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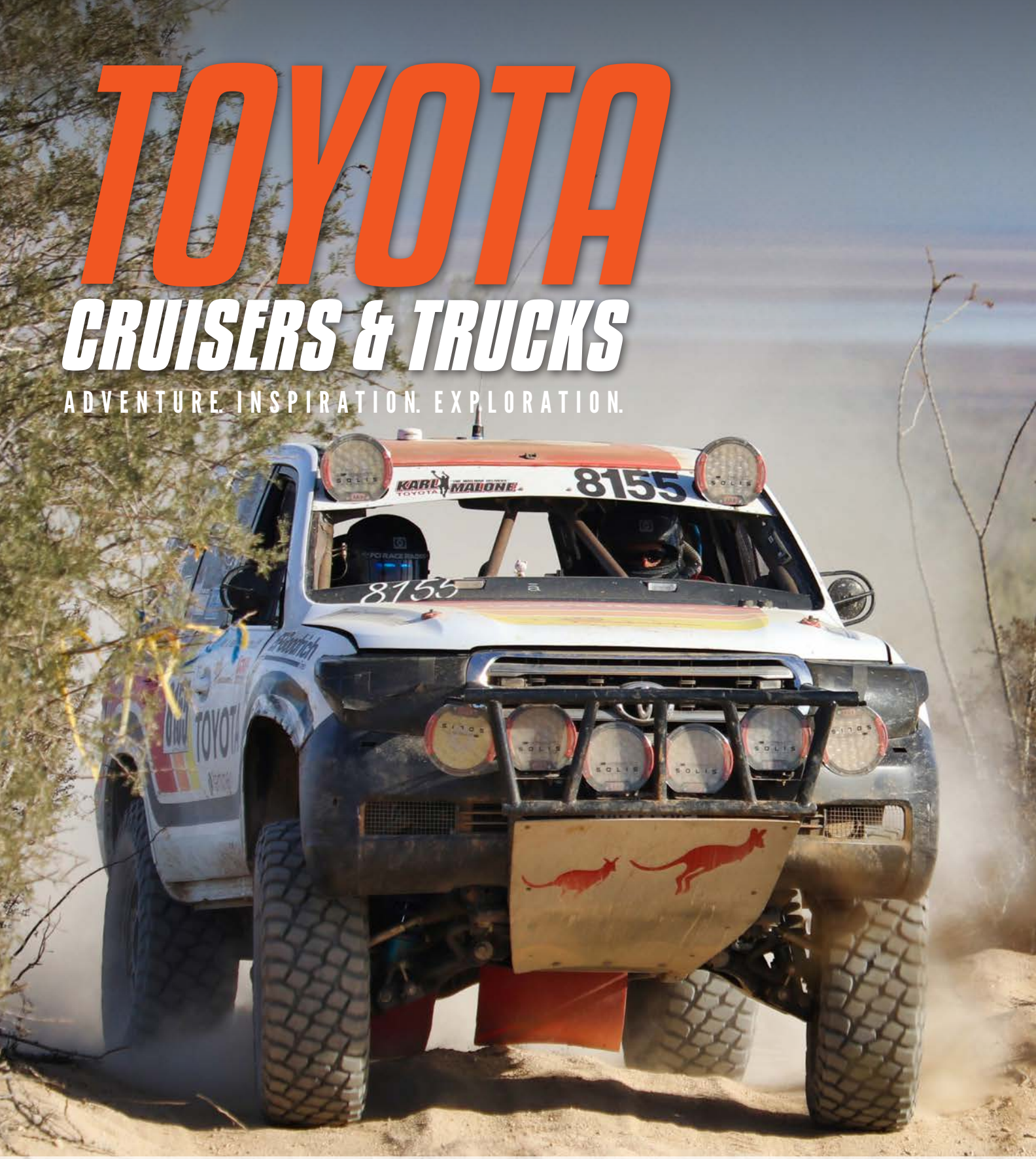

BAJA 1000

Chasing Canguro Racing on the way to their Class win, during a pandemic.

EXPLORING SOUTH KOREA

A New Continent that could be an explorers perfect destination.

GAMBLER 500 COLORADO

Part rally race, part festival, part community event. All FUN!

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

WE MADE IT!

While we have no doubt that lives have been majorly impacted by the events of the past 12 months, we are excited that for the most part, we made it.

This year has taught all of us how to live, and in some cases merely exist, in ways we never thought possible. I'm not going to belabor that point any more, what I'd really like to do is share my gratitude.

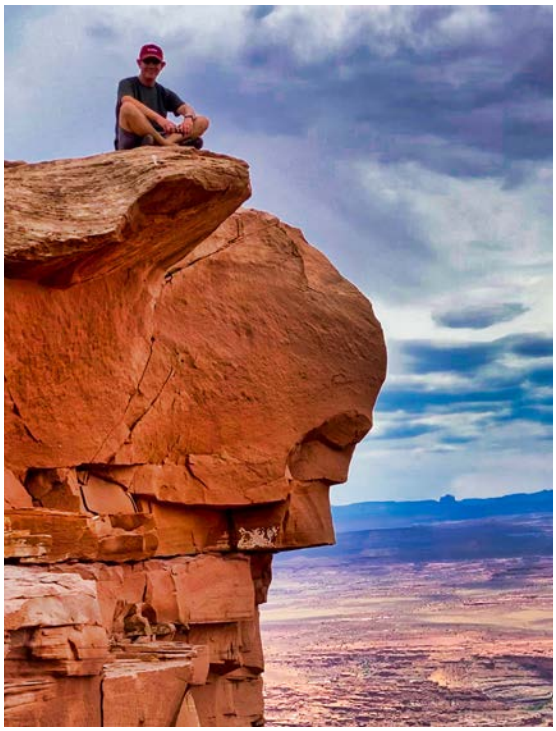
Our community has grown this year as more people have found ways to explore outside than in the past. As it turns out, taking your Toyota vehicle into the backcountry is a great way to social distance.

Thanks to all of our long time and new fans, the comments, well wishes, and inspiration that you all give our team every day. Our Instagram and Facebook communities are continuously buzzing with your adventures and it's really great to see so many great people out enjoying our world!

As I've said before and will always reiterate—Thanks to our team that puts each issue *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* together. It's not always easy and is sometimes an actual pain. It is always a lot of work and I'm thankful to be blessed with such an amazing team.

Finally, thanks to my awesome family for their love of exploring and adventure! Angie, Alana, and Brenden are always up for new exploring—and I can't wait to see what next year holds.

P.S. See page 54 for a intro to Live to Explore, our site dedicated to family friendly adventure.



Shane

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AND ALWAYS CHECK US OUT AT TCTMAG.US

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TOYOTA CRUISERS & TRUCKS

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NEW & NOTEWORTHY

By TCT Staff

KENDA TIRE KLEVER A/T2 KR628

KENDA TIRE IS A BRAND WELL KNOWN TO THE MOUNTAIN BIKE AND MOTORCYCLE WORLD, but may not be as familiar to Toyota Cruiser and Truck owners. The Kenda Klever A/T2 was the tire of choice for 2020 Championship Off-Road series champion driver Kyle Kleiman running the Klever A/T2 in the rear and Klever R/T in the front—the same DOT rated tires sold at retail.

Announced at the end of 2019 and released in the Summer of 2020, Kenda's new value-priced Klever A/T2 KR628 was designed to take the All-Terrain tire world competition head on. Kenda asserts the Klever A/T2 compares to or exceeds the performance of industry leading brands and models. The Klever A/T2 is designed to be a strong A/T tire and is winter snowflake certified. The Klever A/T2 was developed at Kenda's American Technology Center opened in Green, Ohio in 2015, and will be produced at the company's two-year-old plant in Vietnam.

Visually we see an interlocking tread pattern with larger voids than many all-terrain tires and eye-catching sidewall lugs. We'd expect the square side lugs to enhance on-road performance.

Stay tuned for an in-depth real-world results review by *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* which recently had the opportunity to torture test the Klever A/T2 in a LT285/75R16 E rated tire, on a 2,500 mile round-trip to Baja encountering snow, ice, interstate, potholes, sand, and rock.

VARIES

TCTMAG.US/KENDA

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AGENCY 6 BILLET WINCH SHACKLES are a key component in trouble-free recovery.

The unique design protects your winch line and can be removed and re-installed with common tools. Rubber isolators protect your fairlead while winch is rewound.

- Field serviceable winch attachment made from US Certified 6061 T6 CNC machined aluminum with a 17-4 hardened stainless pin.
- Lightweight design with a working load limit of 19,000 lbs capable of standard recovery ops in off road situations.
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- Stays looking great thanks to UV and abrasion resistant coating.
- Available in Red, Black, Grey, or RAW

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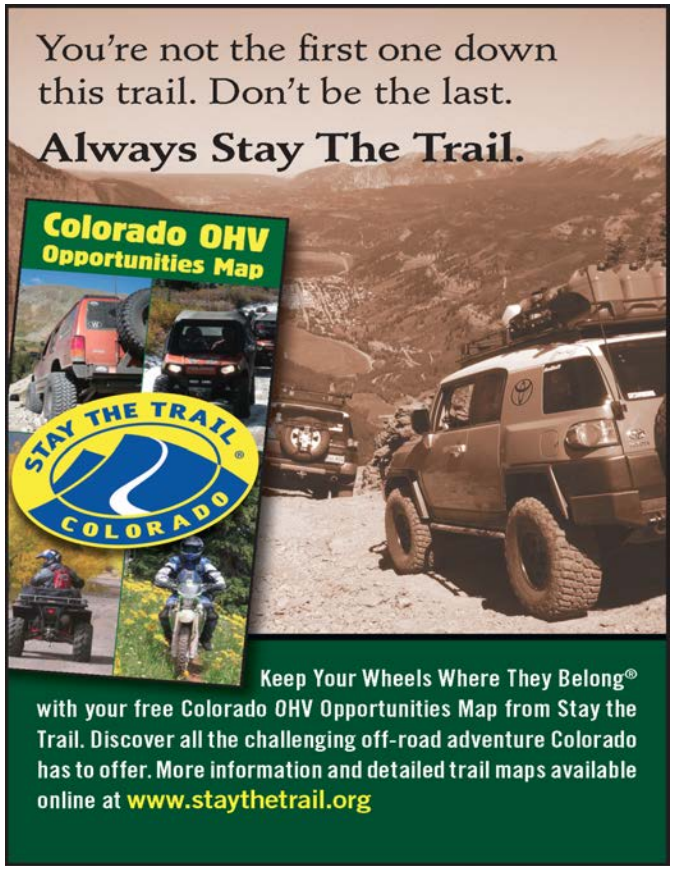

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

By TCT Staff

DOMETIC COMMANDER FIELD KITCHEN

THIS FIELD KITCHEN IS AFFORDABLE AND INCLUDES PLENTY OF STORAGE as well as a large amount of worktop space. It's the ideal field kitchen for camping trips that include larger families or longer adventures. The unit includes a large hanging larder and waste bin. Quickly dismantle and fold flat into an included carry bag for easy transporting and storage.

