

OHIO ROVER #4

Winter/Spring 2025

Official Newsletter of the
Cuyahoga Valley Land Rover Club



Covered Bridge Tour
Rover Around The
Valley: David + Kris

Bondsteel Defender
Upcoming Events





Ohio Rover

Winter/Spring 2025

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Cover Photo: Winter in Northeast Ohio



Out the Alpine Window

DJ Harvey

I'm sure this is said every year, but this winter seemed colder and longer than most in the recent past. There was plenty of snow to be shoveled and cold days to stay inside. The cold and snowy days seemed darker than usual. For me, this winter was a time of reflection and a time to slow down and rest. Attention was given to other tasks that needed addressed. As winter comes to an end spring brings the promise of renewal and rebirth. I certainly view this coming spring in that light.

Even though the dark seemed long and the cold unrelenting, Land Rovers remained a source of warmth, comfort, and capability. The recently added heated seat switch to my Discovery II was used almost daily and an upgrade that I should have done years ago. Despite the more aggressive winter snow this year, my rovers didn't skip a beat and ensured safe travels for me and my loved ones.

As we move into the more active parts of 2025 I hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well, and I hope you're ready to connect in person at one of the several meet-ups we'll have this year. Enjoy the spring winds, rains, and mud, and may your rover carry you to dry and safe grounds!

Happy Rovering!

DJ Harvey

Rover Around The Valley:

David + Kris

Whaling Adventures In Uganda, The Middle East, and at Home

By DJ Harvey

Photos David Whaling, DJ Harvey



David Whaling's black 2002 Discovery II is a family daily, a light off-roader, and work truck around his property. The Disco is labeled with several stickers that act as a snapshot of David's life. The first is a large side window sticker of a whale's tail fin going into water surrounded by the text "Whaling Rovers", a second yellow sticker reads "1971 East African Safari", and a third sticker on the gas tank cover reads "GO ARMY! BEAT NAVY!" On the front fender is the name of the Discovery: Mbale. Mbale is a city in eastern Uganda. Even though Land Rovers have been in David's DNA since birth, it was 40 years before he owned his first rover (now one of four). But that doesn't mean he wasn't always around them. From his early childhood years in Uganda to a military career spent serving abroad in Europe and the Middle East, Land Rovers have always played a role in David's life. Like many enthusiasts, it took years of study, work, and grit before he brought his first rover home. And like many others, it's hard to stop at just one!

Many people can recall a moment or series of events that led to their love for Land Rover's, but not David. For David, the love of Land Rovers has always been present. One must wonder if it wasn't subtly conveyed to him during his early childhood abroad. David's family, the Whaling family, are true adventurers, explorers, and even original overlanders - long before "overlanding" was a thing. As the middle child of a family of three from the Philadelphia suburbs, David recalls the origin of his families' adventures. At the beginning of his parents' marriage his father Harold "promised my mother she'd see the world, and after the third kid she reminded him that it had been 5 years and all she had seen was the inside of a hospital!". David's father Harold held true to his promise and the family of five relocated to Ngora, Uganda for a planned six-year adventure.

David's father was a rapid learner's teacher in a public school district and a professor at Trenton State College in the 1960s when he applied for and was



