



Newsletter

January/February 2000

Issue 16



Lets get ready for
Mendo VI!



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 and Submissions

Newsletter back issues may be obtained on an as available basis for \$2 each. The \$2 includes postage. Submission deadlines for the next few issue is April 15. Submissions can be emailed to leslie@thelen.org or ben@mitchellfamily.com

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.

NEXT NCRC MEETING

The next NCRC meeting will be around the campfire at Mendo VI. Club meetings are usually the 3rd Friday of alternating months (even months). Location will rotate. Contact Bruce 415-468-5000 x3009 or Jeremy 510-233-3167 for meeting locations and details.

Meeting Minutes:

The February NCRC meeting was held February 18th in Brisbane. Despite a relatively small turn out of about 10 people it was a productive and informative meeting.

The first topic of business was to open the floor to nominations for the upcoming officer elections. All members are urged to run and are reminded that nominations can still be made by submitting the candidate's name to any of the officers before March 30. The nominations were:

President	Jeff Rodgers
Vice President	Rick Larson
Secretary	Ben Mitchell
Treasurer	Jeremy Bartlett
Member at Large	Morgan Hannaford
	Bruce Bonar

After nominations were completed there was an extensive and enthusiastic discussion of what role the NCRC should take in current Land Use issues and how they relate to Off Highway Vehicle recreation. There were several possible roles discussed.

- + The club could do nothing
- +The club could make an effort to inform its members of issues, closures, etc. but not take a position. The

club would only serve as a collector and disseminator of information.

- + The club could advocate a position and urge its members to take steps on an individual basis to influence policy.
- +The club should take a strong position on issues and actively advocate that position as vigorously as possible while at the same time urging members to do the same.

The unanimous consensus of those present was that the Club should be a strong advocate of a pro OHV recreation agenda. There was discussion about how there would be disagreements among members on what positions should be taken and which issues to support and which to oppose. It was decided that if the Club took a position that was unpopular with the membership it would be immediately apparent from the membership feedback and that the position would be modified based on that feedback. Any positions taken by the Club would be discussed by the officers prior to being issued.

It was suggested that the position of Member at Large be change to Land Use Coordinator or other similar title and take on the role of gathering information on land use issues, disseminating that information to the members, and being the advocate for the club in various land use forums and with elected officials. This suggestions will be considered and the By-Laws reviewed as to how this change would be made. It was suggested that LRNA be contacted to see what role or position, if any, they have taken in regard to land use issues.

NCRC CLUB EVENTS

March 25-26 Snow Run (Avalanche Express) John Baudendistel will lead the NCRC into the Great White. A recce will determine the exact location and meeting details. Watch the mendo list or contact John or Jeff Rodgers for more information.

April 29 NCRC Meeting. The meeting will be at the Joe Lucas Not-a-Rally (see non club events below).

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Cover Photo

This months cover is a selection of photos from last years Mendo V courtesy of Joe Ernest. Some cake, huh?

Don't miss the annual festivities.

June 23-24-25. Rubicon. The NCRC goes Hardcore. You've heard of it, now's the time to drive it. This is a legendary 4x4 trail and is not for stock vehicles or inexperienced drivers. Trip size will be limited and the leaders reserve the right to determine vehicle and driver suitability.

July 1-5 July Expedition to Kalimopsis Wilderness and Siskiyou Mountains on the California / Oregon border. Clark Bowen and Morgan Hannaford are working now on a great adventure. The group will be meeting in Yreka at 10am Saturday July 1. We will travel by NF road from Yreka to the Klamath River valley and then north into Oregon. The first three nights we will camp with the Pacific Coast Rover Club at Sourdough Camp near the OR/CA border. Sourdough Camp is west of O'Brien, near the southernmost tip of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. The large meadow is at the confluence of the Smith River and Baldface Creek where there is a long, crystal clear swimming hole. Being a former mining region, abundant 4WD trails exist and are indicated on the maps. Access to some of the abandoned mining and cabin sites is shown as being by 4WD trails and to some by pack trails. Does that mean pack your recovery gear? The general map of the area is the Siskiyou National Forest map from the US Forest Service. Recommended topographical maps with legible detail are from the Ranger District series, entitled: Illinois Valley Ranger District and Chetco Ranger District. Other maps produced by the US Geological Survey with even more detail, are called the 7 1/2 Minute Series (Topographical). Check out its history and pictures of the annual Creek n Trail event at the web site: www.oregonoff-road.com.

