

Maple Springs into Cleghorn Maple Bacon turned over Trip Report

Friday, April 10 John's Place Run

A few members pulled up with our 4x4 rigs at John's Place for Dinner. There was myself with my step-daughter, Alyssa, representing the Toyota Land Cruiser, my good friend Becky with her new Lexus GX550 "Epic version of the new Land Cruiser", Kevin with his Ford truck, the Ranger, if I am correct, and Josh Noesser with his very nice family and an awesome Jeep Wrangler. We said hello outside, made it inside, and ordered food. I had a bacon cheeseburger with fries, Alyssa had a corndog, Kevin had a burger as well...I think. Josh had a good plate of onion rings with other food items, his daughter make a good order of pancakes as breakfast for dinner can be very enjoyable. Becky ordered a "small" salad. Becky's salad drew Josh's attention to thinking she was given a jungle of a large meal.... Dinner was outstanding and we had a great time with friends in the Dirt Devil Club. Overall, a good evening run to the meeting location.

Well...a time I was looking forward to getting on the local trail took an unfortunate turn as the Cleveland National forest closed their gates on Friday. I called Thursday with a green light response with the Maple Springs Truck Trail being open. Friday after hearing from some concerns, I called with the bad news of the gate closure.

Friday dinner was great. Thank you Kevin, Becky, and Josh and family for hanging out. Now it is time for a little Cleghorn Maple Bacon Desert on Saturday.

Saturday, April 11 Cleghorn Road

After getting the word out of the Cleveland National Forest closure, I was happy to hear the interest those had to join me for a run on the Cleghorn Road. Joining me for a great day was Geoff Moody and his great dog, Bob Berg, Debi Craddock with her great dog, and once again Becky. We met at the McDonald's at the Cajon Pass to head to the trail where we aired down under the HWY 15 Bridge to start an easy day with some optional challenges.

Through the trail, we had an easy ride. Bob took some offshoots and so did Debi. I feel like along the way Geoff was up for some of those and as I took the ones I felt good about, we also put Becky's new Lexus GX550 through some trials on the rig's maiden voyage with tires on dirt. There were some really great places for Becky to get out of the comfort zone as well as boost the confidence with such a cool rig. I spotted and saw the return of 3 wheeling Becky return in full style once again. Becky told me, "I like this way more than the 4Runner" But we won't let the 4Runner know and feel sad! But wait!...There's more!!!!

Bob had an amazing build of a Jeep. He took some good extra credit lines and so did Debi from what I recall. They ended up getting ahead of us on one of the offshoots and then we regrouped again. As we got closer to the end of the trail, there are many steep extra credit points that can be worth the challenge. Bob was all for these.

Here is where I pause and rethink my lifetime on this trail. Our RunDude, Ray, at this exact spot somehow snapped a pitman arm leaving him with no steering as I winched him and drove my tow rig and trailer up for his recovery. I have used my roll bars on the Tacoma to get me out of some trouble here and I am probably sure others share similar stories like myself. I have a new rule on this trail when I lead or if I go and someone else leads who would allow me this opportunity... Before anyone takes this extra credit, I get to see and spot those through in order to see the break or other excitement if this happens. Otherwise, I am glad to help with getting through in the best way possible!

So Bob was up for the challenge and to his surprise was alerted to the extra credit. I communicated on the radio that I would be right up there. As I walked the steep hill and turned the corner, I had the last sight of his Jeep on 4 tires leaving 2 and taking a good flop on the driver's side. Making the rest of the way thinking about Bob being okay and what the next steps would be, we were all glad he was okay. We all rushed to his support and cut his seatbelt and helped him out of the jeep. Unfortunately, his Jeep had a nose bleed of that good old Maple syrup red known as transmission fluid. No Maple Springs Truck Trail but now only this loss like a locked gate. Now we had to make the next plans with what was needed to situate his Jeep. This day made us only fortunate to have a well qualified firefighter and trained individual, Geoff. Geoff was well armed with recovery gear from shackles, ropes, and straps to help in the situation as well as being ready on the medical side.

The first part of the plan, Debi was willing to drive up the trail from the bottom. She asked me if I was a good spotter. I said yes as she told me she did not have the experience for a while. I told her she was going to get that experience back and Debi was only amazing as she followed me as the spotter. She lightly made her way up to a point to use Bob's winch in a plan to get his rig up the right way. Well we all tried by linking the winch up thanks to all of Geoff's gear so readily available. I got into the sideways jeep, started operating the winch, and trying to steer as best as possible. Unfortunately no luck as Debbi held a solid place on the trail to anchor. Well, onto the next step. Geoff was up above and we also got some attention of others who found us in our situation.

Those helped as we all formulated plans and what ideas were best. Becky took me back to my Land Cruiser and I made my way into a new invented trail to get close to Bob's jeep with a winch line. Getting my Land Cruiser through some brush and bushes, a few obstacles, and on the edge of the cliff to get the winch over, we attached to Bob's rock slider and with the helps of Geoff and some addition friends who helped in the pushing, we recovered Bob's jeep onto all 4 wheels! We were far from over as we could not get the jeep into the correct gear and tried to dry in out the way it came. Geoff was pushing his jeep hard and getting concerned about his transmission as there was just no traction on the ground. Rightfully so and as we kept Geoff there, we daisy chained with our new friend's chevy truck to Geoff, and my to the our new friend. In the process, Becky, Alyssa, Debbi, and the mutts cheered us on and we reached the proper surface to Bob's jeep.

That was our full day of many hours to help each other in the club. We traveled out to the other side and aired up. I went and got the extra quarts of transmission fluid for Bob that he needed once again and he made it home. Becky, Alyssa, and myself went into Wrightwood and made it to the pizza place, Old Yodeler, that I was looking forward to through the whole day. Overall, a huge thanks to everyone for the help, support, and never leaving anyone such as a fallen comrade behind. I want to really recognize our guest potential member, Geoff Moody. I hope he considers taking membership as he was exceptional with his skills and readiness. Geoff made this entire situation much better than if he was not on this run. He was enthusiastic about demonstrating his skills as firefighter and medic as well as the skills in grabbing all his recovery gear and handling a rough situation. We did it as a team but Geoff was outstanding to stand on the front lines of the situation.

We look forward to the next trails and a great time with Dirt Devils!