



MOTOR POOL MESSENGER

Military Transport Association of North Jersey

August 2001

David H. Ahl, Editor

Try This Recipe . . .

MTA members attempt to tame nature using brute force and sheer idiocy. Dave Ahl reports.

Take nine crazy guys, four kids, six assorted vehicles ranging from a quad to a deuce-and-a-half, some of the steepest, rockiest terrain in the northeast, and torrential thunderstorms, mix thoroughly for eight hours, and what do you have? You could answer that we had a recipe for disaster and not be far off. But in fact, it was a recipe for a trail ride adventure that will be remembered for many years.

I, like most of the other guys, checked the weather channel at 7:00 a.m., saw that showers and thunderstorms—and inch of rain per hour in some areas—were promised for the whole day, said to myself, “well, the weather man is usually wrong,” and set out. We met at John Headley’s place in Milton at 8:00 a.m., set our radios to the same channel, and divided ourselves up among the six vehicles going out on the trail, a GPW, M38, M38A1, a tricked-out CJ7, an M35A2 deuce, and a Honda trail quad. It was extremely hazy, but not actually raining when we set out.

The dirt road to the fire tower in the state forest was a fairly straight shot and barely required four wheel drive. Upon reaching the fire tower, John Headley said, “well this is where we leave you,” and he and his GPW, *Nellybelle*, turned around and went home. Smart man. Now we’re down to eight guys and five vehicles.

I’m riding shotgun for Randy Emr in his topless bright raspberry M38. His son, Jesse, rides on the pile of stuff in the back. Randy shifts into low range, 4wd, and we set out on the real trail. It starts to rain.

The notice in the club newsletter said “no deuces.” The trails just aren’t wide enough. But Dan Muchmore, with Lou Smith riding with him, was sure that his could make it. Dan was right—to a point. It could make it with the help of several chainsaws. So for the next two hours, we crawled over rocks, splashed through creeks, moved aside logs, and squeezed between trees, cutting down a few that were just too tight for the deuce.

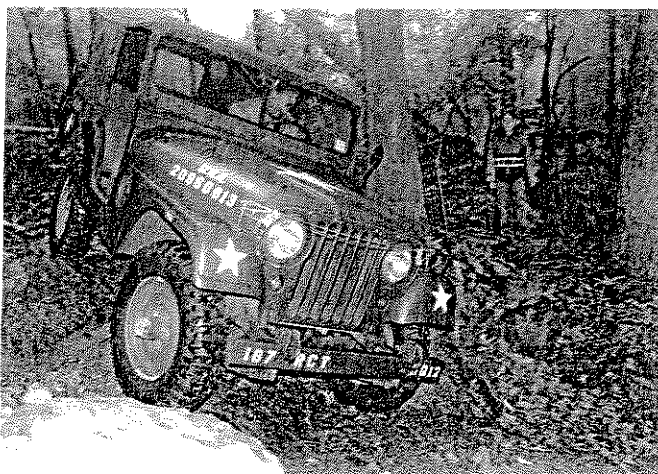
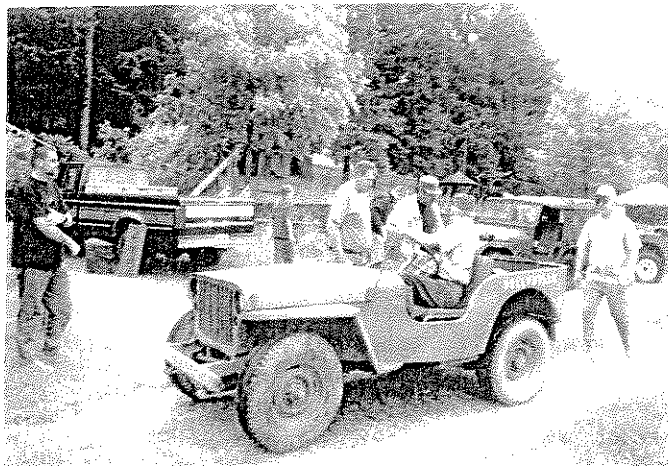


Mark Jezewski and his son Kyle on the quad made runs back and forth between the leading elements and those bringing up the rear. The radios kept us in touch with each other, but instructions like, “take the left fork at the big tree” were less than helpful.