- Extension table suitable as a worktop or stove stand.
- Extra storage with two shelves and zipped door.
- Quick to set-up and dismantle.
- Internal shelf, side hanging rail with hooks for utensils, and an aluminium edge for strength.
- Worktop or stove stand fits most popular camping stoves. TCT

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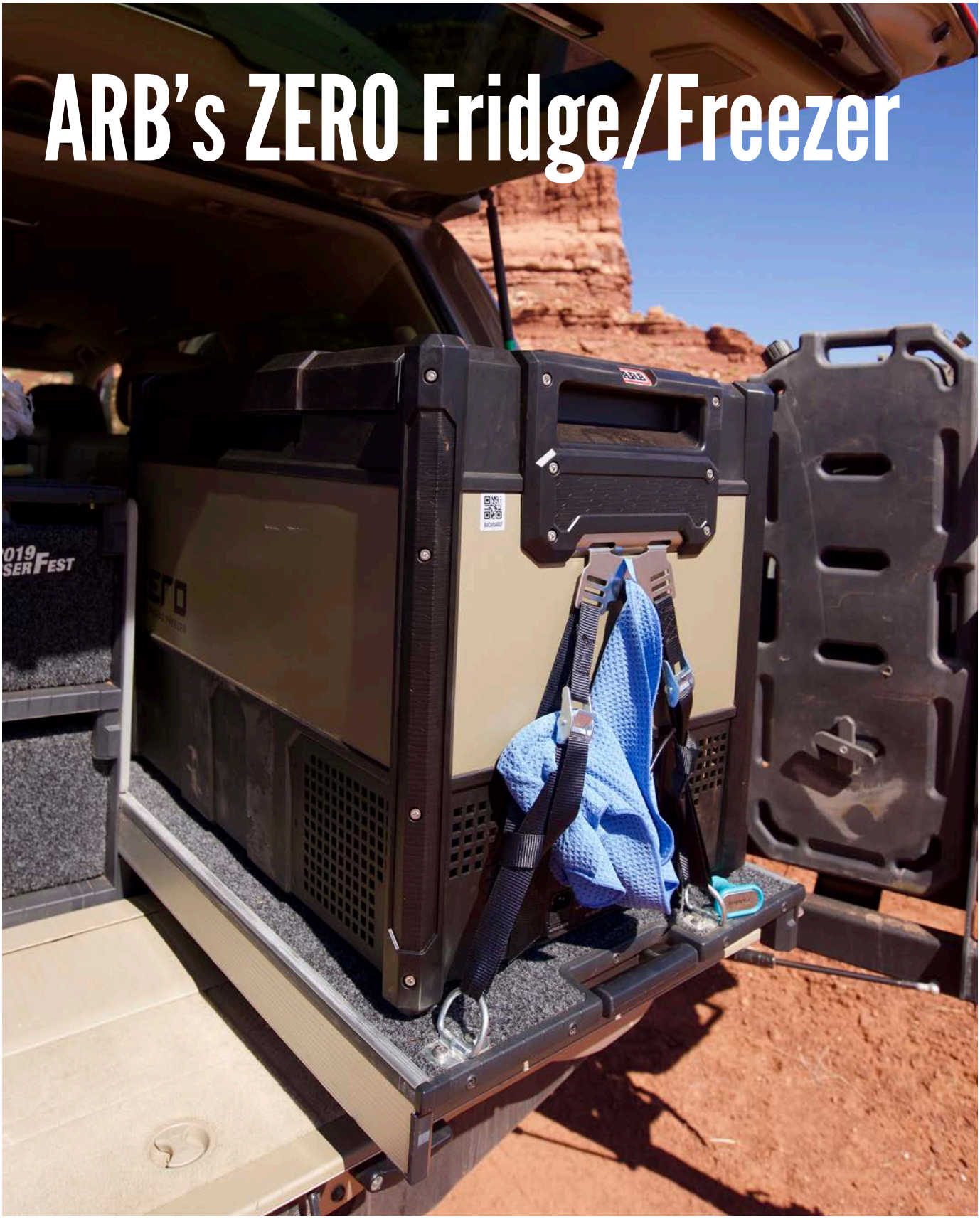
Story and photos by Michael Holland

ARB's ZERO Fridge/Freezer



MY FAMILY AND I WANDERED THE CANYONS OF SOUTHERN UTAH this past April. The weather was idyllic with temperatures in the lower 70's and nighttime lows in the 40's. High cumulus clouds passed over the red rock of Canyon Country while tints of red reflected across the bottom of the clouds. There is no better place to be during the spring season. My wife, Louise, and our daughter, Lilly, joined me in biking, hiking, exploring, and relaxing in this slick rock wonderland. Oh, and we had a new piece of equipment: an ARB Zero Fridge/Freezer.

Yes, the 12-volt fridge is nothing new in the off-road expedition world. For years, adventurers have raved about them, and rightly so. Gone are the days of ice and food swimming in water. A 12-volt fridge is the best purchase many adventurers have made, even though it is an investment. Fridges can run from $700-$2000, depending on size and manufacturer. That is not inexpensive, and price is something to consider when evaluating the different sizes and models. ARB recently developed the Zero line of fridges/freezers and did so with some unique features.

GONE ARE THE DAYS OF ICE AND FOOD SWIMMING IN WATER.

The new ARB Zero line of dual-zone fridges/freezers comes in 73 qt and 101 qt sizes. We used the 73 qt model on our nine-day trip wandering the canyons of red rock country and the ole stomping grounds of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. The 73 qt model was a perfect size for the three of us. We packed the dual zone Zero as a one-zone fridge to start our trip. The beauty of the Zero is that you can make it a dual-zone or remove the interior wall to make it one fridge or one freezer. We easily packed the Zero with the many organizational baskets provided inside. Once packed, we determined the lid would be easier to open on the right side. So, removed it from the left side and snapped it on the right side. The lid is designed for easy removal to accommodate numerous vehicle-mounting options. Ingenious!

Louise and I prepared breakfast in the heart of Robber's Roost in south central Utah. We retrieved the necessities with the help of the Zero's LED interior light. After breakfast, I placed a few warm cans of seltzer water inside to cool during the day's drive. I decreased the Zero's temperature using my iPhone. I can control the Zero via a phone app or ARB's LYNX system. We used both to control the Zero without an issue. With the fridge repacked, it was time to motor onward.

LILLY WANTED ICE CREAM SANDWICHES. NOT ONE, BUT A BOX. SHE KNEW WE HAD A FREEZER.

We biked high above the waters of the Colorado River. The red tacky dirt was a blast to bike. Fast and flowy. We stopped for a snack, and I pulled out the Zero fridge/freezer that was mounted on my ARB roller drawer system. ARB lowered the display panel to the bottom of the side panel. The LED display is easy to navigate and to change between Fahrenheit and Celsius. I really liked how I could press and hold down a display button to show the battery's voltage, which is a great feature to consider if your vehicle is equipped with a single battery system. The control panel also has a USB port, allowing to charge anything and everything. I plugged in my phone, ate a snack, and reached for a cold seltzer water deep in the Utah desert.

A few days later, we found ourselves in a small, rural town in southern Utah. Lilly wanted ice cream sandwiches. Not one, but a box. She knew we had a freezer. I replaced the thermal wall inside the fridge

WHENEVER YOU ARE ABOUT TO PURCHASE YOUR NEXT OVERLAND GEAR, ASK YOURSELF: DOES THIS MAKE CAMP LIFE EASIER AND EFFICIENT?

and dropped the temperature on the one side to 10 degrees. We now had a fridge and a freezer—dual zone overlanding solution. The ice cream sandwiches lasted a few days. They served as a great desert treat There's something special about enjoying ice cream next to a crackling juniper fire in the desert of Utah.

Like many adventures and journeys, they end all too soon. We spent a final night outside Capital Reef National Park. We watched the "magic hour" over the Temple of the Sun and Moon. I waited for the full moon to rise to take some pictures of the moon's rays "playing" on the rock. After returning to camp, I opened the Zero Fridge/Freezer and grabbed a cold pilsner. A nightcap in canyon country.

The ARB Zero Fridge/Freezer did not make or break our trip. However, it did make things easier and more efficient. When I wander through Mother Nature, I want things to be easy, less stressful, and more efficient. I desire to take more pictures, hike/bike a few more miles, and prepare hassle free meals. Whenever you are about to purchase your next overland gear, ask yourself: does this make camp life easier and efficient? If so, consider purchasing it. ARB's new dual zone ZERO Fridge/Freezer does just that! TCT

WHAT'S TO LIKE?

- Attractive color scheme.
- Dual controls for each compartment.
- Internal baskets keep contents organized.
- Controlled through phone App and/or LINX system.
- Removable lid allows for easy access.
- Integrated USB port to charge devices.
- The height of the Zero is a consideration, depending on vehicle.

