

TKC

UPDATE

A MEMO FROM THE INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY
MARCH, 1987



INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY

The Indiana Karst Conservancy, Inc., is a non-profit organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.

The purpose of the Conservancy is to acquire, manage, and protect the caves and related karst features of Indiana and other areas of the world for future study and recreation. The Conservancy will also promote conservation education about, and environmentally compatible use of karst areas.

Board of Directors for 1987:

President--William L. Wilson	Director--Keith Dunlap
(305) 695-8563	(317) 291-3845
Secretary--Tom Rea	Director--Glenn Lemasters
(317) 839-2100	(812) 378-2008
Treasurer--Cindy Riley	
(317) 634-3837	

Committees for 1987:

Membership-----	Cindy Riley	(317) 634-3837
Public Relations-----	Dave Haun	(317) 784-2573
Cave Acquisition and Maintenance--	Bill Wilson	(305) 695-8563
Fund Raising-----	Cindy Riley	(317) 634-3837
Scientific-----	Bill Wilson	(305) 695-8563
Educational Program Development--	vacant	
Resource Inventories-----	Jim Wolford	(317) 259-1088
Spring Mill Park Project-----	Noel Sloan	(317) 845-8821

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

March 28 Annual Meeting, at the World War Memorial Building in Indianapolis, at 10:00 am. Please come and voice your views, discussion of upcoming conservation projects, general elections of officers.

Please call any officer or director for more details about these events.

IKC membership is open to anyone interested in cave and karst conservation. Tax deductible annual membership dues are \$25. For more information on the INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY or to become a member write to:

Cindy Riley
P.O. Box 461
Plainfield, IN 46168

The IKC UPDATE is published as a free service to keep the membership and other interested persons in touch with the Board of Directors and informed on current projects and happenings.

THE COVER: Another excellent drawing by Linda Heslop.

Reprinted from Vol. 25, No. 11 & 12,

The Cascade Caver

ANNOUNCING
2nd ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING
INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, INC.

MacArthur Hall
Indiana War Memorial
431 N. Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

SATURDAY
MARCH 28, 1987
10:00 A.M.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and directors for 1987, discuss the accomplishments of 1986, and solicit suggestions for conservation projects in 1987.

Nominations for 1987: (Floor nominations will be accepted.)

President Keith Dunlap (Director-at-large, 1986)

Secretary Kathy Hornaday

Treasurer Cindy Riley (incumbent)

Directors-at large
(Only four of the following candidates will hold office)

Marty Atherton

George Brutchen

Dave Haun (Director-at-large, 1985)

Lynn Miller

Tom Rea (Secretary, 1986)

Noel Sloan

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The following article summarizes our past year and looks to the future. The membership should have already received this as a mailing. It is included here for our non-membership readers.

FIRST YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Indiana Karst Conservancy was incorporated as a nonprofit organization under the laws of the State of Indiana, on February 14, 1986. During the first year of its existence the Conservancy made tremendous advances in protecting caves. Some of our outstanding accomplishments include the following activities:

Wayne's Cave was protected by gating the entrance and starting a controlled-access program which provides neophytes with necessary safety and cave conservation information. Wayne's is the longest (4.25 miles) and best decorated cave in Monroe County. Previously the cave was subject to heavy vandalism by unaffiliated cavers. Since the Conservancy began to manage the cave, it has been almost entirely detashed, and the garbage dump in the sinkhole next to the entrance has been removed. Wayne's Cave is open year round on a permit basis. Unaffiliated cavers have been visiting the cave most weekends. Vandalism of the gate has been heavy and necessitated frequent repairs.

Inexperienced visitors were protected from the 75 foot pit entrance to Shaft Cave by gating the entrance. Shaft Cave, in Monroe County, has the worst safety record of any pit in the state, and maybe the worst in the country! The cave is open year round on a permit basis to people with adequate training and equipment. The gate has been frequently vandalized. A rescue of inexperienced cavers was necessary one time after the gate was broken and access was unrestricted. Fortunately no one was hurt!

The first bat conservation project ever undertaken by Indiana cavers was started at Grotto Cave in Monroe County. A fence was built around the entrance of the cave to establish a positive barrier between people and a hibernating colony of 4,200 endangered Indiana Bats. The colony is the fourth largest known in Indiana. The fence doesn't stop everybody, but is certainly helpful. Grotto Cave is open from May 1st to August 31st when the endangered bats are absent.

In a similar manner, the Conservancy has acted to protect a smaller colony of Indiana Bats which hibernate in Coon's Cave, Monroe County, Indiana. Log ladders were removed from the 25 foot deep entrance pit, and signs were posted to notify independent cavers about the regulatory closure of the cave from September 1st to May 1st. Conservancy members have been patrolling the area regularly to discourage visitation.

If the IKC had not obtained leases on Coon's Grotto and Shaft caves and offered to manage them for the owners, then the caves would have been off limits to all cavers. The new property manager has chosen to prosecute trespassers, but allows the Conservancy to give cavers permission to visit the caves.

The Conservancy has assisted representatives of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to count bat populations in the Garrison Chapel Area, Monroe County, Indiana. Working with DNR has helped demonstrate to them that cavers are a valuable source of information and assistance, rather than a threat to the endangered bat populations, as so many biologists have thought.

At the request of the Northern Indiana Grotto (NIG), the Conservancy agreed to hold a lease on the Woodard Entrance of Dunbar-Woodard Cave, in Montgomery County, Tennessee. NIG gated the cave to protect it from vandalism. For many years NIG cavers have had an active exploration and mapping project in Dunbar-Woodard Cave, which contains over eight miles of passage. In 1985, many outstanding speleothems were deliberately destroyed by a group of local neophyte cavers. This incident prompted NIG to protect the cave by restricting access.

The Conservancy obtained a lease on the spring, or quarry, entrance to Shiloh Cave in Lawrence County, Indiana. A local Bedford caver, who is not an NSS member, gated the church entrance and was intending to close the entire cave. Through the efforts of Conservancy members, limited access to Shiloh Cave was arranged.

A cave resource inventory program was initiated by the Conservancy, to document the condition and nature of cave resources in Indiana. In addition to recording the types of cave resources and targeting future conservation projects, this program provides many members the opportunity to take a tax deduction for caving expenses related to working for a nonprofit corporation.

A quarterly publication called the IKC Update has been published regularly by Dave Haun. The Update helps the directors communicate with the membership and other organizations.

In order to accomplish the activities described above, the IKC raised about \$1,500 of financial aid from its members, some grottos in Indiana, the NSS, and the Richmond Area Speleological Society.

Hundreds of man-hours were contributed by dozens of cavers to protect a few classic caves. The dedication of these people who care enough about caves to volunteer their time, effort, and money deserves a loud round of applause.

Land owners have happily signed leases that give cavers the right and obligation to protect and preserve miles of caves in a natural condition. The IKC has three cave leases and one agreement with a landowner. The land involved contains six caves that have a combined length of 14.8 miles. The leases require only token payments of \$1.00 per year, but the investment in time and materials has been high.

Through our positive, assertive actions, the Conservancy is showing landowners that organized cavers are their best friends. The safety and conservation information distributed to neophytes who visit caves managed by the Conservancy helps reduce the destructive impact of visitation on these and other caves. We have aquired access for cavers to caves that were closed by the owners. Clearly, the Indiana Karst Conservancy has stepped-in to fill a gigantic cave conservation need.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Cave Conservation is a big job and it takes time, effort, and money to make it happen. We will continue to stand between the caves and the vandals because it is easier to protect a cave than to restore one. It is more fun to visit a cave full of living natural features, than one that is a dead hole in the rock. We cannot endure the scorn of future generations for letting the unique natural wonders of caves be destroyed. Apathy is no excuse for allowing a cave to be vandalized. We need your help, your labor, and your membership in order to support a full agenda of conservation projects in 1987. Please join the Conservancy for only \$25 per year. Send your membership renewal today!

The following projects are not necessarily listed in order by priority. They represent a few of the exciting possibilities where cavers can work to make organized caving a powerful environmental force:

Perhaps the most ambitious project being considered by the Conservancy is a proposed study of radon gas concentrations and a complete resource inventory of caves in Spring Mill State Park. The study would be done under contract and may generate revenue for the Conservancy. Information produced by the study would be used by the park to develop a plan for a wild cave visitation program. This is an opportunity for cavers to provide input to a state agency that is actively managing and, responsible for, protecting cave systems in Indiana.

The Conservancy should continue to manage and protect the caves for which it has leases. Most especially, the gate on Wayne's Cave and fence around Grotto Cave need to be maintained. Each broken gate cost about \$75 to replace. Broken locks cost about \$10 each.

The gate of Shaft Cave is being replaced with a fence in response to concerns expressed by cavers about easy access to the cave. The fence will not provide a positive barrier to unprepared visitors, but the property manager has agreed to try the fence as means of reducing his liability exposure.