We were originally thinking, 2½ hours in to the sand pits, an hour for lunch and to play, and 2½ hours out. Ha! We got to the sand pits at noon, an hour behind schedule. Some of the kids were getting weary of it all so Steve Lind, his kids Ryan and Stephanie, and Mark Jezewski and Kyle decided to turn around and head on back. Smart move. But no shortcuts in this forest; you’ve got to go back the way you came in.

Not 15 minutes later the heavens let loose: thunder, lightning, torrential rain. Randy had brought a poly tarp, one side of which he tied to the bed of the deuce and the other side of which was held up by three guys. Those not holding the tarp gobbled their sandwiches and then took a turn with the tarp. The rain let up and we got ready to play on the big flat rocks and in the sand. Too soon. Another thunderstorm hit. But this time we got a tree branch for one side of the tarp.

So play time was limited to one slippery lunge by Randy and Dan off a house-size boulder after which we got back on the trail. Dave Coward in his M38A1 with John Peterson riding shotgun was driving with abandon, racing up the rocky slopes and down into each creek bed and puddle—by now much





deeper—sending up a huge muddy splash and a whoop of joy from Jesse watching out the back of Randy's M38.

We were making relatively good time until we hit—ta, da—the cliff. When we came down the cliff in mid-morning, we wondered why there were three routes down. Of course, we chose to take the most exciting one—the one in which your vehicle plummets straight down with only one or two wheels in contact with the ground. Making the return trip the light bulb went on. Ah, ha, there are three routes because your vehicle is not, in fact, a mountain goat and it is darn near impossible to drive it straight *up* the boulder-strewn side of a mountain. So there are three ways to try and climb the cliff. Oh, did I mention, the rain was now coming down harder than ever? At least an inch an hour. And did I mention that none of the three remaining vehicles had a winch? It's true; we're idiots.

Do things ever happen one at a time? Heck, no. After his fifth fruitless assault on Route #2, Randy ran out of gas. No problem, except that he had given his fuel can to John Headley who was long gone and Randy's M38 was now blocking the center of the most promising route ("most promising" is a relative thing) so that neither Dave Coward or Dan Muchmore could give it a try. Dan had attempted route #1 five times and the smell of burning rubber was in the air so finally, contemplating a 6-hour walk out of the woods, he tested the side slope ability of his deuce and cut across to route number 2 *above* where Randy was stuck, jammed it in low first, and by sheer willpower clawed his way up to the top.

By this time, Randy, hovering under the tarp being held by me, had aired down his tires, Dave Coward had squeezed the last drops of his reserve fuel can into the M38's tank and, Randy, contemplating cutting down 50 or 60 trees to make a fourth route to the top, used the sheer willpower approach to scratch *his* way up the cliff.



Sheer willpower did not work for Dave Coward but cables and straps hooked to Randy's M38 at the top eventually did. It took four tries, but we were on the trail again.

Not for long. On the way out, Dan managed to duck under a tree leaning across the trail at 45° but going back the exhaust stack on the right side just wouldn't make it. Not a small tree; it was at least a foot in diameter and 80 feet tall. What to do? Simple. Put a cable around the tree, back up the deuce, and pull it down. Keep backing up and pull it to a bend in the trail. Hitch the cable to the front of the tree and around another tree in the woods, back up some more, and pull it off the trail. We're on our way again. The rain is absolutely torrential so Randy packs Jesse into the deuce. He and I continue on in the open M38.

There's more, but I won't bore you with it. By now we're getting kind of pooped. Actually, totally exhausted. Randy admits to me that after watching the weather channel in the morning he was going to call everyone and call the whole thing off, except that he had lost the sign-up sheet. We look at each other and say, "nah, we wouldn't have missed this for the world."

Randy calls me later and says he talked to Mark and Steve. They got up the cliff just before the really heavy rain. They speculated, "this is really bad, but with the rain it's going to be much worse. I wonder if those other guys will make it."

Who's up for a trail ride this fall? The colors are really pretty and the fallen wet leaves make the trail more of a challenge than ever. Are you man enough to join the few, the proud, the MTA Trailblazers?

**Be sure to sign up for MTA-
Red Ball Picnic! Call John
Sobotka: 973-398-3692**

Minutes of July Meeting:

Amid the din of 49 members, guests, and kids, Mr. Sobotka attempted to call the July 9 meeting of the NJ MTA to order at 8:04 p.m. After the noise level lowered, he introduced two new members, Vincent Schwartz of Chatham (no vehicle at present, but looking for a big wrecker) and Tom McHugh (working on an M38A1). I might also note that John Doyle's brother, Doug, was present and joined the club.

