



Two Rivers Tracker

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

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The Prez Sez

From Lee Ator



Happy New Year! Soon we begin our season of wheelin' fun. I encourage all of you to take advantage of your membership benefits and come to the Trail Builders (which are more fun than work) and join us as we sponsor a number of free catered meals and special trail rides for members.

Your 2012 membership directory and the Safari registration form is enclosed in this mailing. Please let your wheelin' friends know about the Safari and encourage them to attend. Registration forms are on the web page or they can call the club phone and we'll mail them one. The more people we get to attend the Safari, the more fun we'll have and the more we can donate back to the community. And Lilly already has some great door prizes with more to come. Also, please try to attend some of the Board meetings and let us know what we can do to make TRJC even more enjoyable for you and your family. See you on the trails!

Upcoming Events

All events start from the VFW. Breakfast begins about 7:30 AM and trails leave at 9 AM. Check the web page for updates in the event there are changes due to the weather.

Feb. 4: **First Trail Builder** of the season, weather permitting.

Feb. 18: **Trail Builder. Board meeting @ 7:30 AM. Catered kick-off dinner @ 6:00 PM.** RSVP to the club phone or Jeff Sorensen (tricieff@yahoo.com).

Mar. 3: **Trail Builder.**

Mar. 17: **Trail Builder.**

Mar. 31: **Member Trail Ride. Board meeting @ 7:30 AM. Catered member appreciation dinner @ 6:00 PM.** RSVP to the club phone or Jeff Sorensen (tricieff@yahoo.com).

Apr. 14: **Trail Builder.**

Apr. 28: **Trail Builder. Board meeting @ 7:30 AM.**

A Day on the Trails...

A Women's Beginners Guide

By Lilly Vittetow



Preparing for a day on the off roading trails for a woman is a bit different from a guys. Guys make sure they have tools, extra parts, fluids, winch controller, tree savers, tow straps, fire extinguisher, etc. and they're ready to go. Now when a woman goes they think of essentials needed throughout the day to make it a little more enjoyable and comfortable for everyone.

First, let's look at safety and nuisance items. First aid kit is a must! What if your guy smacked his knuckle and busted it open while changing the tire that blew? How about the stinging Nettle plants? The Band aid itch gel is great, or as our daughter calls it "the magic gel". Takes the sting & redness out immediately.

Now bugs...The gel works great for stings but what about the ticks. Learned a trick from an Army Ranger that sounds really weird but so far works every time. You know the paper matches? Take the sulfur head off of one and swallow it. The sulfur comes out your pores and the ticks will not latch on. They may crawl on you but won't dig in.

Gnats an annoyance? Mix about half of a bottle of vanilla with water in a spray bottle and spray yourself. Really works and smells good too, great for those hot days. You may have to re-apply every few hours but who cares.

Pack a small cooler. Be sure to fill it with water and sport drinks to keep hydrated on those hot days. You'll want a minimum of 3 drinks per person for a full day of wheeling. Bring things to make sandwiches for the lunch break; bread, lunch meat, condiments. Bring some fresh fruit for energy. Pack some chips for the junk food if you need it or do trail mixes for a healthier side. I've even brought yogurt on the trails, freeze it overnight and it'll keep all day!



Well, what else do I carry in my pack on the trails? Toilet paper, a few empty baggies for used TP (don't leave anything on the trails or in the woods), wet wipes for quick clean up, healthy snacks, a camera, extra batteries for the camera, a small trash bag.

Now if you have kids with you. You will want to bring something to keep them busy in case there is down time. There are break downs on the trail and the last thing the people working on a rig wants is a kid in the way. Bring baggies and maybe a camera for the kids to use. Leave the video games, iPods and phones at home! Maybe even a small nature's book (put into a baggie to protect it). Enjoy nature!

There are always things to find on the trails if you look hard enough. We've found clay, different weeds to make beautiful bouquets, deciduous tree beads, rocks, geodes, fossils, nuts, pine cones, feathers and all kinds of things. Kids love finding new things on the trails at all ages. And don't tell them, but they're learning things! We have a wonderful friend that knows all kinds of nature stuff and shows our daughter. We have quite the unusual collection of things and pictures that our daughter has brought home along with some great memories.

It truly is a family sport and quality time together! Enjoy it! Hope to see you in the Spring!!!

Hail to the Chief



Thanks Chief for keeping me amused month after month. Your dry humor and talent for taking a simple subject and turning it into word art makes reading the Tracker something to look forward to. Shawn and I constantly reminisce of the days spent wheeling on Murphy's Trail and the time served as your Tail Gunner but more importantly we wonder what happened to those darn raccoons. If for any reason you have successfully rid yourself of them I would be more than happy to take up a collection and bring you some more just to keep your wordsmith prowess on form.

Please keep up the great work and keep the Tracker worth reading.

