment, but she did agree that of the few people we would entrust our sons safety to, included on the list would be Zack and Gaelin, Cliff and Sharon, Eric and Brig, Fil and Gina and a few others. Even the level of trust required and engendered during off roading does not remotely compare to the level of trust required for a mother to relinquish her only child to another. Recognizing that it was Cliff and

Sharon, and Eric and Brig that Mackie would be spending the day with calmed her fears to a certain extent.

As we descended Liberty Hill, there was an impressive sight of 16 Rovers snaking their way down the spine of the ridge. Numerous photographs were taken, from the front and the rear of the convoy. The main group apparently took a route that afforded them great views of Whittaker's Dardanelles, Prather Meadows, the South Fork of the Stanislaus River and other natural wonders of California.



John Hess in his Dormie and we in our Range took our time on the dirt roads inside the National Forest, finally ending up on Highway 4 to Angels Camp. We then took Highway 49 north till it met Highway 16. We gassed up, and decided to take the Jackson Highway into Sacramento, which would allow us to maintain a more leisurely pace on a more scenic route. The temperature gauge never

once moved over normal, and I wondered if our early departure had been premature. We cruised over to Zack's and had a few sodas to help counteract the heat. John headed out to Davis and we hung around till it was time to head to the Watts' house to pick up Mackie. By the time we got to Cliff's house, Mackie had been cleaned up and fed, and was so tired from all the excitement, he was almost ready for bed. Within minutes he was asleep in the back of the Range Rover as we drove home.

Well, Eric, this trip report is for you.

Thank you for arranging a wonderful trip, for all your extra help in waiting for us at the pharmacy, arranging a rear-guard guide, dragging us along on the trail, providing water and a thermostat. A heartfelt thank you to everyone else too, for their patience during our frequent and extended stops, and a bigger thank you for sharing your precious water with us. This trip may not have been as arduous or as lengthy as a Camel Trophy event, but from where I sat, behind my steaming Range Rover, the values and traits celebrated in the Trophy awards were much in evidence here.

## EPILOGUE

Soon after we got home I did dose up the Range Rover with Bars Stop Leak. It did not stop the leak, but it did cause strands of white mucoid slime to drool from the water pump to the ground. Hooking my index finger around the water pump pulley I was able to drag it both downwards and upwards 1/4 of an inch each way. Perhaps I should have given a little of the Dickinson universal cure, taken with a sip of nice phosphate free antifreeze.

A few days later I received an e-mail asking me to write a trip report. My response to that request effectively summarizes the events of the intervening days. I intend to write a trip report, but I have a country song to write and live first:

My wife s Porsche 944 got smashed by a DUI dimwit  
last month  
And blew its cam & crank oil seals the next day  
The Range Rover s water pump failed on the HHA trip  
The water pump on my VW Vanagon just failed  
(Contagious?)  
The Hard disk on my Powerbook 3400 crashed the  
Monday after the HHA trip  
My backup Powerbook Duo 2300 won t reveal its  
menus & is unusable  
I m down to my prehistoric monochrome Powerbook  
180  
How soon do you need the report?

On Tuesday the Rover had developed a major coolant leak from the water pump, so I had ordered a replacement pump, thermostat, gaskets and hoses from British Pacific and the following day I started disassembling the cooling system. Because her Porsche 944 had recently been smashed by a drunk driver while it was parked outside our house and had developed a catastrophic oil leak the next day, and her backup, the Range Rover was partially dismantled, I was dropping Patti off at BART, then taking Mackie to school, and still arriving at work earlier than usual. On Friday I stopped by Eddie s German Auto Repair to schedule the van in for its annual service prior to our 2nd annual Canada trip. The following day as I sped down to San Jose in search of 2.5 inch IDE hard drives I began to hear strange new noises. The report delivered by Eddie s on Monday was: the van was in great shape, but it desperately needed a water pump. The Bus Depot had all the parts in stock and 48 hours later they were in the back of the van along with belts, hoses, antifreeze and Deionized water. With Patti on BART, Mackie and I

were on our way to his school when I heard a snap and a thump from the back of the van. The LED in the temperature gauge started to flash, the alternator light came on, the steering became heavy and the oil pressure buzzer sounded off. I coasted to the side of the road and discovered that the water pump had seized, shearing its belt and the flailing remnants of that shredded belt had thrown the remaining belts and broken some softer components, such as the alternator shroud, in the engine compartment. Mackie and I walked the 5 blocks to my office, borrowed a car and completed our morning rounds. At lunch I reinstalled the belts and drove/ coasted the car to a co-worker s cousins garage where they were able to squeeze my van in and get it ready in time for me to pick up Mackie and Patti after work. Such speedy service was possible mainly because all the necessary parts were already in the back seat of the van, and because Gus put my van at the top of the work order list. I coughed up the big bucks for the express service and picked up the van after work.

