

IKC UPDATE

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INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, INC

PO Box 2401, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401

ikc.caves.org

Affiliated with the National Speleological Society



The Indiana Karst Conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and preservation of caves and karst features in Indiana and other areas of the world. The Conservancy encourages research and promotes education related to karst and its proper, environmentally compatible use.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President
Jerry Lewis (2009)
(812) 280-8052
LewisBioConsult@aol.com

Secretary
James Adams (2009)
(317) 882-3724
JKAdams@aol.com

Treasurer
Keith Dunlap (2009)
(317) 882-5420
Keith.Dunlap@juno.com

Directors
Bruce Bowman (2011)
(317) 539-2753
Bruce.Bowman@tds.net

Dave Haun (2009)
(317) 781-1996
DEHcave@onet.net

Don Ingle (2010)
(812) 847-4406
D.Ingle@insightbb.com

Kriste Lindberg (2010)
(812) 339-7210
Kriste.Lindberg@gmail.com

Steve Lockwood (2010)
(812) 944-8097
SKNALockwood@aol.com

Bob Sergesketter (2011)
(812) 482-5517

Bruce Silvers (2009)
(260) 416-4197
BruceSilvers@verizon.net

Karen Silvers (2009)
(260) 249-0924
BentBat@hotmail.com

Tom Sollman (2009)
(812) 753-4953
Sollman@juno.com

Bob Vandeventer (2011)
(317) 888-4501
VandeventerBob@netzero.net

Richard Vernier (2011)
(812) 385-5058
rsav1@juno.com

Jamie Winner (2010)
(812) 367-1602
JAWinner@gmail.com

COMMITTEES / CHAIRPERSON

Education/Outreach
Kriste Lindberg
(see E-Board list)

Web Technologies
Bruce Bowman
(see E-Board list)

IKC Update Editor/Publisher
Keith Dunlap
(see E-Board list)

Hoosier National Forest
Steve Lockwood
(see E-board list)

Buddha Property
George Cesnik
(812) 339-2143
GeoCesnik@yahoo.com

Orangeville Rise Property
Steve Lockwood
(see E-board list)

Robinson Ladder Property
John Benton
(812) 389-2248
JBenton@fullnet.com

Sullivan Property
Keith Dunlap
(see E-Board list)

Wayne Property
Robert Sollman
(812) 753-4953
SollmanCaver@hotmail.com

Indian Creek CE
Richard Newton
(812) 365-2495
Cedarman@netpointe.com

GROTTOES & LIAISONS

Bloomington Indiana Grotto*
Dave Everton
(812) 824-4380

Central Indiana Grotto*
Keith Dunlap
(317) 882-5420

Dayton Underground Grotto
Mike Hood
(937) 252-2978

Eastern Indiana Grotto
Brian Leavell
(765) 552-7619

Evansville Metro Grotto*
Ernie Payne
(812) 477-7043

Harrison-Crawford Grotto
Dave Black
(812) 951-3886

Near Normal Grotto*
Ralph Sawyer
(309) 822-0109

Northern Indiana Grotto*
Bruce Silvers
(260) 416-4197

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Mark Kraus
(574) 295-6673

Sub-Urban Chicago Grotto
Gary Gibula
(630) 393-6746

Western Indiana Grotto*
Doug Hanna
(812) 208-4609

Windy City Grotto
Jack Wood
(773) 728-9773

*grottos with liaison agreements

MANAGED CAVES / PATRONS

Buddha & Shaft caves
Jeff Cody
(317) 888-9898
codyjpme@att.net

Coon & Grotto caves
Keith Dunlap
(317) 882-5420
Keith.Dunlap@juno.com

Robinson Ladder Cave
John Benton
(812) 389-2248
JBenton@fullnet.com

Shiloh Cave
James Adams
(317) 882-3724
JKAdams@aol.com

Suicide Cave
Ronnie Burns
(812) 883-7400
RBurns@blueriver.net

Sullivan Cave
Bob Vandeventer
(see E-Board list)

Wayne Cave
Dave Everton
(812) 824-4380
DEverton@indiana.edu

Cover: A very healthy Cave salamander (*Eurcea lucifuga*) in Swarren Cave, Harrison County, Indiana. Photo taken by Dave Everton, July, 2008.



QUARTERLY MEETING REMINDER
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th, 5:00 PM EDT
FERDINAND STATE FOREST, INDIANA
HOME OF JAMIE & CARLA WINNER

The quarterly meetings are for the elected Board to conduct business and for our members and other interested persons to have an open forum to talk about caves and karst conservation and related topics. Past, present, and future IKC projects are discussed to solicit comments and input from our members and the caving community as a whole. The meetings are informal, and everyone is encouraged to attend and participate. The IKC Board wants your input.

Preliminary Agenda Items: Brief recap of the last quarter's activities; Buddha kiosk; 2009 Buddha trees; Cave River Valley ownership change; Indian Creek Conservation Easement; Petition to change oil & gas drilling regulations in karst areas; Treasurer's report; Land acquisition activities; and more...

Meeting directions: The meeting will be at the Manager's Residence in Ferdinand State Forest (see page 19 for map).

From I-64: Take exit #63 which is the exit for Ferdinand, Jasper, Holiday World, SR 162, etc. Turn north and go through the town of Ferdinand. Continue for about 2 more miles until you come to SR 264. Turn right (east) onto SR 264 and follow it about 5 miles, at which point the highway ends at the State Forest property entrance.

From the north: Take SR 37 south to SR 64 at English. Turn right (west) onto 64 and follow it for about 20 miles. You will be looking for a brown sign for Ferdinand State Forest that points to the left (south). This will put you on CR 600 East. Follow this for about 3 miles until you reach the property entrance.

Once you get to the property entrance, follow the signs, which will refer to the house as either the "managers" residence or the "custodians" residence. If anyone wants to camp it is \$8.00 per night. All the camping at Ferdinand is primitive. The group camp has been reserved for IKC or people can camp in the regular camping sites. If you get lost, call (812) 367-1602.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

September 20 – IKC Quarterly Meeting, Ferdinand State Forest (see above)

September 20 – Lost River Tour (Orleans)

October 4/5 – Buckner Restoration Work Weekend, Bloomington

October 18/19 – Final Buckner Restoration Work Weekend, Bloomington

For more information on the Indiana Karst Conservancy, visit our website at <http://www.caves.org/conservancy/ikc> or write to our PO box. Membership to the IKC is open to anyone interested in cave and karst conservation. Annual dues are \$15. Please see inside the back cover for a membership application form or to make a much-appreciated donation. Donations can also be made by credit card using the donation button located on our website's home page.

The *IKC Update*, distributed for free, is published quarterly for members and other interested parties. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep the membership and caving community informed of IKC activities and other news related to cave/karst conservation. Submission of original or reprinted articles for publication is encouraged.

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RAMBLINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT...

I find in contemplating “Rambling” that I am perhaps a man of few words when it comes to such things. My friends are smirking as they read this, thinking about one episode or another where they



were trying to get me to shut up as I jabber endlessly about some obscure bug. So perhaps a few words of ramble on the subject of how bugs might play a role in the IKC...

