

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.friendsofrockbridgemp.org/>

President's Message, Kevin Roberson - Thanks for a Wonderful 50th!

Greeting Parksters! What a great time to be on this side of the grass. The holidays are here, the weather is mild, and the Park is beautiful.

What a great time to revel in being alive. We just had a wonderful 50th birthday for our park and got to visit with founders, property donors, park staff, politicians and FoRB members. The party was a huge success due to many hands and a lot of caring. Especially I want to thank, Roxie Campbell and Sara Whiting for their efforts to make this happen...Thanks!! You two are the best. The poster contest was a big success and I would like to thank Susan Haines for her selfless giving to the community to make this happen. Thanks!

Let's put our thinking caps on to see if we can come up with any ideas on how to make the Park better or stronger, FoRB to be better or stronger, or any resolutions that we may want to deliver to the Conservation Federation of Missouri that pertain to Parks or Natural Areas. Let me know if you have anything to discuss or any ideas.

Keep on visiting and enjoying!

Kevin

FoRB Officers and Directors – 2017 Officers: President: Kevin Roberson; Treasurer: Jan Weaver, Secretary: Sara Whiting ; 2017 Directors: Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Lynne Hooper, Jim Gast

NEXT FRIENDS BOARD MEETING: Monday December 11, 6:00 pm, Park Office

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.mostatetparks.com/rockbridge.htm>, email: rock.bridge.memorial.state.park@dnr.mo.gov

Superintendent's Message, Sarah Jones - Invasive Species: Why should we care?

There are many different types of invasive species trying to invade the park. This time of year, the park is focusing on removing bush honeysuckle and garlic mustard.

Plants are not the only type of invasive species endangering the park. Humans use firewood for camp fires and to heat their homes. Insects burrow into the wood. Humans transport the wood causing the spread of invasive beetles such as the Emerald Ash Borer. These beetles can kill groves of trees in a short amount of time. The best thing to do is buy your firewood where you are going to burn it.

Our nearby rivers are also invaded by invasive species. The Asian Carp (fish) is an invasive species that depletes food used by native sport fishes such as bass and crappie when they are young.

Another invasive species that endangers our forest and wildlife is the feral hog. Feral hogs will eat nearly anything they come in contact with, including many species of native wildlife. They compete directly with native wildlife by eating acorns, a major fall food source for deer, turkey, and black bear. (MDC) Thankfully right now the park is feral hog free.

You may ask, "What can I do about invasive species?" Invasive species and their seeds can travel on tires, clothes, in bait buckets and firewood. (MDC) Make sure to remove or refrain from transporting such species. If you would like to help with invasive species removal in the park, please contact the office at 573-449-7402. Every little bit of help in stopping the invasion, is vital. Help us keep the park safe today and for years to come.

Happy Trails!

Sarah

Learn more about these and other invasive species at <https://nature.mdc.mo.gov/status/invasive>



Naturalist's Message, Roxie Campbell – Park Stewardship: Ways We Take Care of the Park

- **Invasive plant control** – Because bush honeysuckles are still green late into the fall when natives have lost their leaves, it's the prime time of year for spraying and the easiest time to see the need for treatment. Seasonal staff and volunteers have been working on spraying this fall and on cut/stump treatments during other times of the year, but there is still a need for more volunteers. Contact Roxie if you are interested.
- **Preparing to burn** – Another method of control of invasive plants, which has additional ecological benefits, is to burn off brown vegetation during the dormant season (now through March). Staff have mowed grassy fire break lines periodically during the growing season and have been clearing fire lines in wooded areas. When burn plans are approved, fire lines are prepared, crew and equipment are assembled and weather is appropriate, we hope to burn these units this year: Wild Area South, Grassland East and Karst West.
- **Cave trips** – We held four trips into Devil's Icebox Cave this fall: 1) for cave rescue training with five participants from Boone County Fire Protection District, four volunteers and five park staff, 2) to count pink planarians (a low count of 3 was the result) and associated aquatic life, 3) to collect samples and install monitoring equipment ifor two water research projects, 4) to have personnel checked on and become more familiar with more distant parts of the cave such as Chert Bridges and the Left Fork. On September 24th, an estimated 1,200 gray bats were seen in the cave. It seems that gray bats are not dying from White Nose Syndrome like some other species have.



Looking for a Christmas Tree? Shop the Downtown Optimist Tree Lot at 1201 Grand Avenue (just sw of Burger King on Business Loop 70) . **The Optimists support our summer Nature Detectives and UPOP Programs – so please support them!**

Final 50th Anniversary Hike Hike to the Hidden Treasures of Rock Bridge December 2 2017 1:30 to 3:30

Special Use Area: Saunders Cabin and Coyote Bluff Views
Reservations Required, 573-449-7400, Recommended for ages 8 and up. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Prefer no Dogs.

To join FoRB, send your name, address, phone and email with a check to: FoRB, P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205. **Membership levels:** \$15 park staff/volunteer, senior or student; \$20 individual; \$35 family; \$100 supporting **FoRB is a 501 (c) (3) organization** and donations (but not memberships!) are deductible to the extent allowed by law

First Day Hikes are being planned for Monday, January 1, 2018. Start the New Year with hiking in the park! See www.mostateparks.com for details and call the park office (573-449-7400) to make your reservation.

December 2017 Issue
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