

to watch and photographed the burros before continuing on to South Park Canyon.

We encountered "Chicken Rock" and were all able to get around without incident. The bridge was also no problem for our group. We then came to a spot that a few weeks prior had been damaged and quite narrow but on this day it was no challenge. Apparently the "Road Gnomes" had been there and repaired it. Thanks fellas!

Our next stop was at the Stone Cabin for a quick look around. The folks that adopt this cabin have done an excellent job of keeping it clean and in good repair. It looks ready to move into.

As we continued down canyon, Mary called over the CB that she had a problem with her clutch. A quick assessment of the situation determined that the clutch cable had broken and that she could drive her Jeep "clutch-less" farther down the canyon until we found a flat spot that was more conducive to cable replacement. A spot was found, the cable replaced and down hill we drove. We arrived at Ballarat, re-inflated our tires and discussed dinner plans. Nickoletti's was decided on and off to Ridgecrest we went.

I would like to thank all who attended the run; I hope that they enjoyed it as much as we did.

George & Bill cool off in the shade the Cottonwood, below the Stone Cabin



Jerry changing out the cable.



McIVER'S 4X4 ROAD MAINTENANCE RUN *By: Warner Fellows*

It's that time of year again; time to start cleaning up our Adopt-a-Trails. This month we took on the road to McIver's Cabin. Looking forward to a long day of hard work were Bill & Samela Dorey; George & Linda Graham; Jim & Donna Kenny; Curtis Martin; and a friend of mine from work, Jeff Smith. I think Jeff rates a little recognition here: he is not a member of the club, not really an off highway enthusiast, but he has suffered through many hours of my rants about access and the lack thereof. He went and joined Cal4Wheel as a lifetime member. Then on this day he drove his nearly new Ford F150 FX4 pick-up truck the length of the McIver road with virtually no off highway driving experience, just to "do his part". Thanks Jeff.

I had recently been up on McIver's and discovered quite a bit of misuse damage. A lot of erosion, exposed rock, and go-arounds **LOTS** of go-arounds. Some of the go-arounds had go-arounds! A lot of work was needed to get the road back into shape. I was glad that we had a good-sized work party to get it done.

We met at the Triangle and left on time again; I see a trend beginning here. We then proceeded to the road head (SC65) and aired down. We headed up to the trailhead and our meeting with Ranger

Bob Frenes. We arrived at the trailhead a little after 9 and Ranger Bob was waiting for us. He climbed in with Curtis, as he had an open seat, and off we went.

We arrived at an area that resembled a dirt freeway interchange with on ramps, off ramps and shortcuts aplenty. We gathered deadfall tree branches and rocks to block the illegal trails and removed some rocks from the roadbed to make the way a little smoother in hopes of eliminating the need for the short cuts.

We were then off to the next area that needed our attention. This one we blocked last year and then it was barely discernable. This year it was very pronounced. Ironically, there was really no need for this short cut other than for a short cut. The main road is in amazingly good condition here. So why the short cut? We may never know. So we gathered more deadfall and even drug some trees in to REALLY block the short cut. We then scattered branches and other debris along the length of the cut to disguise it and hopefully we won't have to do it again next year.

The next area was truly amazing in the extent of the damage. This was the area that had short cuts on the short cuts. Incredible! Again we dragged trees in to block the ends of the cuts and scattered

debris along the length to obliterate them. Satisfied that this area was done we headed off to the next area.

As our group headed out I was thinking that there was a conspicuous absence of motorcycles on this day. How strange. Then, as if on cue, a steady procession of what seemed like thirty of them (it was more like ten) came roaring through. I'm not sure if some of these riders were not familiar with the trail or not expecting the changes that we made, but some of them had a bit of trouble negotiating this section of the road. One of the hapless riders stalled their machine and took several minutes to get it restarted. Another group came roaring through just as the previous one was clearing out. These heroes were going so fast one of them nearly ran into the back of Jeff's truck, and then fell over as he came to a stop.

