



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.

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ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING REMINDER

SATURDAY, MARCH 27th, 10:00 AM EDT

THIS WILL BE A VIRTUAL MEETING

The Annual Business meeting is for the purpose of the Executive Board elections. Annual reports from the IKC Cave Patrons and Property Managers are also presented. And as always, the meeting is for members and other interested persons to have an open forum for talking about caves, 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 meeting is informal, and everyone is encouraged to attend and participate. The IKC Board wants your input.

Preliminary Agenda: Elections; Cave Patrons and Property Manager 2020 reports; Recent work projects and the promotion of upcoming projects at our various preserves; Financial reports; Investment Committee update; Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion fund-raising wrap-up; Wayne Cave EQIP funding contract update; Election Process ad hoc Committee status report; Membership questionnaire/feedback; Cave/land acquisition activities; and more....

Note COVID precautions: The meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom. The meeting credential information will be e-mails to all members a few days prior to the meeting.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

March 14 – Wayne Cave Preserve Work Day (see page 11)

March 27 – IKC Annual Business meeting (see above)

April 18 – Wayne Cave Preserve Work Day (see page 11)

May 1 – Orangeville Rise Preserve Work Day (see page 9)

June ?? – IKC Quarterly E-Board meeting (place and time TBD)

For more information on the Indiana Karst Conservancy, visit our website at 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. Memberships and donations can also be made by credit card using our on-line services on our website (see the Join Us! tab in the menu) or this [link](#).

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...

After *thirteen years* of being President, with time before that on the Board, I have now decided to step aside. I believe this is my 52nd (and longest) Rambling... and for this last one, I thought I would summarize some of the highlights from my time at the helm, as well as a few other observations.

The thing that everyone thinks of as progress for the IKC seems to be property acquisitions, so I'll start there. Perhaps the first one was the simplest, with a 33-acre expansion of the Robison Ladder Preserve in 2010. It was simple and painless. I met Allen Pursell out in Corydon and signed some papers, and that was everything involved. Thus, The Nature Conservancy signed over the property to us... they purchased it, and then just handed it to the IKC. It doesn't get much better than that.

The acquisition that I am most proud of was completed in 2012 with the purchase of an entrance to Upper Twin Cave. That property became the focal point of the 50-acre Shawnee Karst Preserve, with its large population of the Indiana cavefish and many other rare cave species. It's also a fun cave (if you like water) and allows a great through trip to the downstream entrance in Spring Mill State Park. In 2020, another 17.5 acres was added to the Shawnee Karst Preserve, capturing another large section of the cave's river passage.

In Monroe County, the IKC completed two property expansions at the Wayne Cave property. These two property expansions, in 2014 and 2018, added another 57 acres to the original 20-acre preserve. That also puts us almost within a stone's throw (230 feet to be exact) of the 43-acre NSS Richard Blenz Nature Preserve. My vision for the IKC has been to work towards preserves that encompass significant pieces of our karst landscape, rather than just postage stamps around cave entrances. While I've been

President, the IKC has started to see the realization of this goal at Shawnee Karst Preserve, where the IKC is closing the gap between our property and Spring Mill State Park, as well as at the Wayne Preserve.

The 2019 purchase of the entrance to Lowry Cave was somewhat of an exception to the goal of building large preserves, since the property with the entrance was only about 6 acres. That said, it seemed like a great place to make the IKC's first cave acquisition in the southeastern karst. By the standards of that region, which lies almost entirely under glacial till plains, Lowry is a huge cave. The preserve includes the large, scenic entrance of the cave and a section of bluff-line along Graham Creek that might well be the most ecologically significant piece of surface property that the IKC owns.

To me an equally important accomplishment has been the establishment of better safety protocols and emergency planning for our preserves. This was inspired after a group of cavers – almost all of them friends of mine – were trapped in Binkley Cave in December, 2016. Sitting on the surface above the cave entrance with the family of one of the persons trapped in the cave, it occurred to me that the IKC was ill-prepared to deal with a similar large rescue on one of our preserves. Luckily, everyone emerged from Binkley alive that night, but it required a significant rescue during which a number of people risked their lives to bring out the cavers trapped by floodwaters. Over the next two years, the IKC established safety protocols for all of our preserves. Contact information needed during an emergency is now posted at the entrance of each cave, so the IKC has taken a step forward in dealing with future crises occurring in one of our caves. Like other things in life, hope for the best, but plan for the worst.

