



Two Rivers Tracker

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

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The Prez Sez

Lee Ator

Our wheeling season for this year is over. Board elections have been held and Dave Bell stepped down. Our thanks to Dave for his time on the board. Dave's spot has been filled by Kaye Iftner so we welcome Kaye to the Board. As you can see in Kaye's bio, she's been heavily involved with TRJC for a number of years and faithfully processes all the Safari and Blast registrations as well as many other jobs within the club. The Board also approved the 2016 calendar of events which is in this newsletter.

This year's Safari raised \$5,652.00, the Blast raised \$3,926.00 and the ice cream sales netted \$908.05. The Board approved a six-way split of the proceeds as follow: Pike County Unmet Needs, \$2,500.00. Access Illinois Outdoors, \$2,000.00. Pike County Little League, \$2,000.00. Pike County Christian Academy, \$1,500.00. Pike County Historical Society Military Museum, \$1,500.00. Pikeland School Recycling, \$500.00. We also have over \$900.00 from the ice cream sales that the club rounded up to \$1,500.00 for the Christmas Food Basket program. Thanks go to Lilly and her helpers for two great events that made these donations possible. And a special thanks to every single one of our helpers and volunteers that made 2015 such a great wheeling season and allowed us to thank our community with the donations.

Well, it's time to get to work on the Jeeps. Let's see, I need to work on body mounts and "Oh shoot, I'm still stuck in low lock!" Gotta go. See you on the trail in February!

Welcome Kay Iftner to the Board

Kaye has been working with TRJC since May of 2008 when she joined the Pike County Chamber of Commerce as Executive Director. The Pike County Chamber of Commerce, established in 1987, is a coalition of area communities, industries, businesses, organizations, professionals, and individuals who pool their talent and resources to improve the economic, civic, and cultural climate of all of Pike County. Its mission is to make Pike County a great place to live, work and visit.



Kaye grew up in Godfrey Illinois and attended Western Illinois University. She worked for American Cyanamid Chemical Company and BASF in various sales, marketing and communications roles before retiring and moving to Pike County in 2006. Kaye and her husband David live in Pittsfield.

Trail of Life

By Chief

Many of you who have been members of TRJC for a while may remember my true to life short story offerings which came to be known as the "Raccoon Wars". The Raccoon Wars lasted for several months in 2004 and 2005. The series of battles, man vs. beast, detailed the dogged determination of the human and animal kingdom to hold geographic territory each believed it had claim to. I am bringing back a chapter of the Raccoon War in this issue to remind those who sat riveted in their chairs as I shared the terror of the times and to let the newer members get an idea of the intensity and the raw emotions of the "Raccoon War".

As I reminisce of the times described in the resurrected article below, I am sad to tell you that a new even more concentrated attack on the home front is underway. No, the raccoons have not broken the treaty, but a new and equally destructive invader has launched an attack. The rat-a-tat-tat attacks by this winged demon on my beautiful cedar sided residence is bringing a new level of terror to the homestead. Thus far negotiations and less than lethal deterrents have been ineffective. The situation seems to escalate day by day.

I am unsure of the eventual outcome as an aerial threat is a whole different animal requiring completely different strategies and weapons. Stay tuned and also stay Frosty!!

August, 2004

I hate to start every column with the word "well", but it seems that's what always comes to mind first when I start writing. So by using this disclaimer for the word "well" I have a fresh new beginning. I received so many comments about my last "life experience" and since I am really lacking any news to print, I decided to continue with some background about the raccoon wars mentioned in the last issue.

