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Toyota Trails

A Publication of the Toyota Land Cruiser Association



by Brent Hatherill

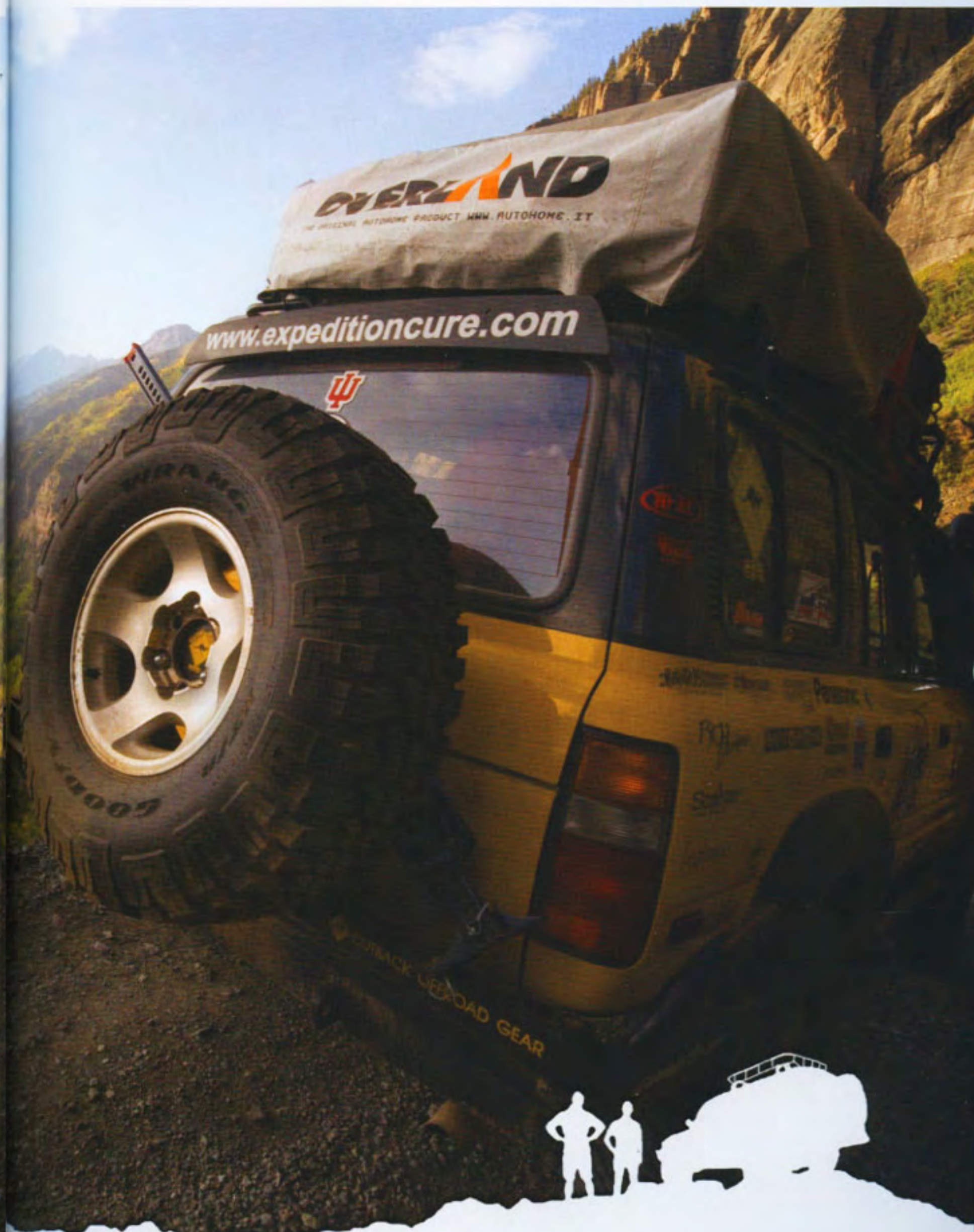
Expedition Cure

It was a dry day at work for those thirsty for adventure, and after a year of the corporate world and the daily 8 to 8, both myself and Hanley Noel were beginning to feel parched. Me staring from the window of a talent management firm in Los Angeles, and Hanley from Indianapolis's Tom Wood Porsche and Audi dealership—we both realized a shared need for adventure. Hanley had recently become active within the Indiana chapter of the TLCA and after a shared viewing of Dana Brown's Baja 1000 documentary, *Dust to Glory*, ideas quickly began formulating.