Besides those highlights, over the course of



the thirteen years many other things were accomplished. Some of it was perfunctory. I led fifty meetings during which we pushed the business of the IKC forward and passed countless motions. I always joked that I “campaigned” on the platform of keeping meetings under two hours in length, and for the most part, I kept my campaign promise (although in reality no one wanted the job of President, and thus I never had to campaign).

I think one of the most important things that has been done was work on improvement of our preserves, in particular a concerted effort to conduct the eradication of noxious non-native invasive plants. Invasive plant control is slow, difficult work that brings new meaning to the expression “sweat equity”. Anyone who has done much invasive plant control on one of our preserves understand that not only sweat, but blood, is usually involved because of the preponderance of thorns on invasive plants. The IKC currently has a grant to conduct invasive plant control on the Wayne Preserve, so if anyone wants to get their hands dirty volunteering there are plenty of opportunities.

This brings up an idea for a way the IKC might want to consider exploring in moving forward. Recently, we seriously considered acquisition of the property containing the entrance to Ranard School Cave. The Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) offered significant financial and personnel assistance to the IKC if we decided to move forward with purchasing the property. In the end we decided against it, but the idea of partnering with CILTI was intriguing and I believe the IKC should consider exploring more partnerships with other land trusts. For many years The Nature Conservancy has been our most significant conservation land trust partner, and has put their proverbial money where their mouth is. The IKC has gone to the TNC financial trough many times, for example, they wrote the IKC a check for \$50,000 toward the purchase of the Shawnee Karst Preserve. It is germane to point out that I don’t recall anyone from TNC ever asking for anything in return or making any criticism of how the IKC managed its properties. Perhaps we should look at how other land trusts might become partners that would expand the reach of our organization. Beyond the financial ramifications of partnerships, the IKC appears to have reached a tipping point in which our ability to acquire properties has surpassed our volunteer base for managing them. Partnerships might be a way to obtain more assistance in both purchasing and managing properties.

Another option in dealing with managing properties is to look at ways to decrease the amount of maintenance required at some of our properties. For example, there is a rather extensive trail loop on the Shawnee Karst Preserve – well over a mile long – and I don’t recall ever hearing anyone say that they had used one of the trails. That’s a lot of trail to maintain that could be eliminated. It’s usually mowed two to three times during the warm months of each year, along with occasionally cutting fallen trees off the trail with a chainsaw. Only a few hundred feet between the parking area and the cave entrance are usually used by visitors. Similarly, the path from the parking area at the Buddha Karst Preserve and the cave entrance is only a few hundred feet. How often does anyone walk the entire one-mile loop trail around the preserve? Yes, the trails are nice, but if no one wants to volunteer to mow them in the future, something is going to have to change.

And how did I become the IKC President? When Dick Vernier decided to step down as President in 2007, he asked me if I would be willing to consider taking on the job. I remember it well... we were having an IKC board meeting at our home and Dick and I were standing on the front porch. I was taken completely off-guard, having never even considered being President. During the same conversation he also asked me if I would be willing to travel to Washington DC to represent the IKC at a meeting at the US Department of Agriculture. Needless to say, it was quite the surprising conversation. As a result, I did go to DC for the meeting, and did become President. Now thirteen years later, one of my last acts that I wanted to perform as President was to find someone suitable and willing to take over the reins. At the end of the December IKC meeting, I surprised Matt Selig, as much as Dick Vernier had surprised me, when I recommended to the IKC Board that I thought Matt would be a fitting successor.

My choice was not made lightly. I thought that the best option was to select someone who had past or present experience sitting on the IKC board, and I’d had my eye on Matt for a while. For starters, he is an active caver with decades of experience in the Indiana karst. Matt also has prior leadership experience at the helm of another (non-caving) organization. In considering the possibility of taking on the role of President, Matt and I have had a couple of in-depth conversations about what’s involved. The only thing



most people see me do is the meetings, and few even see that. There is a lot more than that, and Matt has given careful consideration and a lot of thought to everything we discussed. I think that's a good sign. He's going to be a different kind of president than I was. My background is in science and I think the IKC has profited from it. Matt's background leans more towards business, and considering what I'm going to be discussing in the next paragraph, I think that's going to be important.