The minutes of the June meeting were accepted as printed in the newsletter with apparently no one noticing the two glaring errors in the first two sentences. (Years ago when I was

an market research analyst, we were convinced that the executives at our largest client were not reading our reports for which they had paid hundreds of thousands of dollars. So we embedded a sentence on the conclusions page that said, "we will give \$100 to the first person who reads this and calls this number xxx-xxx-xxxx." No one ever called.) Which may explain why the videos aren't being returned, i.e., nobody reads this rag.

Please Return Videos! Other people want to borrow them.

Mr. Frei gave the treasurer's report. Deposits: \$60 memberships, \$65 50/50, \$25 sale of jackets, parades \$1775. Disbursements: \$150 refund to West Caldwell because no tank, \$100 to St. Joseph's Shrine for the M38A1 parts jeep, \$113.70 newsletter. Closing balance \$3,816.67

Committee Reports

For the **Parade Committee**, Mr. Axelrad announced that we will definitely be in the Mendham Boro Labor Day Parade. A chronologically-challenged member asked when it was. The answer, of course, is Labor Day, which is the first Monday in September (Sept. 3 this year). He also said that we will help out the National Guard in other events as appropriate. He also said something about the Clifton Veteran's Day parade in November, details to follow.

For the **Restoration Committee**, Mr. Headley reported that he and Mr. Markert had picked up the third M38A1 parts jeep from St. Joseph's Shrine and delivered it to Dover Armory.

For the **Trail Ride Committee**, Mr. Emr gave an enthusiastic report of the June 23 trail ride (see page 1). Mr. Ahl gave out "Intrepid Trailblazer" achievement certificates for "incredible courage and perseverance in traversing impossible terrain under intolerable conditions" to the 13 idiots, er, people who went on the ride: Randy & Jesse Emr, Mark & Kyle Jezewski, Stephen, Ryan, and Stephanie Lind, Dave Coward, John Peterson, Dan Muchmore, Lou Smith, John Headley, and himself.

Old Business

In an unbelievable display of democracy at its worst, Mr. Sobotka brought up the subject of an alternate meeting location. It was quite obvious that 49 people just plain do not fit in the side room of Godfather's Pizza. Stephen Lind, a member of the Whippany American Legion described the hall (3 times the size of Godfather's, room for displays and mini swap meet, bar & snacks, etc.). From there on it was straight downhill. Members attempting to shout out other members. Loud yelling, high emotions, childish behavior.

(I normally report who said what, but I'm not going to here because first, I think that several members may regret what they said—if they don't, they should—and second, I don't want a contract on my life.)

One member shouted that the absentee ballots of members who weren't present (3 who called me) should be thrown out. (I know where this member can get a job in the next presidential election.) Another griped that he wouldn't put up or fold down tables at the American Legion Hall. Several said that every time we've moved, we've lost members. Others said (oh, heck, why am I bothering, who cares anyway?)

The first vote was: Godfather's 17, Whippany American Legion 16, Netcong VFW 12 (9 present plus 3 absentee). The

runoff vote was Godfather's 20, Whippany Am Legion 18. Mr. Jezewski made a suggestion that since the vote was so close—practically a tie—that maybe we should try the American Legion for one month, but he was shouted down by the opposition. This isn't a presidential election, after all; we're not voting for an unchangeable location for the next four years. But...

For the Good of the Club

Mr. Sobotka congratulated Jim and Ellen Moore on their first anniversary and Bill and Linda Best on their one-month anniversary. Huzzah, huzzah.

Mr. Sobotka also made an announcement about the rapidly disappearing video library. To put it bluntly, the scofflaws that haven't returned the club videos are ruining the program for everyone else. I currently have a box of 12 videos I was planning to donate to the club, but now I'm now saying to myself, "why the hell should I donate them just so someone else can steal them for himself?"

Mr. Headley reported that the MTA-Red Ball Convoy to the MVPA Convention will be leaving from northern New Jersey on Monday and arriving in Ft. Lee on Wednesday night. Call him for details at 973-697-3576.

Mr. Sobotka reported that he and Mr. Ahl had gone to the COMVEC show in Portland, CT on June 16. A good show, about 32 vehicles on display (they claimed 55), and 22 vendors. Different people these Connecticut Yankees, but a good show.

