

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

The Real Meaning of Thanksgiving - by Joseph Farah, shared by Susan Haines, FoRB President

There are many myths and misconceptions surrounding the people responsible for the American Thanksgiving tradition. Contrary to popular opinion, the Pilgrims didn't wear buckles on their shoes or hats. They weren't teetotalers, either. They smoked tobacco and drank beer. And, most importantly, their first harvest festival and subsequent "thanksgivings" weren't held to thank the local natives for saving their lives.

The Pilgrims came to America for one reason – to form a separate community in which they could worship as they saw fit. They had fled England because King James I was persecuting those who did not recognize the Church of England's absolute civil and spiritual authority. When the Pilgrims landed in the New World, they found a cold, rocky, barren, desolate wilderness. There were no friends to greet them. No houses to shelter them. No inns where they could refresh themselves. During the first winter, half the Pilgrims died of sickness or exposure. Though life improved for the Pilgrims when spring came, they did not really prosper. The reason they didn't succeed initially is because they were practicing an early form of socialism. The original contract the Pilgrims had with their merchant-sponsors in London called for everything they produced to go into a common store. Each member of the community was entitled to one common share. All of the land they cleared and the houses they built belonged to the community. For this community [so far as it was] was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For young men that were most able and fit for labor and service did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men's wives and children without any recompense ... that was thought injustice. What a surprise! Even back then people did not want to work without incentive. A plot of land was then assigned to each family to work and manage, thus introducing free enterprise. What was the result? This concept had very good success for it made all hands industrious, so as much more crops were planted than otherwise would have been.

As a result, the Pilgrims soon found they had more food than they could eat themselves. They set up trading posts and exchanged goods with the Indians. The profits allowed them to pay off their debts to the merchants in London much faster than expected. The success of the Plymouth colony thus attracted more Europeans and set off what was called the "Great Puritan Migration." But it wasn't just an economic system that allowed the Pilgrims to prosper. It was their devotion to God and His laws. And that's what Thanksgiving is really all about. The Pilgrims recognized that everything we have is a gift from God – even our sorrows. Their Thanksgiving tradition was established to honor God and thank Him for His blessings and His grace.

Today we continue that tradition in my home – and I hope in yours. May God bless you, God bless America, and Happy Thanksgiving. I took the liberty of a pre-written article to share with all of you, because I agree with the author. You can find his entire article on the "Meaning of Thanksgiving" at <http://www.wnd.com/news/article>.

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 November 16, 6:00 pm Country Kitchen. All members are welcome to attend.

FoRB Membership - October 2009 135 members (29 single, 53 family)

Thank you to Members who have recently renewed! Jean Crowson, Ilyana and Glenn E. Pickett, Julianne Ramsey

Welcome to new Members! No new members this month

Time to Renew! Renewals due in November 2009 Tanya Christiansen & Dan Eididin, Nancy S. Finke, Don Garvin and Jean Graebner, Ann and Ferd Labruerie, Jonathan McConathy, Walter and Linda McConathy, Charles Shipman, Pat Timberlake; **Renewals due in October 2009** Patrice & Kurt Albert (2), Beverly Kabrick and Walter Horn (2);

Renewals due in Sept. 2009 Roxie Campbell (1), Evelyn and John Tanner (2), Twana & Todd Ware (2)

Friends of Rock Bridge November Event

The November FoRB membership meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 17, in conjunction with watching the Leonid meteor shower with Columbia astronomy expert Val German. We will gather at the Rock Bridge Gilbert Shelter around 10:30 p.m., the shower should begin after 11 p.m. if weather allows for viewing.

Mr. German will have telescopes and his digital camera for viewing objects in the sky until the meteor shower begins. He says we may be in for a rare treat, so-called "earth grazers" that streak through the sky leaving long, streaking tails. The last time these were visible in Missouri was 2000.

