

# The BRIDGE

Volume 25: Issue 10 October 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](mailto:weaverjc@missouri.edu), address: FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642 website: <http://www.friendsofrockbridgemsp.org/>

### President's Letter - Kevin Roberson: Rock Bridge Renewal Rocked!

It is with optimism and excitement that I take a few minutes to pen this missive to the already converted. We have just had our 1<sup>st</sup> semi-annual Rock Bridge Renewal work-day at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park and I believe that we can put it in the successful bracket. We had 17 workers that showed up and worked hard for 3 hours. We completed much more than hoped for: we tore out fence and cut down Honey Locusts near the Grasslands trailhead, we cleared about 3 acres near the Hickam Cabin of Bush Honeysuckle, and we supported our friends at the Rock Bridge Revenge for their annual event. The FoRB Board and the Rock Bridge Volunteers have done much to make the park better and to support the park and its staff, but I believe that this start could grow into a lasting process that will make a big difference in our park. I will work to make sure that it does. *Stay tuned for info on our next Rock Bridge Renewal sometime this spring!*

I would like to acknowledge all that helped us, but we weren't as efficient as we will be next time in gathering names. We did have help from the SPYCe youth (State Park Youth Core), the Rock Bridge High School stream team, staff from ABC labs, FoRB members and park volunteers.

- |                    |                  |                        |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Tony Burkhart   | 6. Tracy Fetter  | 11. Jimmy Song         |
| 2. Daniel Crawford | 7. Danith Kuling | 12. Christine Roberson |
| 3. Eric Bohle      | 8. Andy Matera   | 13. Kevin Roberson     |
| 4. Brendan Bautor  | 9. Rose Neal     | 14. Jan Weaver         |
| 5. Adam ?          | 10. Eric Seaman  |                        |

Special thanks go out to Kurt Mirtsching and Shakespeare's South pizza for the donation of lunch. Thanks also to Roxie Campbell and Jim Gast for helping to organize this effort, coordinating volunteers and tools. Also, special thanks to the Roberson tribe for donation of water and soda for the event. As always, thanks to the park staff that supported us in our effort.

Enjoy the fall in the park. It is my favorite time of year. I hope to see you there.  
Best regards, Kevin Roberson - President, FoRB

**FRIENDS BOARD MEETING:** Monday, October 15, 6:30 pm, at the Southside Shakespeare's Pizza, 3911 Peachtree Drive.

### 2012-2013 Officers and Directors

2012 - 2013 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

## 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](mailto:rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov)

### Park News - Jim Gast, Park Superintendent: I Can't Believe it's Already October

The rain we have been receiving is returning the green to the park. We've actually had to mow the grass. We're busy putting in fire-lines in preparation for burning this fall and winter. Under the most extreme drought conditions earlier this year, no fires were allowed in any Missouri State Park. This included campfires, but it did not include charcoal fires in barbecue grills. The burn ban also affected Conservation Areas, Corps of Engineer land and the Mark Twain National Forest. We're still below normal rainfall for the year, however. The lower temperatures have also helped.

The full-time staff, seasonal staff, volunteers and State Park Youth Corps (SPYC) completed the following tasks this summer: mowed, weed-eated (we looked this up) and cleaned; removed invasive species; conducted interpretative programs; re-shingled and repainted the flush toilet building; re-shingled Gilbert Shelter House; re-shingled Rockbridge Mills Shelter House; worked SAG stops on Katy Ride; painted boardwalk steps; painted the shop office; repaired and maintained the park trail system; replaced boards on the boardwalk; trimmed trees and vines; filled cracks on the Katy Trail; sprayed unwanted vegetation and worked in the office.

We will not be having a managed deer hunt this year. Last year's mild winter meant that we didn't get 4 inches of snow which is the minimum needed to do a helicopter count of deer. Without the count, we can't determine the number of deer per acre. Our threshold is 25 per acre.

## Naturalist News – Fall Colors – from the Missouri Extension Department

The leaves of the growing season are green because of the formation of chlorophyll, a pigment found in minute leaf structures called plastids. Chlorophyll is the change agent for food making in green plants. These green pigments use energy from sunlight, carbon dioxide from air, and water from the tree itself to produce simple sugars that feed the tree in a delicate process known as photosynthesis.

Yellow and orange pigments called "carotenoids" are also present in the leaves during the warm weather of the growing season, but are "masked" by the greater amounts of the green pigments. Autumn's dropping temperatures and decreasing day-length stop the production of new green pigments and cause existing chlorophyll to degrade at an accelerated rate. The yellow pigments are then "unmasked" as the green pigments disappear, accounting for the brilliant coloration of Missouri hardwood species such as hickories, birches, cottonwood, sassafras, poplars and hackberry.

The pigments responsible for the vivid red and purple autumn colors of persimmons, dogwoods, maples, sumacs, sweetgums and ashes come from another group of cell pigments called "anthocyanins." Anthocyanins develop in the sap of leaf cells in late summer and are stimulated by lowering temperatures and high light levels. If the tree's sap is acidic, the leaves become red; alkaline sap causes purple coloration.

Carotenoids and anthocyanins often combine in leaves to give the deep oranges, fiery reds, and bronzes typical of many hardwood species. Brown autumn leaf color of oaks and beech is due to the presence of the brownish tannin compounds in combination with the carotenoids.

Several environmental factors can diminish the fall foliage colors. Very warm weather conditions encourage late season chlorophyll production and vegetative growth, which discourages initiation of autumn colors. An early frost before abscission kills the leaf before the pigments reach their maximum development, causing it to simply shrivel and fall to the ground. Long periods of wet, cloudy weather in fall produce a drab coloration because of low light intensity.

To summarize, cool but not freezing temperatures, mild late-season drought and sunny days are necessary ingredients for creating the brightest fall colors of the Missouri woodlands.

For a list of trees and their fall colors go to <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G5010>

### In other news....

**FoRB purchases herbicide mister for invasive plant removal.** Working with park staff, board member Jeff Friel helped research and purchase a new Stihl SR450 mister for \$585, provided at a 10% discount for us by Henderson Implement. The mister will help with large uniform patches of honeysuckle.

**Summer temps in lower 48 are 3rd highest in history.** September 10, 2012. Between June and August, the contiguous United States experienced its 3rd hottest summer. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the average temperature around the lower 48 states was warmer than average in June and August, and set a new heat record for July. The average for the whole summer was 74.4 degrees F, 2.3 degrees above the 20th century average. Environmental Network News - <http://www.enn.com/climate/article/44926>

**IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) kicks-off "Green List" for fully conserved species.** Mongabay, Jeremy Hance. September 27, 2012. Bummed by the Red List (endangered species)? The new Green List will cover conservation success stories. Mongabay - <http://news.mongabay.com/2012/0927-hance-iucn-green-list.html>

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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Park News: I Can't Believe it's Already October

Naturalist News: Fall Colors