

Park Supporters Gather at Knob Noster

Park supporters celebrated Missouri state parks at MPA's annual fall gathering, held this year at the refurbished CCC-era Camp Shawnee at Knob Noster State Park near Warrensburg, complete with visits to other nearby parks, a barbecue and breakfast prepared by park division staff, and special activities for kids while their parents discussed the state of the parks.

Early arrivals enjoyed a fascinating site visit to the Windsor junction of the Katy Trail with the Rock Island Line, which is currently under development to provide a long-sought link to Kansas City for the popular cross-state trail. Planning and development division director

Jane Lale and other staff led a sobering discussion of the challenges still confronting this project despite a major breakthrough in negotiations with Ameren (owner of the Rock Island), which has now agreed to pursue abandonment

of the line under the National Rails to Trails Act so that the new trail can be developed directly on the rail bed, rather than alongside it.

The earlier arrangement for a completely new trail some 25 feet from the current rail bed was fraught with difficulties—more than 80 new bridges and road crossings on the 46-mile route—and legal doubts, since Ameren did not own most of the land. And it would cost far more than the \$18 million the state received for the project (as part of a 2007 settlement with Ameren for natural resource damages at Johnson's Shut-ins State Park, caused by the December 2005 catastrophic collapse of Ameren's Taum Sauk

Brush and trees have grown over the Rock Island Line at Windsor.

hydroelectric reservoir on nearby Proffit Mountain).



MPA meets at Camp Shawnee at Knob Noster State Park.

The new agreement is far preferable for park developers, trail users, and the environment and it should be much less expensive and time-consuming to complete, but park officials now freely admit that even this project will cost an estimated \$9 million more than the \$18 million still being held for it, and this at a time of severely constrained funding for park infrastructure. The easiest three-mile segment near Pleasant Hill has already been completed, but it cannot be opened to the public until legal hurdles have been jumped. Ameren has yet to seek federal approval to abandon the line, and the rails still have not been taken up. There has been no maintenance since the last trains stopped running thirty years ago, so brush and even large trees have completely taken over, necessitating not only removal but major work to



New Directors for MPA

After an MPA summer retreat highlighted the need for new—and younger—board members and more attention to communication strategies, MPA members at the fall annual meeting elected six new directors to help chart MPA's course in the coming years.

Jeremy Neely lives on a small farm near South Greenfield in Dade County with his young family and teaches history at Missouri State University. With a prize-winning book on the Kansas-Missouri border in the 19th century, he looks forward to helping with *Heritage*, especially during these years of the Civil War sesquicentennial.

Bob Painter of rural Clay County is energy efficiency programs manager for Missouri Gas Energy and a consultant in business development, marketing, and sustainability. Having helped forge partnerships for MPA's Urban Populations Outreach Project during an earlier position with DNR at the Discovery Center in Kansas City, he looks forward to helping with Kansas City UPOP, fund-raising, and strategic development of MPA.

Roger Still of Columbia, formerly executive director of the Nature Conservancy in Missouri, then Audubon Missouri and National Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative, is currently a consultant on conservation and sustainable development with Community Initiatives. Having previously worked with MPA on Church Mountain and other issues, he wants to help keep our state park system one of the best in the country.

Mike Sutherland served in the Missouri House of Representatives for eight years, most recently as chair of the Ways and Means Committee and co-chair of the Joint Committee on Tax Policy, and is now a government relations consultant in Jefferson City. An outdoor enthusiast with a background in mass communications, he helped on park issues while in office and wants to continue to work for parks through MPA.

Julie Townsend of Columbia is an attorney and Midwest government affairs director for Advance America. A park enthusiast who worked previously as legislative liaison for the Missouri Department of Transportation, she looks forward to helping on the park funding issue as well as on MPA communications.

Shirley Wolverson of St. Louis is a biologist who has worked most recently in air pollution control for the City of St. Louis and the state Division of Environmental Quality. With a lifelong interest in parks and historic sites, she hopes to help increase public support for and assure the financial stability of the state park system.

Longtime board members **Mary Abbott** of Kansas City and **Harriet Beard** of Kirksville term-limited off the active board and were elected to a new status as honorary directors of MPA.

