

The BRIDGE

Volume 23: Issue 1 January 2010

The Newsletter of the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

News from the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (FoRB)

Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is a membership supported 501 (c)(3) organized to promote understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and preservation of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park and the surrounding area. Website: <http://rockbridge.missouri.org/>, email: forb@socket.net, phone: 573-815-9255, address: Suite 204, Outdoors Building 200 Old 63 South/P.O. Box 7293, Columbia MO 65205

President's Column - Susan Haines, FoRB President: State Parks Situation

Greetings, Hope all of you had a wonderful holiday. Below is an update on the situation with State Parks

The DNR Division of State Parks held a special meeting on December 11 and invited friends groups from around the entire state. Bill Bryan, new Director of State Parks, gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the basis of the recent layoffs and the needs of the department for maintenance and repair of the parks and historic sites statewide, with the total amounting to over \$200 million. Susan Flader from the Missouri Parks Association initiated a coalition meeting inviting friends groups to assist in making contacts with legislators explaining the financial and physical duress the Division of State Parks is experiencing due to revenue decline in sales tax.

The next meeting of the Missouri Parks Association is set for Monday, January 11, from 1-3 pm in Jeff City, followed by visits with legislators in the capitol. Also, Conservation Lobby Day is set for Wednesday, February 3 and will include the park funding issue. Most important, please talk with your local senators and representatives, if possible before the session begins January 6, and encourage other members to do so. The message is the critical need for capital improvements funding for the \$200 million backlog in state parks, and the compelling need to include state parks in a CI bond issue this session. For more information, consult the fact sheet and other information on the MPA website: <http://parks.missouri.org/>.

Minutes from the December 11 meeting are posted on the FoRB website at <http://rockbridge.missouri.org/>.

2009 Officers and Board Members

President: Susan Haines; V.P.: Scott Schulte, Treasurer: Don Bay, Secretary: Kathryn Holland,

2009-2010 Board Members: Melinda Staley, Jan Weaver

2009-2011 Board Members: Greg Horstmeier, Maggie Kirby, Rosemary Stevens, Sue Tillema

Next Board Meeting - Monday January 18, 6:00 pm Country Kitchen. All members are welcome to attend.

FoRB Membership - as of December 2009: 136 (32 single, 52 family)

New Members - Mark Schulte, Carol Squires

Renewals Received - Patrice and Kurt Albert, Tanya Christensen and Tom Edidin, Walter Horn and Beverly Kabrick, Ann and Ferd LaBrunerie, David Sapp

Renewals due in January 2010 - Delores and Bill Clark, Meredith and Joe Donaldson, Donna Brunet and Jim Gast, Paul Hayden, Linda LaFontaine, William B. Nunn, Marla Steel, Sue and Herb Tillema, Mary Jane and James R. Wheeling

Renewals due in December 2009 - Kelly and Greg DeLine, L. D. and R. W Jones

Renewals due in November 2009 - Don Garvin and Jean Graebner, Jonathan McConathy, Walter and Linda McConathy, Charles Shipman, Pat Timberlake

Applebee's Benefit for the Friends of Rock Bridge MSP a Success!

Applebee's was packed all Saturday morning with FoRB Friends and members of the public. The breakfast raised over \$1000 for the new kiosk in the park. Dottie Stoerker Peters and FoRB would especially like to thank these people for their help in organizing and putting on the breakfast:

- The Columbia Daily Tribune, reporter T.J. Greaney for his article, and Tanya Ragsdale for her advice in advertising
- Debra Montague, Manager of Party Perfect for the Santa Claus costume
- Troy Wieberg, Manager of Applebee's Restaurant and his staff for providing the Breakfast
- Bryan Pfifer from the Downtown Optimist Club and Bob Jackson, a friend, for playing Santa
- Jim Gast, Superintendent of RBMSP for providing the conceptual drawing of the Kiosk
- Jan Weaver and Greg Horstmeier for managing the raffle
- Susan Haines for being hostess, cashier, and contributing to the raffle
- Rosemary Stevens for handling communications and contributing to the raffle
- Kathryn Holland for designing the centerpieces for the raffle
- Greg Horstmeier for taking care of tickets and advertising
- and all the people who came to the breakfast *and* bought raffle tickets!

Holiday Greetings from the Department of Conservation (the *other* state agency) at YouTube -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hybg9tCD3a4>. Only a minute, but it should bring a smile to your face!