RESOURCE

Don't need a dual zone fridge and freezer? ARB makes single zone Zero fridges in sizes 47 qt and 63 qt sizes.
www.arbusa.com
73 qt and 101 qt dual-zone models

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THE 53RD BAJA 1000

BY SHANE WILLIAMS AND DANIEL MARKOFSKY
PHOTOS BY DANIEL MARKOFSKY UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED

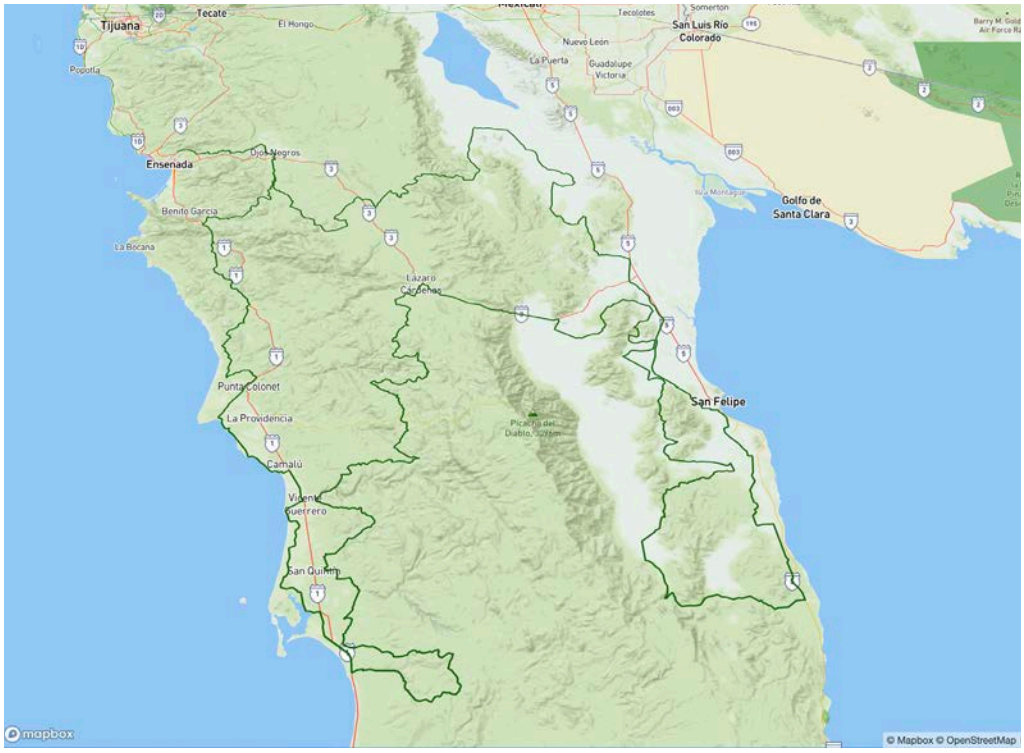
IT'S THE END OF 2020, AND WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN. It seems like our entire world has been turned upside down, most events were postponed or cancelled, and many of us were not able to get out on adventures as much as we wanted to.

That's why I was so excited to chat with Daniel Markofsky, one of *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* (TCT) longest serving editors, and a six-time Baja 1000 Chaser, about his experience this year chasing for Canguro Racing once again. Let's start by setting the stage.

WHO IS CANGURO RACING?

From their website: *Canguro Racing formed somewhere in the mountains of Northern Utah. Or maybe amongst the cactus and beaches of Baja, Mexico. It might just have happened on the slickrock mesas of Moab. The truth is that there is no exact date when Canguro Racing was created. Over 20 years ago we were complete strangers, however through a shared love of the venerable Toyota Land Cruiser we all became friends.*

Each of us has been active in the off-roading community for over 15 years, traveled thousands of dusty, washboard miles and have served in local and national leadership positions for various volunteer organizations. What started as a goal to race the Baja 1000 has turned into passion for racing and a desire to get better and faster. Eight years after our first race we are still loving the adventure and see no signs of change.



Course map of the Baja 1000. This year's race was a loop of 898.4 miles, covering some of the most challenging and iconic terrain.

The Race Truck is a 2010 200 Series Toyota Land Cruiser—meet "Monica"

Engine: Toyota 3UR-FE 5.7 liter V8
Exhaust: Dual Flowmaster high flow mufflers
Air Filtration: AEM dryflow filter with custom intake routed into passenger compartment
Transmission: Stock Toyota AB60F six speed automatic with custom "one off" paddle shifter
Transfer Case: Stock Toyota
Differentials: Stock differentials with Nitro Gear and Axle 4.88:1 gear ratio; open front differential, ARB Air Locker rear differential
Fuel Tank: 46 gallon fuel cell with backup redundant fuel pump
Front Suspension: Custom tuned King Kong 3.5" triple bypass shocks with 2.5" King Coil-overs
Rear Suspension: Custom tuned King Kong 4.5" triple bypass shocks with 2.5" King Coil-overs
Steering: Stock Toyota rack and pinion, with external oil cooler
Brakes: Custom CNC dual master cylinders, adjustable proportioning valve, Remmen high performance brake pads and rotors; stock OEM Toyota calipers
Tires: 37×12.50R17 BFGoodrich Baja T/A KR2 on TRD forged wheels
Charging & Starting: Dual batteries with stock Toyota 175 amp alternator; stock Toyota push button start
Lighting: Eight ARB Intensity Solis LED driving lights producing a combined 76,368 effective and 145,424 raw lumens
Communication: PCI race intercom with Kenwood 150 watt race radio
Navigation: Lowrance HD7 GPS
System Monitoring: Full complement of pressure and temperature gauges and a Scanguage II to keep track of live engine data
Climate Control: A/C & heating removed from truck; dual parker pumper fresh air systems
Seats: Sparco EVO III seats with Crow Enterprizes 5-point harness
Roll Cage: Geiser Bros built roll cage with integrated engine and passenger protection

Canguro Racing members:

Will Carroll
Darren Webster
Dave Connors
Marc Van Tassell
Kurt Williams
Bryan "Bub" Meenan
Ryan Davis
Ryan Nakaya

The Chase Trucks:

Chase 1: 2019 Tundra, Ryan Davis, Canguro Racing
Chase 2: 2016 200 Series Land Cruiser, Dave Connors, Canguro Racing
Chase 3: 2008 200 Series Land Cruiser, Kurt Williams, Cruiser Outfitters + Canguro Racing
Chase 4: 2008 Chevy Duramax (Was out of commission for the race. Diesels do not run on petrol.)
Chase 5: 2017 Tundra, Paul May, Equipt Expedition Outfitters
Chase 6: 1993 80 Series Land Cruiser, Daniel Markofsky, *TCT Magazine*

How did the race go for Chase #6?

The number one rule when chasing is "Safety" followed closely by "Team First." So whatever the team needs, that's the main job. This includes things like grocery runs, spare parts carrying, rescue and recovery, field maintenance, and of course, taco runs. Tacos are very important in Baja.

Basically, the chase crew in each truck can be thought of as a mobile pit crew. While the 898.40 mile course winds its way around and across the Baja peninsula, the chase trucks take the highway (and sometimes dirt roads—which may be the only road) to get ahead of the race truck. Chase teams leapfrog each other to specific areas to set up pit stops. These assignments can, and often do, change at the last minute, because, Baja.

At most pit stops there are two to five chase trucks, depending on the pre-planned tasks plus any last-minute changes. Activities at each stop can include driver change, fuel filling, maintenance, chassis bolt checking, and taco eating. Each person from each chase truck has a specific task, so we swarm the race truck to get everything done.

Our crews are not NASCAR fast, yet they are surprisingly quick at getting it done and the race truck back on the course as quickly as possible. The goal is to support the Baja saying "slow is fast." The only thing more important than winning the race is finishing it.

Prior to the race, Dave Connors puts together a detailed chase plan. This plan is delivered to everyone to study before they leave for Baja, and the night before

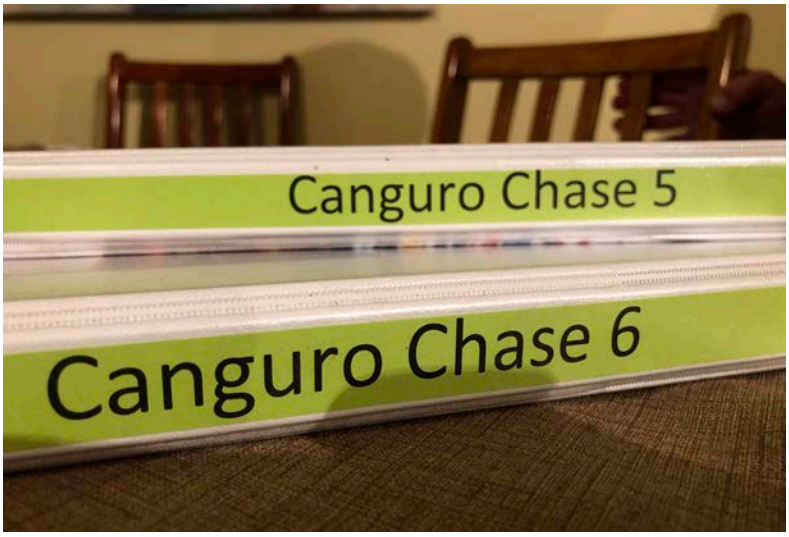


Photo By Jeremy Alverett

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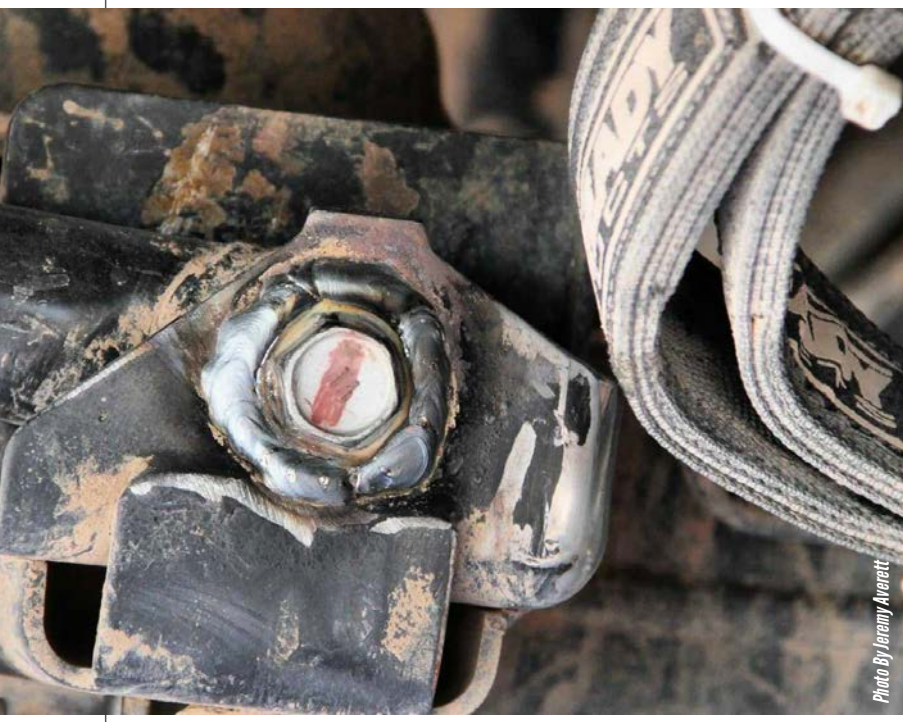
Photo By Jeremy Averett