Up ahead Ranger Bob stopped the riders to spot-check them for Green stickers and spark arrestors. Had he had his ticket book with him, Bob could have cited nearly all of the riders for one violation or another. But he lectured them on compliance with the rules and let them go with a stern warning. Next year I think I'll remind Bob to bring his book.

While we at the back of our group waiting for the motorcyclists to clear out, and Bob was checking the bikes for stickers and equipment, the rest of the crew was closing what turned out to be the last short cut. So we set off for the cabin for some lunch. But not before some play time on the "rock". This was Bill's first time down the rock and with a little spotting from Curtis he made it down with no problem.

Once at the cabin we settled down for some relaxation, lunch and some lively conversation. All too soon, it seemed, it was time to head back down the road toward civilization. On the way out Pamela & I lagged a little behind to coach Jeff as he negotiated some of the more difficult parts of the trail. You must remember that Jeff is pretty much a "pavement pounder" and threading his way between trees and rocks is foreign to him. Combine this with the fact that he drives a pretty big truck, you can understand the challenge before him. We were able to guide him back out to the road and down to pavement where he is a little more comfortable. All things considered, I think he did a great job.

Back at the road, we aired up our tires and made plans for dinner, the end of a very productive day. McIver's road is in much better condition now; I just hope that it stays that way.

Thanks to the crew and a special thanks to Ranger Bob for some hard work and a great time.



The group at the trail head. . .
Ranger Bob, Curtis, Warner, Pam,
Donna, Jim, Samela, George,
Linda, & Bill.



The "go around" was blocked off ...
maybe they'll stay on the
designated trail !!??

SPECIAL REPORT: New Movie Called 'Soft Core Eco-terrorism' for Kids

By: Marc Morano, CNSNews.com Senior Staff Writer

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(CNSNews.com) - Three middle school children band together, sabotage a construction site, gag a land developer and take him hostage. But their criminal conduct, aimed at saving the habitat of burrowing owls from "greedy land developers," isn't reality-based.

It's the subject of a new movie that one entertainment reviewer labels "soft core eco-terrorism" for kids.

The movie, "Hoot," opens Friday, May 5. It features environmentally conscious teenage characters vandalizing heavy machines by stealing parts off of them and flattening tires in order to hinder a development project.

The teens, who ultimately succeed in halting the project, spray paint a police car that is providing security, trespass, rip up surveyors' stakes, place alligators in portable toilets, release poisonous Cottonmouth snakes at the construction site and

evade the police. The teenagers also debate stealing the construction trailer and sinking it into a nearby canal to further delay the project.

The teenagers in the PG-rated movie face no repercussions for the illegal acts and instead are portrayed as heroically preventing the construction of a pancake house in South Florida to save the owls' habitat. There are consequences, however, for the pancake company.

In addition to facing construction delays and cost overruns because of the kids' actions, the company's project manager is arrested at the end of Hoot for violating environmental protection laws.

The film's **trailer** urges viewers to "break the rules" and features one of the lead characters saying, "You gotta start thinking like an outlaw."

Wil Shriner, the movie's director, dismissed the notion that the movie portrays eco-terrorism and instead called the teenagers' vigilante actions on behalf of the owls "mischievous." The teenagers in the film are merely reacting to the illegal behavior of adults, said Shriner, who hopes Hoot will inspire kids to take a stand to protect the earth from too much development.

Cybercast News Service attended an advance screening of the film on April 29 in Washington, D.C., where Hoot's portrayal of law-breaking for the greater environmental good seemed to find a receptive audience with those attending the preview.

"If it's a really, really good cause and you aren't like really hurting someone, it's sort of like it works out okay," responded 12-year-old Alex Kacher when asked by **Cybercast News Service** whether he was troubled by the kids' criminal behavior in the movie.

