

VEHICLE PREPAREDNESS V.2

CHANGE WITH THE
SEASONS <<

PLAN "B"
TRANSPORTATION <<

MAXIMIZE YOUR
VEHICLE'S POTENTIAL <<

+

SKILLS TO PRACTICE



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By: Charley Hogwood



VEHICLE PREPAREDNESS v.2

Intro: By Charley Hogwood

A series of regional political skirmishes have broken out between the far sides of the two parties in the last few weeks. The rhetoric has intensified with threats of increasing physical violence. There is a rally tonight, and the media claims your town is next on the list of protest sites. The opposing radical groups have claimed that some stuff is going to go down like never before.

You let out a bored yawn. The family is generally prepared, so you aren't too worried. Picking up your phone, you scroll through social media until a post appears showing a line of national media satellite trucks lined up outside of a local arena.

With your interest piquing, you switch on the evening news to see a breathless news anchor live broadcasting when all of a sudden there is yelling and running. You perk up in your recliner. The camera crew pans to the left just in time to see a Molotov cocktail impact a news truck and burst into flames.



The kids turn to the TV and ask what you are watching. It's only when the words of explanation leave your mouth that you realize your home is not that far from the action. Torn between watching the scene unfold and grabbing your bug out bag, you realize that you aren't as ready to leave as you thought you were. Then you hear the gunshots, not on the TV at first but from outside your windows. The shots echo off the large buildings in the distance. The obvious return fire has a slightly different tone as the unseen battle intensifies. A crash of glass causes everyone to turn toward the big picture windows in the living room. A stray round has found its way to your house. The moment of confusion passes quickly, and you grab the kids and drag them to the far side of the house and take cover.

From your hiding spot, your ears strain to hear the TV news from the other room between the echoes of distant gunfire. Panicked reporters tell of crowds and a running street fight moving to the south.

You live south of the arena.

Most preparedness-minded people will store some food and maybe go as far as packing bug out bags, but have they really thought about how to leave in a hurry? You might have an idea where to go, but do you have a vehicle that will get you there?

In this issue, we are taking the concept of vehicle preparedness to the practical level. From the skills and spare parts you need to choosing a ride, and even how to improvise when the wheels fall off of your Plan A.

Get in, hang on, and keep your arms and legs inside the vehicle at all times, it's going to be a bumpy ride.





THE ROAD WARRIOR VS THE SLEEPER

By Nick Meacher



In the last issue, we examined what to look for in bug-out vehicles. The ideal bug-out vehicle for most situations is a 4WD SUV or truck with features that make it perfect for traveling off-road or over rough terrain. In any SHTF, you want the options of being able to bypass roadblocks, fallen trees, and utility poles, etc. Features including additional lights, high clearance, spare fuel cans, reinforced bumpers, vehicle recovery gear, and water traversing features such as snorkels all contribute to an excellent bug-out vehicle. However, these features make the vehicle conspicuous.

Adding stickers, such as pro-2A, NRA membership, the Gadsden, or Betsy Ross flag, all add to making your vehicle noticeable and a potential target for thieves and especially post SHTF.

If you live in an area where there are 4 wheeling/off-road trails, then your vehicle could somewhat **BLEND IN** with external tools, winch, extra lights, and water and gas cans. If you live in a rural area where there are cattle and other farms, then your pickup truck with heavy-duty brush guards and bumpers may blend in.





A **'SLEEPER' VEHICLE** is one that doesn't look conspicuous. "Out of sight, out of mind." A 'regular' SUV can hold a significant amount of equipment, especially those that have a third row of seats that collapses. Some newer passenger vehicles and SUVs have storage space under floors that are almost inconspicuous. A cargo rack on the roof can still blend in semi-rural areas where camping and other similar activities are usual. Even a regular pickup truck will blend in most areas, and a hard cover can hide a truck vault or similar area that can keep your gear secure. Adding tinted windows to SUV's can help protect the contents, but make sure you check your local laws as some have restrictions on the percent of tint you can have on certain windows. You can also cover your items in the back with a dark (wool) blanket to help conceal them or look into a vault, they make them for pickup trucks and law enforcement SUVs and will keep your supplies very well secured.





Another option is vehicles or trailers designed for off-road use if you are into RV'ing and off-roading. **EARTHROAMER VEHICLES** are rugged, off-roading vehicles intended for camping. They have a higher center of gravity and are not fast vehicles but will certainly keep you comfortable and supplied in remote areas where you can be away from the urban areas. Rugged, off-road camping trailers are another option. These are a trailer or small camping trailer designed to be pulled on trails and off-road. So, if you have an off-road capable vehicle, this could be another way to have supplies ready to go, while keeping your daily commuter truck or SUV a sleeper. If you are not sure about a trailer, some places rent them out; a friend recently took one on a trip to Moab and was able to decide what he liked, and didn't, for a future purchase.

I see many SUVs and pickup trucks with additional LED front light bars these days. They are becoming very popular and thus less conspicuous as a 'road warrior' vehicle. I've seen many vehicles where a light bar has been installed behind the front grill, and unless you are looking carefully at the vehicle, it is very difficult to see when it is off but provides a lot of forward light when on.

Maintaining your vehicle is a topic covered in other articles, however, keeping good tires year-round on an SUV as well as basic tools such as fix-a-flat, 4-way tire wrench, and a portable air compressor will help with most things that could inhibit an 'escape.'





One modification you can easily do, with no vehicle modification, is to replace your stock tires with higher-rated tires in terms of thickness, such as C or E. The higher the letter, (A versus E) the thicker sidewall and are therefore more durable. While they may decrease your mile-per-gallon slightly, they will provide more traction and resistance to cuts when encountering debris and for off-road travel. See this article in link below for a more detailed review of some tires.

[CLICK HERE](#)



RADIO ANTENNAS are harder to conceal. As a ham radio operator, I use my radio most of the time while on the road. I've never had an issue where someone has targeted my vehicle for the radio, so I would think, in most cases, a radio isn't going to attract too much attention. Adding an HF antenna, which tends to be much larger, might, but then again, I had a vehicle that had one on for over eight years without any issues. I don't have one on right now as my regular commuting is less than 30 minutes, but when I had daily two-hour commutes, I regularly made contacts with other countries on HF. In a previous article, we talked about having HF capabilities for bug-out situations. If you have a tow hitch, there are some very quick setup HF antenna options you can explore (see the February 2019 SDI issue for additional information on mobile comms).



FINAL THOUGHTS

Road warrior or sleeper is going to depend on your area (what looks “normal”) as well as your finances. If money is not a concern, then you can have a road warrior vehicle for the true SHTF situation and a daily commuter vehicle. However, depending on your commute and the rate at which an SHTF event occurs, you don’t want to get caught miles from home in a small commuter vehicle with minimum supplies and little or no transportation. Finding a compromise is probably the best option for most people. An off-road capable trailer could be your solution. **AS ALWAYS REMEMBER, FORTUNE FAVORS THE PREPARED.**



5 SPARE PARTS TO CARRY

By Brant McGee

Anybody that has been driving for any amount of time has experienced a breakdown. Even with today's advanced vehicle models and easy access to roadside towing or mechanical support, there are a handful of problems that will kill a vehicle and strand you at the worst possible moment. Being stranded on a sunny Saturday morning in town is a far cry from being stranded in the middle of the Mojave desert at night while fleeing East after the societal collapse of the West Coast. I have compiled a simple list of items that should be in every vehicle, not just your bug-out ride.



1 TIRES - Keeping the rubber on the road is paramount. A healthy spare tire is only a half-measure beyond dropping some serious coin to get a set of run-flats. Keep a patch kit, fix-a-flat, and/or a small air compressor in the trunk.



2 BELTS, HOSES, CLAMPS - Most vehicles motor their power steering pumps, radiator fan, and electrical system on only one serpentine belt. If it fails, the vehicle will be dead shortly after losing it with no hope of a solution without a spare. It's easy to pack, pretty easy to install and will be the best spare-part purchase you make. Ensure you pack and carry the appropriate tools and know how to install it! I also carry some extra radiator hose material with hose clamps. In a pinch, replacing a large hose outright or cutting a patch and installing with a clamp and duct tape can hold water and maybe keep you moving. Make sure to let the engine to cool before cutting into hoses filled with boiling water!



3 FLUIDS - Running out of fuel is a game-ender. Also, fuel is challenging to carry safely and takes up precious space in the vehicle. I recommend carrying only a gallon of shelf-stable, explosion-proof spare emergency fuel or better yet, plan well ahead at every gas station you drive by and keep the tank full. If you have a big vehicle or truck and deep pockets, there are some really nice spare fuel tanks built by the racing industry that will give you some peace of mind and lots of extra go-juice. Typically, a low oil situation has been created by some type of internal failure that you will not be able to recover from on the side of the road. That said, carrying a bottle of oil system sealant and a quart of oil may get you just a little further down the trail and out of harm's way. The last fluid that I carry is pre-diluted anti-freeze and coolant. For a long time now, I have carried a gallon on top of my spare tire tucked up under the bed of my truck.