Calling all MPA members

Missouri Environmental Summit, Saturday, January 28, AB Natural Resources Building, University of Missouri-Columbia, 9am-3:30pm. Hear keynote by DNR director Sara Parker Pauley, attend breakout sessions on issues ranging from parks to healthy foods to energy, and network with members and leaders of conservation organizations statewide. Register now at <http://www.mvc-ef.org/what-we-do/summit/2012-summit/>.

Conservation Lobby Day, Wednesday, February 29, State Capitol. MPA belongs to the Missouri Conservation and Environmental Alliance, which hosts an annual lobby day with other organizations on common agenda issues, one of which is state park funding. Please join us to learn how to lobby and to participate in small group meetings with legislators. Our state parks need you. For more information and to register, see <http://www.movotesconservation.org/our-legislative-work/lobby-day/>.



Missouri State Park Director Bill Bryan and MPA President Susan Flader display the National Association of State Park Directors 2011 President's Award to the Missouri Parks Association "in recognition of your outstanding service, commitment and leadership to protect and enhance our natural and cultural state park resources through your extraordinary efforts to preserve the Missouri State Park System."

Q&A with Linda Endersby, Missouri State Museum

The Missouri State Museum was recently presented with the Heritage Advocate Award from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Heritage Preservation for its work in caring for and improving awareness of the museum's holdings. Among these collections are more than 65,000 artifacts including 135 Civil War flags, musical instruments, preserved tarantulas, and recorded histories of former slaves. The museum in the state capitol preserves and shares the story and spirit of the state with visitors from around the world. Linda Endersby joined the museum staff in 2005, and currently is acting director. She recently took some time to share her thoughts about one of Missouri's more unusual "parks" with MPA's Mary Barile.

Where were you born, raised, and educated?

I was born and raised in northeast Nebraska. I received my B.S. in Math/Computer Science from MU, my M.A. in History from MU, and my Ph.D. in the History of Science and Technology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. My research areas include the history of technology, history of science, and technology museums.

How did you become interested in museum work?

I have been visiting museums since a child. I love history and I did the "academic" thing with teaching and research. But I found the concept of telling stories about history to a wider audience more appealing than academic writing.

What's the most challenging part of your job?

Everything? Okay, seriously, the biggest challenge is wanting to do so many things in terms of telling Missouri's history and preserving Missouri's history but there is never enough time or resources. The administrative side (budgets, personnel, etc.) is the most challenging perhaps because it's the least fun.

The most fun part of your job? Telling the stories of Missourians through cool objects and helping to make sure those objects get preserved for future generations. One of our initiatives in the past couple of years has been "behind-the-scenes" tours of our artifact collections. I love pointing out unique and interesting artifacts with great personal stories attached.



Linda Endersby

Tell us about your "average" day at work.

There isn't an average day; that's part of the draw and the challenge. The "average" day can start like this morning with a call from the alarm company that there is a problem with the alarm in one of our historic buildings (two hours before it's open to the public) or another day where a curator walked into one of our artifact collections areas to find water flowing on the floor (water is NOT good for artifacts).

Almost every day I have to deal with budget tracking, purchasing and personnel issues. There are usually one or two public (or inter- and intra-agency) inquiries regarding the museum, its activities, or its collections. The most important part of my job as director, in my opinion, is to run interference for my staff so that they can each do their job. I also spend a lot of time in meetings or phone calls with others in State Parks trying to get my staff whatever it is they need to do those jobs. And I have a lot of contact with other

state agencies working on partnerships and coordinating collaborative projects.

As director, I try hard to spend some time each day (or at least each week) working in various aspects of the museum -- helping out at the interpretive staff desk in the Capitol, doing data entry clean-up as part of a collections inventory project, researching for exhibit text (or reviewing text for exhibit installation), documenting newly-acquired artifacts, reviewing data on temperature and relative humidity in our artifact collections areas (for long-term preservation). It takes up to five years to plan a large exhibit such as the Civil War Missouri exhibit that just opened. We also have added an average of five hundred artifacts a year to our collection over the last five years. Each artifact has to be documented, catalogued and stored appropriately (special boxes, packing, etc.). There are also longer-term projects such as grant applications and grant reports, writing planning documents for collections and interpretive programming, and so on.

What would you like to tell each and every visitor to the museum?

"It's Your History." I strongly believe in our mission to preserve and interpret Missouri's history. But, we're not doing it for ourselves. We're doing it for current and future Missourians. We work for them so we want to hear what they want from us, and we want them to know what it is we do.

