

The BRIDGE

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The Newsletter of the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (RBMSP)

A membership 501 (c)(3) organized to promote understanding, appreciation, enjoyment & preservation of RBMSP & the surrounding area
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From the Friends of Rock Bridge MSP (FoRB) News - from the FoRB President, Jan Weaver

March offers some great opportunities for getting to know the park better. Roxie Campbell and Katherine Devany DiFoxfire are holding three "Volunteering at Rock Bridge 101" trainings. All three will cover the park's history, its mission and its resources. Roxie and Kat will also talk about the volunteer opportunities at the park - programs, surveys, research, removing invasives and other service activities. Trainings will be Thursday March 5 from 6-9 pm, Saturday March 7 from 1-4 pm, and Tuesday March 10 from 6-9 pm at the Park Office, 5901 South Hwy 163. Advance registration is required, call 573-449-7400.

Building on the Volunteering 101 training - there are three other programs in March that provide advanced training: Lost in the Woods (orienteering and land navigation) will be Sunday March 8 from 12-4:30 pm; Help Fight the Invaders (removing invasives) will be Saturday March 14 from 1-4 pm; and Frog's Serenade will be Saturday March 14 from 5:30 -10:00 pm (because that's when frogs roll). Advance registration is required for these as well, call 573-449-7400.

Our Friends mission is to promote the Understanding, Appreciation, Enjoyment and Preservation of the park. Attending one of the Volunteer 101 trainings and then one or more of the more in-depth programs - Lost in the Woods, Fight the Invaders or Frog's Serenade is a way that you can make your commitment to the park hands-on by gaining the understanding and skills to lead programs, slow down the spread of invasive plants that decimate native plant communities, and track the populations of wild creatures that make the park such an interesting place to visit. Please find time in your schedule to attend one of the Volunteer 101 trainings, and then, over time, work in a few hours a month to help care for and preserve one of central Missouri's most valuable assets - Rock Bridge Memorial State Park.

Nature Notes

by Roxie Campbell

Clear Creek is Ozark-like with bedrock pools, a predominance of gravel bottoms, moderately clear water and a constant flow of water - just the kind of habitat enjoyed by 15 species of fish (Vokoun and Noltie, 2000). One minnow that you can see from banks of Clear Creek, is the Common Shiner. As a school of Common Shiners swim, they turn their bodies so that the sun shines off of their silvery sides. There are also many crayfish that inhabit this creek and made holes in the mud of the embankments or hide under the rocks. Junior Naturalists using nets in Clear Creek have caught fish, crayfish and insect nymphs including dragonfly nymphs that were nearly as large and round as a penny.

FoRB Membership

Thank you to these FoRB members who have recently renewed! Margaret & Max Berends, Dr. & Mrs. Denny Donnell, Linda LaFontaine, William B. Nunn, Sue & Herb Tillema, Mary Jane Wheeling, and Barbara Willenberg

FoRB gratefully acknowledges donations from: Barbara and John Willenberg

FoRB values the support of its members and offers the following reminder to those whose membership has not yet been renewed:

Tom Bass, Joan and Don Bay, Anita and David Cox, Jeannette and Jerry French, Cay Goodman and Peter Holmes, Leon and Rosemary Stevens, Sheila & Robert Bailey, Jeanne & Vernon Barr, Cathy Richter & John Besser, Hazel Breitenbach, Ava Fajen & J. Scott Christianson, Dona Sue Cool, Sandra Hild, John Larkin &, Maggie Kirby, Mr. & Mrs. Forrest Leighton, Lynn & Scott Schulte, Marcia Walker, Janet L. & Jeffrey R. Blunt (Wild Bird Ctr), Amelia Miner-Cottle & Brian Cottle, Meredith and Joe Donaldson, Cyrilla Galbreath

From Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

News - from the Park Superintendent, Jim Gast

What a nice winter we're having. The warm temperatures mean people are coming out to the park and not just on weekends.

There are two new geocaches in the park. A geocache is a container placed somewhere and the latitude/longitude coordinates are published on www.geocaching.com "Geocachers" then use their GPS units to find the container. Both of the new geocaches are in the Gans Creek Wild Area.

We took about a 15% reduction to our park budgets for the rest of the fiscal year which ends June 30th. There weren't any cuts to our full-time staff, but our seasonal budget was trimmed. We submitted our budget requests for fiscal year 2010.

Mark Templeton has been nominated by Governor Nixon to be the next director of the Department of Natural Resources. He should begin his duties around March 1st. In the interim, Joe Bindbeutel is acting director.

Trails to Explore by Roxie Campbell

The High Ridge Trail (2.3 miles) takes you to one of the highest points in the park and provides a vantage point from which to see many of the park's 2,273 acres. It's a good place to go when you have cabin fever or have a desire for being in wide open spaces. After parking at the Gans Creek Trailhead and crossing Rock Quarry Rd., take the trail to the right, climb the hill to a circular mowed area with a bench. The trail continues along the ridge to the north through native grasslands (some burned some not) before descending to Clear Creek. Here, you can peer down into the clear water and watch for fish, crayfish and other wildlife. The trail follows the creek, eventually emerging out of the valley and up a wooded hillside before returning to the trailhead.

Opportunities (Volunteer and Educational)

Volunteer Training and Public Programs.

In an effort to generate more volunteers while making the public aware of park issues, several public programs (PP) will double as volunteer training (VT) this spring. Some also include service project (SP) opportunities.

(VT) **Park Aide Training** (required for park aide certification)(choose one): Thursday, March 5 (6-9 p.m.), Saturday March 7 (1-4 p.m.) and Tuesday March 10 (6-9 p.m.)

(PP, VT) **Lost in the Woods** (Land Navigation): Sunday, March 8, noon-4:30 p.m.
Training: noon-12:45 Program and additional Training 1-4:30 p.m.

(PP, VT, SP) **Help Fight the Invaders** (Invasive Species): Saturday, March 14, 2009
Program/Training: 1-2 p.m. Bush Honeysuckle Removal Project 2-4 p.m.

Look for more March & April events in upcoming editions of the BRIDGE or check them out online at our newly updated Friends web page: <http://rockbridge.missouri.org/> Thank you to FoRB member Brock Bigard for his work on this task!

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, and is funded by primarily by the Parks-and-Soils Sales Tax. It is located at 5901 S. Highway 163, Columbia, MO 65203. Information about the park is at www.mostateparks.com and the park may be contacted by email at rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov or phone at 573-449-7400



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\$15 Special (park staff/vol, student, sr.)
\$20 Individual \$35 Family

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