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# Black Bear Travels Nearly 400 Miles Across Southern Missouri

JULY 08TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Black Bear Travels Nearly 400 Miles Across Southern Missouri

**Traveling black bear is a reminder to be “Bear Aware.”**

**Whitewater, Missouri** - A three-year-old black bear sighted in Whitewater Friday morning is a reminder to southeast Missourians to be “Bear Aware” according to the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). Whitewater resident Phillip O’Kelly saw the bear with his daughter on their front porch, but when the bear heard humans, it took off, he said.

“It was probably about 100 feet from the porch,” O’Kelly said. “I came out to look at it and as soon as it heard our commotion it turned around to run off.”

O’Kelly said his property is surrounded by woods and is a place where his family enjoys seeing wildlife of all kinds.

“He wasn’t aggressive, was just looking around and he definitely wasn’t hurting anything,” O’Kelly said. “I hope people just let him be.”

O’Kelly noticed the bear was wearing a collar and ear tag, so the family contacted the MDC’s Southeast Regional Office to report the sighting.

“I’ve been tracking this bear and watched it trek about 400 miles across the southern part

of the state,” said Jeff Beringer, MDC resource scientist who leads the Missouri Black Bear Project.

Beringer’s research confirms multiple bear sighting reports made to Bollinger County Conservation Agent Jeff Scott this week, were all related to the same bear as he traveled through the area.

The Missouri Black Bear Project has entered its second phase. First, biologists trapped and radio-collared bears across southern Missouri. This helped them to estimate how many bears are in the state. Now the biologists are measuring survival and reproductive rates of female bears as well as keeping track of survival of first-year cubs.

“This bear probably left Christian county because his mother ran him off and because young male bears have an instinct to move and find unrelated females,” Beringer explained. “Not all bears move this far, but long dispersals are common for male bears.”

Beringer said the bear sighted in Whitewater was originally captured when it was 18-months-old in Christian county, where it wintered. Sometime the following year, the bear traveled to Warren County where he dened.

“This spring, a landowner took pictures of him and sent them to me and I noted the collar and knew he was a long way from home,” Beringer said, adding that studying the animal’s movements gives MDC an opportunity to see how bears use corridors and other physical barriers like roads and rivers. Beringer said the bear was recaptured and given a new collar in May and has since traveled on its own to southeast Missouri.

“He’s probably looking for a female and I expect he will settle down somewhere this summer, since he’s three-years-old now,” Beringer said.

Beringer said this bear sighting is a good reminder for Missourians to be “Bear Aware” by making efforts to keep bears wild. Residents should ensure bird feeders are put away, trash is kept out of reach and any pet food is stored inside at night.

“A fed bear is a dead bear,” Beringer said. “Bears are creatures of habit, so if they find they can get a free meal somewhere, they’re likely to stick around and that’s when they get into trouble.”

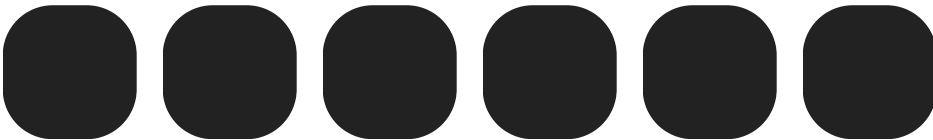
O’Kelly said although he enjoyed seeing the bear, his property doesn’t have things sitting out that might make the bear stay.

“It’s neat to see a bear in real life, instead of on television,” O’Kelly said. “He was a cute bear to look at, but we hope people let him be and he can travel on and stay out of trouble.”

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## Route O in Stoddard County Reduced for Bridge Repair

JULY 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Route O in Stoddard County Reduced for Bridge Repair

**Stoddard County, Missouri** - Route O in Stoddard County will be reduced to one lane as Missouri Department of Transportation crews perform bridge maintenance.

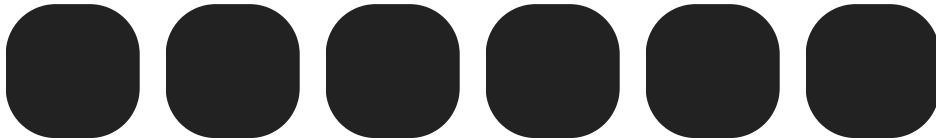
This bridge is located between County Road 316 and County Road 371.