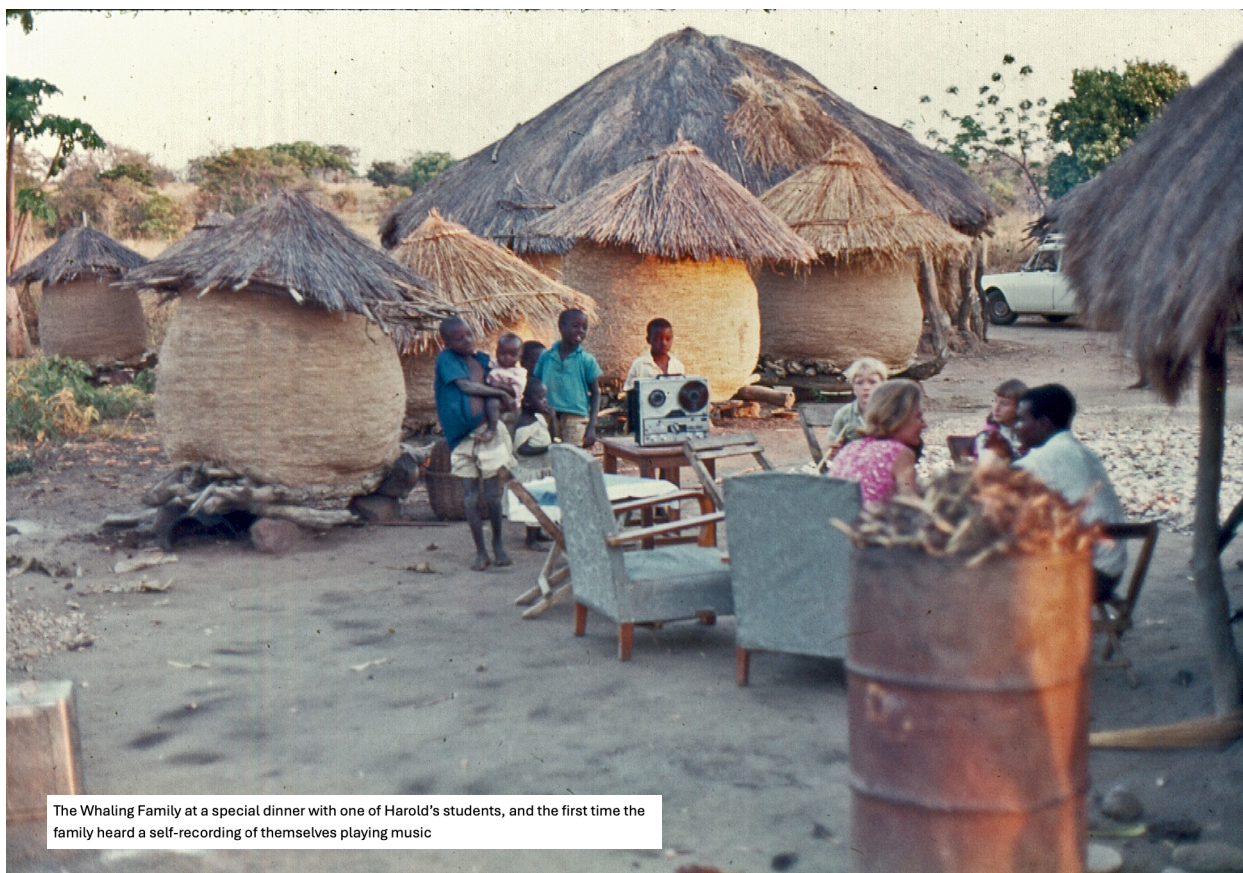
A man walks behind a monument at Bishop Kitching College (BKC) in Ngora District. PHOTO/SIMON PETER EMWAMU



Whaling family on Safari in Uganda in their Simca

accepted to teach future teachers in Africa. This required a major move of the family to Ngora, Uganda to teach at Bishop Kitching College (BKC), a college that trained teachers. The college was named after Bishop Kitching of the Anglican Upper Nile Diocese and founded in 1903. BKC played an integral role in educating future Ugandan teachers who would go and teach primary education to the next generation of the Ugandan people. David was in primary school himself when the family moved to Uganda and during a portion of his time in Uganda he attended a British Boarding School in Kenya. Between teaching responsibilities, Harold and Janet Whaling would load the family into their French made Simca station wagon and head out on Safari. The Whaling family went on true adventures that would have been the stuff of today's social media fame. The family spent time out on the Serengeti Plains, Ngorongoro Crater, Maasai Mara, Murchison Falls, Kidepo, Mount Elgon, to

