

The BRIDGE

Volume 25: Issue 1 January 2012

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. email: weaverjc@missouri.edu, address: FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642 website: <http://www.friendsofrockbridgemsp.org/>

President's Letter - Kevin Roberson, President: New Year's Thank You's

Happy New Year! And what a wonderful time it is. The New Year is a time to reflect upon past accomplishments and plan for future successes. We have had some new, exciting, accomplishments in the last year: the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park board was re-formulated with new and experienced members, the board has decisively moved on two decisions, and the memorial to Lew Stoerker has been placed in the park.

The two decisions were to dismantle and store the Hickam cabin, instead of restoring 'in-situ' and to financially support the electrification of the Rock Bridge Mills shelter. A special 'tip of the hat' goes to Scott Schulte for his work in the investigation into the cost and feasibility for solar power at the shelter. Special thanks also to Jan Weaver and Jim Gast as they are the glue that holds us all together and their support makes these things possible.

A hearty congratulation goes to Dorothy (Dottie) Stoerker-Peters for her perseverance in getting a memorial to the efforts and vision of Lew. I thank you for all that you do and have done to support our Park.

Yesterday, 31DEC2011, I went to the Park to look at the newly-set boulder and plaque memorializing Lew. It is beautiful and a fitting tribute. It was a gorgeous day, 65°F, sun-shiny and crowded. More bikers than you could shake a stick at and many families. As I walked up the creek to look at the Rock Bridge Mills shelter the yells, shrieks of joy, and peals of laughter of the children enjoying the park rang-out and reverberated down the valley and across the hills. What a feeling that gave me to be a part of something that is helping to keep what was started over 40 years ago going strong and supporting our community and its children.

Thank you all who have labored in the past and thank you all who will give of yourselves in the future. As we plan for the future successes we need you and appreciate your help. See you at the park, our park.

Kevin Roberson

FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday January 16, 6:00 pm, at the Park Office, 5901 S Hwy 163

FRIENDS PROGRAM – Look for the next program in the February Newsletter

New FoRB Website: <http://www.friendsofrockbridgemsp.org/>

Please update bookmark folder and point your Friends of Rock Bridge link to the new address!

REMINDER: The NEW ADDRESS for FoRB is: Friends of Rock Bridge MSP, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO, 65205-7642. Calls can be directed to Jan at 573-424-9438 and emails can go to weaverjc@missouri.edu .

2011-2012 Officers and Directors

2011 - 2012 Officers: President: Kevin Roberson; V.P.: Jeffrey Friel, Treasurer: Jan Weaver, Secretary: Brennan Van Matre

2010 - 2012 Directors: Bill Hobbs, Sue Tillema

2011 - 2013 Directors: Scott Schulte

Park Events in December - None are currently scheduled

Events in the Columbia Areas

- January 14 - Forum Wetlands Birding Excursion -8:30 am to 10:30 am, Meet at Songbird Station, 2010 Chapel Plaza Ct #C, Columbia - http://columbia-audubon.org/field_trips.php#5
- January 17 - Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary Birding Excursion - 8:30 am, meet at Cunninham stub at Bray, Columbia - http://columbia-audubon.org/field_trips.php#5
- January 17 - Owl Moon (6 to 12) - 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, Runge Nature Center, Jefferson City, registration required - 573/526-5544 - http://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/resources/2011/11/habitat_janfeb2012.pdf
- January 18 - Threats to Biodiversity in Missouri, Paul Nelson Mark Twain National Forest Ecologist - 7:00 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 2615 Shepard Boulevard, Columbia - <http://columbia-audubon.org/meetings.php#5>

News from Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, Missouri 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 News - Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: Deer Hunt Results and Boardwalk Update

A total of 44 deer were harvested during the park's managed deer hunt in December. There were 28 does, 15 button bucks and one buck-- shot accidentally. The buck's spikes were less than 6 inches, but greater than 3 and one spike was broken. 28 deer were taken in the park excluding the Gans Creek Wild Area and 16 were taken in the Gans Creek Wild Area. 37 were harvested on Saturday and 7 on Sunday. 103 hunters were drawn, but only 86 showed up to hunt. 51 hunters didn't kill any deer. 27 got one deer. Seven hunters shot 2 deer and only one hunter shot the limit of three.

Phase 6 of the boardwalk reroute is finished. Funding for materials came from an Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant. We received word that we received another RTP grant to pay for materials for Phase 5 of the reroute plan. Phase 5 builds a bridge over Devil's Icebox Spring Branch and connects the boardwalk with the Sinkhole Trail. A new boardwalk will also go approximately 3/4 of the way under the Rock Bridge on the left side (as you face the Rock Bridge from the existing boardwalk. The old boardwalk went under the Rock Bridge on the right side.). As part of the grant, the kiosk and first two bridges behind the kiosk will also be replaced. The division's Statewide Construction Crew is providing the labor. No construction start date has been announced.

Park Natural History/History – Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: Night Time is Coyote Time

While the park is home to a variety of wild mammals, people usually don't see them because they are active only at night or hide when people come by. It's good for wildlife that the park is closed to people during the night since one purpose of each Missouri State Park is to serve as a wildlife refuge. For example a park visitor who was hiking shortly after sunrise this fall saw and heard coyotes in the Spring Brook Trail area and neighbors to the park have reported hearing their high pitched yelping and howling.

The coyote has inspired many stories, some of them humorous, among American Indian tribes. Coyote ("ki-o-tee") is the Aztec name for this animal.

Like other members of the dog family, coyotes use a variety of sounds and body language to communicate with each other. They also will howl for fun or at unusual sounds like a siren or train. They range 25 to 30 miles, but will reduce that when raising young. They often will remodel another animal's den, digging in the earth to create a den 5 to 30 ft. long and 1 to 2 ft. in diameter with an enlarged chamber in the back

Unlike dogs, both male and female coyotes have a limited reproductive period that occurs once a year in early spring. The two will stay together for that year and sometimes for life. The pups, usually 5 to 7, are born in late April – early May. Both parents care for the young. The pups are taught to hunt between 8 to 12 weeks of age. Studies show that 2/3 of the coyote's diet is rabbits and mice. They also eat dead animals. For short distances, coyotes can run 45 mph! They can swim and like to play.

Just imagine the scene on park trails after the sun sets, as the coyotes and other wildlife come out to reclaim their park... to hunt, howl and play. It's nice that it returns to being our park during the daytime and that this time share works out well for both wildlife and people.



FoRB Membership - To join, *Clip and Mail* this section with check made out to FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642

\$15	Park Staff/Vol, Student, Senior	Name _____
\$20	Individual	Address _____
\$35	Family	Phone _____ Email _____
\$100	Supporting	

FoRB is a 501.c.3 organization. That means your donations to us are tax deductible!

**FoRB
P.O. Box 7642
Columbia MO 65205-7642**

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