On an 89 Range Rover the water pump sits conveniently at the top and front of the engine. It seemed an easy enough task to remove and replace it. Then Haynes informed me that to get to the water pump, I first had to remove the radiator, which required that I remove the power steering pump, the alternator etc. Before the water pump could be removed, the radiator fan attached to its pulley had to be removed, and to accomplish that, all the other engine ancillaries and their drive belts had to be removed. I never imagined that I would have dismantled the whole front of the engine before I was able to even loosen one bolt on the water pump. The fan could not be separated from the pump pulley, even after I spent \$70 on 1 and 1 1/4 wrenches. In addition, the Viscous coupling-to-fan bolt could not be undone, so I had to remove the radiator with it in place. I took the pump to work, locked it in a vice and beat on it, but still the nut would not budge. We applied heat to it and then rammed a lever into the vanes of the pump to increase leverage. The vanes broke off one by one leaving only the hub of the vanes around the shaft. So we locked the hub into the vice, but now the hub spun on the shaft and still the nut would not come loose. We cut off the hub and locked the shaft directly into the vice, but still it would not move. Finally in desperation we applied enough heat to the nut, with an oxyacetylene torch, to make it glow bright red, and then the nut began to grudgingly turn. I have no idea what all that heat did to the viscous coupling, but if it acts up at all I will shoot it with a small caliber firearm in the hope that rigor mortis will cause it to stiffen up into an always blowing

# Trip Report

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condition, that will, if anything, overcool the engine and extinguish the fires of hell.

In desperation I had picked up a Rover water pump from Kragen as I could not wait for the parts to arrive



from BP. I soon discovered that the pump they had sold me was not quite right, so that had to be removed, but of course the radiator had to come off first. Fortunately, by the next day the BP parts had arrived. Later that day I reinstalled the radiator on the Rover to find that when the mounting dowels and bolts on the radiator lined up, the radiator hoses from the block and the connection stub pipes from the radiator each had their own corner. I gazed at the radiator for a while, and in a flash of brilliance, removed the radiator, inverted it and slid it back into place. Now I could connect up the hoses, but filling the radiator from below proved to be a little problematic, especially considering that the cap was resting on the frame, tilting the radiator to one side. Once again I removed the radiator and tried to fit the shroud, but that too would not fit. It appeared that the radiator shop had reversed the top and bottom plates. I took the radiator back to the shop, along with the shroud, and asked if they would not mind making a few adjustments such that I might be able to take advantage of gravitational force when filling the radiator.

After that, reassembly went much more smoothly. All the dowels in the water pump lined up, the gasket did not crease, the belts slipped right on and belts

snugged right up. There was just the matter of the alternator brace: when I got the right water pump on, the alternator securing bracket would not mount up so I had to remove the pump again and of course the radiator had to come off first. I found that a bolt had been broken off in the block, and looked just like a locating dowel so I had not noticed it. The broken bolt was now the length of the other shorter bolts, and so did not look out of place either. I had no choice but to extract the bolt and start all over again. Eventually it all came together, but in between I had removed the pump several times, the radiator even more times and the hoses and belts innumerable times. After I had put it all together I noticed that the lead from the temperature gauge sender had been bent flat, and of course I had to straighten it back out. Metallurgy being what it is, I straightened the connector spade right off the sender. So now I hopefully have a repaired cooling system, but with no way to tell if it is working correctly. I have since ordered new temperature and oil pressure sending units, but they are yet to be installed. They are both sitting in a box on the living room floor, keeping the three thermostats company: the one I got from Eric, and the others that I added to each successive BP order, to ensure that I would have a fresh one to return to Eric. I'm just having a little trouble deciding which one to send.

The Rover is running again now, as is the van, but a couple of weeks ago as we entered Vancouver, the coolant light in the van came on and steam spewed out the back. Turns out it was just a hose that came loose, and I could have fixed it with the Leatherman on my belt, but being in a strange town with no way to get to a parts store even if I knew where one was and which parts I needed, it just made more sense to limp into a garage and have them fix it. \$100 for tightening one hose clamp is hard to swallow, even if they are Canadian loonies. A week later at work, I noticed that the van was leaking again, at the same place. Same problem, loose hose clamps - \$100 for nothing! And they charged me \$18 for a gallon of antifreeze. Maybe it's so expensive because of all the Phosphate in there.





# Mechanics & Parts & Service 21

The following list contains parts suppliers and mechanics who support and work on Land Rover and Range Rover vehicles. **This is not an endorsements list.** Before using particular vendors or mechanics we suggest you talk to fellow Land Rover and Range Rover owners regarding their experience and recommendations. Please contact us with any businesses or updates you would like to see added to this list.