For the last few months there has been a rumor that a change was coming to the IKC. Here's what that's about.... I was contacted last fall by an attorney for the estate of Gale and Ray Beach and was informed that the Beach's had left a bequest of \$400,000 to the Indiana Karst Conservancy. Yes, wow! Not being one to count my chickens before they are hatched, I wanted to wait a bit to announce this. There was going to be a 120-day legally mandated waiting period (for a trust to be contested), and when I re-contacted the attorney last week, they informed me that the waiting period was now ending and that we would be issued a check shortly. Ray, an old-time Indiana caver and IKC member, had apparently liked what he saw of the IKC management, and updated his and Gale's Living Trust a couple years ago to include us. Apparently at least someone liked what they saw during my tenure. I have no doubt that there will be a lot of discussion about this bequest in coming months. For the moment, I'll finally be able to see if anyone reads these Ramblings, as I suspect this item might receive some attention.

It is a significant infusion of cash and there are a lot of options of what the IKC could do with it. The first idea that might come to some people is to purchase a big-ticket piece of land. Wouldn't Wyandotte Cave make a nice IKC preserve? Ok, maybe not, but there will be other opportunities for nice property acquisitions. Keep in mind that \$400,000 sounds like a lot of money, but at, say \$5,000 an acre, that's only one 80-acre property. The IKC isn't going to start a land empire based on this bequest, but certainly a nice property could be purchased. Remember that when the IKC purchases a property, a concomitant amount of funding is transferred to our Stewardship Endowment Fund, and funds are also needed for infrastructure development of things like constructing access lanes, parking area, etc. And there are other options besides buying land... other orga-

nizations do things differently. For example, the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias funds significant grants to individuals for caves and karst science research – typically tens of thousands of dollars each year. There are undoubtedly lots of possibilities to consider. To employ a quote from *Game of Thrones*, “I wish you good fortune...”

Finally, what am I going to do with myself post-presidency? When I announced at the December board meeting that I would not be running for another term, I was asked if I would be willing to continue in the role of a conventional Board member. Most past-Presidents have done this, but I've lived and breathed the IKC for a long time, and I'm ready to do something different. News apparently travels quickly and I was almost immediately approached about taking a position on the Board of Directors of the Karst Waters Institute (KWI), an organization with more of an international scope. One of the missions of KWI is doing workshops of various sorts, and that's right down my alley, so I suspect I may be on the road doing karst invertebrate education. I am also looking forward to expanding my work at the Smithsonian Institution. Last month I submitted a book manuscript on cave isopods for publication by Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, and I hope it won't be the last. I've also been working a lot for several years with the karst program of the Virginia Natural Heritage Program – and in 2021 it has become a full-time job. And, of course there's the world subterranean isopod molecular phylogenetics project that I'm working on in Lyon. Thanks to COVID-19 I haven't been to France for over a year, and it's time to get back to continue the molecular genetics work. Suffice it to say, I have lots of ways to remain entertained, I won't be bored.

In closing, I want to thank all the members who supported my work as President over these last thirteen years. In particular, I want to thank my best buddies Tom Sollman and Keith Dunlap – we've spent a lot of time working together on IKC preserves over the years as well as a variety of other projects. I'll also be remaining in touch with Dick and Sue Vernier, my birding buddies. And maybe Carla can become Property Manager at the Shawnee Karst Preserve and get rid of the rubber pond liner (a bit of an inside joke). Au revoir mes amis, je vous souhaite bonne chance.

