



TRCR

Three Rivers Competition Riders

"Western Pennsylvania's Premier Off-Road Club"

online @ www.trcr.org



Member PA Off-Highway
Vehicle Association

APRIL 2004 NEWSLETTER

EVENT CALENDAR

Visit www.district5ama.org and www.mojoraceteam.com for updated Harescramble, MX, GNCC & AWRCS race schedules

MAY 2004

- 3 TRCR Monthly Meeting, 8:00pm, Northgate Cycle, Cranberry
- 8 Blue Knob Fire Co. Run on the Mountain, www.blueknobfire.com
- 15 Hundred WV Volunteer Fire Dept ATV Ride, www.hundredatvride.com
- 16 Ramey Fire Co. Poker Run www.rameyfireco.freeservers.com
- 16 Adopt-a-Highway cleanup, I-279 North, Camp Horne Rd Exit, 8:30am
- 22/23 Tour De Forest, Marienville, www.allegheeny-online.com
- 29 Shortcreek Sportsmans Club, Rumble on the Ridge, www.rumbleontheridge.homestead.com

JUNE 2004

- 7 TRCR Monthly Meeting, Adams Cycle

THREE RIVERS COMPETITION RIDERS

President: *Steve Stiller* Vice President: *Celine Nista* Treasurer: *Nicholas Milan*
Secretary: *Jeff Pflugh* Legislative Affairs/USFS Liaison: *Mike Babusci*

GREETINGS FROM THE BACK OF THE PACK

First, apologies for the lack of a newsletter last month. Your humble secretary was stuck out of town with an illness in the family. Now all is well and there is plenty to talk about this month. Our April meeting was held at iMX in Zelig and thanks to Brooke Gill and all the good folks there for hosting us once again. You should check out their website at imxracing.com – they are now sponsoring the iMX Gold Cup Series put on by AWRCS. The turnout was good and so was the food and hospitality. The racing season has started so some of the talk was of motocross and hare scrambles and just plain trail riding now that the winter has given way to warmer and muddier ground.

We made plans for our annual spring ride at **Hatfield McCoy** which was held just last weekend. Somewhere around 30 club members made the trip down to Logan to assault the trails with some of us staying in Logan and others camping near the Bear Wallow trail head. You can be assured that a great time was had by all with little in the way of trail fatalities except a couple of flat tires which we were able to assess and repair on the trail. But, then, there was the incident where Dave Hammell was assailed by a fallen tree on Saturday as he made an ascent up one of the Rockhouse mountains. We assumed that Dave was okay, but after further assessment upon arriving into the town of Gilbert, Dave decided that he may need some assistance. But no TRCR member was assiduous enough to rise to the task and our trail boss for the day, Dave Caughey, refrained from assigning responsibility to any of our dirty dozen to offer assuagement to poor Mr. Hammell, who by now was, well, feeling like he'd been the victim of an assassin. So, we pointed Dave to the paved highway, where he took the easy road back to Logan to seek assistance with the local medical assemblage at the emergency room. We assumed Dave would be okay, and sure enough, later that evening, he returned for some bench racing with his associates, his pride a bit assaulted, but he was a good sport about it. And that's important when you ride with this assortment of jackasses.

Seriously, though, this was perhaps the best trip down yet. We had a great turnout and the riding was super. We ran into some rain on Friday at Bear Wallow but then put on about 70 miles at Rockhouse

on Saturday. Dave Caughey did a great job leading a super loop which hit all the good stuff. Vinny disappointed us by staying on his bike – but one of Mark Savol's crew gave us a good get-off over the handlebars in the woods. No harm done, just some bruises and laughs. And the trails there keep getting better and better. And, some of the hills keep getting nastier and nastier. If you've yet to get on board this event, your next chance is this fall. Or, make a trip down on your own. We challenge anyone to come back and say it's not worth it.

