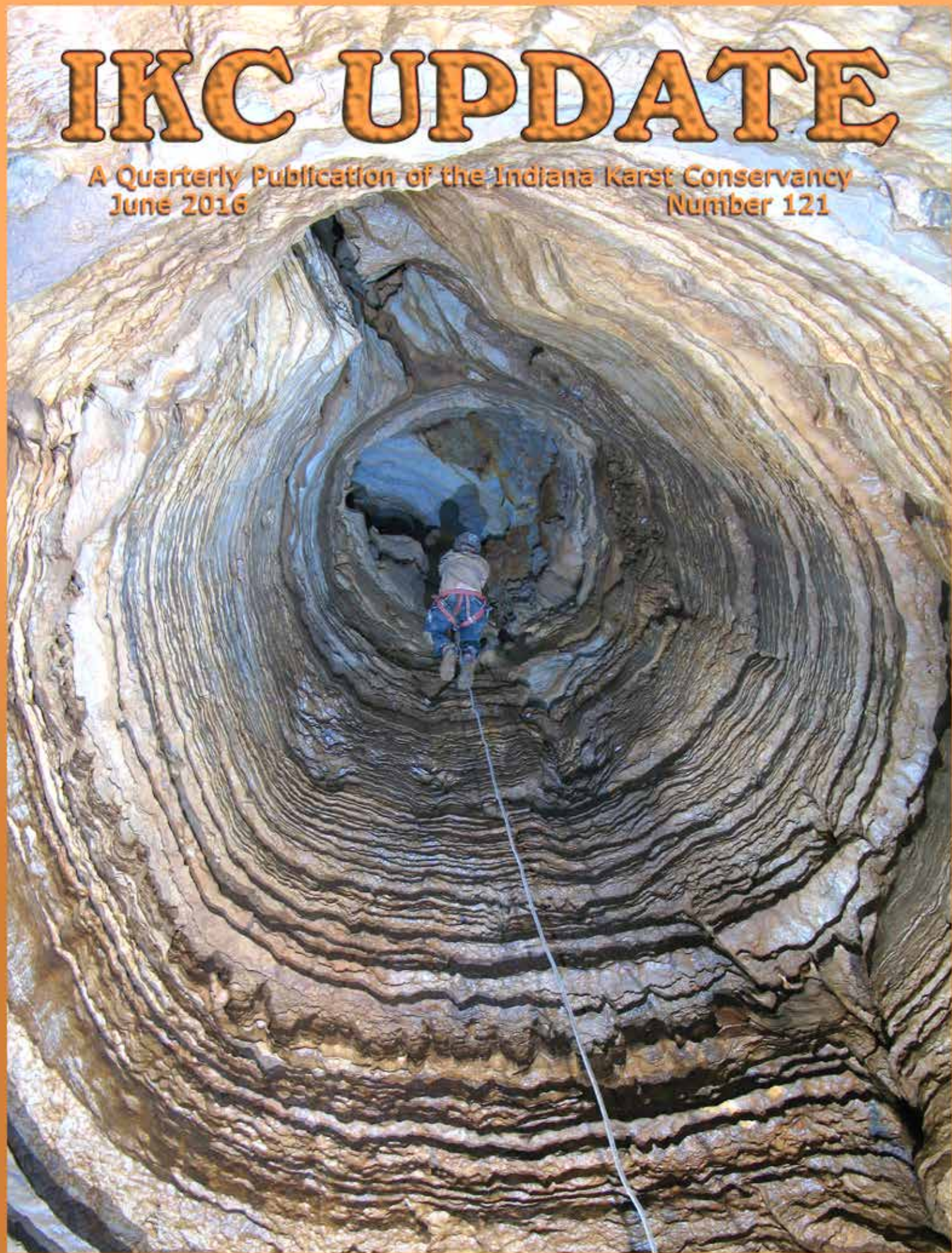


# IKC UPDATE

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[ikc.caves.org](http://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.

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# IKC QUARTERLY MEETING REMINDER

## SATURDAY, JUNE 4th, 3:00 PM EDT

### MITCHELL, INDIANA

### SHAWNEE KARST PRESERVE

The quarterly meetings are for the Executive 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:** Recap of recent work projects and promotion of upcoming projects at our various other preserves; Wyandotte Cave re-opening; Bylaw Revision Committee status; Financial reports; Land acquisition activities; and more....

**Stewardship Activities:** There will likely be some work activities at the property before the meeting including mowing the trails, erosion control, invasive eradication, etc. If you are so inclined, show up early and pitch in. Start time will be noon.

**Directions to the Shawnee Karst Preserve:** From the intersection of SR37 and SR 60 in Mitchell, take SR 60 east 4.0 miles (or 0.7 miles east of the main entrance to Spring Mill State Park). The Preserve driveway is on the south side of the road marked with a "4000" address sign. Proceed up the driveway to the parking loop at the end. GPS Lat N38.71871 Long W86.40616

**Note:** In case of inclement weather the meeting may be held in the entrance room of the cave so bring a helmet/light, jacket, and pad to sit on. You may get muddy.

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

**June 4 – IKC Quarterly Board Meeting (see above)**

**July 9 – Grand reopening of Wyandotte Cave (details still unknown)**

**Jul 16-23 – NSS Convention (Ely, Nevada)**

**Aug 5-7 – Cave Capers (Lawrence County Recreation Park)**

**Sept ?? – IKC Quarterly Board Meeting (date & location to be determined)**

For more information on the Indiana Karst Conservancy, visit our website at [ikc.caves.org](http://ikc.caves.org) or write to our PO box. Membership to the IKC is open to anyone or any organization interested in supporting 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'm thinking of a conversation I had this past week while I had Karst (Karst is our cat) at the veterinarian. While the vet was poking and prodding the cat, she was telling me about her recent experiences of trying to hire another person for her practice. She related that it seemed like everyone she interviewed seemed to have a great sense of entitlement, as if they were considering hiring her, rather than vice versa. This has become one of my pet peeves... the growing sense of entitlement in some segments of America. What happened to "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country?" [from the inaugural speech of President Kennedy in 1961]

So, at the risk of a convoluted segue, that brings to mind a person with the least sense of entitlement who I know... Tom Sollman. I thought I'd dedicate this Rambling to talking about Tom, one of the IKC's "rock stars". I'm positive he won't like it, but at least now Tom knows why I apologized to him in advance at the recent Indiana Cave Symposium.

I don't know when I first met Tom, but I've known him for a long time. Although we had done some caving together, the first big project we worked on together was a biological evaluation of Binkley Cave back in the 1990s. For that project we went in the main entrance to Binkley every month (this was back when Binkley was "only" 21 miles long) and did a variety of things. My emphasis was on the biology of the cave, while Tom started measuring everything he could think of measuring. Starting at the dripline, he documented the temperature, humidity, wind flow, water depth, and a variety of water chemistry parameters. That was when I first learned about the depth to which Tom focuses on details. It's not every caver who comes equipped with pH and conductivity/TDS meters and knows how to use them. Tom made measurements of water chemistry at in-feeders along Binkley River Trail from the entrance to a point almost two miles downstream.

We were also censusing all of the fish and crayfish along the river and developed an effective, if perhaps bizarre, field method. The problem with trying to conduct a stream census was that the water flowed downstream from the entrance. Anyone who has been in Binkley knows that there's nothing in the cave if not mud, and as soon as we stepped in the stream, a plume of mud started flowing downstream like an aquatic smokescreen. To conduct the census, Tom would walk in front of me and spot the animals, and then scoop them up from the stream bottom and hand them back to me with one hand, where I would quickly evaluate their gender and use a millimeter ruler to get the animal's length, then as I gently bent to put the critter back in the stream while calling out the species, gender and length, like

"Orconectes, male, 42 millimeters" for Tom to record. And we were doing all of this while walking to keep ahead of the mud plume. It was quite the routine, but we became good at it.