Regular access to Gory Hole is being negotiated with the owner. To date the owner has insisted on construction of a gate at the entrance. Major construction costs may be incurred in order to obtain access to Indiana's deepest pit.

The Conservancy is examining the possibility of closing the culvert entrance to Doghill-Donnehue Cave, Lawrence County, Indiana. However, there are several problems, not the least of which is negotiating an agreement with the Indiana Department of Transportation. The culvert entrance has allowed easy access by independent cavers who are leaving trash and graffiti in the cave.

Conservation and safety brochures should be written, published, and distributed to neophytes entering caves, in the Garrison Chapel area, such as Buckner's and Salamander. These brochures will not promote caving or identify organized caving groups but will promote safety and conservation ethics.

Other caves are constantly mentioned as being in need of either protection or regular access. Some of these include: Reeves, Wells, Budda, Sullivans, and Ray's. Once again, the idea is not to close caves to neophytes, or organized cavers, but to slow the neophytes down long enough to tell them that these caves possess unique natural resources that deserve to be appreciated and protected.

Join the Indiana Karst Conservancy and help save a cave! The effort of individual cavers will determine the level of success achieved by the Conservancy. Every voice that speaks in favor of saving caves helps establish the conscience of the caving community. Your membership dues will make you a part of the most active cave conservation organization in the Midwest. Please help us support a full agenda of conservation projects in 1987 by sending-in your dues without delay.

NEW HORIZONS
by Noel E. Sloan

These are exciting times for the Indiana caving community! When I moved to Indiana, I was surprised to find that we had no organization through which cavers could work together on a state wide basis. In the past few years I have become increasingly aware of the need for such an organization. The importance of caves and karst hydrology is now being acknowledged by the general public; and with increasing frequency they are looking to the caving community for guidance.

The charter goals of the I.K.C. are to carry on programs of acquisition, scientific study, management, protection, and public education as related to karst features. These are broad goals. As such, the I.K.C. is an organization which can acquire recognition as a responsible authority on dealing with a broad realm of cave and karst related issues. The Conservancy is currently the best vehicle we have in Indiana for the caving community to interact with Federal and State agencies on karst related matters. Such issues range from the opening of State Park caves for recreational caving, to the impact of a landfill permit on nearby caves and water quality.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has recently encountered several issues which are directly related to caves; and they have approached the caving community for guidance. Upon presenting these D.N.R. issues to the I.K.C. board, I found myself as chairman of an immediately formed committee whose purpose is to interact with the Indiana D.N.R. on cave related matters.

The first issue the committee is addressing relates to the State's decision to open the caves at Spring Mill State Park for recreational caving. After careful consideration of similar programs at Carter Caves State Park, and Mammoth Cave State Park in Kentucky; and, receptive solicitation of advice from the caving community, the D.N.R. is drafting a policy which will be implemented this Spring.

Our committee is currently looking at the ways we can aid the D.N.R. in supervising the implementation of this policy. The areas we are addressing include public education about cave conservation and caving safety; inventory, exploration, and survey of the Spring Mill State Park caves; scientific projects including biological, geological, and radon studies; and monitoring the impact of an open cave policy to assure the preservation of both the caves and their unique cave adapted species.

Clearly, this project will require a dedicated and professional commitment on our part. We need the support of you, the caving community; both in working man-hours and in spirit to do a good job. I feel this kind of project is the direction the I.K.C. must pursue to gain credibility with both governmental agencies, and private landowners. This is our chance for the caving community to have an impact on the vast issues associated with caves, and be heard!

Let us not lose sight of the broad purpose and potential of the I.K.C. Far too much energy has been wasted in recent months on negative issues. It is time to work together and move on to new horizons.

If you are interested in further information on the above projects please contact me at:

Noel E. Sloan
8715 Garden Rock Court
Indianapolis, Indiana 46256
317-845-8821

Treasurer's Report

Below is a financial statement for the IKC's first year. Although we've had our lean times, we finished the year with over \$500 in our account for future projects. Seventy-one percent of our receipts have been used to directly support cave conservation goals. Twenty-three percent are unused. Only six percent was used for administrative expenses. This means that of a member's \$25 dues, only \$1.50 was spent on indirect conservation expenses. IKC members and supporters can be confident that their donations are not wasted!

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes
in Fund Balance for the Period Ending December 31, 1987

Receipts

Donations - Unrestricted	\$1028.70	
Donations - Restricted to Shaft Cave	175.00	
Total Donations		\$1203.70
Membership Dues - 1986		850.00
Membership Dues - 1987		150.00
Sale of Bat Pictures		203.88
Interest		25.43
Total Receipts		2428.01

Expenditures

Grotto Cave Fence	\$1146.71
Shaft Cave Gate Maintenance	161.14
Shaft Cave Gate	123.77
Wayne's Cave Gate	116.32
Bat Pictures	65.25
Wayne's Cave Gate Maintenance	52.92
Postage	46.00
Miscellaneous	33.50
Trash Removal - Wayne's	32.00
Fee to Amend Articles of Incorporation	26.00
Signs at Caves	19.83
Membership Cards	17.85
Lockbox Rental	12.00
American Cave Conservation Association Dues	10.00
Grotto Cave Fence Maintenance	8.96
Total Expenditures	1872.65
Excess to Fund Balance	555.36
Fund Balance, 2/6/86	-0-
Fund Balance, 12/31/86	\$555.36

During 1986 we received several generous donations. Major financial support was received from:

National Speleological Society	\$300
Richmond Area Speleological Society	\$250
Tom Rea	\$200
Keith Dunlap	\$175
Mid-Hoosier Grotto	\$ 99

As important as these donations have been, the IKC couldn't have accomplished a thing without the muscle power of cavers. It's hard to give up weekends to spend time working...even if it is to protect caves. The IKC is equally indebted to these folks!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

Access to the Hancock property (Shaft, Coon, and Grotto Caves plus access to Salamander) has changed. Please read the following article.

Land Status Changes in the Garrison Chapel Area By Bill Wilson

Coon, Grotto, and Shaft caves are popular novice caves in the Garrison Chapel area, Monroe County, Indiana. These three caves occur on a single tract of property, measuring approximately 480 acres, owned by the heirs of Hugh Hancock. For many years access to these caves was unrestricted because the heirs were elderly, absentee owners. The management situation has changed drastically in the last two years. As a result, it appears that the period of owner disinterest has ended, and cavers will have to work with the owners to maintain access to the caves.

In January, 1985, the executrix of the Hancock estate gave power of attorney to her nephew, Marc Hancock who lives near Evansville, Indiana. Mr. Hancock is a young, no-nonsense business man who views the caves mainly as a nuisance and a liability problem (see a copy of his letter to the BIG elsewhere in this issue). He began to commercially exploit the property by sell the timber in mid 1985. In December, 1985, Mr. Hancock leased the caves to Bill Wilson who was interested in protecting the cave resources such as colonies of endangered bats. Later the lease was transfer to the Indiana Karst Conservancy which was incorporated in February, 1986.

The Conservancy attempted to manage the three caves in a variety of ways. Coon remains in a natural condition. A chain link fence was built around the entrance to Grotto Caves to protect a colony of endangered Indiana bats. Both caves are closed from September 1 to May 1 for the bats. Shaft Cave was gated to protect inadequately prepared visitors from the 75 foot deep pit entrance and to help reduce Mr. Hancock's concerns about liability. The gate was philosophically unpopular with some organized cavers and even more unpopular with locals that vandalized the gate frequently.

The timber was cut in the fall of 1986, after which Mr. Hancock sold the tree tops to Steven Pope of Bloomington. Mr. Pope immediately began cutting up the tops and selling it for firewood. He had repeated vandalism to his equipment left on the property, and thus posted the property and vigorously began prosecuting unauthorized visitors for trespassing, with Mr. Hancock's full blessing. Mr. Pope is fully aware of the IKC's legal rights to grant permission to visit the caves on the property and has thus far been cooperative. However, because he needs a way to tell "the good guys from the bad guys", he requested that we issue some form of letter to be carried onto the property, to verify our permission. We have done so, and the letter is available from the cave patrons and grotto liaisons (an IKC membership card is also acceptable. Note: we do not want to discourage members from checking on the cave entrances when they are in the area, just don't abuse our rights and above all, act "professional" while on the property!). Also a reminder to cavers that plan on entering the caves, they must still sign a liability waiver before hand and notify the appropriate contact.

Access problems will not end when Mr. Pope is finished cutting firewood. Mr. Hancock has asked a near by residence to act as a caretaker and to build a gate across the pull-off area along Spicer Lane. Hancock intends to have the caretaker continue calling the sheriff and have trespassers arrested. Eventually Mr. Hancock expects to inherit or buy the property so cavers should be prepared to work with him for many years to come.