Weather permitting, work will be performed Thursday, July 7 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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# Bootheel Counseling Services Job Opportunity

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JULY 05TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Bootheel Counseling Services Job Opportunity

**Community Support Professional**

**Position Opening – Bloomfield and Sikeston**

There is an opening for an adult Community Support Professional in the Bloomfield Office and in the Sikeston Office. Bootheel Counseling Services offers a rewarding career and excellent working environment.

Qualified applicants must possess at least a Bachelor's Degree from a recognized educational institution in the field of psychology, social work or a related field. Previous experience is preferred.

Interested candidates should submit applications to:

**Bootheel Counseling Services**

**Human Resources Department**

**760 Plantation Blvd.**

**Sikeston, MO 63801**

**[hrdirector@boothelcounseling.com](mailto:hrdirector@boothelcounseling.com)**

**Fax: 573 471-5740**

**Equal Opportunity Employer**

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## MDC Reminds People Outdoors to Celebrate Safely

JUNE 30TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[MDC Reminds People Outdoors to Celebrate Safely](#)

**The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reminds people in the outdoors to be extremely careful with fireworks, campfires, and other sources of fire that could cause a wildfire.**

### **FIREWORKS**

Don't light fireworks in any areas where the sparks could ignite dry grass, leaves, or other potential fire fuel. Always have an approved fire extinguisher and an available water supply to douse sparks or flames. Wet the area around where fireworks are being discharged. Check with local ordinances and authorities for bans on fireworks and open burning.

### **OUTDOOR BURNING**

Don't burn during wrong conditions. Dry grass, high temperatures, low humidity, and wind make fire nearly impossible to control. Check with local fire departments regarding burn bans that may be in place. A person who starts a fire for any reason is responsible for any damage it may cause.

## **DRIVING OFF ROAD**

Wildfires can start when dry fuel, such as grass, comes in contact with catalytic converters. Think twice before driving into and across a grassy field. Never park over tall, dry grass or piles of leaves that can touch the underside of a vehicle. When driving vehicles off road, regularly inspect the undercarriage to ensure that fuel and brake lines are intact and no oil leaks are apparent. Always carry an approved fire extinguisher on vehicles that are used off road. Check for the presence of spark arresters on ATV exhausts.

## **MAKING A CAMPFIRE**

Clear a generous zone around fire rings. Store unused firewood a good distance from a campfire. Never use gasoline, kerosene, or other flammable liquid to start a fire. Keep campfires small and controllable. Keep fire-extinguishing materials, such as a rake, shovel, and bucket of water, close.

## **NEVER LEAVE A CAMPFIRE UNATTENDED**

Extinguish campfires each night and before leaving camp, even if it's just for a few moments. Extinguish cigarettes completely and safely and dispose of them responsibly by burning them in a controlled campfire or packing them out.

## **CALL FOR HELP**

Call 911 at the first sign of a fire getting out of control.

## **REPORT FOREST ARSON**

Wildfires are sometimes set by vandals. Help stop arson by calling 800-392-1111 and reporting any potential arson activities. Callers will remain anonymous and rewards are possible.

## **MANAGED FIRE**

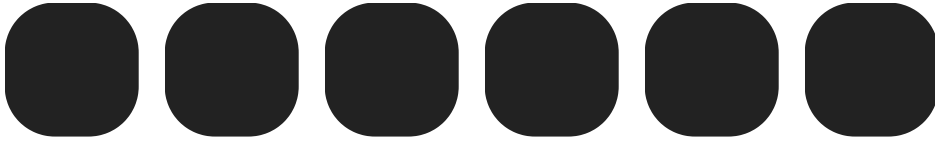
Fire used in the wrong way can create disasters. Used in the right way, fire can help create habitat for wildlife. For more information on using prescribed fire as a land-management tool, visit [mdc.mo.gov](http://mdc.mo.gov) and search "prescribed fire."

Photo courtesy of Kay Stevenson.

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# Ryan Windham Becomes MO State Trooper

JUNE 29TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Ryan Windham Becomes MO State Trooper](#)

## Patrol Commissions 102nd Recruit Class; 26 New Troopers Take Oath Of Office

Colonel J. Bret Johnson, superintendent of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, announces 26 troopers graduated from the Patrol's Law Enforcement Academy on Friday, June 24, 2016. The ceremony took place at 10 a.m. in the Academy gymnasium. The 102nd Recruit Class reported to the Academy on January 4, 2016. The new troopers report for duty in their assigned troops on July 11, 2016.



