



Friends of Camp Zoe, Inc.

www.friendsofcampzoe.org

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friends of Camp Zoe, Inc., Announces Receipt of 501(c)3 Designation

St. Louis, Mo. (June 10, 2016) – Crowning the hill overlooking Sinking Creek and Echo Bluff State Park, The Camp Zoe Lodge and its stone walkway bear witness to the footsteps of generations of campers that went to their cabins, the mess hall, the creek to swim or canoe, and to participate in other summer camp activities from 1929 to 1986. Alumni consisting of campers and staff of the former Camp Zoe have recently incorporated in the State of Missouri and received the non-profit 501(c)3 designation from the IRS as Friends of Camp Zoe, Inc. A cooperative agreement between the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and Friends of Camp Zoe is in place. Scheduled to open July 30, 2016 in Shannon County, Mo., the new state park will be a gateway to the Ozarks and Missouri's other nearby state parks.

The Friends of Camp Zoe is a membership-supported non-profit organization with the mission to preserve, support and promote the history of Camp Zoe (1929-1986) in Round Spring, Missouri. The primary focus is on restoration and long-term maintenance of those features and elements of Echo Bluff State Park that were part of the former Camp Zoe, including The Camp Zoe Lodge. As stewards of the history of the beloved summer camp, The Friends of Camp Zoe is dedicated to safeguarding the memories of the popular boys' and girls' camp by preserving its buildings and artifacts and sharing the stories of the camp experience with current and future generations.

The Camp Zoe Lodge was built in 1929 in the distinct Missouri vernacular architecture genre, Ozark rock masonry, when Camp Zoe was founded as a youth summer camp. Historically significant both architecturally and culturally, Ozark rock construction expresses the high-minded principles of the Craftsman movement while at the same time symbolizing the traditional hard-working, self-reliant Ozark way of life. The stone walkway also dates to 1929.

Missouri State Parks, a division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, acquired the 330-acre property at auction in 2013 and has added acreage to provide additional access and natural areas. Missouri State Parks is developing a recreational destination to attract visitors to the Current River, the Ozarks, and other state parks in the area.

At the invitation of Missouri State Parks, former campers and staff of the original Camp Zoe visited the property during a reunion picnic on Aug 22, 2014. At that time the group heard plans for the new park and learned that state funds were not available to restore the Lodge. The alumni group formed "Save the Camp Zoe Lodge" to raise the funds necessary to stabilize and restore the Lodge. Their efforts quickly gathered pledges of more than \$35,000 from former campers and staff to preserve these historic and original structures. The historic Lodge is still standing, and the alumni group has pivoted to a more long term effort that will, as described in its mission, focus additionally on long-term maintenance and preservation of the lodge, the walkway and other structures and memories of Camp Zoe.