The Indiana Karst Conservancy has tried to manage Coon, Grotto, and Shaft caves for Mr. Hancock in exchange for regular access. The gating of Shaft has been unpopular and unsuccessful, so the management plans are being reconsidered. The Conservancy is in a difficult situation having to satisfy conflicting goals. The owners' representative wants to minimize their liabilities and other concerns (best done by closing the property and the caves to everyone), while many members of the caving community want full unrestricted access. The IKC is hoping some middle of the road compromise is acceptable. The important point to remember is that the owners hold all the cards, and the cavers must live by the owners wishes.

It seems unlikely that Mr. Hancock will change his mind about prosecuting trespassers on the property. The current process of issuing letters of permission to be on the property may seem like a hassle, but considering the alternatives of closing the caves completely is an even harder pill to swallow. Had the IKC not previously established it relationship with Mr. Hancock, the property would have most certainly been closed to everyone right now!

As a final observation, the recent access changes to the Hancock property is just another example of what may be considered as the changing views of landowners (past examples include Eilers and Showcase and future examples may include Budda, Wells, and Sullivans). Access to caves is not a "God given right", it is a privilege that must always be respected and never taken for granted.

IKC/GROTTO AGREEMENTS

Perhaps the biggest criticism the IKC received in its first year of existence was its inconvenient access procedures to the caves it manages. Having all access granted thru one person had its advantages, but the caving community voiced their opinion that a better system was necessary. After input from various cavers and grottos, a Letter of Agreement was drafted to be signed by participating grottos. The agreement acknowledges the mutual conservation concerns the signing organizations have and clearly states the responsibilities required of both. Each grotto will select a liaison to administer access for their members. The IKC will supply the grotto liaisons with the proper permission forms, keys, and full authority to arrange visitation.

The Letter of Agreement was distributed to five Indiana Grottos. Thus far four grottos have signed the agreement including the Bloomington Indiana Grotto (liaison: Mike Miessen), the Northern Indiana Grotto (Angie Manon), the Evansville Metropolitan Grotto (Ernie Payne) and the Mid-Hoosier Grotto (Jeff Cody). While full implementation of this new access procedure has just started, the results so far have been very positive. There will surely be some adjustments as problems arise and it is hoped that all those involved will have patience and make suggestion on how to make the system even better.

Other NSS grottos that are interested in being considered for a similar agreement should contact a Board Member for more information.

IKC QUARTERLY MEETING - DECEMBER 10, 1986

Director present: Tom Rea
Cindy Riley
Keith Dunlap
Glenn Lemasters

Members present: Jim Wolford, Kathy Hornaday, Chris Blackwell,
Suzie Mroz, Scott Fee, Bill Goshen, Lynn Miller,
Jeff Cody, Mike Miessen, Steve Reesman, Dave Haun

Visitors present: at least ten that signed the sheet

This was the first publicized meeting since the March meeting. The purpose was for feedback from the caving community. The minutes are as follows:

- 1) Introductions were made and the purpose of the meeting given.
- 2) Current news:
 - a) Update of activities at Shaft cave where given. The gate was vandalized once again, lasting only ten days this time.
 - b) Correspondence:
 - 1) Letter from Karl Pitts, rebuttal of recent letters sent out by Dunlap and Haun.
 - 2) Letter from Marc Hancock to the BIG asking for their assistance. The BIG responded.
 - 3) Letter from Ernie Payne.
 - 4) Letter from IRS. The IKC has been determined to qualify as a non-profit organization. Members expenses are tax deductible.
 - c) The IKC has applied for NSS Conservancy status. This will add creditability plus allow us to more easily obtain grants from the NSS.
 - d) The DNR will be conducting a bat count in February. The IKC has volunteered to help. Persons interested in assisting should contact Dunlap.
- 3) Treasurer's Report. The IKC has spent approximately \$1500 on projects this past year. The current balance is approximately zero until next year's dues are collected.
- 4) Tax advice. It was stated that donations and membership dues should be paid before December 31 to take advantage of 1986 tax rules. Next year, donations are not tax deductible unless you itemize. Also last chance to purchase copies of the "Bacardi bat".
- 5) Membership services. Members were solicited as to their views on how well they were being informed. Several felt they did not know what was going on. Suggestions were made to have quarterly public meetings, have Directors meeting announced in advanced, and minutes of all meetings published in the newsletter. Most felt the IKC Update was worth while and was their main source of keeping them informed.
- 6) Update on current projects:
 - a) Dunlap summarize status of Grotto. So far the fence was doing the job and there has been very little vandalism.

- b) Dunlap gave his observations on Coon. Visitation has been minimized by posting the property, removing the log ladders, and recent logging.
 - c) Scott Fee explained recent vandalism. Discussion of new approaches were given with several comments from the floor. It was felt that it was best not to spend additional moneys repairing the gate at this time. Several felt that an inexpensive fence should be tried and Bloomington cavers volunteered to help with the erection.
 - d) Tom Rea gave a brief summary of visitation going to Wayne's, most are non-NSS cavers. Tom is distributing NSS literature with each contact and states that it is an effective novice education tool. The gate on Wayne's has been repaired and is now functional.
 - e) Shiloh update was given by Cindy Riley. Very few cavers have taken advantage of our limited access. A trip was planned for the Dec 14th.
- 7) IKC public relations. Comments were solicited on how to improve our image, discourage bad PR, and generally gain acceptance among Indiana cavers. Bloomington cavers felt it was important to minimize gating activities and work on more "worth while" projects. Several felt that membership dues were too high and that lowers dues would generate more support.
- 8) Grotto Letter of Agreements. Drafts of the IKC/NSS Grotto agreements were distributed. Each grotto present was to review draft and make suggestions. Comments should be forwarded to Dunlap by late December so Letter can be distributed ASAP. All agreed that this Agreement was a giant step in the right direction to solving many of the past problems the IKC has endured.
- 9) Future projects:
- a) Spring Mill Caves. Noel has been in correspondence with the head of the State Park system. Project may include surveying caves, resource inventories, and Radon studies. May also have input on their plans to implement permit system for cavers. A project such as this could greatly improve the image of the IKC and more importantly, the image of cavers in the eyes of State agencies.
 - b) Gory Hole. The IKC can obtain access and a lease on Gory Hole, but conditions of the agreement include installing a gate over the entrance. There is a possibility that the owner might accept a fence. Most felt that a fence would be acceptable and a gate was not. Dave Haun has arranged a trip to Gory Hole on December 20th.
 - c) Doghill-Donnehue. Discussion was made as to the closing of the culvert entrance to this cave to reduce novice visitation and thus vandalism. Several thought permanent closing was acceptable, others wanted a gate, and still others did not want it closed. Before anything could be done, the Indiana DOT must be contacted. Kevin Komisarck volunteered to do this. There was also concerns that endangered Southeastern bats used the cave during the summer and any actions might be detrimental.
 - d) Another bat project. Because of the perceived success at Grotto, several felt another bat project would be worth while. Possibilities include Coon, Ray's, or something in cooperation with the DNR. It was felt that a project could be determined after this winter's bat count was completed.

In addition to the above minutes, the following article, reprinted from the January issue of the NIG's Michiana Caver, is included to inform those interested of what took place at this important meeting. Most that attended, left enlightened and with a more positive attitude about the IKC.

Notes From An IKC Meeting
By Angie Manon

Steve Reesman, Mike Sunderman, and I recently attended an Indiana Karst Conservancy meeting in Indianapolis. As many of you know, much controversy has surrounded the IKC lately. I thought a brief summary of the meeting may help to clear up some of the misunderstandings and ill will toward the conservancy.

The meeting was held to accomplish three basic items: to inform the public about the activities of the IKC; to find out if the IKC is functioning according to the wishes of its members, and if not what changes are desired; and to help improve the relations between various grottos and the IKC. (Four grottos were represented - Mid-Hoosier Grotto, BIG, NIG, and CIG).

First, reports were given concerning the various caves that have been leased by the IKC. The gating of Shaft Cave has proven unsuccessful thanks to some person(s) who believes they are making some sort of statement by continually vandalizing the gate. Do they actually believe that the pit should be accessible at their convenience, leaving it wide open to novices also, despite the fact that there have been numerous accidents, some even resulting in death? Apparently they do, because approximately 50 manhours have been invested in the Shaft gate repair and maintenance.

Some people at the meeting believe that a fence, rather than a gate should be installed. While I agree that a fence will stop the kids in the area from accidentally entering the pit; it will not provide a means for excluding non-vertical cavers from dropping Shaft. This was illustrated after the latest act of vandalism. The door was removed, and one week later a rescue was held for people who made it to the bottom, unequipped with ascending gear.