Dress appropriately, we plan to have coffee and hot cocoa. If weather is cloudy, we will decide on postponement around 3:30 that afternoon. For latest information, you can call Val at 573-289-8489 or Greg at 402-707-0982. The Leonids also will be seen the following night, so Nov. 18 will be our backup event.

A Challenging Rock Bridge Revenge - by Rosemary Stevens, FoRB Board Member

FoRBMS and Boy Scout Troop 706 volunteers and Columbia Track Group participant runners spent a chilly Sunday morning in the Park on October 11. The runners did a 7 mile, 25K, or 50K run over steep and, sometimes, slippery, wet, and muddy terrain with good cheer. One has to admire the determination to excel under such conditions. Jim Gast was present when one runner requested, with some irony, if they could include a few more hills. Runner's World, Tryathletics, and Panera Bread sponsored the runners and the Columbia Track Club provided a chili/hot dog lunch for all involved. In recognition of FoRB volunteers' assistance, Columbia Track Club will be making a donation to FoRB.

Applebee's December 5, 2009 Benefit for the Friends of Rock Bridge MSP

Come join us at Applebee's Restaurant on East Broadway, Sunday, December 5, 2009 from 8:00 to 10:30 A.M. for a breakfast FEAST. Included are: flapjacks, bacon and eggs, hash browns, orange juice and coffee. Children under 8 free with adult entree. PRICE: \$5. Three dollars from each meal will be donated to our KIOSK project. Applebee's will keep two dollars. SANTA CLAUS will be there. Bring your relatives and friends to this exciting event. If this is a success, Applebee's promises to do it again.

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 Shifts to Off-Season - Jim Gast, Park Superintendent

The "off-season" for Missouri state parks begins November 1st and it means changes to our operations. The administrative and maintenance staff will no longer work weekends on a regular basis, although Corporal Devin Foust, our ranger, will still work weekends.

The water will be turned off and the flush toilets winterized and locked. The Wild Cave Tour Center (former park office) will also be winterized. The building is no longer hooked up to a propane tank so it can't be heated.

The water will also be shut off at the drinking fountains and flush toilets at the New Franklin and Jefferson City trailheads on the Katy Trail. There are vault toilets at McBaine, Tebbetts, Mokane and Portland and they remain open year round. The drinking fountains at McBaine, Rocheport, and Hartsburg will be turned off, but the flush toilets at Rocheport and Hartsburg will remain open because they have heat. There are no drinking fountains at Tebbetts, Mokane and Portland.

There are no utilities or facilities at Jewell Cemetery so there is little to be done. The only thing to do at Clark's Hill/Norton is to change the time of day and the closing time of the gate. There are no restrooms.

Park Natural History by Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: *Pondering Change on the Sinkhole Trail*

As you walk the Sinkhole Trail, you'll see things that may cause you to ponder change. On the lower (eastern) section, you can't miss noticing that a huge oak tree on the bluff to your right came crashing down and broke other trees as it fell. Old gives way to new as sunlight now reaches the forest floor to give strength to new tree seedlings. Further up and within 100 meters of the sharp curve to the right, a solid section of limestone bedrock has a narrow rut we believe was worn there by the passage of many iron wagon wheels of farmers bringing grain to Rockbridge Mills – back in the 1800's. Back then, this trail was a road. That time period is gone, but not forgotten.

The plants and animals are adjusting to yet another season change – as they do every year. Many trees have lost their leaves, revealing the beauty and variety of branching structure and bark. The crickets and other insects are quiet now. Some wildlife is still around and active, while others have migrated or hibernated or are spending more time in their dens. You're still likely to see squirrels and some birds.

On the ridge (western section) past the pond, there are two concrete silos that once stored grain. What once was farmland was dedicated in 1967 as a state park for all Missourians to enjoy. For 42 years, it's been a place where people can come and find that life continues on and nature still resides here. That's comforting, especially when our own lives contain change. Come and hike the Sinkhole Trail to find both change and constancy.

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

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/>
Applebee's on East Broadway**

FoRB
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Columbia, Mo 65205