

OCTOBER 2018

TRACKS



CLASS VI RUN

By, Lisa Horowitz

On Sunday, August 26th, a group of 20+ jeeps, led by Cassandra, enjoyed an “easy” Class VI run in the beautiful state of New Hampshire. We all met at the Interval Farm Pancake House, and then set off to explore some unmaintained roads that would lead us from Henniker to Bennington. The group consisted of everything from slightly modified to stock, and included new members, guests of members, and active members. We all lined up in typical fashion, dispersing the stock rigs and those without winches, in between the more modified ones, and, of course, Alabama as gunner.

For those who had never been on C6 roads, the general assumption was that we would be driving on dirt roads, and possibly encounter loose gravel, a few rocks, some pebbles, and hopefully some wildlife. We all switched our radios on to Channel 2 and followed Cassandra into the woods. We didn't make it 100 yards before quickly realizing that these Class VI roads were more than just dirt and pebbles. Two large boulders blocked the trail, due to wash out from previous rain storms. These large granite rocks made access difficult to drive past without properly picking the right lines and understanding how to navigate a Jeep over such an unforeseeable obstruction. There were no go-arounds and we had to get everyone past this initial barrier, in order to enjoy the next few hours on the trail.

We soon realized that going left was probably not the best idea, after someone needed to be winched off one of the rocks. We filled in a deep rut to the right of the boulder, and were able to get everyone past with lots of spotting. While there was some scraping and odd noises here and there, every Jeep made it safely over the rocks and we continued on our way. None of the stock Jeeps seemed bothered in the least, and everyone was out of their vehicle, watching each Jeep slowly navigate the impasse. The positive attitude on the run was pretty contagious and the teamwork made me proud to be part of such an amazing club.

The rest of the Class VI run was uneventful, but nonetheless, a great time. It was an absolutely beautiful day to be out in the woods exploring New Hampshire with great company and meeting new people and getting to know each other better. For those of you who didn't go on the Class VI because it might seem less challenging, but have never been on a Class VI, I urge you to go on one, just to see what you might encounter.

JL: JEEP LIFE

From a TJ to a JL...How, Why, and a JL Review

By, Shannon Anastos

Comparing a TJ to a JL may not seem like a fair juxtaposition. However, I find that there are some similarities that just cannot be ignored, and even some differences that only improve the newest model to join the Jeep brand family. Now having owned my JL for just about 2 months, I feel pretty comfortable with what I have found and learned about it. Sure, I did some reading up and even watched some comparison videos. But, most of them were more concerned about the changes from a JK to a JL. Well, this wasn't the situation for me. Lucky for you, this might make for a more interesting read.

I'll give you all the abridged version of my beloved TJ's demise. Or not so abridged, as the Newsletter needs content and I love writing. Some of you may already know, I started having transmission issues. The kind that can't be ignored. On my way home from work one day, I stopped at a local store. When I came back out to the Jeep, it wouldn't start. I honestly don't know what made me think to try this, but I popped it into Neutral and tried again. Bingo! It started. I thought it was an odd phenomenon. But, it didn't happen again for a week or so.

I had a conversation with Kurt Klopp and began searching the internet for answers. (The latter never being a good idea). The former being a reliable wealth of knowledge. Within a half hour, Kurt had determined that my Neutral start switch was starting to go. The part itself was inexpensive and he felt that we (and by that, I mean he and his patience) could probably get this swapped out. We made plans to tackle this on April 15th at his place. He made Animal bleed like a stuck pig. Turns out, on the 2006 TJ, that inexpensive part was tucked away in an expensive way, inside the transmission.



So, drain the transmission we did. Then, it was a waiting and reading game. With every bolt turned, it seemed to have more fluid to ooze. As Kurt kept reading, he informed me that there was a decent chance of 2 smaller pieces falling out...and NOT being able to go back in. So, he suggested we stop.

I was about an hour drive from home and unprepared for the inability to drive the TJ back home. So, we stopped. We put the cover back on the transmission, after re-tightening the aforementioned loosened bolts, and refilled the transmission fluid. Then, I drove it home. It wasn't until I woke up the next day that I realized it was time to make a big decision. So, for informational purposes, I called a shop to get a price on a new transmission.