Getting back to the April meeting - we scheduled an **Adopt-a-Highway cleanup detail for May 16 at 8:30am at the Camp Horne Road Exit** at our I-297 North site – please be there, we need your help! There will be a trail ride afterward. Cleanup usually only takes a couple hours and it's a worthwhile endeavor. Also at the April meeting we talked about the annual **Rev & Roll Motorcycle Expo** which was held a couple weeks ago in Monroeville.

We also had some breaking news about the new Rock Run Recreation Park riding area that has received a \$2 million grant from the Rendell administration. See article further in this newsletter. Exciting news.

One very sad bit of news. Upon arriving at the trail head at Hatfield McCoy, we learned that Leff Moore had passed away just 2 days before our arrival. For those of you who don't remember Leff, he was THE person responsible for Hatfield McCoy. We first met him at the inaugural ride in 1993 and since then, he spent the next 10 years making that trail system happen. He was an outstanding speaker, as we've seen him sell the idea of trails for prosperity to property owners, legislators and others over the years. We all owe the legacy of Mr. Moore a tip of our helmets and if you are ever on the Hatfield McCoy website, you might express your sympathy to the family and friends and gratitude for what he gave us.

If you have anything to submit to the newsletter, you can send it to the secretary directly at jpflugh@adelphia.net or to our website, trcr.org. See you at the May 3rd meeting at Northgate Cycle on Rt. 19 in Cranberry. Then, we'll see you in the woods.

BITS FROM BABS

By Mike Babusci, TRCR's Legislative Affairs/US Forest Service Liaison

I just got back from the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council conference in Portland Oregon. I thought I would give you a brief update of the activities. They asked me to give a presentation on the Feasibility Study that PB prepared for Greene County. In case you didn't know, the project came to an abrupt halt when Scott Blair lost his re-election bid for Greene County Commissioner. The remaining Commissioners had no interest in pursuing an OHV Park in the County and we were told to wrap up the study and essentially put it on a shelf. If nothing else, we at least identified a process by which future studies can be conducted, or in the simplest form, a checklist of issues that should be considered when assessing the feasibility of a proposal. The study also gave us an opportunity to generate some planning level costs for construction, operation, and maintenance which can be used as rough guidelines to determine the financial feasibility of an OHV park. The numbers are not particularly encouraging and clearly show that establishing a private, for profit facility is an uphill battle. It appears that few attempts will survive (without subsidies) unless one or more of the following conditions are in place.

- * The site can sustain a significant trail system with overnight accommodations or the owner is willing to promote competitive events.
- * The owner/operator has the bulk of the capital cost covered. For instance they already own the land (or it's donated), or they already own most of the trail maintenance equipment, or the overnight support facilities are already in place. Income generated by a successful OHV park can be enough to cover operating expenses but is seldom enough to cover principle and interest payments on a large capital investment.
- * The park has the support of the community.
- * The operator can find operating insurance.

You can certainly find exception to these rules of thumb but they will most likely be operating on a shoestring or they will be smaller club oriented operations that don't have the volume of users that a public facility can expect to see.

NOHVCC is in the process of revamping their technical library. They have hired someone to either extract, or prepare, an abstract for each document, report, and article they have in their library. They intend to make their entire library available to the public by putting it on line via their web site. They want the users to be able to log on to the NOHVCC website and search the library by author, title, or subject. Once they find a list of publications that meets their query, they will be able to access the abstract for each publication. The abstract will give a brief description of the information contained in the article, the date the article was written, and the number of pages of the article. The user could then download a pdf file of the article for their use. I gave a copy of PaOHV's Technical Information CD to the individual responsible for preparing the web-library.

This raises the question of whether the PaOHV should continue to maintain our own Technical CD library. After discussing it, Denny Mann and I both feel that it's worth the time to maintain PaOHV's Tech CD, at least for a couple more years, for the following reasons; 1) we already have the money allocated for maintaining it, 2) It's a good calling call; 3) it's very useful for someone who has a computer but no web access or anyone who wants a faster download on the articles, 4) We can add our SCORE program to the CD. We thought it would be beneficial to store a power point presentation on the CD that had the audio for the power point slide dubbed into the presentation. That way Denny Mann wouldn't have to attend a meeting in person, a club could simply load it and give the presentation by themselves. Our Technical library and SCORE program would all fit on one neat little disc.