name a few of the places, and camped on the beautiful beaches of Kenya and Tanzania. Camping in the wild under Baobab trees surrounded by barbed wire security fence perimeters in search of and seeing the African Big 5 was unforgettable. Harold was a lover of nature and photography, often traveling with three cameras around his neck. David's mother Janet was also a nature lover and was always using all her senses to immerse herself in the environment. David affectionately recalls a time on safari when his mother walked up to a giraffe and stood beside it to get a better view! David recalls another more harrowing safari adventure in search of wildlife. While driving through the African bush Harold came upon a bull elephant. With the vehicle stopped Harold began taking photos from the driver seat. Clearly agitated by their presence the elephant eventually charged the car. Despite a car full of screaming children Harold waited to put the car in reverse until what seemed



The Whaling Family at a special dinner with one of Harold's students, and the first time the family heard a self-recording of themselves playing music

to the children as the very last moment. They easily reversed into safety, although Harold kept trying to capture that one in a million photo!

At this time in Uganda's history, Land Rovers were ubiquitous being used by military, police, and government officials. Land Rovers were widely used as tourist vehicles as well. Undoubtedly young David was surrounded by classic Land Rovers. Unfortunately, the Whaling family's time in Uganda was cut short after Idi Amin, commander of the Ugandan Army, took control of Uganda from President Milton Obote on January 25, 1971, after a coup d'état. After a short honeymoon period under the new government, it became apparent that brutality and violence were the new way of life. The Whaling family, like many others, made their way out of the country.

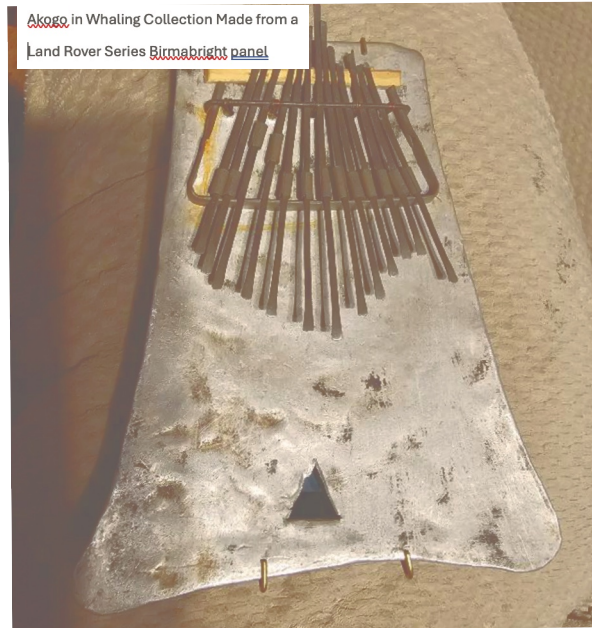
Harold and Janet collected many local goods like pots, weapons, carvings, and instruments from their time in Africa, one being a thumb piano common in Uganda known as an akogo. An akogo is a very important musical instrument to the Teso ethnic group, who were the primary tribal group the lived in the Ngora area. An akogo is made of metal tongues fastened to a hand carved curved wood board from the trunk of a kiatt tree and played with both thumbs by plucking the metal tongues. It is played at sacred life events such as births, marriages, or funerals. The Whaling's akogo however, is hand made from the remains of a Series Land Rover instead of the kiatt tree!

Upon returning to Pennsylvania the transition to American primary school was eventually made and upon graduation from high school David was

Akogo in the Rumble Museum made of kiatt wood



nominated and accepted to The United States Military Academy at West Point. After four successful years he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US ARMY. David's career in the ARMY was an honorable one, with twelve years on active duty and eighteen years in the reserves for a total of thirty years of service. He was platoon leader in an Air Defense battery on the Czech border in Germany, and a company commander in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC. The 82nd Airborne division specializes in parachute assault into hostile areas with a mandate to be "on-call to fight anytime, anywhere". During his time in the 82nd Airborne Division, David deployed to Saudi Arabia at the start of Operation Desert Shield then into Iraq as part of Operation Desert Storm. His last active-duty assignment was teaching ROTC at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. Although David was yet to own his own rover, he was drawn to them on every deployment. He once jokingly offered to trade a Humvee for a Defender with British soldier colleagues. For details on a great Land Rover story while deployed, read David's story "Bondsteel Defender" in this issue of the newsletter.



