

## Riverways Plan Open for Comments

The long-awaited General Management Plan for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways was finally released November 8 for a 60-day public comment period that ends January 8, 2014. This is the opportunity for which MPA and other conservation and civic organizations have long been waiting, and a high level of citizen participation will be imperative if we are to secure a well-managed Riverways for the future.

Fortunately, the 512-page plan contains a very reasonable range of alternatives and reveals that the National Park Service (NPS) is committed to dealing with the problems that have festered along the Riverways for years, something that was previously in doubt.

The Current and Jacks Fork rivers, 134 miles of which form the core of the long, narrow Riverways park, were America's first federally protected rivers. The Ozark National Scenic Riverways was Congressionally authorized in 1964, and served as a prototype for the National Wild



*October morning on the Current River.*

and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. From the start it was agreed that three crown jewels of the state park system—Round Spring, Alley Spring, and Big Spring state parks—would be transferred to the National Park Service to become focal points of the new national park. The state retained only Montauk, at the headwaters of the Current River, as a state park.

The Riverways was dedicated in 1973, after most of the necessary land and easements were acquired, but it was not until 1984 that a management plan was approved. It was a good plan, but it left most of the details to be worked out in future plans and then implemented.

Much of that never happened because the park, which had always been troubled and often neglected by higher authorities, fell on especially difficult times in the 1990s and beyond. The new plan has been in the offing at least since the turn of the century, but it was not until 2006 that NPS held "scoping" meetings, then went silent again.

MPA has long been interested in the Riverways because of its state park roots. When the park division in 2007 acquired (from the Conservation Department) a 780-acre tract fronting on the river north of Round Spring, MPA held its 2008 annual meeting at Montauk to visit the new Current River State Park and focus attention on Riverways problems—proliferation of a maze of unmarked, deeply rutted roads and

### Extra: Camp Zoe Acquired

*As Heritage was going to press, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources announced that it has acquired the beautiful 330-acre Camp Zoe property on Sinking Creek east of Highway 19, adjacent to both Current River State Park and the Roger Pryor Pioneer Backcountry. Although plans are still preliminary, part of the property will likely be used for a campground and other visitor services and to provide a focal point for trails in the region.*

*President's Message by Steve Nagel:*

## A Park for All Seasons

There are many tempting state parks from which to choose our location for MPA's annual gathering, but we traditionally convene where issues and projects are emerging. Once again this was the case when we met at the newly rebuilt dining lodge at Camp Pin Oak in Lake of the Ozarks State Park October 11-13.

As luck (and planning) would have it, our visit coincided with the official dedication of the lodge by Governor Nixon at noon on Friday. The governor was very much at ease talking about Missouri's state parks and made it clear that the completion of the lodge was a priority. Attending the ceremony was a large crowd of park enthusiasts, media, families with fond memories of Camp Pin Oak, partners and young people who worked on the building, DNR officials, park staff, MPA members and other guests.

Following refreshments in the magnificent new building, park staff led the MPA group on an insiders tour of the park with a focus on group camps, camp ground infrastructure, sewer line construction, a recon of the yurts and outpost cabins, and a visit to the airport—the only one in the park system. This is the largest park in the system with over 17,600 acres and 180 buildings, so we saw only the north part, returning in time for a wonderful dinner courtesy of Dave Lako and park staff volunteers to inaugurate the new dining hall. I was fortunate to have two overnights in one of the outpost cabins; if you heard a banjo playing around midnight, I'll confess the log cabin experience was made for Ozark mountain music.

MPA members were welcomed Saturday morning by park superintendent Bill Arnold who began his career in state parks in 1984. Bill and his staff were

outstanding hosts all weekend. A comprehensive, engaging and informative part of our gathering is the annual State of the Parks report by park director Bill Bryan. Newsletter space precludes all the detail and issues he covered, but an emphasis was on the funding situation and marketing strategies to attract youth and families outdoors to enjoy all that our state parks have to offer. That was followed by a panel to discuss the "wild ride" during the past session of the general assembly and prospects for next year. Former House member and MPA board member Mike Sutherland, board member Steve Mahfood, and legislative consultant Ginger Steinmetz provided valuable insights on a chaotic but generally successful session. Steve



*Builders of Pin Oak Lodge with Governor Nixon, Bill Bryan and Sara Pauley.*

had just returned from visiting our Missouri delegation in Washington D.C. and added personal anecdotes of the government during shut-down.