**Trooper Ryan J. Windham, of Dexter, Missouri, has been assigned to Zone 6, which serves the citizens of Mississippi, New Madrid, and Scott counties. Trooper Windham is a graduate of Dexter High School and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Trooper Windham's field training officer will be Trooper B.A. Pratt.**

Governor Jay Nixon provided the keynote address during the June 24 graduation ceremony. Department of Public Safety Director Lane Roberts, and Colonel J. Bret Johnson also addressed the class. The Honorable Mary Rhodes Russell, Missouri Supreme Court, administered the Oath of Office to the new troopers. Dean Gil Kennon, vice president of College Affairs for Mineral Area College, conferred an associate of applied science degree to 10 of the new troopers.

Troop F Color Guard presented and retired the colors. A quartet consisting of Sergeant John H. Lueckenhoff, Troop D, Sergeant Andrew A. Henry, Troop H, Trooper Steven J. Force, Troop H, and Pastor Terry Beasley, of Cameron, MO, sang the national anthem. Rev. Tim Rickman, Assemblies of God, Nixa, MO, provided the invocation and benediction.

Four class awards were presented. The recruits accumulated points toward graduation in the categories of physical fitness, firearms, and academics throughout their 25 weeks at the Academy. The person with the highest number of points in each category earned the respective award. Trooper Dakota K. Fletcher earned the physical fitness award. Trooper Justin C. Jenkins earned the firearms award. Trooper Matthew W. Neely earned the academics award. Trooper Sean P. Ernst accepted the Superintendent's Award, which is presented to the person with the most points overall.

Listed below are the names, hometowns, and first assignments of members of the 102nd Recruit Class:

Ronald K. Adams, Portageville, MO, Troop E, Pemiscot & New Madrid Counties  
Geoffrey Beaulieu, Cassville, MO, Troop F, Montgomery County  
Caleb M. Elam, Oak Ridge, MO, Troop E, Scott, Mississippi, & New Madrid Counties  
Kyle L. Elledge, Newburg, MO, Troop C, St. Francois & Washington Counties  
Sean P. Ernst, Columbia, MO, Troop F, Boone County

William W. Fair, Chicago, IL, Troop I, Phelps & Maries Counties  
Aaron W. Ferguson, Warrensburg, MO, Troop A, Ray & Carroll Counties  
Dakota K. Fletcher, Hamilton, MO, Troop A, Clay County  
Tyler C. Fuller, Macon, MO, Troop B, Marion & Ralls Counties  
Samuel R. Glass, Springfield, MO, Troop D, McDonald & Newton Counties  
Justin C. Jenkins, Mineral Point, MO, Troop C, Ste. Genevieve & Perry Counties  
Brandon G. Katzing, Sedalia, MO, Troop A, Benton County  
Robert P. Mahoney Jr., Arnold, MO, Troop C, Ste. Genevieve & Perry Counties  
Justin K. Marlin, Osage Beach, MO, Troop A, Benton County  
Corey T. Morgan, Columbia, MO, Troop G, Carter & Reynolds Counties  
Matthew W. Neely, Cameron, MO, Troop H, Daviess & DeKalb Counties  
Catlynn E. Newbold, Columbia, MO, Troop F, Camden County  
Andrew C. Rickman, Battlefield, MO, Troop D, Stone & Taney Counties  
Mark D. Ritter, St. Robert, MO, Troop I, Phelps & Maries Counties  
Kaven D. Roney, Farmington, MO, Troop C, St. Francois & Washington Counties  
Jeremy D. Sanders, Cuba, MO, Troop C, St. Francois & Washington Counties  
Nelson R. Saucedo, Valley Park, MO, Troop C, Warren County  
Joseph C. Southwood, Columbia, MO, Troop I, Laclede Counties  
Braiden D. Vaught, Springfield, MO, Troop D, Jasper County  
Brodie P. Waaso, Cottleville, MO, Troop C, St. Charles County  
**Ryan J. Windham, Dexter, MO, Troop E, Scott, Mississippi, & New Madrid Counties**

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