

#27_2021_March_Newsletter

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Thank you for signing up to receive my newsletters. I hope you've found the previous editions informative and helpful for your vehicle-supported adventures. I trust you will enjoy this month's newsletter. If you have comments, please email me: Bob.Wohlers@discoveroffroading.com. You can access, download, and read previous newsletters on my website here (Click Here): [NEWSLETTERS](#). Look through the Newsletter Reference for a topic that may interest you, or download them all!



2021 Four Wheel Camper Owner Adventure Tours Update



The Rimrocker Trail, Baja (Winter), and San Rafael Swell tours for Four Wheel Camper Owners are sold out. However, there are still a couple of spots open on the following tours:

- * Drive Through the Valley of Death - Death Valley National Park Off-Road Adventure: October 28-31
- * Camp Baja Beaches (Summer) – Introduction to Baja Mexico Adventure: June 9-15
- * Westward Ho on Applegate/Lassen Trail – Black Rock Desert Off-Road Adventure: September 29 – October 2

Off-Road Safety Academy, Inc. and Four Wheel Camper, LLC invite you to explore the remote backcountry with like-minded vehicle-supported adventurers. This is our third year offering these enormously popular tours. Come along and see new sights, camp in new locations, meet new friends, and learn how to off-road safely. Each tour includes unique evening campfire discussions on such topics as overlanding navigation, water disinfection, satellite communications, backcountry survival, and various 4WD topics.

Off-Road Safety Academy is a permitted BLM and National Park Outfitter and Guide.

You may sign up and purchase Tours by clicking: [HERE](#).

If you have questions after reading all the Tour information, click [HERE](#), please call Bob at: 909.844.2583.



For more Adventure
Tour information,
[CLICK HERE](#).

Black Rock Desert Hot Springs.



Camp Baja Beaches Adventure Tour. Camping right on the beach of the Sea of Cortez.

NEW: 2021 Adventure Tours for Short Wheel-Base Vehicles

Off-Road Safety Academy is thinking of offering **two adventure tours in 2021 for the owners of short wheel-based vehicles** (no 3/4 or 1 Ton Trucks). Acceptable vehicles include Jeeps, Toyotas, Land Rovers, G-Wagons, SportsMobiles, Nissans, Broncos, etc. These tours will tackle some moderate challenging trails, so



each 4WD vehicle must have 4-Lo range, a bit of a lift, 33" or larger all-terrain tires, and be in top mechanical condition.

The Death Valley Adventure Tour will be based out of Panamint Springs Resort. Each day the tour will take you to a different off-road secret spot within the National Park. The tour will return each evening to Panamint Springs Resort's motel, campground, RV hook up area, and gas station. Motorhomes towing their 4WD vehicles are welcome on this tour.

The Black Rock Desert Adventure Tour will be an overlanding-style tour, camping at a different locations each evening. This tour will visit a variety of hot springs, camp on the famous Black Rock Playa, and journey through the fabulous High Rock Canyon. Vehicles traveling on this tour must be equipped for overland travel and be self-sufficient.

Each of these tours may be offered in the Fall if there is enough interest. Last year, I fielded lots of requests for tours such as these. If you might be interested in one or both of these tours, call me at 909.844.2583 or write me an email (bob.wohlers@discoveroffroading.com). I look forward to hearing from you and forming a list of possible participants. In the next few months I will post dates and sign up information. **Watch for this information in a future newsletter and on my website.**

Never Say Never, Or... For That Day



I'll Never Get Stuck in the Mud

Never Say Never is a quip I frequently say to my students. Read on; I'll clarify this retort a bit later. There is another title I could have easily given this newsletter issue – ***For That Day***. Allow me to explain...

"For That Day" is a line from the 1975 hit movie *Three Days of the Condor*. If you've not seen this movie, I highly recommend it – starring Robert Redford, Faye Dunaway, Cliff Robertson, and Max von Sydow. Max von Sydow plays Joubert, a paid CIA assassin. Joubert knows that Redford's character is about to become a target since he has uncovered an unauthorized CIA plot to take over Middle East oil fields (this movie was scripted just after the '70s oil embargo). While giving Redford's character some important "how to stay alive" fatherly advice, Joubert hands Redford a pistol – a .45 1911. As Joubert hands the pistol to Redford, he quietly says "For that day." Watch the YouTube movie clip by clicking [HERE](#) or on the image below and you'll understand the context of my message. Watch the clip all the way to the end. Turn up your volume and listen carefully to the dialogue before you continue reading this newsletter.



[Screen Grab – Three Days of the Condor]

Sometimes I feel a bit like Joubert as I train folks to safely off-road in their 4WD vehicles. Unlike Joubert I probably won't hand you a pistol, but I might hand you, for example, a winching pulley block, a winch line extension, a bug-out-bag, a safety lanyard, or a Garmin inReach. After I give you one of these items, I might say "For That Day." Joubert is giving important protective advice to Redford. Like Joubert, I often take on the role of advice giver. It's an honor to do so. I don't want my students or readers to make the same mistakes I've made while traveling off-road in the remote backcountry.

Practically all my 4WD course objectives and those in my books have but a singular focus – to prepare you "For That Day." Here's some dialogue from the movie clip to make my point. Of course, I've modified the script to add some off-road specificity.

It will happen this way, you may be driving, maybe the first sunny day of the spring...

When you blow two tires and you are remote, solo (no other vehicles with you),
and you are in the Mexican Yucatan jungle.

