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First CAFCNA Regional Meet Details Inside



VOLUME 1  
ISSUE 1  
FEBRUARY/MARCH 2003

**PLUS:**  
DRL's ALWAYS ON MOD



Michael Grundy  
(flynhigh)

TOP TEN THINGS TO DO WHEN  
TAKING DELIVERY OF YOUR 2003!

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Feb/Mar 2003

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**President**  
David Obelcz

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Erick Ames

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# Reader Rides



This '02 loaded Z71 belongs to supporting member Lance Knopp (AvaLance). Lance joined the club on 5/28/02 and lives in Oregon.



This '02 2500 belongs to Frank (Ultravox) and can be found cruising the back woods of Connecticut. Frank has been a member since 11/16/02.



If you're on Route 66 you might see Spectron65 during your travels. Hailing from Arizona, this beautiful Z66 can be seen on a regular basis.



This '02 Pewter rolling mod showcase belongs to Jonathan Miller (Drifter). The picture was taken during and early morning trout fishing session.

Continued from page 5

6

6. Here's the complete modification. There is a couple of 10mm nuts above and to the left of the body control module. You can see where I mounted



the ring terminal. The yellow wire that runs horizontally is actually a conduit for airbag system wiring. Anytime you see yellow conduit, it means airbag wiring. You should avoid routing any modification adjacent to these conduits; wires and antennas emit magnetic fields when current runs through them, and this can affect airbag function.

7



7. Voila!, the finished product. Now all your CAFCNA buddies can see that it's you even when it's dark outside. AZ



Joe Wurtzbacher - Flag Bowties Show your support with a high quality flag bowtie. Take a look at your choices at: <http://homepage.mac.com/jwco/bowties/> They are \$42.00 each and Joe will donate \$1.00 to the club for each one purchased. Order them on the club website.

# CALENDARS, EVENTS AND CRUISES

am at the Texaco (corner of Roosevelt and Loop 410) to cruise to Poteet. The parade begins at 10:00 am and we will stay for the BBQ afterwards.

Cruise Coordinator  
Lisa Flores  
210.416.3911

## April 19, 2003

**Memphis, TN. Chapter-**  
5:00 pm GTG at Hooter's of Memphis II (Wolfchase) located at 2838 New Brunswick Road, Memphis, TN. Get together with all your AV friends and make some new ones while having some good food and great fun. I might even pull out a prize from the CAFCA Memphis prize closet!

Cruise Coordinator  
Edward Kustoff (Edward K)  
901.409.8696

## April 27, 2003

**Memphis, TN. Chapter-**  
Cruise to a Memphis Redbirds game. Starting at Sarra Chevrolet, 7850 Stage Road, Bartlett, TN by 12:00 pm. The Memphis chapter will be cruising to see the Memphis Redbirds take on the Omaha Royals at beautiful AutoZone Park in downtown Memphis. Dinner on Beale Street after the game for those interested. Awards and prizes will be given away.

Cruise Coordinator  
Edward Kustoff (Edward K)  
901.409.8696

## April 12, 2003

**Alamo City (ACA) Chapter-**  
Canyon Lake and Fort Sam Houston Recreation Area. We will meet at Canyon Lake and the cruise to the recreation area. We will cook out there. It will be a great family day.

Cruise Coordinator  
Lisa Flores  
210.416.3911

## Monthly GTG

**Alamo City (ACA) Chapter-**  
The ACA's have a get together twice a month at Harper's Burgers & Brew in San Antonio on Friday evenings starting at 6:00 pm. Dates are: Feb. 7 & 21 and March 7 & 21. Meet behind the burger joint and hang out for a while.

Cruise Coordinator  
Lisa Flores  
210.416.3911

## Monthly GTG

**Dallas/Ft. Worth Chapter-**  
The Dallas/Ft. Worth Chapter has a get together on the 2nd Saturday of every month at 3:00 pm at Fuddrucker's. The Jan., Mar., May, July, Sept., and Nov. meet will be at the Plano location and the Feb.,

April, June, Aug., Oct., and Dec. will be at the Bedford location.

Cruise Coordinator  
David Wick (Dave02Z66)  
817.268.3701

## Looking for Members

**Middle Tennessee Chapter-**  
The Middle TN Chapter has just become official on January 8th and they are looking for new members. The Chapter is based out of Nashville. If you are interested, please contact them.

Cruise Coordinator  
Scott Grattis (EarthQuake)  
615.300.6956

## Looking for Members

**Louisiana Chapter-**  
Mardi Gras is quickly approaching and the Louisiana Chapter is working on details for a cruise. Call them if you are interested.

