



Two Rivers Tracker

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

Volume 13 Issue 3

June 2010

News 2 Use

Summer Events

All events begin with breakfast at the VFW, 7 AM, and will leave from there at 9 AM.

Please note that any last minute changes and updates will be posted on our website.

June 5: TRJC Recovery Class Cancelled.

The June 5 Recovery Course is cancelled. We were unable to get enough instructors and also a vehicle to use for the course. We'll try again next year.

June 19: Board Meeting and Father's Day Run

This is our most popular and fun run of the year sponsored by Durrell and Syndy Miller. For those of you who are new to the club, this is always one of our most fun, member only, events. We ask that you provide the courtesy of an RSVP to trjcieff@yahoo.com or call the club phone if you have no email and do so before June 16. We need an accurate count for the free catered meal following the day's fun. The Board will meet at the VFW at 7:30 AM. Bring water pistols!

July 10: 4th of July Run

Please RSVP to Jeff Sorensen, trjcieff@yahoo.com or call the club phone if you have no email. There will be two or three trails run and in the early evening there will be a cookout – all food supplied by the club. Bring your own refreshments. Last year those who attended had a wonderful time and this year will be just as good!

July 25: Last Trail Builder before the BLAST

Join us at the VFW for breakfast. Trails to be run will be determined that morning.

August 5 -7: 12th Annual 4x4 BLAST

We need your help. BLAST attendance has dropped over the years and if we are to keep this event alive we need to get people to attend. If you can attend, we encourage you to do so but also please tell your friends about this opportunity for non-members to wheel on our many trails. We had a lot of new people for the Safari and they really enjoyed themselves so let's see what we can do to get more people to come to the BLAST. Please --- if our numbers continue to drop for the BLAST, we may not be able to continue to sponsor it. Any questions about the BLAST, contact Lisa Catt at riddle01@comcast.net or call the club phone. Please help make the BLAST as much of a success as the Safari was!

August 21: Ladies Day Run and Night at the Movies

For the last three years this event was a big hit! Join us again for a great time. While we encourage the ladies to drive, guys can also drive if they wish (although the gals may show them a thing or two about driving!) RSVP to Lisa at riddle01@comcast.net or call the club phone if you have no email. We need a count so we know how many to prepare for. Please mention if you are going to the movie or not so sufficient space may be reserved for the club. Meet at the VFW at 7 – 8 AM for breakfast with trails leaving at 9. Meet again at the VFW at 7 PM to caravan out to the drive-in. Check the website a few weeks ahead of time for the movies to be shown that night.

The Prez Says

From Lee

Thanks to all of you who worked so hard to make this year's Safari a success. This is truly a team effort and I'm proud of all those who volunteered. There are a lot of folks behind the scenes also who work to make these events a success. Thanks to each and every one of you. And by the way, the Blast is coming soon. Our numbers are always a little lower so we'd again ask that you invite your wheelin' friends to the Blast. Here is only one example of the kind of feedback we get.



From Kelly....

I won the Smittybilt winch and wanted to say thank you to the sponsors and TRJC for the winch and wonderful time on the trails. It was my first time in Pittsfield and driving the trails were fun and challenging. The 15 hour drive was well worth it and I can't wait to come back and try some other trails.

Kelly Langness, Thief River Falls, MN

This year we also had an 83 year old lady and her son from Alaska that attended. She was fulfilling part of her life's dream as a bucket list and the previous week she was riding a camel in Egypt. One item on her list was to come to Pike County and go wheeling at one of our events. Pretty neat that she decided to fulfill one of her dreams with us!

Even with the rain and mud, this was a great event. And the kids who washed the vehicles sure thought so too! They literally "cleaned up."

We collected money for the Christmas Basket and raffle funds for distribution after the Blast. All in all a great time was had and we hope to see you at the Blast.

9th Safari Report

By Mark Schumacher

The 9th Annual Illini 4X4 Safari has come and gone and once again it was a great time had by all. For several years Rick Culberson did a great job as the event coordinator and when he resigned he left big shoes to fill. The Club was certainly lucky when Lisa Catt stepped up and offered to act as the event coordinator for both the Safari and the 4X4 Blast. Putting on a single event is a huge amount of work but Lisa has to figure out how to coordinate two a year. In the past couple of years she has worked tirelessly for the Club, scheduling, contacting vendors and sponsors and coordinating the volunteers that assist her in all her efforts. She's always in need of extra assistance and when it isn't there she simply takes on the extra work herself. Trying to manage a family, a career and the event coordinators job leaves her with very little free time. Chris and I want to thank and congratulate Lisa and all of her volunteers for a job well done.

