

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; Melissa Hutchens Treasurer; Jan Weaver, Sue Tillema, Scott Schulte, Jim Gast, Mark Hahn, Steve Ferguson Board Members.

President's Message

Kevin Roberson

This has to be one of the roughest summers in the last 20 years and yet, it never broke 100° for a daily high. Hard to get anything accomplished without taking a chance on hurting yourself. Take it easy my fellow tree-huggers. At least we got a good rain here at the Park on August 26th: 1.2".

Exciting times coming up shortly: I get to start my invasive remediation work on the Karst Area. I will be the foe to *Sericea lespedeza* for the next two weeks. Thank goodness for the cold front moving in, the high in the upper 80s for a while. This work is making a difference, much more than I had thought that it would. Conventional wisdom is not always correct. The mowed area grows back much less densely and of-course no seed production for this year if we get it cut before the middle of September. I will also start mowing the fire lanes this month and helping to keep them ready for any future burn.

The next big thing for me will be my presentation to the Missouri Parks Association (MPA). The MPA is having their annual meeting this year at our Park and have asked for a presentation on our work to protect our Park from inappropriate development on our borders. It will be an interesting story and one that all of the FoRB members will rightfully be proud of. Our leadership and planning played a large part in defeating (at least stalling) this development. Thanks to all of the Board Members for all that they have done in this area, especially Jan, Steve and Jim. Teamwork makes the dream work.

Naturalist News

Roxie Campbell, Park Naturalist

We're gearing up for the September 1 through October 8 season of trips into Devil's Icebox Cave. Here's an update on the Devil's Icebox Cave Institute:

Trips planned: 2 refresher training, 2 pink planarian monitoring, 4 training/interpretive, 4 mapping (more will be added).

Members: 22 of the 26 who started the institute in 2019 are still involved; 20 plan to go on trips this fall.

Mentors: we have 6, 5 of which plan to go on trips this fall.

Members leading their first trip this fall: 4. This is exciting – one of the goals of the institute.

Affiliations: we continue to involve those with organizations such as Missouri Speological Society, Chouteau Grotto, Cave Research Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Service and other researchers.

Guests: who will be experiencing the cave for the first time include Rock Bridge's new ranger, some affiliates and a few potential new members.

Folding Kayak: we believe we have a water craft that is working well in the cave and the park purchased one.

Read the October Bridge for a report on how our plans turn out.

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