Following a deployment to the Middle East in 2003-2004, while exploring North Carolina, David drove past Land Rover Cary (Cary, NC) and stopped to see the vehicles. A 2002 Land Rover Discovery II had just been turned in off a two-year lease. With the release of the third generation Discovery, renamed the LR3 in the American market, the dealership was trying to move the remaining second-generation Discovery's off their lot. An offer was made in David's favor, and he took home his first Land Rover, Mbale, that day!

David also went to work for GE Transportation working in logistics management, sourcing, supplier quality, and production over a 22-year career for the largest producer of diesel-electric locomotives in North America. As a member of the ARMY Reserves, he completed four more deployments including to Kuwait, responsible for all operations of US and partner nations at the Kuwait Naval base, as a battalion commander in Iraq, as well as the operations officer managing logistic operations in Jordan, Iraq, and

Afghanistan. Being away from his rover didn't mean the Discovery was going unused, however. David's wife Kristen made use of the Discovery as her daily driver. And whenever needed, David's father Harold along with Kris would lend a hand to help maintain the Discovery. Like many Land Rover enthusiasts, opportunities to obtain another rover seem to materialize out of thin air. In the mid 2000's David came across an advertisement for a 1967 Series Ila soft top in Washington State. After a couple of phone calls and reassurance that the vehicle was running the vehicle was shipped to Pennsylvania and came laden with spare parts and several manuals. This 1967 Ila, named Ngora, has a diesel engine and still runs, although with a bit of smoke. The 1967 Series Ila was originally imported to Canada before coming south to Washington.



The third rover came after a trip to Oregon in 2010. David came across a 1973 two door right-hand drive Range Rover with a 200tdi engine and a five-speed manual transmission. The interior was a bit rough and is currently awaiting some TLC. The Range Rover was shipped back to PA and christened Soroti, another small city in Uganda. The fourth rover was bought in 2019 after a friend recommended a car auction in Erie, PA. A



Three Bloses: Mbale, Ngora, and Soroti



David and Kris Whaling

1963 Series Ila Station wagon was offered for sale and David had the winning bid. Unfortunately, the clutch failed, and it had to be U-hauled home. The 1963 Series is named Kampala after the capital city of Uganda. In order to both store and work on his rovers, David's wife Kris surprised him after returning from deployment with a new garage that can fit all four rovers! The garage/shop with the rovers and his late father's tools has become a place of tranquility, craftsmanship, and a place to connect with the past.

Now that his career in the ARMY is over, David keeps himself very busy. As a lifelong learner David is back in school working on a Diesel Engine Repair degree to pair with his CDL/heavy equipment certificates and Automotive Technology

and Maintenance Degree! David and Kris brought their Discovery II to Cuyahoga Valleys Land Rover's Summer Campout as well as the Covered Bridge Tour. You can also read some of David's letters to the editor in *Rovers Magazine*! What's the next big adventure for David and his rovers? In addition to attending some of the well-established Land Rover events along the east coast, David and Kris are working on plans to visit Maine in their motorhome with the 1963 Series Ila as their companion. However, as David says, "any other time I'm able to go anywhere in a Land Rover I feel good and enjoy the ride – even to the local hardware store!" The next time you see David and Kris in one of their Whaling Rovers, be sure to tell them Gybeale ko! (Jeb-ah-le Ko!) – Hello in Luganda!



PLEASE BUCKLE UP FOR SECURITY. © 1989 RANGE ROVER OF NORTH AMERICA, INC.

Tired of eating in the same old places?

Why not try a drive-in?

