



Tales from the Trail

INAUGURAL ISSUE



Charter signed by Charter Members, paperwork has been filed with the State of Arizona—We are official !

Charter members from CA, to CO and all over Arizona signed the “Charter” the last two weeks in December and our paperwork has been filed with the state in early January. By organizing and incorporating we not only insure the future success of our Club but we also giving ourselves a measure of protection individually and as a group plus we are also protecting our name and our logo from use by anyone else.

As our members have realized, the benefits of organization are many and there really is no downside. Ok so we have to pay dues, but remember, that for about the price of 2 cases of your favorite frosty beverage you are supporting your club, the website, the fight to keep our lands open and providing us with many other legal and financial benefits.

Picture of the year 2007

George Zalman peering over a cliff at Monument Valley. This was one of many million dollar views there. This certainly gives meaning to a picture is worth 1000 words, or in this case make you speechless !



Upcoming Expeditions:

Devils Highway—March 8 & 9 with optional 3rd day March 10th

Sea of Cortez-Yuma to Rocky Point—April 18th -21st Explore the coastline

Moab—May 17th-25th Trails suitable for Stock Jeeps and challenges too !

Send articles and suggestions for the newsletter to: Newsletter@JeepExpeditions.org



.....**from the Founder and Chairman of the Board**

It has been a hectic and exciting year for our group. After months of planning we successfully pulled off our 1st Expedition on the Devil's highway and now a year later we are planning our Anniversary Run with some new trails and twists. Since then we have planned and had 4 more exciting Expeditions and our 2nd year looks to be even more active with as many as 10 Expeditions planned or in on the drawing boards.

Our 1st Website went online in May of 2007. It was very crude to begin with, got a makeover in October and now what you see is our 3rd generation website today. In September the Jeep Expeditions Blog went live but it was not a big hit with the members so it got buried. In October our Forum/BBS went live, it was an instant hit with many. In December the majority of those participating in an online blind vote/poll made the decision to migrate from our Yahoo Groups Jeep Expeditions site to the Forum and at the same time voted to organize and incorporate. We voted in our 1st Board of Directors in December and the Board developed our Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and SOP's. Charter Membership was offered to all existing members and nearly 1/2 of the group became Charter Members and by the end of December our legal documents were all in order and signed, Charter Members signed on the Charter Page and now 1 week into the new year, our documents are filed with the state. As of today, we have applied for membership into the Arizona State Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs and expect that our membership will be approved at their February meeting. And with all we are working on in the beginnings of 2008, we are already looking forward and have 5 trips on the drawing board for 2009.

Our work has just begun and we have a lot of talent that is moving your club forward and making it better each day. Soon we will have our 1st club discount with a major 4x4 online retailer, we are looking to sign up more and we are visiting with your favorite local retailers too. In the coming weeks and months, a web page will be devoted to discounts, where we get them and spell out exactly what the discount is. We are trying out our NEW Expeditions Store. We have items that are made here directly for the club that are listed on the website and we have just signed on with CafeExpress for a ton of other items from coffee cups, to beer mugs, clothing and more.....all with the club logo on it. We have talented people working on the tech side for website enhancements and improvements and in the near future I would like to see the members rig section have everyone's rig in it and I want to see some major changes made to our Photo Gallery which is too slow in loading and difficult to edit. On the Forums side I would like to see us be able to come up with a good solution to sign up for and keep track of people for trips. This would lead to all the duplicate stuff and the Yahoo Groups Trip sites. All of this takes time and talent. We never seem to have enough time but we have some great talent that has dedicated many hours for you and the club.

I want to thank our Board of Directors: Mark Engdahl, Michael Bethel, Lance Wilson, Diane Zalman, Jim Pribbeno.....also Jeff Edgett for his tireless work on the website, Michael Bethel for his planning of the Cochise Expedition, Jim Galbraith for his planning of the 2008 Devil's Highway Expedition, Don Pryor for his help as a Global Administrator and his volunteering to be the trip leader on the challenging trails at the Moab Expedition, Michael Bethel again for the many hours of design and re-design of our Club Logo, and Carol, my long time partner who has spent countless hours as a computer widow so I could concentrate of building our website, planning trips, doing research, building the BBS..... and others whose names and deeds might have escaped me at the moment for all of the hard work and dedication they have given us.