I mulled over the information for a week or so. But, in my gut, I knew the TJ's time had come to an end for me. It had some other small quirks that merely solidified the decision. And I just need a reliable vehicle for my daily driver. So, the search for my next Jeep began. I shouldn't have to tell you how heartbreaking coming to terms with the decision was. This was my first Jeep, it was nearing wheel-ability, and I just plain loved it. But, being my daily driver, having transmission issues (beyond the intermittent start issue), and not having functional 4WD, all solidified the decision.

I went into the search knowing that it was time for something newer, despite wanting another TJ. That alone took a little time for me to digest. But I was literally driving to work and home. If I needed to go any real distance, or take the highway, I was borrowing a car from my parents. I grew more and more uncomfortable driving my Jeep.

I started looking for a used JK. But, I just wasn't finding my unicorn. I found a handful that seemed like they might be possibilities. But, the test drives all confirmed they weren't meant for me. So, my quest continued...



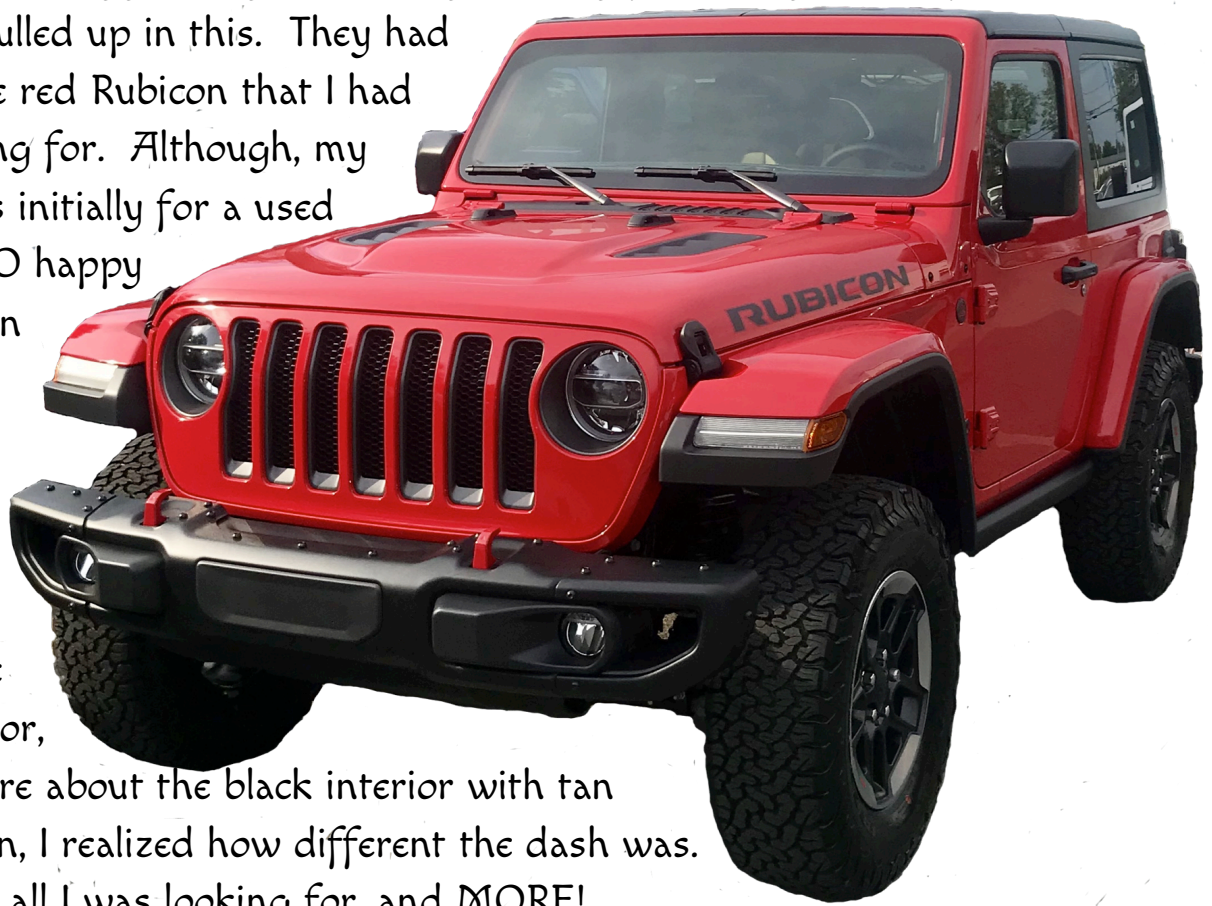
After months of searching, I realized that it was time to look for a NEW Jeep. On Friday, June 29th, fate must have intervened. I left work and went to a local dealership, hoping to drive a white 2-door JL they had in their inventory. When I arrived, the salesman pulled up in a 4-door. When I explained that I was looking to drive their 2-door, he hung his head in embarrassment and said he'd be right back with it.

