

The Bridge

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The Newsletter of the Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park (FoRB)

P.O. Box 7642, Columbia MO 65205-7642 <http://www.friendsofrockbridgemsp.org/>

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.

Send your submissions to Jim Gast, editor at jgast@socket.net

FoRB Officers: Kevin Roberson, President, Lynne Hooper, Secretary, Jan Weaver, Treasurer; Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Jim Gast, Board Members. The next board meeting is **Monday, January 14th, at 6:00 p.m.** at the park office.

President's Message

Kevin Roberson, FoRB President

Greeting Parksters!

Merry Christmas to all. This is a great time to be with family and friends and an even better time to get to the park. You can enjoy all the scenery without those fussy leaves being in the way (except for the invasives and they are generally lower). This is a great time to see the winter birds and squirrels scavenging for morsels, and deer bedded down on a south-facing slope in the sun.

It is also a good time to keep your eye, and camera, out for dogs off-leash. The park has made this problem a priority and has asked for help with a call or notification of any sighting. Details and pictures welcome. The dogs off-leash have been a continuing problem for many park users. The state regulations demand all dogs be on leash in all state parks. Park visitors and neighbors have lodged complaints about harassment by dogs and the wildlife doesn't care for them either.

Best to all and Happy New Year.

Your's in service,

Kevin

Superintendent's Message

Sarah Jones, Park Superintendent

Season Greetings! I hope your fall went well. I have included some pictures of the fall happenings at the park. I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. I want to thank all the staff and volunteers for all their help this past year. Volunteers have logged in over 3451 hours at the park this year. (final numbers are still coming in) I'm truly grateful that so many people love and help take care of this wonderful park. We are blessed in so many ways. Thank you for all you do for the park.

Happy Trails!



Photos by Sarah Jones



Naturalist News

Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist

We were able to successfully do a prescribed burn of Grassland West unit (128 acres) on December 18th. Staff had completed fire line prep such as clearing around dead standing trees near the fire lines. Weather was mild and favorable and tree leaf litter dried out. Most of this unit had been burned two years prior, however the woodland north of High Point Lane was a little overdue, having been burned last five years ago. The burn crew was made up of four Rock Bridge staff, three other MDNR staff and eleven volunteers for a total of 18. You may want to hike this area because it looks more open than it did previously.

Park staff and volunteers participated in Columbia Audubon's Christmas Bird Count on December 15th. Overall, in the 15 mile diameter survey area, 93 species were reported. The park was covered well. Personal highlights for me were two yellow-rumped warblers, a brown creeper, several white-breasted nuthatches and a beautiful eastern bluebird.

Wildlife viewing Tips: For these winter months, I recommend simply driving through the picnic area. During day time hours, look for various species of birds that overwinter with us. In the hour or so prior to sunset, you can usually see several deer.