The structures at other caves leased by the IKC seem to be serving their purpose. The fence erected to protect the bats at Grotto is still intact; however, there is evidence of a few people climbing it. The gate on Waynes has been effective. Responsible cavers have been obtaining permission to enter, while trash and vandalism have been kept to a minimum. Tom Rea has received favorable comments from visitors on the cave's appearance. The logs have been removed from the entrance to Coon's Cave. Access to Shiloh Cave, formerly closed, can be arranged through Marty Atherton.

Future Projects:

1. Dave Haun is attempting to lease Gory Hole. The owner still has not agreed to any visitation policy. Installing a gate or fence to control visitation was discussed. People at the meeting would prefer to see a fence installed. However, due to lack of IKC funds, this project cannot financially take place.

2. Noel Sloan is IKC's representative to Spring Mill State Park. He is attempting to open the caves for non-guided trips to responsible cavers. Anyone wishing to be on this committee is asked to contact him.
3. Recently, the Culvert Entrance to Doghill-Donohue has seen an increase in traffic and a corresponding amount of vandalism. Solutions for ending the vandalism were discussed. Some people were heavily in favor of permanently sealing the Culvert Entrance because two other entrances to the system do exist. Personally, I would rather see it have controlled access. I realize that gating will pose a larger expense, but it would be a shame to permanently close such a unique entrance. Also, the Culvert-to-Donohue-River-Entrance provides an excellent through-trip for any caver. If the IKC gains control of the Culvert Entrance, I would like to see it managed in a similar manner to that of other IKC leased caves.

The general question of what expectations members had and whether or not they were well-informed was addressed. The majority of the members would like to see quarterly meetings. They also want to receive minutes from all the director's meeting. The latest IKC Update served as a good and informative source of current IKC news and events.

The IKC is working to eliminate the hostility and misunderstandings that have developed between the conservancy and a local grotto. They would like to develop a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect with all grottos. To begin a good working relationship, the IKC has proposed an agreement to each Indiana and various other grottos. Through the current policy, all cavers must contact the cave patron and sign a release form before access is granted.

The new policy will allow each grotto to appoint one person to be the IKC liaison. The liaison will be given a key to the entrance of every cave that the conservancy controls. He will be responsible for ascertaining that everyone who enters the cave has signed a release form. The grotto liaison will screen prospective visitors, and will keep a record of those who have visited the caves. The individual grottos must vote to accept this new policy and sign a letter of agreement with the IKC.

I believe that this new policy will help to gain acceptance from those who are currently opposed to the IKC. I'm glad to see that they are trying to make access readily available to responsible cavers, while restricting potential vandalism. Our grotto should support their goal towards cave conservation. We will also benefit through their efforts to open caves that were formerly closed to the public. The IKC and our grotto have mutual goals and interests and progress is being made toward attaining them.

DIRECTORS MEETING - JANUARY 16, 1987

Director present: Tom Rea
Cindy Riley
Keith Dunlap

Members present: Noel Sloan
Kathy Hornaday
Dean Myers

The meeting was rather lengthy with numerous items on the agenda:

- 1) Explanation of the changes on the Hancock property (Mr. Pope having people arrested for trespassing). Dunlap will draft a Letter of Permission form which will include a liability release for all parties. Forms will go to patrons and liaisons. Dunlap will handle correspondence with Mr. Pope.
- 2) Letter of agreement. The final draft of the agreement (after reviewed and revised by the BIG and NIG) was approved. The agreement will be initially offered to the BIG, NIG, CIG, EMG, and MHG. Dunlap will handle drafting the cover letters and mail as soon as possible. A grotto liaison "package" needs to be put together and mailed.
- 3) Election meeting date. Several alternative dates were proposed with March 28th selected. Dunlap will handle arrangements with the War Memorial. Starting time will be 10 am.
- 4) Slate of officers. Each director had solicited nominees. Slate for mailed ballot will be. Keith Dunlap - President, Kathy Hornaday - Sec., Cindy Riley - Treas., Noel Sloan, Tom Rea, Marty Atherton, Dave Haun, Lynn Miller, George Brutchen - Directors. Wilson will handle mailing ballots, meeting announcement, and letter to solicit membership renewal/summary of accomplishments.
- 5) Spring Mill Project. Noel summarized the minutes of the Spring Mill project meeting held on January 13th. Project would be to study Radon content in the caves, survey of the caves, and resource inventory. The project would be used as fund raiser for other projects, plus establish the IKC with state agencies.
- 6) DNR meeting. Dunlap summarized his meeting with Scott Johnson, the new non-game biologist for the DNR. Scott was taken to the entrances of several area caves including Coon and Grotto. The meeting was very positive and the IKC might become involved in the bat population count to be conducted sometime in February.
- 7) Education Chairman position. Suzie Mroz has inquired about the position. The Directors will offer her the position if she is still interested.
- 8) Incident at Wayne's. Dunlap summarized the recent incident with a group being detained after the lock was sabotaged. It was decided that bolt cutters should be placed inside to prevent this from happening again. Tom Rea will purchase and place in cave.

- 9) Discussion as to the approach of controlling the copying of keys now that there will be many keys floating around. Restricted blanks are expensive and it was decided that it would be cheaper to rotate locks occasionally.
- 10) Filing annual corporate report with State. No one was sure of what was required. Tom Rea would check with State and complete what ever was necessary.
- 11) Membership expiration. It was again discussed as to whether to have membership expire on their anniversary dates of when the members joined, or try to pro-rate dues to expire on March 31st of each year. Both would require a better method of bookkeeping than we currently have. It was decided to try to pro-rate renewals to expire in March.
- 12) By-law changes. Several inconsistencies and ambiguities currently exist. Also must require Directors to be NSS members to become an NSS Conservancy. It was also suggested that we increase the minimum number of directors and decrease the number of members per director in order to have a broader governing base. Dunlap will draft proposed changes and distribute thirty days in advance. Short meeting will be held before March CIG meeting to vote on changes. This will allow more directors to be elected at March 28th meeting.
- 13) American Cave Conservation Association. As a member, the IKC receives a quarterly newsletter. It was decided to donate the newsletter to the CIG library.
- 14) Shaft Cave. The gate has not been effective. The BIG strongly suggest a fence and has volunteered to help in the construction. It was decided that a fence would be tried if Mr. Hancock approves of the idea. Dunlap would have Wilson contact Hancock and determine if a fence is acceptable.
- 15) Devil's Graveyard. The NIG has unofficially inquired if the IKC would be interested in taking over the maintenance of the gate on Devil's Graveyard. It was decided that we would should they decide to relinquish that responsibility.
- 16) Wells' Cave. It was reported that the owner of Wells' cave, Shirley Wells, has had some trouble recently and might be thinking about closing this cave. Tom Rea would check on the situation and volunteer our assistance if it would improve matters.

DIRECTORS MEETING - MARCH 4, 1987

Director present: Tom Rea
Cindy Riley
Keith Dunlap
Glenn Lemasters

There was a very short (5 minute) directors meeting held on March 4th. The sole purpose of the meeting was to vote on the previously distributed by-law changes. There were nine changes suggested, all of them accepted. The majority of the changes were to clear up inconsistencies and ambiguities that existed. Also the requirements that Board Members must be NSS members was added such that the IKC may qualify to become an NSS conservancy. The other major change was to increase the minimum number of Board Members (including officers) from five to seven, with directors added at the rate of one for every ten members above the minimum (it was one for every twenty members).

The revised by-laws will be published in the next issue of the IKC Update or a copy may be obtained from one of the directors.

THE MAIL BAG...

The IKC receives correspondence from various individuals, organizations, and agencies, some of which merit sharing with the membership. The first letter reprinted is from Ernie Payne, a long time caver from the Evansville area. The second letter is from the US Fish & Wildlife Agency which learned of our bat conservation efforts through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Also attached is our return correspondence. The third letter was from Marc Hancock (owner of Coon, Shaft, and Grotto Caves) asking for assistance from the Bloomington Indiana Grotto. The BIG response is also attached.

IKC members also received a letter authored by Karl Pitts and signed by several Bloomington cavers. The letter was a rebuttal to Keith Dunlap's and Dave Haun's response to the "BIG's" original letter. The letter contained some valid comments which were seriously taken into consideration. However, it also contained some damaging comments, which in light of the improved relations between the two organizations, it was felt (by both sides) that it was best that the letter not be re-published (too much "dirty laundry" between the two groups has already been aired).

December 5, 1986

Dear Keith:

I've read the November, 1986, "IKC Update" and the letters, etc. I am not able to attend the December 10th General Meeting. So I'm expressing my views to you so you will have some more input if needed for the meeting.