Sifting through possibilities, we soon found ourselves helplessly transfixed upon a photograph of a Land Cruiser perched upon the



Heading down Black Bear Pass and into Telluride, Colo



The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research

is dedicated to ensuring the development of a cure for Parkinson's disease within this decade through an aggressively funded research agenda. Team Fox is The Michael J. Fox Foundation's grassroots community project raising funds and awareness for Parkinson's research.

Enormous progress toward finding a cure has been made on many neurological fronts, and scientists' understanding of the brain and how disease affects it has increased dramatically. The Foundation seeks to hasten progress further by awarding grants that help guarantee that new and innovative research avenues are thoroughly funded and explored.

Actor Michael J. Fox established the Foundation in May 2000, shortly after announcing his retirement from the ABC television show, *Spin City*. In 1998, he publicly disclosed that he had been diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson's disease seven years earlier.

Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive disorder of the central nervous system that belongs to a group of conditions called motor system disorders. Symptoms of Parkinson's, which often appear gradually yet with increasing severity, may include tremors or trembling, difficulty maintaining balance and gait, rigidity or stiffness of the limbs and trunk, and general slowness of movement.

You can join Expedition Cure in making a difference in the lives of those living with Parkinson's disease. Your support of Expedition Cure's Team Fox efforts helps The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research in their work to ensure the development of a cure for Parkinson's disease within this lifetime. More than six million people worldwide are living with Parkinson's disease today. Together we can play a part in the fight to eradicate Parkinson's, so one day soon we'll be able to say that Parkinson's disease is truly nobody's disease. To date, Expedition Cure has raised \$3,120 and still needs your help.

To donate today and help cure Parkinson's visit: www.expeditioncure.com/donate.aspx



Carl St. Clair of Outback Off-Road Gear puts the finishing touches on the roof rack.

peak of Black Bear Trail within the majestic San Juan Mountains overlooking Telluride, Colorado. Even at a glance of the photo, we knew love at first sight and decided to take the expedition of a lifetime. By drawing from Land Rover's 1989 Great Divide Expedition (led by Tom Collins), stories from motorcycle adventure rider Mark Sampson, and suggested trails

from IH8Mud.com, we created an off-roading route straight down the North American Continental Divide.

With Hanley's aunt suffering from Parkinson's disease, we decided to make this more than a lark and contacted The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. In joining up with Team



Expedition Cure reaches our starting point at the Canadian border—all downhill from here.



Enjoying a peaceful moment along the shore of Mill Lake, Idaho.

Fox, we had our purpose for the expedition intact.

