

# 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

Greetings fellow park lovers!

I am proud to say that the Board met this month by Zoom. This was the first meeting since about March and it was good to see everybody. We had a great meeting and heard from Sarah Jones, who gives a Park update at the meetings. We all were amazed and appreciative of the effort put in and the results derived from her personal actions and persistence that allowed the Park to stay open during the pandemic and protected both the Park users and the Park staff. Sarah went on to describe how important that volunteers are to the functioning of the Park. The volunteers, through mowing and stewardship work, have allowed the Park to stay within budget, even with the drop in revenue which comes with the drop in income from the sales taxes.

So this was a long introduction into reminding us all to reach out to Sarah or Roxie at the Park office and ask what we can do as a volunteer to keep this ship afloat.

Good job all and keep it up. Please enjoy the Park and I hope to see you there!  
In service to conservation,  
Kevin

Former board Member Jim Weaver passed away on August 18<sup>th</sup> at age 89. Among his survivors are former board member Nanci Johnson and current treasurer Jan Weaver.

## Naturalist News

### Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist

The number of plants the park has documented for the park was at 571 and has now grown to 573 thanks to two new discoveries in recent weeks, one benefit of my getting out into the park more.

Just one clump of Eastern Gama Grass, *Tripsacum dactyloides*, was growing on a gravel bar of Little Bonne Femme Creek just two feet away from an advancing patch of Johnson Grass (invasive). I was fortunate to see it with its seed stalk present; without, it is hard to distinguish from other grasses. It produces a chain of hardened seeds that resemble corn kernels. On native Missouri prairies, it tends to grow in wetter locations. (article continued on page 2)



Mullein Foxglove. Photo by John Nies, Used by permission.

The second plant newly documented for the park is large and showy making it surprising that it wasn't previously recorded. A graduate student, Joe Ryan, did a thorough plant survey for the park in 1989-90, but this plant wasn't on his list. Maybe he just didn't make it to this spot in the park at this time of year. It was growing at the base of a hill next to Little Bonne Femme Creek. It is Mullein Foxglove, *Dasistoma macrophyllum*. It is around six feet tall with a stout erect stem, branches and yellow flowers. It parasitizes the roots of trees such as maple and elm. The flowers are pollinated mainly by larger-bodied and longer-tongued bees.

#### In Other Park News:

Twelve people attended the park's informational meeting held on August 22.

Trail maintenance work has been happening thanks in large part to volunteers with the Columbia Missouri Trail Association (COMOTA).

Volunteers continue to help Roxie with invasive plant control and mowing of firelines.

While most interpretive programs are not happening, Roxie was able to provide programs to three civic groups in July and August.

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the Bonne Femme Watershed Project held its annual Water Festival, modified due to COVID-19, with 43 people attending.

On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 12 members of the Devil's Icebox Cave Institute met. Their day included exploring Elbow Cave in small groups of three spaced out.

Volunteer Kitty Peer completed a quilt square that will become part of a quilt featuring all of Missouri's State Parks and Historic Sites. The quilt will tour the state next year to help commemorate the state's bicentennial.

Staff are gearing up for conducting prescribed burns of some units this fall, winter or spring.