Don't forget the big MTA-Red Ball picnic on Saturday, August 11 at Sven Johnson's farm. We voted to furnish drinks and dessert (if you want beer, bring your own). There is a mild trail ride, well, a dirt road ride, that kids will love. Roast chicken and maybe a roast pig this year. Great fun. Come any time after 10:30 or so. (See map for directions.)

Mr. Sobotka announced that the club is now the proud owner of a water buffalo trailer. A suggestion was heard to make it into a cooker/cooler with a grill on one side and beer & soda taps on the other. Mr. Coward and Mr. Jezewski will investigate the possibilities. The trailer will be in Mr. Covart's Fox Hollow Landscaping Co. lot in Parsippany for now.

Certificates of appreciation were awarded to Mr. Markert for the name tags (no vote was taken on name tag fines), Mr. Emr for the trail ride coordination, Mr. Doyle for the Ledge-wood member rescue, and to Sgt. Lefferts.

The 50/50 cash and lots of goodies were handed out. Those who thought that the meeting would never end were rewarded at 9:32, when it finally did.

—respectfully submitted, David Ahl, Secretary

Random Notes:

If you want to get something into the newsletter, please give it or send it to me on a **piece of paper**. Although I have a steel trap memory, sometimes it traps things so well that they don't get back out (actually, most of the time). So if you tell me something and you don't see me write it down, figure that it's water through a sieve. I say again: write me a note—DHA

If you didn't get a big 160-page **Belle & Blade Video Catalog** at the meeting, call 973-328-8488 and they'll send you one. Remember to quote account 012001 to get a 10% discount.

Need to **move a vehicle**? John Doyle has a dump truck and trailer available at a nominal cost.

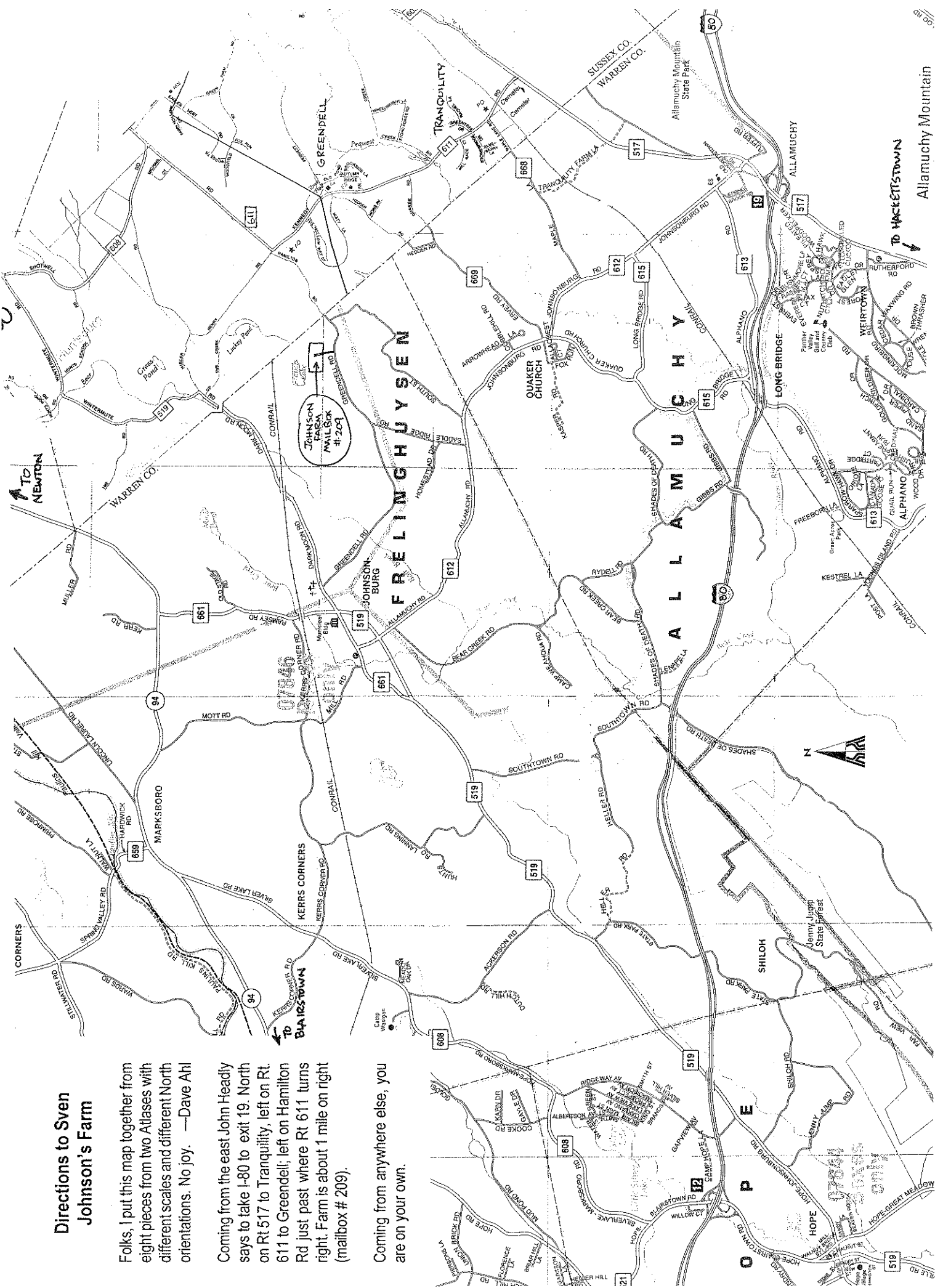
Mr. Mundy notes that the **Sussex County Veterans Committee** seeks military vehicles to join in a big event to honor veterans at Sussex County Fairgrounds on Sat., Nov. 10. Call Jim Mundy for details at 973-770-0262.