Annual New Year's Day Hike - Friday, January 1, 1:30 pm (*note time change*) - Wagon Wheel

Trailhead. Hike to Scott's (Schulte) Secret Refuge! To get to The Wagon Wheel Trailhead, take Grindstone, Nifong or Gans Road to Bearfield, head south til the road deadends at the Trailhead. The hike will be somewhat rugged and off trail, at least for sections. So participants should be in reasonably good shape, and should wear sturdy shoes with ankle support, and clothing appropriate for the weather.

Hot Cider and Snacks at the Park Office for Volunteers & Friends- Friday, January 1, 3:30 pm

The goal is to have this follow the 1:30 pm hike, so don't be concerned if no one is there, they are just a bit late.

News from Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, and is primarily funded by a 1/10 of 1 cent State Parks-and-Soils Sales Tax. It is located at 5901 S. Highway 163, Columbia, MO 65203. phone: 573-449-7400; Website: <http://www.mostateparks.com/rockbridge.htm>, email: rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov

Park News by Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: *How Much the Park Has Grown*

In January 1992, I responded to a want ad for a part-time clerical position at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. When I first started, there were 3 full-time positions at the park—Superintendent, Naturalist and Maintenance Worker. We shared a Ranger with Finger Lakes. Today we have eight full-time employees (Superintendent, Naturalist, Ranger and five maintenance positions) and as a result of the recent budget cuts and three-quarter time interpretation position. We've lost two full-time positions since 2004.

Eighteen years ago, we were responsible for only Rock Bridge and Jewell Cemetery State Historic Site. Today we are also responsible for almost 76 miles of the Katy Trail and Clark's Hill/Norton State Historic Site.

Other notable achievements include adding 35 acres--bringing our total acreage to 2273, mapping more Devil's Icebox cave passage, creating the Deer Run and Karst Trails, constructing the new service buildings and a second picnic shelter, renovating the residence so it is now our office, converting more acres into native grasses as part of our prairie restoration program, opening up glades, working on eradicating invasive species and developing good community relations to help project the watershed.

I have also seen the growth of the Friends of Rock Bridge from a handful of interested people to over 100 members who care about the park.

Park Natural History/History by Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: Find Freedom in the Wide Open Spaces of the Karst Trail Area

The Karst Trail offers you a wide open view of earth and sky... and a sense of freedom. This area lies south of Hwy. 163 off of Fox Lane (watch for the sign along Hwy. 163 east of Pierpont). Once you leave the old field near the parking lot, take a right at the trail junction to discover large white oak trees growing among the many small sinkholes. Listen for woodpeckers and watch for other songbirds. You may take a connector trail (white arrow on sign) to your left to shorten your walk (3/4 mile) or continue straight (later it also curves left for a total of 1.9 miles). Either way, you'll find yourself in the midst of a big field of native grasses where you can touch the wide open skies and feel freedom, freedom from the small confines of buildings, freedom to roam, freedom to think. Perhaps you can let your feelings soar along with a hawk or let your thoughts float by along with a cloud. Don't let the winter weather stop you. Some warm clothing, some exercise from hiking and some sunshine can make a cold winter day pretty comfortable... and liberating.

**Park Events - Reservations are required for all park events - Call 573-449-7400 to reserve a spot
No Events scheduled for January**

Upcoming Community Events

- January 10 - Hike at Rock Bridge State Park (Sierra Club) - Columbia, contact Greg Leonard 573-443-8263 or greg.leonard@missouri.sierraclub.org - <http://missouri.sierraclub.org/osage/>
- January 26 - Treekeepers Session 1 - 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm, ARC 1701 W. Ash, Columbia, following sessions January 28, 6-8:30 and January 30, 8 am to 1 pm <http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Volunteer/Opportunities/treekeepers.php>
- February 8 - Spring Master Naturalist Training Orientation - classes Mondays 6 to 9 pm, March 1 thru May 10, at the Boone Co Extension Center, Columbia with 3 Saturday field trips \$75, contact Kent Shannon, shannond@missouri.edu, <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/>

For other news and events, visit the FoRB website at <http://rockbridge.missouri.org/>

**FoRB Membership Information - To join,
Clip and Mail this section with a check
made out to FoRB**

- \$15 Park Staff/Vol, Student, Senior
- \$20 Individual
- \$35 Family
- \$100 Supporting

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Street Address _____

City, St., Zip _____

Mail check to P.O. Box 7293,
Columbia MO 65205

Friends' Friends - This space is for businesses and organizations that support our efforts!

Columbia Track Club <http://ctc.coin.org/>



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FoRB
P. O. Box 7293
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New Year's Day Hike
Friday, January 1
1:30 pm
Wagon Wheel Trailhead
Details Inside