A seven-year-old girl who identified herself as Dillon noted that "it was a fun movie" and said she learned that "it's not good to kill animals."

The New Line Cinema and Walden Media film was co-produced by singer Jimmy Buffett and is based on Miami Herald columnist and author Carl Hiaasen's 2002 award-winning novel. Hoot tells the story of newly relocated Florida middle school student Roy Eberhardt's battles with a bully. This conflict leads to his environmental awakening and his friendship with a runaway boy named Mullet Fingers and his half-sister, Beatrice Leep.

Hiaasen's environmentally themed novels have drawn critical praise and earned him fans like former Vice President Al Gore. Many members of the extremist group Earth First are also fans of Hiaasen's novels, according to the Palm Beach Post. Hiaasen's 2005 kids' novel "Flush" sympathetically portrays a man who sinks a casino boat that is illegally dumping sewage into the ocean.

The burrowing owl featured in Hoot is not included on the national endangered or threatened species [list](#), according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Instead, the owls are listed as "species of special

concern" by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The birds have adapted to the development in South Florida, according to Brian Mealey, the president of the Institute of Wildlife Science in South Florida.

"These owls immediately started moving into the front yards of people's homes. And that was the first step in the urbanization of these owls," Mealey explained, according to the production notes provided to **Cybercast News Service** by the movie's publicity agency, Grace Hill Media.

"If we want to look at a positive story for development, these animals have been able to survive urbanization," he added.

'Sort of mischievous'

Hoot's portrayal of teenage law-breaking prompted entertainment columnist Jeanne Wolf to recently **label** the movie "a little soft-core eco-terrorism." But Shriner, who also wrote the film's screenplay, dismissed Wolf's characterization.

"I call it more mischief. Pulling some stakes out and slowing down construction, putting an alligator in a toilet -- that is sort of mischievous," Shriner told **Cybercast News Service**.

"The only time that he [Mullet Fingers] really breaks the law is when he takes -- when [the pancake executive] is starting to kill the owls and he then takes him captive. I mean that, you know, that is a desperate act. That's a law-breaking act brought on by the adult breaking the laws as well," Shriner said.

He insisted that the teen characters in the movie only break the law in response to the developers' violations of the environmental protection laws.

"There is basically law-breaking on the developers' side. So the kids decide to take matters into their own hands since nobody else is and do something about it. So the adults are the lawbreakers initially, and the kids are just responding to it," he explained.

Shriner acknowledged that the teenagers featured in the movie face no negative consequences for their law-breaking activities. "There's no punishment for the kids. They just -- they succeed," Shriner noted, while insisting that the movie "doesn't promote terrorism."

"This is not about setting Hummers on fire or doing any of that sort of thing," he added, referring to the large SUVs that have been targeted by eco-terrorists for their alleged damage of the environment.

Shriner sees Hoot as wholesome family entertainment with an environmental message. "This movie is a very family-friendly film. It has no smoking, no swearing, no indecent behavior. It is a film that is supposed to send a positive message," he explained. "This is not a movie with a lot of farting and sophomoric humor. This is a smart movie, with smart kids and a smart message."

'Step across the law'

The book's author, Hiaasen, has been defiant in defending the criminal acts committed by the movie's teen characters. "There are times when you have to step across the law to do something right. It's nothing new in literature, and it's nothing new in our history," Hiaasen told Jeanne Wolf in a recent interview.

"I think this country has a long and glorious history of civil disobedience. Without it, there would be no United States. How far do you go for a cause? Hollywood hasn't been ignoring the question," Hiaasen added.

He admitted to also having engaged in similar antics when he was a kid in Florida. "Since the Hiaasen, who estimates that 450 acres of undeveloped land disappear in Florida daily, is optimistic that his novel and the new movie on which it is based will help inspire a generation of kids.

"There are times when I think all is lost and I've just got to find a place which isn't all paved over. Then kids write me about fighting the fight. And I think they couldn't possibly grow up to be as greedy and self-centered as my generation was," he said.