4 BATTERY - A dead battery seems to be a norm with our home fleet, and always at the worst possible time. Either from a light being left on or the normal strain created by all of the automatic systems that run on DC power before the vehicle is cranked, I seem to be addressing a dead battery annually. My first attempt at a backup was a small battery jump starter that turned out to be a complete waste of money. Even on a full charge, the thing does not have the strength to turn over a totally dead engine. At a minimum, carry jumper cables, and best case is a spare battery system. There are tons of ideas online, I installed a spare marine battery that has a solar trickle charger and is very capable of jumping my truck. A nice feature I added recently is a power inverter that boasts of 2000 watts peak power. If you do start playing around with adding a spare battery or using inverters, do keep a supply of common fuses in the glove box. I'm 50 years old and can count on one hand the fuses I've changed over the years, so I don't get too excited about them. On top of that, most newer vehicles have so many fuses due to unused accessories, you could easily pull one to replace a critical fuse and do without heated, massaging seats.



5 LIGHTS - This is an item that very few folks will ever think about. Slashed tires can be changed, but busted out headlights limits driving to daytime only. Additional light bars or even fog lights can save you a tremendous amount of trouble. In the late 1980s, I lost BOTH headlights while off-roading at night deep in the woods. The fog lights on my buggy saved me from having to camp unexpectedly until morning. For those that don't think an LED light bar mounted to the top of their Porsche would be practical, there are magnetic LED off-road lights that can be plugged into a 12-volt receptacle and work great for driving in a pinch.



FINAL THOUGHT

This is but a small list that will be reasonably easy to start with but do keep in mind that there are many other areas of the vehicle that will break at the worst possible time. Start small, let your life experiences with automobiles guide your decision making process.



GEAR SPOTLIGHT

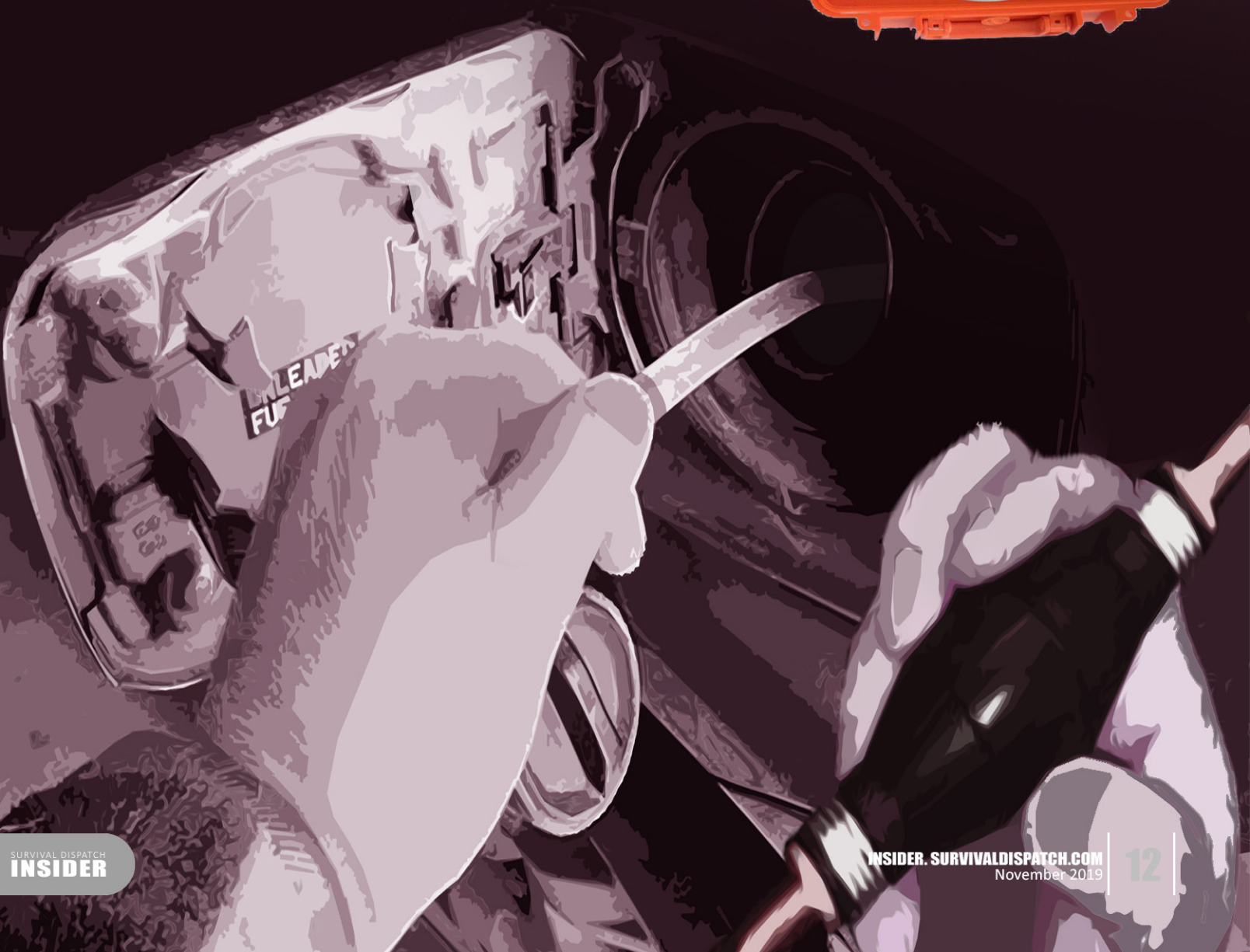
GasTapper

SIPHON PRO XL

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\$22

The **SIPHON PRO XL** is Made in the USA and VERY easy to use. This product is designed to allow user customization depending on particular needs. Whether you are stranded in the middle of nowhere and need the fuel to start an emergency fire, helping a person get enough fuel to make it to another fuel source or even just simply flushing your equipment of old gas and oil as part of your spring preparation, this product is very handy to have in your prepping arsenal.



v3i11

Hose Retainer Clip

Jiggler Siphon Starter and Hose Weight

8' of 5/8" Made in the USA Hose

8" Pump

Spring Prevents Hose Kinks

Shut Off Clip

Hose Retainer Clip

- It's a **PUMP** or a **SIPHON**
- Made in the USA
- Largest Siphon on the market!
- This siphon can lift fluid in the hose 6' high.
- Up to 4 gallons per minute depending on how it's used
- 8 feet total & 5/8 hose with anti-kink spring
- Hang the hose over an edge and it keeps it's shape
- 2 Siphons in 1 & patent pending universal hose clip to secure hose in place, no flop outs!
- Comes with a **JIGGLER** to start siphoning process as well
- Jiggler acts as weight to sink hose or start siphon - hose is easy to push on and off hand pump



“PLAN B” TRANSPORTATION

By Nick Meacher

If all our planning has gone according to plan, then we have a ‘hardened’ vehicle with sufficient supplies on board, including food, water, communications, navigation, etc., to get out of any urban areas and to our planned ‘alternate’ location. However, “No plan survives its first encounter with the enemy.” This phrase is most commonly associated with Douglas MacArthur; however, the concept was first in a thesis on war by Helmuth von Moltke the Elder, a Prussian field marshal. His thesis states (translated); “No plan of operations extends with certainty beyond the first encounter with the enemy’s main strength.” Why do I mention this? Because there are a lot of lessons and strategies, we can learn from history in our preparations and planning for preparedness, including The Art of War by Sun Tzu.

SO, WHAT ARE OUR “PLAN B” OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION? Some are obvious, and some may not be, so we will mention a few here to give you some ideas.

One that can be a daily part of our commute could be a **BIKE**. This could be your weekend get out and about bike that you carry on your bike rack daily, perhaps use from a park-and-ride on your daily commute to work. An alternative is a folding bike, such as those by Oyama or Xspec, (see the folding bike review) that you keep in your trunk for 'emergencies.' Another option, especially if you would have a long ride home, is an electric bike, such as those by Cannondale, Trek, Emdaot, and Aceshin. There is even a folding electric bike made by Freego. There is now a large selection of solar/electric bikes, including mountain and fat-tire bikes on the market, many for under \$800.

Obviously, with a bike, there are limits on the items and weight you can carry, but adding racks can increase your load-carrying abilities. If you are looking for a serious 'bike out' bike option, then consider one with fat tires. Obviously, carrying spare tire tubes, puncture repair kits, and other bike tools should be part of your kit. You should also learn how to maintain your bike, do preventative maintenance and other repairs. Check your local bike shops as they may offer courses on this, or you might be able to make some kind of deal with one of the mechanics to teach you how.

If you are at home and a bike has to be your Plan B, then adding a **SMALL CART** or **TRAILER** can increase your load capacities. The kid carriers are one option but are design for small kids, not heavy loads over potentially rough terrain. Cargo carts or trailers might be something to invest in, such as those by Aosom or Cycle Force.

If you are planning on a bike, then practice with it! Make it part of your exercise routine, including carrying heavy loads.





Some of the **WAGONS** mentioned earlier can be used without a bike if you have to abandon it, so when looking, consider how easy it would be to use if you have to go to “Plan C.”

