

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

President's Letter - Kevin Roberson: Finishing Old Projects, Finding New Ones.

Greetings Friends! I am just coming off of the 4 day Thanksgiving Holiday and am feeling rested and ready for some challenges. I will get plenty at work this week, but maybe we can develop some that pertain to the park.

Bill Bryan and Denny Bopp of the Missouri State Parks have let the Friends group know that they are interested in seeing a modest educational space/building happen at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. They have asked if the Friends Board could support this type of project. The board passed a motion to support this new and exciting project. The exact nature of our support and involvement is not clear yet, but our desire to make this happen is high and this is definitely a challenge worthy of our efforts. Jim Gast, our Superintendent, had a great idea for potentially using a currently existing building to renovate and save capital.

One point of view that the whole board shared was that we need to finish up a few projects that we have started before we are able to focus our energy in this direction. The Hickam Cabin project and the solar electrification of the Mills Shelter being the main ones that we need to finish up. Let's see if we can wrap these up in a timely fashion to allow us to fully accept this new challenge.

Get out and enjoy the park. And look for projects that we could tackle during our next work day in the spring.

Best regards, Kevin Roberson - President, FoRB

FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday, December 17, 6:30 pm, at the Library at Garth and Broadway, Room B. Agenda items include reports on the Hickam Cabin renovation and Solar electricity for Rock Bridge Mills Shelter, review and suggestions for next spring's Rock Bridge Renewal.

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

Park Superintendent News – Jim Gast: Spring into New Year

Do you need something to do on New Year's Day? How about going on a First Day hike at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park? The hikes for 2013 will visit the springs in the park. There will be several hikes leaving at different times throughout the day. You can do one or you can do several. The choice is yours.

- The **Rock Bridge** hike will tour the Rock Bridge area and the spring house. The hike stays on the Sinkhole Trail. These tours start at the Devils' Icebox parking lot and last about 45- 55 minutes. You'll learn some of the history of Rockbridge Mills. Tour times are 11:00, 12:00, 1:00 and 2:00. This hike is rated easy.
- The **Springbrook** hike utilizes the Springbrook and Deer Run Trails and requires some off-trail hiking to see a well and the spring. This hike is rated moderate. It starts at the playground and has two start times 11:00 and 1:30. This hike lasts around 90 minutes.
- The **Gans Creek** hike travels to a spring at the base of a bluff. Except for a short distance on a gravel road, this hike is all off-trail and is rated moderate to strenuous. Learn about dye tracing studies and how water flows in this area both above and below ground. This hike has start times of 11:00 and 1:30 and lasts about 90 minutes. Meet at the Gans Creek Trailhead on Rock Quarry Road.
- The **Little Dome** hike leaves from the Special Use Area at 11:00 and lasts about 90 minutes. You'll see two springs including one that comes out of Little Dome cave and walk along Water Slide creek. About a third of a mile is off-trail. The hike is rated strenuous.
- The **Family Farm** hike is similar to the Little Dome hike above but it also goes to Coyote Bluff. Learn about farming in the area. The hike leaves the Special Use Area at 1:00 and lasts two hours.

You are strongly encouraged to make reservations for your spot(s) for the hikes because space is limited. Please call 449-7400 Monday to Friday to make your reservation.

Naturalist News – Roxie Campbell: Thank You So Much for the Mist Blower

Thank you Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (FoRB) for purchasing a mist blower! It provides us with a more time-efficient way to treat bush honeysuckle and other invasive plants. The methods we have been using are labor intensive because a person has to come up to each plant, cut each stem with hand tools and then paint each cut stump with herbicide. In contrast, the mist blower is like a backpack leaf blower that blows herbicide with the air with the power to reach as far as 40 feet (less if thick vegetation is in the way). The other day, I walked along Rock Quarry Road and sprayed approx. a third of a mile of roadside in 30 min. It would have taken a crew of three workers several hours to treat the same area using our usual methods.

I often use the analogy of war when speaking about invasive plants. Well FoRB, you've just enabled us to move up from small arms fire to dropping some serious bombs! Knowledge and technology are important in war. Some luck always helps. We're fortunate that bush honeysuckle leaves stay green late in the fall and come out early in the spring when native vegetation is dormant, so this gives us a window of opportunity when we can spray Round-up without harming native vegetation. This opportunity to separate the civilians from the combatants and this technology of the mist blower may have just turned the tide of war in our favor! Thank you FoRB!

In other news....

Hellbender makes list of top 10 species threatened by water pollution. Press Release from the Center for Biological Diversity, Collette Adkins Giese. November 14, 2012. The Ozark hellbender has declined by 75 percent since the 1980s, with fewer than 600 remaining in the wild. The primary threat facing Ozark hellbenders is degradation of their aquatic habitats from sources such as mining, fertilizer runoff and animal operations. The eastern hellbender has declined by at least 30 percent. Hellbenders are fully aquatic salamanders, meaning they never leave the water. In highly polluted waters they develop dramatic skin lesions.

Three state parks will close temporarily December 8-9 for deer hunts. DNR Press Release. November 16, 2012. By law, state parks are established as wildlife refuges and hunting is not permitted except under special circumstances. However, these special hunts are being used as a resource management tool because the deer population is too large for the environment of the park and resources in the park are being damaged. Special hunts will be conducted Dec. 8-9 at the following parks: Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park in Wildwood, Cuivre River State Park near Troy, Watkins Woolen Mill State Park near Lawson.

Events

- December 8 - Columbia Crawdads Monthly Cleanup - Columbia - contact Mike Heimos at mjheimos@gocolumbiamo.com
- December 11 - Big Muddy Series: Film - Lupus MO, Village by the River - 7:00 pm, Les Bourgeois Vineyards, 14020 W. Highway BB, Rocheport - <http://www.riverrelief.org/updates/entry/big-muddy-speaker-series-rocheport/>
- January 8 - Big Muddy Series: Monitoring Birds on the Missouri River - 7:00 pm, Les Bourgeois Vineyards, 14020 W. Highway BB, Rocheport - <http://www.riverrelief.org/updates/entry/big-muddy-speaker-series-rocheport/>

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

FoRB
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Columbia MO 65205-7642

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