

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.

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

President's Message

Kevin Roberson

This month's message comes as Spring appears to be breaking early and it seems to be a good time to reassess priorities. The seasons come and go, the years spin 'round and the cycles of life continue on. This week I have heard the reassuring sound of the Mourning Dove's wing flaps as they pass over-head and their cooing as they roost for the evening. I expect that I will be able to hear the Woodcocks' peenting if I get out at the correct candle power of light left by the sun passing beyond the horizon.

I am retiring from a career in science this month after over 35 years' service and will be spending much more time in the out-of-doors. I am renewing my commitment to FoRB, my work with the Executive Board and my volunteering in the Park. My volunteer work mostly has centered on the Karst Trail area and consists of mowing trails, fire-breaks, and *Sericia lespedeza*.

I will continue to seek ways to support our Park, its staff, and the youth of the community in my work. I know that the Board has had some very good new ideas that will be bearing fruit beginning this summer and I expect with the waning Covid Pandemic (hopefully) on the way out, we can begin meeting with our fellow Board Members, the staff and the public this summer to plan and execute even more ambitious programs to support our Mission.

I hope that I can count on your continuing support in the coming years as we try to give

back to the Park and the Community to make things continually, incrementally better. Get out and enjoy your Park! I hope to see you there.

Yours in Conservation,
Kevin



Do you know what this is and where it is located? Hint: it was used by a business that was located at what is now Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. See page 2 for answer. Photo by Jim Gast. Used by permission.

Naturalist's News

Roxie Campbell

Space is Needed by People and Nature Alike

Dealing with a pandemic in 2020 has heightened my appreciation for space! All of us have needed our space for living and working, our 6 ft. of space between us and some outdoor open natural space for our sanity and enjoyment! The park's attendance more than doubled to 709,000

as more people than usual visited the park for psychological release, exercise, socializing safely, experiencing nature, etc. Space is one of the four things wildlife need to make a habitat work for them. Within that space, an animal also needs to find food, water and shelter.

The amount of space a species needs varies a great deal. The space needed for some species of native predatory wasps is quite small, an area of only a few hundred yards, yet within that area they need to find certain insect prey, certain plants as nectar sources and certain nesting materials. A small patch of prairie may serve quite well, just like your home may serve you well as long as you can keep it stocked with food, water and electricity. At the other extreme, a bobcat needs a lot of space for hunting the wide range of small animals it preys upon. A bobcat tends to travel 3 to 7 miles nightly! With that kind of territory, a bobcat living in the park (they have been documented in the park in recent years), is likely to travel in and out of the park regularly. So, even though the park contains a lot of space (2,273 acre, 3.5 square

miles), it still is not enough for one bobcat! If land around the park becomes urbanized, the bobcat might find that there isn't enough space for him to meet his needs.

There's also the matter of sustaining this space over time. An example is the famous burr oak tree of McBaine. It has occupied that piece of earth and sky for over 350 years! Last year, we planted some burr oaks saplings in Katy Trail and Rock Bridge Memorial State Parks with the hope that the citizens of Missouri will sustain and protect these lands as public spaces for another 350 years or so! The citizens of Missouri are doing just that through the Parks, Soils & Water sales tax.

Have you noticed the symbiotic relationship here? People need space in nature and nature needs us to protect space for its continued existence.

Answer to photo question: It's the millstone (or top stone) from the gristmill that used to be near the rock bridge. This stone is located at the historical village at the Boone County Historical Museum in Nifong Park in Columbia.