Buffett also is hopeful that the movie will inspire today's generation. "The message of this movie is not only that our kids are smarter than adults, but it's our world that they're going to inherit, and it's great to see activism at that early age," Buffett said, according to the movie's production notes.

Hoot's characters echo Hiaasen's anti-development sentiment frequently during the film. "They put up these giant hotels and only goober tourists are allowed. The

same thing is happening everywhere. There is nothing to stop [developers] from bulldozing from one coast [of Florida] to another," declares the character Mullet Fingers.

Hoot is already ruffling the feathers of at least one expert on eco-terrorism. "Hoot is not just pushing eco-terrorism. It's pushing social and political terrorism as well," Ron Arnold, author of "EcoTerror: The Violent Agenda to Save Nature: The World of the Unabomber," told **Cybercast News Service**.

"Hoot's so-called harmless 'mischief' is training a generation to look cute while burning homes and cars and stores. Eco-terrorism is serious. Eco-terrorism is arson and pipe bombs and hate that hurts people and destroys lives," Arnold said. He had not yet seen the film when interviewed by **Cybercast News Service**.

"Hoot's Hollywood producers wouldn't think it was so cute if it was their studio the kids destroyed," Arnold added.

But Shriner sees the movie inspiring kids to take positive action. "If you don't send a positive message to young people to care about the environment, then there is really no chance. Our ice caps are melting. Our cities are grossly over-polluted. We are way too dependent on oil. They're the ones that are going to have to do something about ozone depletion and all these elements. The answers will come from the education and awareness of the generation that follows us," said Shriner.

Thought anyone planning on taking their kids or grandkids, might like to read this review.

April Meeting Hilites

President George Graham welcomed new guests, Eric & Kristen Anderson and kids Cooper & Jacquelin. We welcomed back returning guest, Shawn Bensen.

VP Warner announced we lost 3 members due to military moves. He also announced McIver's needed work and it was time for the "Show 'n Shine" season to begin.

Mary won the 50/50 & Gary won the Moab Jeep Trails book donated by Scott & Denise Bart.

Mary read an email from a t-shirt collector from Indonesia requesting one of our t-shirts. We voted to send her one.

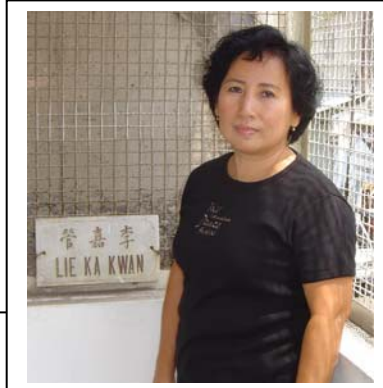
Shawn Bensen passed out a flier to his web site that you can view at: www.deathvalleyrockcrawlers.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: You will read that he thinks clubs are stupid, paying money to organizations is stupid, etc. I have taken him off the mailing list as he has no intention of joining our club, does not support our values or any of the organizations that fight for his right to go 4-wheeling, etc. If no one were out there fighting the extreme environmental groups to keep the land open, there would **NOW** be **NO** Public Land access.

I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE

you to Stephanie Widyastuti. She is a retired teacher whose hobby is collecting tees and reading. I contacted her to let her know she would be receiving a club t-shirt once we got some made. She was very happy to hear from me and emailed me almost immediately with her picture and one of her collection. **Here is some info on Indonesia:**

For sheer size, scale and variety, Indonesia is pretty much unbeatable. The country is so enormous that nobody is really sure quite how big it is; there are between 13,000 and 17,000 islands. It's certainly the largest archipelago in the world, spreading over 5200km between the Asian mainland and Australia, all of it within the tropics and with huge areas of ocean separating the land-masses.



DON'T FORGET to check out the club forum under our
Members Only page and to add your 2-cents worth.

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