



Two Rivers Tracker

A publication of the Two Rivers Jeep Club, Pittsfield, Illinois

Volume 11 Issue 5

October 2008

Board Elections and Proposed Changes

The Annual General Meeting and Board Elections were held Saturday October 11. Mark Schumacher was elected to the Board replacing Walt Gilbert. Thanks to Walt to the years of service he has given to the club by serving on the Board and congratulations to Mark on volunteering. For those of you who don't know Mark, a short Biography is included on page 2.

There was discussion from Club members and the Board on some proposed changes for 2009 and beyond. Here are some of the major issues. This is your club and we'd like your input on these issues:

1. Move the Annual General Meeting and Ma Earth Run to late September. Many landowners are leasing their properties to hunters and requesting that we don't use their property after October 1. Moving the date of our last official run for the year will allow us to keep the run while respecting the landowner's requests.
2. To balance out the events, the Better Late than Never 4th of July Run will be moved back to the 4th of July or the week after. Any thoughts on which date would be best?
3. The amount that TRJC pays the American Legion for the meals served at the Safari and *BLAST* is critical to the Legion if they are to survive. It's a good deal for TRJC also as included in the meal prices we get the use of their entire facility for three full days. In order for our club to break even, and only to cover the cost of the meals, there is a proposed \$10-\$20 increase in the registration costs for the Safari and *BLAST*. We will still give TRJC members a substantial discount for both events. These increases are only to cover the cost of the food and the Legion's facilities. These are the first price increases in seven years!
4. It was suggested we make the newsletter a quarterly publication instead of once every other month. We're seeking member input on this also.
5. We'll once again run a trial for those who wish to access the newsletter from the website only and not receive paper copies. If you want to remove your name from paper copies of the newsletter, email davec@millenicom.com. We will not be able to notify you by email when the newsletters come out due to previous problems we've had with email notifications. You'll still receive special notices and invitations by postal mail.

6. We have a coordinator for a hands-on safety training session this spring, Brenda McKinley. Thoughts are to have no classroom sessions, but to have this done entirely on a trail and demonstrate safe recovery techniques. This would be open to all TRJC members and would probably be required for all trail guides as a refresher. If you are interested in helping, please contact Brenda.
7. We still have no volunteer for promotional items like jackets, cups, hats, etc. We could use some help. Please consider volunteering.

November 1 we will have the 2009 planning meeting at the VFW from 1 to 5 PM. We need your input on the above items as that's the date decisions will be made on these issues. Members are welcome to attend. If you cannot attend and have comments or suggestions, please either call the club phone, a board member, or email davec@millenicom.com before November 1 so we know what **you** would like to see as we plan for 2009 and beyond.

After the November 1 meeting, the 2009 event schedule will be posted on the website and will be included in the December newsletter.

2009 membership renewals have been sent out. If you have not received yours, please fill out the application in this newsletter. If you have already received the renewal in the mail, give this application to a Jeepin' friend. We need to keep attracting new members.

Welcome to the Board, Mark!

My wife and I joined the club in 2007 and have had more fun with the club activities and met more nice people and made more friends than in any other activity we've been involved in. We are both hot rodders but that has taken a back seat to the Jeeping with our 32 Ford sitting gathering dust. I've always enjoyed working on and building vehicles and I've found that Jeeps are just another way to put a dollar sign between four wheels. Chris says I'm always out of control when it comes to vehicles. In 2007 my wife and I served as Trail Guides on New Salem and enjoyed helping Doug and Don and meeting everyone at the two open events. We've also enjoyed every work day and club event this year and are already looking forward to 2009. My career was in law enforcement having been a Police Officer, Police Chief, and then retiring as the Chief Deputy with the Knox County Sheriff's Department in Galesburg, Illinois. I volunteered to be on the board to get more involved and help the club in any way I can. I'll help retain our family type atmosphere and continue to help the club grow, attracting more nice people.



The Prez Sez...

By Lee Ator, President

I'd like to congratulate Mark on his new position in TRJC and thank Walt. These folks are working and have worked to make sure we remain the best Jeep club in the country. But we can't do it alone. There are so many things we need done and few volunteers. We're starting to get a few more like Mark and Brenda but we still need more. Please, if you have time to help our club, give me a call and we'll put you to work!



