



Two Rivers Tracker

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

Volume 18 Issue 1

February 2015

Upcoming Events

All activities take place or start at the WBBA radio station building unless otherwise noted. Trails leave at 9 AM. Always check the website for trails to be run or any last minute changes.

Feb 7: First trail builder of the season. Being this early in the year, this trail builder has the potential to be a lot of fun. However, if conditions are too dangerous due to the weather, it may be cancelled. Always check the website for last minute updates. Come early and visit. Trails will leave at 9 AM.

Feb 21: Board Meeting, Trail Builder and Kickoff Dinner. The Board will meet at 7:30 AM. This is open to all members. The trails will leave at 9 AM. At 5 PM the free catered Kickoff Dinner will commence. If you are new to the club, please try to attend. This is a great way to meet people and get a feel for the many trails we have to offer. Please RSVP to trjceff@yahoo.com or call the club phone.

Mar. 7, 21, Apr. 25, May 2: Trail Builder weekends. If you are a new member, consider attending one of these. They're great fun and a lot more wheeling often gets done than work. Heavy shoes or boots and gloves always come in handy. March 21st and April 25th Board meetings will be held starting at 7:30 AM. Board meetings are always open to all members.

Apr. 11: Trail Ride and Member Appreciation Dinner. Trails will leave at 9 AM. At 5 PM the free catered Member Appreciation Dinner will commence. If you are new to the club, please try to attend. This is a great way to meet people and get a feel for the many trails we have to offer. Please RSVP to trjceff@yahoo.com or call the club phone.

May 2: Quincy Dogwood Parade. This is a popular event and a different way to have fun. Save the date. More information will be on the web. If you have any questions about this event, contact Jen Bell.

May 9: Trail Builder (if needed). Depending on the spring thaws, we may need an extra weekend to get trails ready for the Safari. Check the website around May 1 for information.

May 14-16: The 14th Annual 4x4 Safari. This is our premier Jeep run open to the public. We run all our trails, have catered meals, and prizes galore. Your **discounted member registration form** will be sent to you March 1 along with the club directory. Invite your friends to the Safari. The more people we have, the more fun we have. Non-member registration forms will be on the website (www.trjc.com) starting March 1.

The Prez Sez

Lee Ator

Being in the club I've met a lot of nice people and made some good friends. Last week I lost one of those friends in Charlie. I will miss him along with Chuck and Fuzzy. On a happier note I saw OR and he looks to be doing well after his surgery. Carl is getting much better also. Let's say a prayer for them.

Jeeping season is here. I hope you all have your Jeeps ready to go. I don't! The club has three catered dinners this year: the Kickoff, Member Appreciation and Father's Day Run so if you plan on being at one of these dinners, please RSVP to Jeff Sorensen on the Thursday before the dinners. We need to make sure we have the right amount of food.

That's all for now and hope to see you on the trail soon. *I got to get my Jeep fixed!!*

Charles Ater III (1942 - 2014)



Charles Ater III, 72, of Winchester, died Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2015, at Passavant Area Hospital in Jacksonville.

Charlie was born March 9, 1942, in Jacksonville, the son of Charles and Grace M. Francis Ater. He grew up in Arenzville, later moving to Winchester.

Charlie joined the U.S. [Army](#) in 1961 and was a member of the 3rd Armor Division stationed in Germany. He went on to be a 40-plus year employee of Kordite/Nesco/Mobil Chemical/Pactiv and helped open the second plant.

Charlie was an avid outdoorsman and a life member of the National Rifle Association, fine upstanding member of the Two Rivers Jeep Club, the Studebakers Drivers Club, and a honorary member of the Vagabonds Car Club Illinois chapter.

He was preceded in death by his second wife, Suzy (Linda White) Ater, in 2003. He is survived by his son Charles "Jay" (wife, Stephenie) Ater of Alexander. One of his final acts was witnessing the marriage of his cherished granddaughter, Alex, to Cory Suhre. Charlie was engaged to Lora Van Winkle at the time of his passing.

Charlie is also survived by his brothers, Francis (wife, Kay) Ater of Concord, Burton (companion, Esther) Ater of Jacksonville; sisters, Jennie Castleberry of Carthage and Barbara (husband, Ron) Surratt of Arenzville; many nieces and nephews, and quite a few unrelated folks that simply called him "Uncle Charlie."

Memorial services were held January 31 at the Williamson Funeral Home. Casual dress was encouraged, as the minister was asked to wear bib overalls. *(Ed. Note: Quintessential Charlie!)*

A personal note from Dave: Charlie and Lora joined me in Moab for a couple times a few years ago and we all had some great "adventures" and always fun stories. Anytime wheeling with Charlie was always fun with his wonderful sense of humor. He was building another YJ and planning to go to Moab again but at least he had a couple shots at it. You'll be "riding on my shoulder" in Moab this year, my friend. And on this next adventure of yours, keep your shiny side up!