Cruise Coordinator  
Reny Ramos (MudBugZ71)  
504.471.0147

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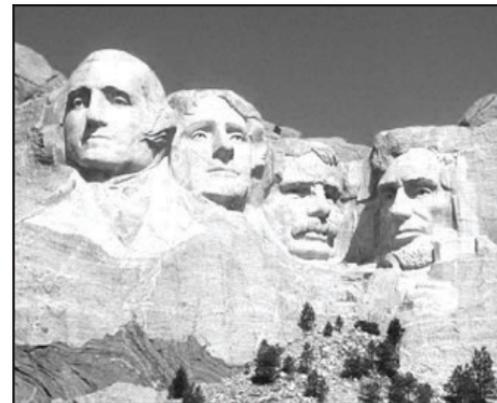
# Thrills in the Black Hills

**National Meet 2003 - July 21 - July 25**

**Target Number of Avalanches: 125**

**Target Number of Attendees: 350**

Join your fellow Avalanche owners from July 21st to 25th for a summer event you'll never forget. Come to Rapid City, South Dakota - the gateway to the fabled Black Hills. From the awe inspiring majesty of Devils Tower, to the national symbol that is Mount Rushmore, to the spectacular desolation of Badlands National Park this adventure offers something for everyone.



We'll be meeting at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel in Rapid City, South Dakota. The Ramkota is the largest hotel convention center in Rapid City and just completed a \$13 million renovation. From there you'll have four days of fun and adventure with the families of Avalanche owners from across the country.

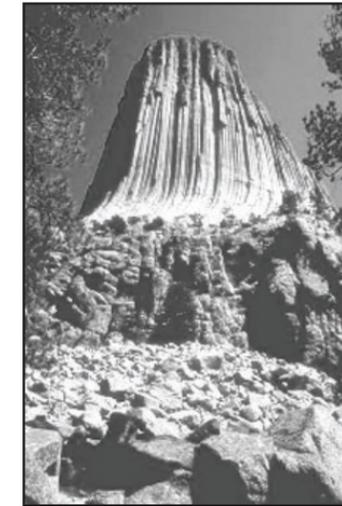
Activities during the meet will include:

Cruises to Badlands National Park.

Cruises to Devils Tower National Monument.

Cruise to Deadwood, South Dakota for a historical tour including visiting Boot Hill, a gold mine, and panning for gold.

A cowboy supper with musical show and lumber jack demonstration followed by the lighting ceremony at Mount Rushmore.



A Deadwood, South Dakota gambling trip.

Cruises to Wall, South Dakota to see world famous Wall Drug and see a spectacular badlands sunset.

Cave tours of the Black Hills at Jewel Cave National Monument and Wind Cave National Park.

Cruises through the Black Hills including Custer State Park and the world famous Needles Highway as well as visiting Hot Springs.

A history of the Sioux tour guided by members of the Lakota tribe that live on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Four-wheel drive schools and tours in the Black Hills.

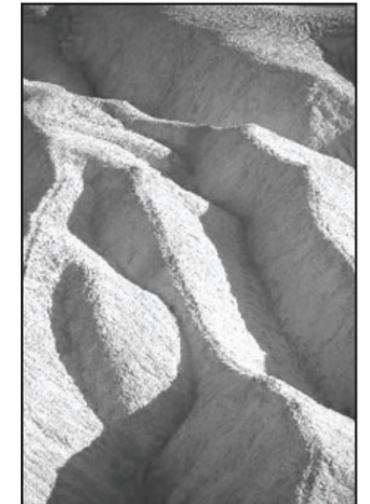
Star gazing trip in Badlands National Park with a guide.

A shopping trip in Rapid City, South Dakota to the Rushmore Mall.



You choose the activities you want to attend. You pick the pace. At the end of each day you'll come

back to Rapid City. But that's only just the beginning, because there is also the Avalanche Jamboree on Thursday, July 24, 2003. The day will start with a breakfast and speeches from members of the club and officials from General Motors. Then the real fun begins. There will be show Avalanches on display and vendors to see and talk with. We will also have break-out sessions to have discussions, a western lunch, local wares, and a fun zone for the kids. There will be activities pool side in the afternoon followed by an awards ceremony. After that there will be a semiformal dinner with a Native American dance demonstration and then you can dance the night away at the club. Baby-sitting will even be provided for those with families!



But there is even more. There will be meals with your fellow members, games, prizes, surprises, and fun for the whole family. Although the Black Hills are known for Mount Rushmore and the Badlands, the scenic wonder, consistent and warm weather, and hundreds of square miles of forest, prairie and badlands make it an incredible vacation destination. It is a trip that you and your family will remember for a lifetime.