For 2009, we need to make sure the membership remains stable. You can help with that by telling your Jeepin' friends about us and inviting them to join TRJC. If you can't volunteer any other way, just that little effort will help a lot.

"Say something good about TRJC to your buddies!"

2008 Better Late Than Never 4th of July Run

Courtesy of Mark Schumacher

It was great weather for the Better Late Than Never 4th of July Run in Pittsfield. Doug and Jennifer Watret and Chad and Frannie Suhre spent a lot of time and effort putting the day's activities together and it would turn out to be another great day at TRJC.



Over thirty Jeeps showed up for breakfast at the VFW. Two trails were available for the day, Ridge Rambler and Murphy's Law. Hamer Tate and Doug & Jennifer Watret were guiding on Ridge Rambler with Gary Williams and Andrew & Sonya Bottrell guiding on Murphy's Law. Later in the day I realized that Chad Suhre had decided to skip the trail rides and instead he set up the area that we would be eating our dinner at.

and I went on Ridge Rambler knowing that the night run would be at Murphy's Law. Fifteen other Jeeps headed towards Ridge Rambler looking forward to a nice ride. With Hamer, Doug, and Jennifer in the lead we headed out with the intent of finding mud to play in. When we arrived at the area that had a pipeline project going on we found that the area had dried much better than expected which especially surprised Hamer. Hamer was very busy all day clearing the trail from trees that had fallen in the storm that week. He would run ahead of the pack and by the time we caught up with him the trail was usually cleared.



As usual, Hamer and Jenny opened their home to everyone for lunch and then it was back to the timber. Doug, Jennifer and Shawn Hartman left the group after lunch so that they could go help Chad with the preparations for dinner. Chris and I were asked to lead the way behind Hamer with Hamer thinking that we couldn't get lost. The afternoon was then spent running on some of the eleven miles of trails on the Tate property with Hamer staying busy clearing the trail.

We decided to head to Murphy's Law at 4:00 and Charlie Ater led the way taking us through back roads that I'll never find again. He called one of them, "Seven Creek Crossing Road" because there were seven creek crossing in a half of a mile. He stated that two days before they had been impassable but we again found that the water had gone down. I think the area would make for a great snow run this winter as a lot of it was not much more than a two lane path.



Once at Murphy's Law we found that Virginia Williams and her son Gary Williams had really opened up their property to the club. We were led into an area with a private fishing pond that the family maintains and which Virginia said held Catfish two feet long. We found that Chad, Frannie, Doug, Jennifer, and Shawn had set up tables, a Port-a-Potty, a generator and chairs around a fire that was ready to be lit. In addition they had games ready for all age groups. These included Volleyball, a washer toss, horseshoes, a toss using balls on a rope, and a scavenger hunt.

In addition, two games were set up that required that you drove your Jeep to participate. One involved trying to parallel park your Jeep between some traffic cones without knocking some eggs off of the cones, the closest Jeep winning. Brenda really turned on the charm and won the event with a combination of driving skills and charming personality. The other involved putting an egg in a magnetized socket on your hood (they made sure your paint was well protected) and then driving an obstacle course. The fastest time won after adding penalties for dropping

the egg, breaking the egg, not following the course, and for hitting the stakes outlining the course. Brenda tried to turn on the charm for Chad but he wasn't having any of it and it didn't work as well on this event.

Frannie delivered a full course dinner from Kentucky Fried Chicken which included pop, tea, and a couple of large cakes. While waiting for it to get dark everyone enjoyed dinner, talked, and played games. One young man went swimming after his sister gave him an encouraging push. She then tried to make it better by hugging him to try to help him dry off.

When it finally got dark we were led out to the front section of Murphy's Law. Everything sure looks a lot tougher at night. A few Jeeps were towed and Gary Williams spent some time in a corn field trying to get his cattle out. I don't think he succeeded and wonder if we'll be eating burgers at the next club event. Around 10:00 PM awards were handed out for the games. The fire was roaring and some people headed home and some stayed to enjoy the evening.

