



Two Rivers Tracker

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

Volume 13 Issue 2

April 2010

News 2 Use

May/June Events

May 13-15: 9th annual Illini 4x4 Safari.

We still have room. By the time you get this newsletter the Safari will almost be here but there is still time to invite your friends to join us at the Midwest's best 4WD event that is open to the general public, from beginners to experts alike. And...if you have not yet registered and decide at the last minute to attend, we should be able to accommodate you. While it's important for people to register ahead of time so we can plan for food, we have not turned anyone away that registers at the last minute. If you cannot attend this event you'll have another chance August 5 – 7 at the 4x4 *BLAST*. Better yet, we hope to see you at both!

June 5: TRJC Recovery Class.

Join us at the VFW for breakfast and then at 9 AM we'll head to Murphy's Law for a day of hands-on vehicle recovery training. There will be a one hour classroom session with the rest of the time spent on the trail demonstrating ways to safely recover vehicles and also to attend to injuries on the trail. The course will be taught by experienced instructors and will also deal with such issues as taking command of an incident and dealing with victim recovery from accidents, communications, medical attention, crowd control as well vehicle stabilization and recovery.

At least one Trail Guide/Helper from each trail will be required to attend. In addition, all TRJC members are encouraged to attend. Please notify

Mark Schumacher, m32shoe427v8@frontiernet.net 309-314-3919

if you plan to attend or if you have any questions. This is the only notice that will be sent out so please mark the date on your calendar now, RSVP, and plan to attend. ***We need a beater vehicle that we can lay on its side for demonstration. Contact Mark if you know of one.***

June 19: Father's Day Run and Board Meeting.

The ever popular Father's Day run is again sponsored by Durrell and Syndy Miller. This is one of our most popular member-only club events. More details will follow in the next newsletter but please reserve that Saturday for a day full of fun.

Reminder.....

Please, we need any write ups and photos you might have of the Safari for our next newsletter. We plan on printing it around the 1st of June so send any articles and photos you may have to davec@millenicom.com before then. Thanks!

Moab ...the Rest of the Story

By The Ol' Fart, Charlie Ater

We all know that there is always more to a wheelin' tale than is told by the people involved and this trip was no exception. Don't get me wrong - I consider Dave Christensen to be a fine, upstanding citizen, but he's an A—hole! Just ask Mark! It seems that Mark has a severe aversion to heights, and when trails were discussed prior to departure, it was "Just a little bit of shelf road; not bad at all." You guessed it! Half the trails were 500 to 1000 feet above the floor of the canyons and had few rocks ranging in size from a 15 gallon drum to VW bug size. And we had to drive over them. And when we reached the main road back and stopped to air up, potty break, or whatever, Mark would tell Dave "I like you, but you're an A—hole!"

I left a day early after dropping the dog of at the vet/kennel and spent the night with Mark and Chris. We hit the road early and picked up Mike and Julie DeBacker on the way to the world's largest truck stop - the I-80 Truck Stop for fuel and breakfast. Good food and fair prices and a museum of trucks. If you're in the area, it's worth a stop. We took it "easy" across Iowa, Kansas, and into Colorado driving into a gusting wind that sapped mileage and kept you driving every second. We allotted two days to do this and we were ready to stop each day. The trip over (through?) the Rockies was a lucky shot. The road was only open for a short time, and we hit it at the right time and sailed, well, maybe slogged is a better term. Snow squalls, slick roads, dumb drivers, high altitude power loss (for me - I had the gas engine in a diesel crowd), and idiot drivers. I ended up running in low and second gear going up the mountain to the Eisenhower Tunnel. And once we were clear of the Rockies - **WOW!** The scale of this immense and beautiful country we live in starts to become apparent. The variety of color, terrain, and desolation is unending and infinite.

At the motel in Moab, Mark negotiated a healthy discount for us. He's good - he pulled out all the stops: AARP, etc., but ran into the limit when he asked about a special discount for cops. The little gal checking us in asked if we were all really cops and I answered that those two were, but I was a perp. Mark immediately piped up with, "Yeah, we met him while he was in prison." The look on her face was worth it!