In October conservationists and natural lands managers from across the country will be meeting in Nashville, Tennessee for the Natural Areas Conference. The Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy has asked me to give a presentation on “Managing Subterranean Biodiversity”. My talk will center around work that Salisa and I are doing to bioinventory caves owned by the IKC.

In sampling these caves, we learn the inhabitants at each site, from common flies to rare cave beetles. So far, we have completed biological surveys of Robinson Ladder, Buddha, and Sullivan caves, and are currently working in Wayne. One goal is that the next time the IKC has an opportunity to purchase a property, and someone asks “Are there any good bugs in the cave?”, we will know what species are already protected in our preserves.

Looking at the bigger picture, in Indiana we have sampled about 600 caves, perhaps 1 in 4 of those known in the state. The fauna is diverse and

there are segments of it that still have little protection. When we have completed the biological surveys of the IKC properties, the possibility of targeting acquisitions at least in part to protect assemblages of cave animals becomes a reality.

Cave properties have been purchased by the IKC over the years based on a number of “resource values”, like geologic, biologic, historic, or recreational. Obviously a big part of a decision as large as purchasing a property is the cost, and the comfort of the fit with our organization. As our knowledge base grows so will our ability to make informed acquisition choices.

The IKC is certainly not operating in a void and many caves are owned by the state (e.g., in IDNR state forests, state parks, nature preserves); federal lands (e.g., HNF and USFWS – Big Oaks NWR); cities (like Leonard Springs Park, Bloomington); and even commercial caves (e.g., Bluespring Caverns, Marengo). A large mosaic of caves and their faunas are protected to a greater or lesser extent, and the IKC is in an excellent position to be an integral part of the overall conservation picture.

To date our sampling has revealed that there are several species for which the only known localities are in IKC preserves. For examples, there are two endemic species of the small red cave beetles that cavers sometimes encounter known only from Buddha and Wayne caves. And dozens of other species of animals of varying rarity, ranging from site endemics to the widespread Cave salamander (see front cover) are protected on our preserves.

The Nature Conservancy is at the forefront of natural lands conservation in Indiana, frequently acting as a middle man in purchasing properties like Cave River Valley, then looking for an adoptive parent to manage the sites – but that’s a pot to stir in a future ramble.

Jerry Lewis

NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ Cave River Valley changed ownership on August 1st and effective immediately will be closed until next year. The interim owner is The Nature Conservancy, but the property will eventually be transferred to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. For more details, see the article starting on page 14.
- ❑ The Buckner Cave Graffiti Removal project is about to wrap up. The final sand-blasting weekend will be October 4/5 and volunteers are always welcome. Participants have found the project very rewarding

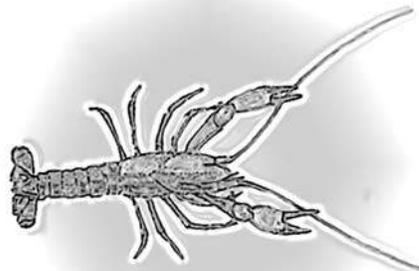


through the visual accomplishment being gained. Recent efforts have concentrated in the Volcano Passage section of the cave. On October 18/19 cavers are being solicited to remove all the equipment from the cave, then clean, organize, inventory, and prepare everything to be returned to the Peppersauce Cave Conservation Project. This will be a large undertaking. There will be both below and above-ground work. The weather is generally still reasonable for camping, and that will be available, but please notify Bill Baus of your intentions. Bill would also appreciate it if you would notify him that you will be coming so he can plan manpower. Bill can be contacted at Baus@alumni.indiana.edu or 812-339-1210.

- ❑ This year has been very good for growing trees. The 1,000 trees planted at the Buddha Karst Nature Preserve in April had ideal conditions early on with nearly 100% survival (with the exception of a few seedlings lost to deer browsing). In June, herbicide was hand applied around each tree to burn back the fescue that can out-compete for moisture and sunlight. Conditions have been dry in August, but most trees appear to be weathering the drought. This is the first year we have planted Black Walnut (see photo) and it appears to be a very hearty species. Other recent observations include the persimmon trees planted in 2002 fruiting for the first time and some of the Ash trees planted in 2003 exceeding ten foot in height.



- ❑ Each year, the National Speleological Society honors its members at their national convention (this year it was in Lake City, FL). For 2008, IKC members Jerry Lewis and Patti Cummings were designated NSS Fellows. Also, Dr Lewis was honored with the NSS Science Award for his many years spent in the field of bio-speleology. It should also be noted that IKC member Tom Rea was just elected the Executive Vice-President of the NSS, and that member Bill Tozer has just “retired” as the NSS President after serving for three years in that position (plus six years before that as a NSS Director).
- ❑ While it seems like this year’s Lost River public tours have just come to an end (actually the last one is September 20th), the Lost River Conservation Association have already set the dates for their 2009 trips. They are April 4th, June 6th, and September 19th. Smaller groups can arrange special trips by contacting Dee Slater at (317) 253-6951.
- ❑ Just a reminder that the IKC can earn cash simply by our members using the GoodSearch internet search engine (powered by Yahoo). Just go to www.goodsearch.com and enter the “IKC” as your charity. You can also add GoodSearch to your browser’s menu bar so it’s even more convenient. To earn donations even faster, if you shop on-line, enter your favorite shopping site through the GoodSearch portal (or go to www.goodshop.com) and a percentage of your purchase will automatically come back to the IKC. There are literally hundreds of participating merchants from Best Buy to Wal-Mart.



RED-HANDED VANDALS CAPTURED

by Patti Cummings

Buckner Cave, located on Dick Blenz's property in western Monroe County has been visited by a lot of people over the years, resulting in major damage and vandalism. However, for the past few years, there have been considerable efforts to reduce the traffic and to clean up the graffiti, in addition to the many trash clean-ups that have scoured up debris in the cave. Much progress has been made, primarily due to the concerted efforts of the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy (RBNC) and the volunteer efforts of many cavers. One very active group of loosely organized cavers, calling themselves the Buckner Restoration Project, has worked many hours on the property. Led at first by Dave Everton, and now by Bill Baus, the Buckner Restoration Project has been the custodian of the Peppersauce Cave Conservancy sand-blasting equipment for the last 2½ years. Regularly scheduled weekends are spent cleaning years of damage and spray-painted graffiti off the cave walls. Other clean-up work includes cleaning up the spent sand-blasting materials and mud-washing areas that cannot be cleaned without damaging the cave itself.

In preparation for just such a weekend, Bill Baus and some Chicago cavers were at the cave setting up equipment and carrying supplies into the cave on July 17th. While in the cave, the cavers smelled paint fumes and reported that news to Dick Blenz upon their exit. Bill Baus found and picked up a cash-register receipt from a local big-

box store for two cans of spray paint. Dick Blenz had seen a car parked along-side the road just past Domicile Pit and was concerned someone was trespassing at Trap Door Cave. Bill went down and checked the entrance of Trap Door and found that it was cobwebbed over, so he determined that no one had entered recently.