August 4-5-6 Dusey-Ershim Trail Imagine a trail tougher than the Rubicon and three times longer. That's the Dusey Ershim Trail in the Sierra National Forest. South of Yosemite, not far out of Fresno this trail bisects the two Wilderness Areas using a 600 foot OHV corridor. Spectacular scenery, extremely difficult four wheeling. Bring all your spare parts and tools to join Eric Cope and Bubba on an adventure that may last more than 3 days.

September 23-24 Fall Colors Join Jeff Rodgers for the annual trip with the whole family to enjoy the Sierra Fall Color. Jeff will be leading the group to the Pine Grove area. Details to follow in a later issue or contact Jeff.

October 21-22 Party in Truckee. Jeff leads us again.

This time to Prosser OHV park near Truckee and then into Truckee for a party Saturday night. Bring the family and friends.

November 4-5 NCRC Rally This is your year to win. Defending 2 time champs Gerry Mugule and John Hess have volunteered to help out with the Rally so the competition is wide open. Sharpen up your analytical and driving skills, find a navigator, and join the fun. See Jeremy Bartlett for information on how to enter.

Last week May or first week June 2001 MOAB, Utah. Rick Larson has made arrangements with Dan Mick a famous backcountry guide from Moab to lead the NCRC on a don't miss trip to the ULTIMATE 4x4 playground. The first 3 nights Dan will lead the group on a camping tour of areas near Moab you'll never see on your own. We will then return to stay in Moab, either camping or in motels at your option, to take day trips for the next two days. There will be a fee for this trip to pay for guide services. If you've never been to Moab you can't imagine how great it is. If you don't want to run hard 4+ trails take a day trip to Arches NP, Canyonlands, or other slick rock destinations. Bring the mountain bike and enjoy some world class single tracks or graded roads. There is something for everyone.

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.

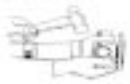
NON CLUB EVENTS

April 28,29, & 30 Joe Lucas Mendo Not-a-Rally The largest gathering of Land Rovers in Northern California. Don't miss it, no one else does. Usually a big pot luck Saturday night. Contact Joe Lucas for details.

May 20 & 21, 2000 Pacific Northwest Team Trophy Challenge The premier off-road competition on the west coast. Several NCRC teams will be competing against 4x4's of all makes in a challenge of both teamwork and driving.

July Pair-O-Dice Bob & Sue Bernard lead LR's into the High Lakes south of Lassen. Don't miss the pot luck Saturday night.

Calendar items should be sent to Bruce Bonar at least 2 months before the event. brbonar@wenet.net
415-468-5000 x3009



Technical Information



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Let There Be Light (under the bonnet)

by Blair Peterson

Have you ever had to fiddle about under the bonnet of your Rover at night, in some compromising location? Ever had to do it when that funny shaped battery in your Petzl hands-free headlamp was dead? Have you decided that holding that MagLite in your teeth was neither effective nor good for your smile? Having answered yes to all three I decided to install an under-bonnet work lamp in my Defender. This is a very simple, relatively quick modification that has a frequent payback.

I had always been impressed with the light output of the rectangular Lucas dome light (with the glass lens and chrome bezel, P/N STC251) that is in many Solihull products. So that was my choice, and besides, it keeps the modification genuine. The underside of a Defender bonnet has two wide but shallow omega-profile reinforcing ribs, each with two race track-shaped cutouts. One of the left (driver's) side cutouts happens to be above a clear space amongst the engine components (aft and inboard of the alternator) which allows room for the dome light when the bonnet is closed.

I cut a 3"x6" plate of 1/8" thick aluminum which would be the mounting plate for the light. Using the light base as a template, I drilled two holes in the alu plate for



small bolts to mount the light to the plate and two more holes to rivet the plate to the bonnet rib. Assuming you can handle basic 12v wiring ok, the only potentially dangerous part of this project is drilling the rivet holes in the bonnet rib: the rib is steel, you will be working upside down, and there is only about 3/4" of clearance between the rib and the soft, thin aluminum bonnet skin. Either use a drill stop collar on the drill bit or don't push very hard when drilling (or both) to avoid ending up with a vent hole in your bonnet where you don't really want one...