With its exceptional off-road capability, a Range Rover can provide you with a setting any 5 star restaurant would envy.

And it can do it with a suspension system so cleverly engineered that a Range Rover can make it over rocks, around boulders, even into and out of gullies without

breaking so much as a quail egg.

As well as with a new, more powerful engine to give you faster

food than ever.

Why not call 1-800 FINE 4WD for the name of a dealer convenient to you?

After all, with a Range Rover you're not merely getting the vehicle *Four Wheeler* magazine named "Four Wheeler of the Year," you're also getting one of the world's most elegant dining cars.





Netcher Road Covered Bridge

CVLR Covered Bridge Tour 2024

Story+Photos: DJ Harvey

~~~~~ An interesting geologic boundary exists on the east side of Cleveland. When traveling east bound on Cedar Road through University Circle you transition from the flat city and begin climbing up Cedar hill into the inner ring suburb of Cleveland Heights. Cedar hill marks the geologic transition of the Midwest plains into the Appalachian plateau. The Appalachian plateau is a network of plateaus that gain in elevation until they reach the Appalachian Mountains, which span from Canada to Alabama. The east side of the mountains have more rapid decrease in elevation

due to the Alleghany Front. The northeast Ohio plateau region lacks many of the more dramatic features seen in wilder parts of Appalachia due to smoothing of the plateau from ancient glaciers. Continuing northeast for sixty miles along Lake Erie you will come into Ashtabula County. It's a rural county and Ohio's most northeastern county bordering Pennsylvania. Ashtabula County is squarely within the Appalachian Plateau and has the geography required to host nineteen covered bridges. Two of those bridges are particularly notable. The West Liberty Bridge, the shortest covered



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bridge in the US, and the Smolen-Gulf bridge, the longest covered bridge in the US are found a short distance from each other. Ashtabula County is also home to pastoral farmlands, wineries, orchards, and an abundance of trees. The combination of bridges and geography are the perfect underpinnings for a leisurely autumnal drive.

When researching the perfect route the usual internet searches were undertaken. County visitor websites, Facebook, forums, and newspapers all lacked a logical route to see the bridges in an efficient manner. No ideal route has been devised and published, and if it has, I could not locate it. Several trip reports were found while and these all documented seven-to-eight-hour trips and their listed order of bridge stops was extremely inefficient. As much as I would enjoy driving my rover for eight hours, this felt excessive for a leisurely autumnal road trip. I then set out to map my own



route. I entered the data and made changes until I had a route that made sense. I had never visited these bridges, so the next order of business was to go and preview the bridges and route in person. I made several invitations to scout with me however all my invitations were decline, likely because I had a 5AM start time on an August Sunday morning, allowing me to make the hour trip to Ashtabula County, scout my route, and make it home in time for church. The early summer sun rising over the fields and bridges and streams was peaceful and healing. I was alone for the most part on the roads in my LR4. At the conclusion of my scouting trip, the changes were noted to build the ideal route.

October 5<sup>th</sup> was the official date, and the day couldn't have started off any better. It was a warm but crisp autumn morning with blue skies and morning sun. Our meeting place was a coffee shop in Geneva, OH called Scribblers Coffee