**Atlantic British [P, OV]**  
Box110. Rover Ridge Drive  
Mechanicville, N Y 12118  
tel. 800-533-2210

**Badger Interior Coachworks**  
259 Great Western Road  
South Dennis, MA 02660  
tel. 501-364-2680,  
fax 508-760-2281

**Britalia [S, P]**  
2210 San Pablo Avenue  
Berkeley, CA  
tel. 510-548-0240

**British Bulldog. [P, NV]**  
394 Kilburn St.  
Fall River, MA, 02724  
tel. 888-874-3888,  
fax 508-674-5025  
bulldog@meganet.net

**The British Car Co. [S]**  
5830 Paradise Dr.  
Corte Madera, CA 94925  
tel. 415-927-2995

**British Motor Car Dist. [D, S, P]**  
901 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA  
tel. 415-776-7700

**British Northwest Land Rover Co. [S, P, OV]**  
1043 Kaiser Rd. S.W.  
Olympia, WA  
tel. 206-866 2254

**British Pacific [P]**  
3317 Burbank Ave.  
Burbank, CA  
tel. 800-554-4133

**Carpenter Rigging [AA, ABA]**  
222 Napoleon St.  
San Francisco, CA 94124  
415-285-1954

**Cole European [D, S, P]**  
2103 N. Main St.  
Walnut Creek, CA  
tel. 510-935-2653

**DAP Enterprises, Inc.**  
86 Clinton St.  
Springfield, VT, 05156  
tel. 802-885-6660

**Desert Rover [ABA, NV]**  
15245 So. 16 Place  
Phoenix, AZ 85048

**Euro Parts, Ltd [P]**  
1910 Prospect Ave.  
East Meadow, NY 11554  
tel. 800-274-4830

**Great Basin Rovers [P, AA]**  
342 West 1700 South  
Salt Lake City, UT  
tel. 801-486-5049

**Hubacher Cadillac and Land Rover [P, S, NV]**  
#1 Cadillac Drive  
Sacramento, CA, 95825  
tel. 415-460-4600

**RAB Motors/ Land Rover Marin [D, S, P]**  
J  
540 Fancisco Boulevard West  
San Rafael, CA  
tel. 415-460-4600

**Roverland [S, P]**  
San Francisco, CA  
tel. 415-648-0885

**Roverland Parts [P, NV]**  
2038 Village Point Way  
Salt Lake City, UT 840093  
tel. 801-942 7533

**Rovers North [P]**  
1319 VT Rt. 128  
Westford, VT  
tel. 802-879-0032

**Safari Gard [ABA, NV]**  
41095 Fig St.  
Murrieta, CA 92562  
tel. 909-698-6114

**Land Rover San Jose [D, S, P]**  
4040 Stevens Creek Boulevard  
San Jose, CA  
tel. 408-246-7600

**Scotty s [S, OV]**  
(Chevy conversions)  
tel. 510-686-2255

**Shamrock Services [S, NV, OV]**  
15195 Arnold Drive  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
tel. 707 935-3605

UK 4 Wheel Drive  
P.O. Box 123  
Estacada, Oregon 97023  
tel 503-630-6765  
fax 503-630-7519

**West Coast British [S, P, AA, NV, OV]**  
190 Airway Blvd.  
Livermore, CA 94550  
tel. 510-606-8301

**Wise Owl [P]**  
3396 Marine Dr.  
West Vancouver, Canada  
tel 1-888-880-2600  
fax (604)-921-729

**XKs Unlimited [P]**  
850 Fiero Lane  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
tel. 1-800-444-5247  
xksunltd@aol.com

<b>P</b>	Parts
<b>S</b>	Service
<b>D</b>	Dealer
<b>NV</b>	Newer Vehicle
<b>OV</b>	Older Vehicle
<b>AA</b>	After-market Accessory
<b>ABA</b>	After-market Body Armor

Revised 11/22/99

# Northern California Rover Club

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## Membership Application Form

The Northern California Rover Club is a new club dedicated to providing communication between owners of Land Rover and Range Rover vehicles. We aim to provide a venue for the enjoyment of the vehicles including off road activities and their maintenance by focussing on providing a means of connecting fellow owners. The Club will be holding meetings on alternating months and aiming at producing a newsletter covering issues of interest and providing a forum for communication.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Northern California Rover Club send this form and a check for \$20 made out to Northern California Rover Club to the following address:

**Northern California Rover Club  
P.O. Box 14961  
Berkeley, CA 94712-5961**

The \$20 covers membership dues for one year with all the rights of membership outlined in the club bylaws; members will receive an initial membership card and club decal, all newsletters mailed in that period, and an annual directory of club members.

Please provide the following information and indicate if any of it should not be included in the club directory which will be distributed only to other members. The NCRC will assume that all information provided is to be distributed unless indicated otherwise. Please note that members must be over 18 years of age and have a valid driver's licence.

Name:

Street Address:

City, State and ZIP:

Tel. number (day):

Tel. number (eve):

Types of Land Rover/Range Rover owned:

Rover related interests: