

TOYOTA

CRUISERS & TRUCKS

ADVENTURE. INSPIRATION. EXPLORATION.



TOYOTA CHINOOK

Adam Smith from Roadlyfe discusses his adventures living full time in a Hilux RV.

OVERLAND WEEKEND

A Texan perspective of the TCT Crew annual Colorado trip.

UPGRADE YOURSELF

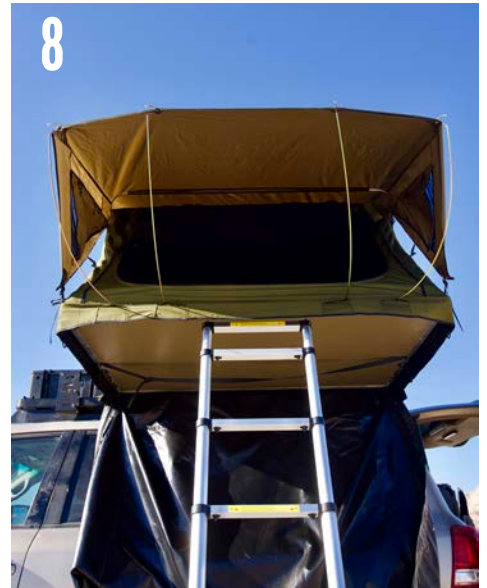
A boost in skill and confidence can make all the difference.

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PHOTO BY Adam Smith

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[FRAMED]

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

IT ALMOST FEELS WRONG to share our latest publication covering so many great summer adventures, considering everything that's still going on in our country and around the world. While many areas are still struggling with how to move ahead during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, others have the added stress of nearby forest fires, unbreathable air, a very active hurricane season, and most recently torrential rain that has drenched burned areas, causing major flooding.

So first and foremost, our thoughts and prayers go out to everyone whose lives have been permanently impacted by these tragic events.

After nearly 14 years of writing and publishing stories of inspiration, I feel like it is well within our realm of expertise, and in some ways our continuing duty, to publish this issue. You'll notice that it's a bit lighter than many of our issues, again mostly due to the fact that pretty much every event in the country was cancelled this summer.

Still, this issue contains several firsts for our team:

- The first RV as the cover story, which is truly inspiring and will no doubt have many of you ready to hit the road.
- The first annual TCT Crew Overland trip. Believe it or not, that trip was the first time many of our editors and staff have ever met in person. It was a really great time and we look forward to repeating this annual adventure.
- This is also the first time we've had five **FRAMED** photos. We simply couldn't narrow it down to just four =)

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue and feel a little relief that there is light at the end of this tunnel we call 2020. We're excited to finish the year strong, and look forward to better days in 2021!

Shane

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Comments? Kudos?

Email us at info@tctmagazine.net and let us know!

AND ALWAYS CHECK US OUT AT TCTMAG.US

ADVENTURE. INSPIRATION. EXPLORATION.

TOYOTA
CRUISERS & TRUCKS

Monument, CO 80132

www.tctmagazine.net

PUBLISHED BY

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Reviews, opinions, comments, and ratings of any product do not represent endorsement of said product by TCT Magazine, its editors, or publisher.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

Number of issues published annually: Four
Annual in-app subscription price: \$9.99 in U.S.A. Location of known office of publication: 19250 Sixpenny Lane, Monument, CO 80132.
Owner: Zaxyn Media, LLC 19250 Sixpenny Lane, Monument, CO 80132

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NEW & NOTEWORTHY

By TCT Staff



STEP 22 GEAR NEW ITEMS!

WE'VE COVERED STEP 22 IN THE PAST, and they're known for making really great gear! This time they have a few all-new products that promise to help make your adventures even more streamlined and efficient.

NUMBER 1: PANGOLIN TOOL ROLL

This is a great combination tool roll + tool bag. Inside the roll you'll find three pouches for wrenches and sockets along with a wrench roll, each of which can be pulled off the Velcro backer, making each piece portable. When rolled out, the big pouch becomes a safe and clean spot to drop your tools or place hardware, ensuring nothing rolls away or gets lost in the dirt.

MSRP \$145

NUMBER 2: STINGRAY FLAT BOX

A handy collapsible box that is the perfect addition to any organized adventure travel setup. It works great for storing

clothes, camera gear, food, or camp kitchen gear. Handles on each side make it easy to grab from any direction and move around camp. When not in use, the box folds flat down to 1/4 of the original size, saving precious space in your rig.

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NUMBER 3: HEDGEHOG TOILETRY ROLL

Similar to the tool roll, this is a solution built for adventure travel. The unique roll / bag design keeps all your toiletries organized and easy to use even when you are in the middle of nowhere, especially since it can be hung from just about anything. The roll includes seven different storage areas, including two removeable pouches. The attached carry bag doubles as a handy storage bucket when hung, perfect for phones, masks, and other EDC items.

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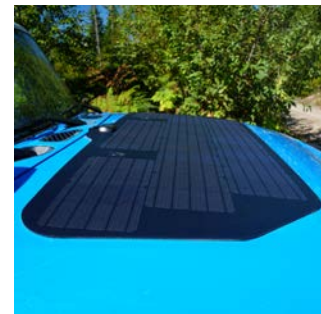
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CASCADIA 4X4 SOLAR OPTIONS

CASCADIA 4X4 STARTED SEVERAL YEARS AGO

in British Columbia, Canada, and they've developed some really great options for vehicle-specific solar panels. Cascadia custom designs panels to work with specific vehicles (they call it the VSS System), and using the latest in solar panel and vinyl technology, they're able to get really great performance that augments your single or dual battery system, and can also provide ample power for overland equipment such as refrigerators and other accessories.

They support nearly every late-model Toyota vehicle, including Land Cruiser, Tundra, Lexus LX and GX, and of course 4Runner. They've also just released a custom 100w panel for the FJ Cruiser, now available for pre-order.



MSRP VARIES BY VEHICLE AND CAPACITY: 85 WATT PANEL FOR 3RD GEN TACOMA STARTING AT \$399; 100 WATT FJ CRUISER PANEL STARTING AT \$419

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NEW & NOTEWORTHY

By TCT Staff

GMRS / FRS RADIOS

FOR YEARS WE'VE ALWAYS RECOMMENDED CB RADIO + A HAM LICENSE (and gear) for trail communications. Well, over the last few years there has been a new movement coming, and we're finally getting the GMRS and FRS gear that makes this UHF FM comm method suitable for trail use.

Midland Radios now has several GMRS options to suit every need and budget, and the TCT team was able to test some Midland gear during our latest overland trip.

Midland offers a variety of handheld and 'Micromobile' hard-mounted (easily converted to portable) options that will work really well, and definitely extend range and voice clarity over traditional AM CB or FRS solutions.

For a hard-mounted (or semi-portable solution), the MXT Micromobile product line is the way to go. The highest-power is the MXT400, which transmits a maximum of 40 watts and has a \$249.00 MSRP. It can be bundled with a 3db Gain antenna and mounting bracket for \$299.00 MSRP. A 6db Gain external antenna is also available.

If you like the idea of Micromobile but are interested in a less expensive and more compact option, the MXT115 or MXT275 bundle offers a maximum of 15 watts complete with antenna, each for \$149.00 MSRP. We like the MXT275 for having all controls on its mic.

For your friends who come along for the ride or don't want to invest in an installation, the Midland "X-Talker" series FRS radios (we tested the T71VP3) are a great handheld solution. They offer longer distance than old-school FRS, and are USB rechargeable in your 4x4. \$89.00 a pair MSRP. *TCT*

\$ MSRP \$299 FOR MXT400; \$199 FOR MXT115; \$149 FOR MXT275

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BODY ARMOR



Wow, It's Dark!

A Review of 23 Zero's RTT constructed with LST Fabric



Rooftop tents (RTT) are commonplace. Look around. They are everywhere but continue to be the must-have item in the off-road camping scene. Rooftop tents are mounted on anything with four wheels: from Subarus to SUVs. I recently spotted an RTT mounted on a side-by-side. Rooftop tents are generally comfortable and easy to setup and take down. Plus, it's neat to sleep high above the ground. Manufacturers continue to engineer and design advancements to the rooftop tent. They look for ways to make their RTT stand out and be unique among numerous offerings.

"It's dark in here. I can't find my water bottle." My wife,

Louise, said after using the tent ladder to climb into the tent.

"Use my headlamp." I replied and offered. It's 10:00 in the morning, and the sun has been up for hours. The new 23 Zero roof top tent remains dark inside. I mean, completely dark; I am not exaggerating. The 23 Zero's new Light Suppression Technology (LST) fabric is a game changer in the rooftop tent world. The 23 Zero uses "a leading-edge application, a combination of a UV treatment, and an Advanced Polyurethane coating that gives you the benefit to sleep better than ever before in a rooftop tent." Simply put, the fabric creates a dark, beneficial sleeping environment as well as reduces the



Experiencing the 23 Zero tent in southern Utah.

Upon our arrival, we easily popped open the tent. The newly designed ladder felt comfortable and stable.

inside tent temperature. The sun's rays are unable to penetrate the fabric of the tent, allowing campers to sleep in a darker and cooler environment.

I was lucky enough to test the new 23 Zero Breezeway rooftop tent with LST fabric on a trip to the Vermillion Cliffs National Monument in northern Arizona. I mounted the tent easily onto my Frontrunner Roof Rack using the included stainless steel hardware. We headed south from our home in Park City, Utah, to explore the wonders of the Vermillion Cliffs. Upon our arrival, we easily popped open the tent. The newly designed ladder felt comfortable and stable. So, what's the big deal? The big deal was noticeable as soon as I climbed inside.

Yep, it was dark! The fabric blocked all light from penetrating the tent. I tried my best to look around. I needed to use my headlamp to survey my surroundings.



The new ladder design in comfortable and sturdy.



The tent packs up nicely.



Windows located on each side provided cool cross breezes and ventilation. The other stand out feature, the mattress, constructed with three-inch thick rebounding foam. This mattress invites the user to enjoy a comfortable sleep. Sleep? I wasn't ready just yet. I joined my family and our friends at the campfire to enjoy the peaceful, still desert night.

The following morning, I glanced at my watch and noticed that it read 8:03. The sun had risen more than an hour ago, yet it was dark and cool inside. The LST fabric allowed all of us to sleep comfortably and soundly without waking at the sun's first rays. It also kept the inside of the tent cool, not warming us like some roof top sauna. The mattress was both firm and supportive. We all woke up, rested and ready for adventure.

We needed to travel to White Pocket, a signature rock formation on the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. I sipped my coffee as Louise prepared breakfast. After eating, we packed. The tent closed without issue, and the ladder collapsed with ease. All of our bedding fit inside. We did not have to "wrestle" with the

front cover to zip it closed. A thoughtful touch. In a matter of five minutes, the tent was ready. We stowed a few last minute items, and we set off to explore the geology that makes the Vermillion Cliffs unique and outstanding.

Over the next five days, we wandered and explored the Vermillion Cliffs and surrounding area. The tent opened and closed without issue. The LST fabric allowed the tent to stay dark and cool, each day we awoke feeling refreshed. Yes, the rooftop tent craze continues. It's nice to see manufacturers engineering and designing nuances to make the RTT even better. The 23 Zero Breezeway Tent constructed with LST Fabric performed flawlessly. *TCT*

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- The LST Fabric can be found on 23 Zero's Rooftop Tents and Awnings
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THE MOST IMPORTANT UPGRADE

STORY BY KATHY LOCKE | PHOTOS BY BLAKE RUBENSTEIN/GUERILLA CAPTURING

ANXIETY. That's what I felt when I would see a trail ahead of me with larger-than-I'm-comfortable-driving-over rocks, or a hill that appeared steeper than I would prefer with said rocks. The stress I would endure during these trying moments began wearing on my enjoyment of actually going off-road. I was always fearing the unknown obstacles ahead of me and whether or not my FJ, or I, would make it through unharmed.



I'm sure many who are new to the off-road world will understand those thoughts. Maybe even those who have been off roading for years still have those thoughts. I've been off roading now for over three years, with my 2008 Toyota FJ Cruiser, on various types of trails with two of those years the FJ completely stock. I currently have the Toytec Boss 2.0 Front Aluma Series Coilovers with a 3" lift, along with RCI steel skid plates and rock sliders. Having these upgrades have definitely helped me feel my FJ is a little more protected and prepared.

Let's be real—FJ Cruisers, even stock, were built to off-road, and honestly, it took a while for me to realize it was an incredibly capable vehicle. It was me—or rather my fear and lack of confidence—that was holding us back. Those fears would be almost debilitating, seeing the obstacles ahead of me, as my hands would become uncontrollably shaky and breathing would become difficult as if something were sitting on my chest.

Not a really fun way to enjoy the trails. I was tired of feeling stressed and anxious and was afraid these overwhelming feelings would eventually prevent me from driving off-road all together.

I had an opportunity to upgrade my off-road driving skills with Matt Balasz, owner of On Trail Training. I was ready to learn, and most importantly, ready to conquer my fears.

Matt started On Trail Training in 2015, and after taking almost a year to get permits approved with the Forest Service, Matt's first class had one student. That first

year, he had a total of 12 people. Now, he has between 300-400 students a year with classes in recovery, trail driving, trail fixes, and overlanding. He can also customize courses to fit your needs. Matt is one of less than 100 I4WDTA (International 4 Wheel Drive Trainers Association) Certified trainers in the world—with less than a third of applicants actually passing the certification training.

We meet up at a gas station and head down the road to Slaughterhouse Gulch near Evergreen, Colorado. Matt has done this trail too many times to count and relies on

this area to train drivers about their vehicles, driving techniques, and of course, actual trail driving. I've never been on this trail but I know it has bypasses. Matt kindly lets me know we will not be taking any of the bypasses.

The trail starts out pretty easy but as the day goes on, each section

becomes slightly more technical. Every time we would pull up to the next section, my eyes got a little bigger and my smile slowly turns into a slightly stressed frown, pursed lips and all. "I'm going up that?" is inevitably my response to the section I see before me, and every time, Matt says, "That's not even the hard part."

I'm rethinking what I signed myself up for.

We stop at one area to test how far we can get my FJ at a "not-so-fun" tippy angle. My FJ has the inclinometer and Matt is going to show me just how far we can actually tilt my FJ. I drive my FJ along the hill, or basically the wall of the trail, driver side to the top and passenger side facing

**"The fears we don't face,
become our limitations."**

-Robin Sharma

the bottom of the road. From the inside, it is pretty much terrifying and I am sure a wiggle or heavy sigh will flop my FJ. Matt takes a photo and I as I looked at it later, I was floored at just how insignificant the lean actual was. "That's it? That's what it looked like? That doesn't even look like anything." My FJ can lean pretty far and what I was feeling and perceiving was not nearly as bad as I thought it was. My fear of tilting—so-much-I-think-I'll-flop-or-roll—reclaimed.

As we drive along, we make our way to a rather long but rocky hill. "I'm going up that?" Again, Matt calmly tells me he'll spot me and that that wasn't even the hard part. "Whatever you do, don't stop. It's all about momentum."

I make it up the hill without much drama and the requested momentum successfully. I lost a little traction in one spot, but Matt yells, "Keep going! Momentum!" I realize the hill isn't really that bad and feel quite proud of my newly found hill climbing prowess. I feel pretty good. Maybe even a little... confident? I find that each obstacle isn't as bad as I *perceive* it to be. *Perceive. Perception.* Those words stick with me beyond the training.

We get to the top and I see the next hill. My body quickly sinks into my seat. I take a deep breath. "I'm going up... *that?* Are you f*cking kidding me?" Perception—gone. Out the window. Confidence? Gone, too. I'm trying to picture what part under my FJ is going to be ripped out or what part of the FJ am I going to break over these rather large and imposing rocks?

Matt, and video crew in attendance, smile at my remark but they quickly head over to calm my fears and as a group, become my impromptu off-road cheerleaders.

Matt has me walk up the hill with him. We're going to walk it and see where tire placement will be. We spread our arms out like airplanes and check out where our tires will land on the rocks. I realize my wing span is the same width as my FJ. Who knew?

We decide a good line—the path I will take the FJ up and over, trying to keep the FJ as level as possible. Sometimes, driving over the big rock is the better option, even though your gut may tell you otherwise.

Matt offers to drive up the hill first in his 80s Series Land Cruiser, with me as passenger, to see how this will work. I agree and Matt tears up the hill without a hiccup. He's done this hill numerous times but it helps me understand where the large rocks are that will be my biggest challenges.



Opposite page: Heading out for training; *This page, top to bottom:* Matt going over some basics of driving techniques and vehicle mechanisms; Me, all smiles, completely unaware of what's ahead; Matt, always smiling, going over vehicles maintenance basics.



I walk back down to the bottom of the hill, get in the FJ, and take a LOT of deep breaths. A lot. I tell myself, "I can do this. I can do this. Just keep the momentum. Don't stop."

"It's just a rock. Get over it."

-Unknown

During this trail section, Matt explains "brake throttle modulation". "Poor Man's Locker" or "Poor Man's posi-traction" creates back pressure to the differential so there is no path of least resistance when a wheel loses traction. I've been a left-foot braker since the 2018 FJ Summit Rebelle U class, so it was easy to put this technique into practice.

I give the thumbs up and head up the hill. I make it over a few of the larger rock obstacles and get a little hung up on another rock. I apply the brake throttle modulation technique and make it over. I make some quick right and left turns to avoid a rather large opening between some other rocks, and make it to the top.

Breathe.

After getting to the top, I chat with Matt about how it went and how it felt using the braking technique. It felt good. It was great. I can't believe I just drove up *that* hill. Although part of me is saying "once is enough", the other part is saying, "you're here, you might as well do this again since you have the teacher here to help you."

After talking with Matt, I tell him I want to drive it again. He thinks it's a great idea but this time, he says I should drive up the hill using my rear lockers and see if I notice a difference with steering control. I head back up the trail again, surprisingly without the previous nerves, and I do notice that the FJ seems to fight me a little when I have to make some of the tight turns. It's all coming together and I am understanding what is happening with my FJ with the different methods. I can't believe how happy and elated I feel—how *relieved* I feel. I made it up *that* hill. *Twice*. Fear of big rocks—lots of big rocks on a hill—reclaimed. High-fives abound within the group.

A sense of calm, understanding, and relief takes over at the end of the training. I understand now what I need to do to conquer these obstacles I *perceived* to be larger and more difficult than they actually were. They are just rocks and my FJ can drive over them with some planning, momentum, and a confident driver.



Opposite page, top to bottom: Matt and I checking out one of the obstacles I will go down and discussing tire placement; One of my many facial expressions during training; This page, top to bottom: My face after seeing the final trail and obstacles; Matt explaining to me what I need to do and what will happen when my tire hits the face of the first rock; Matt and I "flying" the path I will take my FJ along and understanding what I need to do as I approach each area.



**“Action cures fear.
Inaction creates terror.”**

-Douglas Horton

After the training, I went on numerous camping trips with various types of trails and skill level during the summer. I found the obstacles I had feared earlier were no longer in need of the anxiety and energy I once gave them. I looked at them as “just rocks” that my FJ and I could now drive over without a breath held. I could walk the trail and see where my tires would land and what “obstacle” might need just a little more effort to climb over. Using the brake throttle modulation technique has also completely changed the way I drive and now I rarely use my rear lockers.

I recommend off-road trail driving classes to anyone thinking about venturing off-road. Whether a newbie or a trail-tested warrior, driving capable vehicles and continual training is essential in the back country to enjoy and adventure safely outdoors.

Make sure to check out the video of my training class with Matt and On Trail Training at tctmag.us/kathytraining

Learn more about trainings available at www.ontrailtraining.com

MATT'S TIPS

What do you recommend to beginners to prepare for driving off road?

- Drop the ego and testosterone.
- Low range is your friend. I see too many beginners spending the day in 4H or even worse 2WD.
- Learn where your wheels are. A good drill is finding small rocks on the trail and hitting them with your tires or practice in a parking lot with soda cans. Pick them up after, be a decent person.
- Avoid wheel spin. Once you have lost traction you will not regain it by spinning tires.
- Get qualified training. Spending a day with a good trainer can easily give you the knowledge it will take years to learn on your own.





- Find a friend who has been doing it for some time and go along. Ride with them a few times and watch what they are doing, ask lots of questions.

What do you hope people take away from your classes, besides just new skills?

I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing my students faces after tackling an obstacle, with ease, that minutes before they thought was impossible. I want my students to leave class more confident in their skills and having a better understanding of their vehicle's capabilities and limitations.

MATT'S 80 SERIES LAND CRUISER

First off, names Otto. I name all my trucks after Simpsons characters; Otto was the school bus driver and OTT is short for On Trail Training so, there ya go.

It was built with the intention of being a teaching truck, essentially an overbuilt overland rig. I wanted it to be extremely capable, lots of room and reliability. So, 80 series. It's a '97 that I bought stock. 4" lift that's a combination of Slee and OME parts on 35s. ARB lockers front and rear, RCV Birfield joints and Nitro rear axle shafts. Regearred with 4:88s and a Marlin 3:1 low range. The bumpers were custom made by two fabricators; Rock Rash Engineering did a fantastic job fixing the first guy's screw-ups. I have a Superwinch Talon 12.5 winch up front and all sorts of recovery gear in the back. **TCT**



Opposite page, top to bottom: Matt and I driving up the last and most difficult section in his 80 Series; Me and my FJ heading up after figuring out the best line; Matt spotting me to the top; This page, top to bottom: Matt getting the FJ up the rest of the way after a few tight turns; We're done! Thanking Matt for an awesome trail training day.

Follow @FronRange_FJ on Instagram for more photos of the training and FJ adventures.

Adventuring with Titus Adventure Company



“When you’re close, call me,” Travis provided instructions over the phone. “I’ll open the gate” “Okay.” I replied.

“What did he say?” My friend, Sam, asked.

“When we arrive at the gate, he wants me to call him.”

“What gate?” My friend, Brian, inquired.

This broken, confusing conversation took place as we drove through the streets of Boulder, Colorado, listening to and following Google directions. Minutes from our hotel, we found ourselves in an industrial park stopped by a green metal security gate. Is this an overland adventure or a secret meeting with a CIA agent? The gate slowly

opened. Travis Titus greeted us, and we proceeded to follow Travis, on foot, to a storage facility. Shortly, we arrived at Titus Adventure Company.

Overland adventures start in many ways and fashions. This one started uniquely. We stared at a clean, white 2019 Toyota Sequoia TRD Sport vehicle kitted with some of the latest and greatest overlanding equipment. Travis welcomed us to Titus Adventure Company (TAC) and escorted us into the facility to orientate us to the vehicle. This storage facility is home to TAC and a fleet of Toyotas to rent. Travis described a Tacoma, 4Runner, and Sequoia for the adventurer to rent. The vehicles come equipped with gear



Titus Adventure Company headquarters is an adventurers' dream shop.

from AluCab, RhinoRack, Yeti, NEMO, Kokepelli, and a plethora of other great manufacturers. Travis did not spare any cost to equip the TAC vehicles with solid, reputable gear and equipment. We had a lot to cover before we left.

Travis started TAC after working for 10 years as a mechanical engineer.

He grew up exploring and adventuring in the outdoors and desired to share the joys of outdoor adventuring with others. At times, adventure seekers experience "road blocks" like not having the right gear or vehicle. Travis wanted to find a solution. Also, he realized that people may not need or want to drive a SUV or truck daily, but would want one to rent one for an adventure. People could reduce their carbon footprint by renting an adventure vehicle only when they needed one. Travis created Titus Adventure Company. Problem solved. Opportunity knocks.

Travis explained the "ins and outs" of the Sequoia and the gear that we would use over our four-day adventure. Brian listened to the directions for deploying and retracting the RhinoRack Ghost 360 degree awning. He showed Sam how to use the IKamper roof top tent. Travis insisted that we felt comfortable and confident in the use of the gear and vehicle. Lastly, we chatted about the route we had planned—Travis offered helpful suggestions. Before leaving, he showed us where the first aid kit was located and the many maps we might need; stored in the vehicle. Simply put, the vehicle was completely outfitted, and we left comfortable and confident. Ready for an adventure! Our loose plan was to head to Crested Butte for some hiking and biking.



Travis showing how the equipment works before departure.

Without a problem, the Sequoia “swallowed” all of our bags, personal items, equipment, and two bikes. The Sequoia TRD Sport was comfortable but not super sporty or agile as we dodged the traffic in and around the Denver metro area. All three of us sat comfortably in black leather captain’s chairs. Sam was in charge of playing the tunes, while Brian was in charge of navigation. I stepped on the skinny pedal and the 5.7-liter engine revved to life, southbound toward Highway 285. Turning westbound on Highway 285, signified departing the hustle and bustle of Denver and the true beginning of our adventure. The road quickly narrowed to two lanes, so I focused my eyes on the tarmac and the oncoming traffic.

“Would you guys like to see some old mines?” I asked as we rolled into Fairplay, Colorado.

“Sure, let’s do it,” both Brian and Sam replied. Fairplay is a rustic ranching and mining town. Mining

still takes place here, but we were on the lookout for some relics of yesteryear. We turned off of Highway 9, and the Sequoia finally hit dirt. Monster cumulus clouds covered the towering Rocky



Travis offering local knowledge and expertise.



Colorado is a special place.

Mountains as we proceeded to climb in elevation as the road twisted and turned through evergreen and aspen forests. Soon, we spotted some old mining relics and sites. We left the comforts of the TAC Sequoia and proceeded on foot. Our lungs gasped for air; my watch read 11,500 feet. Ore cart towers dotted the landscape. Some had fallen and succumbed to the elements, while other stood tall and proud. Sam and Brian threw some snowballs at each other while I discovered some stunning alpine flowers. The clouds continued to lower and rain began to fall. It was time for us to move.

Rain pelted the windshield as we climbed higher toward Cottonwood Pass outside Buena Vista, Colorado. At the top, we stopped to savor the views. Tall mountains of granite stretched toward the sky. Clouds and rain created a spooky mood across this 12,100-foot pass. We descended the western side of the pass; this once dirt road is now paved, so we mindfully watched for traffic and animals. As soon as we reached the bottom, we were rewarded with a few baby moose and momma eating the lush grasses on the roadside.

"The sun might pop out," Sam suggested.

"Look, there!" I pointed to the north.

"Let's go," encouraged Brian.

We hoped for a magical sunset as we headed north from Taylor's Reservoir. Rooster tails of dust kicked up as we chased the setting sun.

"There, pull over." Brian alerted us. We stopped and watched the sun "kiss" the high alpine peaks we had just descended from on the Cottonwood Pass road. A few rainbows showed themselves. I faced the sun and marveled at the scene before me. It was a satisfying way to end the day.

The next morning we aimed the Sequoia toward Crested Butte. Along the way, we passed stunning ranches and crystal-clear mountain streams. We rolled into Crested Butte (CB), shortly before noon. The town was "jumping" with people. CB is one of the prettiest towns I have visited in the western United States. Main Street is lined with brightly colored homes, and the surrounding mountains are just jaw dropping gorgeous. It's a place that I never get tired of visiting.

"Let's find a campsite." Sam suggested.

"Sounds like a plan." I agreed.

We traveled along the Slate River and into the mountains.

"We have to ford the river and then, continued on the road." I said. The Sequoia eased through the water, which really wasn't that deep. On the other side, and we found a picturesque place to camp. The campsite sat at the base of towering mountains; and waterfalls cascaded on all three sides. Brian opened the awning; Sam popped the tent; and I organized the back of the vehicle. We set camp quickly and then decided to take an afternoon hike.

The high alpine mountains of Colorado are breathtaking. Wildflowers grew abundantly next to the cascades. We marveled at our surroundings as we continued to gain elevation. Mines from the past dotted the landscape, and we envisioned a hundred plus years ago when the miners forged a living in this harsh landscape. We walked through Columbine and Lupine flowers as we followed the trail. The trail dead-ended at a mine that has been gated closed. Nonetheless, the view was fabulous!

"I am going to get the bikes ready, okay?" I offered.

"Sure," responded Sam. The TAC vehicles can be



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Base Camp in the Colorado Rockies.



The Sequoia handled water crossings with ease.

equipped with all sorts of gear depending on the adventure planned. Travis had equipped the Sequoia with a Kuat bike rack. Sam and I were excited to ride some single track for which CB is famous, while Brian planned to fly fish in the local waters.

High cumulus clouds soared overhead in cobalt skies as Sam and I biked the Snodgrass Trail. The rolling nature of the trail provided a fast and fun ride. The views of the entire CB valley stood before us as we stopped to gawk at another view. The view was picture worthy everywhere we turned. The riding was exhilarating, but we planned to meet Brian in the town of CB in the late afternoon for beer and pizza. So, we increased our pace and continued.

"How was the fishing?" Asked Sam.

"It was okay. I got dumped on." Brian replied.

"What? Really?" I questioned.

"Yeah, the rain clouds unleashed on me for 15 minutes or so."

"Wow, no rain fell where we rode." I commented. After meeting, we enjoyed our time at The Secret Stash Pizzeria.

The Neowise Comet soared high overhead as we strained to get a closer



A well-kitted Toyota 4Runner, one of the three Toyotas available for rent.

look. A pine log fire warmed us while we gazed at the stunning night sky. Stars swam in an endless black sea high above us. We spotted constellations and the Milky Way in all its glory. It was a good night.

Early the next morning, I shifted the Toyota Sequoia into 4-high and headed up the Gothic Road toward our next bike ride. At the 401 trailhead, we unloaded the bikes, excited for the ride down. Brian took the Kokepelli pack raft for a paddle on Emerald Lake, just a few minutes away where he could throw some dry flies on the water. Sam and I rode down the 401 while Brian threw a few dry flies onto the waters. A few hours later, Brian packed the raft and drove the Gothic Road to meet us. We hastily packed our remaining gear and equipment. Time wasn't on our side, and we needed to return to TAC headquarters in Boulder.

Travis asked if we enjoyed our adventures. "We did. So sorry for returning the vehicle dirty." I replied.

"No problem at all. It looks like you tested the Sequoia and all the equipment."

"We certainly did," stated Sam. We spent the next half hour or so taking our bags and items out of Sequoia and returning them to my car. TAC had their Tacoma and 4Runner clean and ready to go. We checked out those vehicles, which were ready for rentals the following day.



Titus Adventure Company will get you here.

One was headed to Glacier National Park for two weeks, while the other was staying local in the Colorado Rockies. Travis did mention that most of his customers explore and adventure in Colorful Colorado. And why not?

All of us crave adventure. Titus Adventure Company literally offers the keys to adventure. It's up to each of us to define and pursue it. Adventure awaits. Contact Travis and Titus Adventure Company ASAP! *TR*

RESOURCE:

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[FRAMED]

f/11 1/800s 55mm

Red Cone, near Montezuma, CO

PHOTO BY DANIEL MARKOFSKY







[FRAMED]

f/7.1 1/1,250s 24mm

Climbing the mountains of
Central Colorado

PHOTO BY PHILLIP JONES





[FRAMED]

Coyote Flat Trail, near Bishop, CA

PHOTO BY ATSUSHI KUMAGAI

[FRAMED]

f/2.8 1/500s 75mm

Greenwater, WA

PHOTO BY ALEX GRUBER







[FRAMED]

f/2.8 1/40s 4mm

Mosquito Pass, near Alma, CO

PHOTO BY SHANE WILLIAMS

TCT MAGAZINE ROADTRIP: *a Texan Perspective*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PHILLIP JONES



IT WAS THE 3RD WEEK OF AUGUST AND I WAS CONFUSED.

I was standing outside of a gas station in the town of Fairplay, CO... *and I was freezing.* Two days earlier, I was in Texas packing for this trip, eager to escape the 100+ degree temperatures. Packing winter weather gear never crossed my mind—*because it was August.* I scrambled inside the gas station in hopes of finding a sweatshirt or something to provide an additional layer. My sweatshirt and rain jacket would have to suffice, as the gas station sweatshirt inventory lacked sizes for a Texan addicted to Whataburger.



The crew heads up the route to Kite Lake and Mosquito Pass



Winding our way up to Kite Lake.



Hugo Huerta of ToyTec Lifts navigates through a tricky crux.

The gas station was the rendezvous point for meeting up with other *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* (TCT) Magazine staff, as well as some of the ToyTec Lifts Team. My previous night was spent camping in Mills Canyon, NM in mild temperatures under dark skies. Naively, I expected similar weather conditions the following nights.

The crew rolled in, introductions were made, and we departed for a Creekside campsite at around 11,000 ft, which meant even colder and windier conditions. The next morning, we headed up to Mosquito Pass. On the way up, we took a side route up a somewhat steep and technical climb to view Kite Lake. Nestled between snowy peaks, the picturesque lake was surrounded by beautiful flowers. Our Creative Director, Kathy, was busy taking photos of the flowers up close. Good idea!

"Are you okay?" asked one of our crew.

"How are you feeling?" asked another.

So began the frequent inquiries into my health. Everyone on this trip resides in Colorado, except me: I reside in a suburb of Dallas at 613-feet elevation. Fun fact: Toyota

We reached the 13,185-foot pass (the highest drivable through-pass in North America), parked the trucks for photos, and started the descent.

built their new headquarters just seven miles south of my home. My TCT teammates are concerned because I was the oldest and the least healthy (thanks to Whataburger), and I don't visit five-digit elevations very often. Or maybe it was because my "I'm fine!" responses were paired with gasps for air.

Next stop was a historical mine, and then we started up the rocky ascent to Mosquito Pass. I stopped at one point to capture a photo of my Tacoma on the rocky trail. As I lifted my camera and zoomed out for a wide angle shot, I realized the steep slope of the mountain was just a big pile of boulders. It was a rockslide waiting to happen. I scurried back and drove up the trail at a quicker pace.



Shane Williams drives his Tundra on the scenic trail while his suspension absorbs the rocky terrain.



Mike Wilder's 4Runner build provided the most impressive flexing on the trip.

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OFF-ROAD

We reached the 13,185-foot pass (the highest drivable through-pass in North America), parked the trucks for photos, and started the descent. Eventually we found ourselves hitting paved roads as we headed to our next campsite west of Salida. As we set up camp and cooked dinner, we were treated to a colorful sunset between nearby mountains.

Day 2 offered new challenges, most of which occurred on the trail called Otto Mears Toll Road. This narrow trail is riddled with tight switchback turns that

sometimes made me regret my long wheelbase double cab Tacoma. I remember another thought that crossed my mind: *at least I'm not the guy behind me*. Shane, the publisher of TCT Magazine, decided to drive his CrewMax Tundra on this trip, and it lacked protection. Each time I managed through a sharp turn without

rolling down the mountainside, I stopped to make sure Shane could make it.

At one point, I hit a hilltop with zero visibility of the trail because Toyota stuck a big hood scoop on the TRD Pro

This narrow trail is riddled with tight switchback turns that sometimes made me regret my long wheelbase double cab Tacoma.



Rocky ascent up to Mosquito Pass.



Pile of rocks didn't seem stable, so I scrambled out of there.



We reached the top of Mosquito Pass.



TCT Creative Director, Kathy Locke, takes on the rocky descent as we depart Mosquito Pass.

Tacoma and it was blocking my view of the drop-off side. The left side offered no guidance. I took it slow and edged to the left a bit, quickly putting me in an off-camber situation. I was unable to step out to examine the trail. Eventually I leveled out and could see the trail again. Usually I just grin and laugh when I encounter nerve-racking off-road experiences, but this time I was butt-puckering concerned.

We continued onto more trails before finding our next campsite on a gradual hill amongst some white aspen trees. As the sun set, the sides of the aspen trees illuminated with a mesmerizing orange glow. I was so captivated, I forgot I had a camera sitting nearby.

The ToyTec crew cooked up some Italian pasta that attracted the rest of the crew like flies. These guys are amazing...they can discuss suspension spring rates while displaying their culinary skills. As darkness surrounded us, we turned up the propane fire (CO fire burn ban was in effect) and listened to someone's Weird Al playlist while telling stories and reliving the Otto Mears trail.

The next morning, we took our time breaking down camp, mainly because the ToyTec chef squad decided to make a fantastic breakfast. So much for losing weight. We finished the morning in a historical mine we could walk through. Soon we said our farewells and I started the long drive back to Texas.

There was so much more we experienced during the four-day expedition, but I think this conclusion is better suited. Folks living in Colorado and other states out West with near instant access to numerous trails, national forests, and BLM land are truly blessed. The ability to go out into your backyard and explore is something of which I am envious. During campfire





Jules Maraczi navigates Dylan Ewald's Tacoma through a muddy and flex-inducing route.

Folks living in Colorado and other states out West with near instant access to numerous trails, national forests, and BLM land are truly blessed.



Trail Leader and TCT staffer, Daniel Markofsky, on a scenic route through the aspens.

chat each evening, I was amazed as these very experienced off-roaders of Colorado would talk about CO trails they had not yet encountered. Oh how great it would be to have a plethora of trails waiting to explore on the weekends, and to do so in the midst of such fantastic scenery.

I'm glad Shane referred to this as the "first annual" TCT trip. I look forward to participating in the future trips. For me, it was worth the two-day drive. Comradery, stunning landscapes and sunsets, and fun trails are the perfect combination of getting away. **TCT**



Camping amongst the aspen trees.



TCT Editor Bob Holliday heads out on our final morning.



Bob Holliday



Shane Williams



Dylan Ewald



Daniel Markofsky



Kathy Locke



The Toytec guys—Mike Wilder and Hugo Huerta



2020 OVERLAND TRIP **TOYOTA** CRUISE & TRUCKS ADVENTURE INSPIRATION EXPLORATION

**MAKE SURE TO CHECK OUT
THE AMAZING ADVENTURE AT
[TCTMAG.US/2020TRIP](https://tctmag.us/2020trip)**

By Shane Williams / Photos by Angie Williams, Shane Williams, Bob Holliday, Daniel Markofsky, Kathy Locke, Jim Akers, Dennis Lloyd, Jonathan Harris



FJ Summit Retrospective

As I go through all of the photos, articles, videos, and swag that we've collected over the years from our trips to Ouray for the annual FJ Summit, I sit with mixed emotions about how the world has changed in the last seven months.

It is unlikely that anyone reading these words has not been impacted by the worldwide pandemic that continues to change the way we live, work, and play. For Toyota enthusiasts like us, there is no clearer sign of that impact than when the FJ Summit was canceled.

The event that usually sells out in a few minutes was not able to be held this year, due to the limitations required to help slow the spread of disease. While I've heard that some enthusiasts still chose to visit Ouray during the original FJ Summit timeframe, many of us chose to explore other areas of our great country, or simply stay safe at home.

Since we don't have 2020 FJ Summit coverage for this issue, I thought a short retrospective from past events would be an interesting topic. So I'll start at the beginning...

If you do a search on 'the blue room' (FJCruiserForums.com), you can still find the original discussions around the inaugural FJ Cruiser event. While Angie and I attended the very first event back in 2007, at the time we were brand new Toyota enthusiasts, and we had no idea how our passion for our little 4x4 would impact the lives of thousands of future enthusiasts. (www.fjcruiserforums.com/forums/2007-fjcruiser-summit.174/)

The inception for our original *FJC Magazine*, which became *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks (TCT)*, happened during the drive home after FJ Summit #1. Angie and I decided that we wanted to do a few minor modifications to our vehicle, but only if it made sense

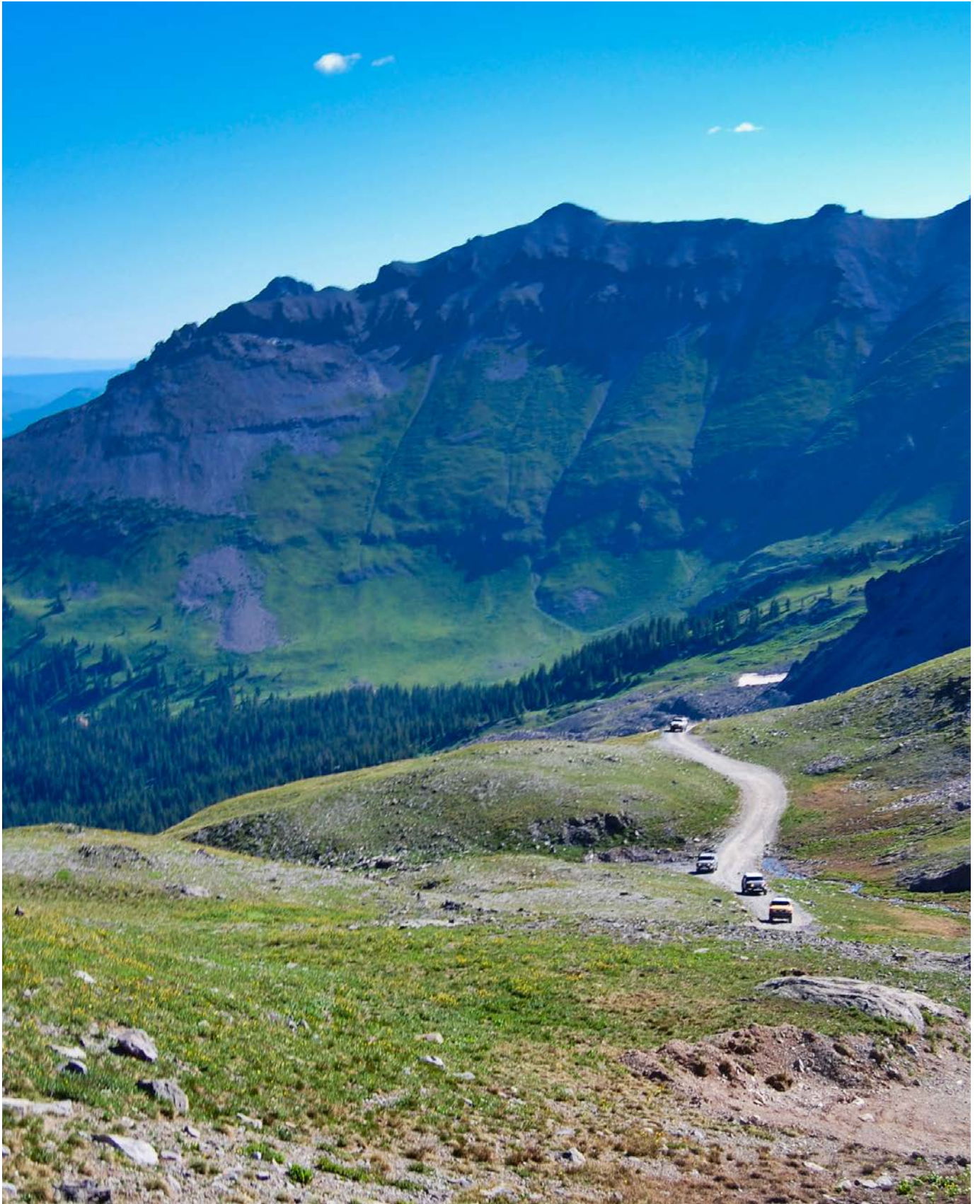
in terms of helping the broader FJ Cruiser community. While the forums were a great outlet for build threads, photos, and anecdotes, we wanted to aim for a more traditional platform. *FJC Magazine* was born a few months later as a free digital PDF 'zine', and we're still going over 13 years later.

At this point one could say that the rest is history, and even though I won't bore you with my recount of every single event that I've attended or that we've covered in our publications, how about a few highlights?

In 2008, we attended FJ Summit #2 as 'press' or 'media' for the first time. The major thing that changed for us is that we had better camera equipment, we knew a little more about the community of FJ (and Toyota) enthusiasts, and the event was much larger! In fact, I still have a photo of Angie and I in front of the Baja 1000 Millen FJ Cruiser (see Two Roads to Baja for more on that) on a shelf in my office. 2008 was also the first year that Zaxyn Media published the FJ Summit event guide.

