



# THE SLO 4-WHEELER



Volume 22, Issue 3

May / June 2016

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## SLO 4-Wheelers Spring Fling 2016

*Written by Suzy J  
Photos by Suzy J*

We could not have picked a better day to take a nice casual drive to the coast for our annual Spring Fling on April 23. Despite rain the day before, we had blue skies, no wind and mild temperatures. A large collection of vehicles, dogs and their owners gathered in the Paso Robles Denny's parking lot at 9AM. Kirk M., our trailboss, explained the plan for the day, which was to head north on Nacimiento Lake Drive/Interlake Road (G14) out of Paso Robles, to Lockwood/Jolon Road and then to Fort Hunter Liggett.



We had a total of 12 rigs:



- Kirk & Ingrid M. and their dog Ione in their 1982 Toyota
- Tom & Karen B. in their 1985 Toyota pickup
- Mike D. in a 1990 Toyota pickup
- Robert & Belen G. in their 2008 Jeep Grand Cherokee
- Jon, Deena and Deegan M. in a 2006 Jeep Rubicon Unlimited
- Casey & Loree M. with their dogs Sissy & RC in their 2000 Ford F350 diesel 7.3L

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 2015 SLO 4-Wheelers Officers

### Officers:

President:..... Tom B  
 Vice President:..... Kirk M  
 Secretary:..... Kevin B  
 Treasurer:..... Jon M

### Board of Directors (includes officers):

Ways and Means:..... Kenn B  
 Membership Director:..... George W  
 Events Director:..... Eric F  
 Land Use Liaison:..... Tyler F  
 CA4WDCA Liaison:..... Suzy J  
 Social Chairperson:..... Open  
 Newsletter Editor:..... George W

### Committees:

Safety Chairperson:..... Nathan L  
 Promotional Chairperson:..... Dan H  
 Virtual Club Scrapbook:..... Open  
 Archived Scrapbook:..... Randy P  
 Virtual Committee:..... George W  
**Adopted Trails and Campgrounds:**  
 Garcia Ridge Trail:..... Tyler F  
 Pine Mountain Trail:..... Phil B  
 La Panza Camp Ground:..... Open

### Newsletter submittals

by two weeks before the next issue to George at g\*\*\*\*\*@\*\*\*\*\*.net

(Continued from page 1)

- Larry & Lyndsee T. with their dogs Moonshine & Rebel in their 1998 Chevy K2500
- Kurt W. and Paul H. in Kurt's 2014 Jeep Wrangler
- Q, Melia and Araya in their 2014 XTerra
- Laura & Eric H. and Devyn B. in a 2003 GMC Sierra
- A couple whose names I didn't get in a nicely restored early Bronco
- Terry & Suzy J. in 2011 Jeep JK Rubicon Unlimited

After our travels around the country, it never ceases to amaze me how beautiful this part of California is with its rolling hills, agriculture, wildflowers, soaring hawks, wild turkeys and even herds of elk (yes, I'm pretty sure I saw some near Fort Hunter Liggett).

We stopped at the water crossing at Fort Hunter Liggett and let the dogs and their humans enjoy playing in the water. It was a



good time to get acquainted and admire each other's vehicles.

After that we headed out on the winding, slow and scenic Nacimiento-Fergusson Road that would take us to the coast. This road climbs to 2,700 feet, with more than 100 turns on the last part of the road, and offers breathtaking views of the ocean far below.

We became the only ones with mechanical issues on this trip when we got a 'hot oil' light on our Jeep. Turns out the transmission overheated a bit due to the long and slow ascent. We

should have shifted into first and just left it there instead of letting it hunt for gears.