Jerry Lewis

NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ Members should have recently received a questionnaire with their renewal/election mailing. While the Board had a long list of potential questions, it was decided to limit the size and scope of the survey (thus only eight questions) to focus on what our members think should be our priorities as an organization, and some feed-back on “how we are doing” related to member services, involvement, and responsiveness. If you have not already done so, and wish to provide input, we would appreciate you completing this survey, either by mailing back the paper form, or completing the questionnaire online (at the URL given on the paper form – we are not listing the link here as it is for members-only).
- ❑ The IKC website was recently migrated from the NSS’s old server to a new host server. While this switch-over was long planned by the NSS, their migration timing kept moving, and the IKC finally received a hard deadline of December 31 to get our sub-domain moved. However, the technical aspect of the migration were beyond our internal skills, so we solicited assistance and very fortunately Raymond Moul was familiar with the required software and facilitated the move. Thanks to Raymond, along with Robert Sollman and Bruce Bowman for the seamless transition.
- ❑ The IKC did a “mini” fund-raiser last December. Cindy Rothrock, a supporter of the IKC, offered to donate processed persimmon pulp to the IKC to re-sell. She also offered to “wholesale” honey from some of her hives for the IKC to retail for a “profit”. Because the items could not be easily shipped, the offer was sent out to a limited list of IKC members and supporters in the Indianapolis and Bloomington areas so the goods could be hand delivered. In total, 37 two-cup packets of pulp and ten quarters of honey were sold to a dozen customers, netting \$366.
- ❑ As has been noted in the past, the IKC annual dues (\$15/year) revenue do not completely cover all of the IKC’s baseline operating expenses and obligations. These baseline expenses include printing and mailing our quarterly newsletter, our general liability and business insurance premiums, our property taxes, routine stewardship activities, and other miscellaneous business expenses. Thus, we greatly appreciate the additional donations many of our members make beyond their dues to supplement and support the IKC, and the many other projects that the organization completes. During 2020, forty-five individuals/couples and five organizations made general donations beyond their dues totaling \$3,058. Donors include John Ahlberg, Miriam Ash, Ted Bice, Don Bohling, Dayton Boyd, Jeremy Brisch, Larry Bundy, Thomas Chenier, Jeff Cody, Patti Cummings, Laura Demarest, John Dimit, Dave Everton, Jeff Farr, Daniel Gary, Chris Gibson, Barbara Hanka, Tim Heppner, Tem Hornaday, Glenn Kotnik, Ed LaRock, Marcella Larsh, Jerry and Salisa Lewis, Aaron Marney, George Mattson, Jane and Lynn Miller, Marc Milne, Carl & Louie Nelson, Ken Nisly-Nagele, Ernie and Jacqueline Payne, Joe Powers, Russel Pusilo, Tom Rea, Krista Reeves, Charles Rex, Kelle Reynolds, Wes Roeder, Ralph Sawyer, Gordon Smith, Bruce Trotter, Aaron Valandra, Dick and Sue Verniers, Chris Wadsworth, Norbert Welch, Scott Worpell, Bluespring Caverns, Cleveland Grotto, Greater Cincinnati Grotto, Near Normal Grotto, and Northern Indiana Grotto. The overall number of donors and the total donations were down a little in 2020 compared to the prior year, but part of that was due to back-to-back land acquisition fund-raisers in 2020.
- ❑ The IKC also maintains a Cave/Land Acquisition *restricted* fund which is used exclusively to accumulate resources for our acquisition activities. In 2020 we solicited donations to acquire the Lowry Karst Preserve and the Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion with eighty-three individuals and nine organizations contributing \$41,317. Donors include Joshua Abdulla, Gretchen Anderson, Miriam Ash, Joy Baiz, John Benton, Bruce Bowman, Dayton Boyd, George Brutchen, Pat Burns, Mark and Susan Clark, Jeff Cody, Barb Coons, Patti Cummings, Mark Deebel, Laura Demarest, John Dimit, Jim Duncker, Keith Dunlap, Scott Frosch, Sam Frushour, Allen Goodcase, Jeff Gosnell, Jeffery Gosnell, Daniel Gray, Danyele Green, Michael Gullett, Barbara Hanka, Dave Haun, Marlin Heinlein, Tim Heppner, Shawn Hogbin, David Hughes, Goni Iskali, Kevin Johnson, Servaas Labs, Jerry and Salisa Lewis, Richard Lunseth, Danny McDowell, Thomas and Kim Metzgar, Jon Miller, Marc Milne, Bill Morrow, Stanley Nieder, Nathan Pate, Ernie and Jacqueline Payne, Matt Pelsor, Gene and Jennifer Pelter, Joe Powers, Kevin Rasmus, Tom Rea, Kelle Reynolds, Carroll Ritter, Gary Roberson, Cindy