Directions to Sven Johnson's Farm

Folks, I put this map together from eight pieces from two Atlases with different scales and different North orientations. No joy. —Dave Ahl

Coming from the east John Heady says to take I-80 to exit 19. North on Rt.517 to Tranquility, left on Rt. 611 to Greendell; left on Hamilton Rd just past where Rt 611 turns right. Farm is about 1 mile on right (mailbox # 209).

Coming from anywhere else, you are on your own.



Classified Advertising:

FREE 6-foot snow plow blade, came off an MB. Located in Andover. Gary Schultz, 908-852-4520

Civilian jeep rim \$9.00. Harold Ratzburg, 973-887-2574

1952 M38A1. Good price. Bob Fenton. 609-971-9045.

Last Call! Small trailer for MB or GPW. Make an offer before junk man cometh. Dick Ivory, 908-686-0449.

1950 3/4-ton Chevy panel truck, does not run, \$500. Call Ed, leave message, 973-347-3866.

1934 Chevy drive train, wheels & tires. Tom. 973-627-9448

Sky Insight Consultants. NYC Air Tours. Aerial resupply. Aerial photography. "Mile High Club" Stephen Lind, 973-386-9213.

Wanted: M543A2 Wrecker. Vincent Schwartz, 973-635-2404.

Wanted: Khaki overseas (flat) cap, prefer one with officer's braid, but any is okay. Size 7-5/8 or 7-3/4. Dave Ahl at 973-285-0716 or 973-538-3385.

Member Services:

Starting soon, **business card size ads** (2" x 3 1/2") for member services (and others) will cost \$10 per year (a bargain!).

Landscaping, Retaining Walls, Patios Don Covart, Fox Hollow Landscaping, 973-263-8106, 335-4367

Tree Services

John Boyle, Boyle Tree Service, 908-964-9358

Welding, Sheet Metal Work, Machine Work

Brian's Custom Fabricating & Repair, 973-209-0454

Used Cars & Trucks—Buy or Sell Dan Lacey, Empire Auto Sales, 800-94EMPIRE, 201-440-3323

Add-A-Level, Additions, New Homes Randy Emr, Emr Construction Co., 973-663-5130

Vehicle Repairs & Restoration

Joe Detauda, 570-686-3121

Mobile Sandblasting—Commercial, Residential, Metal John Peterson Enterprises, 732-777-6828

Officers for 2001:

President John Sobotka
37 Mountain Trail, Hopatcong, NJ 07843
973-398-3692

Vice President Brian Bancala
56 Newton Ave., Sussex, NJ 07461, 973-875-6985

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Dave Ahl
12 Indian Head Rd, Morristown, NJ 07960
973-285-0716

Treasurer Rick Frei
P.O. Box 628, Blairstown, NJ 07825, 908-362-5045

Sergeant of Arms Mark Jezewski
11 Godfrey Ave., Roseland, NJ 07068
973-228-7086

Calendar:

Meetings, parades, and events that are officially sanctioned by the club are listed in **BOLD UPPER-CASE TYPE**, while other events are listed in standard type-face.