We left pavement by turning left on the Coast Ridge Trail (Forest Service Rd. #20S05), wound around for a while and then turned on 22S04 onto the Prewitt Ridge area. On the ridge overlooking the Pacific, the group decided that this would be the best spot for lunch. Not only did we have great views, but we also enjoyed watching some very brave souls setting up their hang gliders and para gliders and leaving solid ground on a gust of wind. Kirk, Ingrid and others set up the EZ-up, hung up the club banner, and proceeded to put out a delicious spread. We had tri-tip sandwiches, salads and desserts hauled in by our intrepid crew. Just as we were settling into our chairs for a well-deserved meal, a forest service employee showed up and said that we were lawbreakers. It seems that we had parked our rigs just beyond the 'no parking' sign (sign, what sign?). We all needed to move forward a few





feet to get off of the grass. So the EZ-up sprouted legs, chairs were moved and vehicles inched closer to the para gliders. We managed to avoid getting any parking tickets, and instead were issued free campfire permits.

After at least an hour (maybe two) of eating, chatting and watching the people fly around, we slowly packed up and headed out. I assumed that we were going to go back the way we came, but instead we headed out for more dirt roads. That was fine with me, because there are some great routes back there and I was in no hurry to get back to pavement.

Somehow we got separated from the main group shortly after takeoff, so Terry and I, Tom and Q were left to figure out which way to go. We looked at our vehicle navigation (useless), failed to find a Forest Service map that covered the area, and generally were, well, sort of lost. I pretended to know what I was doing by scouting out the two choices, and decided (wrongly as it turns out), that more vehicles had turned left than had turned right. So we went left in a heading that took us uncomfortably east rather than west. Eventually we were joined by our trailboss, who had doubled back after taking road #23S02, only to find a locked gate.

We continued southeast on the South Coast Ridge Road (#20S05) for about eight miles, enjoying the views while at the same time wondering if we were ever going to come down out of the mountains. Finally, we turned right on #23S01 on Willow Creek and got down to Highway 1.

Goodbyes were said, and I think all of us frantically headed for the nearest restroom. Thank you Kirk and the rest of the crew for a great run and an amazing meal.



# 10 Important Tasks After Driving Off-Road

Just as you put a lot of thought and preparation into your trip before you set off, you should also take the time afterward to ensure that your vehicle and gear survived the drive and are ready for the next adventure. Even a mild course can affect your vehicle.

Print this checklist and keep it in your glove compartment or other dry location. By following this list carefully, you ensure that you review every important section or component of your vehicle.

First and foremost, do a thorough inspection of your vehicle to make sure that it is in safe driving condition. You should not take the vehicle onto roads, especially the highway, if there are significant structural or other safety issues.

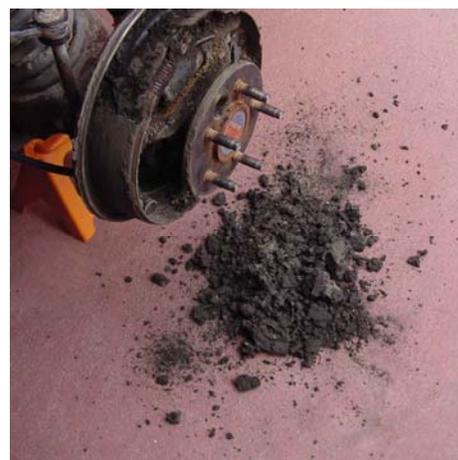
1. Air up your tires. Don't try to drive on pavement with your tires low on pressure. Not only will you have difficulty handling the vehicle, but you risk serious damage to tires and rims. Check your tire pressure the following morning. It can drop 2 to 5 PSI overnight. Remember that you aired up when the tires were hot.
2. Wash and vacuum your vehicle. This will help prevent the spread of weed seeds to other areas, but also makes it easier to spot any fluid leaks and damage that needs repairing. Invasive plants are a problem all over the U.S., caused in part by people driving in multiple areas—sometimes even in different states—without cleaning their vehicles between trips. As a result, they spread noxious weeds to new locations. Be a good sport and clean your vehicle after each off-road drive.
3. Wash your engine. Drive to an appropriate facility, turn off the engine, and hose it down. With a clean engine, you can spot any leak that has developed, as well as a loose bolt, hose, clamp, or other part.
4. Check fluid levels, fan or serpentine belt, and other parts. If you do this frequently enough, you will become accustomed to your engine compartment, and it will be easier to spot a problem or potential problem when one occurs.
5. Examine the differential and transmission for cracks and the fluids for water.
6. Inspect and clean drum brakes, if applicable. Pull off the drums and clean out any mud or sand inside. That will wear down your brakes in a hurry. This is a good time to adjust your brakes or even replace the shoes, if need be.
7. Inspect CV boots, struts and shocks, and other underbody parts. Any need replacing? Take a look at joints, bearings, and other parts that may need regreasing. What about the nuts and bolts that hold the axle and suspension together? The vehicle's suspension system (track bar, control arm, shocks, and spring) are very susceptible to loosening and affect the drivability. Problems with any one of these items could cause damage to the drive train over time.
8. Push and pull on the suspension to see if anything is loose. Push on the side of the vehicle. Are the track bars loose? Have a friend rotate the steering wheel back and forth while you inspect the tie rod ends.
9. Inspect your tools. Are they clean, in order, and accessible?
10. Clean and restock any fluids or gear (including medical supplies, spare parts, and fire extinguisher) you used or that became damaged



