

The BRIDGE

Volume 23: Issue 5 May 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 - Children in Nature

Dear Friends,

I want to congratulate the Friends' Board for their forward thinking and planning of the many programs they have approved to offer to our Columbia community. At a symposium that I attended a couple weeks ago hosted by the Missouri Conservation Federation, they shared statistics stating that the average child today only spends about 7 minutes out of doors per day, but almost 7.5 hours in front of computer, TV and screen games. Those statistics blatantly indicate the need to promote outdoor programs for our community as well.

Gov. Jay Nixon signed an Executive Order issuing the "Children in Nature Challenge". In a speech dated February 26, 2010, Gov. Nixon remarked to the Conservation Federation of Missouri Convention,

"I'm challenging all Missouri communities to make the most of the programs and opportunities that exist for kids to experience and explore Nature and the outdoors. Educating them about Nature will not only benefit our children physically and mentally today. It will instill in them a lifelong understanding and concern for the care of our natural resources. I'm instructing the state departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Higher Education, and Economic Development to join in the excellent efforts underway in the Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources to help implement this challenge."

Our Friends members will be offering Nature Detectives, UPOP, Leave No Trace, and will participate in KMOS Kids Day. Your volunteerism would be greatly appreciated in helping to facilitate these programs for our future community and state leaders. Watch the Bridge for the dates, times and locations of these programs.

FRIENDS MEETING: Monday May 17, 6:30pm ROCK BRIDGE MEMORIAL S.P. at the GILBERT SHELTER
This will be a potluck celebration, please bring a covered dish or dessert to share and your own plates and silverware. Fried Chicken will be provided. All members are welcome to attend!!

FRIENDS PROGRAM: Saturday May 22 - Meet at Rocheport for a hike, bike or walk on the Katy Trail.
Arrive early (9:30 am) for breakfast at the Trail Side Cafe.

RANDALL CLARK'S SPRING WILDFLOWER WALKS: Every Wednesday through Mid-May, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.,
meet at Devil's Icebox Parking Lot, Free and Open to the Public, No Reservations Required. Led by volunteer Randal Clark.

VOLUNTEERING

- **SAG (SUPPORT AND GEAR) VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR KATY TRAIL RIDE:** Contact the park if you can volunteer on **June 23** from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM when the riders stop at the McBaine trailhead. Call 573-449-7402 or email jim.gast@dnr.mo.gov.

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 April 2010: 146 (single 44, family 51)

New Members - Laurel M. Kruse, Judy and John Watkins WELCOME!

Renewals Received - Meredith Donaldson, Scott Schulte THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO RENEWED!

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, Ginger and Otis V. Wheeler

Renewals due in March 2010 - Tom Bass, Peter Holmes

Renewals due in February 2010 - Sheila and Robert Bailey, Dona Sue Cool, Sandra Hild, Marcia Walker

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

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.mostateparks.com/rockbridge.htm>, email: rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov

Park Perspective by Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: Rain

Wow, what a weekend of rain. The rain gage at Bradford Farms recorded 5.61" from Thursday through Sunday. Susan Haines reported that Gans and Clear Creeks were flowing together Saturday night although there was no water over Highway 163.. Parts of Rock Quarry Road were under water. Water carried debris on top of the big iron bridge over Little Bonne Femme Creek and moved a small foot bridge on the Springbrook trail. There are numerous trees that are down or partially down due to the ground being so saturated. At least the ground was soft to put in replacement orienteering markers. Thanks to John Fritz for helping with that.

Also thanks to all the volunteers who came out to do the litter pick up along Highway 163.

Park Natural History/History by Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: Aquatic Cave Animals One Year

It was one year ago while conducting our bi-annual Pink Planarian Project (P3) survey in Devil's Icebox Cave on 4-26-09 that we discovered that numbers of isopods (*Caecidotea brevicauda*) and amphipods (*Crangonyx forbesi*) had dropped drastically. The total count of isopods on 4-26-09 was 11, down from an average of 2,540 obtained on previous spring surveys – a reduction of 99%! By doing extra monitoring, we learned that isopods began reproducing in mid-August and returned to 61% of pre-2009 numbers by 9-20-09. Amphipods also rebounded. These two aquatic invertebrates are believed to be prey animals for the pink planarian (*Kenkia glandulosa*), a flatworm known to occur only in the Devil's Icebox Cave system. Pink planarian numbers were typical (11) during the spring count, but dropped by 85% of normal by September (3 compared to an average fall count of 24), perhaps reflecting the classical predator/prey relationship (predator numbers drop later when they can't find enough food).

Staff and volunteers just completed the spring 2010 P3 survey and found only 2 pink planarians. Since it is not practical to search the entire cave stream and arrive upon a total population count, the study is designed to search the same areas of cave stream biannually to detect changes over time. We hope that pink planarian numbers will rebound now that their prey numbers have rebounded. But we also remain apprehensive, knowing how vulnerable these aquatic cave animals are to pollution that can easily enter from surface lands in this region of karst topography.

It can happen so easily as did one incident that occurred a few weeks before 4-26-09 – an automobile accident that spilled about 25 gallons of diesel fuel in the cave's recharge area. We don't know if this incident was responsible for the decline or not, but it's a possible culprit. Fortunately, water testing since 4-26-09 has not detected any significant pollution problems.

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

- May 1 - Where the Wildflowers Grow - 1 to 4 pm
- May 15 - Butterfly Survey - 12:30 to 4:30 - rain date May 16
- 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

Upcoming Community Events

- May 2 (Rain Date) - Columbia Earth Day Festival - Peace Park and Downtown Columbia

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

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

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Street Address _____

City, St., Zip _____

FoRB
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May 2010 BRIDGE
Children in Nature,
Rain Affects Park,
Pink Planarian Survey,
Wildflower Walk,
Butterfly Survey, Save
the date for Summer
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