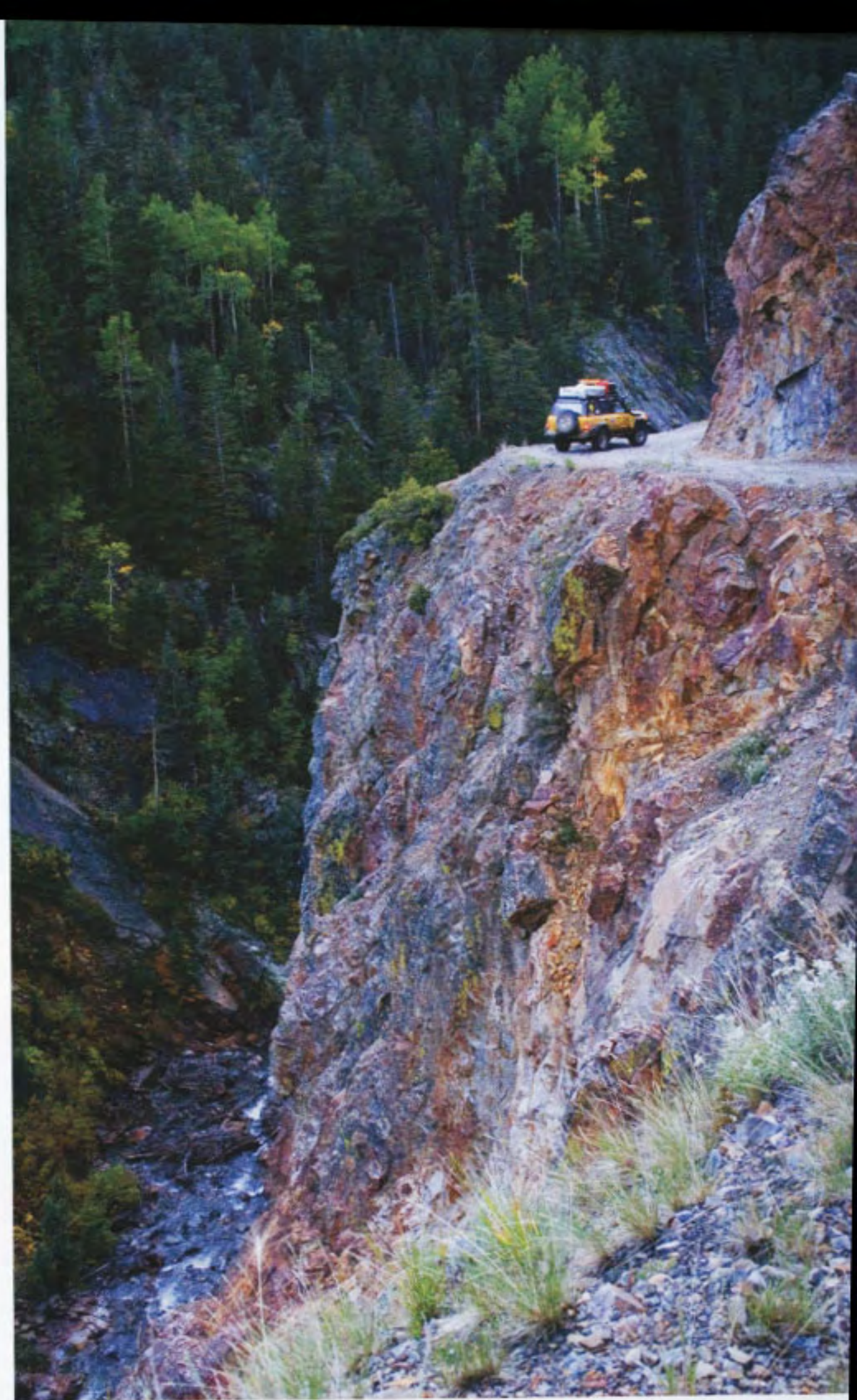
Working with a 21 day timetable as the goal, we thought we were all set—we're both young and adventurous, how hard could this be...? And even though Hanley's 1996 Toyota 4Runner had just been upgraded with a new suspension, he was having doubts as to its ability to withstand the potential payload that the expedition would entail. In hindsight, maybe it was fate which brought that curious soccer mom in her 1994 Toyota Land Cruiser with dual lockers rolling onto the Tom Wood lot in search of a trade in. Either way, within a month we'd both left our jobs to embark on the now titled, Expedition Cure—and found ourselves sitting across from Carl St. Clair of Outback Off-Road Gear with a sponsorship proposition.

By then it was July and as we had plans to be at the Canadian border by September, the timetable for transforming this newly acquired 80 series from grocery-getter to expedition-ready was seeming ridiculous. Despite the fact that Carl had just run Toyota's Great Adventure in August, we managed to capture his attention and with a flash of his mad scientist grin, we knew he was on board. Soon after, Jim Klubens joined the team, bringing the whole project closer and closer to the realm of possibility.

Literally a month later, what once stood a stock forest green 80, was now a bright yellow Land Cruiser equipped with a 3.5" Old Man Emu suspension lift, 35" Goodyear MTR tires, Outback Off Road Gear custom front and rear bumpers, and Outback Off Road custom sliders and safari roof rack. The Cruiser also boasted an Autohome Overland rooftop tent, Scepter Jerry cans, Storm Cases, 60" Hi-Lift Jack Extreme, Engel 12 volt freezer-fridge with slide and transit bag, Helton Hot Water Shower, Winchline.com synthetic winch line, an 11,000 lb. Pull Pal Land Anchor, and Staun tire deflators. Mounted within sat a Panasonic Toughbook CF-51 laptop with National Geographic TOPO! navigational software linked with a DeLorme Earthmate GPS receiver.