*Boundary Peak, NV*

(such as recovery straps). Create a list of repairs and other actions action items during the trip or on the way home while it is still fresh in your mind. Make sure you put back all the essential items, and that your vehicle is tidy and prepared for your next trip.

Tom Severin, President  
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# Safe Departure Point & Other End Trip Stuff



Last month we reviewed the 10 qualities of a great trail leader. That article took us from the planning and preparations stages to the conclusion of a 4WD trip. This month's article discusses what you as a Trail Leader need to do once everyone has reached the departure point. Even though the ride is over, several additional steps are needed to bring that enjoyable event to a successful conclusion. This is riveting information if you are a trail guide!

## 1. Departure Point Selection

But before we arrive at the departure place, let's review the selection of the departure point and the time-of-day goal to end the trip.

Can you have them back on pavement early enough, to drive home that day? 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. is OK when the return trip is 200 – 300 miles. It will be a late arrival for them but still gives a very full day on the trail. If it is the last day of a long holiday weekend, you can be sure most guests will be anxious about getting out ahead of the traffic. You should plan to have them on pavement by noon.

Pick a safe place to allow the vehicles to be aired up, anti-sway bars to be reconnected and people to say goodbye. It should be near a major road home. The departure point need not be right when the dirt ends. Continue to lead the group until it is a simple matter to head home. A great location has a trash bins nearby. Everyone wants to unload their trash as soon as possible. Access to fuel is a plus after a long off-road trip. An ideal location has available flush toilets (or at least pit toilets). You need to identify the closest car wash for situations when it is imperative the mud comes off as soon as possible.

## 2. Get your guests back on the road

Your fellow four wheelers will be eager to get going. But you need to ensure that each driver and vehicle is ready to go. Drivers should inspect their vehicles to make sure they are road worthy. Visit each driver and ask, "Everything all right?" If anyone needs assistance, either lend a hand or ask others to help. If not obvious by their comments, make sure every driver is clear about the route home. Retrieve any gear or

equipment (radios, shovels, etc.) you lent out.

You should always be the last to leave the departure area. You never want to leave anyone behind. Be especially patient with newer four wheelers. They often take a little longer to get prepared.

This is a good time to collect the evaluation forms. Incidentally, those should be handed out just prior to arriving at the departure point. Stop about a half-mile out and distribute the forms. If you wait until the departure point, drivers will be too distracted and anxious to get going.

You could mail them later, but don't expect much of a response. It's better to approach the drivers while they're still on the trail.

## 3. Clean your 4WD vehicle and restock your equipment

This is an important step. Even though you're probably tired and eager to put your feet up, take time to properly deal with your vehicle, equipment and supplies. If you put it off for more than a

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Club Meeting Minutes:

*Meeting Minutes by Kevin B, Club Secretary*

## Meeting minutes for the month of April:

### Old Biz:

\$\*\*\*\* in the bank.