I too "cut my teeth" in 1959 on Buckner's, Wayne, Grotto, and in 1960, Salamander-Crystal Cave (I was on the first BIG trip there and have slides I took in 1960 when the cave was more beautiful than today). Off and on over the years I've returned to Monroe County caves. Then I began to hear of IKC and gated caves. At first, like some of the letter writers, I felt either shut out or at least it would be a hassle to make long distance arrangements, get a lock combination, etc. So I too hesitated to join IKC.

Then after a trip to Salamander last June, we walked to Shaft to see the new gate we had heard of. I was immediately impressed and could see that this really was a way of reducing the accidents that had occurred over the years.

So I soon sent my check after Cave Capers (I thought IKC would openly have a membership stand there) to show that much support without really knowing much more about IKC.

Now with someone's suggestion that keys be available to the grottos for the use of their members, I would expect that local grotto members would feel included in the IKC efforts. Not only would more cavers join IKC, but at least be supportive and no organized caver could then say they were excluded.

The Evansville grotto does a lot of caving in western and central Kentucky. We are trusted with a key to one cave and have unlimited access to several other caves which are otherwise off limits to others. This certainly makes us feel welcome and we take extra interest and concern for them.

Likewise, if the Indiana grottos had keys, then real interest and support for conversation efforts should bloom.

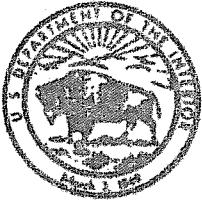
Sincerely,



Ernie Payne, NSS 4996
1025 Thompson Avenue
Evansville, IN 47715
(Home) 812-477-7043
(Work) 812-428-2959

Member:

NSS, EMG, CKKC,
ACCA, OVR, IKC.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Federal Building, Fort Snelling
Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111

IN REPLY REFER TO:

AE/OES

December 8, 1986

Mr. R. Keith Dunlap
7823 Hunters Path
Indianapolis, IN 46214

Dear Mr. Dunlap:

We have recently learned of the Indiana Karst Conservancy's actions to protect Grotto and Coon's Caves from vandalism. We understand IKC has obtained leases for both these caves and erected a fence around Grotto Cave. We are, of course, interested in the status of these, and other, caves because of their importance to species found on the Federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants.

Our limited staff and funding prevent us from initiating all of the conservation actions which are needed to adequately protect species like the Indiana bat. For this reason we are pleased to see private conservation-oriented organizations step in and use independent funding and/or "grass roots" support to pick up where we have left off.

We applaud your protection efforts at Grotto and Coon's, but would like to know more about your future plans for these, and other, Indiana bat caves in Indiana. We would also appreciate being placed on your mailing list for your newsletter.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Refsnider
Staff Biologist
Division of Endangered
Species

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY

PO Box 461
Plainfield, IN 46168
December 29th, 1986

Ronald L. Refsnider
Fish & Wildlife Service
Federal Building, Fort Snelling
Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111
Re: AE/OES

Dear Ron,

Thank you for your recent correspondence and positive comments pertaining to our organization, the Indiana Karst Conservancy. We are a young organization that is still trying to establish our exact directions and priorities, but our principle goals are to do what we can to conserve and protect the caves of Indiana and their related resources, including bats. In our first year, we have been formally involved in formulating management plans for six caves, two of which have a substantial bat population. The fence erected around Grotto Cave has thus far been very effective in restricting winter traffic and hopefully will increase the survivability of the bats that hibernate there (including 4200 Indiana bats per the last population count). We have also initiated efforts to minimize visitation to Coon Cave (800+ Indiana bats) by posting signs and "patrolling" which has been surprisingly successful. Response to our bat protection activities have very positive from the organized caving community, local and national caving organizations, other conservation groups, and government agencies.

In the year ahead we hope to initiate other bat related projects. Although we currently have not selected any specific caves, we have several in mind. Final selection will be dependent upon this winter's population count and our ability to obtain the proper funding. We have also volunteered to help the Indiana Department of Natural Resources with some of their proposed bat related projects, should they need our assistance.

We would also welcome any suggestions or information that you feel would be helpful to our organization in implementing future projects. I have read some material published by Robert Currie of your agency, and Merlin Tuttle of Bat Conservation International, but I'm sure there is much more information available.

As you requested, we have added your office to our mailing list. Our newsletter, the IKC Update, is published approximately quarterly. Our latest issue is enclosed of which pages 15-16, and 23 may be of interest to you. Also enclosed is a separate article on Grotto Cave (that was inadvertently omitted from that issue).

Again, thank you for your interest in our activities. Sincerely,



Keith Dunlap
IKC Director

cc: IKC Board Members, Chris Iverson (DNR)

Marc Hancock
8344 Poplar Drive
Newburgh, IN 47630
November 26, 1986

Kate Siebert
2631 Garrison Chapel Road
Bloomington, IN 47401

Dear Kate:

My relatives own the property north and west of Spicer Lane in Monroe County where Coons, Grotto, and Shaft caves are located. I am managing the property and have been given power-of-attorney over it. Last year I leased the caves to the Indiana Karst Conservancy, whose directors offered to help protect the caves and reduce liability exposure by controlling access to the caves. I fully support the conservation actions taken by the Conservancy.

It has come to my attention that the gate on Shaft Cave has been broken repeatedly, even though signs are posted about how to obtain access to the cave. Shaft Cave is a hazard which my attorney has urged me to close permanently. I am concerned that if the organized caving community cannot help me manage the cave and reduce my liability then I will have to close the cave physically.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to ask other members of the Bloomington Indiana Grotto to help maintain and protect the gate of Shaft Cave and fence around Grotto Cave. Persons who vandalize the gate or fence are trespassers who are destroying private property. I will prosecute anyone who is caught breaking into the caves.

I know that cavers from the Bloomington area have enjoyed visiting Coons, Grotto and Shaft caves for many years. Increasing visitation and litigation make it necessary to establish a ceiling on the use of the caves. The caves are not being closed; they are simply being managed in a way that strikes the best balance between visitation, protection of the caves, and reduction of liability exposure. I am sure you will agree that landowners have the right to decide how to manage their caves. Respect for the rights of the landowners will help keep the caves open for cavers.

Sincerely,



Marc Hancock

Ms. Kate Siebert
2631 Garrison Chapel Road
Bloomington, Indiana 47401
(812) 825-2424

1 December, 1986

Mr. Marc Hancock
8344 Poplar Drive
Newburgh, Indiana 47630

Dear Mr. Hancock:

I thought that, as Chair of the Bloomington Indiana Grotto, I would respond to your letter of October 26 and fill you in on some of the discussion which has continued at our monthly meetings since Bill Wilson announced the formation of the Indiana Karst Conservancy almost one year ago.

While there has been considerable debate over the philosophies and methods of the Conservancy, I know that such differences are not of real concern to you. I think it fair to say the the (organized) cavers of the Bloomington Grotto recognize the difficult position you are in. I doubt that there is one among us who would willingly accept similar circumstance. Many Grotto members are land and business owners themselves (one is part owner of Blue Springs Caverns in Bedford) and fully understand the liabilities you are faced with. We too assume some responsibility each time we participate in a cave rescue; we could, in theory, be held accountable if someone is dissatisfied with the results of our efforts. Landowners, and individuals, do have the right to manage their own responsibilities as they choose.

Should you decide to close Shaft Cave physically, I must (sadly) say that it will be neither the first nor the last cave to be. It is a fact that Bloomington cavers have grown to accept, having more than once been confronted with landowners whose anger is the result of rude and/or careless "cavers" we later learn were college students, local delinquents, or residents of surrounding counties or neighboring states. These "cavers" are beyond the reach of the Grotto, though I doubt we would have much to do with them in any case. I cannot ask them to cooperate, as they would not, and they make up the great majority of speleo-traffic in the Garrison Chapel Valley. Grotto members rarely, if ever, visit these caves anymore, first because we do not wish to be "guilty by association," and second because the caves have been so violated that they no longer have any appeal to experienced cavers.

As I am sure you have heard, some members of the Bloomington Grotto do have strong differences with some members of the Indiana Karst Conservancy, their objectives, and their methods; these differences are beyond the scope of this letter, for several reasons. They are, in some respects, personal (I believe), and, because I do not share all of them, I doubt I could present them in an objective light. If I tried, it would involve more pages than you or I care to wade through, and, as I have said, they are of no concern to you, I am sure.

Others find it more productive to seek a common ground and cooperate along those lines. To that end, one of the Grotto members who has joined the Conservancy has already recruited the help of a dozen or more others and arranged a schedule of volunteers to help check the Shaft gate on a daily basis during the month of December. It remains to be seen whether all will carry out their good intentions, but it is encouraging to hear.

Many others among us are concerned about the surface erosion occurring near the cave entrances, as evidenced by the enclosed letter from Garre Conner. We have, as a group, discussed his suggestions about re-seeding. If it is agreeable with you, we should like to pursue this subject further, and soon. If the heavy timbering traffic has finished, we offer our assistance to you and the Conservancy in doing what we might this season, such as trenching, terracing, or grading in the vicinity of the entrances. Long range plans might be better saved for awhile. If you, or the Conservancy, care to respond to this, we can make arrangements when we hear from you.