I'm a scientist by trade, am accustomed to working with people who are attentive to detail, but even by those standards, I was impressed by Tom's degree of focus on every aspect of the cave's environment. Tom isn't a scientist, at least not by training, but some place along the line he self-taught himself. If Tom had been born during

a different era he would be called a "gentleman naturalist", but today... I can hear him saying "I'm no gentleman".

One night after we emerged from a long day in Binkley, I got a little insight into what Tom was trained to do... I saw him fiddling around with something on the tailgate of his truck and walked over to see what he was doing. It was like he had an electronics warehouse in his truck. At that moment he had what looked like a tackle box open, but instead of having lures, each of the dozens of little slots in the box had light bulbs... dozens of different shapes and sizes of little light bulbs for caving lamps. Tom always made his own lights



and the things were like bringing a phaser into the cave. He made one for me and the first time I turned it on it literally cooked the bug we were looking at. Come to find out, Tom is one of those “MacGyver” people who know how to do everything when it comes to building things... if you don’t think so, look at his home, which he built around his childhood treehouse. Ask him about it, it’s an interesting story.

At the end of the Binkley project I described a new species of millipede that we had found in the cave and named it in honor of Tom: Sollman’s cave millipede (*Scoterpes sollmani*). It was small thanks for all the work he put in on that project.

The Binkley project was a year in duration, but that was just a moment in time compared to some of Tom’s other projects. He’s been conducting stream censuses in other caves – Shiloh and Marengo come to mind – typically visiting and counting all the fish, crayfish, salamanders, and whatever else he can find to count, four to twelve times a year... for over 25 years. I’ve got a file an inch thick of his census data... it’s an incredible storehouse of information. And that’s just a tiny fraction of the library of information on Indiana caves that Tom possesses. In his office (which also contains his eclectic collection of over 2,000 functional 8-track tapes), he has walls of files with every reference to an Indiana cave in history, literally that he’s been able to track down. It’s incredible. So that’s Tom’s hobby, in which he has probably gathered as much information on Indiana caves and cave life as anyone, ever.

Tom has also been a key collaborator for the DNR’s biennial Indiana bat counts for the past twenty years, as well as numerous other DNR-sponsored projects (see the cover of the March 2007 *IKC Update*). And then there’s his volunteer work with the IKC. Have you ever seen one of our workdays when Tom wasn’t there? How many derelict trailers has he helped cut up and remove from IKC properties? When we bought the Shaw-

nee Karst Preserve there wasn’t a trailer, but we did inherit a large plastic water tank that had been turned into a deer stand, it was sort of like an old trailer, so Tom brought his sawz-all and cut it up instead. And the front road gate at SKP... he built that on the same day. He is also a skilled welder and strong laborer for many of the IKC gates that have been constructed over the years. And while we’re on the subject of building things, have you seen the Wayne Cave Preserve kiosk? It’s more like a small house than a kiosk, all conceived, designed and built by Tom and his son Robert.

And the list just goes on and on and on...most recently Tom (and Robert) was at the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve at our most recent work day, planting chestnut trees. It’s hard to say how many trees Tom has planted on our IKC preserves over the years (for an action photo, see the cover of the March 2009 *IKC Update*).

So, entitlement? Tom is like a person in some parallel universe where entitlement doesn’t exist. Among my friends, many of whom are card-carrying obsessive/compulsive, Tom stands out as one of the most highly self-motivated people I know. Contrary to the image he might try to convey, Tom has a keen intellect and is one of the best-read, most literate people that I know. I’m proud to call Tom my friend. He’s an asset to anything he’s involved in and luckily he’s heavily involved in the IKC.

In conclusion, yesterday we attended our daughter’s commencement at the University of Evansville and the benediction was a passage by 18th century theologian John Wesley. I think it’s an apt way to conclude this Rambling: “*Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.*”

*Jerry Lewis*

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## AMERICAN CHESTNUT TREE PLANTING

*by Keith Dunlap*

As was mentioned in the March *IKC Update*, the IKC and The American Chestnut Foundation planned a joint tree planting on April 16th at the IKC’s Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve in Crawford County. The goal of the project was to plant fifty of TACF’s Restoration 1.0 hybrid American chestnut trees, along with 150 other compat-

ible seedlings (butternut, black walnuts, and red oaks). The planting was accomplished using volunteers from both organizations. The planting area had already been mowed and different color flags were placed randomly for the various species (this was done in March). The tree planting task actually was accomplished relatively quick-





ly. However, to improve survival success of the trees, an eight foot high deer fence was erected around the planting area to eliminate deer browsing, a significant problem with tree seedlings.

The American chestnut is a historically significant tree to the eastern United States, including Indiana. The species grew on ridgetops and once dominated southern Indiana forests in karst areas. Unfortunately, an invasive blight all but eliminated the native species. Over the past thirty years, extensive efforts by TACF to

develop a blight-resistant hybrid has netted a viable tree which is now being selectively planted to revive the species. It is still uncertain if the trees we planted will perform as well as expected and survive to maturity, so this is part of the reason why other species are co-planted to create a forested landscape regardless of the chestnut success.

As a side note, TACF completed paperwork to have this planting project designated as an *Indiana Bicentennial Legacy Project*.



photos courtesy Jerry Lewis



## 2016 INDIANA CAVE SYMPOSIUM RECAP

*by Keith Dunlap*

The Crawford County Fairgrounds was the host venue for the 24th annual Indiana Cave Symposium, which was held this year on April 30th. Indiana cavers were out and about earlier in the day caving and enjoying the warm (but rainy) spring weather. The Symposium was once again co-hosted by the Indiana Karst Conservancy and Indiana Cave Survey, with each organization sharing the facilities rental and food expenses, which included burgers, brats, pork loins, buns, condiments, and soft drinks. Approximately sixty attendees helped out by bringing side dishes, desserts, chips, and the like to complete the cookout for the first part of the event. The program part of the Symposium began around 7 PM. The following summarizes the presentations:

- Jerry Lewis – Presented the “The Wrath of SinKHoles”, a multi-pronged compilation of projects over the past year that included the re-opening the IKC entrance of Upper Twin Cave, stream level monitoring in Upper Twin, the bio-inventory of the Shawnee Cave System, and a preview of results from the HNF sinkhole project.
- Bill Greenwald – Presented the “Two Rs of Putting up a Bat House” in that there is the “reality and responsibility” of putting up a bat box and the long term commitment should your box become inhabited.
- Melissa Fitzpatrick – To continue with the bat house theme, Melissa presented on an interesting project to mass-construct bat houses as an environmental project for CCIU. This included researching and selecting a design, soliciting sponsors, procuring the raw materials, cutting all the pieces, assembling and painting the boxes, and finally distributing the boxes to non-profits and selectively selling the remainder to recover costs so they can do it all again next year.
- Kevin Romanak – Presented on the recent activities of the Caving Club at IU, a very active student “grotto” that promotes safety, education, and social aspects of caving. In addition to multiple trips per month, the CCIU has sponsored an international exchange with a student caving club in Korean and also organized the first ever invitational caving event for other collage caving clubs in the Midwest.
- Rand Heazlitt – Summarized the various caving trips and new exploration in Binkley Cave over the past year, including several trips to areas of the cave that have not been visited in twenty to thirty years, plus the activities in Dewey Eckart Pit to extend and someday hopefully connect to Binkley.
- Dave Everton – Presented his “Life After Binkley” that summarized a number of smaller cave projects over the past few years that he has engaged in since he has taken a lesser role in the Binkley Project.

A hearty thanks to everyone who made this year’s Indiana Cave Symposium a success, from the symposium organizers, to the presenters, the sponsors, the burger grillers, and all the attendees! Interested in presenting next year? Just let it be known!

Jerry Lewis presenting at the 2016 Indiana Cave Symposium at the Crawford County fairgrounds.