Co. The coffee shop is a converted older home with a large gravel parking lot on the side and back. The gravel lot extends south with an entrance/exit just east of the West Liberty bridge, the shortest covered bridge in America. As I approached the exit for Geneva off of I-90 I was pleased to come upon a Woodcote Green Discovery driven by Eric and Kelly Brown. We exited and pulled into the coffee shop together and found several rovers already present. Dave and Kris Whaling in their Discovery 2, Tom Martin in his wife's green discovery 2. Before we could make it inside several more rovers pulled in including Chi Chi, who came from Columbus and camped in her roof top tent on her discovery 2 along the Lake Erie Shore, Michael Shock and his girlfriend in his Discovery 2, Gene Paulin in his P38 Range Rover, Steven Zukowski from Youngstown in his L322 Range Rover, Steph Hronek from Cleveland Heights in





her Series 2a. There were nine rovers in total.

After coffee and breakfast sandwiches the group moved outside to visit the West Liberty Bridge. Since it was literally at the end of the parking lot we walked to and across the bridge. Several paused for photos. We then had a short team meeting discussing the route and safety consideration, checked radios, and then off we went. Heading south our first bridge crossing was Harpersfield Covered Bridge. This bridge crosses the Grand River and is within Ashtabula County's wine country, two vineyards are nearby including Ferrante Winery and Ristorante and Laurello Vineyards. We then made our way to Mechanicsville Covered Bridge, and then on to Doyle's Road. The

planned route would cover fourteen of the nineteen bridges and the route to a counterclockwise route after starting in Geneva. The other bridges were in the far east and far west of the county. Before reaching Doyle Road Steph's Series 2a became quite thirsty so we detoured to a service station in Austinburg, OH. This stop for gas proved pivotal as several people needed to use the bathroom now that morning coffee and breakfast had settled! The group then soldiered on to Doyle Road covered bridge. As we approached Gidding's Road Covered Bridge the radio chatter focused on the question of whether the farm fields were growing wheat or barley, a question that is still yet to be answered! Gene also shared the story of an adolescent excursion he





took with a friend who lived around Gidding's Road Covered Bridge.

The route continued to Netcher Road Covered Bridge and then to the most southern bridge on the tour, the South Denmark Road Covered Bridge. This bridge has a nine-foot clearance and sits on a bypass of the local road and has ample room for parking. The group took a break and stretched their legs, walked the bridge, took photos, and chatted. After everyone was ready, we continued to Caine Road covered bridge. This bridge sits next to Red Hawks Landing, a 97-acre farm to table private venue. Continuing north we passed Graham Road Covered Bridge, a historical site that is no longer used as vehicle bridge. The next bridge was Root Road covered bridge before we turned west towards Benetka Road Covered bridge. Benetka road has a section of unpaved surface which was refreshing for the short distance before and after the bridge.



Continuing northwest we made our way to Olin's Bridge on Dewey Road, passing our final lunch spot Brandt's Apple Orchard. We were able to get a preview of how busy Brandt's was on a beautiful Saturday morning, with several commenting how the parking was overflowing into adjacent fields. After Olin's bridge we reached our last two bridges. The Smolen-Gulf covered bridge is 613 feet long and the longest covered bridge in the US, crossing the Ashtabula River. A second pedestrian covered bridge sits below the Smolen-Gulf called Riverview Covered Bridge. The group parked at the lot near river level. Several walked the pedestrian bridge while others chatted and relaxed.