It would seem that we agree on many points (and perhaps others as well), and look forward to continued contact with you. The Bloomington Grotto meets on the second Thursday of each month, in the Geology building on the IU campus at 7:30 p.m., and we would welcome you should you ever find yourself in the area at such a time. I remain

Sincerely yours,

Kate Siebert

Kate Siebert, Chair
Bloomington Indiana Grotto

MORE MAIL...

In the February issue of the NSS News, Mike Dyas capsulized some of the previous problems that have occurred in the Bloomington area and commented on some of the philosophical differences that exist between cavers. Mike's review was not received well among Bloomington cavers because it included speculations that "organized" cavers, implicating BIG members, were doing the gate vandalism. As such, a letter to Doug and Glenda Rhodes, the NSS News Editors, was drafted expressing their desire to have the following reply published.

BIG REPLIES

The "organized cavers" of Bloomington, as affiliates of NSS, BIG, CIG, NCRC, CRF, ICS (Indiana Cave Survey), IUSC (Indiana University Spelunking Club), and IKC are dismayed over the one-sided review of cave management in the Garrison Chapel Valley which appeared in the February Mike Dyas Digest. In response, we wish to point out the following:

1) The phrase "organized cavers with political motives" implicates all of us in the vandalism of the gates. We would like to see evidence to back up this accusation. In lieu of that, we would like an apology.

2) A Letter of Agreement between the IKC and BIG signed 23 January 1987 has improved the climate considerably. This agreement provides for local access to keys and enlists the BIG's assistance in maintaining security. The BIG has also offered (Nov. 86) assistance in fence construction and erosion control.

The BIG Newsletter appears annually; our March 1987 issue will contain a more detailed account of our views. Hopefully Dyas will give us equal time.

Bloomington's Organized Cavers

Kate Siebert

Kate Siebert
Chair, BIG

IN THE MEDIA...

The IKC has been getting its share of ink in the printed media recently. There was a short article in the "Conservation Dispatch" section of December's NSS News pertaining to our fencing of Grotto Cave to protect the Indiana bats. In January's NSS News, a short paragraph about Shaft Cave was included in "Dyas Digest," and In February's NSS News there were two mentions (the second quite lengthy) in "Dyas Digest," plus a paragraph in the "Conservation Dispatch Section. We also expect to have a full length article published in the Conservation Quarterly (NSS conservation Section's Newsletter) and possibly a similar article in the NSS News. We are also planning on submitting material to Bats Conservation International for possible mention in the their newsletter BATS.

We also receive routine coverage in the CIG Newsletter and the NIG's Michiana Caver. Other Grotto's are encouraged to reprint material from the IKC Update in their own newsletter and write original material about the IKC (hopefully positive in nature).

MORE LETTER TAG

Unfortunately the "battle of the pens" did not die after Karl's letter. Bill Wilson felt compelled to further reply to Karl, expressing his frustrations on the Garrison Chapel controversy. Bill's personal letter was sent only to a select few and was not intended to express the view point of any one except himself. The letter was admittedly pointed and critical, again prolonging mutual progress of two organizations for the sake of personal differences of a few.

Again it was thought that the battle was over, but Kevin Komisarick, as editor of the usually highly respected Bloomington Indiana Grotto Newsletter, took liberties in the March 1987 publication to take a few more jabs under the auspices of the BIG. While the editorial was promised to express and promote the BIG's conservation point of view, Kevin's apparent personal vendetta against Wilson totally obscured whatever message he was trying to convey.

It is hoped that this is now the end of these games and that both groups can listen to one and another, work together, and be proud to be associated with one and the other!

ORGANIZED CONSERVATION

The IKC has strong ties to the NSS (and in fact has applied to be recognized as an NSS Conservancy). Most of our members are also NSS members or at least support the philosophies of the NSS. The NSS has grown over the years to the point that it has become many things to many cavers. While conservation is deeply ingrained into NSS policies, it sometimes does not receive the emphasis or financial support that some of us would like to see (understandably, many members prefer directly tangible benefits such as a fancy newsletter as opposed to that money being spent on a cave conservation project that they will never visit). This is primarily the reason that over the last decade there have been many "local" conservation organizations, such as ourselves, created.

Many of our members may not be aware of another national cave organization that exists, the American Cave Conservation Association (ACCA). The ACCA is a relatively small organization (approximately 400 members, of which the IKC is one), but they have put together a very strong list of directors that have a lot of contacts and the means of getting things done. And as their name implies, this organization is strictly dedicated to preserving our cave resources and hopefully it will be much more effective by narrowing and concentrating their focus. Their main function is to serve in an advisory role to help other organizations and cave owners protect caves, and to promote the educational aspect of cave conservation. They originally were based in the Richmond, VA area, but just recently moved to their new headquarters in Horse Cave, KY. I highly recommend that our members look into joining the ACCA. They are an ambitious organization (perhaps too ambitious) that could use the support.

The following excerpt is from a commentary published in the ACCA's newsletter, American Caves (Autumn 86). It echoes the observation that larger organizations tend to become less effective while much can be accomplished by small organizations or even a few individuals.

Caves and karst or karst-like geographies are found throughout nearly thirty percent of the United States. Our past ignorance in treating this out-of-sight resource with an out-of-mind attitude has begun to demand retribution. More important than broken speleothems, litter or graffiti (sic), water quality, essential to life, is being destroyed in most of America's active karst regions. Several spelean species, a measure of the health of our world, have already been driven to distinction or its edge.

We have, in the past, turned to "big brother" for solutions and have only recently begin (sic) to realize that the "Wizard of Oz" is dead. The problems accelerate while the hierarchy slows down. Strangled by its own red tape it discourages progress to protect the status quo; gobbles up resources for the sake of growth and returns less and less to those who feed it.

On the bright side, we are seeing a rapid rise in the number of independent grassroots conservation organizations. This is a healthy indication that people are no longer willing to wait for the pyramid to move. I have learned from experience that traditional organizations cannot be depended upon to accomplish as much as one or two determined people. By the time the structure realizes that there is actually a problem and tries to move, the problem has usually grown ten-fold. We've learned that the pyramid can't move, let alone catch up with the problems.

INDIANA BAT CENSUS

by Keith Dunlap

The main purpose of the Indiana Karst Conservancy is to protect caves and their resources. And one of the main resources of caves, and perhaps the only renewable one, is their unique biological life, of which the bat is probably the most often noted. There are several species of bats that utilize Indiana caves, of which one, the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) is classified as federally endangered.

In order to evaluate the survivability of this species, the known population must be periodically estimated. The census is performed cooperatively on the federal and state levels. The federal US Fish and Wildlife Agency is responsible for counting Indiana bats every other winter in caves classified as Priority I (30,000 bats or more) of which there are two caves in Indiana (Twin Domes and Batwing). The remaining population counts are the responsibilities of state agencies which in Indiana, is administered by the non-game wildlife division of the DNR. The non-priority I count is now also performed every other winter (but out of phase with the federal count), and since 1981 has primarily been performed by Virgil Brack. Virgil originally became involved with the count because of his graduate work at Purdue. He has since received his PhD and is now employed as a senior biologist for Wapora, Inc., an environmental consulting firm in Cincinnati, OH. Virgil was again contracted this winter to perform the count in fourteen caves, which was eventually expanded to eighteen caves (all known caves to contain Indiana bats excluding the two priority I caves).

What does this have to do with the IKC? Well, as most of you know, the IKC manages two caves, Grotto and Coon, that serve as hibernacula for Indiana bats. Previous to the count, I had been in communication with Chris Iverson and Scott Johnson, the two state non-game biologists for the DNR. They had expressed their interest in our bat conservation activities and I had volunteered our organization to help in whatever way possible. Scott passed my name to Virgil, and Virgil in return contacted me and solicited help on a couple of caves that require vertical experience. I in turn asked for volunteers and arranged for several of our members to participate in the count. Of the eighteen caves surveyed, IKC members were directly or indirectly involved in helping on, or arranging access to ten, and would have helped on several other had there not been scheduling conflicts.