Dick Blenz telephoned Sam Frushour, one of the board members of the RBNC, and described the situation. In turn, Sam contacted Patti Cummings, another board member. Together, they drove out to Buckner, contacting the Monroe County Sheriff's Department en route. Once on the property, Sam and Patti split up; Sam going to talk to Dick about the situation, and Patti staying with the trespassers' car, to make sure they did not sneak off if they evaded Sam on the trail. While Sam was up at the house with Dick, the Sheriff's Department responded. Sam came down and spoke with the officers, who were concerned that they were being asked to go into the cave. Sam assured them that he would be going into the cave, and a couple of cavers who had permission to be on the property reported that the smell of paint was strong around the T-room. The police suggested that since they had the license plate of the car, they could contact the perpetrators later, perhaps the next day. Patti suggested that the police be called back to the property as soon as the trespassers were located so that everything could be taken care of all at once. The police left and the two

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Nicholas Gillespe, one of the four convicted vandals, posing by his "artwork" in Buckner Cave. His spray paint graffiti was applied to a recently sand-blasted walls.

photos by Sam Frushour

cavers, needing to make a previous appointment, followed soon after, leaving Sam in the cave and Patti at the car, with Dick as back-up at the house.

Sam entered Buckner Cave but did not have to go very far before he heard the party of vandals struggling their way back through the crawlway. So he backed out and waited for them in the entrance room, and caught a party of four men, accompanied by a small dog, emerging from the crawlway, still clutching the paint cans, now emptied, in their hands. Sam walked them part-way up the trail and when the four men attempted to leave the trail and go back through the brush to intersect where they had parked alongside the road leading up to Dick's gate, Sam let them know they needed to stay on the path. At that point, the four men began to realize they were not going to have the evening they had planned after tagging the cave. By the time they approached the car, they knew they were in trouble. Sam left the four with Patti at their car, and made his way back up the hill to call the police again and call them back out to the property.

While waiting for the police to return, Patti talked to the four men and got some information from them. All were young, one was 19, the other three 20. They had helmets, kneepads, and seemed to know enough about caving to find the cave. They claimed a friend of a friend had given them directions and told them how to get to the cave. They claimed they did not know it was restricted access or that they required permission to get in. At one point, they said they were told all they had to do

was sign in at the kiosk, but when questioned why they had circumvented even that courtesy by parking on the road, they had no answer. They were clearly lying and trying to talk their way out of trouble, promising to cause no further trouble, and wanting to leave. Patti pointed out to them that they needed to stick around to talk to the police, and since their front tire on their car had gone flat while they were in the cave, they needed to tend to that problem as well (*must have be karma – ed*). After a short discussion with Patti, they decided it was safest for them to wait for the police. Sam returned from calling the police and more discussion was held, mostly trying to figure out what was going through their heads to make them think it was okay to trespass onto private property and spray paint a cave. One lie that they kept repeating was that they “only had the paint to make arrows to find the way out with”. Eventually, they admitted to each writing his initials or name in the cave. They confessed this to the sheriffs' deputies who responded to the call as well.

The Monroe County Sheriffs' Department responded quickly and effectively, taking the men's information and writing them citations on criminal trespass (class D misdemeanor) and cave vandalism (class A misdemeanor), and explained to them the gravity of their situation. They were given information on when to report to court for their initial hearings and lectured about the stupidity of their actions. One of the officers was older, and had had experiences with caving, and the free-for-

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Tristan Morton admiring his handy-work in Buckner Cave.

all that used to be the Buckner scene. That officer gave them the strongest lecture, discussing proper caving etiquette and safety procedures, even telling them that if they had gotten hurt trespassing in a cave, without permission or letting anyone know where they had gone, “By the time we found your bodies, you probably wouldn’t even stink anymore”. That seemed to get their attention. Sam was listed as the complainant on the police report and his information was taken as well, to be given to the prosecutor’s office the next day. The police officer also told the vandals that if they helped clean up their mess, it might go easier on them in court, so they took information on the clean-up being held the following Saturday.

On Saturday, bright and early, the four miscreants pulled up in a better car (no flat tires) than they had driven on the previous Thursday. They all got out, geared up, and waited for instructions. They were quiet, well-behaved, and worked hard all day removing a portion of their own graffiti and under the direction of Bill Baus. They also helped hang additional “NO TRESPASSING” signs around the property, including one on a tree just above the entrance. While in the cave, it was learned that they had not only written their initials and arrows, they had painted on gypsum crystals, sullied an area that had been previously cleaned left of the T-Room, and had written their names throughout the cave. It is estimated their damage will take over 100 man-hours to clean. Sam Frushour took pictures of their damage and of them working on the clean-up. After 8 hours non-stop with Bill and Sam, they were allowed to leave, and reminded to

attend their court hearing. Sam let them know he would be at their hearings with the photographs he had taken.

On the advice of Anmar Mirza, President of the RBNC, Patti contacted the local newspaper, to see if there could be a story on the incident, in order to provide some publicity of the crime and punishment. An interview was done over the phone, and the reporter did a passable job of relaying the information to the public. It is the hope the Anmar and the rest of the RBNC board that such publicity will put people on notice that Buckner is closed to the public without specific permission, and that there are serious consequences to ignoring the access requirements.

On the day of their initial hearing before the duty judge, Matt Sutton, Matt Stone, Tristan Morton, and Nicholas Gillespie all showed up to court, wearing their most worried looks. With them was one of the perpetrator’s equally worried mother. She approached Sam, who had a folder of the photographic evidence of their misdeeds, and thanked him for his efforts to try to get the “kids straightened out”. The four in turn approached the bench, pled guilty to their charges, and were given fines of \$360 apiece, 10 hours of community service to be served under the supervision of the RBNC, and were placed on probation for one year, as part of their plea agreement under the Monroe County Pre-Trial Diversion Program. While on probation, they cannot commit any more crimes, use or consume any alcohol or drugs, and are subject to periodic checks at the discretion of their probation officer. There are reporting and probation

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Matt Sutton pointing to his signature painted in orange on the freshly cleaned cave wall in Buckner.

fees, as well as court costs, to be paid on top of the criminal fines. Any failure to abide by the terms of the plea agreement can result in the revocation of their probation and they can be ordered to serve up to six months in jail under the A Misdemeanor charge of cave vandalism. It is expected they will attend the September 13/14 clean-up at Buckner to fulfill their community service requirement.

The Monroe County Prosecutor, Chris Gaal, contacted Patti Cummings sometime later and requested some feedback on the prosecution of the case. He was concerned that a stronger sentence should have been imposed, but because this was the first time that cave vandalism had been charged, the prosecutor handling the case has offered the standard plea deal. Mr Gaal is considering putting into place a policy of using a tougher plea agreement should there be future cases, and apologized to the caving community for the actions of the four miscreants. He was pleased that the

newspaper had covered the story (see below) and had also published an editorial piece on the crime, and felt that the community recognized that these four men had committed an act that was beyond typical graffiti and "tagging". It is hoped there will be no further incidents, but if there are, Monroe County stands ready to prosecute fully, and to impose stronger sanctions.