He did return, but without the Jeep. He explained that it was in their satellite lot, which would take him about a half an hour to go get. He suggested that I make an appointment and that he could have it ready for me the next time. I had another errand to run (and another dealership to visit). So, I thanked him and left. After the errand, I made my way to the other dealership with the intent of driving a really nice white, 2-door, Rubicon Recon edition I had scoped out online.

When I arrived, the salesman informed me that it had been sold. Only for the General Manager to come over a few minutes later and tell me that he had confused it with another white 2-door that had indeed just been sold. Luck was on my side, after all. The salesman pulled up in the white Rubicon and off we went. Not surprisingly, what a difference this was from my TJ!! After the test drive, we returned to their lot.

We got to talking about my wanting to also drive a JL. (Secretly, I still wasn't totally sold on the white, I was still desperately hoping to find a red one, which he didn't know). He smiled and said that they just happened to have a 2-door. He grabbed the key from inside and wandered off into their lot to grab it.

I'm not exaggerating when I say that my jaw nearly hit the floor when he pulled up in this. They had to have the red Rubicon that I had been looking for. Although, my search was initially for a used Jeep, I'm SO happy I decided on new. The test drive was a dream. When I opened the driver's door, I was unsure about the black interior with tan seats. Then, I realized how different the dash was. But, it had all I was looking for, and MORE!



When we got back to the dealership, I was able to park the JL beside the white JK I had also test driven. Turns out this will be more of a combined review. I find that I can't exclude the JK, as the JL turns out to be a variegated mash up of generations. Some pretty basic stuff became obvious when the JK and JL were side-by-side: the factory lift, bigger tires, style changes, and overall size (yep, it grew up again). Here are some interesting numbers:

	JK	TJ	JL
Width	73.7 in	68.3 in	73.8 in
Height	72.5 in	71.2 in	73.6 in
Length	164.3 in	154.9 in	166.8 in
Wheelbase	95.4 in	93.4 in	96.8 in

I have a long and growing list of 'favorite JL things'. I'm sure you've realized by now that you've gotten more than you've bargained for with this article/review. The style review is easy...I mean, just look them!!



Despite the angle shift of the JL windshield, I assure you, it is still the bane of any bug's existence. A recent trip to Acadia National Park tested and proved this theory. The stock steel bumpers come ready to switch over to stubby bumpers.

The new blinker style is a sleek improvement from the TJ's amber counterpart. Have I mentioned the grill? No? Well, it's a wonderful flash back to early CJ days. And who doesn't love a classic with a new twist?

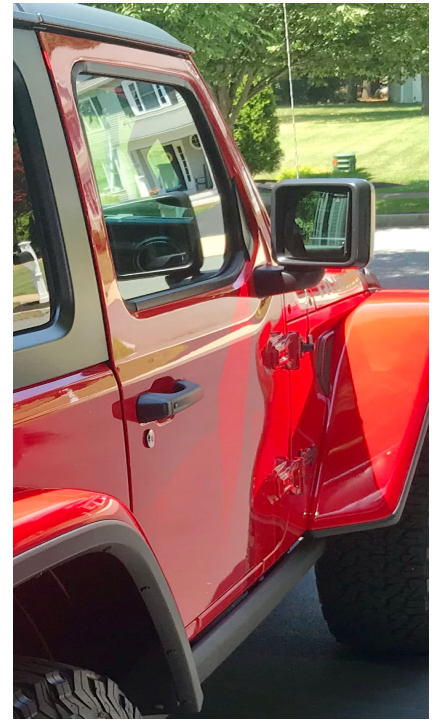


This leads me to the headlights. They say Jeep, what's not to like? Oh, I've been flashed because people think my high beams are on...when they're not. Surely, this is a pro and con.