Install the lamp assembly to the plate, crimp on about four feet of wire for the hot lead, feed the end of the wire down the bonnet rib to where it emerges near the bonnet hinge/bulkhead, then blind rivet the plate to the bonnet rib. I mounted a switch on a small length of aluminum angle which shared one of the left hinge mounting bolts (more advanced tinkerers could opt for a mercury switch I suppose). I took power (via 3A fuse) from an always-hot source on an accessory terminal block that I installed near the coil on the inner left wing (there are other power sources in the vicinity). So far, the hinges themselves provide enough ground to the bonnet for the lamp so a dedicated ground wire is not necessary.



Voila: light under the bonnet when you need it!

Trip Report

MENDO V - Mendocino National Forest April 24-25, 1999

(Editors note: Mendo VI is almost upon us! That (and the fact that we really did not have any other content to speak of and Joe wrote this nifty trip report) encourages us to revisit the great fun that we all had last year at Mendo V. We think that this year will be even better than before!)

By Joe Ernest

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

We packed the van and the Range Rover Thursday night. Fortunately this did not take too long as the van always stays packed and we never completely unpacked the RR after the Los Padres trip.

The plan was for Patti to take the Rover to work so that I could pick up Mackie from school in the van at 3:30 p.m., head over to Pleasanton and join the rush hour creep in our mini convoy by 4:00 p.m. or whenever she could sneak out of work.

I woke up late on Friday as I had the day off, and had been up till 3:00 a.m. playing with my newly acquired scanner. When I strolled out of the house I found the Range Rover still in the driveway, right next to the van. After a few minutes of heated phone conversation, I was on my way to Pleasanton to drop off the Rover and drag the Porsche 944 back home. The first errand to be run was to stop by Chris Jewelry and pick up a ring that was being resized. For those of you that have been following along, this is the dreaded birthday ring from the Wine Country trip at the end of March. Usually the storekeepers hand the jewelry over in a little presentation box, but this time, in order to reduce the geek-bulge in my pockets I requested that they pack the ring in a little padded purse. I stuffed the baby blue pouch into my trouser pocket and exited the store thinking how cute. My next thought was this pouch feels very much like the paper towels I have a penchant for storing in those same pockets. To be safe I transferred my collection of paper towel bits into the other pocket, leaving the precious pouch all alone in my left pocket, so that it might be safe until later that evening when I could hand it over to Patti.

A RING IN THE POCKET IS WORTH MENDO 5 IN THE BUSH

Feeling rather smug with the precautions I had taken, and convinced that my appearance was significantly less geeky, I set off to gas up, fill jerry cans, look for CB mounting hardware etc. After rummaging through the sheet metal and other assorted bits at various hardware stores, each time I washed my hands I

automatically and unthinkingly stuffed the resulting moist and tattered paper towel into my pockets. Pretty soon my pockets were occupied with an overabundance of partially moist, crumpled paper towels, and thereafter at each store I looked for a receptacle into which I could divest myself of my burden of processed forest product.

Pretty soon it was after 3:00 p.m. and time to start heading to Mackie's school and then to Pleasanton. Thinking how glad Patti would be to have her ring back, I slid my left hand into my pocket for a reassuring check. There was nothing. The pocket was empty. No paper towels even. I yanked the wheel, nearly collected car in the adjacent lane, almost kissed the curb and narrowly avoided rear-ending the abandoned Gran Torino by the sidewalk. Trouser pockets were hurriedly emptied and their contents spread on the roof of the car. Thinking that I might have got smart and moved the pouch to my shirt pocket, that too was emptied. Still no luck, just your basic engineer fare: a pen, two 0.5mm pencils and several Post-It stickies with cryptic notes and unintelligible calculations. Maybe it was in my back pocket - out came the wallet and cheque-book. Nothing. Nada. Absolument rien.

By now panic had taken hold completely. Hell hath no fury like a woman informed that her prized diamond ring has been lost. I could only hope for a quick death, certainly it would not be painless. Then the obvious hit me. I must have given it to her already. But if I called her to ask, and she didn't have the ring, I would be equally dead. The game would be up. I pondered this dilemma for a while, as best a panicked mind can ponder. I could only get half way through any thought before it was over run by thoughts of impending doom. s#!%, S#!T, S#!TTT!!!!!! Harried, panicked and depressed I decided to make the call. Now I could not find my cell phone either. Bollocks, big bollocks and double bollocks!! So I drove home, some times fast and furious out of fear, sometimes slow and lethargic with depression. Eventually, I made it home.

