

# The ROCKSPIRIAN

October 2018

Volume 3, Number 34

THE ROCKSPIRE FORUM is now meeting monthly at the MobbyMac Carriage House to discuss current and local topics of interest. The forum topics evolved from discussions among participants at the *Movies at the MobbyMac* monthly series.



The MobbyMac  
Carriage House at  
Rockspire  
7.13.18



At the October 13<sup>th</sup> forum, there was discussion of an interview seen on TV with Robert D. Kaplan, author of *Earning the Rockies -How Geography Shapes America's Role in the World*. Kaplan stated, "there is a geographically induced disconnect between large urban cities and smaller rural towns in America. This disconnect is largely due to the idea that most rural towns are not able to effectively participate in the global economy." Therefore, the question before the Rockspire Forum was, "**Does Eureka Springs need to be more connected to the global economy to ensure its sustainability? And if so, how can this be accomplished?**"

Five discussion themes emerged:

1. The cost of living in Eureka Springs.
2. The Eureka Springs economy is dependent on tourism which is cyclical and seasonal.
3. Eureka Springs' tourism and population is not growing, and in some areas, declining.
4. The unique and diverse population living in and around Eureka Springs.
5. There doesn't appear to be commonality of purpose within Eureka Springs and Carroll County.

November's topic will be "*Our Community – is it real?*" A deeper dive into October's discussion. We hope you will be able to participate in the discussions at future Rockspire Forums.



Elizabeth's Angel  
The latest angel installed on Joan's Angel Trail  
In celebration of the life of Elizabeth Williams  
9.21.18

The MobbyMac Carriage House  
at night 9.12.18



## HOMESITES UPDATE

Initial dirt work has been completed, creating sites for five homes. We are in the middle of geotechnical engineering analysis of the homesites. Once this analysis is complete, Rockspire's architects and engineers will be able to complete the structural design for the two initial homes which are anticipated to start construction early next year. Schematic, three-dimensional, computer models of the first two homes have been created where architects can visualize and refine their designs.



October 2018

## Community Ecology

A disciplined approach to community

**W**AIT, BEFORE YOU “TUNE OUT” because there are no pictures or videos and take a moment to digest an emerging research field, called “**Community Ecology.**”

This area includes content on the spatial and temporal analysis of species interactions, and consequences for community structure and organization, where a community is defined as, “*a group of interacting species within the same environment*”. Community ecology focuses on the abundance and distribution of species, community structure, and biodiversity.

By analogy, community living at Rockspire is a group of humans (and assorted emotional and environmental support creatures and plant life) interacting in a beautiful, idyllic natural environment. In our small environment, much is untouched and left to chance in how it will develop. Rockspire’s ecology focuses on the abundance and distribution of species (flora, fauna, and their habitats), biodiversity (variety of living things), and *community structure*.

It’s the community structure part where we have some influence. So, what at Rockspire is structured, and more importantly, what should be structured? Buildings are structural, so by design and construction, living and working spaces stand as edifices built on the land. The concept of a structured community encapsulates relationships between humans and nature. *Coexistence* is the popular term. Therefore, all constructed structures must first do little or no harm to the environment. Lifestyle can also be thought of as “structured” in the conscious decisions and actions taken by humans and our stewardship over the land. Here’s where community and ecology join forces to create something better.

There’s a temporal component too – that means over time, does the community stand? This gets to legacy, with the current generation providing for the long-term benefit of a community in the future. Are we doing that? Are we setting in motion what’s needed for long-term benefits of communities by improving lives and the environment through better and more sustainable water, food, shelter, health, and community?

Surveying some of the recent academic journal articles, topics illustrate the many approaches to *Community Ecology*:

- Endangered species
- Reframing conservation
- Sustainable weed management
- Impact of biodiversity on tourism flows
- Ecodevelopment
- Forest biodiversity
- Animal welfare
- Invasive species management
- Adapting to climate change
- Biodiversity Inclusive Impact Assessment (equivalent to environmental impact assessment)
- Intentional communities