The culmination of the restoration project will be the clean up of equipment, inventory, and storage for transport, all set for the weekend of October 18/19. Many hands will be needed and all are welcome. A special thank-you dinner will be provided by the RBNC on site, and it is hoped that anyone who has attended or worked on the project will come for the last weekend and share a celebration of a project well-done. Although Buckner will never be restored to a pristine state, much graffiti has been cleaned off the walls of Buckner, thanks to the hard work of many.

Four people fined for defacing cave

Vandals caught in the act after other cavers smell paint, call police

by Macela Creps

Four people caught spray painting their initials on the wall of a Monroe County cave each will pay a \$300 fine and perform 10 hours of community service work to atone for defacing the cave.

Nicholas Gillespe, 19, of Bedford, and Bloomington residents Tristan Philip, 20, Matthew Sutton, 20, and Matthew Stone, 20, were each cited for criminal mischief and criminal trespass. On Thursday, they pleaded guilty and were entered in the pretrial diversion program. If they pay their fines, complete the community service work and stay out of trouble for a year, the charges will be dismissed and not remain on their records.

The foursome was caught inside Buckner Cave, in the western part of Monroe County, on July 16. Monroe County Deputy Steve Hale went to the cave after a person called police and reported he and some friends were exploring the cave when they smelled paint. After checking around, the group determined that others were inside, possibly painting the cave walls.

The caller told deputies he would wait at the scene to see who left the cave. At 9 pm, the caller advised he was talking to four people who had just walked out of the cave. When Hale arrived, he talked to Gillespe, Philip, Sutton and Stone. Police said two of the four had paint cans. At first the four said they used the paint to mark their way so they wouldn't get lost. Later, each admitted to painting initials on the cave walls.

Patti Cummings, a member of the Bloomington Indiana Grotto caving group, said the four men caused a lot of damage to the cave. Sam Frushour, another member of the group, went to the cave after hearing about the incident. Frushour was there when police arrived to cite the four men.

Cummings said people at the cave reported finding a car parked along the road. Believing someone might be in the cave, the group went in and smelled the paint fumes. Another person found a receipt for paint inside the cave.

"They painted it on crystals, too, on quartz crystals," Cummings said. "What they did permanently damages the cave."

The four young men were at the same cave last Saturday, attempting to clean up the mess left behind. Cummings said sandblasting can be used where it is environmentally appropriate. Wire brushes are also sometimes used. Unfortunately, sometimes there is nothing to do other than mud wash. Mud washing means using mud to cover the graffiti.

Even after eight hours of cleaning, Cummings said, there is still damage to clean up. She said the paint and its fumes are not only harmful to the cave, but to people and animals.

All the caves in Monroe County are on private property. Keeping the public out of them is important not only to local cave enthusiasts but to police, who called Frushour to thank him for his help. Cummings said police were quick to respond to the incident and were glad the local cave lovers were interested in keeping the public out.

"We're really pleased with the way the police responded," Cummings said.

Reprinted from the July 25th, 2008 issue of The Herald-Times. This article was also distributed by the AP.

IKC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

by Kriste Lindberg, Chairman

We are pleased to report that good progress has been made with our expanded education plan and collaboration with the NSS Environmental Education Committee/Project Underground. Items are being checked off one-by-one – the first four have already been accomplished – not bad for a plan that was just approved at the last IKC quarterly meeting! Below is a brief synopsis of the plan's time line:

- ☺ Appoint three regional coordinators
- ☺ Create an education web page on IKC web site
- ☺ Garner media coverage
- ☺ Set reporting procedures
- ☺ Gather traveling trunks (Project Underground activities, the inflatable cave, the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* cave life documentary, karst/groundwater model, and more)
- ☺ Employ a database to keep track of details
- ☺ Correlate programming to standards
- ☺ Attract more committee funding
- ☺ Engage in more outreach
- ☺ Conduct Project Underground Facilitator Training in Indiana
- ☺ Organize and host a Project Underground Board of Directors retreat

In more detail, we now have regional coordinators with Karen Silvers serving northern Indiana, Bob Vandeventer handling the central section of the State, and Don Ingle covering the south. The IKC Education and Outreach Committee web page is now available on our web site (ikc.caves.org). A newspaper article was recently published thanks to *The Herald-Times* (see page 13). A reporting procedures is set in place, including a form to fill out for each event that a coordinator hosts. This information will be used for reporting at meetings, article writing, judging of effectiveness, and more. Since our last report, we have:

- ☺ Conducted a Cave Critter Creations, Monroe County Public Library, Bloomington, June 26. We are almost being seen as “a regular” at this library! This is the second “CCC” we have done with them and they are wanting more. Both times, we attract over 50 participants. Not

bad! The word is catching on (we also showed the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* video there this past spring).

- ☺ Attended the Environmental Education Symposium, Indianapolis, June 26-27. This was the first-ever event of its type in Indiana and attracted over 100 participants. Bob Vandeventer and I attended. It and related organizations, including the Environmental Education Association of Indiana, promise to be valuable, additional partners in our karst education pursuits. You will hear more about this liaison over time.
- ☺ Quarries: Old and New, Bedford area, Bloomington Parks and Recreation, June 28. This “sold out” tour of four area quarries, co-hosted by Carroll Ritter of the Sycamore Land Trust, was a *huge* success. We visited Empire Quarry (historic dimension stone), Evans Quarry (current dimension stone), Rogers Quarry (crushed stone), and the historic Dishman Quarry (whetstone – see below). It has garnered much local interest on limestone and related subjects, including historic building and cemetery tours. We are already meeting to do more with SLT in the future. A “history of limestone” tour will be offered in the Winter/Spring 2009 Bloom-



ington Parks and Recreation Program Guide.

- © Caves Among Us: Leonard Springs Nature Park Tour, Bloomington Parks and Recreation, July 16. These tours, given quarterly, introduce visitors to LSNP, a park focusing on cave and karst as well as water resources. The mood of the park changes with the seasons. In the summer, it is quite popular. This particular trip attracted 23 attendees. The Fall tour should do well, too!
- © 2008 NSS Convention, Lake City, Florida, August 11-15 (Education Day, August 14). We continue to collaborate at the local, state, and national levels. At this year's convention, we announced our expanded education plan during a presentation at the Conservation Session, "Project Underground: Westward Ho!", on a poster that was part of the IKC display in the main hallway (see page 12), and it was covered during Education Day on Thursday. Thanks to Columbia High School for hosting the Project Underground workshop portion of the event. On the way down, we met with a new contact in Georgia to discuss modeling some of our outreach after a NASA-based program which engages "space ambassadors". Naturally, we are considering, "cave ambassadors". More on this later.
- © Spring Mill State Park "Gone Caving!" Third Annual Event, Mitchell, August 23 – 24. This was the third time we helped the IDNR coordinate this event! And, fortunately, the weather held out once again. It attracted over 100 participants including a dozen who were treated to a "wild" cave trip to Sullivan Cave. This year's offerings also included an all-day educational cave filmfest (of course, including

the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest*), a cave art contest with prizes for three age groups, a concert by cave ballad singer/songwriter Paul Ash, a cave rescue demonstration, and of course, Project Underground activities. We are looking forward to doing it again next year.

