

Galvin's News and Views from *Lake of the Ozarks*

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News from around the Lake.....

More to Lake of the Ozarks than just the lake

Mention Lake of the Ozarks State Park and most people think of water. But they're leaving out a whole lot of land. "Something like 17,600 acres – we're the largest state park in Missouri," said Cindy Hall, a naturalist with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

"We're also one of the busiest; we have over a million visitors a year." Many of those visitors come because of the Lake of the Ozarks, which is a favorite for boating and fishing in the Midwest. The lake itself is owned by AmerenUE, with the state park wrapping around its Grand Glaize Arm. The state park features two beaches and two marinas with boat launches and rentals, providing public access on a shoreline that is largely privately owned. "Those are busy, busy places on summer weekends," Hall said.

The park creates something of an oasis for boaters and anglers seeking to escape the watery traffic jam on the lake's main channel. Because it is a private lake, development was allowed along much of its shoreline on the main channel. Continued on page 2.

More to Lake of the Ozarks than just the lake *Continued from page 1.*

But the park property that borders the Grand Glaize Arm is largely free of condos and restaurants and resorts. Visitors can find a secluded, tree-lined cove, even on those crowded summer weekends.

“A lot of people like to come to this arm of the lake because it’s much quieter,” Hall said. “It’s become kind of a mecca.”

But the park has several features that have nothing to do with the water. “A lot of people think the marinas and the beaches are the park, and there’s nothing else to it,” Hall said. “But anything you’ll find at other state parks, you’ll find at Lake of the Ozarks.”

Nice and quiet

The park has 12 designated trails covering some 50 miles for everyone’s interest -- hiking, backpacking, mountain biking and equestrian. Even boaters have a trail with the park system’s only aquatic trail – a series of buoys over 9.75 lake miles that allows visitors to discover the park’s woodlands, glades and geologic features by water. Along the way, a brochure explains the scenes, such as the swallows that inhabit the rocky ledges or the cedars that would invade the glades without periodic prescribed burns.

The Trail of the Four Winds is the park’s longest trail, taking hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders over 13.5 miles through woodlands with stunning views of the lake. For people who want to do the trail on horseback but don’t have a horse, the park’s stable can take care of that. Several shorter trails follow the shoreline.

Take the 2-mile Rocky Top Trail, which climbs to one of the park’s largest glades, then head through the woods to a cliff overlooking the lake. The view can be serene, with a single boat skimming the placid water. “We get a lot of people looking for a good view of the lake, and I send them out on this one,” Hall said of the trail. “The wildflowers can be beautiful and you get to the bluff and look directly into the park – you don’t see any of the development.”

She added that most visitors think of the Ozarks as dense woods, and are surprised to find areas with widely spaced trees and grasses and wildflowers growing beneath. This landscape is preserved by fire management, mimicking what occurs in nature and historically, when American Indians and early settlers burned plots.

The park has more than 230 shaded campsites, ranging from primitive spots in the backcountry to those with electric hookups. Eight camper cabins offer rustic lodging by the water. There also are group camp sites constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The historic district along Highway 134 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of the beautiful stone work in the CCC-era buildings, bridges and dams.

“We have such a diverse user group – people with the big houseboats and people who have a tent way out in the middle of the park, and everything in between,” Hall said.

An Angel Shower

Ozark Caverns, another of the park’s features, showcases the geologic wonders found in southern Missouri’s karst topography, which is marked by a subterranean system of caves and fissures.

Visitors to the Caverns take lantern-light tours and learn about the soda straws, stalactites and other deposits, as well as about the species that range from the blind grotto salamander to four types of bats.

The Caverns most notable feature is Angel Shower, a continuous flow of water from a “showerhead” of stalactites to a crystalline basin eight feet below. “If people remember anything, it’s the Angel Shower,” Hall said.

The Division of State Parks has closed most of its wild caves as a protection against the spread of a disease called white-nose syndrome that is killing bats in several states. Ozark Caverns is one of four public tour caves that has remained open but staff are taking precautions to prevent the spread of the disease.

The visitor center at Ozark Caverns, where Hall has an office, is in a wooded setting near a restored fen and a spring-fed brook. The mile-long Coakley Hollow Trail begins at the center and meanders through one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the park.

“Even on the Fourth of July, when the lake goes crazy, the Ozark Caverns area is nice and peaceful,” Hall said. “We do programs to help people learn that there’s a little more to this park than just the lake.”

Wag the tail of the dog days

What’s a matter, Bunky? Heat and humidity got you down? Feel like a flower wilting in the sun? Already dreaming of a white Christmas?

