

IKC AUTUMN BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, September 23, 2006 -- Cloverdale, Indiana

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Vernier, President
Bob Sergesketter, Secretary
Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
Dave Haun
Don Ingle
Steve Lockwood
Nick Noe
Bruce Silvers
Tom Sollman
Bill Tozer (proxy by Kathy Welling)
Bob Vandeventer
Jamie Winner
Sue Vernier

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jerry Lewis
Kriste Lindberg

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM at the property of Tom Rea, President Richard Vernier presiding. Kathy Welling was accepted as proxy for Bill Tozer. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as published in the September 2006 *IKC Update*.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Dunlap reported total assets of \$336,584.44. Our land holdings are valued at \$258,013 and we have cash in the various funds totaling \$78,584. A detailed Treasury Report will be published in the *IKC Update*.

Dunlap said that the boundary survey of the Robinson Ladder property has been completed and the cost was \$2,400. The acquisition of the Robinson Ladder property is now complete and the final cost was \$84,000, including the contribution to the Stewardship Fund.

Dunlap said that our cash funds, which are invested in Certificates of Deposit and Money Market accounts, are generating about \$300 a month in interest. This is about \$1,000 more per year than we collect in dues.

Membership now stands at 193. Twenty of those members have not yet renewed and have not responded to reminders and so they will be dropped after the December mailing of the *IKC Update*.

Robinson Ladder Cave Acquisition

As reported above, the boundary survey is complete. John Benton, Property Manager for Robinson Ladder, was not present to give a report. Dunlap reported that he received an e-mail from a guy who does herbicide application offering his services. Vernier thought that it's probably too late in the year for anything other than one more mowing. Dunlap didn't think it was worth mowing any more this year. Winner has been mowing the area around the barn, keeping it nice for camping. Vernier said that he will get with Benton and check on the status of the restoration.

Dunlap said that he still hasn't figured out the property tax situation. The first year the bill was about \$400 and last year the tax was only \$90 so it's not as urgent that we get the property into Classified Forest status. Vernier said that there is a time frame on the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP), funds so we don't want to delay too long.

There will be a workday at Robinson Ladder on October 14. Dunlap said that the four corners of the property are now marked with steel pins but he would also like to set concrete posts at each corner. This would make it much easier to locate the corner pins in the future. The surveyor placed wooden stakes at locations around the perimeter that should be replaced with metal posts. These posts, while not official, would help in knowing where the boundaries of our property are. About twenty steel fence posts would be needed and this work could be done on the workday. Dunlap said he thinks that Tom Rea and Wayne Tucker are going to make the concrete posts.

Sollman suggested using "T" fence posts and placing a capped white plastic pipe over it for greater visibility. There was some discussion and then Haun moved to spend up to \$250.00 for materials to properly mark the boundary of the Robinson Ladder property, seconded by Welling. The motion passed 13-0-0.

Dunlap said that other projects for the October 14 workday include removing another tree stand that was recently discovered and continuing the cutting of the grapevines in the woods. Anmar Mirza asked about the purpose of the grapevine eradication program. Dunlap said that it is partly to improve timber production. Mirza said that the grapevines provide soft mass and that perhaps complete eradication was not the best practice. It might be a good idea to leave some vines in the non-valuable tree species to provide the soft mass for birds. Dunlap said that he plans on having an article in the next *IKC Update* on grapevine management. He didn't disagree with Mirza that a certain number of grapevines may be desirable, but he thought that since we probably won't get them all anyway, it will work out.

Sollman asked if there are plans to put gravel on the road that goes to the upper field. He said that if we don't do something we're going to lose the road to erosion. Winner said that the road is so steep that it will continue to erode even if we keep putting gravel on it. Dunlap said that a properly placed fabric base could keep the gravel in place. Sollman said that we must decide if we want to keep the road and if we do, we have to do what it takes to keep it up. Winner said that we need access to the upper field. He asked if anyone thought about access from the Clark's Ford Road that runs along a portion of the upper field. Dunlap said that he had. Winner said that we could probably come in that way in dry weather only. Dunlap thought that we need to solve the problems with the existing road. Sue Vernier said that we need to keep gravel on the road at least until restoration work is done and everyone agreed that the road leads to the best camping area on the property. Mirza asked if we've thought about using pipes or timbers in building water diversions. Dunlap said that they get washed out. Sollman said again that we need to decide as a group if we want to keep the road. Once we decide that, the property manager and

anyone else who wants to become involved can work out a plan. Several people said that we need to keep it and Vernier said that he will talk to John Benton, Property Manager, to see if he wants to put a proposal together. Dunlap estimated that it would take \$2,000.00 worth of stone and Vernier said that, based on our experience at the Wayne Cave property, it could take a year or two to do the job right. Sollman said that we can't grade it down any more because the road is already lower than the surrounding land. He agreed to assist Benton if needed. Vernier said that there will surely be increased visitation during the 2007 NSS Convention and we may want to have it in good shape by then if possible.