There will be plenty of fun and surprises along the way and the more that attend, the better things can get. Find out more about what is going on and what the plans include on the website - or register now by joining the club to attend. AZ

# New Delivery Top Ten List

by Erick Ames

The following is a list of ten things to do when taking delivery of your new Avalanche.

1. Plan ahead and schedule enough time. It is very important that you allow enough time to take delivery of your new truck. Plan on spending at least an hour to an hour and a half at the dealership. A little time and effort now may save a lot of aggravation down the road.

2. Do a complete walk around. Check for dents, scratches, and paint blemishes. If it is dark outside move the truck under the lights and bring a flashlight. If it is raining ask to have the truck pulled into the service bay. It is much easier to have any defects recorded now than it is to prove that they were there when you took delivery two weeks after the fact.

3. Check the oil and fluids. A quick check under the hood will give you piece of mind when you are driving home; plus there is nothing quite as cool as a brand new V8.

4. Ask your sales person about extended warranties. If you don't buy one right away, ask about how many miles you can put on the truck before the price of the warranty goes up. Check out other companies that sell extended warranties before you purchase one.

5. Talk to the sales staff about the club. Go to the dealer prepared by having some brochures ready to go. Print some of the dealer supporting membership brochures and give them to the sales manager. There is a good incentive for the dealership to offer membership to CAFCA when delivering vehicles. Find out if there are any cruises or GTG's planned and invite them to attend.

6. Talk to the service manager. This is the person that you are going to be dealing with if you need to have work done. If you talk to them now, when you don't have a problem, they will remember you when you do come in later. A friend in the service department is a very valuable asset.

7. Bring a camera. This serves two purposes: first, everyone on the web site will be asking for pictures when you get on there to brag about picking it up and secondly, use it to record any problem areas that you may encounter when doing your walk around. This may also be the cleanest your truck will ever be. After a few trips off-road you will be amazed at where mud can end up.

8. Test-drive it! If you ordered it, then it is a good idea to test-drive it before you take it home. Even if you drove one on the lot before you ordered it, every truck is a little different. If you are buying off the lot, drive it again to make sure everything is working correctly.

9. Take time with the sales person to learn the controls. This is the best part about delivering a vehicle for the sales staff. Let them demo all of the features in your new truck. It will be a little embarrassing to be driving down the road and not be able to turn on the heat/air or tune in a radio station.

*Continued on page 10*



## CALENDARS, EVENTS AND CRUISES



### **March 1 & 2, 2003**

**Dallas/Ft. Worth Chapter-** Casino Cruise. We will be cruising to Shreveport/Bossier City to stay at Harrah's Resort and Casino for Mardi Gras events and gambling.

Cruise Coordinator  
David Wick (Dave02Z66)  
817.268.3701

### **March 1 & 2, 2003**

**Southern California Chapter-** Chevy Truck Familyfest - is a unique and exciting series of two/three day promotional events. These events are a lot of fun for the entire family.

Cruise Coordinator  
Cindy Hamilton (SoCalCindy)  
909.499.6933

### **March 8 & 29, 2003**

**Memphis, TN. Chapter-** 5:00 pm GTG at Hooter's of Memphis II (Wolfchase) located at 2838 New Brunswick Road, Memphis, TN. Get together with all your AV friends and make some new ones while having some good food and great fun. I might even pull out a prize from the CAFCA Memphis prize closet!

Cruise Coordinator  
Edward Kustoff (Edward K)  
901.409.8696

### **March 9, 2003**

**Portland, OR. Chapter-** 21st Annual 4x4 Offroad & High Performance Swapmeet in Puyallup Washington. One entire day of walking around the largest and oldest swap meet in the Northwest dedicated to 4 wheeling.

Cruise Coordinator  
Kevin (pdxkevin)  
503.330.1421

### **March 22, 2003**

**South-Eastern USA Chapters-** The 17th Annual Spring Break Nationals in Daytona Beach, FL. We will be meeting on Saturday and cruising to Daytona Beach. Bikini contest and Horsepower tests. Bring your suit and tune your truck.

Cruise Coordinator  
Richard Fleming (PlanetAV)  
904.813.0955

### **March 29 & 30, 2003**

**WV & NEO Chapters-** Longaberger/Dresden GTG. We will be meeting at the Longaberger Corporate Office at 9:30 am for a tour. Lunch will be at Popeye's Diner and dinner will be at Miller's Ezenplatz at 7:15 pm. Sunday we will go to Longaberger Homestead with lunch at The Homestead Restaurant at 1:00 pm. Group rate accommodations are at the Amerihost Inn in Hebron, OH.

