

This lady is changing the off-road world for ladies

By Sue Mead
Event photos: Rachel Speir, RS Marqueting

It might seem to some that Charlene Bower has had a meteoric rise in the world of off-roading. Bower's recent success in competition includes a 1st place at the inaugural 10-day Rebelle Rally; 2nd in the Pro Class at the 36 Hours of Uwharrie; 2nd at Rally Venture; fastest female at the King of the Hammers Backdoor Challenge in 2014 and 2015; and has a great time competing against fellow Arizona Undertakers as they take on the grueling Arizona trails on her off weekends.

In August, she hosted the 2nd annual Ladies Offroad Network Convention, in Salt Lake City, which drew 65 participants and, following, headed out immediately for a 24-stop women's off-road training program around the US. Her Ladies Offroad Network began in 2016 and has 10,000 followers; in 2017, she added a membership category that has now attracted 250 women.

The truth is, Bower's four-wheel-drive experience started when her mom was eight months pregnant, and her first ride on a dirt bike was when she was one month old. With a dad that competed and a mom that "pitted" for her husband, she and her brother grew up in the back seat of a flat fender Jeep on the Rubicon Trail, other Northern California trails and exploring Moab, Utah. "As our legs got longer, our family turned back to dirt biking, and we were completing 500-mile off-road weekend trips by the time I graduated from high school," says Bower, of Mesa AZ.

Bower's first job out of high school was changing dirt bike tires, before she went on to be a multi-line parts and store manager at two different motorcycle shops over the next 15 years.

She then moved into the media world, working for *Sand Addiction* and *SXS Action* magazines. In 2008, the energetic entrepreneur started Bower Motorsports Media, a public relations and marketing firm for off-road companies, racers and events and has worked with some of the most influential businessmen and women in the industry.

The following year, Bower started Racer Marketing School to help racers, companies and events and has become an Ambassador for BFGoodrich Tires, giving new drivers pointers and

education on tires.

"Recently, I started an online 'How-To' series on Ladies Offroad Network that explains the simple-to-more-complex Tools, Skills and Tips. I enjoy working with all the different levels of ladies and supporting them in their dreams and adventures. Through them, I am also impacting kids and men, as they carry on the conversation after engaging with our 'How-To' events or *Bower Power Hour* video series. And I am currently working on a 10-year plan for Ladies Offroad Network," explained Bower, who recently earned an International 4WD Training Association (I4WDTA) Certificate and was asked to join the Board of Directors.

"My driving and recovery skills have increased exponentially since moving to Arizona five years ago and being part of the Arizona Undertakers Hardcore Offroad Club, where we hang from winch lines off vertical waterfalls and climb boulders that can only fit into swimming pools. I have had the opportunity to be outdoors in an off-road vehicle in almost all the states, take on all types of terrain, battle all kinds of challenges, and I can't wait to add more experiences to this list!"

Ladies Offroad Network is dedicated to supporting all "off-road ladies" by guiding, educating, and motivating them to achieve their goals. All are welcome, whether a driver, co-driver, racer, passenger, mother, business owner,

worker or hobbyist. Bower's goal is "to provide a space to learn more about off-road sports, chat with other ladies from around the world and share stories with a community that has the same passion." In addition, Bower has frequent events, activities, and giveaways.

Components include an **Online International Community**, represented on multiple social channels: Facebook, Facebook Group, Instagram and Pinterest; **Education Online & Hands-On**: how-to's, videos and hands-on events; and the **Bower Media Store**, an authorized retailer of Ladies Offroad Network products and services.

Events include networking socials and the four-day educational **Ladies Offroad Convention**. ■

Charlene Bower
Photo:
Bower Media staff



All the dirt

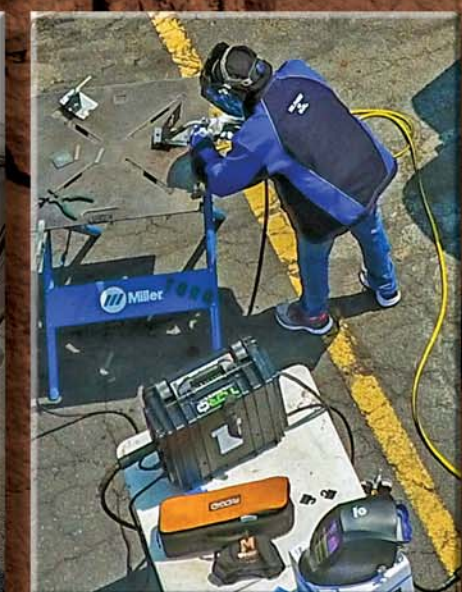
The Ladies Offroad Convention's action-packed, interactive 4-day weekend was dedicated to educating, motivating, and guiding all off-road ladies, with hands-on opportunities to learn all types of off-roading skills and to learn from other off-roaders through their stories, whether they participate in 4x4, or are MX, ATV, SXS enthusiasts, racing or are business owners.

"Some know each other when they arrive, but most don't. By the time the long weekend is over, where there have been multiple opportunities to work and laugh together, everyone molds into a special bond because we all have one thing in common: we don't mind dirt under our nails!" said event founder Charlene Bower.

Ladies 18 years or older are welcomed; mothers or guardians can bring daughters 13 years and older. Of note, no vehicle is necessary, in fact, it's discouraged. There are male instructors who support the ladies wholeheartedly.

Courses offered included Wiring 101 + Audio ;Tools 101 + Install; Outdoor Cooking; How to go Overlanding; Offroad Leader; Navigating Compass & Map; Vehicle Choice and Maintenance; Off-road Photography and Journalism; Opening and Building Trails; Overcoming Objections; Inside Racing; Social Media Tricks; and Tires are Sexy.

For more information, visit:
www.LadiesOffroadConvention.com ■



Ladies OFFROAD NETWORK