Thanks again to state park staff, our group visited Grand Glaize Beach en route to Ha Ha Tonka, five miles south of Camdenton. From the stone ruins of Robert McClure Synder's "castle" perched high on a bluff, we had a stunning view of the Niangua arm of the Lake. We then walked along the beautiful cove to the spring, where water rises from 70 feet below.

*(See "President" on Page 4)*



By Deb Schnack (MPA Vice President) with Jane Lale:

## Park Pioneer Jane Lale

After 35 years of service to the state park system Jane Lale retired October 1. Jane and I worked together on many projects as we progressed through the ranks and pioneered the way for other women in the field of parks management, and I am proud to have had her as a co-worker and a friend. Her expertise and years of institutional knowledge will be hard to replace.

Jane began her career with Missouri state parks in 1977, working as a seasonal and then full-time employee in the administration of several latter-day federal youth employment programs such as the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) at Babler and Lake Ozark. At Camp Hawthorn in Lake of the Ozarks State Park Jane learned quickly

how to organize a new program to feed, house (they built their own winterized facilities), and educate young people while also procuring equipment and supplies for their conservation projects. This experience with young workers and on-the-job training would serve her well many years later in her final and possibly most challenging and exciting state park project.

When funding for the YACC ended in the early 1980s, she became assistant site administrator at First Missouri State Capitol, then administrator of Confederate Memorial State Historic Site. Later she served as assistant superintendent at Meramec and as superintendent at Pershing State Park before moving to the central office in 1990. In Jefferson City, she held a variety of po-

sitions in the sphere of park operations, eventually serving as program director. In 2004 she became director of the Planning and Development program.

During nearly a decade in that position, she oversaw all planning



*Jane Lale (center) and other leaders of Lake of the Ozarks State Park stand before one of the massive fireplaces in the new Pin Oak Lodge; l-r, State Park Director Bill Bryan, Superintendent Bill Arnold, Jane Lale, Deputy Director Denny Bopp, MPA directors Deb Schnack and Nonnie McClammer.*

and construction for the park system. There were projects both major and minor, notably including the re-creation of Johnsons Shut-ins State Park after the devastating breach of the Taum Sauk reservoir in 2005. During her tenure with P&D came the acquisition of new facilities -- Battle of Island Mound, Current River, and Don Robinson. The Katy Trail was extended to Ma-chens and the Rock Island Line toward Kansas City. There were major infrastructure improvements and minor maintenance and repair projects too numerous to mention.

But, it was her last major challenge that brought her full circle back to her roots in the state park system—the reconstruction of the Camp Pin Oak dining lodge at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. This his-

toric CCC-era lodge, beloved by generations of Girl Scouts, had been struck by lightning and burned to the ground on September 3, 2010. As it happened, Jane herself had camped at Pin Oak as a Girl Scout, along with Georganne Wheeler,

now the wife of Governor Jay Nixon. Gov. Nixon personally visited the site, with embers still smoking, and vowed it would be rebuilt. With state park funding at a low ebb, this would prove to be a considerable challenge.

Jane immediately engaged planning and development staff as well as the State Historic Preservation Office (because the entire Camp Pin Oak is a National Register Historic District) in considering all the options for the new building. A decision was reached quickly to rebuild an adaptive replication of the old lodge (for which the

original plans still existed in the state park archives), on-site, but with a larger kitchen wing and patio, and adding modern heating and air conditioning, ADA accessibility, and other improvements.

Within the year and with the governor's support, state park officials forged an innovative partnership for funding and workforce with the Department of Economic Development (DED) and State Fair Community College (SFCC), which offered training in the building trades and had a satellite campus in Osage Beach near the park. Seeing an unparalleled opportunity for their students, State Fair officials secured a \$1.5 million Community Development Block Grant through DED in November 2011 to provide for academic and hands-on training for the

(See "Lale" on Page 4)

*("Lale" from Page 3)*

seventeen students who would work on the project, as well as funding for four fulltime project instructors and managers, plus building equipment and materials.

The project was an entirely new undertaking for all partners involved, but for Jane it was a natural extension of her early experience with YCC and YACC. Jane and her staff provided architectural and landscape design and expertise in CCC-era construction. Together park and college staff found stonemasons to assess which of the original limestone foundation, fireplace and chimney blocks were sound enough to be re-used and supplemented them with new stone found locally. Massive oaks toppled by a tornado at Babler State Park pro-

vided a source of large-sized timbers needed to replicate the original construction. The dining room floor was fashioned from hundred-year-old pine boards located in Maine. Wood salvaged from the Babler blowdown was used for the dining tables and chairs, built to the original CCC specifications, and the iconic chandeliers with their pin oak motif were fabricated by an experienced metalsmith in Springfield. Outdoors, the fire ring was rebuilt with local limestone and the rustic timber benches were made from salvaged trees blown down in the park. Toward the end, members of the park system construction crew were assigned to help finish the job, which turned out to be a big plus both for them and for the students who worked beside them.

