

# The Salt Lake Tribune

## Relic Run campers use vintage vehicles and gear

By Tom Wharton

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**Kamas •** Kurt Williams was using his father's old Boy Scout pack, hatchet and knife, a vintage stainless steel mess kit, a U.S. Army flashlight and a 1973-vintage metal Igloo cooler. He also used a camp kitchen purchased from eBay — though he had to modify it to use propane because the original fuel source kept exploding.

Fellow Utahn Amy Averett of North Ogden, meanwhile, planned on celebrating her birthday by perhaps surviving one of the High Uintas' notorious afternoon thunderstorms inside a 1953 White Stag canvas wall tent. Wyatt Hanks of Green River, Wyo., drank powdered Tang out of what looked like an old jam bottle.

"Pancakes and scrambled eggs just don't taste right without the smell of white gas," laughed Davy Houle, of American Fork, who celebrated the first day of the second annual Relic Run Friday by wearing a brown polyester leisure suit and using his family's 1979 Jeep truck and 1972 vintage trailer. Both were purchased new.

The Relic Run is all about driving ancient 4x4s and using old-fashioned camp gear. The event, the brainchild of Williams and Michael Slade, is taking place this weekend on dirt roads and primitive camping spots located just off the Mirror Lake Highway.

Rules for the free Relic Run are relatively simple. Vehicles must be 1979 or older and street legal. Camping gear must use technologies and gear available during or before the 1970s. For example, no digital cameras are allowed. Don't even think about using a cell phone, though CB radios are not only allowed but encouraged. And GPS systems are completely forbidden. Instead, the group utilizes compasses and old topographical maps.

Keeping with the spirit, Steve Jackson, of Pleasant Grove, visited several area camera stores to find film that worked in his 1960s vintage Polaroid camera and then delighted in taking photos of the start of the event Friday at Murdock Basin and showing off the instant pictures.

A slide show of last year's first Relic Run that involved driving the circumference of the Great Salt Lake — 50 percent of the vehicles either broke down or ran out of gas — used an ancient slide projector powered by a never-before-used 400-watt 1965 Honda generator one of the participants purchased online for \$250.

Then there was the camping gear. "Most of us have newer vehicles," Williams said. "But the idea is [to] go back to simpler times. You find that going back is still a lot of work."

Gary Taylor, of Lindon, had one of the best collections of vintage camping gear that including several white gas Coleman stoves and lanterns, including an olive-colored Army version that featured a compartment to old extra mantles and an attached funnel so it would not get lost.



Francisco Kjolseth | The Salt Lake Tribune In the distance and old 1979 Toyota pick up truck covered with rust joins the pack as a group of Utahns who like camping the old fashioned way and use vehicles and camping gear from the 1970's or older gathered in the Uintahs. The second annual gathering of a dozen vehicles unpacked their gear, swaping stories of the latest unique finds or of vehicle break downs.

“I used to camp with my dad as a kid and I always liked the old vehicle,” said Taylor, who was driving a 1978 Ford Bronco.

Many of the Relic Run participants are collectors who scour websites and thrift shops for not only vintage camping gear but hard-to-find clothing from the '70s.

This weekend's events include rides to places such as Murdock and Washington lakes and the Soapstone Basin, a 1970s hors d'oeuvres hour, a relic gear-and-rig show and a potluck dinner.

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