Cruise Coordinators  
Steve Cunningham (WVBubba)  
304.757.2944  
Derek Marquardt (SnoSlyd)  
330.923.5030

### **April 5 & 6, 2003**

**Portland, OR. Chapter-** Oregon Coast ~ Forest romp, Beach cleanup, Camp out, and Dunes Cruise. Two days of exploring 4x4 trails, helping on the annual Great Oregon Spring Beach Cleanup, playing on the sand dunes, and camping on the beach.

Cruise Coordinator  
Kevin (pdxkevin)  
503.330.1421

### **April 12, 2003**

**Edmonton, Canada Chapter-** Spring Wash and Wax. Anticipating warm weather, the Edmonton Chapter will be meeting at The Harken Corporation parking lot (8204 - 106 Avenue) at 10:00 am to wash, wax, and detail their vehicles. This is a great time to check out other Avalanches and to discuss modifications and projects.

Cruise Coordinator  
Charles World  
780.466.8513

### **April 12, 2003**

**Alamo City (ACA) Chapter-** Poteet, TX - Strawberry Festival Parade. We will be meeting at 6:45



## February 8, 2003

**South-Eastern USA Chapters-** Meet at the Cracker Barrel Country Store in St. Augustine, FL. at 11:30 am for lunch and then cruise to Ripleys Believe It or Not and Castillo de San Marcos. Groups will be coming from Jacksonville, Tampa/Orlando, and South Florida. Prizes will be given out for a number of categories.

Cruise Coordinator  
Richard Fleming (PlanetAV)  
904.813.0955

## February 9, 2003

**New England/Boston Chapter-** Meet at Coastline Trailers, Inc. 669R Rt. 28 East Falmouth, Cape Cod MA. 9 am - 12 pm. Heated shop available for MODS. Scenic cruise around the Cape ending with dinner at The Old Country Buffet.

Cruise Coordinator  
Rich Cottrell (Capecruis8der)  
508.540.8423

## February 15 & 16, 2003

**Portland, OR. Chapter-** Oregon Coast Cruise II. This fun filled, two day cruise runs from the Astoria Column down to the sand dunes on the beach in Florence. Shopping, exploring, and a great coastal highway ride!

Cruise Coordinator  
Lance (AvaLance)  
541.786.3563

## February 15 - 17, 2003

**Edmonton, Canada Chapter-** Family Day Long Weekend Jasper Meet. Come spend the long weekend with the Edmonton Chapter in Jasper and enjoy alpine skiing at Marmot Basin, cross-country skiing at Maligne Lake, the Maligne ice walk, and a half day cruise on the Glacier Parkway to the Columbia Icefields!

Cruise Coordinator  
Charles World  
780.466.8513

## February 22, 2003

**Memphis, TN. Chapter-** Cruise to Bozo's BBQ. Starting at Sarra Chevrolet, 7850 Stage Road, Bartlett, TN by 11:30 am. The Memphis chapter will have an enjoyable Saturday afternoon cruise to the world famous Bozo's BBQ in Mason, TN. Awards and prizes will be given away.

Cruise Coordinator  
Edward Kustoff (Edward K)  
901.409.8696

## March 1, 2003

**WV & NEO Chapters-** Open House/Auto Show GTG. We will meet at Ron Marhofer Chevrolet in Stow Ohio at 1:00 pm. Hamburgers, Hotdogs, and drinks will be provided and the parts department will be open for parts

at 10% over cost to members. At 3:00 pm we will cruise to the Auto Show in Cleveland.

Cruise Coordinators  
Steve Cunningham (WVBubba)  
304.757.2944  
Derek Marquardt (SnoSlyd)  
330.923.5030

## March 1, 2003

**North Georgia Chapter-** Amicola State Park Offroad Day. We will meet at Target in Woodstock, GA (475 and Rt 92) at 9:30 am and drive to Amicola State Park. There is a 4x4 only path that we will be running (4x2 AV's can park there and ride with someone). We will have a cookout afterwards!

Cruise Coordinator  
Robert Vautier  
404.307.3958

## March 1, 2003

**Edmonton, Canada Chapter-** Edmonton International Motor Show. We will be meeting at 8:30 am at the EIMS for breakfast with General Motors and a preview of their upcoming vehicles. The rest of the day will be spent at the show, followed by dinner.

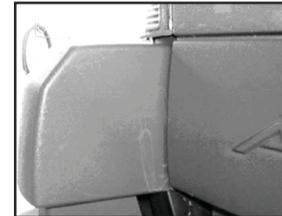
Cruise Coordinator  
Charles World  
780.466.8513

# Performance and Modifications

## Stainless step side plates.

by Murray L. Schultz

My AV had scratched plastic in the vertical area of the tailgate hinge from removal/installation of the tailgate.



