

The BRIDGE

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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

FoRB President, Susan Haines: *Getting Ready for Winter*

The chill is in the air! Leaves are obeying Mother Nature, and creating the blanket that will keep the earth's core warm long into the winter. The Fall Equinox is a good time of year to start thinking about preparing your home for winter, because as temperatures begin to dip, your home will require maintenance to keep it in tip-top shape through the winter. Autumn is invariably a prelude to falling winter temperatures, regardless of where you live. Here are some tips from Elizabeth Weintraub, to help winterize your home, lawn, flower and vegetable gardens.

Inspect your furnace and clean ducts, replace furnace filters and change them monthly. Inspect exterior for crevice cracks and exposed entry points around pipes; seal them. Use weather stripping around doors to prevent cold air from entering the home and caulk windows. Replace cracked glass in windows. If your home has a basement, consider protecting its window wells by covering them with plastic shields. Switch out summer screens with glass replacements from storage. If you have storm windows, install them. Since weather temperatures will fall below 32 degrees in the winter, adding extra insulation to the attic will prevent warm air from creeping to your roof and causing ice dams. Clean out the gutters and use a hose to spray water down the downspouts to clear away debris. Consider installing leaf guards on the gutters or extensions on the downspouts to direct water away from the home. Drain gas from lawnmowers, and water from power washers. Service or tune-up snow blowers. Replace worn rakes and snow shovels. Clean, dry and store summer gardening equipment. Rake away all debris and edible vegetation from the foundation. Seal up entry points to keep small animals from crawling under/in the house. Tuck point or seal foundation cracks. Mice can slip through space as thin as a dime. Buy smoke detector batteries and change them when daylight savings ends. Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work. Check fire extinguisher or replace an extinguisher older than 10 years. Drain all garden hoses and disconnect from outdoor faucets. Insulate exposed plumbing pipes. Drain air conditioner pipes. If you go on vacation, leave the heat on, set to at least 55 degrees. Ask a gardener when your trees should be pruned to prevent winter injury. Plant spring flower bulbs and lift bulbs that cannot winter over such as dahlias in areas where the ground freezes. Seal driveways, brick patios and wood decks. Don't automatically remove dead vegetation from gardens as some provide attractive scenery in an otherwise dreary, snow-drenched yard. Move sensitive potted plants indoors or to a sheltered area.

We've had an unseasonably cool, wet summer. Can we expect the same this winter??!! Once your chores are finished, get out and enjoy the beautiful foliage, hike or bike the trails and keep in shape for the challenges of the winter days ahead. Check out our web page for the many activities scheduled for fall. Hope to see you on the trails!!

2009 Officers and Board Members

President: Susan Haines; V.P.: Scott Schulte, Treasurer: Don Bay, Secretary: Kathy Holland,
2009-2010 Board Members: Melinda Staley, Jan Weaver

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

Next Board Meeting - Monday October 19, 6:00 pm Country Kitchen. All members are welcome to attend.

FoRB Membership - September 2009 136 members (30 single, 53 family)

Thank you to Members who have recently renewed! Martha and Denny Donnell, Lynn and George Montgomery, Carol and Mike Trendle, David Webber

Welcome to new Members! No New Members this month

Time to Renew! October: Patrice and Kurt Albert, Jean Crowson, Beverly Kabrick and Walter Horn, September: Roxie Campbell, Julianne Ramsey, Evelyn and John Tanner, Twana and Todd Ware, August: Tim Drennan, Suzanne Pautler, Ilayna and Glenn Pickett, David Sapp, Judy and Jerry Schermer.

Friends of Rock Bridge October Event

Sunday, October 25 - Hike the Katy - Another Part of the Rock Bridge Family.- Katy Trailhead in Rocheport, 2:30. Led by Scott Schulte. Call 573-268-5439 or email Scott at swschulte@aol.com if you are planning on coming.

New Southeast Regional Park Proposed Master Plan

The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department held two meetings in September to present the new master plan for the proposed Perry Philips Park and Gans Creek Recreation Area. The recreation area borders the northeast corner of Rock Bridge MSP so plans for the recreation area can impact the park. Right now the plans include a large buffer areas for the Gans Creek, playing fields north of Gans Creek and an equestrian area and event open space south of the creek. Please visit <http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/phpQ/fillsurvey.php?sid=123> for information on the plan. The official comment period closes October 1.