The Mad Brit

Trail of Life

By Chief



Well it is almost that time for "Jeepin' 2012". What new adventures are awaiting members of Two Rivers Jeep Club? It will be interesting to see. I know we will have some new scenery on Murphy's Law. I received a call from Murph a few weeks ago saying he has brought in some private contractors from the Quincy area to do some work for upgrading the trail. He said their previous work was a "Mystery" to him but they were very ambitious. He said they were real adventurers and maybe a little crazy. It will be interesting to see what they have added to ole Murphy's Law.

I have been a little disappointed with winter so far. The paltry amount of snow we have had is barely worth mentioning. I like snow. I like to drive in it and it is much easier to clean off of the Jeep than the tenacious Pike County Mud. Due to the lack of snow we haven't been called to pick up nurses to take them to work (a task Murphy has volunteered to help us with) or rescue any damsels neck deep in snow along the interstate following an important texting while driving episode on snow packed roads.

After a really busy end of 2011 at the fire station, 2012 has been pretty uneventful. For lack of any Jeepin' adventures to write about, I am going to be forced once again to relate to you another "interesting rescue" we conducted a couple of weeks ago.

One morning at 03:30 the Sheriff's Office called us to assist in a search for a missing person. A young man in his mid twenties was missing. The weather was clear but cold enough you did not want to be out in it for any length of time. The subject we were to look for was a man who lives in the area with his mother. She works at a bar and grill within walking distance from their residence. The young man left the establishment at 21:30hrs (9:30pm) to begin the short walk home. Around 02:30 when his mother got home he was nowhere to be found. After she and a friend did a quick search of the area, mom called the Sheriff's Office who made another quick search with no results. That's when we were summoned from our warm beds into the cold and dark. We mustered at the station and began organizing the search areas. Calls to the man's cell phone went unanswered causing more anxiety for mom as well as us. The man has had some health issues in the past and we were concerned he might have had an episode and was unable to get someplace for help. The sheriff deputies were contacting the cell phone carrier to have them "ping" his phone for a location. As search crews were being deployed and starting their search grids, the phone carrier notified one of the sheriff deputies that the phone had "pinged" to a location in a field behind a hotel in the area. There is also a gas station in that area which this young man frequents so there was concern he might have cut through the adjacent field while going to the station and encountered some type of problem. We sent out our Gator ATV and our light truck to light up the area for a search. As the search was ramping up, we received a call from one of the deputies on site stating the he had located the man.

While we were searching the field, the deputy went into the motel and asked if they had possibly seen the young man. "Certainly", was the reply, he and his lady friend are in room ----. It seems he had met a young lady from his workplace somewhere in his travels and rather than go home where mom might spoil the party when she got home from work, they decided to spend the evening in the hotel. The phone "ping" was not exact, but it got us in the correct area. Without the "ping" we would probably have been looking through the night and the next day until his romantic fervor subsided. Anyway, from that point it became a domestic situation and we quickly demobilized and returned to the station. We thought we would stay ready however as we were sure we would probably be receiving a medical call when mom got him back home and got her hands on him. The call never came so we all assumed all was well and mom was just glad to have him back home safe and sound.

I haven't had a chance to talk with him yet about his escapade. It will be interesting to hear the "Rest of the Story". Just another journey on the Trail of Life.

See Ya on the Trail,

Chief

We express our condolences to Connie "Butterscotch" Christensen on the passing of her Mother, Jan. 11.

Words of Wisdom: If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.
And---Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.

I Have a Problem

By Karl Anderson

How sick am I? Or maybe I'm not the only one with this affliction. And knowing a lot of the TRJC members I suspect I'm not. In the last newsletter I mentioned my seemingly endless supply of old off road magazines. Am I the only one that looks at the articles and pictures myself on that trail someday? Is it even possible to read about a trail ride at Moab or the Tennessee hills or Farmington, New Mexico, and not want to load your Jeep up and ride off into the sunset? Maybe for sane people, but the club isn't exactly overflowing with rational thinking adults as far as I've seen.

Here's where it's probably worse for me than many of you. Many of you are aware of the fact that I spend most of my waking moments staring out the windshield of my Peterbilt pretending to be working for a living as I enjoy all the scenery the greatest country on the planet has to offer. Probably any vacation destination in America you've ever dreamt about, I've seen the exit for it. I've driven by the Moab exit on I-70 more times than I can recall. The Badlands in South Dakota? I've been within spitting distance. You wouldn't believe all the cool 4x4's in southern New Jersey that play in The Pinelands swamp. And Florida just about kills me. I've seen more mini monster trucks on Rockwells and tractor tires in person than I've seen in the magazines. Then there's the seriously slick rock trails near Monteagle, Tennessee. I've been privileged to see many of the 1 ton Jeeps that tackle these trails on their trailers at the truck stop on their way to a day of wheeling I can only dream about. I've seen sand buggies flying over the dunes of Glamis, near Yuma, Arizona, and barreling up that big hill just west of Albuquerque.