THE PHONE CALL

Patti was most understanding and gentle when I called. No, she did not have the ring, but she would go out to the Rover and check. I was so panicked and petrified that I had forgotten to ask about my cell phone. With trepidation, I pushed the redial button. No she did not have my cell phone, but she would go back out to the parking lot and check in the Rover. If only I had been so understanding when I had called to berate her for forgetting to take the Rover to work that morning. No

the phone wasn't there, but it must be safe, in that safe place where I had carefully placed it. Right beside the ring perhaps?

Now her weekend was ruined, in addition to my life. Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa, mea maxima culpa fornicatiae.

Though life as I knew it might not go on for me, the weekend, however restrained and constrained, would continue. So I climbed into the van to go pick up Mackie. As I cleared the seat that was soon to be filled by a seven year old behind, I

found it! To ensure that it did not get left behind, I had placed the cell phone in the van the previous night. I had to call and tell her the good news. She was not nearly as excited as I had become, and my joy was, not surprisingly, short-lived. I checked the cars again, inside the house too, and drove by the office in a last minute desperation check. By now it was approaching 4:00 p.m. so we headed for Pleasanton. Now not only was the ring nowhere to be found: despite all our Planning, we were also getting underway much later than I had contrived to. And it wasn't because of the Rover/Porsche mix-up.

THE DRIVE UP

Patti had snuck out of work by 4:00 p.m. and was waiting for us at the BofA at Stoneridge and Hopyard, and I recognized the Rover from a block or two away she saw the van and headed out of the parking lot to join us.

Traffic on I-680 and I-80 was surprisingly light and we made good time. Traffic on the I-505 and the I-5 was even lighter and we flew along at 70 plus mph. Pretty soon we were turning west at Maxwell and a few miles later we were on very minor roads. At Lodoga we went straight, taking the road that intuition told me

would take us in the direction of Cedar Camp. Nine dusty and bumpy miles later we came to a T intersection with signs that gave us a choice of destinations. Unfortunately neither of these destinations were in the direction we wanted to take. The road to the left could even take us back to a town we had passed through much earlier, while still on I-5. A brief consultation with the navigator brought to light the perils of assumption

and intuition. A u-turn and nine miles of back tracking later we were back on the right road - the one that turned off to the right, headed in the general opposite direction of Cedar Camp. With a map readily available, my choosing turns based on as the crow flies had left me feeling much like the crow, a definite bird brain.

My goal had been to make camp before nightfall, and as night was upon us, I decided to sit back and take it

slowly. The initial dirt section was narrow, full of switch backs, steep drop-offs and fallen trees across the road. We took our time, but Patti kept falling further and further behind. It made more sense for her to take the lead and set the pace even though her night vision is not the best. A side benefit of that limited night vision is the inability to see the full extent of the drop offs on the hill sides. I dropped back to avoid the dust, but then became concerned when I could not see her tail lights, so we closed up and ate more dust. Pretty soon I began to get bored with the pace so I pulled out the camcorder and started filming the proceedings from the chase car. Now I was busy and having fun.

Between staying on the road, off the trees, all the while keeping the van and camera pointed at the Rover, I was fully occupied. Without a camera stand, the camcorder also had a life of its own, trying to bounce and sway across the dashboard. The resulting footage was quite interesting, if not of the highest quality, but it is viewable if you have either ingested Meclazine or are chewing on a big stick of ginger. The trip directions had mentioned that Cedar Camp was on the M5, and I had assumed that was an oblique reference to one of Britain's major motorways, as a comment on the size and condition of the local trail. I was wrong, my intuition



was still not working. Cedar camp is on the M5, just not THE M5.

By the time we arrived there must have been 2 dozen Rovers there already, a blazing campfire and lots of conversations going. We selected a spot, leveled the van using native rocks and non-native lengths of two by four, and set up our own little campsite.

Once the chairs and tables were set up, we fired up the Pyromid and barbequed some basil-garlic sausage. The sausage was shared with Zack and Pod and was washed down with a bottle of Merlot. As it had been a long week and a longer drive there, we soon went to bed.