THE RACE TRUCK STOPPED AT ONE OF THE BFG PITS, THEY WELDED THE FLANGED BOLT IN ABOUT 60 SECONDS, AND THE TRUCK WAS BACK ON THE COURSE. THE DRIVERS DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO GET OUT.

the race begins, the entire team and chase crews go through it in great detail. Part of the preparation includes loading all Baja 1000 tracks and waypoints into multiple GPS systems, so all team members have all the info they need when out in the desert.

There are other ways Baja teams can manage their pit stops. Baja pits and BFG pits. Both are paid services. These pits include fuel and repair services and can come in very useful. For Canguro Racing, the BFG pit is added as a backup plan, which came in very handy this year. There was a captured nut under the Land Cruiser that broke loose. While it was still holding, it was moving and could have ended the race

Photo By Jeremy Averett

for Canguro. The race truck stopped at one of the BFG pits, they welded the flanged bolt in about 60 seconds, and the truck was back on the course. The drivers didn't even have to get out.

When a chase crew has completed our task, we usually have a little time to kill before the next assignment. This could be anywhere from an hour to more than five hours. During this time we're enroute to our next area, sometimes stopping along or near the course at specific areas to monitor the radios. This is to ensure the race truck has plenty of communications coverage in case there is a maintenance issue or other emergencies. It's also great, too, for the drivers (who generally drive in 12-hour shifts) to hear that the chase crew is standing by, even when everything is running smoothly.

So, what do we do when the race truck runs into a problem while on the course? We got to find out this year right after completing one of our assignments.

We headed deep into the hills along a narrow, twisty dirt road, and found a wide place to pull over and get some rest. Somehow, I managed to fall asleep despite the three packs of coyotes and scorpions all around. Yes, I sleep outside on a pad on top of a blanket outside the truck, right next to all the creepy crawlies.

We figured that we had about 90 minutes before the race truck arrived so some rest would be very welcome. We were near the course, so we could see race car lights dipping up and down across the hills. Eventually we heard the race truck check in, then managed to get another hour or so of sleep.

Once we got going again, we headed back toward the main highway and back into cell service. That's when we heard that the race truck managed to get stuck frame-deep in Baja Silt.

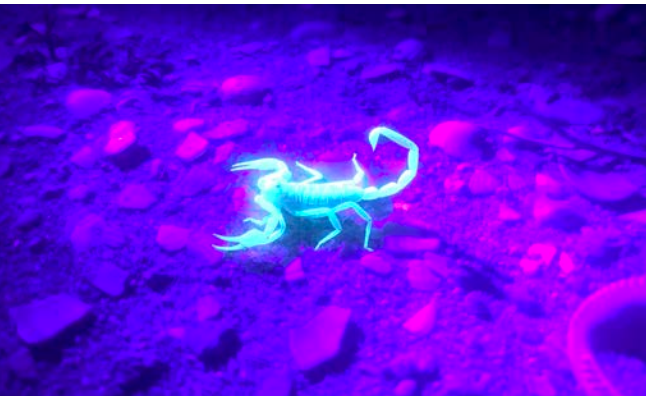

Photo By Jeremy Averett

Photo By Jeremy Averett

WHAT IS BAJA 1000 SILT?

It's hard to describe if you've never seen it, but imagine something slightly thicker than talcum powder, but the same consistency. It is so fine that it almost flows like water, but it's a dry dust. It's like walking in muck near a lake that can suck your shoe right off. The silt can be ankle to waist deep, and once it's disturbed it hangs in the air for hours.

So we started to figure out how any of the chase trucks could get to the race truck. The only way to approach is to find a racecourse entry point behind the race truck, since it's grounds for immediate disqualification to drive against the race flow. It is quite dangerous for a chase truck to drive on the course, since a trophy truck could come up from behind at high velocity, in the middle of the night, with low visibility.

Chase 6 continued toward our next objective since there wasn't anything we could do to help the race truck, leaving cell service behind. Our next stop was Valle De Trinidad, in the heart of Baja California. Luckily by the time we got to town and met up with another chase truck, we found out that the race truck had dug themselves out of the silt. So instead of continuing to San Felipe, we would pace the race truck on the next section of the course, which was actually on the public highway.

Photo By Rachel Markotsky Jacobson

During each Baja 1000 race there are sections on public highways. This year there were 106 miles. This is both a treat and a problem for the race drivers. It's nice to not have to worry about bouncing around and breaking something for a few miles, but the smooth highway can result in fatigue setting in hard, so a chase truck gets to work. We drive in front of the race truck to keep them under the posted speed limit and talk to them on the radio to keep their minds active. This time we paced Monica for about 30 miles into Pit Stop #3.

At that stop we did a driver change as well as some of the other tasks that we normally take care of. The plan was for Dave Connors to take over driving, and for Darren Webster to move over to the Nav seat. Well, after spending two hours digging the truck out of the silt, Darren was completely exhausted, so Bub hopped into the race truck as Navigator. This was at race mile 440, and our next assignment was to listen to the radio for any issues at RM 460, which we did, then we headed to San Felipe for breakfast.

Our next assignment wasn't until race mile 645, which was in nearly the same spot since the course was making a loop. With almost 200 miles of race before our next task (which is over five hours at about 30MPH average speed for the race truck) we headed for the beach to find some shade under palm trees, for a nice nap.

AT THE BAJA 1000, FINISHING THE RACE IS WINNING, BUT IT IS EVEN BETTER WHEN YOU ALSO WIN YOUR CLASS.

The Big Finish

Our final assignment of the race was monitoring radios, about 25 miles from the start/finish line. This last section is pretty fast, so by the time we got moving again and made it to the finish, the truck had already crossed the line. The only other truck in Stock Full did not finish (DNF). While the Canguro Land Cruiser came in overall 95th of 99 finishers, the team won the Stock Full class. At the Baja 1000, finishing the race is winning, but it is even better when you also win your class.

What we really love most about TCT's Baja 1000 coverage over the years is that nearly every truck the stock class. The FJ Cruiser racers from 10 years ago, the winning Tundra in 2014, and Canguro's Land Cruiser which has been raced in Baja for nearly a decade. TCT

[FRAMED]

f/6.3 1/2500s 62mm

Old Ore Trail in Big Bend National Park

PHOTO BY PHILLIP JONES

[FRAMED]

f/4 1/30s 24mm

Eastern Sierra Mountains

PHOTO BY NATE MOEDER

TOYOTA

[FRAMED]

f/2.8 1/480s 4mm

By Shane Williams

SEMA 360

A new show for a new time.

TOYOTA
CRUISERS & TRUCKS
ADVENTURE. INSPIRATION. EXPLORATION.
SEMA 360

Since 2020 has been such an... unusual year, our annual pilgrimage to Las Vegas for SEMA show did not happen. Instead, we spent the week in front of our computers, watching pre-recorded vehicle reveals, product demonstrations, and panels describing what's next in the automotive aftermarket world.

We all took copious notes, reviewed spec sheets, and found some pretty cool new offerings from a variety of manufacturers.

To start with, these are the items we covered on the *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* website during the show:

DAY 1 ON THE WEB *Link Here*

Toyota Press Conference and 4WDTO "Overland" Tacoma

Since Toyota doesn't have any new platforms to show off this year, they partnered with our friends over at the traditional 4WD Toyota Owner Magazine to show off an Overland style Tacoma build.

DAY 2 ON THE WEB ***Link Here***

Patriot Campers launched a new trailer into the North American Market, and perhaps more importantly, showed off their amazing 70 Series Land Cruiser Builds. So gorgeous!

DAY 3 ON THE WEB ***Link Here***

New products from Go Rhino, Warrior Products, and Supreme Suspensions built specifically for several Toyota platforms.

While some of these items are not the most exciting you'll see, it's great to know that our chose adventure platforms will have great aftermarket support for years to come.

For the remainder of the 'show', we took notes on some of the most interesting new items:

The **Warn HUB Receiver & App** ***(http://tctmag.us/warnwireless)*** won a Best Off Road/4WD Product Award from SEMA, and we couldn't agree more. This device takes wireless winch control to the next level, by allowing you to use your phone to control your Warn winch via bluetooth, from up to 100' away. The system is IP68 waterproof certified, and supports both iOS and Android devices.

The innovators over at ARB have developed a way to make your fridge/freezer even more useful, it can now run when away from the vehicle! The **ARB Fridge Power Pack** features a 15Ah lithium battery packaged in a compact housing and includes rubberized magnets, so it can be attached to the side of various ARB fridge/freezers.

The Fridge Power Pack is easy to use; once attached to the side of your fridge just plug it into the fridge's 12V DC power inlet, press a button to turn it on and your fridge will run for up to 18 hours (depending on unit and outside temperatures).

Baxter Performance has been creating spin-on and remote oil filter mounts for years, and their new options for Toyota engines are spot-on.

Starting in December 2020, the 501 series adapters come in both Remote and Spin on versions. These universal adapters fit Toyota and Lexus engines from 2.0l up to 5.7l (with an available extension) and will make changing your oil much more efficient, while retaining more oil post-filtration for better oil supply and pressure at startup.

TR-501-BK

TS-501-BK

Electronic lockers from Eaton are now available for nearly every Toyota application you could ask for. The ELocker internal gears are net-forged, which provides strength and durability for all of your off-highway adventures. Now available front and rear for Land Cruiser, FJ Cruiser, 4Runner, Tacoma, and First Gen Tundra Front & Rear, as well as rear lockers for 2nd gen Tundra.

The **TVS265 Supercharger from Harrop** fits Tundra and LC 200/LX570 5.7L engines and is 40% larger than the original TRD supercharger. It uses an Eaton rotating group with custom designed hardware to provide up to 478hp / 463 ft-lbs (+160hp / +88 ft-lbs over stock) in Stage 1 @ 6.5 psi configuration, or 513hp / 514ft-lbs (+207hp / +136 ft-lbs over stock) in Stage 2 @ 8.5 psi configuration. Additional engine upgrades can produce over 1000hp for racing applications.

We've always been fans of low and hidden storage, and this year **BuiltRight** has the Tacoma taken care of with their Bedside Rack. The 4 Piece kit for 2005-Current Tacoma works with all MOLLE/PALS accessories in addition to universal slots for all kinds of storage possibilities. Each piece is laser cut and CNC punched, and black powder coated for lasting durability. All installation hardware is provided as well.

When you're ready to take your Taco to the extreme and fully enjoy the outdoors, the new **Trail Doors from FabFours** is just the ticket. These doors are specifically built for 3rd Gen Tacomas and are made from 12 gauge US steel for maximum durability. FabFours finishes each set with a 2 stage matte black powdercoat, and the front doors even include a cup holder.

SHOULD HAVE BEEN AT SEMA

Finally, since there were not many Featured Vehicles compared to what we normally see, we found a few in the community that "Should Have Been at SEMA"

RYAN'S 1979 TOYOTA PICKUP

Instagram: @dirtstar2002
Stock Truck

The 1979 Toyota pickup was sold in 1980 new from Yellowstone motors in Wyoming. The dealers would equip the trucks with 4.88 gears and 31" tires since those trucks would live their whole lives working above 7000 ft on winding dirt roads. Other strange anomalies include a block heater and an insulated rear cab wall. The truck is a Short bed base model with manual steering, 4 speed gearbox, no AC, no wing windows, and only a simple bench seat. Most of the paint is original with the exception of a repair down the drivers side and the graphics we added during project Hilux. 1979 was the beginning of the nameless trucks but still carried the Hilux logo through 1983.

Modifications to date:

- Ring and pinion 4.88, chromoly 30 spline birfields
- ARB Compressor
- Milestar Patagonia 31-10.5-15 tires on FJ Cruiser steel wheels and hubcaps
- OME complete suspension, custom tuned the spring packs for ride quality
- Warn Axon 5500 lbs winch
- Softopper
- KC Apollo pro fog lights, Cibie 7" headlight conversion with 85/100 hella bulbs
- Additional 12v power ports in the dash and bed wired for service strong enough for a fridge
- SR5 dash cluster to gain a tach and trip meter.
- 2 X 5 gallon stainless water cans with a pump
- 1 X 5 gallon can plumbed into the fuel system as AUX fuel

Future mod plans include a five-speed R151 transmission, crawl box low range doubler, ARB lockers front and rear, Power steering and crossover steering. Maybe even a diesel conversion.

DEREK'S 5TH GEN

Instagram: @derekchinn

Derek's 5th Gen 4Runner is thoughtfully built for adventure on dirt as well as pavement. He's put together a beautiful rig that is just at home for a night on the town as it is getting dirty in the mountains. From his home near Seattle, Washington, Derek spends plenty of time taking this gorgeous truck to the woods for some excellent social distancing.

Modifications:

- Front ADS Coilovers with Total Chaos UCAs, OME Rear Springs and ADS Shocks
- RSG Angled Rock Sliders
- Morimoto XB LED Headlights
- Baja Design Squadron Sport WC LED Fog Lights
- 295/70R18 Cooper Tire STT Pro tires riding on Large PCD Volk TE37 OG Bronze 18x9+0
- UpTop Overland Alpha Roof Rack
- 40" Baja Designs S8 Light Bar
- Baja Design Rock Lights
- Switch-Pros 9100

KEN FROM HOGLUND OVERLAND

Instagram: @hoglundoverland

"Just a guy that loves to off road with his kids, that also happens to enjoy taking photos" is what his IG profile reads. What we know is that Ken is one of our favorite adventurers to follow, he's always out finding really cool things, and the photos, well, they're epic.

Platform: 2015 Toyota Tacoma TRD Offroad

Modifications:

- PrinSu Design Studio CabRac
- Leitner Designs:
- Forged Active Cargo System
- Gear Pod XL
- MAXTRAX Recovery Boards
- CBI Offroad:
- MOAB 2.0 Front Bumper
- Bushmaster 2.0 Rear Bumper with Dual Swing Outs
- Rock Sliders
- Overland Front and Rear Skid Plates
- RCI Offroad Rear Diff Skid Plate
- Heretic Studio Lighting:
- Clear 40" Light Bar
- Clear Ditch Lights
- Amber Fog Lights
- Clear 20" Light Bar
- Clear 4" Light Bar

Tacoma Beast:

- Halo Projector Lights
- LED Tail Lights
- PIAA H9 Platinum LED Bulb Kit
- Old Man Emu BP-51 and Dakar Leafs, Deaver Stage 3 Expedition Leaf Springs
- Archive Garage Shackle Hangers with Cross Tube
- Timbren Industries Rear Active Offroad Bump Stops and Front Bump Stops
- Falken Wildpeak 285/70R17 M/T Load C Tires on 4WheelParts T-Series 17" Wheels
- Stoptech 6 Piston Front Big Brake Kit with Red Calipers
- Nitro 4.56 Gears
- ARB Front Air Lockers

And so many additional accessories we'll run out of room listing them all.

VINCENT'S TACOMA

Instagram: @vincedprince

Vincent's 3rd Gen Tacoma is what prompted this section of our SEMA 360 coverage. It's simply an amazing build that should inspire anyone. We especially enjoy the Tacotrooper retro graphics on this beautiful white Taco, matched to the SCS wheels carrying Nitto Tires.

Modifications:

- Nitto Ridge Grapplers 285/70/17 on Stealth Custom Series Ray 10 wheels
- Bilstein 5100 (front and rear) and All-Pro Expedition Leaf Springs
- Prinsu Design Roof Rack
- Custom designed Bed Rack that accommodates a tonneau cover
- TJM Front steel Bumper
- Beast-Fab Rock Sliders
- TRD PRO Skid plate
- Rigid Armor Tire Carrier
- Overland Vehicle System Rooftop Tent + 270 Awning
- Phalcon Overland Portable Fridge
- Rotopax Water and Gas containers
- X-Bull Recovery Board
- 13,000lbs Synthetic Winch
- Anzo USA Headlight and Taillights
- Trigger Wireless Remote System
- Baja Design
- Squadron Sport Fog lights
- Baja Design Squadron Sport Ditch lights
- Baja Design S2 chase lights
- Niligh
- 7" round lights (6x)
- 30" Behind the grill light bar
- KC Hilight Rock lights TCT

TOYOTA

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GAMBLER 500 COLORADO

WHERE SPRAY PAINT IS KING AND "PAVEMENT IS LAVA"

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATHY LOCKE | ADDITIONAL PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ERIKSEN AND MAX GOMEZ

It's a Friday afternoon in the middle of August in the northwest suburbs of metro Denver. "We should get going. We *absolutely* have to be there when the Gambler caravan from the Ozarks comes in," says Clark.

Rigging a Toyota Corolla to another Gambler vehicle for a little tug-of-war.

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

MANY THOUGHTS GO THROUGH MY MIND about this Gambler caravan from the Ozarks. I'm trying to not let the stereotype of the Ozarks cloud my judgement or poison my experience with them. Even saying "them" feels like I've already categorized the people I will soon meet, and I feel my ideas of them are already tainted. My only knowledge of the Ozarks comes from my childhood watching the "Beverly Hillbillies" or other Appalachia caricatures from TV and movies. I keep driving and try to focus on what I hope the weekend will entail and try to keep my mind open for unchartered territory at my first Gambler 500 Rally.

We stop at Orville's Restaurant on our way up and run into Josh Patt, one half of the duo running the Colorado Gambler 500. We all chat for a bit but he's headed back to base camp about four miles up the road at a private residence with some food from Orville's. He throws on his helmet and goggles and jumps into a burgundy-colored Gambler car that started life as an early 90s Mercury Cougar, but now has yellow flames on the hood and lightning bolts on the passenger doors. Although it might've lived a more glamorous life in the 90s, it now screams of an old, tired, and weathered lady of the night, who smells of stale cigarettes wearing her tattered and worn pleather miniskirt. Bright bubblegum pink spray paint haphazardly covers the front bumper as if to say, "screw beauty." It no longer has a front windshield, or a roof, hence the helmet and goggles. This is my first taste of a Gambler in the wild.

"YOU KNOW, I DON'T EVEN LOOK AT IT AS AN EVENT—WHAT I ASPIRE TO CREATE IS A FESTIVAL."

Josh and his wife, Niki, the other half of the duo, took over the Colorado Gambler 500 two years ago after attending other Gambler rallies. Two hours after winning the Kansas Gambler in 2018, they were approached about taking over the Colorado Gambler. "We talked about it on the entire drive back to Colorado from Kansas. We talked about the pros and cons, and plans and ideas, and brainstormed. I mean, it took some serious conversation to make the decision because we also knew that once we started it, it's not like we can do it once and be done. It would be something that we had to commit to long term. And we're busy people, so that was a big conversation about that," says Niki.

What was most important to Josh and Niki for the Colorado Gambler 500 was creating an event that culled from their experiences at other racing events they've

attended and competed in. Josh competes in Ultra 4 with his Rock Tech Racing team, most recently winning 3rd place on the podium with his 1981 Toyota pickup at Nationals this past October. "Baja 1000, King of the Hammers, the Mint 400, Vegas to Reno—all these professional races, that's the type of atmosphere that we pull from. You know, I don't even look at it as an event—what I aspire to create is a festival," says Josh. "I want the only complaint from someone is they say they just didn't have enough time to do it all."

We arrive in plenty of time at base camp and greeting us at the entrance is "The Green Growler," Josh and Niki's drab, pickle-colored 1973 Ford LTD with KC Baja lights and BF Goodrich KO2s. We check-in and get our Gambler swag and registration materials, all contained inside a nice, manila envelope. Clark, Frank, and I find our secluded camp spot near the entrance but above the open area of the property, where most of the other Gamblers will probably camp. "It gets a little rowdy and loud at night," says Clark, with a little nod to let me know if we want any sleep, we should stay away from that area. I pick up on the hint quickly and completely agree—I love a good party, but my partying days are long gone. I love sleep now.

I meet up with my navigation partner, Jessy, whom Josh and Niki had introduced me to a few weeks earlier. Jessy, affectionately known as the "Gambler Queen," won that famous title at the 2019 Oregon Gambler, or OG, as it's known in the Gambler community. She is going to be my Gambler teammate for this event. Different than the map and compass navigation I'm used to after competing in the Rebelle Rally, this event allows the use of GPS, which for me, feels a little like cheating.

Around 9 pm that night, loud sirens and blaring lights appear in

Photo by Max Gomez

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

Photo by Max Gomez

the distance amid a cloud of dust from the dirt road and we're roused from our small talk in our camp chairs and cozy propane campfire. I begin thinking the sheriff has come for some reason, but as they get closer, Kenny Rogers' "The Gambler" can be heard playing loud and clear. A large van that lived its previous life as a transportation vehicle for a mental health institution and is now known as the "Beerbulance" drives in, towing a Volkswagen Rabbit with "Pony Keg" emblazoned in large script on its sides. Behind it, one peculiar and outrageous Gambler vehicle after another, either towed or trailered, steadily make their way into camp. Horns honking and sirens blaring, people hooting and hollering. Heads and arms hanging out of windows holding their choice of road trip beverage in hand. I'm in awe at what I am witnessing and can't resist the excitement and energy emanating from their loud, jubilant cheers.

"They're here," Clark says with a smile. I smile along with him and begin cheering and clapping along as they make their way in, this caravan from the Ozarks.

I'm beginning to understand.

RACE DAY

The Gamblers did stay up late. Some were still coming into camp through the night. Some were partying and reuniting with their Gambler family, or Gam Fam, and spreading moonshine cheer. Some, like the team with the completely stock 2002 Volkswagen Jetta, were busy installing a two-inch lift, shocks, coils, brake lines and cutting the body to accommodate the bigger tires, over a period of six and a half hours that night.

"EVERYBODY BROUGHT TOOLS OUT, THEY HAD A GENERATOR WITH ELECTRICITY AND POWER TOOLS—THEY BUILT IT RIGHT THERE IN THE TREES."

"Here's what's so Gambler-esque about it," Josh says proudly. "They had four guys to their team. The two times I went over there to check on them, there were six or seven other guys working on it who were just random dudes from camp that went over there to help out. At one point, there were probably 20 guys working on that car and they got it done and they Gambled it all weekend. The whole Gambler camp helped them do it. Right there. Everybody brought tools out, they had a generator with electricity and power tools—they built it right there in the trees." They also installed a Rhino-Rack roof rack the morning of race day, because, why not?

We attend the driver's meeting, get our coordinates, and are debriefed on the fire, which is still a good distance away, but is clouding the skies and filling my sinuses with smoke. Day two of the rally will be rerouted due to the fire.

Photos by Ashley Eriksen

Jessy and I get into the FJ and she vigorously starts plotting the coordinates into the GPS, and when it's our turn to leave, we head out and start Gamblin'.

Along with having cheap and raucous fun, and driving vehicles that should've never left a paved road and are now decorated like they're from the land of misfit Mad Max rejects, picking up trash scattered about the forest roads is one of the expectations of the Gambler. It's something the Gamblers take seriously and are proud to take part in. "Leave it better than you found it," says Niki.

"I've met some of the most unique people being a part of the Gambler 500. You'd be surprised how many different walks of life care about cleaning up trash," says Gambler photographer and proud co-owner of the Beerbulance and Pony Keg, Ashley.

"Colorado is a wonderful state to share with people who respect the outdoors and want to help clean up our lands," says Charlie, one of the crew members from the "Sirch and Rascue" teams. "Plus, the crap box cars are a hoot!"

" THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF THE GAMBLER WAS A $500 CAR OR 500 MILES. OUR PHILOSPHY IS 500 MILES, 500 SMILES."

It's a blast driving through the trails, even though I'm in my FJ which is perfectly capable taking on the Colorado back roads. When I initially decided to compete in the rally, I confessed to Josh and Niki that I felt guilty having a significant and unfair advantage over the Gambler vehicles competing in my FJ. "The original concept of the Gambler was a $500 car or 500 miles," says Niki. "Our

Photos by Max Gomez

philosophy is '500 miles, 500 smiles,' so it's not about how much money you spent on the car, we don't care. We had a guy last year that brought his Ford Raptor."

"The thing too," Josh chimes in, "is a $500 car nowadays isn't going to be too safe going down our mountain roads, and why do I care what somebody spends? If he buys it for $500 and puts $5,000 in it, what's the difference? And frankly, I just want them to be there. I don't care what they're in."

I soon realize there are many more perfectly capable Toyota vehicles competing—a 60 and 80 Series Land Cruiser, a couple of first and second gen 4Runners, and a first gen Tundra. Also "competing" is a Toyota Previa dressed up as a Dirt Devil vacuum—yeah, *that* Previa—the minivan, and of course, a 2001 Corolla. I'm not feeling as guilty any more—maybe a little nervous for the Previa and Corolla—but otherwise, no more sympathy from me competing in my FJ Cruiser.

As Jessy and I drive throughout the day, we check in often on Gamblers pulled over on the side of the road, making sure everyone is ok. Some are pulled over with the inevitable mechanical problems that plague these living-their-best-life cars. Other Gamblers are hanging out having some lunch or taking a swim in the river, swimsuits be damned. My friends, Clark and Frank, also part of the "Sirch and Rascue" teams, are searching for broken-down Gamblers in Clark's Tacoma. Their Gambler nicknames are "Zip Tie" and "Dog Rocket," respectively, and they are having more fun "fixing" the broken-down Gamblers with meticulously placed zip ties and taking photos of their handy work. When I see Clark's photos of random zip ties attached to various car components, including door handles and tire rims, I have tears in my eyes from laughing so hard. "See, I fixed it," Clark says with a big smile. "Frank actually had more mechanical knowledge than I realized, so when

Photo by Ashley Erikson

THE CAMERON PEAK FIRE

The sky was hazy and an auburn tint surrounded us as the Cameron Peak fire, about 40 miles away at the time, had started literally a day before the event. The first day of the rally was northeast of the fire and clear from any danger. The second day was redirected further southeast to avoid the fire and kept the Gamblers well within safe distance and out of the way of responders. Josh and Niki took every precaution to ensure the safety of everyone competing or helping with the event, and all competitors were cautious and aware of the fire at all times. The Cameron Peak fire eventually became the largest wildfire in Colorado history, burning nearly 310 square miles over a period of 112 days and was 100% contained by December 2, 2020.

INSTEAD, SMOKE AND DUST FROM SPIN OUTS AND DEAFENING SOUNDS OF ROARING ENGINES AND CHEERS IN THE CAMP SIGNIFY ANOTHER SPECTATOR EVENT IS HAPPENING INSTEAD.

we would find broken down Gamblers, he often had good advice for a possible fix," Clark tells me, despite their nifty zip tie work.

The GPS coordinates take us through some beautiful scenery through Wyoming and Colorado and we work our way back to base camp, which is on private property this year due to the Cameron Peak fire, with its billowy pompadour-shaped cloud plume still looming in the distance.

The rest of the Gamblers make their way back into camp for dinner and after stories of mishaps, breakdowns, and off-road maneuvering skills are shared, the real event begins.

Almost as a release of the day's travels and maybe even pure joy of just being where they are at that moment, a crowd starts assembling in the middle of the camp. Typically, they are lured by a large bonfire but the fire restrictions put a halt to it this year. Instead, smoke and dust from spin outs and the deafening sounds of roaring engines and cheers in the camp signify another spectator event is happening instead.

I approach and see the Corolla has a tow strap pulled through the trunk and is attached somewhere inside the car. The other end is attached to the rear of what looks like a mid-80s model LTD. I watch as a tug-of-war takes place between the two Gambler vehicles. The strap breaks free and I can't tell who wins, or if there even was a winner, and before I can process what is actually happening, another vehicle quickly zooms in to be the next challenger.

The shenanigans last a long time—I did not stay up late enough to witness all of it and can't even fathom how everyone is still filled with so much energy that late at night. Driving off-road is mentally exhausting, at least for me, and my two sleeping pads and my ear plugs in the back of my FJ were softly calling my name. Gambler party machine, I am not.

Driver's meeting with Josh and Niki going over the day's coordinates and any bits of important information we may need.

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

The next day, the rally is re-routed due to the fire and we won't be heading southwest as originally intended, as that will lead us directly towards the fire. We make our way to an intersection near Glen Echo Resort and are stopped by Max, another photographer and Sirch and Rascue team member. He's informed us that even the alternate route has been closed and there is a sheriff waiting at the bridge where we are supposed to cross. It looks like our final rally day may be finished before it even gets started.