47 paid members.

We are going to be doing a T-shirt run. So far T-shirt prices are \$9.67 for S->XL, \$11.83 for XXL up. Sweatshirts are \$25.60 for S->L, \$29.69 for XL and up. I'm sure we will see a sign up sheet passed around the internets any time now.

We previously had discussed raising the membership dues from \$20 to \$25. Apparently according to the bylaws of the club this just needs to be in writing for the members to see and then voted on. Everyone seemed to agree during last nights vote and look its in writing.

The Spring Fling has been moved to Apr 23rd. It will now go up the Nacimiento Ferguson road out of Fort Hunter Liggett and up on the coast ridge and over. Should be more scenic this time of year. The club will provide a tri-tip sandwich lunch and the rest will be potluck. There will be a sign up for this event on the yahoo groups.

### New Biz:

Suzi has graciously volunteered her time to help get the clubs website updated and the club voted unanimously to have her do it.

The Santa Maria 4 Wheelers are having an off road expo this weekend, Apr 9th, 10am-3pm, at the Santa Maria fairgrounds. They will have a vendor fair, obstacle course, safety inspection, and other activities. Bring your rig! Lunch included.

Also Apr 9th there will be a monster truck at the Mullahey Dodge dealership. Maybe they will be crushing the competition?

Its time to renew your Cal 4 Wheel membership. I believe you can do it through the club or just go online to there website.

### Trip Reports:

Kirk took a trip out to Carrizo Plains to look at the wildflowers. They had a good time. Apparently it was hot and dusty out and the wildflowers had already peaked for the season.

Some of the club members went up Pine Mt trail to inspect the portion of trail that's washing out. They also had a good run and made it up to the top of the ridge.

## Meeting minutes for the month of May:

### Officer Reports:

\$\*\*\*\* in the bank account.

54 paid members

George needs newsletter articles for the next newsletter.

Kevin will not be here at the next meeting so someone else will need to take minutes for the month of June.

### Old Biz:

Tom passed around a written presentation of raising the dues from \$20 a year to \$25 a year per family. We later voted on this issue and it passed with overall consent of the members present. Dues for next year will be \$25.

Shirt orders are now being placed. So if you want a T-shirt or sweatshirt please let Dan H. know \*\*\*-\*\*\*\*. T-shirts are \$15 for XL and smaller, XXL and bigger are \$20. Sweatshirts are \$30 for XL and smaller and \$35 for XXL and bigger. You can pick your color of shirt if you want too. They will have the same logos as the previous shirts.

Donations. The club voted on and approved donating a hundred dollars each to Blue Ribbon, Corva, and Cal 4 Wheel.

### New Biz:

The new website is up! Hooray for Suzy for getting it done! It looks excellent! Please check it out at [slo4wheelers.org](http://slo4wheelers.org).

Tom brought up that there are some forms that we can start using again. Forms such as a run roster and vehicle safety checklist. It looks like most of this will become available on the website.

Tom is hosting a BBQ at his ranch on June 4th. He will have the ramp and conducting safety inspections also.

This Saturday, May 7th was supposed to be a Garcia Ridge trail cleanup run, but it looks like that has been canceled due to low turnout.

Saturday May 21st is supposed to be an Adopt-A-Highway cleanup day. Meet at 7:30am at Santa Margarita Park as usual.

June 11th is the Miller/Lockwood Jeep trail run down by Gorman/ Frazier Park area.

New guy Kurt, brought up Ham radio testing. Apparently through Cal Poly you can get trained, tested for free and the radios are only about \$35 now. Pretty good deal if you ask me! We should see if we can add some of this info to the website.

### Trip Reports:

The Spring Fling was a success! Everyone had a great time and thanks to Kirk and Ingrid for planning the event as well as supplying the Tri-tip sandwiches.

The Santa Maria Off Road Expo was also a good time. They had a good obstacle course, good lunch, and it looks like some of the guys did pretty good in the raffle.