SATURDAY

I was up by 7:30 a.m. and set about preparing coffee. While the coffee was brewing I walked around the campsite, inspected some rovers, met some LRO s (Land Rover Owners) and took some photographs and shot some video. There was an RR with a tent on top, a few Dormobiles, a few 110 s, a few Disco s, a few D90 s, a 101 Forward Control and even a Series 1 pickup and a D90 Tdi. There was a beautifully restored 109 5 door wagon driven by a lady who would soon be returning to Kenya. Her truck reminded of the one we had in Botswana, except ours had first been severely abused by a safari company, shoddily converted from diesel to petrol, and then repainted forest green using household exterior paint with horsehair brushes, prior to our acquiring it. Other than that, the two 109 s were exactly the same.

I had a long conversation with Deva and Raj, the proud owners of the D90 Tdi. These are a great couple of guys, father and son. They are also almost homies for me, being Tamils from south of the Madras metro area. My roots trace back to a short hop across the Palk Strait to Jaffna, Sri Lanka. I visited with Fil, Armando and their merry band, and marveled at the modifications to Fil's GDE (Great Divide Edition) Rand Rover and Armando's highly modified and bestickered Discovery.

They do look like a matched pair, purposeful, unstoppable and businesslike in their no-nonsense white paint.

WIMPS WEEP IN WETLANDS, WORMS WEEP FOR WETLANDS

I had no sooner drifted back to our campsite to refill my coffee mug when Pat strolled up and asked if Zack could

extricate Mark (Hagen) from a soft patch, about a half mile from camp. Grabbing the cameras from the van, and waiting just long enough for Mackie to clamber in, I took off in the Range Rover after Zack in his 88" station wagon. Two hundred yards up the M5 and half a mile up the hill off to the left, Hagen was sunk up to his differentials. Spencer and his father were already there in their new (non classic) Range

Rover. With no winch, tow rope, shovel or other recovery gear that I could see, Mark seemed to have little hope of getting himself out unaided. I had pulled out my handy dandy shovel/axe/saw to show off to Zack the previous night, so I too was shovel-less. As I had roared off after Zack I had heard Patti mention something about being ready for breakfast. The ice chest full of food blocking access to my limited recovery gear was not a good sign. With two good reasons to return to camp I hot footed it back and presented Patti with the ice chest, grabbed the shovel and sped off back to the stuck silver Disco. I was later able to almost successfully claim that the Los Padres incurred muffler leak drowned out Patti's query as to when I was going to prepare the scrambled eggs.

While Zack skirted the soggy patches, backed his 88" into position and then hooked the tow straps up, I was able to survey the situation. Mark had driven head first into a wetland area, still in the restoration process, as evidenced by the carefully contoured slopes, the silt fences, straw bales and natural fabric mats. I am not a tree hugger, but I do have an affinity for wetlands, probably starting from the time I spent in the Okavango Delta, and around Lake Tchad, and later delineating, restoring, designing and constructing wetlands in



Louisiana and California. It also bothers me to see anyone's hard work destroyed by carelessness or thoughtlessness. The restoration work protects the hillside, the vegetation and the wildlife, and will in time provide additional recreation opportunities for us too. I wondered if I had just witnessed the sort of behavior many of us attribute to the proverbial yahoos in their j**ps.

Not exactly adhering to the Tread Lightly principles.

Any how, Mark was stuck and we had to get him out. With Zack's 88" hooked up to the rear of Mark's Disco, he tried to pull Mark out along the flattest path, but the tangential tugging seemed to have little effect. So we tried a more co-linear approach, even though it meant Zack would be pulling up a 3 to 4 foot high mound of earth. When this failed we used 2 tow straps to get Zack over the hump so he could pull on more level ground. When this failed, my Rangie was brought in alongside the existing straps and I tried adding the pull of my Rover. With only the one tow strap, I was having to pull up the hump, and was not as effective as I could be. Zack decided that a more reasoned approach was needed, and after some evaluation, he led us to the decision to jack up the front axle before we pulled again. As the ground was very soft we used a shovel to spread the load, but when that became unstable, a length of 2x4 was retrieved from my Rover. With the front axle out of the mud we were able to move Mark's Disco backwards about a foot.