While I loved my TJ doors, the JL kept a similar body swoop, just below the window. Not to mention, the JL doors are lighter since they're aluminum vs. steel.

They even improved the Freedom panels, which are lighter AND easier to remove with 3 turn-style latches vs no Freedom panels (TJ) or the screw in knobs (JK).

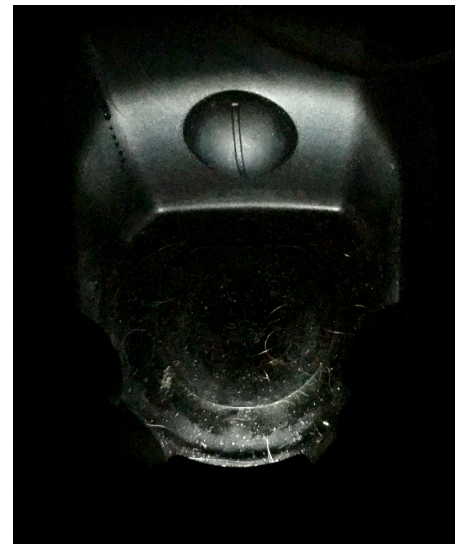


The handles are another example of Jeep innovation. They did the smart thing making them plastic on the JK, whereas the TJ's metal paddle-style easily rusted. The JL brought the JK's handles to the next level with touch sense technology. I put my hand on the handle and the door unlocks.



Some neat interior stuff... lights AND lockers! Yay!

On the left and right are spectacular additions to the next generation of Wranglers! It's the little things...



The photo on the right is the lit cup holder and the left is a rear storage area light! I honestly didn't know what to make of the cup holder the first time I noticed it. But, it was subtle enough that I didn't realize it was there. However, the rear light and 12-volt power socket were hard to miss.

Right away, I noticed the length difference. That extra foot made backing up the first few times fairly interesting. Especially, since I was also trying to get the hang of the new back up camera. This thing has more tech than my TJ could ever have dreamed of. Eventually, I'd like to wheel it. But, that isn't in the cards for a while. Between the idea of having a car payment again and it being too new to break, I just can't consider putting it on a trail yet.

My first real road trip in the JL was the drive to NH for the Member Appreciation BBQ! (Thank you to everyone that organized and executed this delightful day/event)!! About 45 minutes into my drive, it really started to resonate just how uncomfortable and nervous driving my TJ made me feel in the end. Undoubtedly, my enjoyment of driving the JL has just begun. With Winter fast approaching, I'll enjoy even more of the new creature comforts. From the heated steering wheel to the heated seats, I won't be feeling the cold.

This has been more of a fluff piece than the more mechanically inclined minds would have preferred. So, let me add a little more on that end of it. This new 8-speed transmission is pretty badass! And with the manu-matic function, you can have some serious fun shifting gears. This especially came in handy while I was descending Mount Cadillac. I was completely unconcerned about burning up my brakes, as I was able to take full advantage selecting the gear I wanted. This made for a truly relaxing coast back down.

Another love- the gas mileage...averaging 19-20 mpg!! This wasn't a draw for me. I really thought I was going to HATE the auto-shutoff feature, too. Sure, there's a button to disable it....and it has to be pressed every single time you get in... However, if you can find the sweet spot for the pressure on the brake, you can easily regain control without the damn button. I hardly notice it anymore and the gas mileage is a nifty perk.



Don't forget: Baystate Jeepers' Fall meeting
is this Saturday, October 27, 2018!!



September 15, 2018 was the 16th annual Great American Jeep Rally. The numbers for the 2018 well over 1250 Jeeps this year!!!!

We want to send a huge Thank You to our Spectators for making every year better and better! Without them we couldn't keep supporting our troops or our charities! And a big shout out to our Vendors and Sponsors who are there in person and spirit to help us grow!! Also, a fantastic job by our Volunteers, who we could never put on such a big and successful event without!!!

We will be posting before the holidays when next year's event will be! So, stay tuned to our website and Facebook page! And don't forget to share your pictures and our posts!

Xoxo- Jeni, Josh and the Jeep Rally Volunteers!!!!

www.jeepally.org



Until next time....

**Please send photos
and submissions to:**



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