Those of you that kept track of the TRJC crew via Dave's blog already know that I had brake problems and I knew it before I left. Mark told me to come on out and we'd look at them. That was done, they were fixed (temporarily), and they worked! The brakes not working right is what indirectly caused my U-joint to explode. I couldn't slow the spinning wheel with the brake to make the TruTrac engage and when it hit terra-ROCK-firma, aka slick rock, it went KaBlooey! Or something like that. The U-joint had been in less than two weeks...

Dave started us out easy on Fins 'N' Things then dropped us into Hell's Revenge via Baby Lion's Back. Tip Over Challenge was my nemesis but it was worth it. The challenges that we met and really didn't enjoy until later, much later, were few, but notable. The Intimidator on the Flat Iron Mesa trail is one that I still don't appreciate. It's an off camber squeeze around a point that leaves plenty of room to go around, BUT! It's off camber toward the canyon and part way through there's a small dip in the rock that puts you even more off camber. Towards the canyon. Which is 9000, er, 500 feet deep. Straight down. With a rock bottom. Oh, Yeah! Pucker Power, Baby! The mental fornication of this diabolical "challenge" results in boxers being converted to a thong. We did it with Dave guiding us through. Mark was more heartfelt than usual when he complemented Dave, "You're an A—hole!!" And Dave with his usual modesty says "Oh now, that wasn't so bad, was it?"



Charlie finishing the job.

The Kane Creek trail was a “walk in the park”, well, that’s what Dave said. We hadn’t learned yet that Dave speaks and thinks a different wheelin’ language than the rest of us. The first obstacle was the Colorado group in front of us but apparently they knew Dave and pulled way off on a side road. Then there was a little ‘down and up, and out’ that was a hiccup compared to what we found next. A couple of guys in a side by side met us and said some big rocks had fallen on the trail, and nobody could get thru. We had La Sal Dave leading us for



Mark, Chris, and Charlie on Fins 'N' Things. This was only the beginning.

this one and he just popped right on over the obstacle then came back to spot us over. We all did it with some “sturm und drang”, then proceeded to a shady spot for lunch.

The Colorado crew caught up with us and we elected to stay together. They were a cool bunch with a lot of experience and they carried every tool imaginable. They have done major repairs on the trail that included welding, grinding, drilling, tapping, etc. After lunch, this walk in the park got interesting, as “OH SH—“ interesting. Did I mention previously something about a little bit of shelf road? This was it! It wasn’t until we were well off the canyon floor that we went around a corner and saw a rock field and wondered where the road was. And look at the rubber on those rocks! What kind of fool would play on rocks here with a 500 foot drop to the bottom and just a couple of scraggly trees to slow any unplanned descent? That’s the road. OMG!



Mike & Julie on the 6' wide Dragon's Tail fin on Hell's Revenge. No “heights” involved.

I watched Mike and Mark go thru, then it was my turn. La Sal Dave had just drove right on up in his 360 powered CJ, no problem. It was different for me. The little 2.5 engine that could stalled because of operator error. So La Sal Dave had me back up to give it a Moab bump. At this point I’m angled toward the wall, that’s where the line is. And Dave wants me to back up toward that drop. Right! So I did, about two inches. I needed more, so another grudging inch. Dave said I had six feet but all I could see was two and I was trying to get both of them on the break pedal. (They don’t both fit at the same time!) Finally, I gathered it all up and backed up another six inches at which point I was told to “go for it”. Boy, Howdy! Hand throttle eased up, clutch out, foot on

brake lightly to assure the TruTrac worked and Wahoo! I did it! We watched some of the Colorado crew work the rocks, then went ahead. We finished the trail out with no further excitement and at the end Mark complemented Dave in his usual manner.

We did a number of other trails: Long Canyon, Deadhorse Point, Gemini Bridges, Strike Ravine, crossed Area BFE, and I'm sure I'm missing some. One of the best was going to Dry Mesa on the far side of Arches National Park, There were several places that "got your attention" as our intrepid guide would say. The best was a rubble hill strewn with small rocks, a ledge two thirds of the way up, and a big rock or two, or more just to keep it interesting. Several sets of tracks led to the base of the hill but we were the first to go up since the last shower.



La Sal Dave, Mark, Mike, and Charlie on The Kane Creek trail.

They are somewhere inside the circle.

This is one of the allegedly non-existent, and at times less than 7' wide, shelf roads.

