

Protecting our Namesake



Basin Spring 1883

Eureka Springs was founded on the belief that there was healing for human ills to be found in the pure, clean spring waters which flowed abundantly. The community's history is based upon that beginning, and a part of the attraction to today's visitor or resident relates to that heritage of belief in the life re-creating properties of the waters.

The growth of Eureka Springs has produced changes in the landscape that compromised the very springs that drew settlers to the flowing waters. The flow and quality of most springs has decreased dramatically over the last century. As development in the area increased, the resulting

parking lots, streets, and storm-drains deflected rainfall away from the natural slopes and sinkholes which recharge the springs. In addition, underground channels that historically fed the springs were lost by limestone bedrock movement and filled by disturbed soil during construction and other activities. All the springs of the area are deemed unsuitable for drinking due to fecal *coliform* contamination; iron gates have been erected to protect citizens from the contaminated water.

Why do we have springs?

How did we end up with such holey ground? The Ozark Plateau is primarily made up of limestone and dolomite layers. These sedimentary rocks can be dissolved by slightly acidic water, such as rain that has picked up carbon dioxide in the atmosphere or in the soil. As the mildly acidic water moves over and into the grooves and cracks of the bedrock, the rock is slowly eaten away. Gradually underground drainage systems, caves, sinkholes, and other geologic wonders collectively known as *karst* are formed. Some of this karst topography allows groundwater to emerge on the surface, creating springs. About half of our town's springs are surface water that has entered the karst from a higher elevation. Contrary to myth, these springs are not draining areas tens or hundreds of miles away, but rather the areas where most residents live. These springs are very sensitive to any source of pollution because there is little soil contact, and thus little natural filtration or absorption.

Springs Committee Members

***Barbara Harmony
Bruce Levine
Andrea Radwell
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Jim Helwig
Jamie Froelich
Joe Scott
Paula Adkins
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Kate Cooper***

Springing towards our future

The Springs Committee is a group of dedicated volunteers working as a subcommittee of the Eureka Parks and Recreation Commission.

The committee's mission is to develop community awareness and involvement in protecting and preserving the springs of Eureka Springs.

Projects slated for 2007 include:

- Spring protection workshops for city government and the public
- Comprehensive database of information on every local spring
- Creation of educational brochure for local citizens
- Development of critical springs recharge criteria to assist the City of Eureka Springs in the delineation of clear city policy regarding use and development of land in spring recharge areas
- Updated complete map of Eureka Springs including streets, springs, and spring recharge areas
- Water quality monitoring of springs and Leatherwood Creek.
- Attractive medallions for all city storm drains stating: Drains to Springs



Flushing Recharge Area for Grotto Spring



Alicia and Rowan Scheunemann test Magnetic Spring

Shake off the winter doldrums, Contribute to a healthy spring.

If you believe in our vision to restore and enhance Eureka's springs, please consider becoming involved in one of our projects or making a financial contribution. Contact Barbara Harmony at peace@ipa.net.



Magnetic Spring