- © Our Central Coordinator, Bob Vandeventer, accepted a request to show the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* video to the Friends of Turkey Run (State Park) and presented it in context with Indiana karst, in general, including how water flows through the ground via sinkholes. There were fifteen very enthusiastic members with lots of good questions! Some were even interested in the seeing the video again, and possibly purchasing it... Go Bob!

Our next IKC Education and Outreach Committee meeting will be held one hour before the next IKC Fall quarterly meeting, at 4:00 PM in the Ferdinand State Forest where we will discuss the NSF grant in relation to traveling trunks, the database, correlation to standards, more funding, the upcoming Project Underground facilitator training in Indiana.

Below is a list of upcoming events specific to cave and karst education in Indiana:

- © Caves of Indiana: A presentation for kids and adults, Greenwood Public Library, September 8.
- © Second Annual Indiana Bat Fest, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, September 13.
- © Leonard Springs Nature Park Outing (LSNP day-time hike and lunch), Bloomington Parks and Recreation, September 17.

Continued on page 15...



An inquisitive girl learns how caves are formed with a Project Underground activity during the Gone Caving! event at Spring Mill State Park.

Indiana Karst Conservancy

in partnership with the

NSS Environmental Education Committee/ Project Underground at NSS CON 2008

"People protect what they love."

Jacques-Yves Cousteau

Presenting a plan for cave and karst conservation education...

Interest in cave and karst education is increasing! To meet demand, the Indiana Karst Conservancy recently approved a plan by the organization's Education and Outreach Committee to train and coordinate educators from across the state. The plan, which allows for flexibility, is being considered for expansion around the country by the NSS Environmental Education Committee/Project Underground. A few highlights include:

- ✿ Appointing regional coordinators
- ✿ Creating a web page on the IKC web site
- ✿ Garnering media coverage
- ✿ Setting reporting procedures
- ✿ Gathering traveling trunks (Project Underground activities such as the inflatable cave, the "Caves: Life Beneath the Forest" cave life documentary, karst/groundwater models, and more)
- ✿ Employing a database to keep track of details
- ✿ Correlating programming to standards
- ✿ Attracting more funding
- ✿ Engaging in additional outreach
- ✿ Conducting Project Underground facilitator trainings
- ✿ Holding a Project Underground board retreat



We are actively searching for educators to join us in this important and timely endeavor.

Come visit us during our presentation at the Conservation Session on Tuesday and/or during Education Day on Thursday (www.nss2008.com, "Events & Trips", "Education Day 2008 and Project Underground").

For further information, contact:

Kriste Lindberg

cell phone: (812) 327-1642, e-mail: Kriste.Lindberg@gmail.com



Underground enlightenment: State caving group names three regional coordinators to help with cave education

by Carol Kugler

There's an underground movement in Indiana.

It's all about educating people about caves and karst through Project Underground, a national educational program on caves and karst awareness.

Project Underground has been part of the Indiana Karst Conservancy since 2000, according to Kriste Lindberg, chairwoman of the conservancy's educational outreach committee. And it's been growing in popularity, with people from service organizations, YMCAs, health clubs, and schools requesting information about caves.

"What we've been doing is successful and more people are learning," Lindberg said.

But group members want more. So they've named three new education coordinators, one each for north, central, and southern Indiana.

Karen Silvers in Fort Wayne is the north coordinator.

"Even though I live in an area of Indiana where there are no caves, I am an avid caver (chairman of the Northern Indiana Grotto caving club) and have a passion for the beauty of the world beneath us," Silvers said in an e-mail. "So much so that last year my husband, Bruce (also an avid caver) and I were married in southern Indiana while on rope in Oliver Rothrock Pit."

Silvers is also a bat rehabilitator and says bats are her "passion."

"Many people think of caves as dark, scary holes in the ground. Teaching them otherwise is my goal," she said. She also hopes people will become of the need to protect caves.

"I have entered some caves and have seen broken formations, spray paint on the walls, and trash thrown about... Educating our young could help stop or, at the very least, possibly slow down that vandalism. That's what I hope that the educational portions of Project Underground will ac-

complish," Silvers said.

Bob Vandeventer of Greenwood is the central coordinator.

Vandeventer started "serious" caving in the 1970s. He is vice president of the Central Indiana Grotto and is cave patron for Sullivan Cave near Springville.

He's been helping Lindberg with Project Underground and other cave education programs "for a long time" and has the Central Indiana Grotto library in his home.

Having three coordinators will save on today's higher travel costs even as demand for more programming grows, Vandeventer said.

"The demand has gotten a lot bigger," he said.

Vandeventer was also vice chairman of the 2007 National Speleological Convention in Indiana. "That's where we launched a lot of the stuff for karst education," he said.

"One thing we're looking forward to is recruiting new people and getting people caving. People just don't understand what's going on underneath them.

"I've been at this a long time and want to pass on my knowledge and get more people interested. We're older now and we need new people to get interested and step up."

Don Ingle of Linton is the south coordinator.

Ingle's hope is "to educate young people, children, because they are going to be tomorrow's cavers. Sooner or later we're going to be too old to do this (caving) and they're going to be the ones who help protect our cave and karst system.

"There were a lot of things that happened in the past that were just from ignorance and people not really knowing that what they're doing was really impacting their own drinking water... In caving organizations, people are getting older and older all the time. We're kind of trying to recruit young people to become responsible cavers so those resources can be protected."

Ingle has already shared his

love of caving and tried to educate groups, including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church groups, and youth attending Camp Gallahue near Martinsville. "While you have your captive audience, you tend to give them the environmental message and hope they take it home and tell it to their friends," he said.

This fall the three will participate in a Project Underground workshop on caves and karst. They also have a "traveling trunk" full of educational activities, books and posters to help people learn about the world below their feet.

Having three people means Hoosiers will have quicker access to resources, Lindberg said. She has already done workshops in Bloomington, in Tippecanoe, near the Blue River in southern Indiana, and in the Corydon area, and will continue to coordinate the overall Project Underground efforts in Indiana.

This past week, Lindberg and the others presented their expansion plan at the National Speleological Society's convention in Lake City, Florida. And while they were there, they were able to educate high-schoolers about caves and karst.

But Florida isn't where cave education is most popular.

"Project Underground is currently being run in the Commonwealth of Virginia," Lindberg said recently. "That's where it started. This is the first time a big plan has been brought forth outside of the Commonwealth of Virginia.... It's time to expand."

The IKC has already developed partnerships with groups and agencies including the US Forest Service through the Hoosier National Forest and with Ravenswood Media to produce the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* cave life documentary.

The group also can give teachers with master's degrees continuing renewal units.

Reprinted from the August 17th, 2008 issue of The Herald-Times.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY PROTECTS CAVE RIVER VALLEY

Conservancy Works with DNR and US Fish & Wildlife Service to Secure Important Bat Habitat. Acquisition to Be Managed by Spring Mill State Park.

CAMPBELLSBURG, INDIANA — Southern Indiana is famed for its rolling hills and vast caves. Several extensive caves in Washington County recently were permanently protected, which means that the rare and endangered animals – particularly the Indiana bat – that call these caves home have also received protection.