*photo courtesy Dave Black*



## NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ At the IKC annual business meeting on March 19th, Jerry Lewis, Sue Vernier, and Keith Dunlap were re-elected as President, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively. Everett Pulliam, Carla Striegel-Winner and Jamie Winner were re-elected Directors, while Danyele Green became new a Director. The full list of the Executive Board can be found on page 2. Our immense thanks to retiring Director Bruce Silvers who served on the Board for the past 6 years.
- ❑ The IKC/IDNR partnership agreement for the IKC to manage the access to four caves in Spring Mill State Park/Cave River Valley has been extended for another two years. The visitation rules are essentially the same as the prior agreement with the exception that the minimum age to visit Endless Cave has been lowered to better facilitate cave trips by Scout and other youth groups. For complete details and how to arrange a trip, please visit the IKC [webpage](#).
- ❑ Official information on the re-opening of Wyandotte Cave is still hard to come by, but snippets have been posted on various social media sites. The July 9th opening date appears to be firm, with a Friday/Saturday/Sunday operating schedule through Labor Day mentioned. It is unclear if the 2016 abbreviated season will be only for Little Wyandotte, or if tours into “Big” Wyandotte will also available. The existing visitor center is also supposed to be razed and a new, smaller visitor center constructed, but the timing is unclear.
- ❑ At the March 19th IKC meeting, the IKC was presented with four single chamber bat boxes constructed and donated by the Caving Club at IU. The CCIU constructed several dozen boxes as one of their environmental projects, donating approximately half of the boxes to various non-profits, and selling the remainder to generate the revenue to cover the material expenses. The IKC plans to install one box each at Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve, Shawnee Karst Preserve, Sullivan Cave Preserve, and Wayne Cave Preserve.
- ❑ Most of the IKC’s basic operating expenses and obligations (newsletter, liability insurance, property taxes, routine stewardship activities) are covered by membership dues. However, we are greatly appreciative of additional donations to supplement and support the many other projects the IKC initiate. Since April 2015, 55 individuals and 10 organizations have made general donations beyond their dues totaling \$4,767. Donors include John Ahlberg, John Benton, Ted Bice, Jeremy Brisch, Carl Brown, Larry Bundy, Thomas Campbell, Jeff Cody, Don & Barb Coon, John Dimit, Dave Everton, Jeff Farr, Peri Frantz, Rick Gikas, Lee Groves, Barbara Hanka, Dave Haun, Horton Hobbs, Tem Hornaday, Paul Kortepeter, Glenn Kotnik, David Lasser, John Lawrence, Jerry & Salisa Lewis, Ray Long, George Mattson, Jon Miller, Mark Milne, Bill Morrow, Carl & Louie Nelson, Erinie & Jacqueline Payne, Gene & Jennifer Pelter, Kevin Rasmus, Tom Rea, Kelle Reynolds, Ralph Sawyer, Bob & Phyllis Sergesketter, Gordon Smith, Susan Strickland, Bruce Trotter, Bob Vandeventer, Aaron Valandra, Dick & Sue Vernier, Mark Webb, Norbert Welch, Rich Whisler, Gary Whittaker, Scott Worpell, BSA Troop 112, BSA Troop 773, Bluespring Caverns, Indiana Caverns, Central Indiana Wilderness Club, Caving Club at IU, Near Normal Grotto, Northern Indiana Grotto, Sub-Urban Grotto, and the Hulman Memorial Way Foundation.
- ❑ The IKC also maintains a Cave Acquisition restricted fund which is used to accumulate resources for our next property acquisition. Since April 2015, 26 individuals and 2 organizations have contributed \$3,489 to the fund. Donors include Mariam Ash, Laura Demarest, Keith Dunlap, Scott Fee, Allen Goodcase, Barbara Hanka, Martin Heinlein, Hank Huffman, Jon Miller, Ernie & Jacquie Payne, Kelle Reynolds, Gary Roberson, Matt Selig, John & Brenda Shultheis, Gordon Smith, Ty Spatta, Fred Steinhoff, Susan Strickland, Aaron Valandra, Mark Webb, Gary Whitaker, Carla & Jamie Winner, Raschel Wolf, Scott Worpell, Indiana Caverns, and SerVaas Laboratories.
- ❑ The IKC has gained three new members in the last quarter. Welcome Mike Sanders (565), Richard Vanarsdel (566), and Rand Heazlitt (567). The IKC membership currently stands at 193.



## The IKC GOES TO WASHINGTON

*by Jerry Lewis*

In 2015 I received a fellowship at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), one of the museums of the Smithsonian Institution. If the questions that I'm asked are any indication, the Smithsonian is a source of curiosity for folks... everyone knows that it's where some of the nation's finest treasures reside, but what goes on behind the scenes? The museum advertises that only a tiny fraction of their collections are actually on display – so what is all that other stuff that's not on display and where is it? I thought I'd try to answer these questions, or at least scratch the surface of them.

Thanks to the fellowship, I received funding to spend two weeks working at the museum in February, 2016. This was an anniversary for me, since my first trip to the Smithsonian was 40 years ago in 1976. Back then, visiting scientists worked in the museum downtown on the Mall, the long park that is lined with the Smithsonian Museums, ending at the Washington Monument on one end and the United States Capitol on the other. Even at that time, planning was underway for the construction of a new storage facility for the museum's collections.

In 1983 the Smithsonian Museum Support Center (MSC) in Suitland, Maryland was dedicated and the first buildings, called pods, started receiving collections. Each pod is about the size of a football field and is three stories tall. The pods are connected to one another by a huge access hallway. Pod 5 was completed in 2007 and houses the “wet collections” of specimens preserved in alcohol. This includes the nation's crustacean collection (yes, there is a national crustacean collection...) and that was the focus of my visit.

As usual I was at the museum to conduct research with their collections of cave and spring isopods. Each morning I departed from my hotel in Rosslyn, Virginia and walked a few blocks to the Metro subway station, where I rode the subway for 20 minutes

to downtown Washington. Emerging from the Federal Triangle station I'd walk the last blocks to the museum's entrance on Constitution Avenue. I'd been issued an ID badge so I could enter the museum at 7:00 AM, go through the security checkpoint, and then have an hour to be a tourist before the first shuttle departed for the MSC. At that hour the museum is closed to visitors, so I had the place to myself and could walk the exhibit halls in private – only a few custodians and guards were present.

At 8:00 I'd exit through the big columns of the museum's main façade and walk down the stone stairs to the awaiting shuttle bus for the 30 minute trip. Although the MSC isn't a secret, tourists aren't allowed – there's a high fence topped with barbed wire, guards and other security measures to keep out people who aren't supposed to be there. Past the guards at the gate, the shuttle proceeded past an enormous greenhouse complex then stopped at the circle in front of the MSC. After another guard station, I'd walk out to Pod 5 through the access corridor decorated with exhibits that had once been on display in the downtown museum. There were also windows into labs so I could see things like fossil skeletons in various stages of being reconstructed.

On a prior visit to the MSC, the first thing I

*Continued on page 17....*



## A LOOK BACK AT INDIANA KARST

by John M Benton

The Look Back in this issue is an interview with Tom Rea (NSS #4683, IKC #8), noted Indiana and national caver-extrodinaire:

**How did your caving career begin? Do you recall your first cave trip; any details, who with, where, first impressions? Who were your caving 'mentors'?** Well, my very first cave trip was to Wolf Cave in McCormick's Creek State Park with my high school science club. I spent a lot of time after that looking for caves in the wrong places. Sometime after I graduated from college and began working, I was talked into becoming an Explorer Scout leader. The boys wanted to go caving. I thought I knew about that, so we found a few caves near Bloomington that we explored with flashlights. The Scouts had a publicity function that we attended and I met Robert "Bugs" Armstrong there. He told me about the Central Indiana Grotto (CIG) and the National Speleological Society (NSS). I attended the next grotto meeting and never looked back. That was in May, 1962.

**In the past, you have taught classes on speleology; who are some of the students you've had? Didn't some of them turn out to be long-time cavers who have contributed a lot to caving?** Yes, I don't remember the dates, but I taught a class in Speleology at the University of Indianapolis for about ten years. Someone gave my name to Dr Gommel, and he called me up and recruited me. I taught a three hour class in the evening. Some of my students you may know were Nancie Baker, Jo Ellen Kimmel, and Mark Sorenson (Ozzie). Dr Gommel retired and the new department head didn't think Speleology amounted to much, so he never scheduled my class again.