One Saturday morning as I was heading down I-15 from Barstow, California, to LA, I saw a cloud of dust rapidly approaching in the desert on the east side of the highway. Not sure what kind of machine it was, Jeep or buggy, but apparently they don't hang speed limit signs on cactus plants. (I would have just used the plural term for cactus but I have absolutely no idea what it is). One Sunday afternoon, just east of Paducah KY, I saw a group of big, bad American made pickups playing on a muddy road next to I-24. This was back before country music videos so I'm sure they were actually four wheeling.

But probably the worst case of wheeler envy I ever experienced happened one Saturday morning in Auburn, California, right off I-80. I was delivering a '69 Camaro convertible (OK, I was already jealous as all get out over this) to a guy that had it shipped out from Chicago. He told me to meet him at a grocery store parking lot and he'd lead me to his place. I got there a couple hours early and lost track of the Jeeps that drove by filled to the gills with coolers and camping gear. Then it dawned on me. The Rubicon Trail was only a stone's throw away. Well, you might have to have an arm like Nolan Ryan, but you get the point. I just kept thinking someday..... someday..... If only I had a nickel for every time I saw people having fun wheeling and thought to myself, and here I am working, I could probably afford to iron out all the dents on Ol Blue, give her a purdy paint job and finally turn her into the ultimate mall cruiser I've always dreamed of.

But before you all start sending me condolence cards, I have to admit I was able to turn the tables last year after joining the Jeep club. Every Saturday morning that I've been on I-72, Jeep in tow, headed for a day of thrills and spills, I just imagine every truck driver I pass looking at me and thinking, "and here I am working." And being the childish you-know-what that I am I can't help but think "Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah!!" Sometimes I even say it out loud.

Yes, I believe I have a problem.

Charlie's Ramblin's

By Charlie Ater

Landowners: we have some of the best! And all they get out of it are some gift certificates and the appreciation of the Jeepers. Truthfully, I think that most of us take them for granted and are even a bit resentful when they ask us to delay trail building for hunting season or use of a trail because it's too muddy. We should be helping them to look after their land and be thankful for the courtesy they have shown us. Most landowners realize the "show must go on" and allow us

to run our moneymakers during some really adverse conditions. Remember a few years ago when it was so wet? Oh, yeah- the "Gilligan's Isle" episode at the New Salem trail.

Be sure to let our landowners know that they are appreciated when you see them. A simple, heartfelt "Thanks" goes a long way in creating and keeping good will, especially if you comment on your favorite challenge on the trail or the natural beauty that we get to see.

Unsung Heroes: Man, this club is full of them! I can't cover them all. Heck, I don't even know what some people do for the club. Lilly! She's a dynamo! In addition to assisting her hubby with the business she's a great Event Coordinator. I understand that she's bringing more sponsors and products on board for the *BLAST* and Safari. That's no small feat! The team of volunteers that help her behind the scenes all deserve mention but I don't know who all is involved. Pat yourselves on the back, guys and gals! Hamer deserves a mention - keeping the books straight is an accomplishment in itself; explaining it so this Board Member can understand it is major! Mark Schumacher became the right hand of Dave Christensen in Public Relations and took a big load off of Dave. Mark and Dave have done much for the club that hasn't been recognized and at least in part, it's because they don't brag about it. Jeff, anybody that can make sense out of the multiple ravings of Board Members IS a hero! There's a trail that was basically ignored and unloved that needed some TLC and Dennis proved to be the MAN! I think he has the wheelin' disease bad. Anybody who doubts his abilities to wheel or maintain a trail hasn't been there! And we couldn't get any of this maintenance done without Doug's expert leadership. I could go on; this just scratches the surface.

Trails: They change! And not always for the better! The rains we had last year did some damage to the creek crossings on Hopewell; enough that I've changed the rating to a Two from a One plus. This spring may show some more changes that won't be good. Ridge Rambler and Hopewell are easy trails and we need to keep them that way as attractions for those with stock or mildly modded Jeeps. If damage on the trails is bad enough, it needs to be fixed to a least trail rating level or bypassed to allow it to heal. If anyone knows of someone with property in Pike that would allow us to develop a trail, let us know- any Board Member or the Trail Boss, Doug Watret. We can never have enough trails!

Jeep Stuff: Do you need some parts? Remember that 4WD Hardware will give you a discount and a kickback to the club as well. If you want to do this get in touch with Mark Schumacher to sign up. It's worthwhile! When you do get parts, remember that our *BLAST* and Safari are supported by a number of good businesses that deserve our support in turn. A quick check of the TRJC website will turn up a list of patrons.

Events: We have maintained a good attendance at both open events! A lot of hard work goes into them, and it is nice to see them well attended. However; we can always use some help to spread the word. Pick up some brochures and cards when you come to a trail builder to hand out to interested individuals. If you see a nice Jeep at the gas station, talk to 'em, and give 'em a card if they seem interested. Hopefully, we can get some flyers made up to advertise our events and it would be nice to see them in Jeep dealerships and off road shops. People that are interested won't come if they don't know about it!

Personal: *I wish you all a Happy and Productive New Year, filled with joy, happiness, and success! I hope to see you on the trails- keep the dirty side down!*