There are several battles in this war which lasted some ten months. Some battles I won, some I lost. It does seem that I have won the war at this point in time, but the battles are still etched vividly in my memory. One of the most memorable battles took place one warm summer afternoon. I had been busy with a project at church and was in the process of "changing hats" to go work at the fire station. Hurrying into the house and dropping my church clothes as I went, (there was no one else at home) I was down to my skivvies and headed into the master bath for a quick shower. As I entered the bathroom and I made a turn to the commode before hitting the shower, there sat a huge, black and gray, gnarly, tooth bearing raccoon sitting on my toilet looking at me like I should have knocked or something. Needless to say I was startled and at a distinct disadvantage. It was like one of those dreams you have where you are someplace where you should have more clothes on than just your underwear, but you don't. I had absolutely no defensive weapons at my disposal. All kind of unpleasant scenarios raced through my mind. As reality sank in I quickly exited the bathroom and slammed the door shut. Now what... clothes, good start, now make a loop on a stick and get it around the monster's neck. Big mistake! That thing grabbed the rope and lunged at me snarling like nothing I have ever seen before. Retreat is not a bad thing when facing a superior foe. I slammed the door shut again. Not willing to yield my bathroom to this invader, I devised another plan using a large box which previously held a new TV. I would open all the flaps on the box and wedge it between the walls beside the toilet and force it into the box. Marlin Perkins of Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom would have been proud of me. It worked just like I planned, closed the flaps and there it was, a box of raccoon. Basking in the primal rush of victory of man over beast, I immediately carried the box outside and then placed a call to the animal control warden. He was very impressed with my capture and began to describe how vicious and dangerous raccoons could be. Little did I know that was just a foretaste of what was to come, but that's yet another story.

Words of Wisdom:

If it weren't for my lawyer, I'd still be in prison. It went a lot faster with two people digging. *Joe Martin*
Our friend Eddie has kleptomania, but when it gets bad, Eddie takes something for it.

Enjoy the Off Season---See Ya on the Trail

Chief

A Great Group of "Bad Influences"

Jay Ater

I wanted to give everyone a heads up that I will be back next year. After losing Pops and gaining a Jeep or 4, I figured that one wheeling trip was in order before I sold them. I was thinking that when I meet up with him again I could tell him that I tried it and didn't like it so I got them new homes with people that would truly enjoy them. 5 minutes in and I was hooked and there's no way I'd sell 'em. Gave one away but the Brat was supposed to get that one anyway.

As many of you know the yellow Jeep (da Short Bus) had issues with steering and driveline vibrations which Pops really never got a chance to figure out. I am very happy that he got to use it a couple times before his issues started but I wish he could drive it now that it's mostly fixed. I got rid of the death wobble and fixed a few other things before the Father's Day run and that's when I brought it out. Since then I have spent a bunch of money getting the rest of the issues fixed and created a few more all on my own. I do have a solid plan to get it ready for next season and hopefully I can find the time to get it done.

The Father's Run was an eye opening endeavor for both me and my passenger. Neither of us had any idea what was going to happen and it didn't take long to get addicted. Pop's descriptions almost always made it sound like work, had to winch So-and-so up every hill or Sumdood broke his rig clean in half and we spent most of the day putting it back together. When it didn't sound like work, well, it sounded like it was a demolition derby, after we got Sumdood's rig glued back together he flopped it on both sides at the same time followed by a back flip and full gainer. Little did I realize the entertainment value in watching someone's Jeep jump in the air and spit out both drive shafts simultaneously. Hearing the sound of new plastic snapping as somebody rips off a fender flare or 3 will always make you smile although you may have to suppress the urge if the owner has no sense of humor. "UH why are you laying on your side? You aren't even to the hard part yet....."

My biggest regret now that I have been around a bit is not going out with Dad. We had both planned on it but it always seemed like something got in the way. I'm sure it wouldn't have taken long for me to find a Jeep of my own to bring to the party. As it is now I am so thankful that I have his to play with and I am always thinking of him while I'm in it. When he was talking about building it he mentioned that it was going to be expensive and it would be less for me to inherit, I told him it's not mine yet, don't feel bad if you spend it all. I'm glad he did spend both the time and money to get it done although installing that long arm kit is not high on my good memories list.