Speaking of volunteers I want to include the Trail Guides here as well. I see a sort of hierarchy of importance in the club with landowners being at the top, the event coordinator, trail guides and other volunteers next in importance, the members of the club and then the board members. Without the landowners we wouldn't have a place to run and without the trail guides we wouldn't have trails to ride on. They work closely with the landowner to gain and maintain access to the ground. They continuously work to build and maintain the trails and get them ready for our trail rides and events. It's a lot of work and it never ends, trails need maintained, repaired and can always be enlarged. Some of the trail guides are also landowners and board members and they truly set an example for everyone to follow.



As both a club and board member I want to apologize for what appeared to be an attempt to embarrass them Friday night at the banquet. There may have been a problem getting started on time in the morning but that didn't give anyone the right to stand trail guides up and then chastise them in front of a room full of people. The situation was handled very poorly and unprofessionally. I can think of a dozen different ways to have solved the problem and this method would not have been one of them. I believe it's obvious that

neither Lisa nor the board authorized or had any idea of what was going to be said when the trail guides were asked to stand up in the crowd. As a board member I believe that access to the microphone should be limited to those actually involved in putting on the event and I hope to be able to see that something like this never happens again.

Saturday the M&M Crew decided to ride with Carey and Sean at Lake Shore. Lake Shore is a great trail with lots of excellent areas to wheel and a lot of challenges for everyone. The trail guides have worked very hard to bring an abandoned trail back from the dead and it is a great day when the trail is open.

About fifteen minutes into our run Chris and I lost a front u-joint and it of course took out the inner and outer axle shafts. We were ready to pull the outer shaft and try to continue as best we could and then Bill and Brenda stepped up and offered us one of their spare shafts. Bill had upgraded the shafts in the Dana 44's he had put in Brenda's Jeep and they were carrying the stock shafts as spares. As soon as the offer was made it looked like a Tony Stewart commercial, I was pushed out of the way and several people unloaded tools, jacked up the Jeep and proceeded to install the new shafts. I'm not sure if they thought I was incompetent, feeling too bad that day, or just too slow but they didn't let me do a thing except set the brakes. Within thirty to forty minutes our Jeep was back on its wheels and ready to continue. This is a great example of what you can expect from the Two Rivers Jeep Club and its members. No one is left behind and everyone jumps in to help no matter what situation is being faced.

Chris and I owe a lot of people for their help, Jim and Dave for all the work they did on their knees, Mike and Shawn for all of their help and tools, Brenda and Bill for the shafts, and Sean for staying with us and then getting us caught back up with the main group. If I've missed anyone here I want to apologize.

The club has a couple of events between the Safari and the Blast and I hope to see a large turnout for each of them. As much fun as the Safari and Blast are, the smaller club runs can prove to be even more fun. Smaller groups on the trails, friendships are made and many people stay around to eat dinner together. Hope to see you there.

Trail of Life

By Chief

I love the smell of "Murphy's Law" mud in the morning and that special pungent fragrance was definitely in the air during the Safari. So was the smell of the American Legion "Super Breakfast" and the heavenly aroma of the grilled pork chops and the hog that was roasting ever so slowly and to perfection, I might add, that was being prepared for Saturday's dinner. I have mentioned several times in the past that I had gotten tired of the "Jeepin' thing" a long time ago. I just like to come to the events for the food. Well that is not entirely true, but it is sure a blessing to be fed like we are before and after a long day on the trail. Thank you American Legion.



Now back to the mud. "Murphy's Law" lived up to its name and its namesake during the Safari. The only strange thing that happened was that Murph didn't break his Jeep. I am not sure that has ever happened before. Talk about a testimony to the ability of Frankie Smith, (Murph's mechanic he keeps on retainer) to get that Jeep running and make it "Murph Proof" for an entire weekend.



