

Ten Years Later

MR Returns to Quarterly Schedule

by Stuart Westmoreland

Keeping up on the latest stories about Missouri's natural resources and state parks is about to get a little easier when *Missouri Resources* returns to a quarterly publication schedule with the winter 2014 issue. Once again, *MR* will hit the streets around the time the seasons change, just as nature intended.

Ten years. Seems like a long time. Several months ago, when we were laying the groundwork (that's government-speak for "trying to find the money") to return *Missouri Resources* to its original quarterly publication schedule, someone asked me when we cut back to three issues per year. 'Four or maybe five years ago,' I replied, fairly certain I was in the ballpark. It was 2003.

Grabbing an archive copy of *MR*, I wanted to see what was going on in this agency exactly one decade ago when we cut back to three issues. We could have almost cut the Director's Comments from summer 2003 and pasted them into this issue, saving current DNR Director Sara Parker Pauley some time. A few update edits and we'd be good – even the word count was right on the screws.

"In Missouri, and most other states, all levels and branches of government, as well as our universities and public schools, are struggling to make every nickel and dime stretch," said Steven Mahfood, the DNR director in 2003. "That same problem seems to be making its way into our homes and businesses, as well," Mahfood continued.

Mahfood's uncle, who was Yogi Berra (yes, *that* Yogi Berra),

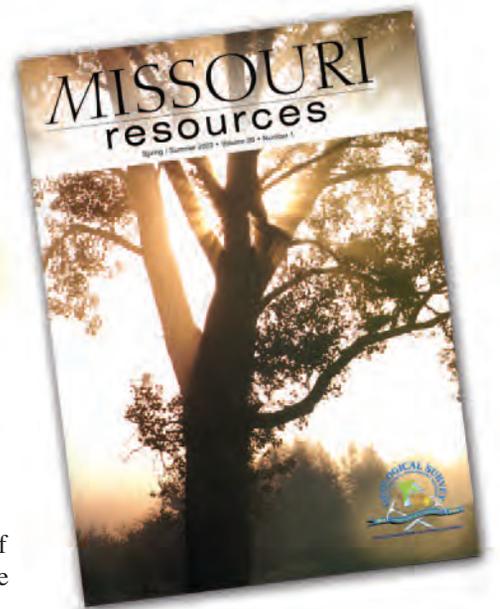
probably would say, "It's déjà vu all over again."

The entire article detailed many of the specific cuts our agency would be working through, including cutting *MR* from four to three issues per year. Do more with less, we're all doing it these days. *We should* be doing it. It's not just state government, everyone has to work faster, smarter and rely on technology. Technology is what has kept printing costs in check through the years. And although postal costs still go up, good list management and accuracy help control it. So now that we're back on schedule, we will be expanding some content, reducing others and tweaking our "look."

Missourians value clean air, water, soil and a healthy outdoors in which to recreate. This message was made clear to me as I read over your comments from an online survey of our existing subscribers. You also conveyed what you wanted to see more of, and what you could do without.

Regarding content, state parks, historic sites, trails and natural areas headed the list of what our readers prefer to read about. Not far behind were streams, lakes, wetlands, rocks, minerals and geologic wonders. Beginning with the winter issue, which will mail in mid-December, two additional parks entries will be added, along with regular feature stories from state parks.

Explore Missouri will replace Resources to Explore, and in lieu of focusing on one park or historic site, multiple parks events normally entered as news briefs will be expanded



in this section. In addition, two new entries – Tops Spots and Trails Highlight – will include best spots in Missouri State Parks to camp, fish and myriad other topics. The new trails page will feature a different trail each issue and include details and photos that space didn't previously allow.

We've also increased the pages devoted to feature stories, and have reduced the text to allow for more and larger photos. Obviously, with the same number of pages, some regular departments had to be reduced or eliminated. Using the survey as our guide, our template was revised accordingly.

MR staff also have heard from many of our state's educators who would like more resources to use in the classroom. So, next issue, many of our features will include links where additional information about a story or topic can be found on our DNR education pages at dnr.mo.gov/education.

We hope you enjoy the new content, an updated style and a return to quarterly publication. As always, we welcome your feedback and look forward to hearing from you in 2014.

You can email *Missouri Resources* at moresdnr@dnr.mo.gov.

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