The Nature Conservancy, working with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Divisions of State Parks and Reservoirs and Fish & Wildlife and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, purchased approximately 316 acres known as Cave River Valley from Cave River Valley LLC. Without a doubt the most noteworthy feature of the property is its caves. Two scenic and significant caves accentuate the valley. The first, River Cave, has 3,900 feet of underground stream passages where a population of the state-endangered northern cavefish is found. The second, Endless Cave, is 6,900 feet in length harboring an important colony of hibernating Indiana bats.

“Cave River Valley presented a wonderful opportunity for The Nature Conservancy to preserve critical habitat for several cave species and the threatened Indiana bat,” said Mary McConnell, state director for the Conservancy’s Indiana Chapter. “Areas that contain populations of both Indiana bats and northern cavefish are extremely rare and therefore the protection of these areas present us with a nearly unparalleled opportunity for cave conservation in Indiana. Equally important is the additional recreation opportunities this land will provide to Hoosiers for generations to come.”

In recent years Cave River Valley has become increasingly important for hibernating Indiana bats. Prior to 1990 few Indiana bats were known to hibernate here, but since that time the number has grown significantly. By 2007, almost 1,700 Indiana bats were found here along with an additional 1,500 little brown bats and 200 bats of other species. Endless Cave is the eighth most important Indiana bat hibernaculum in the state and the second largest little brown bat hibernaculum.

The Division of State Parks and Reservoirs is applying for Indiana Heritage Trust funds that will allow the DNR to purchase the property from The Nature Conservancy in the coming months. Financial partners include The Nature Conservancy, the DNR’s Divisions of Nature Preserves and Fish

and Wildlife, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Nature Conservancy will transfer the property to the Division of State Parks and Reservoirs in the coming months.

Spring Mill State Park will be assuming temporary management during this process. “The DNR understands the significance of this site, both from a natural heritage perspective and from a human perspective,” said Ginger Murphy from the Division of State Parks and Reservoirs. “We want to provide recreational access for the caving community, but we are also accepting responsibility for managing the unique and fragile natural communities at the site.” Caving will be allowed on the property, but the site will be temporarily closed, as all partners further assess the management needs and plan the work needed to reopen it next year.

For more information on The Nature Conservancy and Cave River Valley, visit www.nature.org/indiana. To learn more about the Indiana DNR, Spring Mill State Park and the Indiana Heritage Trust program, visit www.dnr.IN.gov.

Cave River Valley Frequently Asked Questions

Where is the Cave River Valley acquisition located? The 316-acre acquisition is located near Campbellsburg in Washington County, Indiana. This property is a subterranean priority in the watershed of the East Fork of the White River.

Why is Cave River Valley important to The Nature Conservancy? The Nature Conservancy has recognized this area for the presence of six globally rare cave species, including the northern cavefish, golden cave harvestman, and Youngs cave beetle. Two scenic and significant caves accentuate the valley. The first, River Cave, has 3900 feet of underground stream passages where a population of the state-endangered northern cavefish is found. The second, Endless Cave, is 6,900 feet in length harboring an important colony of hibernating Indiana bats.

In recent years the area has become increasingly important for its Indiana bat hibernaculum. Prior to 1990 few Indiana bats were known to hibernate here, but since that time the number has grown significantly. By 2007, 1,689 Indiana bats were found here along with an additional 1,500



little brown bats, making this area the eighth most important Indiana bat hibernaculum in the state and the second largest little brown hibernaculum. Areas that contain populations of both Indiana bats and northern cavefish are extremely rare and therefore the protection of these areas presents the Conservancy with a nearly unparalleled opportunity for cave conservation in Indiana.

What else is on the property? The property is largely wooded with two semi-open areas (approximately 5 acres) that are only partially wooded. The remaining forested acres are considered to be “a well-stocked stand of hardwoods, pine and mixtures of the two” by a recent forest inventory. The land is very rolling with steep slopes and sinkholes present throughout. There are several other smaller caves on the property.

Were there partners involved with the acquisition? Yes. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Department of Natural Resources’ Division of State Parks and Reservoirs, Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Nature Preserves are partners.

What are the Conservancy’s plans for the property? The Division of State Parks and Reservoirs is applying for Indiana Heritage Trust funds that will allow the DNR to purchase the property from The Nature Conservancy in the coming months. Spring Mill State Park will be assuming temporary management during this process.

Will there be access to the property? Yes, but the property will be temporarily closed to the public beginning next week as all partners further assess the management needs and plan the work needed to reopen it next year.

Will cavers still be able to enjoy the caves located on the property? Yes. The Conservancy and the DNR understand the significance of this site, both from a natural heritage perspective and from a human perspective. We want to provide recreational opportunities and access for the caving community. However, we are also accepting responsibility for managing the unique and fragile natural communities at the site. That will likely result in some restrictions, including the closing of Endless Cave during the hibernation season of the Indiana bat.

The DNR’s Division of State Parks and Reservoirs has diligently contacted many individuals and groups who might have been expecting to visit the site in the next six months.

Editor comments: While the acquisition of this important Indiana cave property by The Nature Conservancy should be viewed as a positive, there should understandable be much apprehension within the caving community with the plan to transfer the property to the Indiana DNR Division of State Parks and Reservoirs. One has to look no further than the DNR’s preliminary site management plan (www.in.gov/dnr/files/sp-Prelim_CRVNA_Site_Management_Plan.pdf) to see the potential conflicts between retaining Cave River Valley’s natural characteristics and the “improvements” deemed necessary to make this property accessible to the DNR’s estimate of 10,000 visitors per year. Comments and suggestions on the preliminary plan should be sent to Ginger Murphy at gmurphy@dnr.IN.gov.

Continued from 11...

- ☺ Caves Among Us: Leonard Springs Nature Park Tour (LSNP evening hike), Bloomington Parks and Recreation, September 17.
- ☺ Take a Child Outside, Bloomington Parks and Recreation, September 23-30, including Bats in the Park, a collaboration with Laura Hohman of Bat World Hoosier Hills, September 26.
- ☺ Leonard Springs Nature Days, Bloomington Parks and Recreation/Sycamore Land Trust/Monroe County Community School Corporation, October/November and March/May 2009. Hosting all 6th-graders in the Bloomington

area (approximately 900) to karst, creek, wetland, forest, and soil stations. We, along with the Bloomington Indiana Grotto, are making sure the trail stays in good shape, too!

- ☺ Project Underground Facilitator Training, hosted by Bloomington Parks and Recreation, Indiana Karst Conservancy, and Project Underground. Date TBA.

Special thanks this quarter to Don Ingle, Carol Kugler, Karen Silvers, and Bob Vandeventer. If you would like more information on any of the above and/or wish to help, please contact me at kriste.lindberg@gmail.com or (812) 339-7210.