Missouri offers several sure-fire ways to beat the dog days of summer. Here are a few tried-and-true favorites. *Continued on page 3.*

More to Lake of the Ozarks than just the lake *Continued from page 3.*

Float your boat: Missouri's Ozark streams are spring fed, so the water's always clear and cold. The Current River flows under a dappled canopy of green as it leaves Montauk State Park on its way to Cedargrove. Further down, Welch Spring dumps in 105 million gallons of crystalline water, every day. That will revive your spirits.

Explore a cave: There are four cave tours offered in three state parks. Onondaga Cave State Park has tours of its spectacular namesake, and of Cathedral Cave. It's a whole 'nother world down there, and the temperature is always a cool 57 degrees.

Jump in the lake: The two main beaches at Lake of the Ozarks State Park can get a bit crowded. Try McCubbin Point, where you can swim in a more secluded spot. You'll pass the entrance to Ozark Caverns on the way, so this can be a twofer.

Hang out at a bar: Head to Sam A. Baker State Park, stop at the main campground and take the short stroll to the gravel bar lining Big Creek. Sink your lawn chair at the edge, and dip your toes into this gentle stream. You can wade, fish, or do nothing and the price is right. Free, like all state parks. Aug 16, 2012. Tom Ulenbrock. *lakewsonline.com*.



While the two public beaches at Lake of the Ozarks State Park can get crowded on weekends, McCubbins Point usually provides a quiet place to dip your toes in the water.



Even on a gray day, high points at Lake of the Ozarks State Park have sweeping vistas.

Photos by Tom Ulenbrock/Division of State Parks

Extension planned for Old State Park Road

The extension of Nichols Road into the Lake of the Ozarks State Park in Osage Beach could have far-reaching economic benefit to the city.

Aldermen unanimously approved a contract with Travis Hodge Hauling of Lake Ozark to rebuild Old State Park Road from near the Paul's Supermarkets/Parkside entrance approximately 1,100 feet into the park. The bid was \$209,277.25.

Other bids were \$279,822 from Cannon General Contractors of Troy, Mo.; \$284,583 from Hutchins Telecom of Belle, Mo.; and \$291,953 from APAC Missouri. Engineer's estimate was \$288,124.

Cary Patterson, city planner, told the board he thought extending the road would provide new development opportunities since park users would go past available property as they travel to and from the Expressway on Nichols Road. "Seeing an impact will be the properties near the Nichols Road interchange and the Nichols and OB Parkway stoplight that are either undeveloped or developing," he explained. "The increase in traffic will likely make them more desirable for potential businesses looking to take advantage of an increase in traffic."

In 2011, the Lake of the Ozarks State Park estimates that 224,558 people visited the state park. If only half of those visitors use the new State Park Road, that is about 112,000 potential buyers.

"This is a pretty significant increase in traffic and potential customers for the restaurants, convenience stores and grocery facilities in the area of that stop light and the Nichols Road interchange," Patterson pointed out. "The facilities provide several needed services and products for those going into the park, and existing and new businesses would be along the way for those travelers."

Continued on page 4.

Extension planned for Old State Park Road *Continued from page 3.*

Construction should be completed before winter weather sets in. Currently the only access to the State Park is from Osage Beach Parkway near the post office.

TIF bonds

The board also approved first reading of an ordinance that allows the city to refinance Tax Increment Refunding Revenue Bonds for Prewitt's Point. Depending on market and economic conditions, the city could realize a net savings of as much as \$382,188 over the life of the bonds. Payoff is projected by 2020.

Bid Awards

Bids on several projects or contracts also were approved as follows:

- Reconstruction of the driveway into Osage Beach Rehabilitation and Health Care Center on Passover Road, \$6,900 to Hutchins Telecom, LLC, of Belle, Mo. Drainage issues arose after Passover Road was rebuilt over the winter and the project will fix those problems.

Other bidders were Stockman Construction Corp., Jefferson City, \$13,000; Travis Hodge Hauling, Lake Ozark, \$13,740; KA Berendzen Construction, Jefferson City, \$14,900; and APAC-Missouri, Linn Creek, \$24,820. Engineer's estimate was \$8,532.70.

- Upgrade and repair two sanitary sewer grinder stations, one of which is within the Ozark Meadows community and the other near Mace Road, \$119,747, to Hutchins Telecom, LLC.

Other bidders were Travis Hodge Hauling, Lake Ozark, \$123,458; and Glascock Construction, Osage Beach, \$230,847. Engineer's estimate was \$118,247.

- Towing service for the Osage Beach Police Department, which has rotated between two services in previous years. The approved contractor will be Hi-Tech Towing of Kaiser. Other bids were received from Bledsoe Automotive Services, Camdenton; and American Towing of Osage Beach. Several variables were included in the bidding process.