Goodbye Charlie

By Karl Anderson

This newsletter article is the hardest one I've ever had to write. I got an email from Dave last week letting me know that he needed articles by Feb 3rd, and usually it's no big deal. Right up to the minute I sit down at the computer I usually have no idea what I'm going to write about until an idea pops into my head and it just sort of flows out of my head onto the keyboard. Unfortunately, this time around, I've known all week what I was going to have to write about, and I knew it would be the last thing I ever wanted to do.

As most of you probably know by now, Charlie Ater passed away Feb. 27th. He had been having health issues since last spring and spent the last few months in hospitals and nursing homes. I'd had my doubts for a while now that he'd ever be back up to full speed again, but losing one of my best friends completely never even crossed my mind. I've spent most of the week going from being so damn mad I can't see straight to crying like a baby to everything in between.



But Charlie would just want us to remember him with a smile, so here goes....

My wife Amy and I joined the club about 5 years ago and for the first year we weren't able to make any events. My Mom had just passed away and Dad was having health problems so we never made it down to Pike County and never got to know anybody. I had been working on some trails in my pasture and thought if we couldn't make it to any club runs maybe we'd just invite the club out to our place in hopes of getting to know some of the members. I put a notice on the club forum about our little rendezvous and within a few days my phone rang and it was some guy named Charles Peter. Well, I was going down the road in my semi and I thought that's what I heard him say. Besides, I'd never heard the name Ater in my life, so that would never have even been a guess. I still haven't figured out how I can go my entire life never hearing that last name, then I join the club and meet TWO people with it, but they spell it differently. Lee Ator says Charlie's family messed it up and Charlie blamed Lee's family. I soon realized that arguing with either one of them was like wrestling with a pig in mud so I learned to just nod and smile and let it go.

Anyway.... After that first phone conversation, I felt like I'd known Charlie all my life and that's probably how most people felt about him. Actually, after that call we probably did know pretty much everything there was to know about each other. And that was just the beginning. My phone conversations with him lasted thousands of miles if you added them all up over the years. He'd often say "Man, I gotta let ya go, it's way past my bedtime!" I'd usually respond with "Well, you got me across 2 states and God knows you need your beauty sleep so I'll catch you later".

I never got any response from anyone else about our little trail ride but sure enough, when the day rolled around, here came Charlie, Dennis, John Gage and his wife Marie, plus a few local friends and maybe even some other club members, but I can't recall now. We had several more get togethers here in the years following and we could always count on Charlie being here for them. He and Lora even stayed over with us for the last one.



As time went on, he became as much a part of our family as he was a friend. He and Lora were here for my Dad's memorial service and were invited to both my daughters' weddings. Tom Wombles (the founder of our club and Rockport Off Road Park) felt the same way about him. Charlie helped Tom build the original trails at Rockport and became the guide on Hopewell Trail which is on Rick Wombles land. He thought the world of both Tom and Rick and mentioned on more than one occasion how none of this would have ever been possible without the Wombles boys.

Charlie was very passionate about offroading and the club in particular. As I understand it, he wasn't in the club very long before being asked to run for the board. Even if he had other obligations on the day of a trail run, he still came for breakfast and the board meeting. He took great joy in just seeing all the Jeeps gathered together at the VFW and ready to take off even if he wasn't going to be able to spend the whole day with us. Another of his favorite things was making new members feel welcome in the club. It was very important to him that every new member, no matter what their past experience, skill level, or how well equipped their Jeep may or may not be feel welcome and at home in the club and that we had a place for them.

At the age of 72, he still had plans for future off-road ventures. He'd been to Moab a few times already but looked forward to showing me around the first time we could go along, and we often talked about someday running the Rubicon and taking long Jeep weekends to off-road parks in the Midwest and South. I still plan on making those trips someday, but it won't be without a little sadness wishing he was there.

He had many other interests besides Jeeping, and our many conversations involved a lot of talk about politics, guns and especially history. Sometimes I'd get so frustrated with him because I'd go on about how good a particular movie was, like "Tombstone", but he'd always argue that none of those movies were historically accurate. I'd try to convince him that they were still entertaining to watch, and even challenge the accuracy of his sources, but he wouldn't budge. I'd love to have a nickel for every time I said "How the hell do you know, you may be old, but you weren't there!".

I could probably go on with this forever, but I'll wrap it up by saying that for me, the club will always have a void after losing what I consider its greatest ambassador and Charlie, if you are reading this and run into Wyatt Earp up there somewhere, don't forget to settle our bet. But if you were right and I was wrong, well, Buddy, I don't plan on being around for you to rub it in for at least a couple decades, so deal with it.....

Good Memories

By Warren DeWolfe

First I have to say as I know many will this season it will be a tough year out on the trails without Charlie Ater around. Knowing Charlie had been under the weather and not doing so hot made it a bit hard to not see him with us. But then to get the word that he had passed away was really heartbreaking. I was hoping as I know many were to stop in and say hello or drop him a note with well wishes. My biggest memory of Charlie was our first father's day run with my kids and how he and Lora "put" up with my kiddos running around and trying to get them wet with squirt guns. Lora and Charlie had a bucket of water that gave them a nice supply of water to douse others with in their Jeep. They really made friends with them by continuously feeding them licorice ropes. Charlie you will truly be missed out on the trails and more importantly in the club as an all around great man and fellow Jeeper! Until we all meet again at the big trail head above God bless to you and your family!!