Thu. July 19 - Sun. July 22: MVPA Intl Convention Ft. Lee, VA, 3 mi east of Petersburg. Info: 800-365-5798. The MTA will convoy with Red Ball to this event. Call John Headley for details, 973-697-3576.

Thu. - Sat. July 26-28: 14th Merrimack Valley Club Rally, Weare, NH, off Rt 114 behind Center Woods School north of town. Lots of trail rides, big flea market, displays, more. Info: Larry Damour, 603-529-2884.

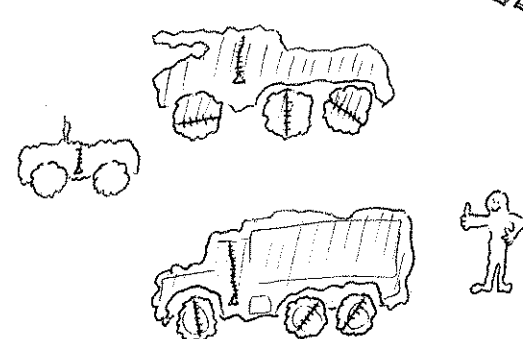
Sun. Aug. 5: King of the Forest Car Show. Drew University, Madison, NJ. 9 am - 3 pm. (Cramped show ground, but friendly to military vehicles.) \$10 pre-register, \$13 day of show. Info: Bob Politz, 973-338-5407 or Guy Vanderhoof, 973-239-1573.

Mon, Aug. 13: MTA MEETING. Godfathers Pizza, Pharmed Plaza, Rt. 10, East Hanover (7:00 eats, 8:00 meeting)

Sun, Aug. 19: Salute to Horsepower Car Show. Lord Stirling Stable, 256 S. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, NJ. 9 am - 3 pm. (Not a good show for MVs; only \$\$\$ vehicles win.) \$10 pre-register, \$20 day of show. Info: Craig Dudas, 908-234-2327.

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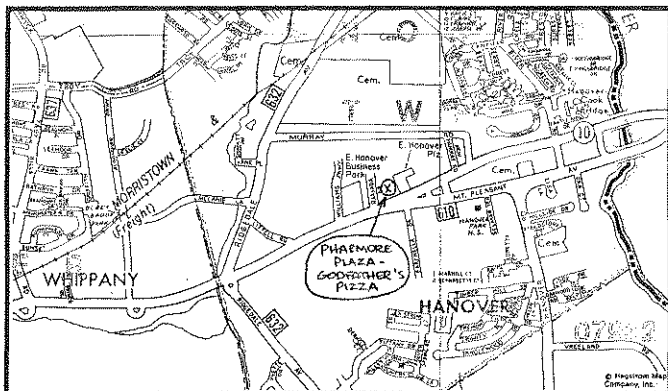
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Military Transport Association of North Jersey

a chapter of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association



Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of every month at Godfather's Pizza, Pharemore Plaza, Route 10 West, East Hanover, NJ. Come at 7:00 p.m. to eat: pizza, sandwich, spaghetti, soda (bring your own beer if you want). Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m.

Join Now and Receive:

- FREE MTA baseball hat, T-shirt, and embroidered patch.
- 12 issues of *Motor Pool Messenger* (this newsletter)
- FREE classified sales and wanted ads in the newsletter
- Notices of parades and events in which you can participate
- FREE annual picnic and FREE annual pizza party.

To join the Military Transport Association, send this form (or the same information on a blank sheet of paper) with \$10.00 annual dues to the address below.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Military vehicle(s) owned _____

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Morristown, NJ 07960

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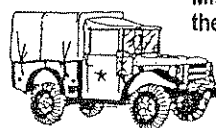
Web site: <http://www.mvpa.org>

Send \$4 for a sample of Supply Line to: MVPA PO Box 520378 Independence, MO 64052

Military Transport Association

The Military Transport Association of North Jersey is a non-profit membership organization for people interested in collecting, preserving, and displaying historic military vehicles. The club holds monthly meetings and participates in 15 to 20 parades, educational events, shows, and veteran activities.

Restoring a Military Vehicle?



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