

Montana Back Roads 4x4 Club, Inc.
Minutes
June 15, 2011

Montana Back Roads 4x4 Club, Inc., called to order at 6:15 pm by President Willie Worthy at Joker's Wild Restaurant, Missoula, MT.

Members present: Larry Garrison, Bruce Erickson, Willie and Jeanne Worthy, Steve Gehring, Steve Knutsen, Dick and Sue Riebe, Curtis Evelo, Jeremy Hitchcock, Joe and Jenny Lorenzo, James Riggs and Alaina Strehlow, and guests Lonnie Labbe, Cody Moore, Chris Raulston, and Jay Schweitzer. Cody rebuilt his Dad's 1982 CJ-7 as a high school senior project.

Willie read thank you note from Missoula Food Bank, for sorting, receiving and picking up food, they gathered 10,300 pounds of food and over \$100 in donations, making it possible to feed 5000 individuals.

Several people didn't rejoin club, so they'll be dropped from roster.

Bruce and wife Lori used her RAV4 for a Northwest trip, got off road north of Spokane on a gravel road, and had a great relaxing time.

Derek Emerson's trip to Garnet on June 5 was interesting, as he chickened out in the snow in a couple of places, and then left early! Willie and Jeanne rode with James and Alaina, and Jeremy, Angie and son brought their Cherokee. Guest Ken Nelson, wife and son from Plains brought their CJ-5, which needs some work to meet club safety standards. Later in the day the club found some fairly good mud puddles and visited the log remains at Copper Cliff area.

James will check out the Blue Mountain Trail for the Watson Children's Shelter trip.

United 4Wheel Drive Association's "Voice" newsletter is only available on line, so be sure to look at it. Willie hates reading it on line, would much rather receive a "hard" copy; the same with M4x4A "Forum". Need to check to see if it is available in print version.

Introduced new member Jeremy Hitchcock who owns J & K Customs in Missoula.

RCORVA is sponsoring a poker rally on July 10, below Darby at Fales Flats Campground, with 4x4 and ATV trails. Willie sent email flyers to everyone.

Larry brought his Jeep trailer for show and tell.

Dave Knapp had said he'd check on t-shirt information; Willie and Jeanne were at the Shirt Shop today and Rob can sell us Hanes 100 percent cotton tees in colors at \$8.50 each if we order 30 or more.

Our speaker was Fran Albrecht, Watson Children's Shelter executive director. They are pleased we're going to do 4x4 trip with kids, which hasn't been scheduled yet due to much snow. Originally called Watson's Receiving Home, it has been in existence since 1977 when Janice Watson, a teacher at Target Range school, started it. She had one of the first day care facilities in the '60s. At that point all the orphanages had closed, so there was no place for abandoned or orphaned children. The police started calling Jan looking for a place for these kids.

When Fran became executive director 14 years they needed to raise one million dollars in two years or their lease would expire (they had raised \$50,000 in three previous years). They accomplished that and built the Shelter on Fort Missoula Road in 2000, six months ahead of schedule. They care for children from infants to age 14, from all over western Montana, any type of family crisis, are open 24 hours a day to receive up to 16 children. Generally a child will stay 50-60 days. In 2010, they started the One Isn't Enough Campaign and raised enough money by July to open another Shelter on Blue Mountain Road that houses another 16 children. They care for approximately 100 kids a year, most of who have nothing when they come in. The Shelter children don't have to worry about meals, they can have seconds and thirds, they give each child five outfits to start out with, and even their own toys. They keep continuity for each child (let them attend same school if at all possible, and keep siblings together). The school bus comes to the Shelter for pick up, and the staff works with catch up and homework in the evenings. They do many activities over the summer (swim lessons four mornings a week, Paws Up horseback riding, raft trips, tours, visit museums, etc.)

Fran said they're seeing more sexual abuse, especially with meth busts. She sees so much good in the children and enjoys watching them blossom. The community can donate clothing Monday thru Friday at the Blue Mountain location (over the summer they need quality kid's tee shirts, shorts, and swim suits, they can be lightly used). They have 38 staff members, 9 full time, with around the clock staffing. The children do chores and receive \$1 per day, and are taught about savings and spending. The Shelter sends things along with the kids when they leave: usually a bike, maybe a skateboard, clothing, toys, and Christmas and birthday presents. They have a bike track/path in the Shelter backyard, as well as a playground and lawn area. She says they always need help repairing bikes.

She answered questions as to trip guidelines: don't ask intrusive questions (keep it general); or you can ask staff any particular questions. Probably will be children ages 7 to 14, as few as 10 or as many as 16.

Steve G. asked question about the Lolo Motorway which is improved gravel Forest Service road that follows the ridgeline Lewis and Clark Trail. Could do it all in one long day. Starts at Powell Ranger Station in ID and ends at Kamiah, ID.

Willie reminded all that anyone can lead a trip.

The Blacktail/Wild Bill area is partially open, muddy, still has four feet of snow in places.

The club now has a Facebook page: link is on the club web site.

Joe presented treasurer's report: club has \$1239.46 having received most member's dues and M4x4A dues (most money will go on to association), should end up with about \$500. Discussion of how to use money: consensus that it shouldn't be used for just a party. Joe reimbursed Willie \$12.99 for speaker Dan Curtin's dinner from last meeting, and \$53.55 for Aplus.net web site hosting.

Discussion of date for Shelter trip, Willie will talk to Shelter staff and send out the possible dates via email. Discussion of what to cover with kids: talk about flowers, trees, animals, weather, etc. Missoula district FS will send their "kid ranger" to talk about how to treat forest correctly and such. Hopefully we'll have good club participation. The club may buy fried chicken, juice drinks, and cookies for all. Steve G. has a heater/cooler he can bring. We could bring pine cones and such back for the children who can't attend. Alaina said she can bring crayons, clipboards, field guides, and could help the children make pet rocks. Jay used to work at the Missoulian so still has contacts for publicity (we need to talk to Shelter staff first regarding privacy issues).

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.