Other cart options are the **FOLDING CARTS** you commonly see in box stores. The disadvantage is their load limit is about 125lbs, and the wheels are narrow. They are fine on the pavement but difficult to traverse on rough roads, dirt, sand, and other terrains. Better options are the heavier **‘GARDEN CARTS’** designed for much heavier loads and with larger/fatter tires. Gorilla makes many carts, with a 400lb cart at only \$65 and a 1,000lb capacity cart at only \$128. With some simple modifications, such as a longer arm, you could easily modify one to pull behind your bike.

STROLLERS are another option that can be used to carry some supplies. While they are not going to be able to carry a lot, those that have heavier designs are going to be able to carry more weight over rougher terrain.

Probably a Plan E, or lower, would be a **SHOPPING CART!** While they can carry a fair amount of supplies, they have small wheels and are difficult on any non-smooth surface.

Going back to motorized options, an **ATV** or similar vehicle can carry a significant amount of weight and supplies, if equipped with carriers. It can traverse very uneven ground and at some speed. The disadvantages are its engine noise, it can be heard a considerable way off, and that it needs fuel, although the last one I had would go all day off-road. Any motorized option requires regular maintenance and developing skills in use. They are usually more expensive than non-motorized options, and if you are not starting off from home, i.e., it’s a plan B to get from one point to another, then you have to have a secure place to store it. Many ATV’s get stolen from homes and even on trailers. While enclosed trailers provide some security from prying eyes, many get taken, even with locks on the hitches, so finding ways to improve security and prevent theft are a must.





Seasons must also be considered in your Plan B. If you live in an area that gets snow, then **'CONVERTING' YOUR WAGON OR CART ONTO SKIS** should be part of your plan. Depending on the amount of snow you typically get, you might need something that can run on solid ground, but then also when the snow gets deeper. Take a lesson from planes used in Alaska and similar terrain that need to be able to land on runways and snow and make a ski that fits around the tire. It allows a few inches of the wheel through the ski, but when the snow gets deep, the ski takes the weight.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Planning for improvised means of transportation is a 'must,' you cannot rely on a single plan. As with communications and all other aspects of preparedness, "two is one, one is none." This principle should (must) be applied to all elements of our preparedness planning. Having an alternative means of transportation could be used as part of your daily commute. Not only do you save gas, but you also get regular exercise, a thing we all need to build up as part of our preparedness planning, but often neglect.



SKILLS TO PRACTICE

By Brant McGee



No amount of preparation can replace training, the inevitability of a worsening situation is almost always right around the corner. **This can be no truer than with your vehicle and how you operate it under stress and duress.**

A year ago, I found myself in a situation that drove this point home and as well, tested every single skill I had learned over the years. I was on a close protection job for a media personality in a really nasty situation, and due to the lack of understanding by the film crew of what tactical driving was, I ultimately ended up in a flee and chase that I had to perform in an area that I had little to no knowledge of. No short article you read will prepare you like a tactical driving course. If you want to truly learn some solid driving skills beyond what is listed below, find a class.



ROLL LOW-PROFILE

If you drive a fully kitted Hummer with a bug-out kit on the roof along with a thousand tactical stickers on the back window so that everyone in town knows how bad-ass you are, and you drive in a similarly aggressive fashion, you've lost the ability to drive tactically. I teach my girls on jaunts to the grocery store on what vehicles we pass that most likely have a weapon that can be easily accessed via a broken window in a life or death situation. Don't be that guy or girl. If you have little stickers of small arms on your back window, I'm laughing at you. Blend in and be ready, don't advertise. When things get dicey, the unprepared will look at your heavily kitted ride and come after you for help.

FOLLOWING DISTANCE

This is safe driving 101. The problem is that we learn to follow safe driving distance to minimize the risk of plowing into someone's backside, but most never apply that to stopping in traffic. Always give yourself a car-length when stopped so that you can clear a turn from the vehicle in front of you, left or right, to keep from being pinned in. With that, stay out of center lanes or in lanes where you can't get over to hop a median or shoulder to get out of the kill zone. Boxing a vehicle in is the first step to ambushing a vehicle and its occupants, ensure you have an escape route at all times.

LEARN TO USE A MAP

Sounds funny, but in the current era of smartphones, it is surprising the number of people that don't know how to use a map to navigate. By no means should you discount electronics, but once the batteries die, or there is a network issue, learning map-reading skills on the side of the road will prove to be difficult and make you very vulnerable. A stand-alone GPS or smartphone will almost always route you via the quickest way, which is precisely what everyone else's GPS is doing. I don't want to be in the mix, but rather making my own way. Whenever I take a trip, I pick up a map that will cover the entire area I'm traveling so that I have a backup. Even if I am using my smartphone to navigate, before leaving, I follow the map to learn of any major landmarks in the direction of my travel that will help me with an egress route. Pick up a map on your next trip and use it to navigate your way, you will be surprised at how quickly you become familiar with driving without a GPS.





KEEP MOVING

When things are at their worst, stationary folks tend to be the first victims. If you get into a traffic jam during an “event” that could turn hostile, keeping your momentum off the “x” or out of the danger area is the best practice. A couple months ago, I was a passenger in a vehicle approaching a lone police officer in northern Nigeria who was waving us down for a shakedown. My driver just kept moving and even sped up to put some distance between us and the checkpoint, and thankfully, the officer wasn’t in the mood for a chase, especially one where he probably had no probable cause. Two days later, with a different driver, we stopped for a single officer at a checkpoint, and I nearly lost my sunglasses and phone in the ensuing shakedown and bribe on my part.



PRACTICE YOUR PIT STOPS

A breakdown will be your worst-case scenario in a situation where you are fleeing an area by automobile. Being able to change a flat in just a few minutes or replace a drive belt on the side of the road in minutes can be a lifesaver. These are easy tasks that can be easy to practice anywhere. If you are not comfortable with some basic mechanic skills such as this, you can bet at the worst possible moment, you’ll have a breakdown and be exposed needlessly to an event you are fleeing from.





IN CLOSING

This is by no means a course in tactical driving, but rather a taste. Do some research, take a class if you can, but by all means, practice what you learn. A properly prepared vehicle is useless without a properly prepared driver.



WHAT WE'RE READING NOW

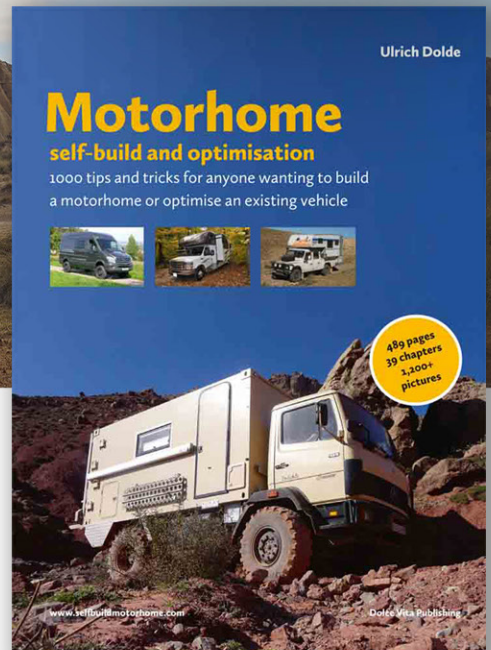


MOTORHOME SELF-BUILD AND OPTIMISATION

By: Ulrich Dolde

A detailed account of how one man turned his dream of building a motorhome into a reality. The project is broken down into 39 chronological chapters and more than 1,200 photographs. But this isn't just a book listing components and how they were installed, but the reasons each were chosen. The current edition also gives you a thorough overview of just about every heating and warm water system on the market, explains all the different toilet systems, as well as covering the various types of batteries and their charging/discharging characteristics. In many cases, you'll even find alternatives to the product. It doesn't matter if we're talking about a panel van, a bus, an RV, a 4x4, or a full-blown expedition truck. Even though this is the first English edition, it is, in fact, a translation of the fifth German edition, which has since established itself as a bible for all German-speaking motorhome self-builders and optimizers.

\$67.90



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IMPROVISED TRANSPORTATION

By: Nick Meacher

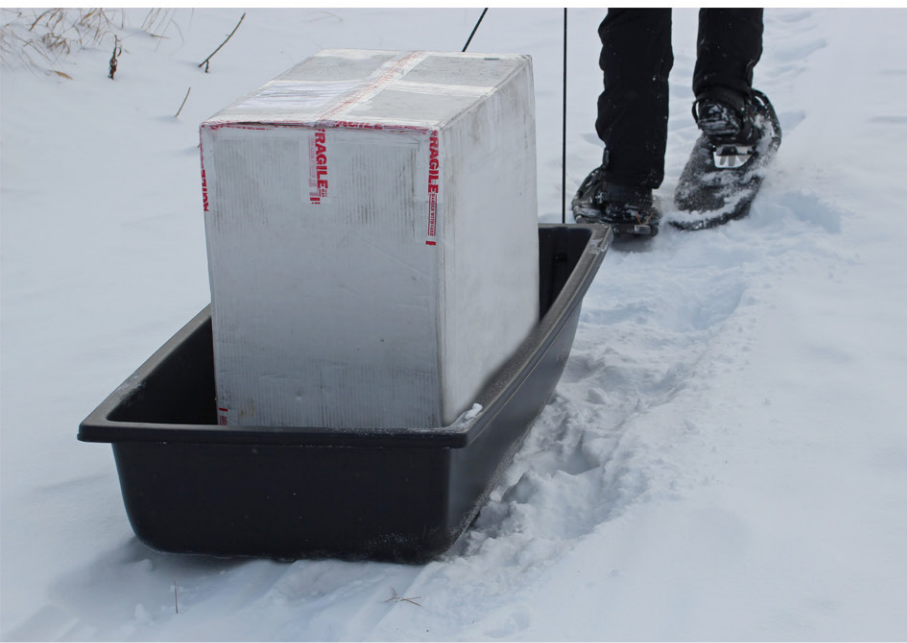
If you had a Plan A, and B and C and you are now on Plan D, then you are probably at the point where you are doing a lot of improvising! “Opportunities multiply as they are seized.” – Sun Tsu. Being innovative is a skill that anyone involved in preparedness must cultivate. Some of this comes from a lot of reading, what did someone do in that situation?