As usual, Hamer, Jenny, Virginia, and Gary were great hosts and we thank them for the access to their land. Doug, Jennifer, Chad and Frannie put a lot of time and effort into this run and are to be congratulated. Club runs like this and the June run at Miller's TNT Farm are more fun than you should be allowed to have in your Jeep. Now that they've stepped up to the plate I hope we can convince them to do it again next year.

2008 Better Late Than Never 4th of July Run

Courtesy of Doug Watret

The scavenger hunt winner was James & Kristine Piiparinen. They won a new Jeep!! Did I forget to mention it was a remote controlled toy Jeep?

The Driving Skills Egg stravananza winner was J. R. Arnott. He won the coveted golden steering wheel award.

The Brady Bunch Backing Blitz winner was Brenda McKinley. This event was inspired by an episode of the Brady Bunch TV show in which Marsha & Greg were fighting over who was the better driver. In their contest they had to get as close as they could to a cone with an egg on it. As everyone remembers; Marsha won. So in recognition of this, Brenda was awarded a Marsha Brady look-alike wig & dress.



Congratulations to our winners & thanks to all who came out to enjoy the day with us. We hope everyone had fun.

Last Run of the Year

Courtesy of Mark Schumacher

Saturday October 11th was another great day in Pittsfield for the final club run of 2008. The only trail open was Atlas due to the rest of the land owners leasing their property to outfitters for the hunting season. Even so, a wide variety of Jeeps and people attended. Before we left for Atlas there was the usual great breakfast at the VFW, the Annual General Meeting, and then a short board meeting.

Even though some of the Jeeps were not rated for Atlas they stayed around to ride, trusting that Alan Grady would get them through. Jeff and Dan were wondering if Alan could make it though as Thomas had stayed home, his daughter Annie was with him, and he hasn't driven much since Thomas started driving. We hadn't gotten a block from the clubhouse when one of the Jeeps suffered a flat tire. A couple of minutes later and the tire was aired back up and we were on our way.



In the morning the trails were pretty dry, Alan kept us on some of the more moderate trails, and I think everyone enjoyed the extremes that they found there. Even staying on the more moderate trails provided much steeper and longer hills and tighter "V" notches than many people had experienced before. It's always exciting to start over the top of a drop and not be able to see the bottom until you are totally committed, especially if you've never done it before. A few Jeeps made more than one attempt to climb some of the hills and a winch or two were needed. Right before lunch one of the Jeeps suffered a broken clutch linkage, it was trail repaired and it continued to fall apart several times during the day. The owners never gave up and had lots of help to make repairs as they continued on.

After lunch we started to find some mud here and there and some of the terrain became a little more difficult. Even though a couple of the Jeeps were relatively stock, no one turned around and everyone gladly accepted a tow strap or winch cable when needed.



As we turned into a pretty deep "V" notch I finally got a dent in Rubi 2 when I drove over a misshapen log and it stood up into the side of the hood. After I got over it Dan had problems with it resulting in his front sway bar brackets and connectors becoming bent and then broken. I think it must be Dennis's fault as the log was fine until he ran over it and moved it into our way. We then reached our first large and deep mud hole, and there was no backing out of it. Alan entered it, got stuck, tried to get out repeatedly and then had to pull winch cable. I think most everyone had to use a winch except for Dennis and Dan who had been there before and both did very well.

I made a huge mistake in the afternoon and was very lucky that no one got hurt as a result of my negligence. After getting to the top of a large hill Justin and I drove straight off of the trail and into a wooded area as the Jeep with the broken clutch was behind us and we were waiting to see if they would need some help. We sat talking for a couple of minutes with the engine running. When the Jeep didn't reach the top of the hill I turned off the engine and we walked over to assist. Dennis and Jeff were there and started pulling winch cable and I asked Justin to get my tree saver from beside the driver seat. The next thing I saw was my Jeep rolling backwards at a pretty good rate of speed. When I realized that there wasn't a driver in it I yelled for everyone down the hill to run and then it luckily struck a large Oak tree and came to rest. Just as soon as Justin opened the door it had started rolling and he was unable to get into it or to reach the emergency brake. If I had put it into gear and/or set the emergency brake it would not have rolled, but I apparently had my head where it shouldn't be and I failed to do so. Rubi 2 suffered a bent frame horn, and damage to the driver's side rear end, taillight, quarter panel and rocker panel. We had to take the door off as it would no longer close. It goes in to get the frame straightened this week. Luckily no one was hurt and I can fix the Jeep. Since the incident several people have told me that they had their Jeeps roll away when they failed to park properly. I know that this is something that I will never forget.