The museum is part of the Missouri park system – but do you ever get a chance to visit a park with bugs and snakes?

Being a museum that's part of State Parks is both a challenge and an asset. I grew up camping, hiking, swimming and spending lots of time in Nebraska state parks. I love that I get a chance to be a part of parks and the great outdoors.

("Knob Noster" from Page 1)

reestablish a viable bed and trail surface, not to mention repair or replacement of many bridges and culverts.

The prospect of a new trail connection from the Katy at Windsor to Pleasant Hill—and ultimately to Kansas City, hopefully through the efforts of communities and organizations along the way—is exciting, but the reality will still be long in coming.

From the trail junction at Windsor, the MPA group returned to Camp Shawnee to pick up later arrivals for a driving tour of the 3600-acre Knob Noster State Park with superintendent Keith Peterson (who also manages the western 74 miles of the Katy Trail). Here the group discussed the challenges of operating campgrounds and depression-era rustic group camps in the 21st century—when campers expect hot running water, internet connections, and air conditioning—and maintaining miles of trails not only for hikers but increasingly for equestrians and mountain bikers, while at the same time protecting, restoring and interpreting the natural and cultural environment.

Then it was back to the dining lodge at Camp Shawnee for a scrumptious barbecue hosted by David Lako and his intrepid central office staff volunteers, followed by a stunning new park division video and remarks from new DNR director Sara Parker Pauley, who reviewed park and recreation priorities in the context of other DNR initiatives and challenges. It is not known how long people stayed around the campfire, talking and toasting marshmallows for s'mores, but it is known that at least some of them needed to be back at the dining lodge well before dawn to start the coffee and preparations for a pancake breakfast served not only to MPA members and guests but also to people from the public campground at Knob Noster. MPA provided the funds and park staff the culinary skills and labor for this free breakfast, similar to others held at various parks this fall as a special treat for campers.

Park division director Bill Bryan prefaced his annual State of the Parks address after breakfast with a surprise presentation to the Missouri Parks Association of the President's Award of the National Association of State Park Directors for its outstanding service, commitment and leadership on behalf of Missouri's state park system, an award for which park division staff had apparently nominated MPA.

Bryan began his address with the top ten achievements of the park division in the past year: finalist in the National Gold Medal Award competition for state park systems, a second successful year of the State

Park Youth Corps, featured in the cover story of the National Recreation and Park Association journal, completion of the Katy Trail to Machens and start of work on the Rock Island Trail, dedication of a bicycle lane on the Missouri River Bridge to Jefferson City, the groundbreaking (in partnership with the State Fair Community College construction training program) for a new dining lodge to replace the one gutted by fire last year at Camp Pin Oak, major Civil War sesquicentennial reenactments of the battles of Athens and Lexington, a two percent increase in formerly declining annual attendance, an expanded volunteer program including Boy Scouts and Southwest Airlines employees, and a new more user-friendly website developed in-house.

He went on to discuss the special challenges of the year, including more than \$2.8 million in damages from floods at Big Oak Tree and Towosahgy in the Bootheel, twenty parks in the Ozarks such as Wappapello, Table Rock and Roaring River, and along the Katy Trail and at Big Lake and other parks in the northwest; major tornado and wind damage at Babler, Wakonda, and Battle of Athens; and widespread snow and ice damage last winter. Other natural resource challenges included white-nose syndrome in bats, which led to the closing of 104 caves, feral hogs in nine parks, and the major new threat of emerald ash borer, as well as continuing threats from other invasive species and encroachment of development near park borders. Perhaps the greatest challenge is to the human resources of the park division: 88 employees, about one-sixth of the total, were eligible for retirement in 2011 alone, and nearly forty percent will be eligible within the next five years, suggesting a critical need for a major effort to recruit and train new staff and imbue them with the state park mission.

After reporting on a \$7 million project for lead abatement at St. Joe State Park (with Doe Run funding) and the continuing saga of e-coli at park beaches, Bryan enumerated his top ten cultural resource projects, also totaling some \$7 million (with no funds in sight), then went on to discuss the park funding situation. Sales tax revenues increased to \$38.3 million in fiscal 2011, but are still considerably below the 2007 high of \$41.3 million, and the park earnings fund is also up, providing some modest support for park operations, but the prognosis is not good for dealing with the most vexing problems of park infrastructure in the coming year, shadowed as it is by the election cycle. Groundwork must be laid, however, for significant action on park funding in the near future.