This unique project provided a priceless—and perhaps life-altering—experience for the students. They acquired social skills and a work ethic, learned responsibility and team work, and developed an understanding and appreciation of Missouri State Parks. The project carried on the legacy of the CCC era by providing young adults with meaningful work, lifetime skills, and pride of accomplishment, assuring that the camp and its stunning new lodge will be enjoyed by Missourians for years to come.

For Jane, the extraordinary challenge at Camp Pin Oak was not only a return to her roots in Missouri state parks but a fitting capstone to her career.

*("President" from Page 2)*

St. James Winery and the Missouri State Park Foundation have partnered to create a series of wines that celebrate and help to support our amazing state parks. During our Saturday evening reception we had the pleasure of sampling the first two of these collector's edition wines, the Montauk White and the Johnson Shut-Ins Red. They are currently available on line at: [www.MOStateParksWine.com](http://www.MOStateParksWine.com) and at: [StJamesWinery.com](http://StJamesWinery.com). Different parks will be showcased in future bottlings. At dinner we were joined by John Cunning and the "Shoe String Band," all state park employees who played good ole time Ozark mountain folks songs.

Later the campfire ring beckoned us all outdoors where DNR Director Sara Parker Pauley briefed us on DNR initiatives with all of us gathered around the campfire. She then created some magic by asking each person to share how they became involved with parks.

At the members meeting after breakfast Sunday morning three former directors were returned to the board—Susan Flader, John Karel, and Terry Whaley—while Ron Kucera and Greg Iffrig were cycled to an advisory role. All four officers were asked to continue: Steve Nagle – President, Deb Schnack – Vice President, Julie Townsend – Secretary, and Melissa Hope – Treasurer. The group heard reports on the four UOPs (Urban Population Outreach Program) and discussed a winter meeting with coordinators to compare notes and look for ways to leverage the programs.

New and continuing state park issues discussed at the board meeting included the Corps of Engineers New Madrid Floodway Project; Jameson Island Habitat Restoration; Taum Sauk re-licensing and future directions for the preservation of Church Mountain; and the Draft Management Plan for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (review period November 8 through January 8)—we encourage everyone to submit a comment.

We adjourned at noon, all feeling that our time together was memorable. MPA has a cohesive and dedicated team of volunteers. For one and for all we extend our deep gratitude to everyone who helped make the event a success. We especially want to express our sincere appreciation to the dedicated and hard working state park staff and those on the MPA board who planned and arranged logistics for the gathering. Thanks for all you do for our Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites!

*("Riverways" from Page 1)*

river access points; rampant ATV use along riverbanks, on gravel bars, and in the rivers; mushrooming of equestrian use on a maze of new trails, almost all of them on floodplains and criss-crossing the rivers, with resulting pollution, sedimentation, and erosion; and many examples of flagrant violation of scenic easement provisions (see *Heritage*, August 2008).

MPA directors John Karel and Greg Iffrig prepared a slide show on "Why We Must Save the Current River, Again," and the meeting led to revival of an earlier Friends of Ozark Riverways (FOR) coalition to document the problems and encourage public involvement. The slide show is now a video that can be viewed on the FOR website, or linked from the MPA website (under Issues & Action/Current River, which also has other background material).

When NPS finally issued its preliminary alternatives for public comment in Spring 2009, there was a tremendous chorus, largely from the immediate vicinity of the rivers, calling for "no action"—meaning no further regulation—but it was matched by an equally strong upwelling for better management, resource protection and restoration. It was reportedly the largest outpouring of public comment on any NPS issue in recent years except for the Yellowstone winter use controversy.

We can expect—and indeed encourage—a similar level of engagement this time around, but we hope it will not be so dichotomous. FOR leaders and others who partici-

pated in a two-day stakeholder workshop organized by NPS in 2010, at which most of the participants were from the local area, were pleased to see emerging areas of agreement, including the need for better enforcement of existing regulations and the concept of river and land management zones to better distribute and minimize overcrowding and conflict among users.