We repeated the jacking and pulling process a few times, and then with our confidence boosted, we started to become a little reckless. By reversing the towing vehicles slightly to create some slack in the tow straps prior to the forward lunge, we were able to jerk the Disco forward, especially when Zack and I were able to synchronize our efforts. As the Disco moved rearwards, my Rangie was moved further and further over the hump, closer and closer to coming into sharp contact with the fallen trees on the far side. Once Mark was free of the mud, he kept his foot on the gas and the wheel cocked such that the annular space between the butt of my Range Rover and the butt of his Disco was rapidly diminished. This kind of butt-kissing we did not need, especially if it led to my becoming the butt of Hagenous jokes. It took the frenzied screams of all present to get Mark to move his foot from the go pedal to the stop pedal, but he did get it done in time. Just. There was not enough room between the cars for a person to squeeze through, let alone attempt to disconnect the tow straps.

As soon as Mark was disconnected he was gone, leaving Zack and I to clean and pack up our gear and

effect any possible minor repairs to the wetland area.

The reward for our morning's efforts was that Mark had screeched back into camp just in time to join the group leaving to follow some trails and do some off roading. Zack and I got to hear the tail end of the CB transmissions fading into the distance. Ah well, a relaxing day at the campsite would be quite enjoyable.

DOG DAY AFTERNOON

When we returned to the campsite Patti had given up waiting for me and fixed herself breakfast, but she did lay out a spread of cold cuts, bread and cheese for us to munch on.

As we sat there in the silence, thinking our own thoughts, enjoying the quiet solitude of the forest, the ambience was shattered by the bark of a dog near by. It barked. It barked again. It barked some more. It then barked again. It whined. It barked. It barked, it whined. This went on for hours, and just when you began to think it might have stopped, it would start up again. Scott, who was trying to get some rest, gave up and drove out of camp. TerriAnn walked over to the dog and spoke kindly to it in her softest and sweetest voice. When that did not work she yelled at it with all the power her lungs could muster. Zack, a farm boy whose wife is a veterinarian and has learned a few things, scientific and anecdotal wisdom, about animals over the years, tried to soothe the dog with offers of food and friendship, but that did not work either. As we did not feel it was right to break the dog's neck, many of us were about to break camp and head for home when the owner returned.

It hasn't been barking all day has it?

Yes it has.

Oh.... You do have a gun don't you.

We can all take comfort in the open invitation offered to terminate the source of our misery using the firearm of our choice. I myself do not own a firearm, but I am certain that others that were at the campsite that day will bring theirs along to future not-an-events, just to be dead sure they don't have to endure that particular brand of auditory torture again.

To avoid the rush to NRAdom, I intend to proceed stepwise, with caution. By the time we next meet out on the trails, the Rangie should be outfitted with light bar and Easy Rider ((tm)) Rifle Rack, replete with the preferred self-defense tools of the suburban gentleman - golf clubs. In the absence of Witworth (?) clubs, I may have to settle for the urban dweller's choice - a Police League officially disapproved Oakland Raider WhupAss Brand Graphite and Titanium 9 iron. The

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aluminium is apparently reserved for the Reginald Denny Edition baseball bats preferred by the city folk.

Thankfully the dog was quiet after the owner's return.

MENDO V ENDO

Some of the excitement of the weekend was experienced by the occupants of a topless and roll-over bar-less Series vehicle, Matt and Tiffany. They had apparently been ambling along at a fairly low speed when they had encountered a patch of corrugations in the roadway. The amplitude and frequency of these corrugations was such that it set up harmonics with the Land Rover suspension, causing the vehicle to corruga-plane. As the vehicle skittered over the corrugations it also began to spin out, and went off the road backwards into a ditch. The combined energy of the velocity, spin and bounce was all converted into a single turning moment, pivoted at the rear corner of the vehicle which first encountered the bottom of the ditch. This turning moment was apparently just enough to flip the vehicle over onto its back. Mercifully, and possibly due to the unseen intervention by the spirit of Joe Lucas (bow your head and grab an earthed conductor) Matt and Tiffany emerged intact and almost unscathed.

I only got the story third and fourth hand, so I

cannot guarantee the accuracy of the above account, but I do believe that the essential facts are as reported. Supposedly the Land Rover could have driven home had they wanted to, but it was felt that one narrow escape was enough for the day. They were very lucky indeed. While we are aware of, and accept the risks for the pleasures associated with driving topless or soft top vehicles, we should not forget that even an apparently good road is not without its risks. Many, including myself were skeptical that a low speed skid could have

caused a spin out and a flip over. Ironically, the very next day while leaving, my van began to skid on corrugations at less than 20 mph. The high center of gravity of my van would have ensured that the slightest ditch would have had us on our side, and perhaps, even wheels up.