Friday went pretty well considering the conditions Mother Nature provided for us. We spent some time strapping most of the vehicles up the gnarly Cow Trail Pass. Trail guide, Randy Newport, aka Ghost Rider, earned his dinner here. Murph went ahead and scouted trail and reported back the conditions at some of the potentially difficult spots. Frankie must have installed some kind of super special traction device for Murph's Jeep, because he reported he had no problems in

making some of the areas while the rest of us found ourselves struggling or on the end of a strap. We bypassed some of the morning hill climbs to avoid burning daylight winching and strapping and tearing up the climbs for future events.

The creek bed crossings provided some challenges and also a Cherokee bumper removal class. I am sure there is a video of that floating around somewhere. Once past the "Murphy's Magic Mud Beauty Elixir" hole, we spent some time on the climb out of the creek. This hill fools you because just when you think you have got it made, a whole new slick section shows up. Straps and winches to the rescue. We nearly lost Ghost Rider and a Limited he was helping here.

We made it to Virginia's for lunch a little off schedule, but not bad considering the conditions we had overcome. Other than the bumper incident, no major problems. I was somewhat disappointed to find Virginia had to cut down our special shade tree we have been sitting under for years for lunch. The stump that was left made nearly no shade at all. Also, Virginia was out antique shopping so she and I did not get to have our traditional cigar smoke after lunch.

The afternoon went relatively smooth. We came across some of the Mystery Trail Jeeps and watched them climb some of the hills. Pretty interesting. Ghost Rider joined them for a few minutes and managed to get about five feet of air coming up the hill. Awesome!! Unfortunately this caused some problems for Ghost Rider later but nothing the Randy couldn't handle. Then when it was time to come off the trail, we found a large tree had fallen across our swamp crossing, forcing Murph to plot a new exit. Once again, he climbed right out while the rest struggled and eventually the Chief's Buggy was forced to plow another new exit out of the swamp to solid ground. We were a little late getting off the trail, but were back in town in time to get cleaned up for dinner.

Saturday brought the full fury of Murphy's Law upon us. It rained most of the morning, so all the same problems occurred at about the same locations as Friday. We were ready for most of the challenges and the morning went okay. Did I mention a muffler falling off? It made a great hood ornament till we got it stored during lunch break. Then lunch happened. First I managed to back the Buggy into another jeep while parking and broke off my fire radio antenna and cracked a tail light. No big deal, just a "Hey Stupid, Look Behind You Before You Back Up" moment for me. No damage to the victim of the assault. Then we managed to pop two tires off the bead climbing the Clay Hill Run. The first we had to change the tire on the slope. That was a challenge. Slick clay mud, big heavy tire now full of mud, high-lift jack, all the makings for a disaster. But with a lot of help from our friends we got it changed. The second one just kept on coming and drove the last 150 feet up the hill on the rim to make it to the top and a quicker, more controlled pit stop. On to Hummer lane, a track bar breaks, Tree Slalom Hill, I slide into a tree breaking off my passenger side mirror, while several others slide off the trail and need to be rescued. I know there were several other happenings, but they all seem to have run together into one big mud ball in my brain. All in all a great weekend of Jeepin'. Conditions not perfect, but in reality probably just what we like, some good challenges, great times with good friends, old and new and let's not forget that food.

Special note to Murphy: Gary, FYI, that special gift you gave me that I thought I had lost was found when I got home and cleaned out the Buggy. I think I will save it, maybe Virginia will be home for lunch during the Blast and we can carry on our tradition.

Words of Wisdom:

Thinking back on the food theme again, A Bacon and Eggs breakfast, a day's work for a chicken, a lifetime commitment for a pig.and.....

A picture is worth a thousand words, but it uses up three thousand times more memory.

See Ya on the Trail,

Chief

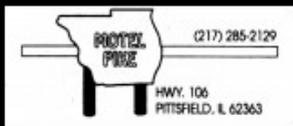
Lisa Catt sent this note:

Susan from the Motel Pike had a cognitive heart failure on Saturday morning while the Safari was going on. I have kept in touch with her daughter and as of yesterday, she should be returning home but the doctors stated that she will have a 10-12 week recovery from all of this.

Tell everyone to keep her in their prayers. She is a wonderful woman to the jeep club and we all admire her very much. We wish her and her family the very best over the next few months while she is recovering.

Her daughter is taking over her duties at the motel. Any questions, please contact Lisa Catt at riddle01@comcast.net

A very special thanks to this year's Safari sponsors.



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