We eventually work our way east towards the bridge we are supposed to cross and there with Clark and Frank is the sheriff, who I'm sure has been thoroughly entertained by their zip tie stories. They tell us the bridge is closed and that we have to continue along eastbound. We happily oblige.

Jessy and I manage to maneuver our way to a few waypoints further east, eventually seeing where we would've ended up had we been able to access the bridge earlier. We decide it's best to call it a day and work our way back to basecamp. The smoke from the fire is burning my sinuses and eyes anyway, and I can only imagine what the locals are going through worrying about their homes and livelihood.

We hang for a few hours as we wait for the rest of the Gamblers to get back to camp. Some have already left and headed back home. The others, still being teased by the day's coordinates, manage to complete the route

Photo by Max Gomez

Photo by Max Gomez

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

backwards, therefore getting the rest of the checkpoints for that day.

Winners for the Gambler 500 events are decided by having the Gambler Spirit—of camaraderie, great attitude, being helpful on the trail, and of course, a crazy car. In the Oregon Gambler, it involves "The Scepter" which is handed down from the previous winner, and in 2019 was passed down to my navigator, Jessy. After spending the weekend with her and driving with her during the rally, I understand why. The Gambler Queen has a heart of gold, embodies what the Gambler is truly about, and truly loves her zany, wild, and carefree Gam Fam.

For the Colorado Gambler, this year's prizes range from a large metal map of the rally route, a few bottles of Gambler 500 Whiskey—one of them of course wrapped in zip ties, a bicycle sculpture made from a bicycle chain, a pear covered with a sticker, a beer koozie, a t-shirt, and a "Try Not to be a Dick Today" wooden ornament.

Yup, you read that right.

Although others may view these "prizes" as not worthy of their time, for Gamblers, this hodge-podge of odd and quirky items

Some of the evening events may have included some moonshine.

Photo by Ashley Eriksen

"IT'S A BIG FAMILY THAT LOVES TO HAVE FUN. PLAIN AND SIMPLE."

is reflective of the people who compete in these rallies across the country. It is an acknowledgment of their personal Gambler Spirit and the love of adventure and friendships born from them.

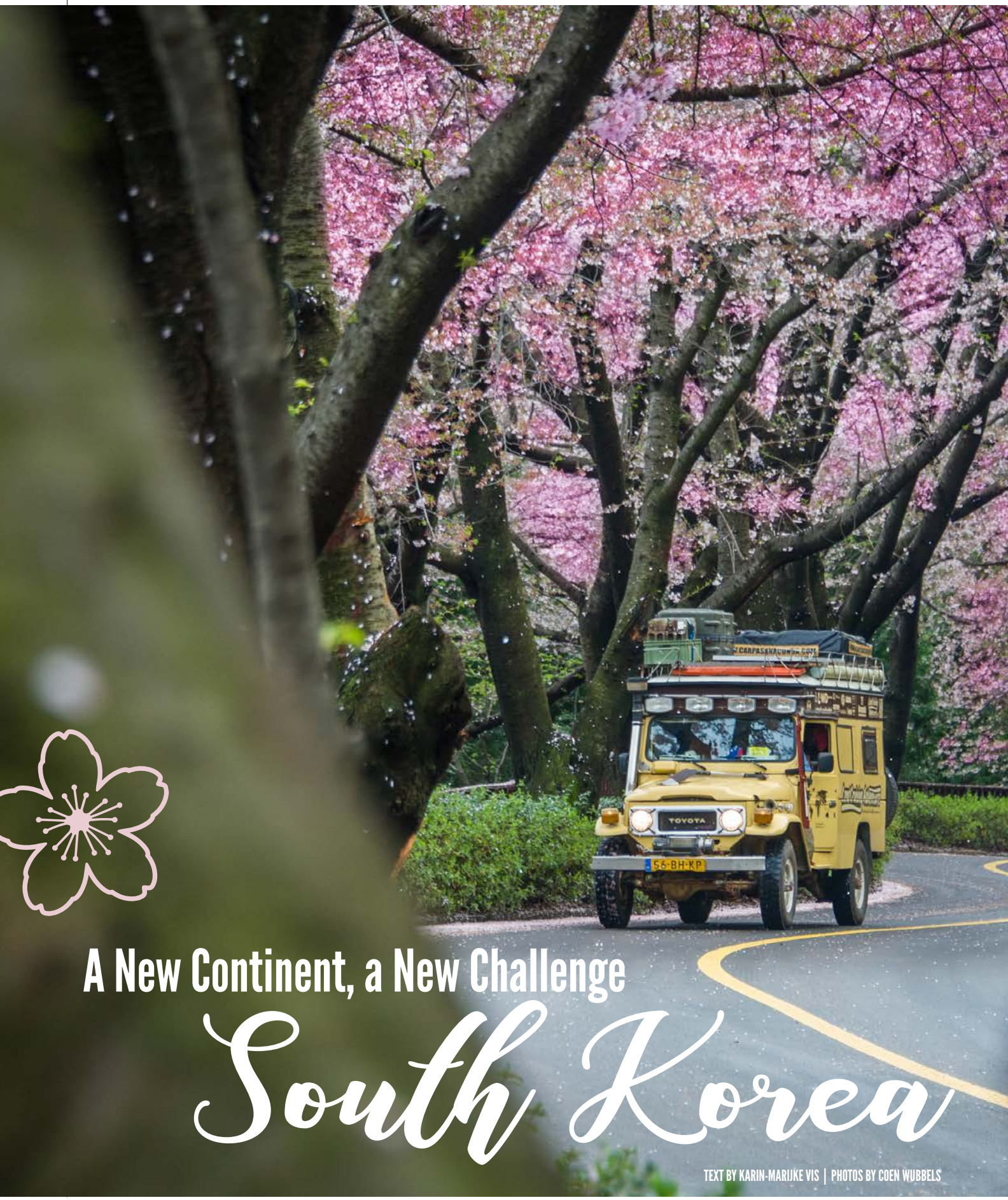
Max sums it up best: "It's a big family that loves to have fun. Plain and simple. They're definitely competitive, but when we all get back to camp, everyone just melds back together."

Respect at the Gambler isn't earned by being the fastest, the coolest, or even getting the most waypoints. It doesn't matter in the least, and in fact, if you're trying that hard it'll be frowned upon. You get it simply by "not being a dick," enjoying an off-road adventure while picking up trash, and helping out your fellow Gamblers.

Oh, and of course, driving a really abominable and perfectly incapable car. TCT

Me and my navigator, 2019 Gambler Queen, Jessy, on our final day of Gamblin'.

Photo by Max Gomez



A New Continent, a New Challenge

South Korea

TEXT BY KARIN-MARIJKE VIS | PHOTOS BY COEN WUBBELS

Pink trees lining the road.

THE FOOTPATH IS LINED WITH LANTERNS, one of the many offerings to Buddha and also serves to illuminate the world of ignorance with Buddha's wisdom. From ancient times lantern offerings have been deemed just as important in Buddhism as incense offerings. We are at the entrance of the Beomeosa Temple, the first of many we will visit during our nine-month overland journey in South Korea.

At the entrance gate we are welcomed by four statues of massive, colorful guardian gods with bulging eyes. They fend off evil and protect the world. Each carries a symbol, such as a lute, a dragon or sword, by which you recognize who is who. Buddhist temples are colorful with lots of depictions of lotus flowers and dragons. At the same time, they radiate serenity with quiet, shady corners where you can just sit and be still for a moment.

THE CHARM OF OVERLANDING IN SOUTH KOREA

Being a highly developed country, South Korea is largely covered in asphalt. If overlanding implies off-roading to you, South Korea may not feature on your overland-travel bucket list. However, this small peninsula in the Far East has so many other things to offer: a rich history and culture which you find in temples and daily life, informative and well-maintained museums, modern architecture, ancient graveyards, gorgeous mountains (hiking is big here), and a coastline with some sandy beaches.

The charms of the country are not necessarily far away from the asphalt, but you do need to get off the highway. That in can be quite an adventure. Overlanding in South Korea has its own challenges. For one, you can't use Google Maps to plan a route because the government has disabled that function. We assume this has to do with its relationship with North Korea. Guru Maps and MapsMe, two of the apps we regularly use, lack many roads and are unreliable. The

BEING A HIGHLY DEVELOPED COUNTRY, SOUTH KOREA IS LARGELY COVERED IN ASPHALT.

A daily ritual: changing of the guards.

main cities and immediate surroundings are a mishmash of expensive toll roads that we prefer to avoid.

FIND OUR WAY AROUND A NEW COUNTRY

Getting out of Busan, the main city and port in the southeast of the country, is a challenge. From the first bridge, the GPS indicates a route north to a second bridge. We see the bridge but can't figure out how to get there and drive a loop back to our starting point. We try another turnoff and get lost once more. When we have found a way back to our route, we are stopped by a barrier. Maximum height is 8 feet 20. Our Land Cruiser is 8 feet 80. We turn around, zigzag some more and not being able to get to that second bridge, we return to the highway once more, me getting my wallet from the glove department, ready to start spending money on toll fees.

The joy of traveling in a new country is that everything is exciting. It does take ages and an effort to figure out, but then, we are in no hurry. We have just arrived in the country, having shipped the Land Cruiser from South America to South Korea, and have to stock up. Not speaking the language, it isn't evident to ask for directions or to find a bank with an ATM to withdraw money. Having completed that mission, we're on for the next: finding a supermarket. Once inside we wonder how hard can it be to get rice. It isn't hard as such, but small quantities aren't evident: three-, five-, and 10-kilo and even 20-kilo bags are common. Not yet being able to decipher the alphabet, it takes ages to figure out what is in some of these elaborate food packages. We learn there are dozens of types of tofu, miso, and seaweed, and all kinds of mushrooms we have never seen before. Strawberries and many other fruits are sold in big quantities and apples are huge. A food adventure has started and will lead to a big change in our daily menu after years of rice and beans in South America.