This excursion was Dave, Mark, and myself, and we did this while the ladies and Mike hiked up to Delicate Arch. The view was fantastic with the La Sals off to the South looking like mountains should with snow capped peaks poking into the clouds. We had to go back, so down the steep rubble hill. Dave tagged a big rock (about the size of a 5 gal. bucket) with his diff and then Mark tagged it too. They were running 35" tires. Mine are 33" so I decided to place my wheel on it. Wohoo! The sucker rolled and did my heart get started! Fun Times!

Our last day we decided to do an easy trip, more scenic than difficult. You see where this is leading, don't you? We hit Onion Creek trail and headed for the La Sals via some interesting roads. We ended up in the La Sals all right, on a snow run complicated by a broken spring pack on Mike and Julie's CJ. We were able to do a solid trail fix even though a leaf was missing. Easy? Dave was involved, remember?

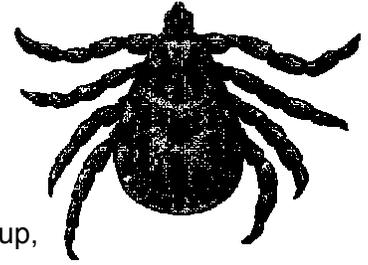
One other thing to tell about- food and beer! I decided early in the trip that the diet was out the window for this week, and Dave knows some great places to eat (and drink). Our first meal in Moab was at the "Branding Iron" where Dave insisted we try the best fries you ever had. When they were brought out, it was "you're kidding, right?" They were the sorriest lookin' things you ever saw - limp, skin on, grayish, and greasy. And we couldn't get enough of them! Zak's Pizza was another experience, as was the Moab Brewery. Of course, all of these places served several kinds of micro brew as well as the brands we're familiar with. Would you believe that I ate like a pig and lost six pounds?

It was a great trip, with some great people, good food, good brew, great wheelin', and good times all around. Bonuses were getting to meet La Sal Dave and, of course, Dieter, who helped with my axle installation. I think Dieter was surprised that we all "knew" him. I hope that we can wheel with him some day. My thanks to all involved, it was a great vacation! Hopefully, we can do it again next year, and take some more with us.

Ticked Off by Ticks?

By The Ol' Fart, Charlie Ater

It's that time of year again, and we need to be ready. I've already been tick-bit several times this year, and being the paranoid feller that I am, I did some digging to see what I could do to minimize the damage. Some of these tips are old, they've been around longer than I have, but they do help.



Wear light colored clothing. It makes the varmints easier to see. Yeah, camo is tough, really macho, but it enables the little critters to hide while they crawl up, seeking a place to get to your nether regions.

Wear boots and/or long socks and "blouse'em" military style. That means to tuck your pants inside the top of your boots or socks so the little buggers have to crawl way up to find an opening to get to your hide. It makes'em more likely to be spotted or even brushed off. It ain't stylish, but then tick bites aren't either. Some of us wear the rubber knee boots. That's because hip boots are too awkward and uncomfortable. Fact: ticks very seldom get more than 18"-24" off the ground, so knee boots do provide some protection. The rubber also is hard for them to grasp as you walk by.

Use a repellent. They do work, just not very well at times. If it's a hot day and your sweating a lot- er, sorry. Horses sweat, men perspire, and women glow. (Jenny- See? I remembered!) OK, on a hot day, you'll need to refresh the repellent more frequently. Be careful when using repellents on children and minimize all applications to bare skin.

When you get done with the activities that expose you to ticks, take a shower! The Deer Tick is very tiny, and in the nymph stage nearly invisible. They have tiny mouth parts and have to work at poking through your hide. A shower with some decent pressure and a good scrubbing with soap will wash 95% of them off and the soap will work on the waxy outer coating of the critters to let them dehydrate and die (slowly, unfortunately).

Check your body for ticks after you're out of the shower, especially the private areas. This can be fun if you enlist some help... Seriously, that's where they seem to gravitate to, so guys, check the dangly bits and ladies check uh, yeah, check down there, too. Check the younger kids, 'cause they sure won't. They're fast and easy 'cause they're smaller and have no modesty...

Since your clothing may have some critters in it, put them in a bag that can be sealed until you can wash them. Or, better yet, wash them ASAP. The soapy water destroys the protective coating that was mentioned and the heat of the dryer cooks 'em. Just throwing the contaminated clothing in the dryer long enough to get hot for a few minutes will cook the little bast- er, bugs, too.

