

Montana Backroads 4x4 Club, Inc., called to order by President Willie Worthy at 6:20 pm at Joker's Wild Restaurant, Missoula.

Members present: Dave and Karen Knapp, Pete and Karen Elmer, Steve Knutsen, Willie and Jeanne Worthy, Steve Gehring, Derek Emerson, Jim and Lorna Younkin, Larry Garrison, Bill and Char Boldt, Bruce Erickson, Fred McDowell, Dick Riebe, Erik Englebert, James Riggs, and Joe Lorenzo, along with guests Jay Schweitzer, Lonnie Labbe, and Alaina Strehlow, and speaker Dan Curtin, from FWP.

Willie had sent meeting notice out two weeks ahead of time and asked to hear back on who could attend. He received only seven or so responses, so booked Joker's Wild mid sized room. They don't want to use their BIG room (which holds 100 people), unless we fill up the mid sized room. They also need a head count so they can have adequate staff on hand. Perhaps change the seating arrangement...make it square, so no one's back is to others? Possibly find another location? Does anyone have ideas on where?

No treasurer's report as Joe not in attendance till very end of meeting. Joe has repaid Willie for Ravalli County Off Road Users Association dues; needs to reimburse him for state of Montana incorporation filing paperwork for \$15, and payment for the hosting of web site.

Mud Bog: There will be a mud bog at Muralt's Travel Plaza on Saturday, May 21, at noon. No one has contacted our club or the M4x4 association about it, Jeanne found out when talking to Walt Muralt. Mountain Jacks 4x4 club has perhaps re-organized and changed their name. Dick will check and report back.

Willie had everyone introduce themselves, tell their occupation & what they drive.

Slide show: Bruce reported that Lori had tried to set up a slide show on web site, but it didn't work with our hosting.

Facebook: Fred will set up Facebook page for club. We should receive much publicity from it. Do we want to set up some sort of blog for club stories?

M4x4A report: Dick reported on Montana 4x4 Association delegates meeting in April where officers were elected. Tom Mander, president; Tom Blom, vice president; Dawn Hines, treasurer; and Stacey Osborne, secretary. They have reworked their web site so it's much more accessible do take a look at it. Their newsletter 4xForum is now on line, and Mark Blom needs your address if you'd rather have a **hard copy, contact him at newconcepts@bresnan.net, 727-1432, or 265 16th Avenue S, Great Falls, MT 59405.**

M4x4 Convention was held in Great Falls on April 9 with "red neck" theme, which was quite humorous. Sue and Dick had made a bid to have convention in Missoula, but best price was \$40 a plate, and at October delegates meeting the association voted to have convention at Claim Jumper in Great Falls at \$20 a plate for pulled pork dinner. They had 75 dinners, an average

turnout.

Also at the delegates meeting in October, Dick questioned if M4x4A should stay affiliated with United Four Wheel Drive Association as it seemed they weren't receiving a lot locally for the amount of money spent. United does have good rapport with Department of Interior in Washington, DC, and they have a part time lobbyist, and have existed for 25 years. Many larger clubs were registering with M4x4A as associate clubs for \$100. M4x4A will redo membership categories, and all clubs have to have 100 percent membership. Dick feels more money should be spent in Montana for Montana. Dick made motion to send a \$2000 donation to Citizens for Balanced Use from M4x4A, Ed Melcher seconded it, motion carried. Eight people from M4x4A will attend convention. M4x4A has net worth of \$28,000.

Postal food drive is Saturday, May 14, have three drivers (Willie, Erik and Dick). Can use other volunteers as well, they need to arrive at the Food Bank on Third (south side) between Orange and Higgens at 4 pm.

RCORUA Report: Pete did report as board member of RCORUA, they do lots of volunteer work in the Bitterroot National Forest (they have 450-500 members). It would have cost the FS 1.2 million in 2010 to do the amount of time volunteered, 1700 + hours and \$85 an hour for ATV rental. They've discussed setting up the old Darby Lumber Company site for off road use (840 acres) as it's interspersed with FS land. It now has mostly logging roads, some good ditches and such, but could have up to 300 miles of ATV trails, a 48-50 mile loop for 4x4 vehicles, and motorcycle trails. It could be a tourism attraction rather than having people going off road illegally. There were suggestions that he contact the Skyliners 4x4 Club in Polson for their expertise on the Blacktail/Wild Bill trail they developed in conjunction with the Big Fork district office of FS. M4x4A Divide Ride will be held in Polson area this year. Pete is also on Bitterroot NF advisory committee, which has members from Sierra Club, to extreme wilderness advocates, to Pete's experiences as off road user and urban interface dweller. The forest has a program for receiving proposals for funding (Ravalli County Weed District does a weed pull for example), which then goes to FS for matching funds. They have received a proposal for roadless area at Darby Lumber Company to protect the fish at Rye Creek in Skalkaho area. There's been no NEPA nor public comment, which there definitely should be. RCORUA does have a fund for fighting closures. The Chain of Lakes area may become a wilderness study area, so RCORUA contributed \$5000 to fight that proposal.

Dan Curtin, FWP warden, has spent 27 years in Missoula office, spoke on various experiences he's had. There are 100 field officers in Montana. He has no typical day...it changes every season. His main message: respect multiple use, use common sense and SHARE. He also stressed that every public comment submitted is read and considered, and that the public should attend all the open houses on a project. Did a outstanding job

Web site submissions: send information to Willie and he'll submit to webmaster. Remember it is your web site so use it and contribute to it.

Watson's Children's Shelter 4x4 trip. Willie has spoken to director Fran Albrecht and she is

interested in participating, but hasn't yet set a date and time. Fred knows Coby English, and will check with him about planned 4x4 trip.

Trips: Erik says he'll set up a snow trip soon, possibly as a chili run. Bruce might also lead a trip. Willie and Jeanne will be doing trips this summer that most likely will be a lot of back tracking and searching out stuff, as well as hiking, and maybe not a lot of four wheeling. They will be a kind of spur of moment type trips with only a few days notice. They'll also hopefully do a couple of days to Melrose area, and a week long one to the Oregon dunes the second week of September after Labor Day.

Dues are due June 1st, no exceptions! mail to Joe Lorenzo at 627 Lafray Lane, Missoula, MT 59801

Club projects: Discussion of doing a trash pickup, possibly up Miller Creek, Deer Creek over to Turah, or Gold Creek (off of Highway 200). Dan knows Steve Kletzel and possibly could get a free dumpster to use, or check with Five Valleys Land Trust as well as Chad Bauer at BFI. Jay was quite enthusiastic about helping.

Publicity for club meetings: any ideas on how to get information out there about the club? Possibly can submit information to wakeup@ktmf.com, community@kpax.com, comcal@nbcmontana.com, and cherrycreekradio.com (contact us); as well as for Community Bulletin which runs in Tuesday's Missoulian (Jackie Maunder 523-5237).

Party: Char asked about club summer party/bbq. Fred had arranged use of a side by side utility vehicle from Big Sky Motorsports for last year's party, which was a lot of fun. Discussion was it is a little early to plan summer party yet.

Tire covers: Dave asked about tire covers: need a minimum of five; he's interested, as is Erik, and James; possibly Bill? Bill could possibly sew them and have silk screened in Missoula. Let Willie know if you want one.