The scratches were minor and the vehicle was delivered this way. I was unable to locate a company that makes a stainless plate, similar to a doorsill guard, which would cover this damage.



I drew up a pattern and manufactured plates out of 1/16" stainless steel.



The plates are attached with double-sided foam tape.



I polished them with a ScotchBrite pad before installation. *AZ*

## 2002 Full Time DRL's

by Karl Rivas

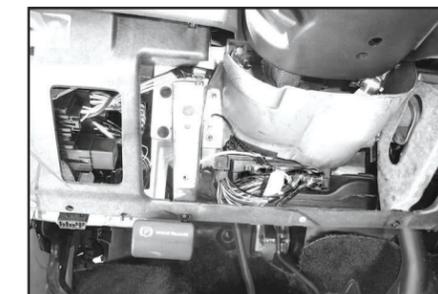
**WARNING - PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK. I MAKE NO GUARANTEE THAT THE STEPS SHOWN HERE WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE FUNCTION OF THE AIRBAG OR OCCUPANT RESTRAINT SYSTEM. AS WITH ANY MODIFICATION TO A VEHICLE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM, THESE MODIFICATIONS MAY INCREASE THE RISK OF FIRE OR MALFUNCTION.**

1. Here is where you start. The panel below the steering wheel is called the knee bolster. To get it out you have to remove these two screws (7mm). Then loosen the trim surrounding the instrument cluster (carefully pull loose). Finally, pull the top of the knee bolster loose.



2. Here is what it will look like with the knee bolster off. The arrows show the instrument trim pulled loose. Be careful to line up its clips and pegs when putting it back on.

3. We're looking for the body control module. It is located below the steering column and behind the knee bolster.



4. You can see the body control module almost dead center in this picture (the DRL modification has already been performed). The body control module is the black rectangle with all the wires coming out at you. They go around on its left side and head toward the front of the AV.

5. Here is the money shot. The modification is performed by grounding the green wire with a black stripe that comes out of the body control module's left connector. The easiest way to do this is to get a scotchlok connector, a piece of wire, and a ring terminal. Solder the ring terminal onto the wire, then scotchlok the wire to the green/black wire from the body control module. Then mount the ring terminal to a ground. I used a blue/white wire I had laying around - the scotchlok connector is square blue thing in the middle of the picture.



*Continued on page 15*

# Avalanche Adventures

## The Pond Adventure

by A. J. Griglak

I bought an Avalanche in November - with the Z71 package, and leather seats. Even though it's brand new, I really wanted to take it off road. Some of my fraternity brothers go off-roading occasionally, and I've gone with them several times - always as a passenger. This time, I was ready to be one of the drivers! At that time, I had 7,300 miles on the 'Lanche. Normally when they go, there are at least 5 trucks - most of them 10-20 years old, used for nothing but off roading. This trip however, there were only two trucks; Rob's Chevy S-10 with huge tires and mine.

We took a camping weekend in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. [Do a search on the CAFCA Avalanche Adventure Finder for Wharton State Forest].

We were cruising through the forest, doing fine. We did about 40 miles of off-roading, and the 'Lanche had no problems crossing several streams and rivers. We found this nice looking pond that we decided to cross. At first Rob radioed to me to wait for him to check out what was on the other side of the pond. I waited several seconds and decided I could make it across as well - I couldn't wait anymore. I made it halfway across and got bogged in, but switched to 4-Lo, and the 'Lanche gripped on, and rumbled across with no problem. The trail on the other side of the lake eventually narrowed down to a quad trail, so we had to turn around and go back across the river. Rob's truck made it across fine. He radios to me to take it slow on the approach (this is audible in the video clip) - but I reply "Too late," I was already burrowing across it. I made it 3/4 of the way across, and hit

something under water which caused the truck to fall off into a rut, which Rob tells me 3/4 of the wheels were under sand (which had the consistency of quicksand). The frame rails were all resting on sand, and as he dug sand out, more sand immediately replaced what he dug out. The truck was at an angle, about waist deep in water on the right side. I attempted to 'rock' it by going from Drive to Reverse, but you couldn't even feel it move a fraction of an inch. Rob was surveying the situation, fearlessly digging under the tires, trying to dig them out. There was a stream that was running directly at my front tire, dumping more sand and water. Needless to say, soon water began to fill the inside of the truck - I'm not sure if it came in through the midgate or the doors. One of my passengers and I fruitlessly bailed water for a couple of hours. We weren't really making progress, but at least we felt productive. Anyway, after 15-20 minutes of digging, Rob began to tow me out with a tow strap. Several maneuvers were attempted, but the 'Lanche only moved about 1.2 inch. One of the maneuvers involved two tow straps, held together by a heavy duty "D" shackle, which slipped part way off the loop, gave way and came flying at my truck, probably about 200 or 300 miles an hour. Joe, who was in the passenger seat bailing water, had a glass snack. He only sustained a minor cut on his nose, and was fine. The 'crater' in the windshield looked as if someone was thrown butt first into my windshield.