There were a couple of "trail patrol" presentations that described the experience of various OHV clubs who volunteered to patrol public riding trails. Their role was primarily to encourage proper trail behavior and offer assistance to trail users rather than strict enforcement of rules. All reported some degree of success.

Club insurance and Facility insurance was another subject that was discussed, mostly among the attendees. NOHVCC doesn't appear to be in a particularly effective position to resolve the insurance problems everyone is facing in the country. I did talk to a couple of folks who suggested different options.

One person told me that he heard of facility operators setting themselves up as Limited Liability Corporation (LLC's). Another told me that there is a ski resort (I think in PA) by the name of Jack Frost that offers individual insurance policies to everyone who buys a lift ticket. Similar to the insurance policies you buy when you rent automobiles.

I had an extensive conversation with Brian Hawthorne, who is the new Public Lands Director for the Blue Ribbon Coalition. Prior to accepting a position with BRC he was the Executive Director of the Idaho (maybe it was Iowa, perhaps it was Utah) OHV organization for five years. His was a full-time paid

position and consequently he was able to make quite a bit of headway in getting that state organized. I feel it would be beneficial to get a PaOHV subcommittee together (3-4 people) and arrange for a teleconference where we can formally pick his brain. I have talked to a lot of people who are willing to give advice based upon someone else's experiences or things that they have heard but this guy actually experienced it himself. I shared some of the experiences we had in getting organized and he ripped off a list of 4 or 5 things that we should try to do but I asked him, if he had to focus in on only one thing, what would that be and how would he go about doing it. He told me that we have to establish and maintain a mailing list and get a quality newsletter or magazine out to all members. Basically his reasoning was 1) nothing happens without money, 2) you need to get as many members as possible to fund the program, 3) nobody wants to join an organization without some type of discernable benefit, 4) not only is a monthly newsletter a constant reminder that the organization is out there and is functioning but it brings information to the members, 5) it's a conduit for advertising and a source for additional revenue, 6) the broader the subscription base, the more useful and valuable it becomes as an income generator, 7) the more diverse the publication, the more people are likely to see it as a benefit (i.e. a rag with nothing more than legislative updates is better than no rag at all, but, it's not nearly as effective as one with humorous stories, informative articles, schedules of activities and events, and articles of local interest). He also nixed the idea of an email magazine saying that it's not nearly as effective as a newsprint magazine. Because it comes off of the web, it doesn't have any personal value as opposed to a newsprint magazine that is delivered to someone's door.

Brian's suggestion was to approach the DCNR again about acquiring the mailing addresses from the registered users. His feeling was this is information that should be public access and that we should have a right to access it. If we absolutely can't access the registered users data base than we should begin developing our own. He suggested that we contact a "fulfillment house" that has the capability to effectively and economically manage mailing lists. He suggested that we ask non member clubs to provide us with their mailing list, organize a raffle to obtain additional names and addresses, simply ask local dealers for the names and addresses of individuals who they sold units to in the past or ask them to obtain permission from new purchasers of ATVs. He suggested that we approach the dealers and ask them to offer a free one year subscription to our magazine for purchasing a machine from them. He also suggested that we should try a couple of direct mailings through out the course of the year as a way of raising funds. The key, and he couldn't address this enough, is to 1) maintain an updated mailing list because that is the source of your income and 2) offer member benefits. "Oh by the way did I mention our member benefits." Member Benefit Number One is the Newsletter/Magazine. He indicated that if we couldn't find someone internal to pull the newsletter together perhaps we find a professional willing to take it on in some type of partnership arrangement. He suggested that we may even want to place an advertisement in the paper.

Incidentally, over the past 3 years I've talked to a number of state and national representatives and everyone assures me that our experiences (fighting among members, lack of enthusiasm, lack of time, poor financial support from members, lack of interest among dealers, poor communication, etc) is very typical of what every state seems to go through. They all have suggestions, many of which we have already tried, but it always seems to come down to perseverance. After a number of years of screwing around with the organization you are generally left with a group of people who really want to accomplish something and sooner or later they all eventually realize that they have to put aside some of their differences and stick together to accomplish anything. This seems to be the universal model.