A big part of innovation is “thinking differently” or thinking outside of the box, using your imagination. Having an attitude of “that can’t be done” means that you give up before trying, you should think, “how can that be done?”

YOU SHOULD HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF “WHEN IT HAPPENS,” NOT “IF IT HAPPENS.”

The last thing you want to do is to walk carrying all your ‘stuff’ on your back. Remember, ounces equal pounds, and pounds equal pain. Having something to carry your ‘stuff’ in or on, and even better, to carry you is going to make your journey much easier.

In another article, we discussed “Plan B” modes of transportation, such as bikes, wagons, strollers, ATV’s, etc. **IN THIS ARTICLE, WE WILL SUGGEST SOME IMPROVISED MODES.** Wheeled modes are going to be one of the easiest improvised modes unless you are in the snow, and we will discuss that below. Wheels have been around since the caveman figured our rocks roll easier when they are round and smooth. A wheelbarrow can move loads easier; however, two wheels are easier to balance. Adding a couple of small wheels on the rear legs means you can push or pull, rather than lift. If you take a walk through a hardware store or places like Tractor Supply, you will find all kinds of wheels for all types of wagons, wheelbarrows, trailers, etc. Add one or two to your supplies, and you will be able to convert or replace wheels on all kinds of things to make moving your ‘stuff’ easier. You can even add wheels to the bottom of a wooden pallet and tie/strap your stuff down or replace the stock wheels on a shopping cart with larger ones that will make it move a lot easier.



If you have something to pull your wagon/cart, then things are a lot easier. If the cart can take the weight, you can move heavier loads. A ride-on lawnmower, with the blades disengaged, can be used, or even a walk-behind powered mower can pull a smaller cart.

If you can't find something with wheels then improvise a sled or a canoe, these will work well in snow but are going to take more effort to move on paved or round ground, but will still allow you to carry a load or an injured person. As mentioned above, a wooden pallet can be easily converted to a sled by removing parallel cross beams on either end. Kids snow sleds are another option. Again, if you have something motorized to pull, it will make it a lot easier to move. Lids from large bins, or plastic bins, can be used by attaching a rope to pull them, but be aware that the bottom will be worn through if pulled over rough or paved ground any distance. If you can find or improvise skis or something resembling skis, and you can put a cart or box on them.

Other options include an animal, such as a horse or donkey; however, this will require a harness if you are going to use them to pull a wagon, cart, or sled. Handling animals is also a skill, you just can't walk into someone's field and rope a horse! If the animal has never been used as a pack animal, harnessed, or used to pull something, then you are going to have a tough time 'training' it in an emergency. If you have a dog, then start training it to carry saddlebags (they make them for most sized dogs). The dog can then carry its own food, water, etc. It may not be a lot, but remember, it's ounces and pounds that you don't have to carry.





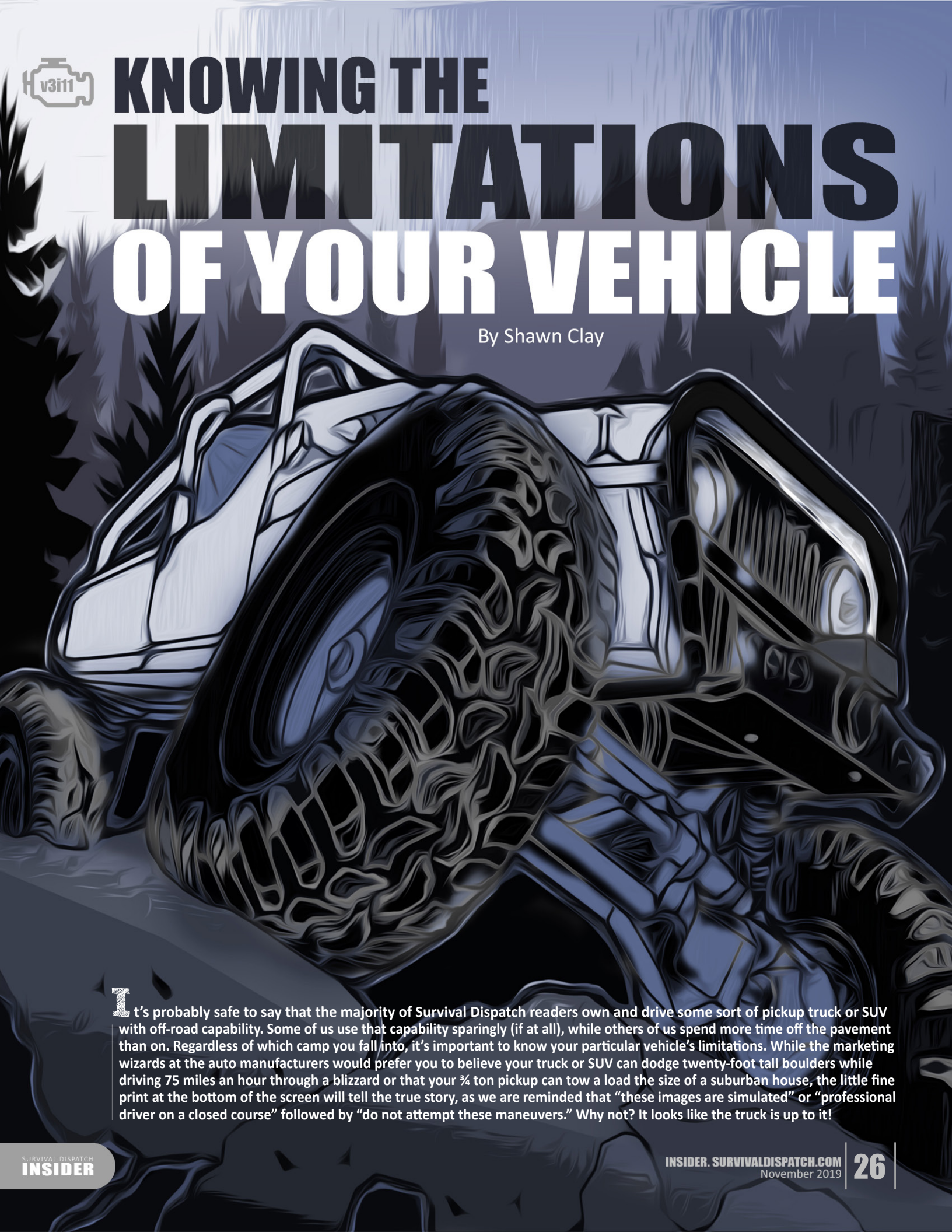
FINAL THOUGHT

Avoiding pain and discomfort when trying to get home or bug out should be part of your goals, but you don't want to dump your gear along the way. Improvising methods to move yourself, rather than walk, will shorten your journey back to your family. If you can't do that, then finding ways to carry your load, or distribute the weight should be your next plan, especially over rough terrain or in severe weather such as snow. Look at what is around you all the time and ask yourself, "what if..." Some basic skills with some basic tools and some everyday parts can help you improvise something to make your trek more comfortable. Learn to "think differently" and "think outside the box."



KNOWING THE LIMITATIONS OF YOUR VEHICLE

By Shawn Clay

A large, stylized illustration of a vehicle, possibly a truck or SUV, that has crashed or rolled over. The image is rendered in a dark, high-contrast, almost abstract style with heavy black outlines and deep shadows, giving it a simulated or graphic quality. The vehicle is positioned diagonally across the frame, with its front end towards the bottom right and its rear towards the top left. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a rough or uneven surface.

It's probably safe to say that the majority of Survival Dispatch readers own and drive some sort of pickup truck or SUV with off-road capability. Some of us use that capability sparingly (if at all), while others of us spend more time off the pavement than on. Regardless of which camp you fall into, it's important to know your particular vehicle's limitations. While the marketing wizards at the auto manufacturers would prefer you to believe your truck or SUV can dodge twenty-foot tall boulders while driving 75 miles an hour through a blizzard or that your $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup can tow a load the size of a suburban house, the little fine print at the bottom of the screen will tell the true story, as we are reminded that "these images are simulated" or "professional driver on a closed course" followed by "do not attempt these maneuvers." Why not? It looks like the truck is up to it!