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 Superintendent, Jim Gast: *New Parks Director, Budget Cutbacks and Park "Store" Opening*

New Parks Director: Governor Nixon named Bill Bryan as deputy director of DNR and director of Division of State Parks. The following is taken from the governor's press release:

"Bryan served for nearly two decades in the office of Attorney General pursuing actions against polluters and violators of the state's laws on environmental protection, and was named Outstanding Public Official of the Year in 1998 by the Sierra Club for his work on cases enforcing anti-pollution laws against CAFOs."

"Following the Taum Sauk reservoir collapse, Bryan was the lead attorney on the state's civil litigation against Ameren, which owned and operated the reservoir. Working with the DNR, the Missouri Department of Conservation and local officials, Bryan ultimately led the state to a settlement of \$179 million from the utility."

Budget Cutbacks and Park "Store": As revenues continue to decline, the division is looking for ways to save money and increase revenue. I've already written about cutbacks in funding for our seasonal workforce and small maintenance and repair projects. In an attempt to increase revenues, Rock Bridge will be getting gift shop items to sell in the park office. Currently, we sell orienteering maps and self-guiding trail brochures of the Devil's Icebox trail. We've added the 2010 State Park calendar. We will soon be getting hiking sticks, a variety of nature-related books, several Katy Trail related items such as bike socks and metal water bottles, and possibly hand-crank flashlights. Items specifically related to Rock Bridge (such as t-shirts) will come later. Legislation was passed and signed that enables friends groups to sell items in state parks.

Park Natural History by Kathryn DiFoxfire: *Enjoy Fall Colors and Feel Like a Tree Expert in No Time*

With more than 170 native or naturalized tree species, Missouri's forests thrive with diversity. By starting at the Wagon Wheel trailhead (trail nearest the kiosk), you can enjoy many of these trees and their fall colors. First, watch for patches of persimmon trees (with bark that resembles alligator skin). About 300 yards southeast of the trailhead a sharp-thorned locust tree has grown up through a wagon wheel. As the trail eventually turns east, aromatic eastern red cedar trees have taken over old fields. As the trail winds to the northeast corner of the Wild Area, maples, hickories, white oaks and red oaks dominate. When you reach rich bottomlands alongside Gans Creek, look for the compound leaves, dark brown furrowed bark and round nuts of walnut trees. To return to the trailhead, either go back the way you came or cross Gans Creek and take the trail uphill, then right to Shooting Star bluff, then down to creek level, cross the creek and head north. Either option will afford you views of huge, water-loving, white-bark sycamores which tower over Gans Creek.

Don't let Missouri's tree variety intimidate you. Several good resources can make you feel like a tree expert in no time. *Trees of Missouri* by Don Kurz is a full-color book with both drawings and descriptions, sorted by leaf structure. *Missouri Trees*, an older black-and-white Missouri Department of Conservation publication, lists the 37 most common Missouri tree species and includes descriptions, photographs, and folklore. *Master Tree Finder* by May Theilgaard Watts uses a process of elimination via a dichotomous key or flowchart process to determine tree species. For instance, if the leaf buds are opposite each other on the same branch, the tree is likely a Maple, Ash, Dogwood, Horsechestnut or Buckeye (think M.A.D. Horse Bucks).

If learning from guide books isn't your style, join us for a park-led three-mile "Fall Color Hike" in the Gans Creek Wild Area October 24 from 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. You'll see breath-taking blufftop views, enjoy the gravel bars of Gans Creek, learn why leaves change color and learn about a variety of wildlife. See details below.

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

Saturday, October 3, Sunday October 4 -Devil's Icebox Wild Cave Tours - Day-long, adventure-style wild cave tours of Devil's Icebox Cave requiring good physical condition, ability to travel 3.5 to 5 miles round-trip, carry a 65-pound canoe 1/4 mile, and paddle 1/2 mile underground, possibly crawl through tight spaces. You must provide cave-appropriate headlamps, footwear and clothing (extra change a good idea). Fees \$25 - \$40. BOTH ARE CURRENTLY FULL.

Saturday, October 17 - Know the Dark - 7 - 9:30 pm - Learn about night creatures and other mysteries of the dark through hands-on activities. Free. 8 to adult

Saturday, October 24 - Fall Color Hike - 12:30 -4:30 pm - Hike the scenic trails of the Gans Creek Wild area (about 3 miles) with the park naturalist. Free. 8 to adult.

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!

JOIN US ON HALLOWEEN!
 Kids in costume eat for free with
the purchase of an adult entree!

11am-5pm at Applebee's 2601 E. Broadway

FoRB
P. O. Box 7293
Columbia, Mo 65205