(Continued from page 5)

day you will forget the issues you had with the vehicle and supplies that were used up. Clean and restock any fluids or gear (including medical supplies, spare parts, and fire extinguisher) you used or that became damaged (such as recovery straps). Create a list of repairs and other actions action items during the trip or on the way home while it is still fresh in your mind. Make sure you put back all the essential items, and that your vehicle is tidy and prepared for your next trip. We covered these and others in 10 Important Tasks After Driving Off-Road.

**4. Update your notes, records**

With the four wheeling experience still fresh in your mind, update your trip notes, journal/log or other document. (In fact, I recommend taking notes during the trip. Sometimes it's possible; other times not.) Record what worked and what could be improved upon. Refer to the evaluation forms for valuable insight.

In addition to your main journal, you should have an equipment list, emergency packet, tour narratives and other resources. Update and replenish as needed. Use mapping software to save your GPS tracks. Edit those files to remove any wayward turns you made. Once cleaned up, that information will be invaluable the next time.

If you had to get a permit to access the area, you may need to send a post-trip report to the appropriate agency. Note any issues or problems you encountered that officials could remedy (broken signs, vandalized rest area, landslide and such).

Now that you're accumulating notes and related stuff, you need a filing system.

**5. Set up a filing system**

A filing system is really handy. Containing both electronic and paper documents, it helps you make sense of all the information you've collected and generated.

Store your maps, notes, checklists, brochures and other paper items to help with the next trip.

Think through your electronic storage, too. This contains navigation information, emergency number(s), handouts, tour narrative and other documents. Simply print out what you need next time. Take advantage of what you've learned to make your next trip more enjoyable.

**6. Trail Leader duties don't end at the departure point.**

There are several more steps you need to take to wrap up that four wheeling experience. Doing so ensures that your guests get on their way properly and that you're prepared for your next 4WD adventure.

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SLO 4-Wheelers contributes to and/or is a member club in these organizations. Visit and support, -they are working for US!

<http://www.sharetrails.org/>



The United Four Wheel Drive Associations also acts as your voice to keep 4x4 roads and trails open so that we can continue enjoying four wheeling in the great outdoors.

<http://www.ufwda.org/>



A varied group of outdoor recreationists who are extremely active in promoting the positive aspects of vehicular access on public lands and protecting that right.

<http://www.corva.org/>



SLO 4-Wheelers is also a member club in the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Association (CA4WDA) If your not a member, check it out,

<http://www.cal4wheel.com> or ask Suzy

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# SLO 4 WHEELERS

PO Box 2271  
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We're on the web:

<http://www.slo4wheelers.org/>

## Upcoming Events / Runs

In addition to this list, keep your eye on the club email list and web site:

<http://www.slo4wheelers.org/>

for last minute events or spur of the moment runs.

**June 11-12** — Miller/Lockwood Trail. Jim B is the Trail Boss.

**July 4** — Templeton 4th of July Parade. We decorate out rigs in an patriotic manner. Tom B is the Trail Boss.

**July 6** — General Meeting at La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**July 9-11** — Rubicon Trail. Tom B is the Trail Boss.

**July 16** — Dessert/Night Run. Las Chiches Trail. Trail Boss TBD.

**August 3** — General Meeting at La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**August 5-7** — Annual Club Coyote Lake Run. Tom B is the Trail Boss.

**September 3rd-5th** — Swamp Lake Run.

**September 7th** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**October 5th** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana.

**October 7th-10th** — Johnson Valley Run.

**November 2nd** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**November 5th-6th** — Turf and Surf at the Pismo Dunes.

**December 7th** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM. Nominations of 2017 Club Officers.

**December 10th** — Annual Club Christmas Party

**December 17th** — San Miguel Christmas Parade.

**January 4th** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM. Election of 2017 Club Officers.

**February 1** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**March 1** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

**April 5** — General Club Meeting, La Mexicana, 7:00 PM.

If you have any questions or events, local runs, not so local runs you would like to do, coordinate and/or participate in, please contact the SLO-4-Wheelers Events Director.