



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the  
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# Missouri Day

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JEFFERSON CITY – This coming Wednesday, October 18, 2006 is Missouri Day – a day set aside to commemorate Missouri’s history and to celebrate the achievements of all Missourians.

The idea for the holiday came from Anna B. Korn, a schoolteacher and member of the Missouri Historical Society. Korn had composed the former state song “Missouri” but felt the state needed an entire day to recognize significant Missourians. She lobbied the General Assembly in 1915 to set aside the third Wednesday in October as Missouri Day. After the General Assembly approved the idea, Governor Arthur M. Hyde proclaimed October 18 as Missouri Day. Korn said the day is designed to “foster a love for our state’s history and to teach rising generations of boys and girls the glories of Missouri.”

Why October? Perhaps Korn was thinking of Mark Twain, who said, “If you want to see Missouri at her best, see her in October.”

Since its inception as a state 185 years ago, Missouri has been and will continue to play an important role in the past, present and future of this great nation. To date, Missouri lawmakers have designated 21 state symbols as official representations of the Show-Me-State, which reflects on a wide range of Missouri’s assets (<http://www.sos.mo.gov/symbols/>).

The French established the first permanent settlement in Ste. Genevieve in the 1730s. Ste. Genevieve was the lone settlement in the expansive Louisiana Territory until St. Louis was founded in 1764. Today the gigantic “Gateway to the West” arch stands 630 feet above the Mississippi River in St. Louis, the town that started out as a simple trading post for trappers.

Other Missouri cities were part of the gateway as well. From the city of Independence, the Santa Fe Trail and the Oregon Trail stretched westward. From St. Joseph, the Pony Express carried mail all the way to Sacramento, California, in half the time it took stagecoaches.

Lewis and Clark left for their famous expedition from St. Charles, Missouri, in 1804. When President James Monroe admitted Missouri as the 24<sup>th</sup> state in 1821, Missouri was the state that was farthest west until Texas joined the Union in 1845.

Many wagon trains set out from St. Louis to settle the West and to search for gold, with stagecoaches setting out twice a week carrying goods and passengers to California. The trip took about 22 days, depending on the weather.

Early explorers discovered Missouri's land was rich with a variety of mineral resources, including zinc and silver. The state's early development is tied to lead mining after French settlers discovered significant deposits in the Mine La Motte and Potosi areas. Today, Missouri remains a leading lead producer and possesses one of the largest limestone deposits in the world.

Missouri also continues to be an important industrial and farming state in the Midwest. Our central location and two great rivers have helped stimulate agricultural growth, create jobs, enhance transportation and attract businesses.

Missouri's geographical makeup is especially unique. The nearly 70,000 square miles of Missouri landscape boast more caves, free-flowing streams and varieties of wildflowers than any other state. Our state is home to 81 state parks, 5,475 caves, 14 major lakes and more than 30 rivers and creeks.

Missouri Day passes each year without the official observance that occurs with other holidays, such as Independence Day. But this October 18, make sure to reflect on and express pride in all things Missouri.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: [delbertscott@senate.mo.gov](mailto:delbertscott@senate.mo.gov)

*Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.*