**Please tell us about your background, where you were raised, attended schools and colleges, your working career.** I was born and raised in

New Castle, Indiana. I was interested in electricity and radio and became friends with the high school principal who was a radio ham. We started a 50-watt radio station in the high school. I went to Purdue and got a degree in electrical engineering. After that I went to Indiana University and got an MBA in management. I went to work for Indiana Bell Telephone Company, which was my first choice, as an Outside Plant Engineer. I worked there my whole working career doing outside plant engineering, equipment engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and computer applications and maintenance.

**On a national level, you have been involved and served several positions with the NSS, please talk about those, the highs and the lows?** There

were never any real lows between me and the NSS. I got more satisfaction from my work with the NSS than I did from Indiana Bell. I am the only person who has held each of the officer positions: President, Administrative Vice President, Executive Vice President, Operations Vice President (twice), and Secretary Treasurer. I was a member of the Board of Governors in one capacity or another for 28 years.

**Do you have a favorite cave? Details please?** Many. If I had to choose one it would be Wayne. What more can I say? I'm not vertical. I'm sure there many great vertical caves,

but they are not for me. I have done Gory Hole though on Prusik knots (once).

**There have been many, but please tell us about the volunteer caving positions you have done, and continue to do so over the years, with local organizations.** I have been Chairman of the Central Indiana Grotto three or four times, Treasurer once or twice, and a Board Member uncounted times. I was also the Editor of the CIG Newsletter for 21 years (1992-2013). I was



photo courtesy Bill Tozer (circa 1966)



a founding member of the IKC, served various positions on the IKC's E-Board, and was the first Cave Patron for Wayne Cave.

***What are the NSS and CIG awards that you have received?*** In the NSS, I have the Outstanding Service Award, Fellow, Spelean Arts and Letters Award, and a Certificate of Merit for the first internal computer membership system which I wrote and maintained for about ten years. In the CIG I have an Honorary Membership, the Lewis D. Lamont Award, and a Karst Heritage Award.

***You have authored and published many cave books over your career; please elaborate on those? Tell us about Greyhound Press, which I believe you started?*** I'm not much of an author; I'm mostly a copy editor and publisher. I did produce the second and third editions of *Caving Basics*. I have two and a half or three feet of books on my bookshelf that I edited and published for the NSS, Cave Books, private authors, and family members. I started Greyhound Press to be able to deal with the Library of Congress and the ISBN organization on my own, without the authority of the NSS. I have software to create the bar codes required on commercial books. I have my own series of ISBNs registered to Greyhound Press and have my own account to obtain Library of Congress registration numbers. Years ago, when I agreed to take on the NSS publishing job, I negotiated the right to put the Greyhound Press logo on the NSS books I published. Right now, Greyhound Press is publishing the guidebook for the 2016 SERA Cave Carnival, hosted by the Nashville Grotto.

***Most memorable cave trips, good or bad?*** Well, that has to be my three week visit to the Soviet Union in 1991 or 1992 to visit the gypsum giants in Ukraine. I saw quite a bit of Optimistic Cave, the second longest cave in the world. During that trip we also camped in Crimea and did a lot of caving there. I wonder what the Ukrainians are doing now that Russia has invaded and taken over Crimea. After the Soviet Union broke up, my friend Alexander Klimchouk said, "How would you like it if you had to get a visa to visit Ohio?"

***Two very important state caving organizations, the IKC and ICS, you have been long-involved with, what do you see as the ongoing legacy for these?*** You know, I think they are very important and I support them, but my recent involvement is minimal. I have spent my energy with the Michi-

gan Karst Conservancy as the Property Manager of the 495-acre Fiborn Karst Preserve in the Upper Peninsula (UP). The preserve contains five caves including the longest cave in Michigan. I just retired as Property Manager last fall after many years, but I will still spend my time, and what energy I have left, with the caves and cavers of Michigan. I authored the 2004 Convention Guidebook about the Upper Peninsula which is still of interest to the few people interested in the UP. I have published a book written by Mark Whitney: *Fiborn Quarry – Then and Now*, which tells the story of the quarry, the caves, and the Michigan Karst Conservancy.

***Anything you'd like to add, free reign?*** That's probably enough. I certainly haven't quit, but I'm more tired that I like to be.



photo courtesy Jaime Coffman

## ANNUAL CAVE PATRON / PROPERTY MANAGER REPORTS

Each year at the Annual Business Meeting, the Cave Patrons and Property Managers are asked to present a verbal summary and submit a written report describing the prior year's activities and incidents, and to make any future recommendations needing implementing. The following is a compilation of the reports for calendar year 2015:

### Buddha Cave Patron Report (Jeff Cody)

In 2015 there were a total of seven trips into Buddha Cave. Five were arranged by the BIG liaison and two were through myself. This is a similar amount as we had last year. As many of you know, sometime in the winter the climb up just inside the entrance had collapsed making it necessary to use a ladder to access the majority of the cave. I was made aware of this in early March and made a trip down on March 21 to confirm. After seeing this, I realized that the collapse has likely been happening in small segments prior to the main collapse last winter. I say this because I had remembered the climb up and also the climb back down being much more difficult than years before. I had feared a rescue as a result of a fall at this spot. With this in mind, I feel this collapse is a blessing in disguise. A fall seems much less likely using a ladder as opposed to negotiating the free climb prior to the collapse. My advice would be to leave it be. The property appeared to be in good condition on my visit that day. I do not think the word has gotten out about the collapse as a few who called me about access since were not aware of this. The cave was made available for Capers this year and I am aware of one trip that went during the event. I had a few call me about access, but did not go because of the collapse.

### Buddha Property Report (George Cesnik)

Activities included:

- Saturday, May 23 – Keith Dunlap mowed the trails and parking area. Trees looked good and he saw his first copperhead snake on the property.
- Early June – Keith performed weed treatment around the planted trees.
- Wednesday, July 15 – Keith Dunlap mowed the trails on the property. Also, sprayed one tank of weed killer on two area of Johnson Grass on the west side of the property and around the oaks by the parking area north of the trails. Trees everywhere are looking good.

- Wednesday, August 5 – Keith Dunlap and Glenn Kotnik were on the property looking at the chestnut trees. They visited the Buddha Cave entrance and discovered white spray painted graffiti vandalism on the left wall. Glenn volunteered to come back within the next month with his daughter to remove it.
- Tuesday, November 10 – Keith Dunlap, Kelly McNamara, and George Cesnik worked on replacing the gate posts at the entrance to the parking area. They dug, chopped, and sawed through soil and roots then placed a 6" by 6" treated post on the hinged side of the gate. Concrete was mixed and poured into the hole around the post. They then spent time in the entrance of Buddha Cave wire brushing the graffiti that Glenn Kotnik worked on previously. After removing as much as we could, we mixed up a mud slurry and mud-painted areas to camouflage the remaining graffiti. Kelly also collected some washed in trash in the entrance room. After that, a second hole for the other gate post was dug and the post was concreted into place. Hinge hardware was installed and the gate hung and levelled.
- Saturday, November 14 – Keith returned to the property to finish the gate installation at the parking area entrance and mow the trails.

### Sullivan Cave Patron Report (Paul Uglum)

This report covers the activity and visitation for the years of 2014 and 2015. I replaced Anthony Owens at the end of June 2015 as Cave Patron. Unfortunately most of the records from Anthony for 2014 and early 2015 were lost and are not available for inclusion in this report. As a result the numbers reported will represent a significant under-count.

Sullivan Cave remains a popular and frequently visited cave. Groups vary from experienced cavers traveling upstream to the Rise, to various youth groups with limited or no previous wild cave experience. Group sizes range widely with the average of about 7 participants per trip for both years. More experienced groups tended to be smaller and youth groups larger.