That little episode brought back memories of how in Africa our factory tropicalized Peugeot 404 wagon had low pressure bulbous tyres that allowed us to glide over corrugations in comfort with reasonable speed, control and safety. All other vehicles either had to crawl over the corrugations or fly over them at insane speeds. Always overloaded, and usually driven at breakneck speed it is not surprising that the taxis in Africa frequently performed the Mendo oVer Endo move made famous by our own Matt and Tiffany.

THE BOUNTEOUS BUFFET

Into the late afternoon and early evening people in Rovers continued to drift into camp. Estimates range from 40 to 42 Rovers in total. Several ladies inquired as

to the time the not-a-pot-luck was to take place, but were repeatedly told that there was not-a-set time. Patti thawed and cut up the chicken and other ingredients, and held everything ready to go, but it would still take a while to cook the Thai Chicken



with rice once she got the go-ahead. We all milled around, built a fire ring, a stack of firewood and then combined the two to make a camp fire. Then we sat down to enjoy the company of Zack, Deva and Raj.

At one point we looked up to see a line forming for the buffet. The dishes had appeared as if by magic. I had already started cooking some sausage in onions, garlic and Madras curry powder as an appetizer, so I was able to get that onto the table pretty quickly. Patti's rice dish took a lot longer and did not get to the table until

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most people had moved onto the pies and cakes. Still, those that tried it liked it. There were some outstanding eats to be had: a perfectly cooked beef with a zippy red sauce, barbequed chicken, barbequed shrimp, veggie kabobs, couscous, an assortment of pastas, salads and pasta salads.

There was a truly memorable potato and leek soup. Initially the soup chef seemed to have a little difficulty giving away his soup, but once the diners got over the wallpaper paste appearance and an assumption of potato blandness to actually taste the soup, he was handing out bowls as quick as he could fill them. There was such a variety of food there that I only tasted a fraction of it, and I can only remember a fraction of the foods that I tasted, so please forgive me if I have omitted your fine creation in this most incomplete listing here.

Being allergic to sugar I did not try any of the desserts, but I did hear that the pie was excellent, as was the chocolate cake and the green and white cake, both suitably adorned with the Mendo V label and miniature Land Rovers, one with a most precious cargo of Guinness.

After the feeding frenzy, the majority of the folks moved on to the main camp fire, with some of the stragglers huddling around Fil and Armandos newly legless barbeque fire pit. They had the warm glow of a charcoal fire without the distraction of smoke or flames. By the time we considered joining the main fire, they were already stacked 2 and 3 deep, so we returned to our campsite where we were joined by Zack, Dheva and Raj. Scott joined us shortly and in time Daniel, Fil and Granny stopped by too.

This was apparently the winos camp fire as between us we came up with 4 bottles of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. And of course we drank them all. We talked on into the night, enjoying the sharp wit and quick tongues of our comrades. The stack of firewood we had collected did not last long, so every now and then I would drift over towards Fil's camp and scrounge up some of the smaller branches off the fallen tree. They did not seem to mind as their fire was fuelled by charcoal briquets. At one point they threatened to hold me hostage until I paid the appropriate undisclosed fee for the firewood. While trying to ascertain the nature of the fee, I casually asked if the barbeque pit was official Land Rover Gear or at least a standard Solihull stamping. As they hung their heads in shame, I made my escape. Back at our campsite Pod took refuge in Dheva's lap, and Mackie did likewise in Patti's. One by one we drifted off to our sleeping bags. Somewhere around 3:00 a.m. I drifted off mid-sentence into the

arms of Morpheus, while still in conversation with Zack and Scott. Scott retired soon thereafter, whereupon Zack set up his cot. Pod took up his bed warming spot inside Zack's sleeping bag. I awoke long enough to pull 2 camp chairs together and slept by the fire until it died down to the point of causing me to seek the warmth of the van.

Sunday many of us awoke to that familiar unwelcome fuzziness in our brains. Little by little the Rovers began to depart, and soon we too were packed and on our way. We made plans with Zack to meet up at Granzella's in Williams, one I-5 exit south of Maxwell. Along the way we came across Scott taking a closer look at something, a bird or a stream or wetland perhaps. After inviting Scott to join us, our little convoy of 2 RR's, an 88" and a van continued in to Williams where we met up with the Dow clan, Charles, Ed and a few others.