In reality, the majority of us who are practitioners of the preparedness mindset will pick out a vehicle only after thoroughly weighing all the options, and selecting the vehicle and accessory package that best suit our particular needs. While everyone doesn't need to select the super off-road package, we do need to consider what our needs are and whether or not our vehicles are up to the task. Also, it's not only the off-road limitations of our vehicles that we need to be aware of. **FOR INSTANCE, DO YOU KNOW THE MILEAGE RATING ON YOUR TIRES?** We all have that one friend who will push a 70k mile set of tires to 100k or more. That's taking a huge gamble with one of the most important components on your vehicle. Also, sometimes, treadwear alone doesn't tell the whole story. I have friends who have a hunting truck that only sees usage in the fall and winter, and most of them are equipped with mud tires. More than once, I've seen a tire blow out or go flat with relatively few miles on them. The culprit is usually mother nature. Rubber that sits on a wheel and doesn't move for 9 months out of the year can become brittle and weather-cracked in short order. If you are putting a set of \$1500 Super Swamper tires on your truck, make sure that you get it out and drive it regularly.



DO YOU KNOW EXACTLY HOW FAR YOUR VEHICLE WILL GO ON A TANK OF GAS?

Yes, most modern vehicles have the digital readout that will tell you how many more miles you have until empty. More than once, I've had friends and relatives run out of gas while the digital readout said they still had many more miles to go. While running out of gas can undoubtedly be a pain, it can also do damage to the fuel pump. Someone very close to me ran her Toyota Avalon out of gas to the point where the fuel pump was pulling air. It ended up being a relatively expensive repair that could have been avoided by just putting gas in the car when it got low. There are also those of us who have owned that vehicle with a less than reliable gas gauge. There's nothing quite like that puckering feeling of wondering how much farther you can go when you skipped your mandatory "every 3-day" fillup. If you are equipped with one of these wonderful vehicles, you quickly learn the importance of the extra gas can that stays in the back.



Since most of us are driving the vehicle that we will be in if the SHTF, it's essential to know the limiting factors to it. We've already discussed tires and fuel, but there are many more factors to consider. **BATTERY LIFE, CRITICAL COMPONENT SERVICE LIFE (BELTS, HOSES, SPARK PLUGS, COIL PACKS, BULBS, BRAKE SYSTEM, ETC.), AS WELL AS ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION MAINTENANCE,** need to be considered. Fortunately, most vehicles have owner's manuals that have room in the back to record all of the various maintenance procedures that are necessary to keep your vehicle running at peak efficiency. If your vehicle does not have one, I recommend purchasing a repair manual (such as one from Haynes or Chilton) and keeping the manual plus a notebook in your vehicle to record all of this critical data. We've all seen the "grandpa" truck that has 300k on it and still looks brand new. We've also likely all seen the truck or SUV that's only 3 or 4 years old and looks like it was used by rebels along the streets of Mogadishu. Knowing when to replace or repair components is essential to trust that your vehicle will be ready to perform when it's needed the most.

If your vehicle is going to be spending **A LOT OF TIME OFF THE PAVEMENT**, you may want to look at upgrades to ensure that it's going to be able to handle all that you throw at it. While some dealers offer upgraded off-road capability with beefed-up suspension packages and extra skid-plates, many of us purchased a vehicle used or were given that old 4x4 truck or SUV from a family member or friend. In these cases, it's important to know what is available to turn your vehicle into the off-road capable beast that you want it to be. For instance, if you are wanting to run larger tires, you may want to consider a suspension lift that will give you the flex you will need. If spending a lot of time off-road is on the agenda, or the vehicle has been sitting for a while, consider replacing or upgrading your hubs to stronger aftermarket hubs. If you know that you will be doing a lot of rock-crawling, make sure that you are running bead-lock wheels so that you can air down your tires to provide more traction without worrying about the tire coming off the rim. Also, upgrade your undercarriage with the necessary skid-plates to ensure that nothing is damaged or sheared off. I've seen more than one oil pan plug or transmission drain plug sheared by driving over a rock. If your adventures take you into swampy environments, consider running a snorkel set up to ensure that you don't hydrolock the engine at the worst possible time. You might discover what some manufacturers consider an "off-road" or "adventure" package is little more than a different logo and an extra skid-plate or two. Sometimes the factory 4WD package is more practical to purchase and then spend your money on the aftermarket upgrades that make the most sense and provide the most bang for the buck.





While upgrading parts and knowing the service limitations of the vital components of your vehicle are critical to ensuring that your vehicle is always ready for the worst, it's of equal importance to ensure that you have **PERSONALLY TESTED AND DRIVEN YOUR VEHICLE** in all of the scenarios that you've envisioned the apocalypse bringing. Don't be the prepper that buys the new Ford Raptor, spends another \$25k on "upgrades," and then never takes it off-road. Know what your vehicle will do. Know how it feels to navigate a nasty, muddy logging road to deer camp. Know what it's like to navigate through soft gravel or sand. Know how it feels to climb those hills when gravity becomes an issue. Put your loadout in your vehicle and drive through that rough terrain and see what bounces around and spills out. You'll learn a ton about what needs to be secured and where. If you are running electronics for communications, know what your effective range is and plan accordingly. The most advanced gear in the world is useless if you're out of range. If you have recovery gear such as a winch or tow straps, make sure that you are well-versed not only in their usage but their maintenance as well.





IN CLOSING

Knowing your vehicle's limitations is no different than knowing your own physical limitations or that of your preferred weapons system. You can watch every video (of which Survival Dispatch has a wonderful library) on the topic, but until you have firsthand knowledge and experience, you really don't know what you are capable of. The same applies to your vehicle. If you have an off-road capable vehicle that you are going to depend on as your SHTF vehicle, get out there and drive it in every situation you can think of. Know what range a tank of gas will give you on the highway as well as in the backcountry because I can assure you that they will be completely different. Know how to shift your vehicle into 4WD or AWD and under what conditions to do so. If you are running aggressive-style tires, understand how to service them. Know how to check and change your battery, as well as other basic components such as belts, hoses, and spark plugs. Know where to add fluids and how to check their levels. I've got friends who can field strip an AR15 blindfolded, but they would be hard-pressed to change their own oil or a tire. In the prepping lifestyle, balance is key. We need to know just as much about our vehicles as we do our food stores, med and comms gear, and weapons platforms. Our lives may depend on each one of these aspects one day, so knowing our limitations is key to survival.





MAXIMIZE YOUR VEHICLE'S POTENTIAL

By Brant McGee

Our vehicles are a blank canvas, just waiting on the proper and thoughtful artistic vision of what we want them to be. Some people use this canvas to show identity through graphics or stickers, others have more of a functional approach. This is where we want to focus our efforts, less on the visual, and more on the functional properties of the vehicle. Recently, I took a ride with a co-worker to a job and was blown away at how well he stored emergency supplies scattered throughout his SUV. It seemed that every compartment I looked in was full of supplies. What was most impressive was the fact that he built his vehicle's potential around the basics of survival. There was an advanced first aid kit under my seat, a survival kit under the driver seat complete with the contents to create shelter, fire, food, and filter water. His weapons platforms were mounted under the rear seats, and he even had body armor packed into a compartment designed for the jack and tools for changing a tire. Every time he took off from a stoplight, the engine sounded as if it was going to explode. At speed, I could feel massive vibrations coming from the tires, and when the brakes were applied, the front end shook violently. I guess all the kit would be coming in handy if we got into trouble, which was not far from the realm of possibility given the shape of the mechanical components. Maximizing the potential of your bug out ride goes far beyond having a personal kit stored in every crevice. Tools, parts, and add-ons such as a spare battery are great, but none of these will trump making sure the vehicle is well taken care of. Proper maintenance is paramount if you plan on using a vehicle for a bug out. We will break this down into three elements; Gas, Tires, Oil.



GAS

What good is a vehicle that doesn't run? Most vehicles, unless you are a battery car kind of person, utilize fuel for power. Keeping the fuel system in order is pretty simple and cheap but will cost you significantly if it becomes corrupt. Keep your fuel system on a maintenance schedule that includes using additives to stabilize fuel in a bug out ride that sits for an extended period. Also, remember to keep the tank full. Space in a fuel tank can condensate when it is not full, and this water will have to be processed out through the engine, which diminishes performance. I'm also a fan of adding a good fuel additive at every oil change to keep the system and injectors clean.





TIRES

Tires are like bread, you get what you pay for. For most of my life, I have gone the cheap route when purchasing tires, sacrificing dependability for cost. I've learned over the years that wear, balance, and reliability all are greatly increased by the quality of the tires I buy. Higher quality tires wear more evenly and last way longer than the cheap stuff, but they still need to be cared for. Unbalanced tires are dangerous at high speeds and will also cause vibrations that can reverberate through the chassis and create even more problems in the suspension system, engine, and drive train. Keeping a good set of skins on the truck that are correctly inflated, balanced, and rotated on a schedule have kept me out of trouble and make the tires last longer. Right next to the tires are the brakes, they are pretty important to keep maintained, and you should make sure you inspect them at every tire rotation. If you start to notice wobbling or noise when you apply your brakes, it's time to get the rotors replaced or re-surfaced along with new pads.