The plan for lunch was to return to Brandt's Apple Orchard. Due to the business of the venue, several people elected to pass. It was near 1pm and some choose to travel home, or find a place to eat along their route home. Eric and Kelly Brown, Chi Chi, and DJ pressed on with the original plan. The orchard was packed, and the line for food went through the building and wrapped around the perimeter. We elected to instead walk a beautiful nature path through the property, passing guests picking apples, children





playing in the field, and a horse drawn carriage. After the nature hike the line to the café was not any shorter, so the group decided to call it a day and head home. Chi Chi made her way to Columbus while DJ and Eric and Kelly caravanned down I-90, I-271, until the east and west I-480 split where the last two Disco's parted ways.

The event proved to be a relaxing autumnal drive through farmland and forest. The weather was agreeable in early October as noted by Steph's topless Series 2a. The leaf colors had not begun to change yet, however. This autumn the colors were magnificent. The meetup is one that can be enjoyed by anyone with a rover, regardless of age or value. We look forward to next years autumnal ride!

Stops:

Stops/Bridges (clearance):

Meet: Scribblers Coffee Co: 388 S

Broadway, Geneva, OH 44041  
 W. Liberty St Covered Bridge (15'0")  
 Harpersfield Covered Bridge (12'5")  
 Mechanicsburg Covered Bridge (10'9" –  
 bypass present)  
 Doyle Road Covered Bridge (13'3")  
 Giddings Road Covered Bridge (15'6")  
 Netcher Road Covered Bridge (14'6")  
 South Denmark Road Covered Bridge  
 (9'0" – bypass present)  
 Caine Road Covered Bridge (13'5")  
 Graham Road Covered Bridge (bypass  
 road – don't drive through)  
 Root Road Covered Bridge (9'4")  
 State Road Covered Bridge\* (was not  
 included but could be)  
 Benetka Road Covered Bridge (10'9" –  
 short distance of gravel road)  
 Olin's Bridge (Dewey Road) (12'0")  
 Smolen-Gulf/Riverview Covered Bridge  
 (SG 14'6", Riverview is pedestrian)  
 End: Brants Apple Orchard



## Recent Events and Upcoming Reports

**November:** Annual Black Friday run at  
Southington Off Road

Stay tuned for a trip report and photos



**January:** Pub Night at Mavis Winkles.  
Trivia night was held with a remote  
conferencing option!



**March:** ANARC Stewards Training:

Eric Brown (Trailhead 4x4, OH) is an official  
Trainer at the Event



2 club members made the trip: Tom Martin (OH) and Charles  
Galpin (VA). We look forward to hearing about their trip!



# Bondsteel Defender

Story+Photos: David Whaling



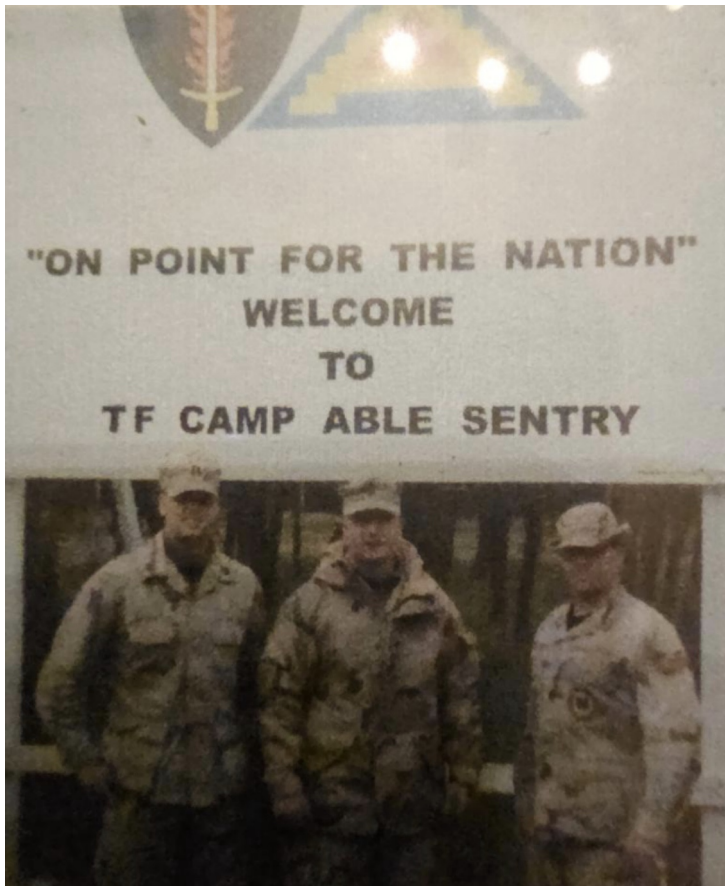
It was a green with white top 1990's four door Land Rover diesel Defender 110 right hand drive with no parking brake, no heat, no air in the tires, no battery, no lights, no reverse gear, some oil, a little fuel, only a single driver's seat, and the rover hadn't been used in quite some time. Someone had rigged up a small screwdriver as the key used to start it and there were wires all over the place in the front dash. It was sitting in the "scrap

yard" waiting to be sold locally for scrap as it was determined to have no value to the base or the US government at that point.

This was at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo in the last week of February and first week of March of 2004. It was cold, snowy, and windy. There were three of us soldiers. I was the team lead along with an Air Force Captain and an Air Force Tech Sergeant. Our mission was to

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identify, mark, and prep to move mission essential support equipment that had been sitting in storage in US military controlled warehouses at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, in Eagle Base in Bosnia, and at Camp Able Sentry in Macedonia, following the war in that region in the late 90's. The equipment could be used in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. We had the list of what we wanted and had to make sure it was operational. I had orchestrated the on ground support requirements for people and whatever else we needed through a supporting one-star general and his staff in Kuwait and the leadership teams at each of the bases in the Balkans.