One of my biggest joys was watching my Brat drive her Jeep on the trails for the first time. A bit timid to start with but once she figured out it wasn't going to up and explode she got right with the program and did her PawPaw proud. That guy she married ain't too bad either. Hopefully soon there will be Grandbabies in there with them. Think about that for a minute, 4th generation TRJC members. That should make you proud or scare the hell out of ya.

As for the rest of ya's, bad influences all the way around. All of you. "Oh you can make that, no problem" followed by winching off a log on a 1 trail.... Or even better, "You're welcome to try but,,," Yeah well watch me" then invite everyone to take pictures as I winch out of a hole on a (gasp) 1 trail..... Someday when I grow up I'll actually make it up the first hill on Murphy's. While I'm thinkin' about it somebody could have warned me how fast those Pike county trees can run. "Just aim for that tree you'll be fine." I must be a good shot because unlike the rest of those jokers in front of me I actually hit the damn thing. I wanted different fenders anyway.

In defense of TRJC, I can't think of a better group of bad influences to be around. At the Blast I would be talking to someone and tell them who I was and somebody walking by would smile, shake my hand and continue on. Comforting in what was an emotional roller coaster.

In closing I want to thank all of you for being so good to Dad and taking me in. I can't wait till next year when the fun begins again. Hope to see you there!

Another Great Year

Warren DeWolfe

Well another year of off-roading has come to an end! It is always a day I dread coming, yet it means it was also a successful year of fun with friends both old and new. This year got off to a great start for me with getting down to Pittsfield as much as I did and enjoying a bit of winter wheeling as well as muddy wheeling. This year was unseasonably wet and muddy; good ole Mudd Butt took a beating! In May at the Safari on Friday I ended up blowing my spider gears and it took until August for me to get the funds and time to get those replaced. I ended up finding a steal for a new gusseted and trussed front axle with Chromalloy shafts, new 4.88 gears as well as a set of 4.88 gears for the rear as well. Now she is great to drive. I only wish I would have spent the extra \$\$\$ at the time and installed at least a rear locker. But for me the pain of going three months without driving my baby on the trails was enough. Then towards the end of the summer as a group of us were working on a new trail she took some more damage to the right side (as if there is not already enough) now there is a big enough gap between the front door and B-pillar that you can just about fit your hand in there! I got some new custom ventilation on the highway.

As always, getting down to Pike County and having fun with all of our family and friends is the highlight of my season. The wheeling and playing is a bonus for me. We have made so many new friends and keep re-kindling with old friends. Serving in some way on the board has been a great experience. I can help voice some concerns brought to me and help find ways to make this the best four wheeling club it can be. I have taken over the role of administrator for the club's Face book page and we now have also a swap shop forum on Face book for folks to sell or trade parts and such. We also have a tech forum if you have questions about building or what experiences people have with products. I can tell you as of right now we have over 1150 people following the Two Rivers Jeep Club on Face book. This gives us so much exposure and opportunities with our members, non-members, the community, our sponsors and donators.

As you will read in this newsletter about the funds that the club donated this year and to what great local Pike county organizations it is truly AWESOME!!! As I was doing some research on how much the club has donated over the years the best number I can get my finger on so far is in the past 7 years the club has donated back to the community over \$100,000.00!!!! This is all monies that is donated via our raffles, silent auctions and ice cream sales from only 4 days each year....that is only 28 days in the past seven years roughly and we raised and gave away that much!!! You all rock and this is why I LOVE this club and its members, land owners!!!

One final thank you to all the landowners: Without your support and you all graciously allowing us to come out and play on your land we could not do this! The only negative thing is if you never did allow this I would still have a nice shiny new stock jeep!!!! All kidding aside I would trade it for the world, every break, scratch, nick, rough ride is all part of the adventure and this club has been an adventure for me and my family for the past 4 years and we look forward to many more....I wish you all reading this a great off season, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and I can't wait to see you all in February with some repaired and modified Jeeps! God Bless.....

