

Canadian couple visits jamboree

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ATVers on their way to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, from British Columbia

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WALLACE -- Wallace's fifth annual High Mountain ATV Jamboree was one of Quebec, Canada, natives Marc Joinville and France Labonte's first stops on their ATV trip to Mexico.

"We're just getting started, actually," Joinville said.

The trip began in Roosville, B.C., after the couple trailered the recreational vehicles from Quebec behind a truck.

Destination: Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

The girlfriend/boyfriend pair started on the western part of the country because, "This is some of the most scenic out here in the West," Joinville said with a hint of French in his Americanized accent. "We're more into the rough stuff than the pavement."

He added that the narrower the trail, the better.

Joinville, 46, and Labonte, 51, have allotted 10 months to the cross-country trip, made possible by planning four years in advance.

They both work for Cascades, a paper mill in Quebec that allows employees to set money aside in advance to take a year off after 10 years of employment. The two started putting money away in 2003 and mapping out their adventure.

In the couple's 16-year relationship, this is the longest ATV trip they will take. They were used to doing small trips of two weeks or so together, but are able to take their time with this one.

Through the trip's publicity and a Web site dedicated to their journeys and planning the big one, Joinville and Labonte earned Polaris's sponsorship,

followed by numerous other associate sponsors.

Although, the two said, "the whole thing was planned and taking place either way," Labonte said. She added that they were pleasantly surprised by the support.

Polaris supplied the riders with two 2007 Sportsman 800 X2, clothing, parts and other stuff. They were "very generous," Joinville said.

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The dream

Joinville and Labonte are realizing a dream -- one they've planned for years.

"We want to make people realize they can materialize their dream," said Joinville. "A dream can come true if you really want it."

The couple's dream is to ride ATVs on the backcountry trail system from Roosville, B.C., to Baja, Mexico.

Why Cabo San Lucas? Because they heard it's possible.

The couple's idea of fun is to travel, camp and ATV. What better trip than to spend 10 months doing just that en route to a tropical destination?

"We're planning on staying as close to the water as we can," Labonte said.

Labonte and Joinville will spend Christmas in Baja and will have spent quite a bit of time away from their family by that time. Labonte has two sons, 21 and 27, at home.

"We're going to be spending Christmas in Baja," Labonte said, "so it will be nice to spend it with our family."

Joinville added, "But we are not rich."

The two joked that maybe after seeing this article an airline company will decide to sponsor them with airline tickets for her two sons to come join them for Christmas.

"It would be a nice surprise," she said.

After spending about four months in Mexico, a friend will drive Marc's truck and trailer to Kingman, Ariz., to meet the couple, load up and drive home.

"We're very happy that we can actually do this trip and live our dream," Joinville said.

For more information on Joinville and Labonte's trip, go online to www.quadtrek.net.