Expedition Cure had grown from an idea to 33 corporate sponsorships, with a website featuring updated GPS tracking, photo galleries, video and a Donate to Win contest. By September, Hanley was backing the Cruiser up to the Canadian border, leaving the hairs on our arms standing one end, with a seemingly endless line of the Rocky Mountains unfolding in front of us. Suddenly the whole thing became real. The first night jitters or maybe all the Monster Energy we'd been drinking left us way too tweaked to yield to nightfall and sleep, so 4 million candle power of lights led us on a five hour night run through the Glacier National Forest.

However, the sweat-beading excitement we were truly after (probably being synonymous with putting the Cruiser in



Keeping our eyes on the road and a steady hand on the wheel along Engineer Pass in Colorado.

real danger) wouldn't find us until a water crossing of the beautiful Green River in Wyoming. Pressed for sunlight to film the attempt (painfully available on the website: www.expeditioncure.com), our haste naturally translated into a lack of preparation. Poised on a boulder in the middle of the river, the camera rolled as Hanley gunned the Cruiser forward with no intention of looking back. About a third of the way across, the 80's nose dove straight down off a shelf

What began as an uneventful crossing of central Wyoming's Green River....



Majestic views and icy-cold air on Imogene Pass outside Telluride, Colorado.

but with that Safari Snorkel sucking away, she pulled right out. Now beware the false sense of safety.... While the far side of the river looked to be a gradual exit slope, it turned out to be a wall of silt mud which just stopped the Cruiser dead in her tracks. With water now lapping above the fenders and the truck slowly sinking, Hanley made the call to try reversing her back into the river. By this time I was in the water and trying to assist with everything I had, while

Hanley handled the wheel and desperately tried to keep up the RPMs when the 80 suddenly let loose, grabbing some much-needed traction. With the engine gurgling away, Hanley made a final push for a rockier section of the shore farther upstream and made it. With absolutely nothing to winch from and any recovery assistance hours away, we came frighteningly close to ending the trip right there. Next time we'll pack the swim trunks....

By the time we reached the border of Mexico at Antelope Wells in New Mexico, we'd followed a line 3,286 miles long down the backbone of the United States. Traveling through some of the most beautiful country we've ever known left us only wanting to

turn around and run the divide once again. However, the 20 days of continual beatings and abuse the Cruiser unrelentingly withstood forced us to question the lifespan of our recent good fortune. Was it luck that brought us virtually unscathed from border to border? Maybe—but I think my next truck will be a Toyota.

Photos by Hanley Noel & Brent Hatherill



Waiting out icy conditions below Tomichi Pass in Colorado—life is still good.

Expedition Cure would like to thank the following sponsors:

Outback Off-Road Gear (www.outbackoffroadgear.com); **Goodyear** (www.goodyear.com); **National Geographic** (www.ngmapstore.com); **Miller Lite** (www.millerlite.com); **Panasonic** (www.panasonic.com/business/toughbook/toughbooks_home.asp); **RCH Designs** (www.rchdesigns.com); **IQuest Internet** (www.iquest.net); **Monster Energy** (www.monsterenergy.com); **AutoHome** (www.autohomeus.com); **Net Heads** (www.netheads.com); **Chaudiere Lodge** (www.chaudiere lodge.com); **Engel** (www.engel-usa.com); **Indy Powder Coating** (www.indypowdercoating.com); **Storm Case** (www.stormcase.com); **Hi-Lift** (www.hi-lift.com); **Impact Sign & Graphics** (www.impactsign.net); **Proxito** (www.proxito.com); **Scepter** (www.scepter.com); **IH8MUD.COM** (www.ih8mud.com); **A.E.D. Motorsport Products** (www.aedmotorsport.com); **Adventure Medical Kits** (www.adventuremedicalkits.com); **L'Explorateur** (www.dinelex.com); **Winchline.com** (www.winchline.com); **Toyota Territory Off-Roaders Association** (www.ttora.com); **Staun Products** (www.staunproducts.com); **Cruiser Outfitters** (www.cruiseroutfitters.com); **Pull-Pal** (www.pullpal.com); **Samco Sport** (www.1fzfephh.com); **DeLorme** (www.delorme.com); **Counter Assault** (www.counterassault.com).