I am not sure what I was expecting when I agreed to be the Cave Patron, but some of the requests have been somewhat unusual. One e-mail request was titled, "Cave hours and gift shop", wanted to know when the best time to visit the





cave was. It appears they were under the mistaken belief we were a commercial cave. Another was from an author of children's books advertising his new book about caves. Several inquiries were from individuals or groups with no caving background or experience that wanted to visit a wild cave. These were redirected to the closest grotto. I have not started tracking how these individuals learned of Sullivan Cave, but will try to compile some of that information for 2016.

**2014:** I have no IKC Cave Patron data from 2014; all of the data from that year is from the various Grotto Liaisons. In 2014 there were 51 visits to the cave with 361 participants. The BIG had the largest number of trips at 39 for the year with a total of 252 individuals visiting.

**2015:** I have the full year of data for the Grotto Liaisons, and half a year of data for the Cave Patron. In 2015 we had 78 documented trips with a total of 530 participants. Again the BIG had the most visits at 40 trips with 247 individuals. Most trips were requested via e-mail and many were referred from Anthony Owen who was initially contacted. All keys were mailed to the trip leader and returned by mail.

I lead three trips to Sullivan including a CIG beginner's trip and a trip following the CIG "introduction to caving" class held at Recreational Equipment Company (REI). In general the cave is in good condition considering the level of visitation.

I see several issues facing Sullivan Cave. The first is how to effectively screen requesters. Some of the groups have been less than gentle to the cave leaving trash and human waste. Education can help, but the commitment to "leave no trace" caving varies from group to group. The second is also related to use. Not including the Liaisons, I have had as many as four requests for the same date with groups ranging up to 20 participants. This creates the potential for more groups approved on any given date than the available parking can support. A calendar was set up on the Sullivan Cave G-mail account but for the most part, it has not been used and by itself would not resolve the issue. Usage tends to peak in the summer but is constant year round.

I doubt that the location of all keys is known. I have several that are sent to and returned from approved trip leaders, one resides with the Property Manager, and the Grotto Liaisons have keys. Due to my distance from the cave, I am maintaining a

key with Anthony Owens so there is a key close to the cave in the case of an emergency (such as a lost key). There are probably more keys in circulation, but I currently have no way of identifying who has them. At some point we need to switch to a new series of locks. *[Editor: this is in progress]*.

### **Sullivan Property Report (Keith Dunlap)**

This was the IKC's 17th full year of ownership and we continue our long-term stewardship projects. The trees in the small field, planted in 2000, are doing fine with some reaching 8" in diameter and 30' tall. Those in the larger ridge-top field planted in 2001 have a more mix pattern with some species doing very well and others just holding their own. Fescue is more of a problem in the open areas in the larger field. There was no tree maintenance/improvements completed in 2015. During our Classified Forest inspection in early 2016, the District Forester suggested we might want to thin some of the Poplars in the smaller field to encourage the oaks. We also should walk the mature woods again to cut grape vines.

The "camping" area and the area out by the highway were mowed four times last year. Weather permitting; I hope to do some grass over-seeding in the camping area this fall.

The lane and parking areas are in good shape and no major maintenance is anticipated for 2016. I do hope to get some new crushed rock placed where the driveway intersects the highway as there is a 3" plus drop at the shoulder of the black-top (I keep hoping InDOT will add a new apron onto the driveway).

Last fall, I had to replace the 911 address sign post by the driveway, as it had gotten run over.

Several members took advantage of the camping area and firewood over the past year, but overall use seemed down compared to a few years back. We are discouraging campers from bringing their own firewood to reduce Emerald Ash Borer transportation, although EAB is now pretty widespread in Lawrence County. The porta-potty was serviced last fall.

Locks are being serviced by Paul Uglum, the new Cave Patron.

There were no major management problems or concerns encountered during 2015.

On the adjacent property to the east (owned by me), I finally finished cutting grape vines during the winter month. Some additional cleanup around the home site is needed and some earth grading is planned to restore the area. Overflow

parking is available there and I have been keeping an area mowed for alternative camping.

### **Wayne Cave Patron Report (Dave Everton)**

I've turned over a new leaf – a green one, that is! This report will tie my record of last year for my shortest ever.

Fifteen trips were requested and approved through me in 2015, and fourteen took place. As far as I know, every one of those 69 cavers who went in, also came out. The only other group who took trips was through the Near Normal Grotto. There were no mishaps reported. Remember, what happens in Wayne Cave *stays* in Wayne Cave, unless otherwise authorized by me.

Wayne Cave continues to be a source of enjoyment and pleasure for the average visitor. Thanks goes to the IKC for their many years of past protection and restoration, as well as regular continued protection and property access. In next year's report, I'll get to say that I also visited, but I'm getting ahead of myself..

### **Wayne Property Report (Robert Sollman)**

This will be the 13th year the IKC has owned Wayne Cave. For the 2015, multiple visits were made to the Wayne Cave property, including overnights, with no serious incidents reported.

Property Maintenance included:

- The clearing at the top of the hill has been left to grow naturally with the exception of glyphosate sprayed on invasive species (autumn olive, multiflora rose, etc...).
- Trash was removed along the road-frontage as well as the driveway.
- Several trips were made to the property for clearing the trail to the cave of down trees/branches, as well as weed-eating the trail.

Future Projects include:

- Installation of interior informational displays for Kiosk.
- A workday for invasive and grapevine control as well as Beech and Maple reduction.
- Continued visits to remove trash along the road-frontage and driveway and other routine maintenance of property.

### **Robinson Ladder Property (John Benton)**

2015 Property activities:

- Early January 2015 – Keith Dunlap and Jamie Winner spent about eight hours retracing the full perimeter survey of the Campbell tract, on the north side of the RLC Preserve. Locating a known pin set by the Jess Gwinn survey, several survey shots were taken setting seven steel t-posts along the north boundary line, marking each post with a white PVC cap for better visibility. Using Winner's survey equipment, a closure error of 1.4 feet on a 4200 foot loop back to the beginning was completed. This marks the north boundary with the last post set on the bluff high above Blue River. The temperature stayed in the single digits all day long.
- Also in early January – Three cavers were able to reopen and gain access to Breakdown Falls Cave near the upper field tract of the property. Chris Bell, Ryan Cox, and Larry Wyman reported a couple of tight squeezes and good air movement. This is a separate entrance/cave from Robinson Ladder Cave. It was noted this cave blew much steam when the air temperature hovered in the single digits.
- In March – Glenn Kotnik of the The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), Indiana Chapter, contacted Keith Dunlap about possibly planting 25-50 hybrid American chestnut seedlings on the property. Long time Indiana caver Carroll Ritter is a member of the Chestnut organization and plans to be involved. The property was looked at later in the year and it was decided best to wait until 2016 to plant the chestnuts during a volunteer day. Soil samples taken in early 2016 indicate the site selected in the upper field would be an excellent location.
- The six chestnut seedlings (the Dunstan hybrid variety) planted in April 2014 in the lower field appear to be growing well due to plentiful rains in 2015. They are easily visible by looking for the white vinyl tubes the seedlings are growing inside of to protect the trees from deer and other possible predators.
- Late May – Jamie Winner bush hogged approximately half of the lower field with his own tractor and equipment. Some areas had too much woody vegetation to safely mow and those areas were avoided. Jamie also mowed a few passes around the upper field, as well as the access lane from Highway 66 and the camping areas near the barn and parking spots. This marks several seasons that Jamie has done





the mowing on a volunteer basis, with his work and effort much appreciated by the IKC.