Noe asked if there were any surprises uncovered during the survey. Dunlap said that some of the existing fencing on the east and west boundaries is several feet off of the true line but we don't plan to make a fuss over it.

Education and Outreach

Vandeventer reported that he and Lindberg attended the National Cave Conservancy Forum. The three-day event is held every other year and this year it was in West Virginia and was very well attended. Vandeventer said that many interesting programs were presented on various topics. One session that he thought was very good was on volunteer values in which they discussed what monetary value could be placed on all of the unpaid hours of work that is spent on conservancy projects. Lindberg presented the Cave Biota program and it was well received. Vernier noted that Lindberg and Vandeventer had considerable out of pocket expenses to attend this event and that the IKC might want to fund part of their expenses. After a short discussion Haun moved to donate \$150 to offset some of their expenses, seconded by Sue Vernier. The motion passed 12-0, with one abstention.

Vandeventer also said that the IKC received the highest rating of all the cave conservancies in the country. There will be an Education and Outreach report in the *IKC Update*.

Barry Welling said that the West Virginia Cave Conservancy does a lot of cave related trinket selling at the various regional events and they seem to be making a lot of money at it. Vernier asked if anyone was interested in doing anything along those lines to benefit the IKC. There was much discussion about what kinds of IKC promotional items we might sell and everyone seemed to be in favor of doing something but no action was taken. Kathy Welling said that she has several catalogs of promotional items and she will present some options at the next meeting. She strongly suggested that the IKC should have name tag lanyards for sale at registration at the 2007 NSS Convention. Barry Welling suggested that we not date any promotional material as this limits it's usefulness in the future.

Dunlap suggested having IKC sweatshirts for sale at the 2007 Photo Salon. The salon will be held in the Marengo Warehouse complex which is an underground facility that used to be a stone quarry. Haun said that a hot chocolate stand at the Photo Salon would be appreciated. No action was taken.

Cave Biota Video

Dunlap asked when will the video be done? He said that the contract said it would be finished by December 31, 2007. That date is looming and McGowan is still filming. Vernier said that there will be a Hoosier National Forest meeting on September 30 and the video will surely be a

topic of discussion on the agenda. We would like to have it ready to be presented as a finished product at the 2007 NSS Convention Video Salon.

I-69

Noe reported that the Hoosier Environmental Council is getting ready to sue the Federal and State governments for having picked the "new terrain" route for I-69 and not fully considering the US-41/I-70 alternative, probably by the end of the month.

HASTI

Noe asked if the IKC wants to get involved with the next Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Incorporated convention, commonly known as the HASTI convention. It will be held at the Indianapolis Convention Center on February 7-9, 2007. It is an annual conference of Indiana science teachers and it usually has 1,500 to 2,000 people attending. They will have a big exhibition hall as well as workshops. To be an exhibitor requires a booth space which costs \$400 but there is tremendous traffic and it is a great opportunity to get our message out to the people who are in daily contact with young people. Noe said that he thinks that this would be a natural venue for the IKC to present our ideas of conservation of karst resources. Included with the booth registration is the opportunity to give a 45 minute presentation at one of the workshop sessions. He thinks that this would be a great outreach for the IKC and he has the time to do it if we are interested.

Vernier wondered if we could work out a co-sponsor arrangement with the HNF in order to split the cost. Noe said that he would bring it up at the meeting on September 30. The deadline for registration has passed, but they are holding a space for us until the end of September when we must let them know if we are in or out. Dunlap moved that we allocate up to \$400 to rent a booth at the HASTI convention, seconded by Welling. The motion passed 13-0-0. Noe will man the booth.

Wayne Cave Preserve

Dunlap reported that the driveway is in good shape in spite of all the rain and that someone has burned a significant portion of the brush pile.

Buddha Cave Preserve

Dunlap reported that 500 trees were planted in the past year and that Property Manager Cesnik would like to plant 500 more next year. The trees need to be ordered by October 17 in order to get in on the first round of the lottery so Dunlap moved to allocate up to \$250.00 for the purchase of 500 trees from the state nursery for the Buddha property. Haun seconded the motion and it passed 13-0-0.