If you do find a tick embedded (don't you just love that term?), scrape the tiny ones off or if they're big enough to get ahold of, pull it off. They sell special tweezers to use but the Deer Tick is so small that they cannot be used to "grasp the head". If one is attached, all is not lost. It may take as long as three days for the little ticks to get their mouth parts far enough into your skin to transmit the bacteria. The minimum time varies with the expert, but it will take at least 10-12 hours from what I've read.

So, there you have it. Is this all you need to know? Probably not, so get on the 'net and check it out yourself. I don't claim to be an authority on ticks and I'm sure I've overlooked some things that may be useful. I hope this will be enough to help you stay relatively tick free this summer.

Trail of Life

By Chief

When I started writing this column for the Tracker, I decided to call it very cleverly I think, the Trail of Life. It was really to be a forum to relate the life's happenings of TRJC members. As time Trailed on, it seemed I received fewer and fewer reports of happenings so I began to write about adventures in my life. One of the subjects which seemed to receive the most comments was the Raccoon Wars. Since I have managed to control the raccoons for the time being, I sometimes find myself struggling to find a topic to write about.



I am sure we have all noticed life tends to be much like the trails we navigate each year at TRJC. We all know life and trails have their ups and down, good times and bad times. It is what you make out of those experiences that determine your success and perspective of life. I remember when I first started my adventures with TRJC, there was much to learn, much to understand and much to spend. I began to understand the motto, Just Empty Every Pocket. I am not going to go into detail as to how much I have spent on the Chief's Buggy as Mrs. Chief is still not for sure and that is okay. I remember making some modifications trying to save money only to find out I should have spent the big bucks in the first place because the cheap solution was the "Cheap Solution". I remember looking at others ideas and setups listening to ideas and trail philosophies. I was never mechanically inclined. I had very limited experience in any type of mechanical work. I was very uncomfortable thinking I could do any of the modifications I eventually ended up doing. After each check written, and part added, I gained a little more confidence. After each trail ride I attended, I felt a little more comfortable and confident in my ability. I remember those who came along side me to encourage me and mentor me on the "way of the trail." The thing I remember the most is how everyone was eager to help no matter how much I screwed up. I think during my first outing, I spent three fourths of my time on a strap behind Rooster or Toughnuts.

In the years I have been involved with TRJC there have been friends who have stayed and endured and those who have come and gone. There have been good times and trying times and some scary times. Just like life. The thing is, there are always new people just like I was, just like we all were, looking for an opportunity to enjoy the adventure and camaraderie of the Trail with good people.

TRJC has a long, rich history of being a family and community oriented group of good people united in the love of Jeepin'. Let's be proud of where we have come from and where we are going. It is just like life, you get out of it what you put into it.

Congratulations to Durrell and Cindy Miller with the addition of Samuel Beau Miller into their family. Samuel was born April 1, 2010.

Get Well Wishes, Mrs. Chief (Linda) is recovering very well from an appendectomy.

Our Condolences to John and Sandy Toumbs. John's mother, Maryann passed away on April 27th.

Words of Wisdom: My wife and I had words, but I didn't get to use mine.....and.....
frustration is trying to find your glasses without your glasses.

See Ya on the Trail,

Chief

2010 Board Members and Officers

Board Members

President	Lee Ator		217-437-5221
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Membership: Dues are \$60.00 per year for a family membership. Yearly membership runs from January 1 through December 31. Dues are to be paid by December 1st each year with a 30 day grace period. Landowners, Board Members, Trail Guides, and major Committee Chairs receive complimentary membership.

Newsletter Deadlines: This newsletter is published 6 times a year (**February, April, June, August, October, and December.**) All articles and photos are due by the 15th of the month before the newsletter will be published.

Newsletter Article Submission

All articles and photos should be submitted to the newsletter coordinator. The preferred method to send articles and photos is email but hard copies of photos and typed or handwritten articles will also be accepted. If you need assistance in writing an article, we can help proof it and correct spelling errors. Photos can be black and white or color with a description of what, where and when. Scanned photos may be in any reasonable graphics format (medium to high-resolution.) Low resolution photos do not print well. Hard copy photos will be returned to the owner upon request.

Next Newsletter Deadline: May 28

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