- June 12 – Keith Dunlap, Jamie Winner, and John Benton worked on replacing/rearranging the drive-in gate hinges near Highway 66 so that the gate opens more smoothly. Keith returned in September to make additional adjustments on the swing gate. A recent check in early March 2016 confirms the gate opens easily and clears the ground. Jamie and Keith installed a couple of PVC covers on fence posts that were missed from the January survey, and Jamie sprayed several tree trunks that had been marked on Tree of Heaven invasive trees on the property. More sprouts were noted, so future effort will probably be needed. Keith investigated more invasive grapevines that need to be cut, an ongoing process at RLC since we have had the property.
- Late June – John Benton works on cutting weeds and cutting vines growing on and around the barn in the upper field.
- The tract of land that was for sale on the Campbell tract's north boundary, either was sold or taken off the market, as the For Sale signs are no longer there.
- January 2016 – Bat census in RLC by Keith Dunlap (IKC), Tom Sollman (IKC), Tim Shier (IDNR biologist), and Cassie Hudson (IDNR biologist) find 9 bats total, 6 of which were thought to be Indiana bats. This is an increase from January 2014 when only one Big Brown bat was found.

**Future work:** April 2016 chestnut tree planting with TACF Chestnut Foundation of Indiana, mowing prior to, and follow up fencing off area to protect trees from deer. Continue to minimize grape vine growth, treat for tree of heaven invasives where seen, and continue to develop plans for upper and lower fields, bush hogging, all or in strips, or let vegetation succession with little intervention happen. Carla Striegel-Winner continues to gather information on this.

#### **RL Cave Patron Report (John Benton)**

- Late December/early Jan 2015 – Chris Bell, Ryan Cox, and Larry Wyman work to reopen Breakdown Falls Cave, near the upper field and were able to get back into the cave.
- June 2015 – A group of nine Indiana cavers

visit RLC. They may have found some new cave down the pits near the entrance.

- Robinson Ladder Cave itself continues to get light visitation.

#### **Shawnee Karst Preserve Report (Jerry Lewis)**

In 2015 the major event at the Shawnee Karst Preserve was the collapse of the entrance to Upper Twin Cave. Repeated heavy rains apparently de-stabilized the slope above the entrance, causing a massive earth slide that occurred during repeated episodes. Over the course of about three months during the spring and early summer the cave entrance, which had formerly been a hole at the base of a rock wall in the base of a large sinkhole, was completely buried. In addition to several tons of soil, the earth slide included large fallen logs, boulders, small trees and other vegetation from the hillside. The entrance was buried to the extent that its exact position could no longer be determined. After rains the sinkhole started to hold ponded water.

The IKC Board considered options for re-opening the entrance, which consisted of digging it out by hand or obtaining the assistance of a mechanical earth mover. A quote was obtained from a local landscaping company and the IKC Board allocated \$2,500 for excavation of the entrance. This was subsequently accomplished in November, 2015. A small Kubota track-loader was used to cut an access route from the rim of the sinkhole to the floor, and rip rap was placed on the uphill end of the access ramp to prevent sedimentation problems after the excavation was completed. Several hours of excavation was required to clear the majority of the soil from the earthslide. The soil from the sinkhole was laboriously hauled out of the floor and deposited in the upper rim where it would not readily wash back into the sinkhole. Straw matting and grass seed were placed on the slopes around the sink to assist in stabilization of the entrance area.

The entrance to the cave had been blocked by boulders. A workday entailed a party of cavers entering via the entrance at the boat dock in Spring Mill State Park to dig from below the obstruction, while another team dug from the sinkhole floor. This operation succeeded in reopening a narrow slit large enough for the cave party to exit. It was deemed necessary to remove the boulders from the cave entrance, so they were broken into smaller pieces and removed from the

cave. Straw bales were placed around the edge of the entrance to act as dams to prevent more soil from entering the cave. The cave entrance was completely restored by mid-December, 2015.

Other activities at Shawnee Karst Preserve included routine mowing of trails and parking areas. As in past years, trees continued to fall on the trails and required two episodes of chainsaw work to remove obstacles on the trails.

Planning for construction of a kiosk including a rocket-box bat house commenced. The bat house has been completed and installation is planned for 2016, along with further planning and possible construction of the kiosk.

### **Upper Twin Patron Report (Dave Everton)**

How often do cavers get to witness nature at work in the form of sinkhole collapses and blocked entrance? I suspect not very often, and thankfully so. That topic will likely be (and already has been) well-covered in past meetings and correspondence, so I won't go into detail of the Shawnee Karst Preserve Upper Twin entrance saga. However, it certainly affected visitation to the cave. Regardless, there were still four trips during 2015, with a total of 27 persons who partook of the pleasure. I have strong reason to believe the Property Manager (Jerry Lewis) will resume his past practice of making unreported trips, now that the entrance has been reopened. However, thankfully I'm not responsible for his actions!

There were no mishaps reported to me, although there is the case of the missing folding shovel, which I hope to solve and restore to its owner very soon.

The popularity of visiting the IKC entrance to the cave has and will likely continue to increase since the DNR has approved use of their entrance during the time when their boat tours aren't running. Thanks goes to the IKC for cave and property protection, as well as cave access.

### **Suicide Cave Patron Report (Kevin Smith)**

On April 26th, the cave gate was reconditioned to correct issues reported by the previous Cave Patron. For several years, groups visiting the cave reported that the gate was difficult to fully close, resulting in difficulty applying the padlock. A grinder was used to smooth surfaces of the side plates along the hinged side of the gate as well as the lock assembly. After removing some material, the gate could be fully closed and was able to smoothly engage the strike plate

such that the lock hasp could be more easily applied. The surfaces that were ground down were then re-primed and painted. Debris that had accumulated around the base of the gate was also removed. Thank you to Keith Dunlap, Tom Sollman, and Jerry Lewis for their efforts to improve the cave gate's operation.

Two separate groups, totaling twenty cavers, visited the cave in 2015. The groups represented the Central Indiana Grotto (CIG) and the Caving Club at Indiana University (CCIU). There were no reports of any issues or concerns from the groups visiting the cave.

The IKC wishes to thank Charlie and Will Biel, stewards of the Arrow Hill Ranch Forestry & Wildlife Sanctuary, for allowing the IKC to manage visitation and the conservation of this great natural resource.

### **Orangeville Rise Report (Steve Lockwood)**

The property continues to attract trash due to the large road frontage and seasonal flooding, but it is remaining relatively clean between trash pickups. Trash was collected from the property in March 2015, and November 2015. Every cleaning of the property yielded a large garbage bag full of trash or more. The trash collected included glass bottles, plastic bottles, plastic jugs, Styrofoam cups, plastic bags, aluminum cans, boards, and etc.

The fence built in 2003 on the western side of the property has collected more flood debris, but remains straight and structurally sound. The high strength wire in the fence will eventually need to be stretched again because it is slowly losing tension. A few trees are starting to grow up in the fence also. The concrete property markers installed in 2004 are still intact on the southeast corner and northwest corner of the property. The property marker on the east side of the property near the bridge over the creek that enters the channel to the rise still has not been located after being washed away in 2011. The erosion on the west bank of the Orangeville Rise streambed at the intersection of the Lost River streambed seems to have decreased in the direction of the fence posts along the west property line.

Most of the trash in a small ravine located on the west side of the property has been removed such as old bicycles, fencing, boards, posts, a lawn mower and other items. An old basketball goal post and some tile still remain and should be removed from the small ravine. Also a small section of fence at the end of the ravine where

it meets the edge of the Orangeville Rise stream bed needs to be removed.

Activities planned for 2016 include biannual trash pickups, and cleaning the post, tile, and fence from the small ravine located on the west side of the property.

#### **Shiloh Patron Report (James Adams)**

The Indiana Karst Conservancy has continued, with the permission of the landowner, to permit up to six recreational trips per calendar year into Shiloh Cave for the general caving community. Each trip is limited to ten participants with three vehicles on the property. During 2015, only four of the allowed six trips were taken into the cave, totaling 31 cavers. No requests for visitation were denied. The trips were taken in June, August (two), and October.

#### **Indian Creek CE Report (Jamie Winner)**

The annual inspection of the conservation easement was performed on June 12, 2015 after informing all landowners.

The previous issue with excessive mowing of Lot #9 appeared to be resolved for the most part. The entire lower portion of the lot in question had vegetation regrowth. There was a slight amount of excessive mowing in the upper area next to the easement boundary, which I photographed and indicated in my report. There was also a slight amount of excessive mowing in Lot #10, which I also photographed and indicated on my report. Two PVC t-post covers were found to be missing and were replaced during the inspection. These are used to more easily identify the easement boundary on each lot.