OIL

Recently, I had the engine oil pressure lines replaced in my old truck that I use for hunting, fishing, or banging around. After the maintenance, I started developing leaks in the valve covers, among other places. What I found was that the leaky pressure lines were the weak point that allowed a loss of oil pressure, keeping the problem isolated to that one part. Soon as they were replaced, the oil pressure increased and started looking for another escape route. Now, every time I crank the truck, there is about ten minutes of burning oil that is leaking out all over the engine. Being a beater truck, I'm not so concerned and will address each area as time allows. I've had this truck for 13 years and, even with 275,000 miles, have kept the oil changed religiously at 5000 miles. I use good quality full synthetic oil and a high-end filter that is manufacturer recommended. My new truck, which is my bug out ride, gets the same love, and I hope it will last me just as long. Along with the engine, the other oiled parts, such as the transmission, transfer case, and differentials, all need to be monitored for leaks. No oil in these parts leads to wear and catastrophic failure, which will rear its ugly head at the worst possible time.





NEW GEAR RELEASE

Toler Tools
UNION



Toler Tools is proud to introduce the UNION™, a pocket tool family of unprecedented range and ability. With patent pending features such as exclusive self-adjusting, ratcheting OMNILOCK™ wrench technology and a modular, reconfigurable architecture to take full advantage, it is the only tool in existence that can lend itself a helping hand. **WE THINK IT IS A NEW CLASS OF TOOL.**

The OMNILOCK™ wrench is ratcheting, self-adjusting, 1/4" - 3/4", standard and metric, and grips tight. UNION™ architecture allows the tool to unfold to full wrench length or be separated easily at the hinge, leaving you with tools in each hand. Both the plier and wrench halves provide multiple driver options, delivering a set from your pocket that can handle complex driving scenarios. Lock the hinge to provide an ergonomic pistol style grip for the locking saws and the file/awl. More modules and accessories are planned for the future, so you can tailor your carry to your day.

\$104 - JUST THE TOOL
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HOW DOES THE OMNILOCK™ WRENCH WORK?

The inner jaw is biased by a spring to close on the bolt head. It can rock in the channel, and the jaws are biased to open and close with rotation. When closed, gear teeth between the jaw and the frame will not allow the jaw to back against the spring, and the jaws grip the face of the fastener tight. When turned to open, the teeth disengage and allow the inner jaw to follow the face of the fastener to the next face. In this way, it achieves all this with one moving part and a spring.

FEATURES

UNION ARCHITECTURE

- Full length OMNILOCK™
- Full size screwdriver
- T-handle driver
- Full grip knife
- Locking, pistol grip saws

THE OMNILOCK™ WRENCH

- Screwdriver
- Right angle driver
- Leverage extension for the wrench
- Pocket clip for easy carry
- Easy use bit extender clip

THE UNION™ PLIERS

- Sprung combo heads
- Four bits on board
- T-handle driver
- Screwdriver
- Locking metal and wood saws
- Locking file/awl
- 3.125" locking
- One hand
- D2 blade
- Slim grip
- Pocket clip
- Slim and comfortable

THE KNIFE

- One hand operation
- Locking
- Full size blade, 3.125"
- Heat treated D2 steel
- Accessible and usable
- Joined or separated
- Slim and full grip configurations



CHANGE WITH THE SEASONS

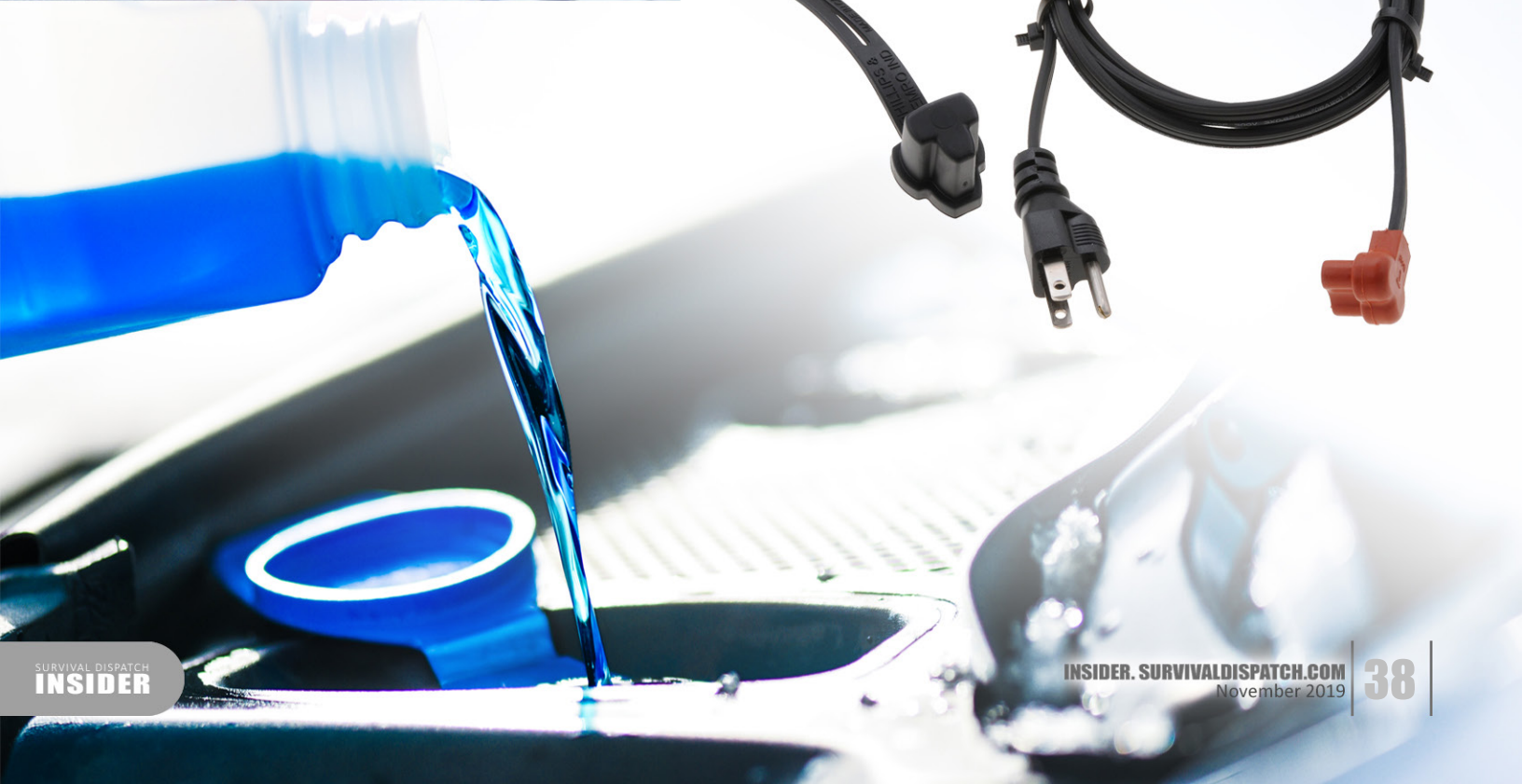
By Brant McGee



Winter is coming, is your vehicle ready? In my travels, I get the opportunity to visit locations all over the country. From the deep south to northern states, I get a good taste of all the various weather conditions our great country has to offer. A couple years ago, I hopped into my rental vehicle in South Dakota during a blizzard when the temps were hovering in the single digits. In a hurry to get to work, I turned over the vehicle's engine, and it sounded like the pistons were trying to chew through the tops of the cylinders. The problem was typical for those conditions, the cold oil sitting in the bottom of the engine took a minute to warm up and make its way through the rest of the system. Us southerners rarely ever have to deal with that kind of morning, so I had never really experienced anything like it, especially in a newer rental vehicle. While I was sitting and freezing, waiting for the engine to warm up, a guy came out and unplugged his engine oil heater that he had running through the night. He cranked up his truck and took off, giving me a wave while passing. He was probably laughing inside as he knew I was not an inhabitant of the northern states while I was sitting looking puzzled as my vehicle was eating itself.



Even newer vehicles that use lighter viscosity oils have a hard time during the winter months when they are first cranked in the morning. If you have a cold snap coming, grab an **ELECTRIC OIL DIPSTICK HEATER** that will keep the engine somewhat warm on those bitterly cold mornings. You don't want to be in a hurry to flee and have to wait on your engine oil to heat up before jetting off. Along with engine oil, a vehicle's engine can't operate without **ANTIFREEZE AND COOLANT** for very long. When you go in for an oil change, make sure you test your antifreeze to make sure the mixture is correct. The last winter mechanical item I keep a close eye on is **WINDSHIELD WASHER FLUID**. No joke, if you have ever traveled on roads that have been treated with salt or brine when the spray off the street gets on a warm windshield, it dries and is almost impossible to see through. Ensure you use a washer fluid that is rated for extreme cold so that you can keep the windshield clean.





FINAL THOUGHT

In my experience, these few items seem to be the most affected by the change of seasons. I would add that you can keep a wool blanket, knit cap, gloves, and extra coat in the back seat. While this is a great idea, the intention is to NOT get into a situation where you need them. Wherever you are from, pay attention to the change in weather, and get your vehicle prepared. We tend to be too reliant on the dependability of modern vehicles, and time after time, they disappoint us.