Dunlap also reported that Cesnik treated the multiflora rose plants at Buddha sometime during the summer but the treatment didn't kill them, only stunted their growth. Another treatment next summer may kill them or maybe a stronger dose of herbicide will take care of them. The trees that were planted last year are doing well. Only a few were chewed off by deer.

Sullivan Cave Preserve

Dunlap reported that the outhouse is still on the Haun and Dunlap action list.

The camping area leveling project is still on hold. Much drier conditions are needed before work can proceed on that project.

Dunlap said that some kind of broadleaf is taking over the grassy area in the clearing. It needs to be identified and treated. Mirza said that he will stop by the property and take a look at it on his way home today. Haun made a motion that we allocate up to \$100 to take appropriate action to eradicate the encroaching broadleaf, once it is identified. The motion was seconded by Dunlap and passed 13-0-0.

Orangeville Rise

Lockwood and Dunlap will repair the plaque and re-attach it to the monument stone.

BCI Project at Wyandotte

Dunlap said that Rich Peine of Peine Engineering in Indianapolis contacted BCI expressing interest in doing a bat project. BCI suggested doing a temperature and wind velocity monitoring study in Wyandotte Cave. In late July, Dunlap was invited to a meeting with Merlin Tuttle and Jim Kennedy of BCI and Rich Peine at which Dunlap presented his ideas about the project and what he would like to see done. Dunlap gave an explanation of the monitoring system that was placed in the cave over the course of several workdays in late summer. Terry Clark and several other IKC members volunteered their time to work on this project. Peine Engineering is donating material and services at least for the initial system.

Sollman asked who will have access to the collected data. Dunlap said that anyone with an interest in it will be able to have access.

Board Member Vandeventer had to leave at this time.

Beck's Mill

Ingle said that he has nothing to report other than he is still trying to get on the e-mail list of the organization that wants to restore the mill. He is going to attempt to contact them again to get on their list so that he will be notified of meetings.

RBNC / Buckner Cave

Anmar Mirza presented an update on the restoration activities at the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy. The sandblasting has reached the Signature Room area. Particular attention is being paid to preserve historic signatures. Vernier asked if they have been able to identify any of the really old signatures. Mirza said that they have been able to identify many with the aid of old photos. He said that all of the 1840 signatures have been identified. They are now preparing to build scaffolding to get to the upper areas and ceiling. A photo album was passed around which showed the progress of the restoration of Buckner Cave.

Mirza said that Dick Blenz has been talking to the NSS about gifting the property to the NSS rather than leaving it to the NSS in his will. The NSS Board of Governors will be discussing this at a future meeting.

He said that they usually get two or three requests for visitation per week. This is less than what was going on before the RBNC took over management of the property.

Patty Cummings said that she would like to see some IKC members at the workdays. There have been a lot of changes for the better at the RBNC and they would like us check it out. They are getting a lot of help from Indiana University students as well as students from other schools, hiking clubs, and church groups. A lot of these people need the proper conservation message and the IKC could provide that, both in person and by having information at the RBNC kiosk. Vernier asked if the Bloomington Grotto and the Central Indiana Grotto have information at the kiosk. Cummings said that they have meeting information posted. She said that they are getting 15 to 20 people per workday showing up. The main job right now is getting lumber back into the cave to build the scaffolding.

Mirza said that the resurvey project has finished surveying the loop passage of the circle route and it is a little over 2,400 feet. The cave is now over two miles long. He highly recommends a trip to the cave for anyone who hasn't been to Buckner for a few years. The above ground area is also much improved.

Cummings reiterated that volunteer help is always needed and appreciated. The dates of the workdays are listed in various publications and work begins at 9:00 AM.

Items From the Floor

Ingle asked if anyone had any information about a web site advertising the location of American Bottoms Cave. He said that he had heard that there had been some discussion from Dave Everton about contacting the landowner to see if they knew anything about it. No one had any additional information on that matter but Barry Welling said that at caves.com there is a link to an Indiana Caving page that has photographic trips through several Indiana caves. Cave locations are not given nor was there any information listed about who took the photos or who actually runs the website.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Saturday, December 2, 2006, at Nick Noe's home in Indianapolis. The meeting will begin at 10:00 AM, Eastern Standard Time.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Sergesketter, Secretary