Although the new plan has already been met with strong anti-federal outcries and calls for "no action," most have been by politicians expressing sentiments not unusual in the region. FOR leaders believe that there are many in the area who would like to see better management and enforcement and more encouragement of a family-friendly atmosphere. They understand that visitors to the Riverways give a tremendous economic boost to the otherwise struggling region; the plan reports a 2011 study that shows 88.5 percent of visitor spending is by non-local people. Though some may be reluctant to speak out in a charged atmosphere, we hope they will submit comments.

Friends of Ozark Riverways is preparing a citizens guide to the management plan that will be distributed electronically and posted on the FOR, MPA, and other websites along with a short NPS summary and maps of the alternatives. The

guide will encourage support of the substantial NPS effort to produce a balanced range of alternatives that address very real management issues. It will also encourage thoughtful comments that are respectful of others and will bring a good balance of resource protection and recreation for future generations. We encourage all who care about the Riverways to submit comments by the January 8 deadline.

## Ed Stegner

Ed Stegner, longtime executive director of the Conservation Federation of Missouri and a staunch advocate for parks, passed away at his home in Pilot Grove on October 25, 2013 at age 88. Born and raised on his family's farm



in Cooper County, he served in the Army Air Corps in World War II, then earned a B.S. in agriculture from the University of Missouri and taught vocational agriculture before taking over at the Conservation Federation, a position he held more than forty years until his retirement in 1994.

At the start Ed was Missouri's only full-time lobbyist for conservation and the environment. He was instrumental in establishing the state's first clean water law, forest stewardship, strip mine regulation, and funding for local parks and recreation. He also helped to secure wilderness areas in the Missouri. He coordinated both the initiative petition and the election campaign for Missouri's pacesetter 1/8<sup>th</sup> percent sales tax in 1976,

*(See "Stegner" on Page 6)*

The National Park Service has arranged three public meetings to explain the plan and answer questions: December 10 at 6pm in Van Buren at the Youth and Community Center; December 11 at 10am in Salem at the City Hall Auditorium; and also December 11 at 6pm in St. Louis at the Powder Valley Conservation Center (Kirkwood). You are encouraged to attend. Comments may be submitted until January 8 online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov.commentForm.cfm?documentID=56208> or by mail to: Ozark National Scenic Riverways, 404 Watercress Drive, P.O. Box 490, Van Buren, MO.





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*Scenic Riverways Plan Opens for Comments  
Park Pioneer Jane Lale*

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## Please Help Kickstart the New State Park Book

Missouri Parks Association is partnering with Missouri State Parks and Missouri Life Media to produce a fully revised new edition of our acclaimed book on state parks and historic sites with essays and photos about each park. Please let everyone you know who cares about state parks that we need their help before December 21 on a Kickstarter campaign to help fund the printing of the book, with hundreds of new full-color photos, in time for release in October 2014. **If we don't reach our \$25,000 goal before noon on December 21, by Kickstarter rules we lose all the money we've raised up to then.**

**Please contribute yourself and tell your friends about the campaign.** We need an immediate surge of donations to stimulate others to give. You'll be rewarded with the satisfaction that you helped create a fantastic new book about Missouri's state parks. And, at \$35 and above, you'll also receive a copy of the new book and other great premiums.

**Just click here to see the campaign premiums and watch the video!** <<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/622423996/discover-missouris-state-parks>>

**Or visit <http://parks.missouri.org> and click Donate Here in the "Take Action" box.**

*("Stegner" from Page 5)*

which enabled the Department of Conservation to acquire significantly more conservation land and develop education centers and other programs for the general public, and then tirelessly defended both the department and the tax against attempts to weaken them.

When funding for state parks was cut to less than half in the early 1980s and MPA was formed to advocate for more stable funding, including a parks and soils sales tax modeled on the conservation tax, Ed was there again with his considerable political skills and his tireless effort both in the gen-

eral assembly and in the public campaign. And when the tax had to be renewed by initiative petition a few years later in 1988, Ed was in the front lines of signature gatherings. When Governor Ashcroft established a state park advisory board in the late '80s, Ed was one of his first appointees; he continued to serve on the board as a sage and strong voice for parks for fifteen years, long past his retirement from CFM.

Ed received major awards for conservation service from public agencies and professional and citizen organizations.

He is survived by two children, four grandchildren, and a great grandchild. A memorial celebration will be held at a later date.

Memorial donations may be made to the Shriner's Hospital for Children, Attn. Development Office, 2001 S. Lindbergh Blvd, Saint Louis, MO 63131; Conservation Foundation of Missouri for the Ed Stegner Natural Resources Scholarships, C/O Smith Moore, 223 Main, Boonville, MO 65276; or Conservation Federation of Missouri, 728 W. Main Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101.