When you accidentally tip over your vehicle on its side, resting on a narrow shelf
trail.

When your vehicle becomes totally engulfed in fire at camp and you are alone,
no other vehicles with you.



Important Recovery Training... For That Day



Never Say Never [Photo courtesy of Coyote Works - YouTube]

You get the idea. I could go on, and on, and on.

Now, about *Never Say Never*. I have actually heard the following statements from off-roaders. No joke, these are actual comments I've heard at off-road and overlanding shows/expos:

I don't need a vehicle that can rock crawl, I never traverse that type of terrain. I research my trails carefully.

I don't need to know how to crawl over rocks.

I don't need rock rails on my vehicle, I drive carefully. I'll never crush my door's rocker panels.

I don't need to take jackets with me in the winter when I off-road, I'm never gone long.

I don't need a locker in my differential, I only drive on easy graded trails.

I never do any of the work on my vehicle. I let the dealer service all my vehicle needs or put on aftermarket equipment. There's really no need for me to understand my 4WD at this level.

I don't need a skid plate at the front of my IFS vehicle. I don't bang the front underbody of my vehicle on terrain.

I don't need a satellite communicator, I'm always within cell phone range when off-roading.

I don't need to know how to disinfect water in the field. I always carry plenty of bottled water with me.

Wilderness first aid training? I don't need that much knowledge and skills, I'm healthy and very careful when in the remote backcountry.

I don't need to know how to repair a tire when off-roading. I always have my spare.

I hate guns. I'll never need one when off-roading.

Reflect on the previous statements while you read through the following real life scenario. This is a situation I share with my students:

You spend a lot of time researching the exact off-road trail you take on your adventures. You consider this research a fun part of your journey and you share your proposed path with friends and family should something go wrong. Excellent thinking. You carefully select a route that matches the easy graded roads you like to comfortably drive.

You hate rock crawling and avoid it at all costs. You've purchased and built-up your vehicle to handle graded roads. Because of this philosophy, you've avoided lifting your vehicle just a bit for more clearance, selecting tougher components like shocks and all-terrain tires, and placing armor under your vehicle to protect vital components.

Your current journey is taking you into a very remote backcountry area. From fuel station to fuel station, you have just enough gas to comfortably reach a paved highway and back to an urban area. So far, the trail has been a delightfully easy graded road, just as you researched. However, about 5 miles from the highway you run into a section of the trail that's been completely destroyed by a flash flood just ONE week ago. The sun is beginning to set. Even the rangers in the area didn't know about this washout since they had not traversed the trail since the storm. Your fuel gauge shows less than a quarter of a tank of gas and you are so close to the main highway you can hear the cars zipping by off in the distance. There's no turning back to return the way you came; you simply don't have the fuel. You don't have a choice; you must crawl over the rocks exposed in the washed out gully. You're hoping your vehicle can handle this challenging section of trail and that your driving skills will take you over the rocks without a major breakdown or tip over.

The point of this story is that you should Never Say Never. I am constantly working to prepare my students and readers "For That Day." That day when you are faced with a surprisingly difficult and challenging section of trail or off-road event. That day when your skills and off-road knowledge is stretched beyond your comfort zone.

Mind you, I rarely hear the word *never* from students that have taken my courses

and clinics, plus those that read my books. They know better than to say this to me. They know I prescribe to the Latin phrase "In Omnia Paratus." Translated: *Prepare for all things*. This slogan has been in the signature area of my emails for years. Of course, "preparing for all things" when off-road is a lifelong journey. You can never stop learning. Also, don't wait to off-road when you "think" you know it all. Just go! Have a bloody good adventure. But don't be foolish. You need to know your limitations and the limitations of your vehicle.

When I hear the words "I never" in this context from an off-roader, I honestly worry about their possible lack of off-road knowledge and skills. **I even question their maturity.** I know this is brutal language in a woke world, but it's my opinion.

Even the "I never carry a firearm when I off-road" is in my opinion, foolish. I've trained many a BLM and National Park Ranger how to drive safely off-road. Without exception, all of the law enforcement Rangers I've had the pleasure to get to know admit that there is not enough of them to protect you. They all say that visitors should have a firearm and the training that goes with ownership when exploring the remote backcountry.

Don't like firearms? Okay, go purchase some bear spray, wasp spray, or have a knife handy if you genuinely believe these will keep you safer when approached by an unsavory individual (or dangerous animal) in the remote backcountry. I can tell you from personal experience, "You won't know how much you'll need or want a firearm in the backcountry until you are confronted by an very suspicious-looking armed person at a remote location." I don't want to make this newsletter segment about the 2nd Amendment, but you get my point.

Here's an old saying...

It's better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it.

It is better to get professional off-road knowledge and skill training and not need it, than to need it and not have it.

It is better to always carry a bug-out-bag and not need it, than to need it and not have it.

It is better to have a satellite communicator (SEND or PLB) and not need it, than need it and not have it.

Get it? Again, I could go on and on.

Never Say Never and prepare as best you can *For That Day*. I can help you prepare For That Day. **Take my courses, read my books, and go on my backcountry tours.** It would be an honor to be a small part of your off-road safety and security.

Joubert on off-roading in the remote backcountry, alone... (Tongue in Cheek; With apologies to the script writers.)

"Oh no... it's quite restful; almost peaceful. No need to believe in either side, or any side. There is no cause. There's only YOURSELF. The belief is in your own precision."

At what level is YOUR PRECISION when off-roading?



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