Mike



.....from Lance “Moondust” Wilson-Vice Chairman

As we move into the New Year, I would just like to say thank you to Mike Fissel for beginning what many of us were looking for in the way of a Jeep club. In the span of just a year we have grown from a loose knit group of former AZVJC members who ran the El Camino del Diablo last March, into a tight knit group of Jeep Expedition Inc. club members. I am proud and honored to have been able to wheel

with most of you and I have formed friendships with many of you over the course of the past year. It has been mind boggling to say the least, watching this group start from its humble beginnings of 26 Jeeps one March morning last year in Ajo, Arizona, grow into a club with close to 100 members! Members from 4 different states "living the adventure" as some of us went on to explore Canyon de Chelly, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and the Kit Carson/Mojave Desert Trail last year. Now with at least 10 expeditions planned for this year, some of them a repeat of last year by popular demand, and the Devils Highway becoming our annual Anniversary Expedition every year, not to mention at least 5 more in the planning stages for 2009, we are doing what no other Jeep clubs can claim, and we do it all in first class fashion, and we all have fun! Look for an off road magazine article about our Kit Carson/Mojave Desert Expedition sometime in March or April of this year!

We have just filed papers with the State of Arizona to become a bonafide organized club, with our very own logo, website, expeditions store, and a great group of Charter Members, with many more members waiting to join up. We have our first Board of Directors of which I am proud to serve on as the Vice Chairman of the Board. Every board member is totally committed to make sure this group continues to grow and become even better in the coming years. I am proud to be working with Mike Fissel, our well deserved Chairman of the Board and Web Master, he has put in countless hours guiding this group, planning expeditions, and building our website as well as our Expedition Store. Mike Bethel, our "Logo Master" who designed our great logo. Diane Zalman, who is our Marketing Director, along with Mark Engdahl and Jim Pribbeno round out a great group of 6 tireless individuals all with a vision of making the Jeep Expeditions Group work for you and all future members. And let's not forget Don Pryor, who has done a great job as our Forums Global Moderator. And finally, I would like to say to each and every member, Thank You for making this group so fun to wheel with! Everyone of you has contributed in one way or another to make Jeep Expeditions Inc. what it is today, the best damn Jeep group in the Southwest !

Lance "Moondust" Wilson



.....from Director Michael Bethel – the Logo Guru !



My Great-grandfather used to say "wish in one hand and spit in the other and see which one fills up first". OK, so after that maybe I owe some of you an apology and what does it have to do with Jeeping anyway? First this same Great-grandfather use to take me out in his 53 Willys CJ3 to go fishing on the Gila River across the border in New Mexico. There, that takes care of the Jeep

connection. Second there are Jeep owners all across the country wishing that they had what we have now. To take a wish from vision to action requires people like you the members of the JeepExpeditions organization.

I personally would like to thank each of you for being people of action. Without you Mike would be out wandering in the desert all by himself. More importantly for myself I now have the opportunity to do something I have often wished for and that is getting to share with you the trails of my youth. The first of these will be this next September on our Trails of Cochise run. I have to say that with 19 Jeeps currently signed up I'm starting to feel the weight of this run but I also feel an excitement that I really hope to be able to share with the rest of you.

Taking vision to action is what started this group and that is what will keep it alive and healthy. As we ride into the future with this group I hope to live some of your visions as well.

Michael "azwillys"



.....**from Director Diane Zalman – “Number 7”**

Funny how one thing leads to another. Your kitchen faucet is and next thing you know you not only have a new faucet, but matching kitchen appliances! Okay, that's probably an exaggeration, but it's not too far off from how much our lives have changed in the last year simply due to meeting one certain fellow Jeeper.

Last year we attended Hunter's 8th Annual AZVJC Bar-B-Que for the first time. We really didn't know too many people there, but it was easy to start conversations and get to know people because it was all about Jeeps. Soon after we got there we heard there was a guy at the Bar-Be-Que who was putting together a trip to the El Camino del Diablo. Well, we had wanted to run that trail for a long time but we didn't want to go alone, so we wanted to meet this guy!

That guy turned out to be Mike Fissel, who gave us contact information to sign up for the trip, which has now turned out to be the Inaugural Trip for The Jeep Expeditions Group. We went on that trip and three more during 2007.

These trips have allowed us to explore more back country than we would have ever dreamed possible. Years ago when we visited Canyon de Chelly and stood on the overlook to Spider Rock, we saw little trucks down there, and we thought, wouldn't that be the coolest; to get to drive down in the Canyon to explore? We DID that! We've seen pictures in magazine articles of vehicles on the Mojave Trail, and thought wow, wouldn't that be fun? We DID that!

Our lives have been enriched beyond our imagining; now that we are involved with The Jeep Expeditions Group, we are either planning, on, or reminiscing about an expedition most of the time. Our marriage is stronger than ever because of it. We must be more interesting people to be around, because everyone is asking us to tell what this or that trip was like. We've made a lot of new friends who share our interests and a couple of very close friends who share our lives. When we look back on the year and that fateful meeting at Hunters, we are thankful and feel blessed. Thankful for the many experiences we would otherwise have missed, and blessed with many our new friends.

Diane & George Zalman



.....**from Director Mark Engdahl – Transrock 1**

Ok so I am obsessed with jeeps but even more than that I am obsessed with the outdoors and sharing the experience with like minded folks. So when the opportunity to form a club with people who are like me came along I thought I had died and gone to heaven... and you know I was right!

