

The BRIDGE

Volume 23: Issue 6 June 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 Message by Susan Haines, FoRB President - Earth Day 2010

It might have been dusty; it might have been disguised in a dark, dark, corner, but it came alive when lots of TLC was applied. I want to thank all the Friends and RBMSP volunteers who helped to rescue the portable cave, repair it, and inflate it with TLC for hours of children's education for Earth Day. Altogether, Friends and park volunteer spent over 40 hours repairing the cave, preparing for Earth Day and working at the event. With the help of many very dedicated Friends and volunteers, we had two great display areas for Earth Day.

One was a booth on Elm Street, where we displayed our newly designed mini cave, thoughtfully created to show aquatic life and cave formations of stalactites and stalagmites. The other, the huge portable cave which was inflated and anchored in the children's play area. Over 230 children and adults crawled into it to experience the fun of a semidry cave and learn about bats and cave life. I say semidry, because it had rained sooo much for soooo long, the ground was quite saturated.

Project kits had been prepared in advance for the children to take home, cut out and create their own caves. It was a great success! We're planning to use the portable cave again June 19th, at the Rock Bridge High School when KMOS kicks off their fun day. We'd love to see some new Friends out to help with it at that time. Please call the Friends office or email me and let me know if you can participate. Also, June 12-13, we're planning an overnight campout for children ages 10-12, with a rain date of July 10-11. Check our web page for any changes due to weather. Hope to see you in the park this summer!!

FRIENDS MEETING: Monday June 21, 6:30 pm Country Kitchen on north Providence. All members are welcome to attend!!

FRIENDS PROGRAM: No formal program this month, but join the volunteers at the Katy Trail on June 23 any time between 11 am and 4 pm at the McBaine Trailhead or drop by Rocheport to watch the Riders on the Katy Trail Ride. (Jim Gast has plenty of volunteers, so you can just enjoy the view).

2010 Officers and Board Members

President: Susan Haines; V.P.: Scott Schulte, Treasurer: Laurel Kruse, Secretary: Kathryn Holland,
2009 - 2011 Board Members: Greg Horstmeier, Maggy Kirby, Rosemary Stevens
2010 - 2012 Board Members: Bill Hobbs, Jan Weaver, Sue Tillema

FoRB Membership - as of May 2010: 144 (single 48, family 48)

New Members - Hank Ottinger WELCOME!

Renewals Received - Mr. & Mrs. Forrest Leighton, Otis V. Wheeler THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO RENEWED!

Renewals due in June 2010 - John Fritz

Renewals due in May 2010 - Annette Albin, Darlene and Ben Londeree, Melinda R. and Eric Staley, Helen and William Steinmann, David Webber

Renewals due in April 2010 - Jack B. Beckett, Nancy Boon

Renewals due in March 2010 - Tom Bass, Peter Holmes

DONATIONS 2ND QUARTER - William Clark, Downtown Optimists, Carolyn and David Leuthold, Scott Schulte, Jan Weaver
THANKS FOR DONATING!

2010 Nature Detectives

Nature Detectives is FoRB's unique educational offering for getting pre-schoolers and their caregivers out in nature together. This is one of the key recommendations in Richard Louv's book 'Last Child in the Woods. The outings are free but space is limited and registration is required. Contact Meredith Donaldson at 573-289-3018 (c) or email her at mjdonlsn@aol.com to register

Wednesday, July 7, Saturday, July 10 -- Forest Friends -- 9:30 or 10:30 am

Wednesday, July 21, Saturday July 24 -- Bats in the Cave -- 9:30 or 10:30 am

Wednesday, August 4 -- Stream Explore -- 9:30 or 10:30 am

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 1/2 of 1/10 of a per 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.mostatoparks.com/rockbridge.htm>, email: rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov

Park Perspective by Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: State Park Youth Corps Workers and Katy Ride

Three State Park Youth Corp workers are now assisting operations at the park. We anticipate several others throughout the summer. Noah Luetkemeyer is working with Roxie on interpretation and resource management. Thomas Egloff is assisting our maintenance staff. He will mainly be mowing at the park, on the Katy and at Jewell Cemetery and Clark's Hill/Norton. Monique Evans is providing support for Katy Trail special events—specifically the cross-state Katy Ride.

Speaking of the Katy Ride, this year is the tenth anniversary of the ride and the twentieth anniversary of Katy Trail State Park. The ride, which takes place June 21 to June 25, will be going from St. Charles to Clinton with overnight stops in Marthasville, Mokane, Rocheport and Sedalia, which is celebrating its sesquicentennial. 300 people have already signed up to ride. Most of the participants camp out, but a few opt to stay in hotels or bed and breakfasts.

There are SAG (support and gear) stops about every 10 miles. Riders can feast on bananas, apples, peanut butter and Powerade. Thanks to those of you who have volunteered to work at McBaine.