Following Bryan's report, the group moved out into the sunshine for a panel discussion of the roles of park

support groups at a time of critical need for enhanced park funding. Cathy Borgman, longtime director of Friends of Arrow Rock, which operates 13 historic properties and conducts major interpretive programs, reported exceeding the \$1 million goal of FAR's recent 50th anniversary capital campaign. Missouri State Park Foundation president Sam Phillips reviewed the foundation's role in raising funds for the Missouri River bridge connection of the Katy Trail to Jefferson City and the development of the new Island Mound State Historic Site, to be dedicated in fall 2012, and expressed interest in closer cooperation between the foundation and MPA. And former legislator and new MPA board member Mike Sutherland made the case for dedicated funding for parks and also for taxing Internet sales, which would modestly increase park sales tax revenues.

During the discussion, Ozarks construction contractor Josh Reeves explained the local economic spinoffs of park and other public infrastructure work, suggesting that MPA and other park supporters work with local business people to develop a positive vision of the economic benefits of a park bond issue. Missouri Park and Recreation Association executive director Jan Neitzert explained how 1995 enabling legislation allowed municipal and county park systems to develop sales tax funding. And Open Space Council leader and former MPA president Ron Coleman described how OSC and other St. Louis area groups raise funds to acquire and conduct cleanups of parks and wildlands along the Meramec River.

It was clear that there are many organizations and

people dedicated to constructive support of parks, but still a need for significant funding that can be provided only through government. As Mike Sutherland encapsulated the challenge confronting a bond issue: "It takes only three words to say 'No new taxes,' but five minutes to explain why a bond issue is not a tax."

The children having returned from their morning activities, the group headed to Confederate Memorial State Historic Site for a box lunch and a presentation and tour with historian and seasonal interpreter Wade Ankesheilm, and then to Battle of Lexington SHS, where veteran site administrator Janae Fuller and northern district director Jim Rehard led the tour. Lexington had just the previous weekend hosted some 15,000 people in the rain for the sesquicentennial reenactment of the famous Battle of the Hemp Bales, but the MPA group enjoyed beautiful blue sky. After the evening dinner back at Camp Shawnee, historian and new MPA director Jeremy Neely gave a fascinating talk on the Civil War on the Kansas-Missouri border followed by lots of questions and more s'mores at the campfire.

At the annual membership meeting Sunday morning six new MPA directors were elected (see bios on page 2), followed by reports and discussion of MPA's Urban Populations Outreach Program (UPOP) in Kansas City, St. Louis, Joplin, and Columbia. The board meeting that followed featured discussion of MPA communications and the vexing issue of park funding as well as status reports on an array of park issues. Adjourning at noon, all agreed it had been a very special, enjoyable, and illuminating weekend.



Members visited the Anderson House at Battle of Lexington State Historic Site during MPA's 2011 annual meeting.



December 2011

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBIA, MO
PERMIT #338

Post Office Box 30036
Columbia, MO 65205

Return Service Requested

*Park Supporters Gather at Knob Noster
MPA Garners National Award!*

<http://parks.missouri.org>



*Students wrote
and read
original poems
as part of the
2011 St. Louis
UPOP
activities, here
at First
Missouri State
Capitol State
Historic Site.*

Turtle

**The turtle crept slowly along
the road,
crunching the crisp autumn leaves
under its feet.**

**Its slick circular shell
passed through
the billowing cattails
as it headed for
a new adventure like an explorer to a
new land.**

**Poem by Dominique Navalta
Marion Middle School
St. Louis UPOP 2011**

The Thalia

**As green as grass
and as tall as the children,
the thalia seem to glide
smooth and gentle
in the wetlands.
Like a hook atop
a bamboo stick,
it's flat and smooth
with crumpled edges and lacey veins
as it glistens in the glassy water.**

**A group poem by Marion Middle School
St. Louis UPOP 2011**

The Flying Dragon

**The skeletal creature, the dragonfly,
with brittle, web-like wings
and a tail sharp
with a glistening onyx sting,
darts and shakes
over its wetland nursery.**

**A group poem by Loyola Academy students
St. Louis UPOP 2011**