We had another guy who was building a dam to try to stop the flow of water and sand. At this point, I start to worry. A couple minutes later, a brand new Ford F-150 happened by, which Rob flagged down. He was more than

happy to try and help - he does it all the time. I didn't pay attention to what they were doing, but he had the idea to hook two tow straps up to the same hook on the front of my truck, and try to pull me with both of their trucks in reverse. The progress was less than an inch, so they tried and tried until the tow hook (which is probably rated for about 10,000 lbs of force) snapped off and went flying into Rob's truck - through his grill, through the air conditioner condenser, through his radiator (which amazingly caused no working damage to the radiator), and shattered his alternator, which is probably about 18" into the engine. The AC fluid was flying and hissing all over the place. It took him about five minutes just to figure out what happened, because he couldn't find the ammo (i.e. tow hook). At this point, I decided we were really in trouble. As Rob got to work on fixing the alternator, I decided it was time to use ON-STAR and call for help:

*O: Yes Mr. Griglak, how can we help you?*

*A: I need a tow.*

*O: What is the nature of your problem?*

*A: I'm stuck and need a tow truck with a winch.*

*O: I hear running water. Are you in a river? Is the water coming into the truck?*

*A: It's more like a pond; yes we are taking on water.*

*O: It seems like you would need a recovery truck.*

*A: No, I think a four wheel drive truck with a winch would work.*

*O: I see that you are in a forest? (They have GPS)*

*A: Yes, about two miles into the woods.*

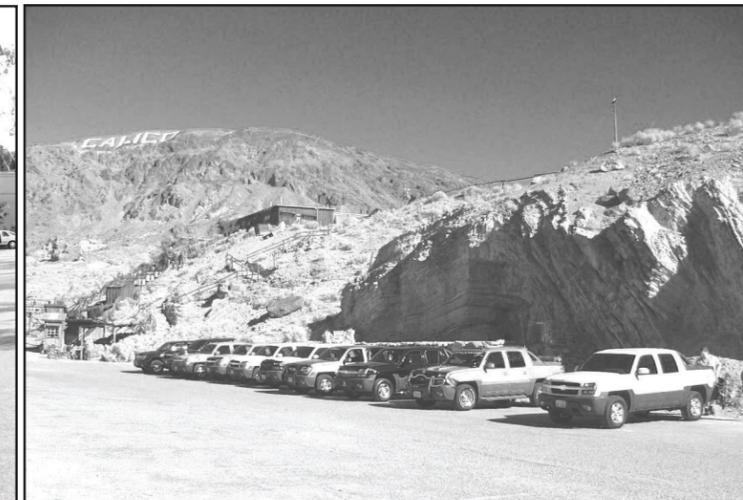
*O: Please hold, let me see what we can do...*

Anyway that was the gist of the conversation - they couldn't get a grasp of the situation.

# Regional News



The New England/Boston Chapter had a GTG/Mod day on February 9 in Falmouth, Cape Cod, MA. With that much snow on the ground I hope the chowder was hot. Photo by Lee Ullrich.



These two photos were taken during cruises taken by the Southern California Chapter. The first was from their December "Toys for Tots" Meet and Greet and the second was their "Goo929 Memorial Cruise" to Calico in January.



The CAFCA Edmonton Chapter held an informal get-together at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin, Alberta on January 25, 2003. Pictured are Boar-Ral's (left) and Chasman's (right) Avalanches sporting their Canadian flag bowties.



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Continued from page 4

10. Bring a set of 3157NALL bulbs and a drop cloth so that you can change your daytime running lights to amber. It is the first modification that you are going to do anyway so you might as well take care of it now. If any club members see you on your way home, you will be prepared.

If you follow these simple ten steps you will have a more enjoyable delivery experience and maybe make a friend or two along the way. Enjoy your new Avalanche! AZ

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**QUANTITY**

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S M L XL		_____
Hooded sweatshirt	\$29.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Men's white t-shirt	\$15.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Women's white t-shirt	\$15.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Long sleeve t-shirt	\$19.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Black baseball jersey	\$19.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Golf shirt	\$19.99	_____
S M L XL		_____
Baseball cap	\$14.99	_____
Tote bag	\$14.99	_____
Mouse pad	\$12.99	_____

**SUBTOTAL**  
WA. residents 8.9% **SALES TAX**  
**SHIPPING** **\$5.00**  
**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_

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Continued from page 6

When we finally got in touch with the dispatch for the tow company (about 90 minutes later), I had to retell the entire situation to him. By the time the tow truck came (another 90 minutes or so), I had been in the water for 5 hours - the engine idling the whole time, so that the water wouldn't get into the exhaust, and potentially the engine. We were pooped from bailing, and eventually gave up. The water covered the entire front passenger floor and the right side of the rear seat also - covering the electric seat components.