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...continued from page 9.

was asked by the collection manager was “I guess you’ll want to see the squids?” Since I was there to work with crustaceans I had no clue why I was being asked about squids. She explained that author Dan Brown had pulled strings and been allowed to visit the MSC to look for locations to use in a book. He saw the large tanks used to store specimens of giant squids and they became the scene of the murder for his book *The Lost Symbol*. So I looked at the squids and they are indeed pretty neat.

The crustaceans are stored in large rooms with ten foot high shelves nested together to conserve space. Cranking a wheel on the end of the shelf units opened up an aisle where I’d walk surrounded by thousands of isopod specimens, some sitting in their vials of ethanol for well over a century. It’s gratifying to look on the shelves and see all the species I’ve described and named over the years... there was a jar with all of the known specimens of *Caecidotea dunlaporum* that I’d deposited the previous year. Each day I’d pull a couple jars of isopods off the shelf for that day’s study and head back to a day of staring through a microscope.

Other researchers were there. The lady in the lab space next to mine was from the USDA. and was extracting DNA samples from crabs. Apparently one of the most common sources of food fraud is unscrupulous suppliers selling things that aren’t what they’re labelled. So the USDA is de-

veloping high-tech methods for determining if our crab meat actually came from a crab, and which species, since some are endangered and catching them prohibited.

One day I needed a century old publication and the staff told me they were stored in a different area with the “large specimen” collection. And that I should take my camera. The publications I wanted were stored in file cabinets along one wall of an enormous room, but much of the space was filled with things like elephant skulls and crocodiles. There were big game trophies – like moose heads that would hang over a fireplace – tagged with the collector: Teddy Roosevelt.

One day as I went through a jar with dozens of carefully labelled specimens, I found three vials of particular interest. They had been collected by biologist Leslie Hubricht on a trip through southern Indiana in 1939. On September 1, he had collected isopods (*Lirceus fontinalis*) from Sharp’s Spring (across the valley from Wyandotte Cave) and the following day he collected the same species from the Twin Caves sinkhole in Spring Mill State Park and Shiloh Cave. I examined the specimens and carefully returned them to their storage jars, where they will reside for posterity among all the other treasures.

I plan to return later this year to continue a project for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and rest assured that all of our nation’s treasures, even the crustaceans, are safe in the care of the Smithsonian Institution.



# INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

## Income/Expense Statement From January 1, 2016 to March 31, 2016

### INCOME:

Dues Apportionment and Residuals	702.50	
Donations - General	3,453.30	
Donations - Land Acquisition Fund	865.00	
Interest	<u>252.76</u>	
		\$5,273.56

### EXPENSES:

IKC Update (printing, production, mailing)	406.88	
Education / Outreach	152.54	
Stewardship/Conservation	196.93	
Business (website, CC fees, etc)	153.08	
Transfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments	<u>1,073.23</u>	
		(\$1,982.66)

NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD: \$3,290.90

## Balance Sheet March 31, 2016

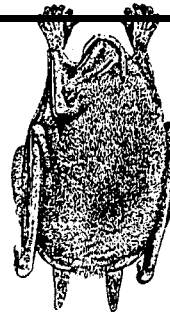
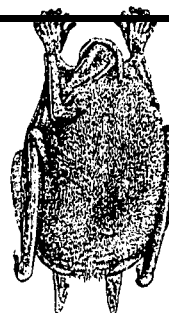
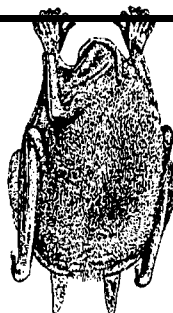
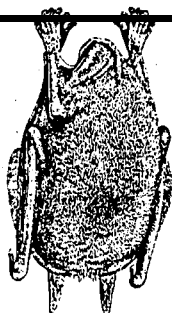
### ASSETS:

Cash in Checking / Saving Accounts / CDs	148,022.63	
Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (73.48 acres)	162,000.00	
Shawnee Karst Preserve (50.31 acres)	105,000.00	
Wayne Cave Preserve (31.85 acres)	85,000.00	
Sullivan Cave Preserve (28.00 acres)	72,000.00	
Buddha Karst Nature Preserve (36.84 acres)	29,000.00	
Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve (3.01 acres)	7,000.00	
Indian Creek Conservation Easement (valued at \$1/acre)	<u>13.16</u>	
		<u>\$608,035.79</u>

### FUNDS & OPERATING EXCESS:

Land Acquisition Restricted Fund	37,043.95	
Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (192 members)	4,410.00	
Stewardship Endowment Restricted Fund	56,109.23	
Previous General Fund (total)	47,181.71	
Net Excess (Deficit) This Period	<u>3,290.90</u>	
Current General Fund (unrestricted)		50,472.61
Current General Fund (committed)	600.00	
Real estate liquidity (basis value)	<u>460,000.00</u>	

Total Liabilities & Operating Excess \$608,035.79



# IKC ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, March 19, 2016, 10:30 AM EDT – Ellettsville, Indiana

## Board Members Present:

Jerry Lewis, President  
Sue Vernier, Secretary  
Keith Dunlap, Treasurer  
Joy Baiz  
Bruce Bowman  
Dave Haun (proxied by Salisa Lewis)  
Everett Pulliam  
Bob Sergesketter  
Kevin Smith  
Tom Sollman  
Carla Striegel-Winner  
Bob Vandeventer  
Richard Vernier  
Jamie Winner

## Board Members Absent:

Bruce Silvers

The meeting was called to order by President Jerry Lewis at 10:30 AM at the Ellettsville Branch Library in Ellettsville, Indiana. All those present in the room shared introductions.

## December Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the December Board meeting were approved as published in the March 2016 IKC Update.

## E-Mail Motions

A motion to accept the slate of candidates available for election at the Annual Business meeting was made by Dave Haun on February 2, 2016 and seconded by Joy Baiz, also on February 2, 2016. The motion was then suspended by President Lewis to allow for further discussion and additions or amendments as necessary. Subsequently, Bruce Silvers contacted Lewis and requested that his name be taken off the ballot since there was a full slate without him. This was done.

Having heard no further discussion, on February 7, 2016, Lewis requested confirmation from Dave Haun and Joy Baiz that the amendment to their motion and second was acceptable. Haun and Baiz responded that the amendment was acceptable.

On the evening of February 7, 2016 Lewis called for an email vote to accept the slate of candidates (listed below). On February 8, 2016 the Board voted unanimously to accept the slate and President Lewis declared the motion passed.

Slate of candidates:

President: Jerry Lewis  
Secretary: Sue Vernier  
Treasurer: Keith Dunlap

## Directors (four positions):

Danyelle Green  
Everett Pulliam  
Carla Striegel-Winner  
Jamie Winner

## Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Keith Dunlap reported cash assets totaling \$146,286.90 and land assets totaling \$460,000.00 for total assets of \$606,286.90. Funds include Stewardship: \$55,901.00; Deferred Dues: \$4,095.00; Land Acquisition: \$36,793.95; and General Fund (unrestricted): \$49,496.95. The IKC membership currently stands at 191. The 2016 renewals stand at 148 with 43 remaining to renew. Keith sent a copy of the IKC's 2015 IRS 990 to all Directors for review and he received one response/correction. He will submit it to the IRS shortly.

## 2016 Elections

President Jerry Lewis requested nominations from the floor. None were received. Mark Milne was appointed as Election Teller. Keith Dunlap made the motion to close nominations, seconded by Everett Pulliam, motion was accepted. Mark will tally the ballots and results will be reported later in the meeting.