----- Warren, Amy, Quinlan, Teagan, Kieran and Reaghan DeWolfe

Skills and Spills

Karl Anderson

If you don't mind my saying so, I'm one heck of a good Jeeper. In fact, I may be the best Jeeper in the club. I'm the best rock crawler in the club. I'm the best hill climber in the club. I can get through mud holes that stop pretty much everybody else in the club. And I just may be the handsomest Jeeper in the club. I'll wait while you wipe up whatever beverage you were drinking that you just spit all over the Newsletter or your computer screen, depending on how you're reading this.

OK, I may have exaggerated just a tad on my Jeeping skills.... But hey, I'm sticking with the handsomest Jeeper thing. OK... I'm the handsomest Jeeper in the club driving a brown, 86 CJ-7. OK... I'm the handsomest Jeeper in the club driving a brown 86 CJ-7 on 37 inch Goodyears. Alright, fine... I'm the handsomest Jeeper in the club driving a brown 86 CJ-7 on 37 inch Goodyears that has my name on the title. Try all you want, there's no disputing that.

As far as my driving skills go, I will definitely stand by the fact that I'm a whole lot better now than I was when Amy and I started making it to the runs regularly in 2011. Some things you learn on your own, but most of what I've learned has come from listening to other club members on the trail and taking their advice. I've always valued experience more than education and watching and listening to more experienced members has made me a much better driver than I ever was before joining the club.

Somebody asked on Face book a few weeks ago about everybody's favorite experience of the 2015 Jeep season and I can honestly say it was our very last run. I honestly had a hard time getting into it early in the season, missing Charlie and all. As time went on and after changing Jeeps I was starting to enjoy it more. Going from a basically stock TJ on 35's and a 4 inch lift to a locked up CJ on 37's with a winch tends to do something for your confidence level. I'm still certainly not at the top of the heap yet, but I've moved up a few notches.

Anyway, on the last run of the season there were only two trails open, Meyer's Mayhem and Atlas. I don't care how delusional I may get about my skills, I still know better than to try Atlas. Maybe someday. After I've beat the living snot out of every body panel on my CJ and don't care anymore. And then maybe not.

Meyer's it was. As everyone was deciding where to go, a guy that I'd seen at some events but had never really got to know yet was commenting that he probably shouldn't take his fairly stock TJ on 33's out that day since the only trails available were both pretty challenging. I talked him into coming out to Meyer's with us since we hadn't had a lot of rain lately and it wouldn't be quite as difficult as it can be. He was still a little hesitant, but I convinced him that we'd make sure we got him through it and there were bypasses around a lot of the really hairy stuff. That's the day I saw Craig Winn go from an inexperienced rookie to an OFF ROAD ANIMAL!! Most of the beginning of the trail wasn't too big of a deal but eventually we got to Hell's Gate. At one point I have my Jeep pretty much completely on its side with Dennis walking along beside me when I asked him "Is this Hell's Gate?".

He said "Yeah, it is!" I said "I thought Hell's Gate was OPTIONAL you A##hole!!!" He just laughed. Dennis seems to enjoy laughing at me for some reason. Sometimes I really don't like Dennis all that much.

Well, OI CJ (short for Carlos Jeep, I named it that because it's brown. Yeah, yeah I know. Political correctness has never been one of my strong points) made it through most of the rest of this wonderful "optional" part of the trail without a hitch. As long as we don't talk about me flipping completely up on the passenger side when I didn't realize how deep that hole ahead of me was. Hey, no body damage and I haven't seen any pictures posted so it never really happened, right?

After everybody helping me get CJ back on 4 wheels from the incident that never happened, I got out to watch Craig come through. I figured that if a Super Jeeper like myself had an issue with that hole (which I didn't), a less experienced guy might need a little guidance. As he got to the hole just before the one that almost was a challenge for me, he got a little too far to the left and ended up on his right side. I've heard of people having problems like this so I thought I could probably help. After some winching in both directions we got him and Kelly back on 4 wheels and got his heart rate back a little closer to normal. He seemed a little shook up when he first landed on his side, but he definitely was smiling ear to ear when it was over.