After 90 minutes of straight work, Rob finally fixes his alternator enough to get his truck running. Just in time, because someone needed to meet the tow truck on the main road - there's no way they were going to find us in the middle of the dark forest.

The tow guy waits until he finally gets to us to inform us that it was a cash only call. I had about 30 bucks on me, and a collection from the other people scrounged up 70 bucks - "It supposed to be 75, but I guess 70 will be OK" We thought he had some kind of scam going, probably already getting paid from On Star, and then charging us cash. It didn't matter to us, as long as we got out. He hooks his cable up to my remaining tow hook (actually Rob hooked it up; the tow guy wouldn't go into the water). Believe it or not, the tow truck was creeping towards the water, instead of pulling the 'Lanche out. He needed to move back to more solid ground, and finally was able to pull me out. "This is the newest truck I've ever pulled out of here."

Driving back to the main road, I was really worried that my truck would never feel the same again. After getting onto pavement again and getting all the sand off the tires, it honestly felt the same as it did pulling off the dealer's lot. After packing up the next day, I drove home about 80 miles, only about a dozen pieces of glass fell

out, so it was OK. I passed four cops, but crossing my fingers seemed to ward them off.

The windshield was replaced on Monday - to the tune of \$320. I was worried that they would tell me that because it was such a new truck, it was a special order and needed a week to come in. But, they didn't even flinch when I mentioned what kind of truck it was.

Four days later, there was still water leaking out underneath the passenger side, and the carpets were still squashy. Luckily, we had a 90 degree day, and left all four doors open for about 6 hours. It's been dry ever since. About a week later, I had the oil changed at my buddy's tune up shop and I cleared out a couple pounds worth of sand from the frame rail. It's been about six weeks now, and it still smells like leather inside. There are some muddy marks on the carpeting, and a couple of the bolts that hold the seats to the floor are rusty. One of these days when I get enough time, I will have the interior detailed. Oh yeah, and I scratched the crap out of the front right wheel.

So, that's my story. You might think I'm crazy to bring a truck like this off roading, but I've been waiting many years to have a truck worthy of off roading. I plan on driving this thing until it absolutely dies - hopefully it will be 10 years or so. I want to keep it nice, but I'm not going to 'baby' it. I will definitely make the next off road trip! I honestly think any truck would've gotten stuck where I did, and was very happy with the way the 'Lanche handled the 4x4 stuff.



AZ

# Care and Maintenance

## Basic Oil Change

by Edward Kustoff

So, you want to do some basic maintenance on your AV/EXT but you're not quite sure what you can handle. Well, welcome to the first in a series of maintenance how-to articles. I will attempt to break down the basic maintenance steps for any DIY'er as well as give insight as to how involved the different services will be. For this month's service we are going to do a basic oil change.

### Step One

Check oil level on dipstick. If a quart low or more, you should be keeping an eye on this in the future before a problem develops or becomes worse.

### Step Two

Before just pulling the drain plug you'll want to make sure that there are no problems underneath your AV. Inspect the plug, oil pan, and filter for a damage that might keep this from being an easy 30 minute service. Also now is a good time to make sure the oil cap can be removed. It's bad to have oil out and not be able to put any back in.

### Step Three

Using a 15mm socket or wrench remove drain plug. **WARNING:** The oil will shoot out of the pan about 2 to 2 1/2 feet. I recommend using a drop cloth because of this. As the oil drains the stream will lose force and you will need to move the catch pan closer to the drain hole.

### Step Four

Inspect your drain plug's magnetic tip for any metal shavings that may have accumulated and wipe clean. If particles seem excessive, have your AV inspected by a

professional. Install drain plug using a 15mm wrench or socket. Drain plug should be tight, not Superman tight, but tight.

### Step Five

Remove oil filter. If it's the first oil change you will need some type of removal aid. I recommend a band wrench, but on this to each his own. Once you break the filter gasket's seal with the plate, oil will run straight down the walls of the filter, be prepared for this with catch pan in place.

### Step Six

Lubricate new oil filter gasket with a thin film of NEW oil. Visually inspect old filter for the old gasket. If not present, remove old gasket from engine block.