- Rick management services contract to Charlesworth & Associates to analyze the city's liability and property insurance coverage and to assist in the bidding process. To date in 2012, the city has spent \$170,587 for liability and property insurance coverage and city officials felt it was wise to use the services of an expert to analyze the policies. Bid was awarded in the amount of \$6,950. Sep 1, 2012. Dan Field. *lakenewsonline.com*.

Bringing the spirit of the seven seas to the lake

Check the chart, mate, be we on the Spanish Main? Nope. It's the Gravois Arm and the pirate ship bearing down is more fun than fright, even though the captain does keep shaking his fist and shouting "arrrggg!" The ship itself appears to be made of wood, has a cannon and is carrying a treasure chest. All part of the fun for Captain Tom Haley.

Haley, who is a part owner of Jolly Rogers, the pirate-themed bar and grill on the water in Rocky Mount, had the 35-foot Carver "piratized." Pro Dezigns in Eldon custom-designed a wrap that turned the Carver from cruiser to pirate ship. Then came a few personal touches such as flags, a treasure chest on the stern and, coolest of all, a cannon that fires. It is propane-powered, booming off three rounds at a time and blowing a cloud of smoke. It is used to announce pulling in and out of port at waterfront restaurants.

The pirate parrot Corona, a fixture at Jolly Rogers, often goes on cruises, giving a touch of realism that makes one wonder where the wooden leg is. "It's hard to be incognito on this boat," Haley says. Lake boaters flock to take a closer look, snapping pictures and getting a kick out of the whole thing.

The Pirate Ship's home port is the Gas Hole at the 5-mile marker of the Gravois Arm, just a couple of miles from Jolly Rogers. Haley often rounds up employees, designates them crew, and sails off down the Lake. Haley says the boat is a fun hobby and adds to the party atmosphere people love about the Lake. "Everyone likes it," Haley says. "It's an eye-catcher."



A custom-designed wrap makes the pleasure boat look like a pirate ship.

Sep 6, 2012. Charis Patires. *lakenewsonline.com*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September ~ October

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT INFO
Fall Hayrides at Cross Creek RV Park	Sep 1– Oct 27	Osage Beach, MO	573-365-1211
6th Annual Lake of the Ozarks Bikefest	Sep 12-16	Osage Beach, MO	www.lakeoftheozarksbikefest.com
43rd Annual Laurie Hillbilly Fair - Sept 14-16th	Sep 14-16	Laurie, MO	573-374-8776
Lake of the Ozarks Marine Dealers Fall Boat Show	Sep 14-16	Sunrise Beach, MO	573-374-5852
Civil War Reenactment	Sep 15	Linn Creek, MO	573-346-7191
International Talk Like a Pirate Day Captain Ron's	Sep 19	Sunrise Beach, MO	www.captainronsatthelake.com
Lake of the Ozarks Air Show	Sep 22	Camdenton, MO	573-346-0300
27th Annual Turkey Festival in Eldon	Sep 29	Eldon, MO	573-392-3525
Champagne Campaign	Oct 5	Lake Ozark, MO	573-348-9990
Versailles Old Tyme Apple Festival	Oct 6	Versailles, MO	573-378-4634 ext 304
17th Annual Golf Tournament	Oct 7	Camdenton, MO	www.oldkinderhook.com
3rd Annual Totes for Ta-Tas Event	Oct 9	Osage Beach, MO	www.facebook.com/totesfortatas
11th Annual CADV Brunch Lodge of the Four Seasons	Oct 10	Lake Ozark, MO	573-346-9630
27th Annual Fall Harbor Hop	Oct 13	Osage Beach, MO	www.funlake.com/harborhop
Kiwanis - Kruzin for kids road rally	Oct 14	Lake Ozark, MO	www.ozarkcoastkiwanis.org
Lake of the Ozarks Festival of the Arts	Oct 19-20	Osage Beach, MO	Lake of the Ozarks Festival of the Arts

Volunteers needed for Shoreline Cleanup

The 2012 Fall Cleanup, sponsored by Ameren Missouri Adopt-the-Shoreline program, will get underway in less than two weeks. The cleanup began on September 8 and will run through November 1. "We are coming off a great spring cleanup with record participation and would like to keep that momentum going with a really strong fall cleanup," said Bryan Vance, field coordinator for Ameren Shoreline Management. "The unusually dry weather has the Lake of the Ozarks a little lower than normal and will give us almost perfect conditions for walking the shoreline and cleaning up any trash or debris that has accumulated during the summer boating season."