Summarizing the bat count activities, on February 9th, I accompanied Virgil, his assistant, his former graduate advisor, and Scott Johnson into Coon, Grotto, Salamander, and Buckner. The next day I, lead Virgil and his assistant into Brinegar's (we were also going to go to Ray's except Virgil's truck was broken into at the barn with all their money and credit cards stolen along with Virgil's briefcase). February 25-28th, Virgil visited Ray's, Clifty, Wyandotte, Saltpeter (Crawford Co.), Wildcat (Crawford Co.), Saltpeter (Monroe Co.), another closed Monroe Co. cave, King, River, and Endless caves. And on March 7th, Virgil visited Boone Cave, while Steve Collins, George Brutchin, Angie Manon and myself did the census in Parker's Pit (as far back as the e1 room). Later that afternoon, Virgil, George, Angie, Dave Haun, and myself finished up the bat count in Jughole. Of the caves surveyed, Brinegar's, the closed Monroe Co. cave, King, and Jughole had not previously been counted (the first three were suggested by the IKC as possible hibernacula). Also Boone had

not been counted since 1962 (Virgil had been denied permission previous years, but thru our contacts with Bloomington cavers, arrangements were secured) and Parker's had only been estimated by observations of another caver in 1982.

The bottom line of course, is what are the numbers and how have they changed from the last count? Well, the specific numbers will have to wait until they are reported to the DNR, but in general, the total population is up a significant amount. The new order of populated caves with over 100 Indiana bats are: 1) Twin Domes, 2) Batwing, 3) Ray's, 4) Wyandotte, 5) Jughole (previously unknown as a hibernaculum), 6) Grotto (previously 5th), 7) Coon (previously 6th), 8) Parker's (previously only estimated), 9) Saltpeter (Crawford Co.), 10) Buckner, and 11) Clifty. Four other caves, Saltpeter (Monroe Co.), Brinegar's, River, and Endless were found to have at least one Indiana bat. Thus almost the entire population of *Sodalis* in Indiana still hibernate in approximately one dozen caves, with over 80% of that population in the top three.

For the two caves that the IKC manages, I can say that the population is up significantly in Coon, and down slightly in Grotto. The drop in Grotto could be attributed on the fence erected around the entrance, but in Virgil's opinion, the fence was the appropriate action to take and he did not seem concern about long term negative effects. Virgil will hopefully make further recommendations on what protection actions should be initiated at some of the other caves, and perhaps the IKC can implement some of these recommendations and assist the State on others. Also having the IKC assist the DNR on the population count was a very positive step in improving past image of cavers in the eyes of some State agencies (the Spring Mill Project will be another step forward).

By the next issue of the IKC Update, the actual numbers should be public and possibly a more detailed article can be published.

INCOME TAX REMINDER

IKC members and other cavers that worked on or donated money towards IKC projects are reminded that they should take advantage of the 1986 tax laws and offset some of their expenses. The IKC has been recognized by the IRS as a non-profit organization, thus qualifying any IKC related expenses as a tax deductible contribution. The 1986 tax laws allows 100% of the contributions to be deducted even if the individual does not itemize (this is changed for 1987). Besides direct cash donations and membership dues, out of pocket expenses while working on IKC projects such as meals and gas, or twelve cents per mile to and from the project can be claimed. While the amount may not be significant, cavers should not pass up this legitimate opportunity to save a little on their taxes. Please contact an IKC director for any further assistance.

[editors note: the following article was originally written last fall for publication in the last issue of the IKC Update, however, it was inadvertently left out. Much of the article is still pertinent and it is important to give recognition to those that volunteered their time and effort on our most ambitious project of the past year, so it is being printed now in a slightly edited form]

GROTTO AND COON CAVE PROJECTS by Keith Dunlap

As most of the members of the IKC know, the Conservancy last year obtained a lease on the property the contains Shaft, Grotto, and Coon Caves. Being our first caves to manage, there has been some experimenting and a lot of learning and I'm sure there are many more surprises in store for us. The activities at Shaft were covered in the last issue and updated elsewhere in this issue. Grotto and Coon are discussed in this article because they have a common reason for needing protection, the bats.

Most conscientious cavers understand the importance of the avoiding caves that serve as bat hibernacula. However, there are many uninformed cavers that are ignorant of the reasons they should stay out and many more "party cavers" that couldn't care less. Soon after obtaining the lease on the property, the IKC erected large signs (fabricated and lettered by Don Miller) on the trails to both caves stating that the they were closed during the winter and the reasons why. We then evaluated their effectiveness (or should I say ineffectiveness!). From this first year "experiment", we concluded that "soft sell" signs did not significantly reduce traffic, with both caves being visited almost every weekend. It was apparent that something more needed to be done. Early last spring, the IKC directors voted to escalate efforts to protect the hibernating bats. Uncertain as to the "best" approach to implement and with limited funds, the IKC formulated different management plans for each cave.

The management plan for Coon was the more "passive" of the two. We would heavily post the entrance, remove the tree ladders from the entrance pit (and keep them removed), and prosecute anyone ignoring the hibernaculum closure.

The management plan for Grotto was much more aggressive. Grotto received preferential treatment because it is used by a much larger bat population. In addition to the common pipistrelles, Grotto Cave contains the fifth largest colony of the endangered Indiana Bat (*Myotis Sodalis*) in Indiana*. We also felt that our efforts would be better directed toward Grotto because of the two, it is the more traveled (due of its proximity to Shaft and Salamander Caves, its more "challenging" image, and its "non-vertical" entrance).

* The census conducted in the winter of 1984-85 by Virgil Brack, approximated that there were 4,200 Indiana Bats in residence. Only Twin Domes, Batwing, Ray's, and Wyandotte Cave contain larger populations of Indiana Bats. In comparison, Coon Cave had less than one thousand Indiana Bats (still a substantial population). A new population count is scheduled to be conducted this winter.

The management method decided upon for Grotto was the erection of a fence around the entrance. This alternative was selected after consulting with several bat authorities. A fence, compared to a gate, is less effective, more vulnerable to vandalism, and more costly; but it has a substantial benefit in that it has very minimal risks of bats rejection. We realized that our efforts would not keep everyone out, but by limiting the winter traffic to a minimum, the bat's should have a much better survival rate. Additionally, the reduced traffic will slow down vandalism in the cave.

Preparation for the fencing project started in April with a survey of the area around the entrance conducted by Bill Wilson and myself. From this information, the dimensions of the enclosure were determined and a project cost estimated. The task of arranging funding was next. Bill drafted and successfully submitted detailed grant proposals to the NSS Conservation Grant Committee (\$150) and the Richmond Area Speleological Society (\$250). Additional funding was obtained from a donation from the Mid-Hoosier Grotto (\$100) and the fund raising raffle at Capers (\$200). The remaining expenses (approximately \$450) would be covered out of the IKC general budget.

The actual physical work on this project started in late July with the digging of "test" holes, assuring adequate soil depth for the fence posts (this could have been a real problem given the exposed limestone around the entrance). The logistics of the projects were coming together. A construction date was then scheduled, manpower solicited, materials purchased, and material transportation arranged. It was now time for the real work to begin.

On the first day of construction (August 23), manpower was lacking early, but just as the first "crew" was burning out, new volunteers arrived. Everyone got their turn at operating a post hole digger (thirteen holes to the required thirty inch depth). Glenn Lemasters supervised the mixing and pouring of the concrete (approximately 2400 pound worth) used to anchor the posts. The final accomplishment of the day was transporting the remainder of the fence materials to the entrance (no easy task considering the fabric came in rolls weighing over 250 pound each).

Several members camped on the property overnight and got a early start the next morning assembling the top and bottom rails. Again manpower was scarce early, but by the time the fabric was ready to be attached, there was more than sufficient help. The only significant difficulty encountered the second day was placing the fabric on the two sloping sides. After some debating, and trial and erroring, we learned the finer points of bias cutting fence fabric. By the time we had properly secured the fabric to the framing, it was late enough to call it a day (we still had maintenance work to perform on the Shaft gate and a large truckload of trash to load up at Wayne's). Volunteers helping one or both days include: Jerry Bailey, Chris Baker, Nancie Baker, Chris Blackwell, George Brutchen, Jeff Cody, Steve Collins, Tem & Kathy Hornaday, Glenn Lemasters, Michael Lorange, Angie Manon, Jane & Lynn Miller, Suzie Mroz, Drew Packman, Tom Rea, Steve Reesman, Cindy & Rusty Riley, Tina Shirk, Susan Sweeney, Jim Wolford, myself, and a couple of other (there were sixteen IKC members present).

The following Saturday, George Brutchen, Jim Wolford, and myself finished the fence by stretching the barb wire around the top, installing the fence gate, posting signs, and completing numerous other "loose ends".

While the fence construction is "complete", the fight has just begun! The fence will be a high maintenance item. Also as stated previously, we are being realistic and do not expect the fence to be 100% effective by itself (this has been proven by evidence of several incidences of "climbers" going over the top); but if we can reduce traffic significant, we will term the project successful. Our final recourse is to prosecute anyone caught inside the fence. It is a shame that we may have to resort to such "hardball" tactics as these, but our only defense is to show intruders that we are serious about protecting the bats and THEIR caves. [Note: should any IKC members witness a violation, they may act as legal agents of the Conservancy, the lease holder, and summons a county sheriff to initially arrest the violators for trespassing (much easier to prove and prosecute; other charges can be added later). It is not necessary for the sheriff to witness the violation, photographs or sworn statements by the witnesses are sufficient. In any case, physical descriptions of each individual and their license plate number should be noted. And remember, there is up to a \$500 reward (and maybe more) should the violators be convicted. Contact me for more details.]

