

# 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 [FriendsofRockBridge@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofRockBridge@gmail.com).

FoRB Officers: Kevin Roberson, President; Mark Lee, Secretary; Jan Weaver, Treasurer; Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Jim Gast, Mark Hahn, Board Members.

## President's Message

### Kevin Roberson

Dear Friends of Rock Bridge

I hope that you and your family are well. I have been working from home for the last 6-8 weeks (who keeps track?), and I have enjoyed watching the world change from my windows. The trees have almost fully leafed out, the birds are plentiful and healthy looking, and Red-shouldered hawks are successfully hunting. I just saw one fly by as I was writing this with some small animal (maybe a baby rabbit) in its talons. Two days ago I saw one fly by with a rather large snake in its grasp. I have seen deer, turkeys, squirrels and rabbits from my home office and think what a great job our Conservation Commission and Department have done over the last 80 years or so.

We are very lucky to live in a state where the Parks and Soils tax passed by 80 percent, and the Conservation Department is relatively free of politics.

Try to get out in the Park and social distance and if you have too much energy, call the Park office and ask for Sarah or Roxie and they can get you signed up to do some volunteering. The Park relies on the help they get from volunteers and they make a difference. That reminds me, I have one more form to fill out. Thanks and I will wave to you in the Park.

Yours in Service to Conservation,  
Kevin

## Park News

### Sarah Jones, Superintendent

As winter went away and spring came, we started looking for volunteers to help us with the basic maintenance and stewardship in the park. We couldn't hire any seasonal staff and Tim Hennessy, Rock Bridge's only full-time maintenance person was planning on retiring after 25 years working for the State of Missouri. First time Handy Hosts Rita and Ron Jacobs came in April and helped us with restrooms and mowing

in the middle of the COVID-19 shut down. COMOTA Trail Volunteers helped with muddy spots in the trail, clearing fallen trees and removing invasive plant species. Park Neighbors are pitching and mowing the grass trails; and Park Director Mike Sutherland and many other MO State Park Staff also joined the ranks to help out.



MSP Director Mike Sutherland with garlic mustard Park photo.

With summer just around the corner, returning Handy Hosts Bill and Marti Koch and first time host Suzy Johnson have filled the ranks in providing front-line work by cleaning restrooms, picking up trash, mowing grass and building the office's new COVID-19 compliant reception area. With Tim retired, we were able to bring back seasonal staff member Anthony Orazio for the next couple of months. In the middle of the largest increase in visitation the park has seen in years, we have been able to provide a safe place for the public to be outside and enjoy nature. A Big Thank you to everyone that has been helping and continues to help keep Rock Bridge Memorial State Park an awesome place for everyone to enjoy.

Not many people know Tim Hennessy by name, but many of you have seen Tim around the park working on the boardwalk, mowing grass, cleaning restrooms, etc. The list goes on forever. He was the backbone of the maintenance in the park for the past 16 years. His contributions to the park affected all who visited.



Tim Hennessy. Park photo

Effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, Tim said goodbye and retired with plans to travel and hunt. With COVID-19 restrictions, we were only able to hold a small staff retirement party outside. In spite of social distancing, we manage to get a staff picture one more time before he took off.

a little slice of the historical information and photos being archived by park staff. Consider how life was different 100 years ago!

Photo below donated by Ray Saunders as part of an oral history project.



Plow found in the Spring Brook trail area. Park Photo

**Naturalist News**  
**Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist**

You never know what you will discover in the park, especially if you walk off-trail which you are permitted to do. I sent a photo of this farm implement to other staff. Mike Dickey who works at Arrow Rock State Historic Site provided some information about it. He says it looks like a horse-drawn one-way plow that was made between 1880-1910 and was in common use as late as the 1940s. It's called one-way because the vertical discs were mounted on the same axle and moved the soil in one direction.

In these photos, you can see the similarities between these two plows if you turn the modern photo around where the horses would be on the left side. In this 1919 photo, Nellie Saunders is plowing, presumably on their land which is now the south central part of the Gans Creek Wild Area! It may be close to where today you can see a field and some remnant prairie plants. Women often helped with farm chores. Notice the team consists of one horse (left) and one mule (right). This is

