

# The BRIDGE

Volume 28: Issue 1 January 2015

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 News – Kevin Roberson: Septic Systems in the Watershed, New Board Members

Greeting Friends!. I hope all are well and their families are safe. We have much to be thankful for this time of year and I hope that is true for all my Friends and neighbors.

With the finishing up of the Hickam cabin we were looking around for another project that is worthy of our time, money, and effort. I think we had one hand delivered last week. I have been concerned for years about the water quality problems with the aging septic systems for the homes in the Karst Plain that includes the Park. We received a question (complaint?) from a citizen concerning a house that they were hoping to purchase that had a non-functioning septic tank that drained directly into a large sinkhole on the property. This will drain right into our cave system and then to our creek with the small children playing in it. I think with the Friends board member's and FoRB member's backgrounds, educations, and connections we can get something done about this problem. This is a problem that goes far beyond this one house for sale. I hope to have a deep discussion on this topic at our next board meeting on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015. I hope to see you there then.

FoRB would also like to welcome two new board members, Mariah Cook and Jim Weaver. Mariah grew up in the park's neighborhood and has used and enjoyed the trails and other resources all her life. She is interested in helping with our Nature Detectives program. Jim Weaver has a long-standing connection to the park through his three daughters, who all have used the park since they started at MU over 30 years ago. Jim brings a lot of board experience having served on the Central Missouri Area Agency on Aging and YMCA of the Ozarks boards for many years. Having moved to the Columbia area two years ago, Jim is looking for an opportunity to give back and will be joining his daughter Jan on the board.

If you wish to work with us to improve our community and help support the park and park staff, drop me an email and we will sign you up. [robersonkw@gmail.com](mailto:robersonkw@gmail.com)

Enjoy the park! Kevin Roberson, President, FoRB Board

### NEXT FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday January 12, 6:30 pm, Park Office

**Officers and Directors** - 2014 Officers: President: Kevin Roberson; Treasurer: Jan Weaver, Secretary: Open, 2015 Directors: Mariah Cook, Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Jim Weaver

## 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 Superintendent News – Jim Gast: Volunteers, Bridge over Little Bonne Femme, Fun Fact!

Including SPYC workers, volunteers put in over 2200 hours of work in the park in 2014. In addition, there were almost 500 hours from people who donated their time for our section of the Katy Trail. A BIG thank you to everyone who volunteered. Your work is greatly appreciated by park staff. I would also like to thank the FoRB board members for their time as well as the members of the Hickam Cabin committee for donating their time and for accomplishing their goals to make Rock Bridge a better place.

Progress is beginning to be made on repairing the bridge over Little Bonne Femme Creek. I met with designers for the fix in December. The next steps are to come up with plans, develop bid specifications and then take bids. Once we know the contractor, repair work can begin.

I'm going to try to include a Rock Bridge fun fact each month as part of my column. This month's fact: 250 adults (18 and older) and 397 youth (17 and under) stayed in the Special Use Area (Scout camp) in 2014. There were 218 adults and 447 youth in 2013.

Have a Happy New Year!

**Park Naturalist News – Roxie Campbell – Hypothermia and Other Strategies Help Birds Survive the Cold**

For many species of birds ranging from songbirds to raptors it's routine for them on cold winter nights to voluntarily allow their bodies to become hypothermic for a few hours! Reducing the temperature difference between the bird and the air, reduces the amount of heat lost. And, since the bird's thermostat is set lower, so to speak, it burns up less stored fat. Surprisingly, birds have the ability to regulate this hypothermia so that their temperature doesn't go too low and so they can come out of it when desired. Some species have been known to reduce their temperature by as much as 50 °F and to keep it low for days during extremely inclement weather!

In addition to "regulated hypothermia", birds seem to have a full grasp of heat transfer physics! With an obvious understanding of convection, they get out of the wind amidst branches of evergreens. To take advantage of solar power, they orient their bodies (back toward the sun) to absorb the maximum amount of radiant heat possible. And to limit the conduction of cold through their bare feet, blood vessels in the feet can be constricted. According to The Birder's Handbook, the core temp of a duck standing on the ice can be 104 °F while its feet are only slightly above freezing!



Dark-eyed Juncos migrate from the North to spend the winters with us, in relatively-balmy Missouri! They and other songbirds sometimes lower their breast feathers to cover their legs and feet to reduce the loss of heat through bare skin.

The Park will be offering five hikes on January 1<sup>st</sup> as part of the national First Day Hike campaign. All of the hikes will *meet at the Devil's Icebox parking lot* and then go to the necessary trailhead. These are the hikes with the theme in parentheses:

- 9:00-12:00      Birdwatching on the Sinkhole, Grassland and Spring Brook Trails**
- 12:30-3:30      Gans Creek Wild Area: Wagon Wheel to Shooting Star Bluff (History, Wildlife)**
- 12:30-3:00      Gans Creek Wild Area: Saunders Cabin and Coyote Bluff (no theme)**
- 1:00-3:00        Devil's Icebox and Sinkhole Trails (History)**
- 1:00-3:15        High Ridge Trail (Wildlife and Prairie)**

If you can't make a First Day Hike, be sure to visit the park sometime during the holidays. Happy Holidays!

FoRB Membership: To join, clip and mail this section with your check to : FoRB; P.O. Box 7642; Columbia MO, ^5205-7642	\$15 \$20 \$35 \$100	park staff/volunteer, senior, student individual family supporting
FoRB is a 501 © (3) organization and donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law		
Name _____	Phone # _____	
Address _____	Email _____	

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

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