> THE JOY OF TRAVELING IN A NEW COUNTRY IS THAT EVERYTHING IS EXCITING.

HOSPITALITY

We are lucky to have arrived in the cherry blossom season, which is in the beginning of April. An asphalt road winds along the Animingogae Ridge above the town of Jinhae, supposedly one of the hot spots in this season, and rightfully so. Left and right pink trees line the road and with a breeze, the light pink petals flutter down like snowflakes. It is utterly enchanting. Locals love this season, which to them announces the start of spring. People are everywhere. Never in our lives have we seen so many people, all happily smiling, giving

thumbs and the V-sign to take the umpteenth selfie in front of flowering trees.

In a parking lot we are invited by a woman to come and stay at her place. Thus, we meet Rachel, who has traveled a lot in between jobs of teaching Engineering and English. She lives in a house with a bed/living room with floor heating. She insists we sleep in her double bed while she moves to the sofa in another small, unheated room. The kitchen is unheated too, we need to bring warm socks for these kinds of places as shoes stay at the entrance of the house. While she scurries around in the kitchen we sit at the kitchen table so we can talk. She starts throwing pots and pans around for the rest of the evening, feeding us as if we haven't eaten in months. We are served soup with fish, mushrooms, leek, and cabbage. Next is a noodle dish with carrots, spinach, other mushrooms. Third dish follows with tuna and more mushrooms. I forgot to write down the names of these dishes. It was way too much to keep up with and have a conversation at the same time. We are not allowed to do the dishes. A Korean friend told us that for the first two days, guests are 'real' guests and are pampered. When you stay longer, you can help cleaning up. Knowing this helps us to accept her hospitality without insisting we do our share.

We sleep well in Rachel's bed. By the time we get up, she has managed to run to the supermarket and display another plethora of dishes on the kitchen table among which fresh pumpkin soup. The seafood we didn't eat yesterday is now served as a Korean bouillon/soup. With it comes an omelet and fried rice with onion, a plate with cabbage, tomato, strawberry and another dish of green leaves with sesame seeds. In case we are hungry. We are overwhelmed by her care. She'd love us to stay another day, but we want to see

Happily reunited with our Land Cruiser.

Selfie time in front of flowering trees.

We are lucky to have arrived in the cherry blossom season.

more cherry blossoms before they cease flowering and move on.

By luck we come across the Yeojwacheon Stream, another famous cherry blossom spot. Lots of people are wandering about—apparently not everybody works 12 hours a day in this country. Lots of hikers in fancy outdoor clothing (couples love wearing unisex) are taking photos, and in search of the next perfect selfie background. Along the waterfront are street stalls selling snack food: corn on the cob, fried snacks, roasted meat on skewers, coconut, waffles, roasted chestnuts. When I am sitting on a low fence, writing my diary and Coen is off taking photos, I'm offered coffee by a street stall vendor who wants to welcome us. We will learn that it's common for people to offer small gestures of welcome like this to us, foreigners.

Trying to make sense of all the brochures and maps.

CAMPING WITH LOCALS

Outside town, we stop at a tourist information center along the highway. It has offers brochures and maps, but few make sense because of the foreign language. We find one brochure with a phone number you can call if in need of an English-speaking person. It's called BBB and works with 4,600 volunteers, not just for English but for a number of other languages as well (among which French, Spanish, Turkish, Polish, Bahasa Indonesia). What a great initiative.

We finally manage to get to the country roads and drive along the coast where we come across a site famous for its dinosaur footprints (52 to be exact) and a sauropod

Karin-Marijke is offered coffee by a street stall vendor.

OCHRE IS THE POPULAR COLOR FOR TENTS THIS YEAR, WHICH ARE ALL BIG AND SET UP WITH PRECISION.

Coen sharing a drink with the locals.

trackway. Like elsewhere in the world, dinosaur history is popular in South Korea. It's low tide and the tracks are embedded in the hard rock tablets of the ocean. We sit there for a bit, taking in the silence and the sun that makes the skin on the top of my head tingle.

It's the weekend and the Koreans are ready for a new camping season. Instead of wild camping we, join them at a campsite and get a feel for their camping culture. These are city people arriving in luxurious cars and fancy outfits, and with a lot of camping equipment. There are few kids, many couples nowadays opt for only one child because raising a child is so expensive in this country. Ochre is the popular color for tents this year, which are all big and set up with precision. No slack lines or chances of being blown away in a storm like in South America. They set up the tents wearing protective gloves. They bring BBQs, kerosene heaters, and some even have some form of decoration on their tents or lines. This is a free campsite, with public toilets and water to do dishes. Others, we are told, are paid campsites, for which you have to make reservations on the internet and include hot water, showers, and Wi-Fi.

A few people speak English, and we have some interesting talks with them. We share a drink and join them for a meal. It's pleasant to be here. No blaring radios, and in the evening, everybody huddles around a fire. At midnight everybody is fast asleep. We are confident we will enjoy our time in South Korea, but have no inkling that we will end up staying nine months because we come to love this country so much. TCT

Koreans are ready for a new camping season.

By Shane Williams

An Intro to *Live To Explore*

If you've been reading our publication for any length of time, you know that above all, we're outdoor enthusiasts. Even though we really enjoy publishing stories of adventure with Toyota vehicles, the Williams family spends most of our time searching for adventure and exploration, anywhere we can find it.

Many years ago, before our original *FJC Magazine* publication began (and long before our kids arrived), Angie and I started a project called "Colorado Insider". Soon this idea merged with that of a good friend, and Adventure Insider (AI) was born. One of the first articles in AI was "Trooper Traverse" a backpacking trip Erick, his dad Ed, and I did retracing the route the 10th Mountain Division accomplished from Leadville, CO to Aspen just before they shipped to WWII. You can read it here: ***https://www.livetoexplore.co/trips/trooper-traverse***

Adventure Insider kept going for a few years, covering outdoor adventure in all its forms. As it turns out though... time goes by, and contributors come and go. Eventually Erick decided to focus on his FDNY career and I ran AI solo for a couple of years.

Not long after we merged *FJC Magazine* and *Tacoma Magazine*, I decided to revive Adventure Insider, but change the focus just a little so that we could more accurately tell our family stories of adventure. That is when *Live to Explore* was born.

On the pages of *Live to Explore* for the last couple years, you'll find articles, videos, and photo galleries that cover our various adventures around the country, and around the world. There is information on just about everything you can do outside: skiing/snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking, international trips, mountains, deserts, and forest. If it's adventure you can experience with your family—we've probably written about it, or will soon.

If it's adventure you can experience with your family—we've probably written about it, or will soon.

Up until now, I've done most of the creating, but as our children grow and mature, they're starting to do their own writing. Soon I'll be asking them to give their opinion on the adventure and exploration we find.

With my Survival Instructor background from the US Air Force combined with my SAR experience from Civil Air Patrol, another idea came to mind when our son, Brenden, was in first grade. It's a Search and Rescue education program meant for young children,

called "**Hug a Tree and Survive**". I read through all the material, watched the training videos, and created a short presentation that I've now given to elementary students at our local school. This presentation is the first step in an upcoming educational initiative to teach young people about safe, responsible outdoor recreation called Explore Smart. You can also keep tabs on the *Live to Explore* site to find out how Explore Smart will be growing in the future.

Finally, *Live To Explore* currently has plans to begin publishing a few niche guidebooks that are beyond the scope of *Toyota Cruisers*

Up until now I've done most of the creating, but as our children grow and mature, they're starting to do their own writing.

& Trucks. The idea is to create compelling content for the vehicle based adventurer (aka overland enthusiast) that could assist in planning and executing amazing trips all around the planet. Keep track of *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* and LiveToExplore.co for details coming in early 2021.

If you're a lover of all things outdoors like we are, head over to **LiveToExplore.co**, or find us on Facebook or Instagram to check out what we have going on. We would love to hear your feedback and can't wait to share our future adventures with you. TCT

By Shane Williams

We're Looking Forward To 2021!

Well, we all know that 2020 was not an amazingly epic year. A lot of the world as we knew it 12 months ago has changed, and this new reality is not likely to go back to the before-times any time soon.

That being said, the *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* and Zaxyn Media team is really looking forward to what 2021 will bring! Why? I'm glad you asked...

For starters, the world we've come to experience this year is starting to feel...normal is not the right word, but, perhaps familiar?

We're starting to learn how to enjoy the things we've always enjoyed, but in a slightly different way. In many ways, this new standard of things may end up improving the way we explor our world.

In the Toyota adventure world, we have some other really great things to look forward to next year. Beyond the trick Tacoma TRD-Sport Trailer concept that was just announced by Toyota, we're expecting something that I've been anticipating for at least five years:

THE 2022 TUNDRA.

We've already written about what we expect in the all-new Tundra, based on a completely new platform. It will certainly bring Toyota adventure vehicles fully into the 21st century, and will likely start to show what's coming in the next five years.

Another major change that 2020 has brought, that will continue in 2021, is the increased interested in the 'overland' hobby. It really seems like the idea of Overland is coming into mainstream, and so many more people are exploring the outdoors for the first time. I think this is going to be really great for our hobby and industry in the long term, but in the short term, we have some work to do.

Toyota Cruisers & Trucks, and Zaxyn Media, are making a commitment to increase our outdoor exploration ethics and information in the coming year. We want to reach hundreds of thousands of people and show them the best ways to explore in a sustainable, ethical, and conservation way. We want to show the new enthusiasts how amazing the roads, trails, and locations can be, and help them understand how to help preserve these great places for future generations.

You can join us in this effort by heading over to ***http://tctmag.us/exploresmart*** for our running list of resources meant to help all of us educate the masses in responsible outdoor recreation. TCT

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YOUR RIGS

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» tctmag.us/myrig or tag #thetoyotamag on social.

2013 TUNDRA "THE GENERAL" IN MONTANA
From Layne C.

FJ 55 LAND CRUISER
From IG @ ozark_landcruisers

LX 450 IN RETRO COLORS
From IG @sir.campalot