I have been on 3 of our 5 Expeditions now and each one has been a GREAT experience!

El Camino Del Diablo was the first and this is one that I will remember for the rest of my life along with about 40+ other avid outdoors minded JEEPERS! I have since been back this year for some different trails that were not taken last year.

We have what looks like a record turn out signed up for this years trip and it promises to be trip to remember. If you are not yet involved I encourage you to get on the forum and get to know us better and start to make your plans for some great trips this year.

If you need help or have questions all you have to do is ask. See you on the trails!

Your friend,

Mark Engdahl

Transrock1@aol.com



.....from Director Jim Pribbeno – “Scramblin’ Jim”

In terms of doing things with my Jeep, 2007 has been a wonderful year for me. I owe a great deal of those blessings to being able to find this group of Jeep enthusiast and getting involved with the activities JeepExpeditions.org has offered!

I am a novice when it comes to Jeep related things. I took the plunge into Jeep ownership back in August 2006 with the purchase of an old '83 Jeep Scrambler. I felt that it made no sense to take a \$30,000 plus vehicle out into the desert and trash it. I like the nostalgic look of the old Scrambler and the simplicity of its design. After I got it into reliable running shape, the question became where to go, and with whom?

Having been on the Arizona Virtual Jeep club website, I learned of this group's first trip and the over night expedition along the Devils Highway. So in May last year I took my first big adventure with my 193,000 mile vehicle and joined the group on the Canyon de Chelly trip. Oh what an experience. Its the most fun I have had on 4-wheels in a long time. What made it even all the more enjoyable was my 12-year old daughter went with me. It was so much fun to see and hear her get hooked on 4-wheeling! She really loved the splashing through all the small creeks, getting mud flung everywhere, and taking pictures of the wonderful scenery.

What is great about these trips and our group is how it is geared for stock vehicles. You don't have to spend tons of money on lifting your rig and protecting it underside to enjoy the trips. And if you break down, how everyone pitches in and comes to your aid, bringing tow straps, tool boxes, spare parts, or even a long drive back to town to get you parts.

Another great thing is our chuck wagon meals and gathering around the camp fire in the evenings. Here we hear stories about the area we are exploring, we share in preparing, cooking, and cleaning up. Its just a great and comfortable end to a day of adventuring.

Now as we head into 2008 and the new adventures ahead, I am honored to be one of the founding members of this Jeep club. My desire for this club is to bring the joy I have experienced in the outback to a level that each of you can enjoy. I hope to be wheel'n with each of you in the near future.

Jim Pribbeno

“Scramblin’ Jim”

****MEMBER OF THE QUARTER****



It is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors announces our first ever, Member of the Quarter, Jeff Edgett, who goes by the member name of “rubicontrail.net” ! Jeff is a Charter Member of our group and has been instrumental in the new look and design of our website. The Board of Directors chose Jeff based on his many hours of dedication and hard, work to bring the website from its humble HTML beginnings to where it is today.

You can read more about Jeff by clicking on his rig in the Members Rigs section of our website www.jeepexpeditions.org

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Future Members of the Quarter will be nominated by the members in the 30 days prior to the publishing of the newsletter. An announcement will be made on the Forum/BBS.

****Honorary Member****



It is with great pleasure that I introduce to you our first honorary members, Christiaan and Beatrijs Linford of the Netherlands. I guess that also makes Chris and "B" our 1st International Members also.

Chris and B love Jeeps, love the southwest and love Arizona in particular. Two years ago on one of their visits here, we wheeled together with the AZVJC and AZBackcountry. Last year Chris and B attended the Grand Canyon Expedition with us. Among other car clubs in their native Holland, Chris and B are members of the Dutch FSJ club and besides a vintage J10 truck they also own an XJ Wagoneer a CJ5 and quite a collection of other vintage vehicles, mostly British and some quite cool too !

This year, Chris and B are arranging vacation time around one and possibly two of our Expeditions, Moab and Sedona and they quite possibly will be bringing two other Members of their Jeep club with them this time. Chris is quite the artist and you can see his work and link to many of his pictures of European, Australian and Arizona wheeling at his website: <http://www.linford.nl/>

Please give a warm welcome to Chris and Beatrijs !

Future Newsletters

Future newsletters will be produced once per quarter. The next newsletter will be available around the end of March, beginning of April.

Content: Each of the Board members will say a few words and we are looking for articles by members to post. Some topics might be your favorite Expedition, your favorite Jeep, a tech article, your favorite off-road spots.....to name a few.

Member of the Quarter will be announced each newsletter and we will also have a member of the year at the end of each year based on YOUR nominations.

News of upcoming Expeditions, trip reports on Expeditions that happened between newsletters and more.

We want the newsletter to be fun and informative. Until next time.....