

# The BRIDGE

Volume 24: Issue 11 November 2011

*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

### President's Letter - Kevin Roberson, President: Spending our Time and Capital

Greeting! I have just spent a wonderful weekend enjoying the weather and the beautiful surroundings that I live in. Part of the beauty derives from living as a neighbor to our wonderful park- Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. As I came in from the woods tonight and as I was putting my tools up in the barn, I was serenaded by my four-legged friends in the park, the coyotes. I hear them almost every night and never get tired of it.

I know that I am not the only person to enjoy the park. Last weekend as I helped pick up trash along Highway 163 as it passes through our park, I was amazed at the number of visitors to the park. In the 4 hours that I was there, the parking lot was packed the whole time. While Andy, Bill, Christine, and I filled trash bags, the comings and goings were almost constant and the enjoyment of the children was evident in their squeals of excitement and joy (along with their hollers of "Hi Mr. Trash-man").

The love and use of the park is evident. My challenge, our challenge, is how do we siphon off some of that love and enthusiasm to help FoRBMSPP and the Park be stronger and better. That will be the focus as we move into the holiday season and make strategic decisions concerning how we spend our time and capital. Take some time to be thankful for all that we have and to think how we can better serve our public and our park.

**FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday November 21, 6:00 pm, at the Park Office, 5901 S Hwy 163**

**FRIENDS PROGRAM – Monday November 21, 7:00 pm, at the Park Office, 5901 S Hwy 163**

Jan Weaver will provide a review of past FoRB programs, after which participants can help plan the 2012 schedule of programs.

### January 1, 2012 - Annual New Year's Day Hike - Led by Scott Schulte

Join the Friends of Rock Bridge for a New Year's Day hike in Rock Bridge Memorial State Park from 1:00 to 4:00. The featured hike will be the eastern part of the Gans Creek Wild Area. Depending on the turn out, at least one other hike of shorter distance and time will also be available for those who do not wish to go on the featured hike. Meet at the Devil's Icebox parking lot by 12:45 to divide into groups. Maximum number of participants is 60. Reservations are not required.

### FoRB Website Temporarily Down

Due to the closing of the COIN system that hosted the FoRB website, our site is temporarily closed. Jan Weaver will be setting up a new site on a new host sometime in the next month. Once she does that she will let everyone know.

**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](mailto: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: Jon Rapp, Nick Recker, 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: Tree Falls

I've been taking a lot of walks in the park this year and have noticed several trees that have been uprooted recently. My theory is the high winds that we had early this year caused some them to fall over.

Sometimes trees fall and they don't do any damage to park structures or buildings. They may just fall to the ground or get hung up in other trees. Sometimes when trees fall they do damage. Three fell on the bridge that crosses the Devil's Icebox Spring branch (the bridge near the confluence with Gans Creek). Fortunately only the railing was damaged. Several trees fell across various trails in the park and had to be removed. In the Gans Creek Wild Area, we use handsaws and cross-cut saws to remove trees because chainsaws are not allowed in the Wild Area. Several trees

fell into the various creeks in the park. We will monitor these to see if they begin to accumulate debris and then act as a dam. This is something we would want to avoid.

One day on the Katy Trail, there were 32 trees down across the trail in the approximately 76 miles that we manage. Most of them were in Callaway County.

In the Karst Trail area, we have been intentionally cutting eastern red cedar trees (*Juniperus virginiana*) to aid in our prairie restoration efforts.

On a personal note, I've made it a goal (again) to learn the tree species. I want to be able to identify the trees that I come across.

### **Park Natural History/History – Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist: People Value the Park for Education and Recreation**

Two of the top reasons why people appreciate Rock Bridge Memorial State Park have been well illustrated in recent weeks. We've had a wide range of age groups visit the park to meet a variety of interpretive/educational objectives. Third graders from Montgomery County R-II Elementary School, came to experience and learn about Connor's Cave and three other habitats (prairie, pond and woodland). Rock Bridge High School Honors Biology students (all 180 of them) came to the park to identify and take pictures of plants and trees they have been studying. A girl told me that it's a lot different seeing the real plants. The teachers were thrilled to see the students being truly excited about cutting cedar trees and working together to accomplish their service projects. Unlike yesteryear, many high school students today have never used a hand saw...or tasted a persimmon. From what I heard and saw, these young people had fun, learned about nature and will carry with them fond memories of the park. We also had three University of Missouri-Columbia classes/groups visit recently because educators know that first-hand knowledge goes a long way for students who are otherwise surrounded by classroom walls.

Probably the reason most people visit the park is for recreation, which can take various forms. Recently, I've noticed people who apparently visited the park for the following reasons: 1) to enjoy the fall colors and wonderful fall weather, 2) spend time with family, 3) see the scenery along a trail, 4) see wildlife, 5) find orienteering markers in the woods, 6) walk the dog, 7) go running, 8) go bicycling, 9) take pictures... I'm sure the list could go on and on. Obviously, people value the park because it gives them the opportunity to do these enjoyable activities in a natural setting.

### **Boardwalk Under Construction at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park**

Construction crews are working to install more than 300 feet of new boardwalk as part of the Devil's Icebox Trail. The new boardwalk will connect the 2007-built stairs to the existing boardwalk on top of the hill as well as cover the stone steps that currently lead to the back of the rock bridge.

During construction, visitors may need to detour onto the Springbrook Trail to access the current section of boardwalk that goes to Connor's Cave. Detour signs are posted showing the route visitors should use.

### **Rock Bridge Memorial State Park Closed Dec. 10 and 11, 2011**

Rock Bridge Memorial State Park will be closed Dec. 10 and 11, 2011, to allow for a managed deer hunt.

**Park Events - Reservations are required for all park events - Call 573-449-7400 to reserve a spot**  
None are currently scheduled

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**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**

### **November 2011 Issue**

President's News: Spending our Time and Capital

Park News: Tree Falls

Naturalist News: People Value the Park for Education and Recreation