Once again, I will be riding the whole 225 miles. It is a good way to connect with visitors and I enjoy doing it. This year the longest day is only 54 miles.

Hopefully we will have good weather—not too hot, not too windy and not too wet.

Park Natural History/History by Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: Nature Quiet?! Frogs and Toads of the Park are Alive and Well... and Loud!

When we've had a hectic noisy day in the city, we may yearn for the quiet of nature. Indeed, it IS quiet compared to our electronic world and nature can be truly SILENT in winter. But, during spring and summer, and fall to a lesser degree, nature has a LOT of sounds happening. Generally speaking, we LIKE to hear THESE sounds because they are relaxing, rhythmic and/or musical. Our frogs can be downright LOUD on most spring nights – so loud that it hurts the ears of those of us seeking to monitor them. Let's hope that someday we won't listen, hear silence and wish for the calls of frogs and toads.

Biologists are worried about the chytrid (pronounced kit-rid) fungus that is killing frogs, toads and salamanders (amphibians) in some parts of the world. Here in Missouri, it has been found on some of our amphibians, but it's yet to be seen which species will be affected and how many will be killed. Bull frogs have been known to have the fungus for 4 years before dying, while grotto salamanders that live in caves are more susceptible. This fungus loves the cool temperatures of caves.

It's not well understood yet whether other factors weaken the amphibians with the fungus being a secondary cause of death or whether the fungus is the primary cause. Either way, what happens is that the skin thickens causing death by suffocation. While frogs have lungs, they also breathe through their skin. The good news is that, SO FAR, the frogs and toads of the park are alive and well.

Park volunteers and I conduct 3 surveys of 10 ponds during spring and summer each year. Each frog and toad's call is unique, enabling us to identify the species and abundance based upon the sounds. During the first survey of this year, we heard the following species at normal abundance levels: Northern spring peeper, American toad, Western Chorus frog and Southern leopard frog. Additional species picked up during the second survey of the year were: Blanchard cricket frog, gray tree frog and green frog. One that we did not hear was the pickerel frog, normally heard at least at a couple of the ponds. Let's hope that for many years to come, we will hear the loud calls of frogs and toads emanating from the ponds of the park. I DO NOT want to hear silence at park ponds in the spring and summer.

Pickerels are unusual in that they spend a good portion of the year in caves. Last fall, we saw a number of pickerels in Connor's and Devil's Icebox Caves, yet we heard none this spring at park ponds. Numbers seen in the caves overwintering ranges from 30 to 300, yet we typically hear only 3 or so at our survey ponds. It will take research to figure out where the frogs go to breed and how far they travel.

Other Park-Related News

Frog Survey, June 18, 8:45 pm, meet in the Grassland's Trail parking lot. Let Roxie know if you are planning on coming - roxie.campbell@dnr.mo.gov

Park Events - Reservations are required for all park events - Call 573-449-7400 to reserve a spot

- July 16 and 17 - Save the date for Bat Programs - details to follow
- August 13 and 14 - Save the date for Bat Programs - details to follow
- Katy Trail Bike Ride - Come see the riders on **June 23** from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM when they stop at the McBaine trailhead.

Upcoming Community Events

- May 28 - June 2- Peddler's Jamboree & Katy Trail Celebration Ride -<http://offtrackevents.com/peddlersjamboree.php>
- June 6 - Columbia Rain Garden Tour - 1 to 4 pm, 15 locations - <http://www.moriver.org/raingardens/tour2010.html>
- June 19 - Canoe for Clean Water: Race, Float and Festival - Clean Water 15: Franklin Island at Boonville to Katfish Katy's in Huntsdale, 15 river miles, shuttles service and safety boats provided for participants. Clean Water 50: Stump Island in Glasgow to Katfish Katys. River Fest noon to 7 pm, Katfish Katy's Campground - <http://www.moriver.org/race/race.html>
- June 20-25 - 10th Annual DNR Katy Trail Ride: St. Charles to Clinton- <http://www.mostateparks.com/katytrail/2010ride.htm>

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

Applebee's on Broadway and Troy Wieberg - <http://www.applebees.com/>

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

Columbia Daily Tribune - <http://www.columbiatribune.com/>

Donna Brunet Macro Photography - <http://donna Brunet.com>

Missouri Department of Conservation and Jim French

Missouri Wildflower Nursery and Mervin Wallace

Party Perfect - <http://www.a1partyfun.com/>

Socket Internet - <http://www.socket.net>

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 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 to P.O. Box 7293, Columbia MO 65205

FoRB

P. O. Box 7293

Columbia, Mo 65205

June 2010 BRIDGE

Portable Cave at Earth Day

State Park Youth Corps

Workers

Katy Ride

Frog Survey Results