The summer access policy for Grotto has yet to be finalized. Current thoughts are to have the keys available in the grottos or to have the fence unlocked completely. Members and non-members alike are encouraged to voice their opinions on this subject. There has also not been a patron appointed to Grotto. If anyone is interested, contact a director for consideration.

Summarizing, the fencing project at Grotto has been the IKC's most ambitious and expensive project to date. We hope the membership feels that their money (\$1100) was well spent. I would again like to thank everyone that volunteered their time to help. This project could not have been undertaken without it (had we paid to have the fence "professionally" installed, it would have amounted to several thousand dollars more).

SHILOH CAVE UPDATE

Not much has happened with Shiloh Cave since the last trip in December, 1986. At this time, the access policy remains as follows: Anyone wanting to visit Shiloh should contact Marty Atherton, who will in turn contact the caretaker of Shiloh Cave in Bedford. A date for the trip (which must be lead by the caretaker, who has a rather strict schedule of availability) will be determined. Up to six cavers, including either Marty Atherton or Keith Dunlap, may make the trip. Previous trips have lasted about three or four hours.

In the six months or so that this arrangement has existed, only one person has contacted Marty about scheduling a trip (a caver from Windy City Grotto). Consequently, there is no real reason to take steps to negotiate a more liberal access agreement at this time, nor reopen the quarry (lower) entrance. Shiloh is a beautiful cave, and is an excellent choice for a beginner's trip.

Anyone interested in visiting Shiloh may contact: Marty Atherton, 1405 E. Hoefgen Street, Indpls, IN 46203 or call (317) 783-2194.

SHAFT CAVE UPDATE

By Keith Dunlap

As was reported in the last Update, the problems of keeping a gate on Shaft Cave has been less than successful. Briefly summarizing, since August there have been at least ten distinct acts of vandalism, probably by the same person or persons. The original gate was vandalized several times then finally sawed off. A second "improved" gate was installed in early October and was subsequently sawed off two weeks later. A rescue occurred out of Shaft one week later, (Nov. 4th.) A third, "more improved" gate was constructed and then installed by Keith Dunlap, Dave Haun, Tom Hornaday, and Dennis Cox on November 29th.

Mike Mieson from the BIG organized a "gate patrol" to check the gate daily, with the theory that it would take more than one day to saw off the gate and we might be able to catch the culprits. Unfortunately, the gate lasted only ten days. This time it was not sawed off but the perpetrator(s) had figured out the hinge system, thus being able to remove the gate once they got it opened. (An interesting side note to their antics is that after removing the third gate, they reinstalled the sawed-off-hinged section of the second gate that they had previously stolen. It is unclear as to why they did this, but speculating, they may have been trying to keep us from knowing that they had figured out the hinge system, thus allowing them to remove more gates in the future before we redesign our system, or they may have just blatantly wanted us to know that it was the same individuals doing all the vandalism.) Since that time we have not attempted to reinstall another gate, but that hasn't deterred the gate vandals as they have returned repeatedly, chiseling on the concrete and trying to pry the frame out of place.

At the present time we have decided to not spend any more IKC funds on regating. We do have an obligation to the property owner and also to the NSS, (since they have paid for the original gate), to regulate visitation for safety and conservation reasons. At the suggestion of the BIG and in concurrence with many of our members, we will attempt to install and maintain a fence around the entrance to Shaft. This should minimize the liability of the owner, (he has agreed to a fence, but would still prefer a gate), and protect anyone from accidentally falling in. The exact details of the fence has not been finalized, but it will probably be of an inexpensive design, with ease of maintenance a high priority. Should the fence prove ineffective, another gate may be attempted.

INCIDENT AT WAYNE'S CAVE

by Keith Dunlap

On December 27th a Cave Explorer Post from Terre Haute entered Wayne's Cave. The group consisted of three leaders, each experienced cavers (and NSS members), two other adults, and five Scouts ages sixteen to eighteen, each with various degrees of caving experience. The group had made the proper arrangements with the IKC and had the key to the gate.

The group did a substantial part of the cave, then did some cleanup work near Camp I (removing names from walls, collecting trash, etc.). They then headed out, returning to the entrance without incident, except for being tired from their physical eight hour trip. When they tried to exit, they found that the lock on the gate had been sabotaged with an X-acto knife blade broken off and cemented into the lock cylinder. After working on the lock for a period of time, it was apparent that they would probably have to wait for outside assistance. Several of the group were wet and showed signs of hypothermia, so they moved back into a dryer and warmer section of Old Wayne's and implemented "survival" tactics. Group tents were constructed out of plastic bags and space blankets. They had some food, but very little water. One of the leaders, because of physical exhaustion and emotional strain, complained of severe chest pains, stomach cramps, and leg cramps. The other two leaders got the third comforted, and everyone else stabilized. The two then took turns trying to attract help (yelling and signaling with flashlights) and working on the lock. They got the blade extracted, but still could not get the key inserted all the way. Finally, after four hours, they got the lock open. Everyone exited the cave without assistance and recovered quickly.

The group itself did not do anything wrong except possibly a lack of emergency food and water. They also had possibly allowed themselves too much time (15 hours) before assistance was to be called. Although they were only detained for four hours, the seriousness of the incident should not be discounted. Hypothermia and the problems experienced by the one leader resulted in a serious situation that could have ended in death(s).

The IKC considered the possibility of just such an incident happening (it is virtually impossible to prevent) and includes precautions in their release form. It was suggested by one of the "trapped" leaders, that the IKC should also store some emergency supplies and tools inside the cave, and this will be strongly considered.

One can only speculate as to the motives and intent of the person or persons that sabotaged the lock. It seems that they had to know there were cavers in Wayne's because of their vehicles parked along the road. I hope this sabotaging was done out of pure stupidity and that the perpetrators had not considered the serious human impact of their actions. Whatever their reasons were (or are), cavers going to Wayne's, or any other cave with a gate, should be aware that it could happen again and prepare accordingly.

NOTE: This malicious act has very substantial and serious legal criminal ramifications. Anyone that knows anything about this incident should contact an IKC director. There is a \$1000 REWARD for information leading to the conviction of those responsible.

FURTHER INCIDENTS AT WAYNE'S CAVE

Since this December incident there have been two more instances of the lock on Wayne's gate being sabotaged. The first occurred in mid-February when no one was in the cave, but prevented a group from entering on a planned trip. Mike Miessen and Dave Everton removed the lock and replaced it. The second incident, on the weekend of March 7th, again trapped a group inside the cave. They had spent twelve hours exploring only to find toothpicks jammed in the lock. They had to wait an additional eight hours before being "rescued".

Steps are being taken to hopefully prevent other groups from being trapped. A bolt cutter has been placed in the cave to allow the lock to be cut off if necessary. But still be forewarned before going to Wayne's. Arrangements should always be made with someone on the outside that can check on your status should you not return by a predetermined time. It could also be monetarily advantageous (by collecting the reward) for someone to "stake out" the gate when cavers are inside or just park your car by the road and wait in the woods with a camera (a nice spring time activity).

DUNBAR/WOODARD CAVE SYSTEM UPDATE

As previously announced, the IKC last May signed a lease with the owners of the Woodard entrance to the Dunbar Cave System in Montgomery County, TN. The lease was signed to strengthen the Northern Indiana Grotto's authority in managing the cave entrance. The NIG has invested nearly ten years worth of work in the cave system and was responsible for installing a gate last March (partially funded by the NSS) after vandals had damaged some formations the previous year. To date, the gate has not been breached and only minor damage has been sustained to the concrete structure. The NIG also posted the property for "NO DUMPING" and installed a chain across the access road. These actions have been very successful in discouraging additional dumping into the already trash filled entrance sinkhole. Cavers wishing to visit the Dunbar/Woodard System should contact the NIG for more details on their access policies.

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY: 650 Alton, Indianapolis, IN 46222

I would like to help the IKC conserve Indiana's unique caves and limestone areas.

Enclosed is \$_____ for the following:

\$_____ donation for current IKC projects

\$_____ for IKC membership at \$25 per year (one year from time of membership)

_____ I know an area worthy of protection. Please contact me.

_____ I would like to volunteer to help.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Suggestions for other interested people:

Make checks payable to the Indiana Karst Conservancy at the address above. All dues and gifts are fully Federal income tax deductible. The IRS considers a cancelled check sufficient receipt. If you wish a separate receipt sent, check here ☐.

names and addresses please

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BATS NEED FRIENDS



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Plainfield, IN. 46168