It is unlikely that anyone reading these words has not been impacted by the worldwide pandemic that continues to change the way we live, work, and play.





One of several special publications we produced during our first year as a magazine.

For 2009, the event kept growing—surpassing 200 registered vehicles according to my notes. Angie and I once again lead a convoy from Colorado Springs to Ouray, filled with many enthusiasts that were experiencing Colorado for the first time. FJ Summit #3 was also the first time the event featured 'Friday Night Out' as a way to ensure Summiteers had the opportunity to support the vibrant Ouray community. This was also the first year Angie and I lead a trail run, Imogene Pass. Finally, I put together my first FJ Summit video in 2009. Remember, it was a LONG time ago...

A lot changed for the Williams family in 2010—we multiplied! FJ Summit #4 was the first for our newborn (now 10 year old) Brenden. Since he was only about four months old during the event, he was not able to experience much of the high country. That also meant that for the first time, Angie and I weren't able to explore together as much as we would have liked.

Still, the event was once again amazing, despite it being one of the wettest on record. The rain poured for much of the event, and our annual 'First to run Black Bear' was not able to be completed that year. After pulling a three-ton boulder off the trail on the high side, just

FJ Summit #3 was also the first time the event featured 'Friday Night Out' as a way to ensure Summiteers had the opportunity to support the vibrant Ouray community.



EVENTS



over the pass, we were stopped in our tracks by a 30-yard long, 12-foot high, landslide covering the trail. The county was able to clear the slide later in the day, but that remains one of the soggiest FJ Summits on record.

Beginning in 2011, Angie and I were no longer the primary *FJC / TCT Magazine* media representative. Many (most?) of our past and current editors have taken their shot at covering the FJ Summit. For several years Angie and I were able to spend a little extra time in the Ouray area before the event began, and also had the opportunity to help with setup and event organization.

After attending the first 10 FJ Summits in a row, our family has chosen other ways to explore over the last few summers. Our team has continued to do great work in covering the event that helped start our publication, and it's always great to get a fresh set of eyes on the now classic event.

You may also know that Angie and I started creating the FJ Summit Event Guide (originally FJ Summit maps) from the very beginning as well. Over the years the Event Guide has grown just as

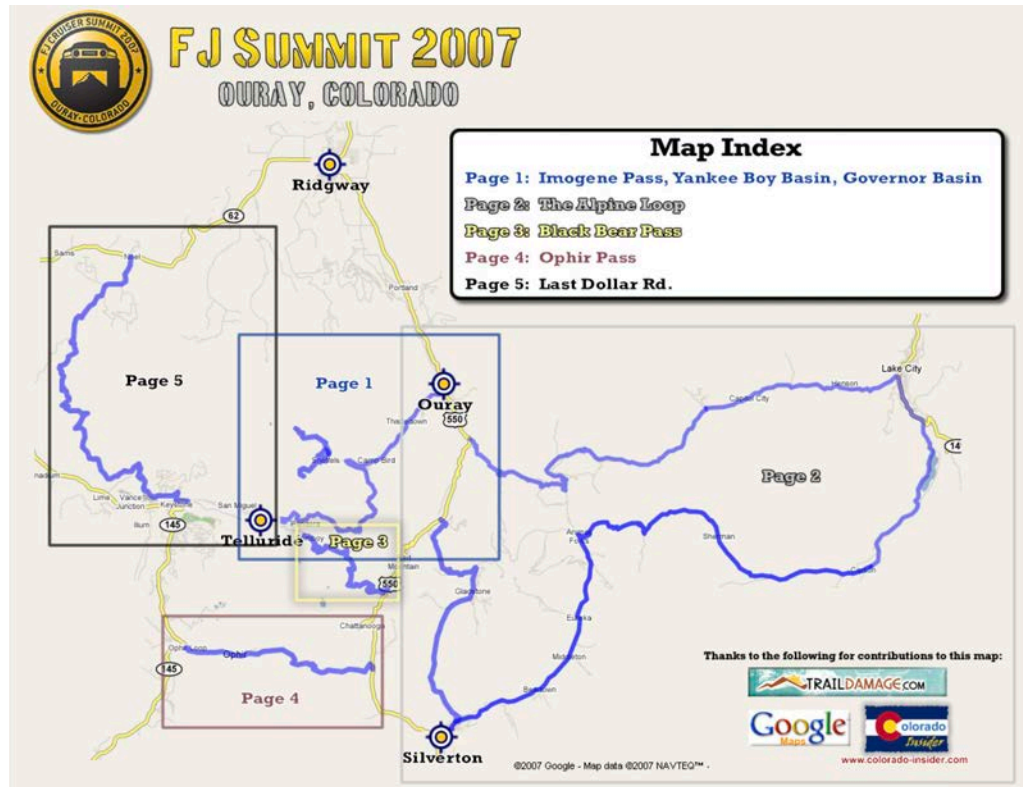


the event has, and we're excited to publish it again for 2021!

If you'd like to see more of our past FJ Summit Coverage, you can search the *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* website for "FJ Summit", or visit this link: tctmag.us/summitsearch

Over the years, we've been able to put together more than a couple FJ Summit videos. We made a playlist on our YouTube channel so you can check them all out at tctmag.us/summitvids

We're positive that the FJ Summit will be back in 2021, and our entire team looks forward to seeing you on the trails in Ouray! *TCT*



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TOYOTA
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OVERLAND

Story by Shane Williams / Photos by Adam Smith

Roadlyfe and the Toyota Chinook

An Interview with Adam Smith





I ran across Roadlyfe on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/roadlyfe/>) earlier this year while looking through our #thetoyotamag hashtag list. What immediately caught my attention was not only the beautiful Toyota Chinook RV/Truck, but the amazing locations this vehicle was visiting.

I reached out to Adam Smith, owner of the Toyota Chinook and creator of Roadlyfe. Adam is currently located in Kansas City planning his next slew of adventures, and agreed to do a short interview.

TCT Magazine: How did you end up finding a Chinook to take on the road?

Adam Smith: I found the truck when I met Troy Moth, an artist from British Columbia back in 2013. I worked hard to convince him to sell it to me, which took over two years. I finally acquired it in 2015.

TCT: Tell me more about the truck, is it an original Chinook or was it built?

Adam: This truck was actually put together before Troy bought it. It's an '87 4x4 Toyota Pickup (Hilux) with a 1976 Chinook camper attached to it.



OVERLAND

TCT: How did you decide to travel full time in the 4x4 Chinook?

Adam: I was actually already travelling full time when I bought the truck, in a VW EuroVan, which was a bit of a pain to work on. It was just a placeholder until I could get the Chinook.

Getting into the Chinook was a big upgrade for me. It's not only a bit bigger inside, but as you're aware...early Toyota trucks are fairly easy to work on. The 22RE engine is bombproof, so if you have a good Haynes style manual, a simple set of tools, and a little know-how, you can do just about anything.

I was actually able to fix a clutch problem in the middle of nowhere in Idaho just using the manual, and saved myself a very long walk back to civilization.

TCT: We've had almost every modern iteration of Toyota vehicles in our family, so I definitely understand the desire to explore in a vehicle that's reliable, and easy to work on.

Adam, maybe you could run through the rough

timeline of how you went from owning an art gallery to traveling full-time in a Toyota Truck RV.

Adam: Back in 2014, I was able to sell my longtime business in Kansas City and move to Bellingham Washington, mostly in an effort to start a new life in a more interesting place.

When that relationship didn't really work out, I just started driving.