The results of the annual shoreline cleanup over the past several years indicate the days of hauling waterlogged dock foam off the lake are coming to an end. That allows volunteers to get some of the more remote areas of the lake cleaned up, according to Bryan Vance. For years, non-encapsulated dock foam created an unsightly mess along the shoreline. Ameren Missouri subsequently banned the use of non-encapsulated foam. The ban combined with the army of volunteers who comb the shoreline every spring and fall has made a significant difference in the amount of debris collected annually. It is also allowing volunteers to get some of the more remote areas of the lake cleaned up, Vance said.

Ameren Missouri sponsors the Adopt-the-Shoreline program. The utility company spends than \$25,000 to dispose of the trash and debris collected. In addition, numerous local organizations and individuals donate boats and other equipment the volunteers need to make the event a success. Over the last 21 years more than five million pounds of trash have been hauled off the Lake of the Ozarks shoreline thanks to the volunteers that have participated in the annual Adopt-The-Shoreline efforts in the spring and fall.

By the numbers

To get involved

Contact: bvance@ameren.com

- Cost to dispose of the trash: \$25,000
- Number of years the program has been in place: 21
- Number of pounds of trash removed from the Lake: 5 million

Sep 2, 2012. lakenewsonline.com.

Community Bridge avoids toll rate uptick

The toll to cross the Lake of the Ozarks Community Bridge will be going down to its off-season rates Nov. 1 as usual, and the rate structure will continue in its current version for the foreseeable future, according to bridge corporation president Larry Gridley. An overall increase of rates had been anticipated, but the board commission will be foregoing the addition due to the recent refinancing of its debt through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Since 2008, the bridge has been dipping into its reserves to make its bond payments — to the tune of approximately \$800,000 a year, Gridley said. But in June, the board finalized a package through USDA's Rural Development program to refinance its \$32 million debt, taking its interest rate from 5.25 percent to 3.378 percent.

That was enough pull the bridge, opened in 1998, back into the black. As long as traffic across the bridge stays the same or increases slightly, the board should be able to meet its obligations without a rate increase.

"It really takes the monkey off our back," Gridley said. "We've been monitoring it pretty close, and we felt like if we didn't get new financing by 2014, we'd be in trouble."

Since its peak in traffic of 1,589,784 vehicles in 2007, the flow of vehicles across the bridge has steadily decreased over the years. In 2010, the total traffic count was 1,314,298. According to Gridley, 2011 saw that downward trend continue at a rate of approximately 6 percent - as compared to the same time the year before.

But it appears the vehicle flow and subsequent drooping revenue may be stabilizing. At the beginning of January 2012, Gridley said traffic held steady in comparison to the same time the year before and has been holding even since then. As long as things hold steady, he said the commission should be able to gradually build back part of its reserves which could help it even more in the long run.

Two years ago, the commission applied to USDA for money to refinance and build a new route to the bridge on the Westside to replace the crooked amalgamation of Routes MM, TT and F. A new route has long been the goal of the commission. A feasibility study by Wilbur Smith & Associates - done when construction was being considered - advised that the ultimate success of the bridge would depend partly on getting a new route to access it. "We've constantly worked at trying to do that," Gridley said.

With its weak numbers at the time of its application to USDA two years ago, the bridge was refinanced, but the federal agency did not provide the funding for a new road. If numbers pick up in the next two-three years, Gridley said they are hopeful that this financing will come through.

Editor's Note: This story originally stated that the new interest rate was 2.375 percent. The story has been corrected to show that the refinanced rate was actually 3.378 percent. Sep 6, 2012. Amy Wilson. lakenewsonline.com.

Viral video sparks extra boating ticket

A video of a boating accident on Lake of the Ozarks not only caught national attention, but also led to a second ticket for the driver of the power boat.

The accident was videotaped on Aug 24 near the 22-mile marker when a 2003 Fountain power boat hit a large wake. One of the passengers on the boat was from a lake area media outlet. The video showed the driver and passengers being slammed from side to side and against each other as the boat hit waves.

Over the course of several days, the video captured headlines and attention locally and on national news programs.

The driver of the boat, Marvin Carter, 48 of Memphis, Tenn., was originally ticketed for careless and imprudent driving. After the tape was sent to the Highway Patrol, officers reviewed the footage and issued a second ticket for allowing passenger to ride on rear deck without adequate railing.

The investigation indicated the boat was traveling too fast with speeds possibly reaching as high as 70 mph. According to the Missouri Highway Patrol accident report, when the boat hit the large wake, the boat was hit by waves on each side of the boat throwing the driver and passengers around. The driver and all six passengers on board were injured as they boat slammed back and forth between the waves. Five of the injured were taken to Lake Regional Hospital for treatment, Two refused treatment. Injuries ranged from moderate to minor. Damage to the boat was listed as minor.

Sep 6, 2012. lakenewsonline.com.