### Step Seven

Install oil filter. Once you feel the gasket contact the filter plate turn oil filter another 3/4 to 1 full turn. Oil filter is installed.

### Step Eight

Install oil and replace oil cap on fill neck. 5.3L will use 6qts. and 8.1L will use 6.5qts. There is plenty of discussion on the site about different oils if you have any questions or concerns about the oil you should use. GM recommends using 5W-30 motor oil.

### Step Nine

Start your AV and wait for the oil pressure gauge to rise. Once oil pressure has built up, look under AV for any signs of leaks. Shut off motor. Check for "full" reading on oil dipstick. If not full add a little at a time until you get a full reading on dipstick. **DO NOT OVERFILL!**

### Step Ten

You're finished...Go drive and have fun! AZ

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## 2004 Envoy XUV at the San Diego Auto Show

by Larry Hoehn

This month my wife and I had the opportunity to spend hours perusing the 2003 San Diego International Auto Show, and now have a list of cars and trucks we won't be able to afford for some time. Some of the cars displayed included Maserati, Ferrari, Bentley, the sleek convertible Chevy SSR truck, and "Eleanor" from "Gone in 60 Seconds".

Due this fall, GMC announced its new 2004 Envoy XUV. GMC took the midgate concept and applied it to their sport utility vehicle. When this vehicle's midgate (and the midgate's power window) is up, it separates the interior from the cargo area. The roof opens, the midgate glass rises, the midgate folds flat, the tailgate drops down or swings open. With the touch of a button, the tailgate window slides down and the rear roof slides open for transporting tall items.

The XUV seats 5 adults, comes with a 4.2L 6-cylinder 275hp or an optional 5.3L 8-cylinder 290hp, and can tow over 3 tons. Compared to the Avalanche, its height is 4" taller and its length is 16" shorter with roughly the same wheelbase. It has about the same headroom, but less shoulder room — the XUV is about 5" narrower than the Avalanche.

The reported standard features included:

- Leather seats in front and cloth seats in back
- Headrests on the rear seats tilt out of the way when the seat needs to tilt forward
- Dual-zone temperature control, one for passenger and one for driver
- Homelink integration
- Optional goodies for pets (tether, harness, or leash)
- Turn signals on the side-view mirrors

The 2004 Envoy XUV is another welcome GMC creation that provides its owners flexibility, not unlike what we enjoy with our Avalanches. *AZ*

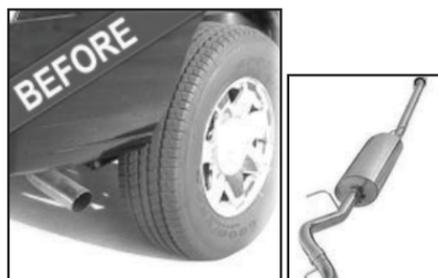


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## DVD Install

by Murray L. Schultz

1. This document outlines the procedure for installation of an after-market DVD player and screen in a Chevrolet Avalanche with bench seating. The installation allows for easy removal and transfer of the equipment to another vehicle or location if desired. My total cost was under \$400.00 for a single screen system.

2. Equipment. The AUDIOVOX VBP4000 system consists of a mobile DVD player with one set of A/V Output Jacks, a DVD/AV1/AV2 switchable source select, dual speakers, S-Video output, two sets of A/V input jacks, full function remote control and a 5.6 Inch LCD screen. The system can be used at home with the included AC adapter. The VBP4000 is upgradeable for two extra screens if needed, making it a three screen DVD system.

3. Tools/items required for installation. Twist-ties, nylon strap material, two buckles (sewing section of a craft store) and some non-slip material.

4. Disconnect the display from the player. Raise both rear seat bottoms. Using one of the provided straps, pass it under the left seat bracket and hook the "S" hook around the strap. Pull tight.

Attach a plastic buckle to the strap, pass the free end of the strap under right seat bracket, through the buckle and secure the player.



5. Lower the left seat bottom. Adjust player so controls are visible. Connect power and display cable to player.

6. DVDs are inserted into the player from the front.



7. Pass the display wire up through the bottom of the center seat piece. Allow some slack and secure the excess near the player. Pass the power cord toward the dash. I used a mat to cover the wiring.

8. Cut a piece of non-slip material and place it on the display as shown. Construct a strap and wrap around console lid.

9. Secure lid, connect display wire to display and power plug to dash.

10. Center unit and tighten strap as needed. My strap material was "slick" so I needed to tighten the strap, and then place it over the display.



11. Power up the player and display insert a DVD and SHAZAM!



12. The remote will not work as described in the owner's manual with the display disconnected. I will try to locate a ribbon cable. This will take the place of the supplied cable that connects the display to the player when detached. *AZ*

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