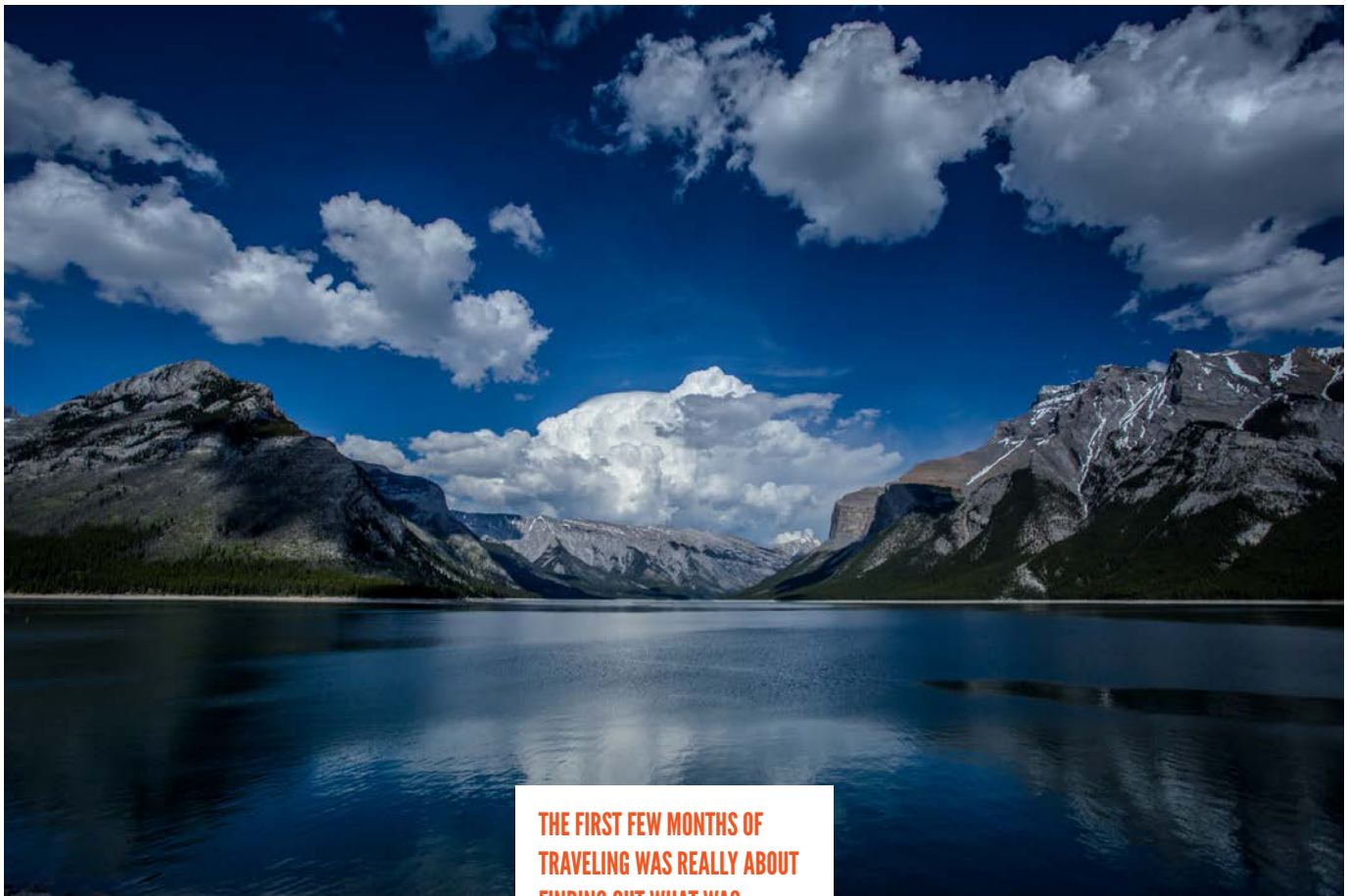
The first few months of traveling was really about finding out what was next for me. Once I finally got the Chinook, a new trajectory started for me. I found myself in the American west, and was able to finally pursue my long time dream of becoming a professional photographer. The Chinook and this situation allowed me to focus without distractions.

TCT: Wow, that's a really interesting way to start such an epic adventure.

How long did you end up traveling full time?

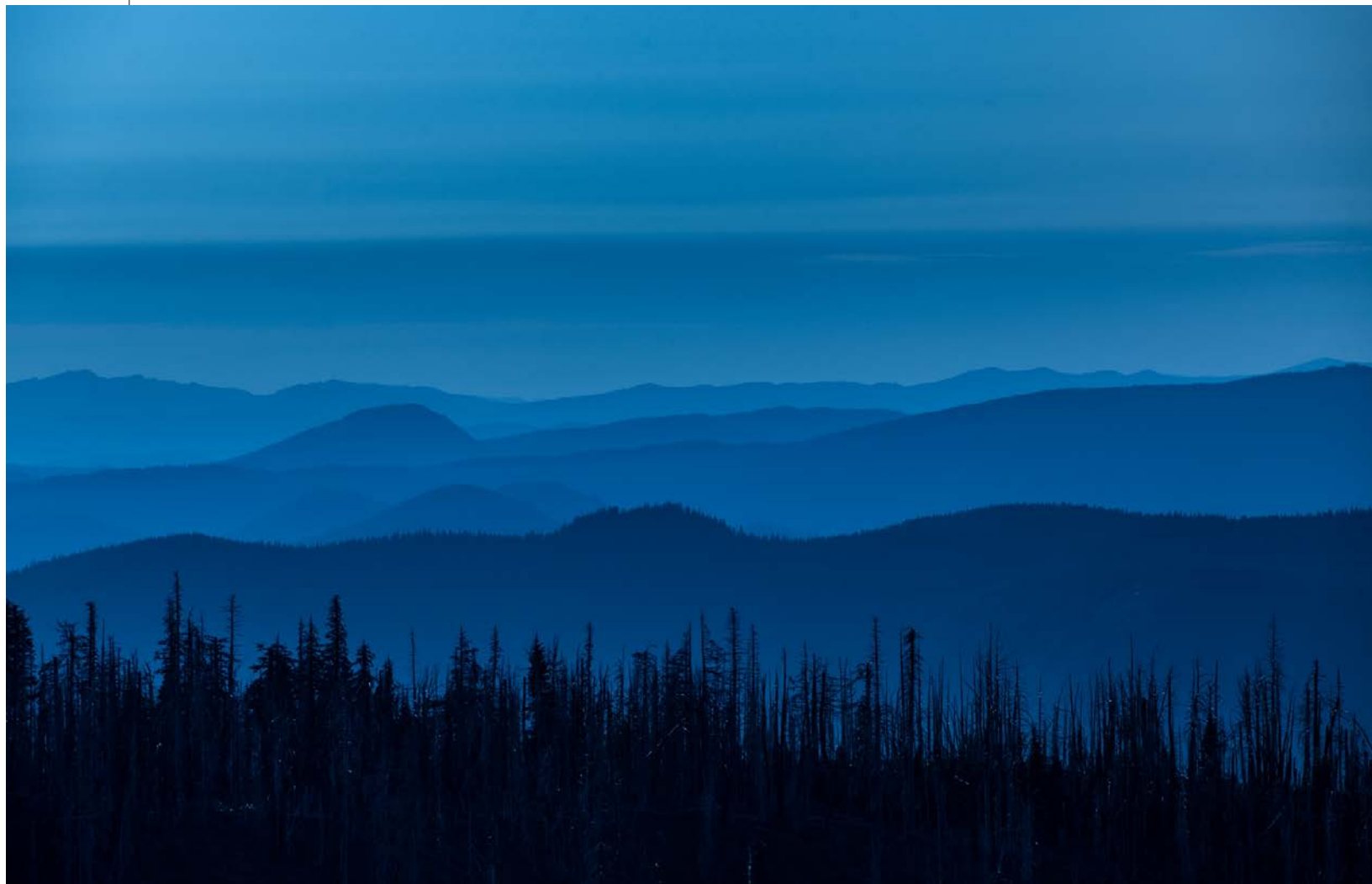
Adam: 1,251 days.





THE FIRST FEW MONTHS OF TRAVELING WAS REALLY ABOUT FINDING OUT WHAT WAS NEXT FOR ME. ONCE I FINALLY GOT THE CHINOOK, A NEW TRAJECTORY STARTED FOR ME.





After three years, things changed a bit...and even though I still love the concept of being on the road so much, I realized it wasn't going to be long-term sustainable. You know, there's a lot of smoke and mirrors in the full-time travel community that make it appear that you can stay on the road forever without worrying about money.

So after spending that long on the road, since I've come back to 'normal life', I've been working on ways that I can travel intermittently and sustainably going forward.

TCT: I agree that within the 'overland' community, there is a stark difference between a fully built 'sponsored' vehicle setup for extended travel, and something that's more achievable and sustainable for most people.

Earlier you mentioned that you were in the



EuroVan when you got the Chinook. How did it work out that you were on the road already?

Adam: I actually had a Jeep with a bikini top when I was in Washington, which wasn't suitable for winter travel. I ended up moving into a Honda Civic after that and drove it to California. Then I wrecked it, and ended up in the hospital. That's another long story, but to keep it simple: I was recently broken up, in a new state, with a wrecked car that I was living in, and ended up with a hospital stay PLUS a cancer scare. Once I got through all of that, I got the van, and it helped me realize that I really needed to be out there to experience more from life.

TCT: So tell us a little more about how you chose where to explore next.

Adam: I've always tried to chase the nice weather, I'm

not a huge fan of extreme heat or cold. My normal route would lead me from the LA area up the western US and over to Vancouver Island, where I have quite a few friends.

At the beginning I was pretty much always on the go, I did multiple trips up and down the west coast, exploring the entire time. However once I gained more experience on the road I ended up slowing down and taking more time in certain locations. I got a lot more interested in wildlife photography.

TCT: During all of this exploring, do you have a specific, favorite trip that you could tell us about?

Adam: For sure!

During my last year on the road, I did a pretty great west to east trip.