At Granzella's the junior Dows entertained us with their experiments in co-mingling gummi worms and 7-Up, starting with the creation of a blonde mezcal con cusano. Some experiments were conducted in vitro - within the 7-Up bottles. Other experiments were conducted in situ - on the table top, prior to re-ingestion. Experiments they attempted to conduct upon the wall, or the clothing of adults were abruptly terminated. Others experiments were conducted in vivo - in various regions of their alimentary canals and respiratory systems. The long term benefits of sugar encrusted sinus cavities is beyond the bounds of my limited biological knowledge, but I hypothesize that an effervescent solution of sucrose and gummi worm yuk aspirated into the sinus cavities must lead to one hell of a sugar rush, directly into the blood stream, in the immediate vicinity of the brain. Freebasing for fun and energy? As the moisture of the solution is exhaled, through normal respiration, the gummi worm yuk coats and adheres to the interior surface of the sinus cavities, and as the gummi worm yuk dries upon those walls, it shrinks, applying tension to the flesh to which it has become attached. This, I think, would lead to one hell of a sinus headache for the Dow-lets. I pray my hypothesis is invalid, or Chris was in for a long and tiring drive home, with the seats of his Defender 110 to be stained by much more than an acidified partially digested solution of psychedelic gummi-Up. At the very least he would wish that the external roll cage was an internal jail cage to contain the rampant sucrose induced frenzy within. On the other hand, they may have already expended all their energy and taken an extended nap during the drive home.

For us the drive home was most uneventful, and free

from the expected traffic jams. I-5, I-80 and I-680 were all moving at or above the limit.

The first thing we did once we got home was to check the garbage cans, the top of her jewelry box and the shelf where I empty my pockets. No luck. I had long since resigned myself to the fact that I had lost the ring and was in the dog house for life, so I sought refuge in my throne - the recliner in front of the TV. Patti either still had hope or was just more stubborn than even I realized, so she continued searching. She walked out to her 944 and opened the driver's side door, and there highlighted against the dark brown carpeting in the crevice between the seat and the doorsill was a baby blue pouch, 1 inch square.

What a relief, what a reprieve. I wish I could say that I had carefully put it there for safe keeping, but I know the truth is more likely that it just fell out of my pocket. Fortunately the door was closed and the ring fell into

the car. Padded as it was, I would have never heard it, even if it had fallen on tarmac instead of dirt.

SUMMARY

Dust, tearing up wetlands, flipped four by fours, drinking, dogs barking, talk of guns, dogs about to be shot, potato canons being fired. There's got to be a country song in there somewhere.

Oh give me a home

Where the Land Rovers roam

Where the winchers and flippers doth play

And seldom is seen an unfordable stream

And the dogs are not barking all day.

Loam, loam on the Rangie....



Dr. Drip



Well Hello Greasy Reader,

Today Dr. Drip would like to share with you the wonderful world of literature. Here we are...the books every Land Rover Owner should read.

Spoof Titles

Moby Ditch (Moby Dick, Herman Melville)

The Origin of Series (The Origin of Species, Charles Darwin)

The Old Man and the Series (The Old Man and the Sea, Ernest Hemingway)

CylinderHeads Revisited (Brideshead Revisited, Evelyn Waugh)

Rover of One's Own (Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf)

The Great GasBuy, my life as a V8 owner (The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald)

Fahrenheit 451, a tale of missing coolant and subsequent woe (FAHRENHEIT 451 by Ray Bradbury)

Real Titles

A Bridge too Far, Cornelius Ryan

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Ian Fleming

Turn of the Screw, Henry James

Lost Souls, Poppy Z. Brite

The Exorcist, William Peter Blatty

No Highway, Nevil Shute

The Power and the Glory, Graham Greene

How Far Can You Go?, David Lodge

(For American Rover owners) The Innocents Abroad, Roughing It, Mark Twain

A Tale of a Tub, Jonathan Swift

The End of the Road, John Barth

Monkey Wrench Gang, Edward Abbey

Road Less Travelled, M. Scott Peck

On The Road, Jack Kerouac

Well, Greasy Reader, I hope you found this to be a chuckle and a laugh. If you have some titles you would like to share, please do write me at bookem@drdrip.com or PO Box 92827, Henderson, NV 89009



Northern California Rover Club



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: _____
