

April 14, 2012

Hello World!

So - how do you get a 4x4 truck out of a water-filled trench? Not with a citified belief that you know it all. Previously I blogged of a good, rainy-day memory that ended with my 4-wheel drive sunk in a mountain meadow trench. This is the conclusion.

I had to wait two days for the weekend to arrive so the two male friends who I enlisted had time to make the trek into the mountains. Oh, and the cutie patootie coed who was with me when I sunk the truck came along for amusement and morale support.

Properly attired in boots and rain jackets against the drizzle, we slogged five miles along mud-slippery fire roads. The hike itself was not unpleasant. What took its toll was carrying the 70 pound, heavy duty chain come-along, the 50 pounds of steel cable, a long-handle sludge hammer, and the 20 pound four-foot steel spike. I had rented these items to extricate my truck. Having sunk the truck in the middle of a meadow there were no trees nearby to wrap the cable around. The plan was to pound the spike into the ground, wrap the cable around the truck's axle and then use the come-along anchored to the spike to wench the truck free. An excellent plan designed by me, a city boy from Los Angeles and a student engineer originally from San Francisco. The third boy was the muscle, a farm boy from a no-name hick town west of Oroville. The coed, she carried my book back pack of dry clothes, towels, and misc. tools. Someone was going to take a muddy swim. Yep, that would be me.

Reaching the meadow and seeing the nearby backhoe, the engineer said, "Let's use that." "Yeah," I replied. "You know how to hot wire it?" With that subject closed we assembled our contraption. The farm boy pounded the spike. I took the chilly dip. The engineer worked the come-along. The coed glowed.

With the cable taught, the truck shuddered and moved perceptively. Unfortunately, failure always follows ego. The saturated ground gave up the spike. The engineer and I moved the heavy spike three times, seeking hard pack, but the meadow had become a muddy bog. For three hours we citified boys endeavored to succeed in our well thought out plan. Exhausted and nearing the point of tossing in the proverbial towel, a sound reverberated, carrying with it the heavy smell of diesel.

With idiot written on our faces, we city boys turned toward the backhoe. Seated in the driver's seat, grinning his hayseed smile, the farm boy shouted, "It's a push-button ignition. It doesn't need a key."

Ten minutes later, with the farm boy expertly manipulating the controls, the backhoe had pulled my truck free. Needless to say, I finally learned the meaning of 'Never Judge a Book by its Cover'. Also, there is always a mind behind the muscles.

An hour later, after removing the spark plugs to empty the cylinders of water, cleaning the air filter and carburater, I drove my 4x4 out of the mountains. In homage to the hero of the day, we stopped at Madison Bear Gardens to buy the farm boy several beers.