

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

Hello FoRB members! It is a beautiful April morning and all is right with the world. A sunshiny, warm, fresh-smelling morning that is so pleasant that it almost makes up for the cold and mud in winter and the ticks and chiggers in the summer.

I am off to hunt morel mushrooms in a little while, after I get my chores completed. I have only found 10 or so this year and have not yet found my own personal "honey-hole". Part of my chores this morning are to write letters to the Columbia City Council members concerning the ill-conceived proposed Canton Estates subdivision on our Northeast corner. This proposed paeen to avarice and greed at the expense of our Park and the people of Missouri has so far been rejected by Columbia's Planning and Zoning Commission and hopefully will die an ignoble death at the hands of the City Council.

The City of Columbia and the County of Boone, along with the neighboring land-owners, have strived to protect the integrity of the Park and the precious water supplied to the area through our Karst topography. Let us hope that the City of Columbia uses this time of crisis to finish work on its planning to protect sensitive areas. As I said at the P & Z meeting; "If the Gans Creek Wild Area is not a sensitive area that deserves protection, then what is?"

Yours in Conservation,
Kevin Roberson

FoRB Needs New Treasurer

Do you want to help FoRB with its capital projects and nature education programs? Are you comfortable with numbers? Are you dependable and good with details? FoRB is looking for a new Treasurer, and it could be you! While our projects and programs depend on hands and hearts, they also depend on funding, and someone has to keep track of the numbers so we can plan effectively and maintain our non-profit status.

Our annual budget is less than \$10,000 with most of the money coming from grants and CoMoGives. It takes less than two hours a month to prepare a monthly report, an hour once a year to do the state registration, and less than ten hours each year to fill out the annual non-profit return for the IRS and income statements for our contractors. The treasurer also helps with CoMoGives campaign and with grant writing. We use Excel spreadsheets for keeping track of our balance sheet, transactions, and the register, but are open to switching to Quick Books, if that is your thing. If all of this makes sense to you, you may have what it takes to do the job.

Our current treasurer will be moving out of town next spring, so now is the time to consider volunteering. She'll be able to show you the ropes and coach you through preparing reports and filling out paperwork that keeps a non-profit going. She learned on the job and it has been a rewarding (and educational) experience for her. It can be for you as well!

If you are interested in more information, please contact us at FriendsofRockBridge@gmail.com.

Naturalist News

Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist

On April 18, 2021, eleven members of the Devil's Icebox Cave Institute conducted research in Devil's Icebox Cave. Several objectives were met.



The team conducted the spring Pink Planarian Project survey, which monitors the numbers of pink planarians, isopods, amphipods and snails that also inhabit the cave stream. The number of pink planarians was up compared to spring counts of recent years. Eight

pink planarians and three pink planarian egg cocoons were counted. Also observed on the trip were five smallmouth salamanders, one spotted salamander and about 400 gray bats.

Water samples were collected from several locations within the cave. These were later tested for E. Coli bacteria. Only one sample had levels above whole body contact standards. A Tucktec folding kayak made its maiden voyage in the Water Passage and preformed successfully. Another objective met was to provide training for

cave institute members. Several learned the route to Chert Bridges which is located about 1.8 miles into the cave. This area is named for three foot bridges of chert rock 2-4 feet wide that go over the cave stream several feet above the ground. Chert Bridges is a large room of about 50 x 100 feet with a large central column of about 15 x 20 feet. There's a tendency for people to go around the central column and get temporarily lost, so it was good for people to become more familiar with the room. Another cool feature is that the column has a dome room inside it!



All of these objectives were met without Roxie or Sarah which fulfilled another objective - for members of the cave institute to function reliably and responsibly without the direct supervision of staff! Thank you Devil's Icebox Cave Institute members and mentors!

Spotted Salamander (left) and Devil's Icebox Karst Window (above) photos by Kayla Heady. Used by permission.

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