Towards the end of the day we hit a spot where coming up out of the creek was one of the most challenging things I've ever done on a trail ride and I know none of our previous Jeeps would have made it. Dennis made it out, then I made it out, then we ended up losing a couple drive shafts and U-joints on the next few that tried it so Dennis decided to send the rest further up the creek to an "easier" exit. Just getting TO the exit turned out to be quite the accomplishment for a few of the guys. When it became Craig's turn to get past a pretty big obstacle on the way to the exit he ended up with his left front tire about 6 feet off the ground and his unlocked TJ just didn't want to go any further. Having listened to other club members over the years I advised him to stomp his brakes while gassing on it to get the tires off the ground to stop spinning and put the power to the ones still on the ground. Well, he pretty much went FLYING out of that hole and it seemed like from then on he was in love with his rev limiter because he sure spent a lot of time right up next to it.

I can't wait for Jeep season to start again, but I have a bit of advice for you all. If you're on the trail with Craig, make sure he's not right behind you. Now that he knows what that skinny pedal is for, if you slow down for an obstacle, he might end up right on top of you....

Reminder

Jeff Sorensen

Well another year of Jeeping has come and gone. I hope everyone had a good year! The renewals will be going out shortly. Please take a look at the information and make sure everything is correct and mail them back. Please remember if any member has questions or concerns about the club, please feel free to attend a board meeting and bring them to board. We need your input to make the club better.

2016 TRJC Event Calendar

All local TRJC events, except the Safari and Blast, meet at radio station WBBA, 1260 West Washington St., just east of the American Legion Hall.

| Date | | TRJC Event | Time |
|----------|-------|--|----------|
| Feb | 6 | First Trail Builder of the Season (Weather permitting) | 9:00 AM |
| | 20 | Board Meeting #1 | 7:30 AM |
| | | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| | | Kick Off Dinner (catered) | 5:00 PM |
| Mar | 5 | Registration opens for the Safari | |
| | | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| | 19 | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| April | 2 | Board Meeting #2 | 7:30 AM |
| | | Member Trail Ride | 9:00 AM |
| | | Membership Appreciation Dinner (catered) | 5:00 PM |
| | 16 | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| | 30 | Board Meeting #3 | 7:30 AM |
| | | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| May | 14 | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| | 19 | Registration Opens for the 4x4 Blast | |
| | 19-21 | 15th Annual Illini 4x4 Safari (Open to the public) | 4 PM Thu |
| Jun | 4 | Board Meeting #4 | 7:30 AM |
| | | Recovery Class / Trail Ride | 9:00 AM |
| | 18 | Father's Day Run & Catered Dinner | 9:00 AM |
| July | 9 | 4th of July Run | 9:00 AM |
| | 23 | Trail Builder | 9:00 AM |
| Aug | 11-13 | 18th Annual 4x4 Blast (Open to the public) | 4 PM Thu |
| | 27 | Member Trail Ride | 9:00 |
| Sep | 10 | Annual General Meeting and Board Elections | 8:00 AM |
| | | Board Meeting #5 | 9:00 AM |
| | | Ma Earth Run | 10:00 AM |
| Oct | 8 | Road Run | 9:00 AM |
| | | Board Meeting #6 (2017 Event Planning) | 6:00 PM |
| May 2017 | 18-20 | 2017 - 16th Annual Illini 4x4 Safari | |
| Aug 2017 | 10-12 | 2017 - 19th Annual 4x4 Blast | |

Three other events are possible: Quincy Mall Display, Quincy Dogwood Parade and the Pittsfield Fall Festival Parade. No dates or information are available at this time but advance notice will be given in the newsletter and also online

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