I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO CHASE THE NICE WEATHER, I'M NOT A HUGE FAN OF EXTREME HEAT OR COLD.



OVERLAND

I basically started in Oregon, then went through Idaho and up Highway 12 and made my way to Missoula. Then I headed north and spent quite a bit of time in the Glacier National Park area. From there I headed north into Alberta through Jasper, and up to Banff for a good six weeks. I then headed back south to Glacier, and back to civilization. This trip took at least 3-4 months.

During that last year I had about 19 bear encounters, including a false-charge by a big momma black bear up in Banff. That experience was a good reminder to be careful with wildlife, especially when they have cubs nearby.

TCT: So back to the Chinook. What do you love so much about that truck for doing this kind of exploring?

Adam: One great thing about that truck, is that it's made to go slow. If I'm lucky I can get it up to 65mph downhill with a tailwind. In fact, the fastest that truck has ever gone is when it was being pulled by the bus (see the sidebar).

So since that truck goes quite slow, it's great for small dirt roads and fire roads. It's a great platform for taking time in the woods, looking for wildlife.

My Roadlyfe project is really a great outlet for my photography, and I couldn't imagine a truck that's better for this than the Chinook.

TCT: So you've been off the road full time for a while now, do you have plans for some great exploring with the Chinook in the future?

Adam: I currently own a commercial photography studio in Kansas City, and it's been doing really well. Going forward, I'm hoping that my commercial studio can help fund my travel, and some of my travel photography can fund itself. Ideally I'd like to spend 3-4 months on the road each year, with the rest of the time spent back at home.

TCT: That sounds like a really great plan. Thanks so much for your time today. Do you have any final thoughts for our readers?

Adam: Thanks for the opportunity! I do have one last thought about how this time traveling really changed my life.

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I never knew that I had it in me to wander the wilderness freeway until I was given the opportunity to do so. My early life was all like a lot of other people who come up without a lot of support. I never knew that I could support myself as an artist until I took the step of forcing myself to try. I understand that not everyone will be given the same opportunities that I was, but I think it's important to note how much taking those opportunities when presented has changed my life. All I ever want to do is find a way to sustainably travel and take photographs. There's so much to see out there and making space to find that new version of yourself is invaluable.

I have no doubt that Adam will continue to find adventure around the country with his little Toyota Chinook. Such an inspiring adventure, and I can't wait to see more!

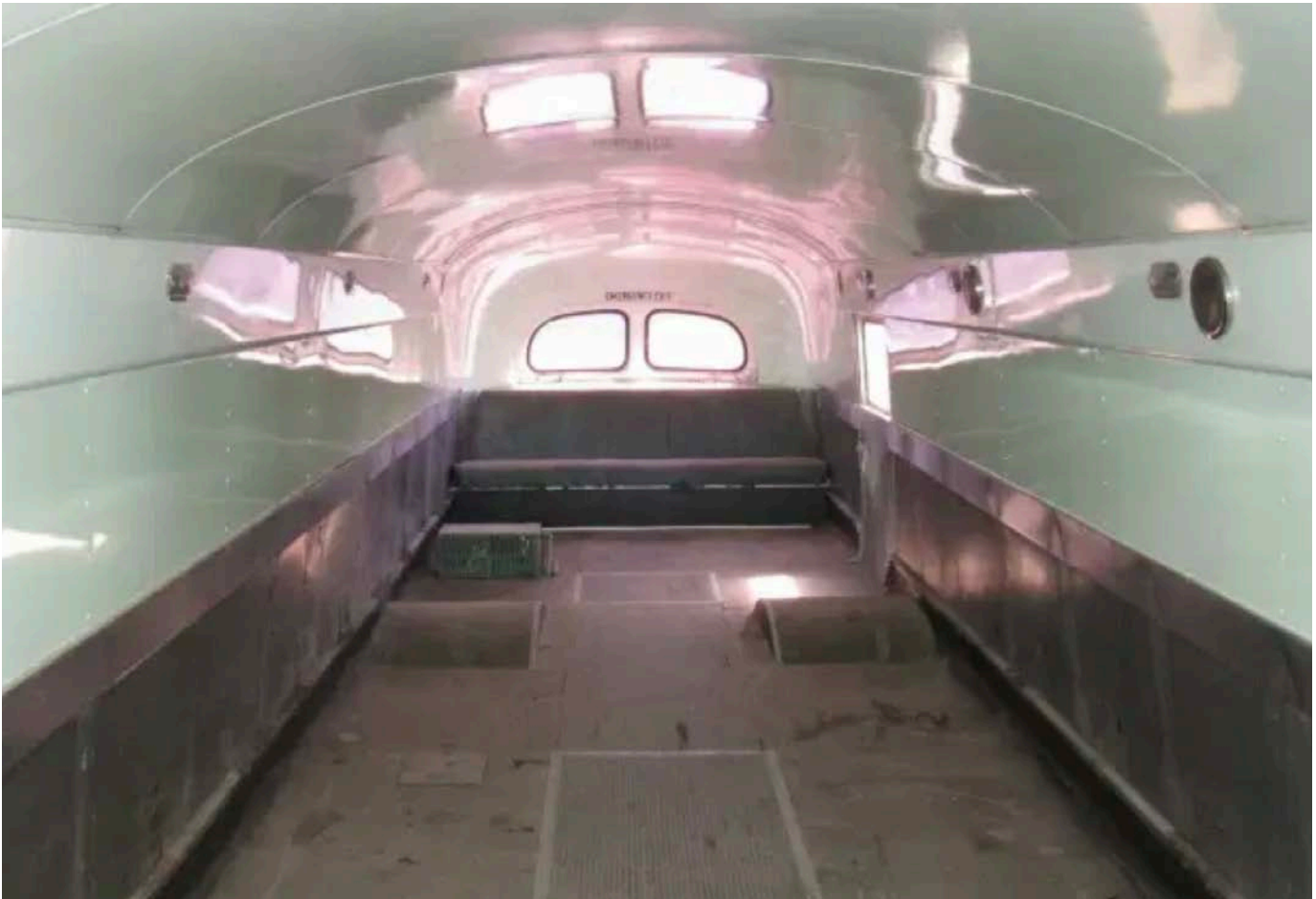
You can follow RoadLyfe on Instagram or on the website: roadlyfe.com TCT

A FUN NOTE ABOUT ADAM'S OTHER PROJECT, THE CROWN COACH BUS.

During his last year on the road, Adam was browsing the LA Craigslist vehicles for sale section, and came across a unique vehicle that he kind of bought by accident. It's a 1976 Crown Coach School Bus that Adam sent a low ball offer on. Next thing he knew, he was on a plane from Portland to LA to pick it up.

The idea is to turn this bus into a very nice tiny house and rent it, as a way to fund travel. One the primary reasons Adam stopped full-time travel was to work on the bus, and that's still very much his plan. Once that project is done, the bus will be available for special events and rentals.





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THE LAST WORD

By Shane Williams

It now seems quite normal to ask What is Toyota doing with their future vehicles? This time, our thoughts have moved squarely over to the 2021 Ford Bronco. A retro styled, fully capable vehicle that was just announced and has already sold out for most first-year models. Many enthusiasts that I know personally have already put a deposit down on one.



While many of our readers have little or no interest in 'late model' Toyota trucks and SUVs, some of us live and breathe based on what future models may offer.

Many sources are pointing to 2021 as the year that the new TNGA-F ladder boxed frame will appear on Toyota trucks. The information I'm seeing points to a 300 Series LandCruiser global reveal in April, with a true 3rd Generation Tundra (the 2014-2021 are at best 2.5 gen since it's been mostly cosmetic upgrades since 2010) coming out later next year as a 2022 model. Both Hilux and Tacoma are expected to use the new frame when they're next updated in a couple of years.



300 Series LandCruiser Rendering from Carsales.com.au

As far as details for the new 300 Series Land Cruiser, we're not 100% sure. It looks like in the US we'll likely get a twin turbo V6 perhaps with a hybrid option. Other parts of the world will likely see a twin turbo diesel, but that power plant is unlikely to make it to North America. Rumors say that the LC300 will be a scaled down, 5 passenger off-road focused SUV coming in at a lower price point than the current luxury model. That certainly could raise some eyebrows and in the outdoor and overland world, and could help to bring modern Toyota vehicles back into the mainstream media.



But wait...there IS one more thing.

I was fortunate enough to be able to view the first **Overlander Film Festival**, which included several amazing films that feature Toyota vehicles. Toyota is still one of the top platforms for vehicle based adventure travel. In fact, when I browse around overland/off-road groups, I still see at least 50% Toyota vehicles of some sort.

There are certainly more brands coming along in the last few years, including Chevy, Ford, Dodge, Subaru, and of course Jeep. However by and large most explorers that are in the know prefer Toyota (or Lexus of course) as their platform of choice. This will continue to change toward other brands if Toyota doesn't answer the call, but I'm confident that they will.

Stay tuned.



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