NOHVCC has adopted a new policy whereby, if a state representative misses more than 3 consecutive annual meetings, his/her position is considered to be vacated.

Only Northern California and Tennessee have representative vacancies. Due to their size, California and Texas both have two representatives (excluding alternates).

The Educational Team is finalizing the literature designed for the Adventure Trail Program. The Adventure Trail Program is an OHV Training and safety seminar designed for children and their parents.

NOHVCC is finalizing a sound testing poster. It should be available for distribution in the near future. Incidentally, "sound" is a very big OHV topic. NOHVCC is focusing a significant amount of their energy to making enthusiasts aware of how much sound their machine makes, and how annoying it can be to others. They are trying to make all users a little more sensitive to the exhaust note of their machines and they are also working with the manufacturers to develop high performance, low sound exhausts.

The Resource Development Team had what they termed a frustrating year. They didn't elaborate, but indicated that some additional funding sources, which were identified at last years meeting, never came to fruition. They felt that NOHVCC needs to pull together a sales package that all representatives can use to

help generate additional funds. Their current thinking is that raising funds should be everyone's responsibility. This appears to be different than last years position that only the resource team should be responsible for raising money.

NOHVCC is also modifying their club starter kit. In the past the starter kit, while comprehensive, was too extensive and proved to be too confusing. NOHVCC is in the process of modifying the kit, actually reducing the content to a minimum that is needed to provide sufficient guidance.

Finally, I ran into someone from Minnesota who told me that the Public Land Managers in Minnesota are citing the public trail system here in Pennsylvania to support their contention that the ATV users in Minnesota don't need any more trails. Apparently the Minnesota Land managers are saying that ATV ownership in PA is the third highest in the country but they seem to manage just fine with 188 miles of public trail. Therefore, why should they provide any more miles than that to the ATV enthusiasts in Minnesota. I have to admit that I was completely speechless while that concept sank in and I quickly pointed out to this individual that nothing could possibly be farther from the truth. I explained to her that we have been working with the DCNR to expand this number in any way possible and there isn't an ATV user in Pennsylvania that would ever tell you we have a public trail system that is anywhere near being sufficient.

2004 CRUSTY DEMONS GLOBAL ASSAULT TOUR

Celine has informed us that the special Freestyle MX show, the Crusty Demons tour, is coming to the Mellon Arena on Saturday, July 10th. If you liked the FMX show, you would probably figure, given the extreme stuff on the Crusty Demons videos, this performance goes to the next level. Celine can get group tickets but we have to decide at the next meeting if we're on board and how much we want to spend will determine which section we can get our seats. We'll be discussing this and more than likely signing up at the next meeting.

ROCK RUN RIDING AREA

Remember Project Ridge RIDER? Well they've finally come through with a riding area. The DCNR has awarded a \$2 million grant to the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority and the Allegheny Ridge Corporation (parent organization of Ridge RIDER) to put an off-road park on a 6,000 acre site in Chest Twp. in Cambria County. Harold "H" Silbaugh, Executive Director of the PaOHV, tells us that this park is on the fast track (well, as fast as government can work, anyway), and everyone involved is excited about it. The site is the former stip mine site of the K&J Coal Co. but is now a very wooded area.

Rock Run is but the first part of a 12 county regional plan for motorized recreation run by Ridge RIDER. With any luck, we could see this park up and running by next year

CLASSIFIED - (ad will run for 3 months only, unless renewed)

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1995 Honda XR250 very good shape, extremely low hours, \$1,400, 724-295-2583

1999 Yamaha WR400F E-Line Baha kit, street legal title. Woods ridden. Full White Bros E Series exhaust, Pro Tapers w/ guards, Oring chain, sprockets, new White Bros piston/rings. Have all orig parts. \$2,000, 412-716-7789

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