Well Jeep season is upon us and I never seem to get the work done in the off season I want or plan too! So much and so little time and even less money it seems, new tires, fixing the steering, CB, re-wiring electrical stuff, fixing the KC lights, playing on the interior and cleaning up the outside. The list just never ends and neither do the options. I know I am twitching as I write this knowing the TRJC season is hopefully "fingers crossed" is starting next week. Being a part of this club and getting the duty/task/honor to serve in some small roll on the board makes me feel proud. You all are some of the greatest and most humbling people I know. How we come out to help others and support them in a time of need. How we come out and share knowledge, albeit sometimes flawed with others is awesome. How we all pitch in to help with a broken jeep or part just humbles me.

This season is going to be another great year in the club with some amazing friends and family, I look forward to it each and every year and hate to see it end each and every year. I just hope I can make it out again this year without any major breakage! Now I know because I said and wrote that down something major will happen, but hey I figure a boy can dream right? Well I won't right some long dissertation like Chief and Lee can. I just can't tell a story like those two, so enjoy the rest of your off time cuz its time to start wheeling and slinging some mud!!!

Happy Trails,

Warren, Amy, Quinlan, Teagan, Kieran and Reagan DeWolfe

Trail of Life

By Chief

One of the things about belonging to an organization or group like Two Rivers Jeep Club is that you meet a lot of interesting people and develop friendships. Over the years of our memberships we share the good times and unfortunately some bad times that the Trail of Life includes. But as difficult as some of the bad times are, we find we are drawn together in those friendships to help comfort and support each other. Even though Jeepin' brought us all together, the friendships keep us together and make us much more than just a Jeep Club. As you all know by now, this past week TRJC lost a member and a good friend, Charlie Ater. I always appreciated Charlie's attitude towards life and his contagious smile. He will be missed but always remembered as a friend who was always there to help.



As we draw near to the first official TRJC event for 2015, we at Murphy's Law are facing some challenges. Due to a land sale, we have lost a section of trail that was always one of my favorites. The section included such famous obstacles as the Double Dips, The Mud Hole, Slick Hill and the Articulation Circle. I have spent a lot of hard earned money to build up my Jeeps to be able to overcome some of those money pits. I have been in contact with Murphy and he is in negotiations with the same crew who developed the Virginia's Secret section (which has been a big hit), to help in developing some new trail. I will guarantee you we will have plenty of action packed trail by the time of the Safari to keep everyone entertained. Speaking of land sales, I have 76 acres of prime farm land for sale in Macon County. It is way too flat to go Jeepin' on so I am putting it on the block.

I am still a little bummed about the snow situation in my area of the country. We were promised 6-10 inches this past weekend and it ended up being mostly rain with about two inches of snow finally showing up. I think maybe we may have had 5 inches all winter so far. Most certainly not what I had hoped for.

Well, get those final winter Jeep upgrades finished, the Safari will be here before you know it. I look forward to seeing you all on the Trail.

Life Observations:

--Dear alcohol, We had a deal where you would make me funnier, smarter, and a better dancer..... I saw the video.... we need to talk!

--At my age "getting lucky" means walking into a room and remembering what I came in there for.

Chief

2015 Board Members and Officers

Board Members

President	Lee Ator	tamara.ator@gmail.com	217-437-5221
Vice President	Gary Williams	gswilliam@live.com	217-285-4750
Secretary	Jeff Sorensen	trjcjeff@yahoo.com	815-790-5433
Treasurer	Hamer Tate	hltate51@gmail.com	217-833-2861
Board Members	Karl Anderson	andersonkarl99@yahoo.com	217-440-8191
	Vacant		
	Dave Bell	taboocustoms@adams.net	217-316-3039
	Rick Culberson	rick1@consolidated.net	217-562-4145
	Warren DeWolfe	warrendewolfe@gmail.com	630-849-8082

Coordinators

Illini 4x4 Safari & <i>BLAST</i>	Lilly Vittetow	lillysvintage@gmail.com	815-977-7365
Trail Leadership & Maintenance	Rick Culberson	rick1@consolidated.net	217-562-4145
Special Events Coordinator	Jen Bell	jenbell@adams.net	217-7792391
Newsletter, Web	Dave Christensen	dave102@bluesky9.net	630-886-6412

TRJC Web Page: <http://www.trjc.com/>
Club e-mail: trjc1@trjc.com
Club phone: 630-717-5337 (JEEP) or 866-483-3982 (toll free)

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.

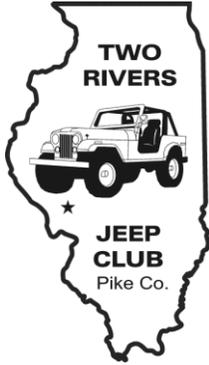
Newsletter Deadlines: This newsletter is published 6 times a year (**February, April, June, August, October, and December.**) All articles and photos are due by the 15th of the month before the newsletter will be published.

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: April 15

Two Rivers Jeep Club
PO Box 47
Pittsfield IL 62363-0047



FIRST CLASS MAIL