VEHICLE EMERGENCY KIT

By Jon Faulkner





KIT CONTENTS

DEKOPRO 158 Piece Tool Set
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Special Operations Equipment Bag
[ONLINE LINK](#)

Neiko
53941A
High
Visibility
Safety
Vest
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Fix-A-Flat
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Orion Locate
Handheld
Signal
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Neiko 51005A
Heavy Duty
Tow Strap with
Safety Hooks
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Professional
Grade
Premium
Microfiber
Towel
[AMAZON LINK](#)

Ezire Emergency
Car Safety Hammer
Escape Tool
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Slime 50063 Truck
Spare Heavy Duty
12-Volt Inflator
& Tire Repair Kit
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Grime
Boss
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Wipes
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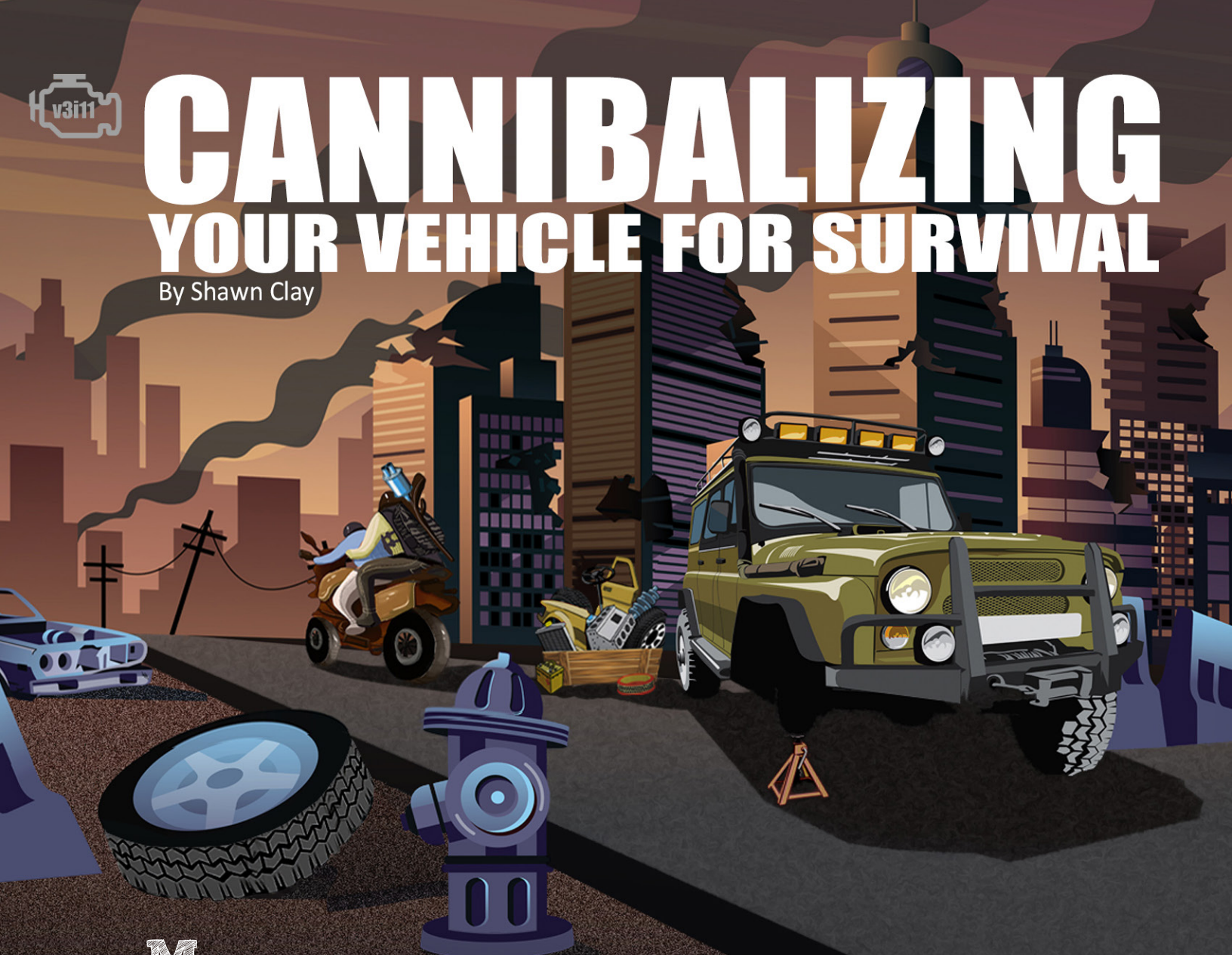
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CANNIBALIZING YOUR VEHICLE FOR SURVIVAL

By Shawn Clay



Most of us carry various items of survival gear in our vehicles, but **HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED YOUR ACTUAL CAR AS A SURVIVAL ITEM?** The amount of resources that you are literally sitting on top of it is staggering if you take a minute to think about it. For the purposes of this article, we are going to assume that your car has been rendered immobile due to a wreck, mechanical failure, stuck, SHTF, etc. and that you are in a situation where help is not necessarily readily available. While we all saw the news story some time back where a guy survived for several days on Taco Bell hot sauce packets after becoming stranded in a rural area, it's my sincerest hope that readers of Survival Dispatch will be a lot more prepared and resourceful should they find themselves in a similar situation. So, let's take a look at how your vehicle (or any random abandoned vehicle that you happen to come across) can help save your hide if you find yourself in the midst of a personal disaster.

To begin with, **AS LONG AS YOUR VEHICLE IS NOT UNDERWATER, UPSIDE DOWN, OR ACTIVELY ON FIRE, IT CAN SERVE AS A SHELTER AND A BASE OF OPERATIONS UNTIL RESCUE CAN ARRIVE.** If your horn is functional, it can be an excellent method of sending out an SOS signal. Flashing the headlights and turn signals at intervals during low light conditions could also help rescuers hone in on your location. It's also wise to stay with your vehicle if at all possible. If you've gone off the road, it will be easier for rescuers to see your vehicle than to find you in the middle of the woods.

HOWEVER, IF YOUR VEHICLE IS NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SHELTER, THERE ARE STILL MANY USEFUL PARTS OF YOUR VEHICLE THAT CAN BE OF SERVICE. For instance, using the tools and WD40 that are likely present in most of our cars, the hood, tailgate, doors, trunk lid, fenders, luggage racks, etc. can be removed and used in the construction of a shelter. Exhaust pipes can make an effective crossbeam for a primitive shelter as well. Seat belts can be cut out and used to help secure the various panels together, as can the mile or two of wiring that is present in most vehicles. Just make sure that the battery is disconnected before you begin stripping the wiring from your damaged vehicle. The floor mats, along with the carpeting and padding in the interior and the trunk can provide ground cover and insulation for a shelter as well. If your vehicle is equipped with hubcaps, those can be removed and used as a primitive shovel to dig a fire pit or to help clear an area to construct your shelter.



The **SEATS** can also provide valuable material in an SHTF situation. Cutting them open can provide you with insulation that can be stuffed into a sleeping bag or even your jacket to keep warm. The outer covering, depending on material type, can be used for a makeshift backpack when paired with some of the wiring you've stripped out of the engine compartment or from under the dash. If your seats are leather, you have the possibility of fashioning primitive footwear or clothing such as a poncho to keep the elements at bay. A word of warning about seats, though. If you are looking at using them for starting or maintaining a fire, be aware that these materials can release toxic fumes, so make sure you are not in an enclosed environment when doing so.



Assuming that you have shelter covered, you'll likely want to **BUILD A FIRE**, either to keep warm or to serve as a signal fire for rescuers. Fortunately, your vehicle has a wealth of resources to help you do both. Most obvious would be the gas in the tank. On older vehicles, using the siphon in your emergency gear or one of the numerous vacuum lines in the engine compartment, the fuel can be siphoned out of the gas tank and into any container that may be present. That could be in the form of a gas can, water bottle, or any other container that you can fashion. With newer cars, however, it can be a tad more difficult to extract the fuel, mainly due to the anti-siphon filters. On these vehicles, you may have to find a way to get the siphon hose into the tank underneath the vehicle, or you may have to resort to puncturing the tank and collecting the fuel. One word of caution, though, when trying to pierce the gas tank; A spark from a screwdriver or a knife blade could prove deadly, so care needs to be taken if you choose to use this measure of gas procurement. Should the gas tank be empty, engine oil and transmission fluid can also be useful in starting a fire. Just be sure that regardless of what fluid you use, have plenty of ventilation available around you due to the fumes.





If these methods are not available, consider using one of the various **MIRRORS** in your vehicle. The rearview mirror, side mirrors, or even the vanity mirror in the sunshade can be used to direct and focus any available sunlight onto a tinder bundle. While this method can be time-consuming, it's tried and true and gives the user a portable method of fire starting should circumstances dictate that you leave the immediate area. They can also double as signal mirrors should rescuers be overhead in aircraft or on higher ground. Also, consider the cigarette lighter in older vehicles. They can be fantastic fire starters as well.