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

**Income/Expense Statement
From April 1, 2008 to June 30, 2008**

INCOME:

Dues Apportionment and Residuals	618.75	
Donations - General	618.38	
Donations - Land Acquisition Fund	62.19	
Bat Conservation International contract	4003.63	
Interest	295.34	
	<u>295.34</u>	\$5,598.29

EXPENSES:

IKC Update (printing, production, mailing)	240.98	
Stewardship/Conservation	353.26	
Education / Outreach	14.42	
Bat gate direct material	1752.97	
Business (Security box, donation fees, etc)	96.88	
Transfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments	1061.82	
	<u>1061.82</u>	(\$3,520.33)

NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD: \$2,077.96

**Balance Sheet
June 30, 2008**

ASSETS:

Cash in Checking / Saving Accounts / CDs	92325.09	
Accounts Receivable (BCI contract)	4003.63	
Wayne Cave Preserve (20.00 acres)	75000.00	
Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (40.40 acres)	75000.00	
Sullivan Cave Preserve (28.00 acres)	72000.00	
Buddha Karst Nature Preserve (36.84 acres)	29000.00	
Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve (3.01 acres)	7000.00	
Indian Creek Conservation Easement (valued at \$1/acre)	13.16	
	<u>13.16</u>	<u>\$354,341.88</u>

LIABILITIES & OPERATING EXCESS:

Land Acquisition Restricted Fund	32441.59
Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (194 members)	3206.25
NSF Education grant	840.00
Stewardship Endowment Restricted Fund	29183.27

Previous Operating Excess	28592.81	
Net Excess (Deficit) This Period	2077.96	
	<u>2077.96</u>	
Current Operating Excess (unrestricted funds)	30670.77	
Real estate liquidity (basis value)	258000.00	
	<u>258000.00</u>	

Total Liabilities & Operating Excess \$354,341.88

IKC JUNE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, June 28, 2008 – Bloomington, Indiana

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jerry Lewis, President
 Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
 Dave Haun
 Don Ingle
 Jerry Lewis
 Kriste Lindberg
 Steve Lockwood
 Bob Sergesketter (proxy by Sue Vernier)
 Bruce Silvers
 Karen Silvers
 Tom Sollman
 Bob Vandeventer
 Richard Vernier
 Jamie Winner

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

James Adams, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Jerry Lewis at 6:02 PM, room 143, in the Indiana Geology Building, Bloomington, Indiana. Sue Vernier was accepted at proxy for Bob Sergesketter. Don Ingle would serve as the recording secretary for the meeting.

There was one correction for the March meeting minutes: Allen Pursell's name was therein mistakenly published as "Alan Pursell".

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dunlap reported that we presently have \$96,322.16 in cash assets which is broken down into the following: \$32,429.40 in the land acquisition fund, \$3,206.25 in deferred dues, \$29,183.27 in the stewardship fund, and \$31,503.24 in the general fund. Dunlap noted that the general fund is the largest amount it has ever been. Our land assets are valued at \$258,000, bringing our total assets to \$354,322.16. Our membership now stands at 194, of which 165 have renewed to date. Dunlap will be sending a second renewal reminder.

The agenda order was revised at this point to accommodate Cindy Sandeno of the Hoosier National Forest who needed to leave early, but wanted to be available for questions.

HNF/IKC COST SHARE AGREEMENT

Cindy Sandeno from the HNF then reported to the Board on the HNF/IKC cost share agreement for the GIS layer construction project. This would be essentially a comprehensive and accurate database of all known karst features within the HNF. Cindy stated that she considered such a layer was necessary because it would make it easier for her, as the HNF's Cave Resource Specialist, to have at her fingertips any necessary or pertinent information regarding the caves on the Hoosier, to know exactly what they have, where they have it, and to know what might potentially be at risk in any future management plans and proposed projects the HNF might undertake. The IKC was chosen specifically because of our non-profit status as an organization, and for expediency sake, as this was something that the HNF had wanted to move on quickly, and partially because we had always traditionally been a good partner organization.

All of the work would be performed by IKC members, who are also Indiana Cave Survey members. Funding will likely be passed to the ICS at the request of the volunteers doing the work. Some discussion followed. Dunlap then moved that we sign the agreement with the HNF so that work can begin. Dick Vernier seconded. The motion passed 13 – 0 – 0.

BUDDHA CAVE PRESERVE

The full-size tri-panel kiosk artwork was then put on display before the Board. Dunlap remarked that the artwork layout was pretty well finalized and if anyone had any layout suggestions they needed to state them now. Most seemed quite happy with the result, with only a few minor suggestions made this time around. Dunlap indicated he would e-mail out the "final" artwork for one last review looking for typos, etc. The panels would then be ordered. Lewis then thanked Cindy Sandeno for all the hard work she had put into compiling the kiosk display.

Dunlap, from Buddha's proper place in the agenda sometime later in the meeting, reported that George Cesnik, Cindy Sandeno, and he had sprayed today around the new trees at the Buddha property, and hoped that it would bear good results, and that at this point the new trees are doing very well due to plentiful rain this year. At this point, the survival rate is probably the best we've witnessed in our ten years of planting trees.

EDUCATION/OUTREACH REPORT

Lindberg announced that the Education/Outreach Committee had made a decision governing future operations of the Committee. Under this plan, the state is to be divided into three geographical regions: North, Central, and South. Each region would have a representative who would be the contact person for that region. Karen Silvers would represent the North; Vandeventer, the Central; and Ingle, the South. This person would also be responsible for being the spokesperson for the IKC at any public educational/outreach appearances that might arise. Lindberg reported that there have already been an increased number of requests for appearances where the word has already gotten out, such as the HASTI Conference last February. The Bloomington Parks and Recreation Dept. has also agreed to assist in training interested parties in the Project Underground cave and karst educational program, and many folks there at the HASTI Conference signed up for that training. Also giving a bit more exposure to our efforts on this front was an interview that had appeared in the *Indianapolis Star* recently. It has also been suggested that the Education/Outreach Committee get its own space on the IKC website to help get the word out to let the public schools and other organizations that might wish to avail themselves of that educational opportunity. A good deal of the remaining time went toward the different methods that might be employed of sanitizing the caving helmets (that were graciously donated by the Silvers) after their use by the kids entering Barefoot Cave, the 37 foot long "inflatable cave", that is frequently used in our Education/Outreach appearances.

ROBINSON LADDER CAVE PRESERVE

Firstly, Jamie and Carla Winner were thanked for mowing the lane and the parking area this summer. It was reported by the



Verniers that the door to the barn on the upper pasture had apparently fallen off during a recent visit. So some minor repairs will be needed, it would seem. The Verniers were present when it happened, and thankfully, no injuries were reported. The need to keep a working riding lawn mower on property was put then put forth, citing increasing gas prices and the lack of an available trailer to haul a mower to and from the property as the primary reasons for the purchase. The property, it should be noted, is also much further away from our other properties making it difficult to incorporate into our other lawn-keeping duties at our other properties. The possibility of purchasing an older mower was then discussed somewhat before being discarded as an option. Dick Vernier stated that the EMG has discussed they'd be agreeable to making a small donation that could be used towards a mower purchase. After it was finally decided that an on-site mower would be preferred, Bowman moved that up to \$1,000 be provided for purchase of a riding lawn mower for the Robinson Ladder property. Dunlap seconded. The motion was passed 8 – 3 – 2.

WAYNE CAVE BIO-INVENTORY

Nothing to report yet, although it is slated to begin next month, Lewis reported.