At the end of the day Alan told everyone that there was one more "V" notch by the exit that had a few large rocks to drop off of and it would take about twenty minutes to get through the area. A couple of Jeeps chose to not go into the notch and a few wished that they had not, although I think they had a good time. Alan isn't very good about judging time as I think it was closer to an hour and a half before we finally got through the notch. Some big rocks hung up a Jeep of two, deep mud gathered in a few, and the final ninety degree turn at the base of the last hill proved to have a lot of deep slippery mud to get through while trying to make the uphill turn. I know that I had to use my winch to make the turn and I believe that a few others did also.

It was about 6:30 when we got off of the trail and several of us headed to the new Mexican Restaurant in Pittsfield for a lot of good food. I think that everyone had a great day and found that Atlas was a lot of fun and pretty exciting. With a lot of good people offering help and guidance everyone got through it relatively unscathed. Some learned why the club inspects Jeeps and then rates them for the trails that they are capable of completing.

It was a great way to end the year and it will be a long time until February comes around so we can get back onto the trails. At least the Christmas Party will get everyone together as a social event. When the Christmas Party gets announced, please sign up as soon as possible so that it doesn't get cancelled like last year. After it was cancelled last year several people said that they intended to go but they had not signed up. Numbers need to be counted in order for everything to be ordered and arranged so there is a cut off date. I hope to see everyone there.

The Trail of Life

by Chief



Writing this issue of the Trail of Life has really proven to be a challenge for me. In my fourth attempt to come up with something interesting and entertaining, I sit before my keyboard, finding my creative writing juices completely lacking. In the past I have had the "Raccoon Wars" or a TRJC event to fall back on during dry periods. Unfortunately from the story standpoint, I have pretty much contained the "renegade raccoons" to an occasional dumping of my garbage cans. My current schedule has kept me from attending any TRJC events past the Blast so I am empty there. The activity at the firehouse sometimes bring some interesting stories but unfortunately the events of the last couple of weeks do not lend themselves to light and comical reading. So to avoid a column of uninteresting drivel, I will stop here and promise to return next issue with a sidesplitting story to be retold for generations.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to TRJC President Lee Ator, Tammy his wife and all of his family on the passing of Lee's mother, Ruth Evelyn Ghrist Ator. Mrs. Ator passed away October 6th.

See Ya on the Trail

Chief

2009 Board Members and Responsibilities			
Board Members			
President	Lee Ator		217-437-5221
Vice President	Gary Williams	gwilliam@adams.net	217-285-4750
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2009 Membership Enrollment Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Home _____

Phone Work _____

Phone Cell _____

e-mail(s) _____

Nickname(s) _____

Jeep(s) _____

Membership Type

PAID MEMBER (Choose one only) <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal (\$60.00) <input type="checkbox"/> New (\$60.00)

OR

COMPLIMENTARY (Choose all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Land Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Board Member <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Special Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Only

Do not publish my address in the club directory

Deliver notices and newsletters via email only

Checking this box means you will receive only minimal paper notifications and no paper copy newsletter.

I hereby release Two Rivers Jeep Club, landowners, and any other party or parties involved in any Two Rivers Jeep Club activity of any liability whatsoever for any loss or damage to property or personal injuries sustained or occurring on any Two River Jeep Club Event. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age and have liability insurance for vehicles I will use on the trails. Membership renewals are to be received by **December 1** if you want your name in the club directory. Make checks out to "Two Rivers Jeep Club" or "TRJC".

Applicant's Signature _____

Date Signed _____

Office Use Only

Amount Received _____ Cash or Check # _____ Date Received: ____/____/____

Two Rivers Jeep Club
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