If a **SIGNAL FIRE** is what you are after, the spare tire (or any tire for that matter) will make a nice, thick, black smoke stream that will be visible for some distance, and the rubber will burn for quite some time. If you are wanting to set multiple smaller signal fires, a hubcap full of oil or transmission fluid will burn for some time as well and send up a nice plume of black smoke. And while there are multiple ways of starting a fire with the battery (some with the use of jumper cables and others with the battery itself), these methods can be dangerous to the user, so I'll leave it up to the readers to research these methods for themselves.

On the subject of the **CAR BATTERY**, if you happen to travel with an inverter present, the car battery can provide a charging source for your cell phone, laptop, or any other device that might help you communicate with the outside world to assist in your rescue. If you happen to be proficient in working with wiring, you may be able to rig up a light source using your headlights or taillights. This could help with illuminating your shelter sight and draw attention to your location to aid in your rescue.

When it comes to the subject of **WATER** procurement, there are a few available options present in most vehicles. Consider the glove box, cup holders, and any other removable compartments that may be capable of holding and transporting water. In a true survival scenario, you could also consider removing the windshield washer fluid reservoir under the hood and rinse it out thoroughly before reallocating it as a water container.



FINAL THOUGHTS

If you are finding yourself stranded in a situation where your life may be in danger, such as martial law or social unrest, you may want to consider if your vehicle has anything available to serve as an instrument of self-defense. Yes, most of us have our CCW along with our truck gun and a litany of knives or maybe a non-lethal option available, but if all of that was lost or unavailable, you are still far from defenseless. If your factory tire-changing equipment is still present in your trunk or under the seat, you will find that the lug wrench can make a very effective blunt force trauma weapon. In addition, a length of the seat belt with the buckle at the end can be quite dangerous in determined hands.

AS YOU CAN SEE, OUR VEHICLES CAN BE A WEALTH OF RESOURCES AT OUR FINGERTIPS SHOULD WE FIND OURSELVES WOEFULLY UNPREPARED IN AN SHTF SITUATION OR EVEN GETTING LOST OR STRANDED IN THE BACKCOUNTRY. A LITTLE BIT OF CREATIVITY AND INGENUITY CAN ALLOW YOU TO USE THE RESOURCES AT HAND TO HOPEFULLY TAKE SOME OF THE STRESS OUT OF A SEEMINGLY OUT OF CONTROL SITUATION.

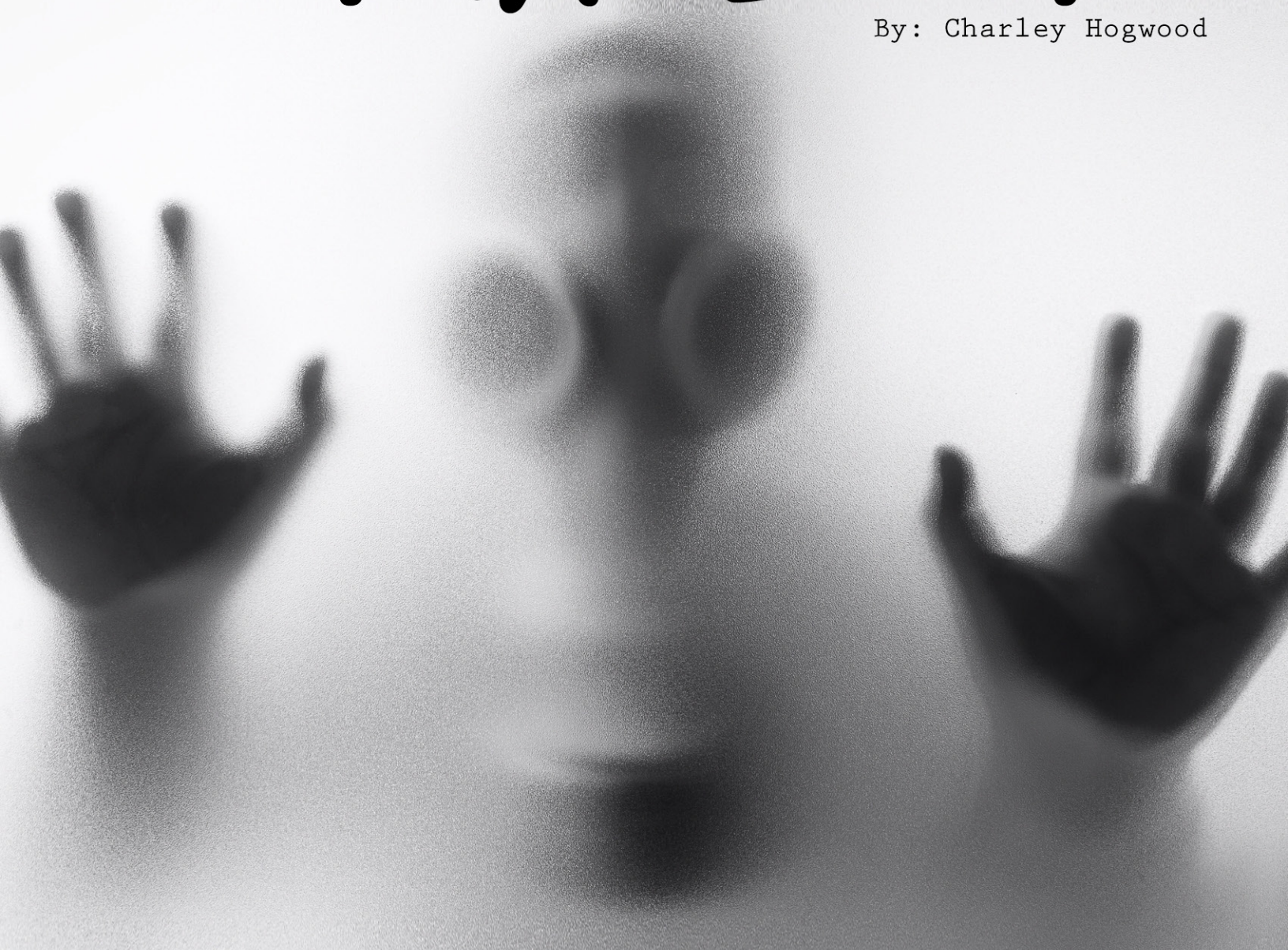




THE

UNRAVELING

By: Charley Hogwood



Punto Fijo, Venezuela
Monday, November 13



It was another smoldering day at the small-town market. Even though it was only 7 am, the line was wrapped around the block with people wearing bandannas, respirators, and various types of protective masks. The line seemed to stretch on for miles, as people kept their distance from each other even if it meant standing in the blazing sun, unwilling to risk their lives for even the slightest bit of shade. Everyone knew that getting too close to someone who was contagious could lead to a violent death.

"Policia! Policia!" Panic rippled through the crowd as everyone scattered to the wind. They all knew that there was to be no public gathering of any type due to "la gripa," the strange illness that seemed to be everywhere lately. Anyone caught during curfew hours would be arrested. The local jails were a viral breeding ground and once in, you were on your own to fight for food and protection. It was commonly believed among the population that the next step would be public executions to stem the sickness, but that was only a rumor. For now.

The police patrol raced down the street, three jeeps loaded with armed men hanging over the sides. All of them were wearing military style chemical masks and long rubber gloves. A truck tagged along behind them, loaded with sad-faced civilians who had already been rounded up this morning for various offenses such as being outside without a government pass.

After the patrol flew by, people sensed that the coast was clear and raced from the shadows to get back in line. At 8 am exactly, the market owner unlocked the door; he had learned the hard way that he was going to need help or the mob would wipe out the whole store. He had been forced to make arrangements with local men to barter food for protection. It wasn't exactly legal, but these days you did what was needed.

"Back up!" One of the four large men armed with clubs growled to the advancing line of customers. Their job was to keep order and allow only five people into the store at a time.

If a person didn't have their nose and mouth covered, they were turned away. The ragtag security team was wearing various face coverings made from an interesting assortment of household items. From t-shirts to two-liter soda bottles configured with charcoal and cotton, they all seemed desperate to fashion a poor man's respirator, doing whatever was necessary to stay healthy.

"Anyone gets pushy and you get some stick time! If you look sick, you don't get in so don't even try!" The second guard shouted down the line through his bandanna. He made eye contact with each person to drive his point home before retreating back to the doorway.

Just as she was about to be let in, a young woman began having a coughing fit, trying to hide it by turning to the side and using her arm as a shield. She failed at her miserable attempt, and the people around her tripped over each other trying to step back and get away. One of the guards saw the commotion and stepped closer, but not too close.

"You! Go away. You must leave now!" he said, using his bat as a pointer to motion her away from the store.

"Please, we have no food and my family is counting on me to bring something." she pleaded.

"Go!" he repeated, pointing the bat toward the street with more force now.

She fell to her knees in tears, and those around her noticed that her eyes and nose were red and runny as she pulled her mask away to wipe them on her sleeve. The man raised his bat in a final threat if she did not leave the line. People stepped further away in anticipation of what might come.

"No... Please!" she cried as she crawled on her knees toward the street and made a shaky effort to stand and walk away. The line began to slowly reform, and people seemed to be hesitant to be anywhere near where the sick woman had just been standing. It was almost as if they were scared that the ground itself might be contagious.





We Hope You Enjoyed This Issue of Survival Dispatch Insider.

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