## Buddha Karst Nature Preserve

Jeff Cody, Cave Patron, has submitted his annual report. He discussed the collapse at the climb up just inside the entrance to Buddha and recommends that a 24-foot ladder should now be used. Jeff considers the collapse a blessing in disguise as it will help prevent accidents at what was the less than desirable climb up. Keith Dunlap gave an overview of George Cesnik's Property Manager report. Items mentioned were graffiti removal, tree spraying, trail mowing, and gate post replacement for the road gate. Future maintenance will likely be the removal of the Ash tree overhanging the road gate, county road, and power lines (it's dying from the Emerald Ash Borer). The Oak trees planted in 2006 are doing very well, as are most of the trees planted in the other years.

## Orangeville Rise

Steve Lockwood, Property Manager, has submitted a detailed annual report. Typical activity is ongoing trash removal. The property marker on the east side of the property that was washed away has never been found.

## Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve

John Benton's Cave Patron and Property Manager reports were submitted. Special recognition was given to Jamie Winner for his volunteer labor mowing significant portions of the preserve's open areas, the parking and camping area, and the access road with his own



mower. Keith Dunlap and Jamie Winner surveyed and marked the north boundary bordering an adjacent property that has been periodically for sale. Keith reported on the January bat census—historically 400 or so bats occupied RLC before White Nose Syndrome. The census found 9 bats which was a 900% increase over the one bat found in 2014.

#### **Shawnee Karst Preserve**

Property Manager, Jerry Lewis, and Cave Patron, Dave Everton, submitted reports. Jerry discussed excavation of the collapsed entrance of Upper Twin Cave. The cave is now open. Keith Dunlap downloaded data from the temperature and stream level datalogger. Results will follow later.

#### **Sullivan Cave Preserve**

Paul Uglum has submitted his Cave Patron report. Keith Dunlap pronounced that Paul is doing an excellent job in tracking visitations data. The latch on the cave gate needs work and Keith will try to take care of it. Keith gave highlights from his Property Manager report. The property is now in maintenance mode regarding mowing, porta-john pump outs, and care of the trees. The Classified Forest inspection took place. The drop where the driveway intersects with the highway is still an issue. Keith reminded everyone again that there is a blind hill at the pullout from the property to the highway, so be careful.

#### **Wayne Cave Preserve**

Dave Everton, Cave Patron, submitted his report; there were a goodly number of trips. Tom Sollman commented on the Property Manager report submitted by Robert Sollman. The property is in maintenance mode, the autumn olive removal continues, and Tom is still working on gathering material for the information signs in the kiosk.

#### **Indian Creek Conservation Easement**

Jamie Winner submitted his report. The conservation easement inspection took place. Excessive mowing on a particular lot was noted and a certified letter sent with photos. Jamie's second inspection revealed the mowing was reduced or stopped altogether.

#### **Shiloh Cave**

James Adams, Cave Patron, submitted his report. Jerry Lewis commented that Shiloh is on the edge of a quarry and the owners allow six trips a year, though only four recreational trips were taken at the quarry entrance this past year. Tom Sollman has begun his crayfish census trips. There was no noticeable problem with trash, etc., at the "church" entrance (it's actually behind the church, not on their property).

#### **Suicide Cave**

Kevin Smith commented on his Cave Patron report. The gate repair was successful and more people are us-

ing the cave again.

#### **Bylaws Committee Formation**

Jerry Lewis observed that the bylaws are somewhat fuzzy as to whether nominations should be accepted from the floor during the annual meeting. The usual interpretation is to open the floor to additional nominations at the annual meeting. Jerry appointed a committee (Bruce Bowman, Keith Dunlap, Tom Rea, Jerry Lewis, Tom Sollman) to work on removing the ambiguity and to put together a proposal. The committee will also review the rest of the bylaws to see if other changes are needed, since it has been a dozen years since the last revision. Bruce Bowman will be chair of the committee.

#### **Hoosier National Forest post-MOU Direction**

Jerry Lewis opened discussion about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Hoosier National Forest. At the December 2015 quarterly meeting the HNF staff informed us that the old MOU was long past expiration. Keith Dunlap gave a brief history overview: In the early 1990s or before, the IKC became involved with the HNF evaluation of the forest's caves and karst. The IKC formed a karst committee. The HNF was systematically searched for caves and there were ten plus years of producing data. The Indiana Cave Survey was also involved in early 2000s and the properly documented information was added to the HNF's GIS system. Later, changes in HNF personnel and White Nose Syndrome lowered the motivation to perform volunteer work on the forest.

Richard Vernier talked about how cavers filled out cave resource forms and submitted recommended management plans to HNF management, but little happened. The intent of the federal National Cave Resources Protection Act was for all caves to be nominated as significant. Bruce Bowman believes only one management plan was ever approved and it was unclear how many, if any, of the nominated caves were declared "significant". The cavers wanted 200-foot setbacks from logging, but the HNF wanted considerably less. These management prescriptions created more work than the HNF had personnel to handle. At present, cave entrances are protected; but sinkhole management is uncertain.

Jerry is the present liaison with HNF. After discussion, the board reached the conclusion that there was not any benefit to initiating another MOU. Jamie Winner suggested that any caver interested in doing cave work on the HNF can request a permit under the auspices of IKC.

#### **2016 Election Results**

Jerry Lewis announced the election results as received from the Election Teller. All nominated Officers and Directors were approved (69 ballots submitted). Bruce Silvers is exiting the Board after serving ten years and Jerry will be thanking him for his faithful work on the



Board. Danyele Green will be our newest Director. New terms begin April 1.

### Stewardship Activities

Keith Dunlap advised that the upper field at Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve has been selected for planting 50 restoration hybrid chestnuts supplied by The American Chestnut Foundation. Tree planting will be April 16 at 11AM EDT. Everyone should bring shovels and equipment. The area will be temporarily (five to six years) fenced to keep the deer out. A total of 200 mixed tree species will be planted!

Caving Club at IU mentor Danyelle Green advised that about twenty CCIU students built thirty bat boxes and she presented four boxes to the IKC to place on their properties (probably Shawnee Karst Preserve, Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve, Sullivan Cave Preserve, and Wayne Cave Preserve).

### Land Acquisition Activities

Keith advises nothing new to report.

### IDNR Cave Access Update

Jerry Lewis, Keith Dunlap, and Dave Everton discussed possible changes (including adding more caves) to the Interim Cave Access Program, but the DNR said no, and the IKC signed the new two-year agreement extension with no changes made to the caves being accessed at Spring Mill and Cave River Valley.

Jerry Lewis discussed the re-opening of Wyandotte cave on July 9 and the Facebook posts by Ginger Murphy on the subject. Discussion centered on the differences in trips within "Big" versus "Little" Wyandotte. Keith believes the immediate priorities for the O'Bannon State Park property manager seem to be several campground projects at the park, rather than the cave re-opening. The status of the IKC's involvement is even less clear now, than previously. The old visitor center will be torn down and replaced.

Richard Vernier noted that the question of indemnification of volunteers leading any tours still needs to be addressed.

### Indiana Cave Symposium April 30 at Crawford County Fairgrounds

Keith Dunlap made a motion to allocate \$200 to cover one half of the cost for the symposium. Bruce Bowman seconds. Motion carries.

### Prospective Gate for Sauerkraut Cave for USFWS

Jerry Lewis talked about the Louisville cave beetle that occurs in Sauerkraut Cave in the city of Louisville, KY. The cave contains the largest surviving population of this beetle. The USFWS would like to install a gate on the cave. Jerry sees the merits of protecting the cave and also sees this as a potential fundraiser for the IKC. Keith Dunlap feels the gate will likely be vandalized; but he is willing to give it a try if the USFWS wants to fund the project. The gate would be the width of the Wyandotte cave gate, but not as tall. It will take a number of IKC volunteers. No decision needs to be made at this time. Jerry is offering this for discussion and a heads up notification. Jerry indicated the IKC should only do this project if there is a cave access plan for caver access and after contacting the Louisville Grotto to assure their buy-in and assistance.

### Items from the Floor

Kevin Smith announced another \$1000 donation from the Hulman Memorial Way Foundation.

### Next Meeting

The June meeting will be at Shawnee Karst Preserve on June 4, 2016, at 3PM EDT.

### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Vernier, IKC Secretary

## 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.