INDIAN CREEK CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Sinks of Indian Creek property was inspected in March, and no violations were observed, although the access road had seen some traffic. Fig Newton will be notified that a copy of his report needs to be submitted in writing to The Nature Conservancy for their records as soon as possible. Lewis then related various conversations that he had initiated in an attempt to generate some interest in finding another organization or government agency to accept the easement from us. Lewis also indicated that he had discussed the possible transfer with Ellen Jacquart (TNC Stewardship Director) and that she was agreeable, assuming we found a qualified entity. Lewis subsequently discussed this possibility to a representative of the Sycamore Land Trust. It was our belief that SLT is an organization that is well suited towards holding conservation easements, as they own several dozen CEs, and continue to pursue CEs to protect other conservation properties. Since this transfer would obligate them to future monitoring observations and incur a certain amount of legal risk on their part

should they accept, it was agreed that an endowment or reimbursement on our part would be appropriate to assure long-term protection. Bowman then moved that Lewis be authorized to negotiate with SLT to accept the easement for up to a set dollar amount, plus any costs associated with the transfer. Ingle seconded. The motion was passed 11 – 1 – 2.

SULLIVAN CAVE PRESERVE

The property has been recently mowed by Ingle, except for one little bit back behind the shelter/woodshed and out by the highway. Subsequently, Dunlap's mower quit in the attempt to finish the job. Also, the new outhouse is finally in place and ready for use. How it is to be serviced was deferred until it actually needs the service.

BAT CAVE GATING

The cave is gated, and looks good. The gate was done with all volunteer work. It is hoped that Bat Cave can once again attract wintering Indiana bats. BCI will be sending a check to pay for the materials used in the gating along with an honorarium for providing the manpower and equipment. See the June 2008 *IKC Update* for more details.

SECOND ANNUAL INDIANA BAT FESTIVAL

The Second Annual Bat Festival is slated to occur on Sept. 13th, in Terre Haute. It will be hosted at Indiana State University at the ISU Hulman Student Memorial Building. Dr Whitaker has requested that the IKC be there once again with the inflatable cave. Ingle volunteered to spearhead the IKC presence at the Festival, and will contact Dr Whitaker to make arrangements.

TRUITT CAVE GATE

Nothing new to report. This item will be removed from future agendas until there is a change in developments.

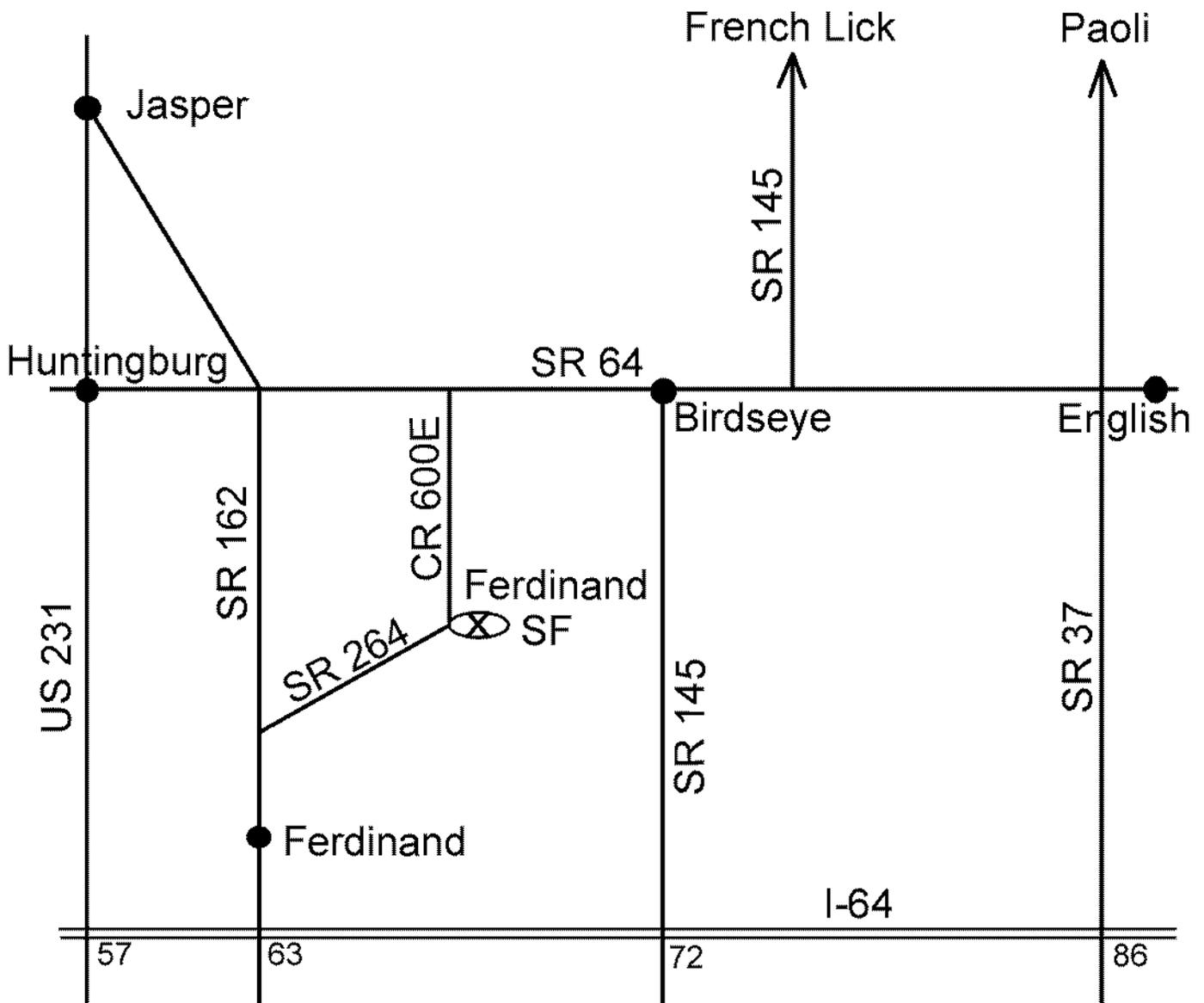
The next meeting is set for September 20th. This has traditionally incorporated a cookout, and the Winners graciously volunteered to host the event. It will be held at the Ferdinand State Forest Property. The meeting will be at 5:00 PM with the cook-out to follow.

The meeting was then adjourned at 7:48.

Respectively submitted by Don Ingle, acting Secretary.



Map to the September 20th IKC meeting at Ferdinand State Forest



INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, PO BOX 2401, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206-2401

I would like to help the IKC protect Indiana's unique caves and other karst features. Enclosed is:

\$ _____ for IKC membership dues at \$15 per year (dues expire March 31st of each year, please pro-rate @ \$1.25/month).

\$ _____ donation to the general IKC fund.

\$ _____ donation restricted to a specific IKC project. Please specify: _____

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

_____ I would like to volunteer to help. Please contact me.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE # _____

Make checks payable to the Indiana Karst Conservancy, Inc. and mail to the IKC Treasurer, c/o Indiana Karst Conservancy, PO Box 2401, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401. The IKC is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with membership dues and donations fully tax deductible.