Of course, going to that part of the world from the desert, we stood out in our desert camouflage fatigues while everyone else was in the woodland fatigue pattern. That wasn't the only

thing that stood out. Apparently only one of the bases really wanted to support our effort as this wasn't related to their mission. Once off the C-130 that we flew on to Camp Bondsteel from Germany, we rucked to the "guest housing" and found no room that night. So, we set up temporarily in the day room area and no one seemed to mind. As we rucked in from the airfield we passed the scrap area and that is when I noticed the Defender. My first thought was, "what is that doing there"? It looked good. After a short nights rest we had some chow and headed to the office that controlled the warehouses on that base. They also controlled the scrap yard. As we had no vehicle to get around the large camp I jokingly asked if we could use the Land Rover in the scrap yard. I was blown away when they said "OK, if you can get it running".

So now I'm in a quandary – how much time can I put into getting a rover working without cutting into the short time we have to get our mission completed and back to the desert. I asked the other two if they were up for a little mechanic work outside the mission requirements. They were all in! I had no idea what we were in for but thought we'd give it a couple hours to figure it out. We went out to the yard and luckily there was a guy in a HMMWV driving by that helped pull the Defender to the front gate of the scrap yard by a maintenance shop. We filled the tires up, were given a battery that was sitting around and had some fuel put in the tank. I tried to start it, after laughing at the small screw driver key, and it did turn over, but the battery was low. We got a jump from the maintenance shop guy and wouldn't you know it, it started! That made our day. So now we had wheels. We procured some old office chairs from the scrap yard for extra seats as well.





Mission accomplished celebration in Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany, before heading back to the desert!

We couldn't use the Defender to travel off Camp Bondsteel to Eagle Base or Camp Able Sentry as it wasn't armored and we couldn't guarantee that it would start anytime and get us where we needed to go. We made sure to park it on any downward slope with some space as it didn't always start and it didn't have reverse so we had to get it rolling and pop the clutch more often than not. We used a rock to chock the wheel – that was the back seat passenger's job. We used it all over Camp Bondsteel and it became mission essential equipment to us – our 4<sup>th</sup> teammate.

After two weeks we had to head back to the desert so we returned the Defender

to the office of the scrap yard. I asked the manager what I should do with it. He said, "Put it back where you found it", as he didn't have any use for it. That broke my heart. The few times any of us three get together the story of the Defender always comes up. I wish I had the time to figure out how to get it back to the US myself and not end up as scrap. That would have been a good follow up story.





## 2025 Spring Events

**April 12: 6:30PM**

Rovers+Burgers  
Mavis Winkles Twinsburg

**May 31: 7PM**

Ice Cream Social  
Country Maid Ice Cream

**May 3: 9AM**

Rovers + Coffee  
Heartwood Hudson

**June 8: 10AM**

Offroad  
Southington Offroad



ASSOCIATION OF  
NORTH AMERICAN  
**ROVER CLUBS**

2025 ANARC EVENTS



Steward's Training  
Tularosa, NM  
Mar 26-30



OVLR Birthday Party  
McDonald's Corner,  
Ontario  
Aug 22-24



Mid Atlantic Rally  
Arvon, VA  
Sep 25-28