

Mark Your Calendar

Spring 2004 Workshops & Events

What's Wrong with My Tree?

Kansas City – June 5

Tree Care Workshop

St. Louis – May 1

Hannibal – May 22

Forestkeepers Annual Meeting

St. Charles – June 12

Call 1-888-9-FOREST or check the website for details about these free events! ☐

Wanted: Spring Reports!

Spring is a great time to get outside and enjoy nature and the beautiful weather. It also presents an excellent opportunity to observe trees. If you're willing to collect tree data, we'd like to hear from you! Just follow the instructions in your reporting kit. If you need a copy of the kit or additional reporting forms, just give us a call or download them from www.forestkeepers.org.

Report back to us and you will be eligible for your choice of one of our great incentives. Be sure to check out the color photos of the incentives at www.forestkeepers.org. ☐

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The Missouri
Forestkeepers
Network



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The Monitor

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A newsletter for all participants in the Missouri Forestkeepers Network

The Monitor

Spring 04

Firewise: Protecting Rural Homes

By Bill Altman, Forestry Field Programs Supervisor, Missouri Department of Conservation

While many members of the Missouri Forestkeepers Network have lived in rural areas most of their lives, many others are developing these areas into second homes or country hideaways. Each year, more and more of the state's rural areas are being developed by people who want to escape the pressures of city life or who want to live closer to nature. Unfortunately, neither the seasoned rural resident nor the newcomer is immune to the risks associated with wildfire in the country. Many do not understand how vulnerable rural houses and associated buildings are to ignition from wildfires.

Peak times for wildfire in Missouri generally occur from late February through early May, and again in late October and November. However, wildfires may also occur during July, August and September. Whenever the weather is particularly warm, windy and dry, there is a chance for wildfire. If natural fuels like dead leaves, needles, grasses and evergreen trees get within a few inches, or even feet, of flammable portions of buildings, these structures may easily become ignited in the case of a blaze.

To protect homes from this hazard, begin, if possible, at the planning stage of new home construction. Avoid building homes with cedar shake roofs and exterior siding made of vinyl or wood. Rather, cover roofs with metal sheeting or asphalt shingles and build exterior walls with masonry, brick or metal siding. Foundations should be enclosed using these same materials in order to keep the wind from depositing natural fuels under floor joists.

Homes require a minimum corridor of 30 feet of "defensible space" to stand a good chance of surviving a wildfire. It is within this perimeter that the homeowner should focus preparedness efforts.

It is important that plants like trees and shrubs are carefully located, and that other risks are minimized.

- ✦ Large evergreen trees should not be located within the defensible space and should be kept from growing under building overhangs.
- ✦ Shrubs should not be placed below evergreen trees if they will create a "ladder" for fire to spread to the trees.

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Ladder fuels are created when vegetation of different heights is close enough to allow a surface fire to become a crown fire.



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Writers:

Bill Altman
Clint Dalbom
Jim Duncan
Nancy von Brecht

Editor:

Nancy von Brecht

Assistant Editor:

Michelle Johnson

Design:

501creative inc.

Forestkeepers Illustrations:

Brian Jensen

Additional Illustrations:

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Forestkeepers Network is a project coordinated by Forest ReLeaf of Missouri and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Its goal is to help people maintain the health of our state's trees and forests.

For questions on forest health:

Contact your nearest forest district office or Forest ReLeaf of Missouri:
4207 Lindell Blvd.
Suite 120, St. Louis, Missouri 63108
toll-free:
1-888-9-FOREST (1-888-936-7378)



Firewise: Protecting Rural Homes

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- ✦ Established trees should be kept pruned so the first branch is 5 to 6 feet off the ground to further eliminate the risk of fire laddering.
- ✦ Dead leaves, needles and tree branches should be kept cleared away from structures. Don't let this material collect in or below flammable portions of the house, such as decks, gutters and roof valleys.
- ✦ When used near a building, non-combustible mulching material is preferred over wood and bark chips.
- ✦ Turf within the defensible space should be kept irrigated during periods of drought and mowed to within 6 inches of the ground.

Freestanding storage buildings should not be placed within the defensible space nor should brush piles be constructed in that area. Firewood, propane tanks, paint, solvents and other combustible materials should not be

stored under decks or anywhere within the defined perimeter.

Debris burning should be discouraged among all members of the subdivision or local community, as it is one of the key sources of wildfire. Any burning of household trash should be done in approved barrels or containers located in areas cleared of fuels.

With thoughtful preparation, becoming "firewise" is not difficult and rural homes can be enjoyed without a major threat of loss from wildfire.

For more details on new home planning and treating your present home to mitigate the hazards of wildfire, visit www.firewise.org.

Information on certifying your town as a Firewise Community may be obtained by contacting Bruce Palmer with the Missouri Department of Conservation at Bruce.Palmer@mdc.mo.gov

Welcome New Members!

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Missouri Forestkeepers Network:

- Camp Trinity
- Robbie Chadwell
- Nancy Davis
- Natalie Garrison
- Jorja Hasbrouck
- Alexander Ingraham
- Robert A. Jackson
- Doug Johnson
- Lombar Achers Church in the Woods
- Pagan Youth as Community, Inc.
- Annette Shaw
- Jaiden Shaw
- John Shaw
- Travis Shaw
- Dwight Sperber



Membership is free and just a phone call or a click away! Be sure to tell your friends and family about becoming a member. Recruiting new Forestkeepers is an activity you can put on your next Activity Report!

Membership information is available by phone at 1-888-9-FOREST (1-888-936-7378) or on the website at www.forestkeepers.org.

The Lewis and Clark Celebration

By Jim Duncan, Conservation Education Consultant, Missouri Department of Conservation

Missouri is the place where it all began 200 years ago. The bicentennial of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's epic journey will be celebrated throughout 2004, providing a perfect time to focus on Missouri's forest, fish, and wildlife resources.

The celebration officially began in Missouri with the *Three Flags Festival* in March. This event commemorated the transfer of the Upper Louisiana territory from Spain and France to the United States with a variety of activities at different locations. The festivities culminated at a ceremony on March 14 at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial at the Gateway Arch.

Among the most exciting events to take place are the period encampments, exhibits and parades in St. Charles during the *25th Annual Lewis and Clark Heritage Days Festival* from May 14-23. Reenactors from all over the world will assemble in period dress and are expected to draw thousands of visitors each day. The encampments, festivals, fairs, and other events will continue up the Missouri River until July 18, when the festivities will pass out of our state. (An event marking the return of Lewis and Clark will take place in St. Louis on September 23, 2006.)

Several other reenactment groups and educational exhibits will help to commemorate this landmark event in Missouri. The exhibits include a premier national exhibition of expedition artifacts on display at the Missouri History Museum through September 6, a 150-seat program tent developed by the U.S. National Park Service, and The Exploration Outpost, a project of the Missouri River Communities' Network and AmeriCorps.

In addition, the Missouri Department of Conservation's dugout boat program has already generated enormous interest. There are four dugout canoes in circulation, with two more under construction. The boats were handcrafted using historic tools of the period from Missouri cottonwood trees. Accompanied by the Department's official Corps of Discovery crew in period attire, they are sure to be a hit at community events throughout the year.

Like Lewis and Clark, Forestkeepers are involved in exploring our natural world and recording what they find. Being in Missouri will be especially exciting in 2004, when the bicentennial will provide many opportunities for learning more about our state's natural history as well as the importance of preserving our natural resources for the future.

For more information on upcoming events, log on to www.lewisandclark.state.mo.us or call 1-800-334-6946.