Sandeno, Ralph Sawyer, Gordon Smith, Kevin Smith, Robert Sollman, Tom Sollman, Ty Spatta, Kevin Strunk, Wes and Kristen Terrell, Dave Tibbets, Bill Tozer, Bruce Trotter, Richard and Sue Vernier, Paul Webb, Stan Weinzapfel, Norbert Welch, Rich Whisler, Carla Winner-Striegel and Jaime Winner, Gerry Woltering, Scott Worpell, Kevin Wyatt, BRS III LLC, Central Indiana Grotto, Dayton Underground Grotto, Evansville Metro Grotto, Indiana Caverns, National Speleological Foundation, National Speleological Society, The Nature Conservancy, and Windy City Grotto.

- ☐ The IKC has gained eight new members in the last quarter. Welcome Charles Coughlin, Andrew Coyle, Tymme Laun, Andy Lemon, Mark Longacre, Kevin McKelvey, Sherrill Owens, and Sam Richey. The IKC membership currently stands at 239.

SHAWNEE KARST PRESERVE EXPANSION

by Keith Dunlap

As reported in the last *IKC Update*, the IKC took ownership of the 17.5 acres tract north of, and adjacent to, our 50 acre Shawnee Karst Preserve in Lawrence County on November 19th, 2020. At that point in time, we were about \$20,000 short of our \$78,500 goal. Since then, all of our grants have been received and thanks to a very successful year-end matching challenge by SerVaas Labs (the producer of Bar Keepers Friend cleansing products) and many generous donors, we exceeded our goal by almost 10%. All extra funds will roll-over into our restricted cave acquisition fund to prime the pump for our next project.

The IKC will continue to accept donations towards the Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion project until an informal cut-off of March 31. Anyone donating until then will be listed on our website donor's list and included on our permanent kiosk display at the property, once constructed.

If you would like to see this new property, the street address is 3918 SR 60 E, Mitchell Indiana (about 1/2 mile east of the entrance to Spring Mill, on the south side of the road). Just stop in and check things out (or for that matter, check out the rest of the Shawnee Karst Preserve to the south with two loop hiking trail).

SHAWNEE KARST PRESERVE EXPANSION
\$10,000 or more
Gary Whitaker
\$2,500 to \$9,999
Joshua Abdulla Keith Dunlap Bar Keepers Friend (SerVaas Labs)
\$1,000 to \$2,499
Bruce Bowman George Brutchen Mark Deebel Gordon Smith Patty & Tom Sollman Wes & Kristen Terrell Carla Striegel-Winner & Jamie Winner Central Indiana Grotto National Speleological Foundation National Speleological Society
\$500 to \$999
Miriam Ash Barbara Hanka Hank Huffman & Ellen Jacquart Matt Selig

\$250 to \$499				
Joy Baiz Virgil & Cindy Brack	Patti Cummings Scott & Stephanie Frosch	Sam Frushour Raymond Moul Nathan Pate	Bruce Trotter Bill Tozer	Richard & Sue Vernier Paul Webb
\$100 to \$249				
Gretchen Anderson John Benton Jeff Cody Barb Coons	Laura & Ryan Demarest David Hughes Goni Iskali & Brad Barcom Kevin Johnson	Jerry & Salisa Lewis Richard Lunseth Dan McDowell Tom & Kim Metzgar Matt Pelsor	Tom Rea Carroll Ritter Ralph Sawyer Kevin Smith	Robert Sollman Stan Weinzapfel Norbert Welch Evansville Metro Grotto
\$50 to \$99				
Daniel Gray Danyele Green	Kelle Reynolds Cynthia Sandeno	Amanda Stofan Kevin Strunk Dave Tibbets	Rich Whisler Gerry Woltering	Dayton Underground Grotto Indiana Caverns
\$5 to \$49				
Dayton Boyd Mark & Susan Clark John Dimit Jim Duncker	Jeffery Gosnell Michael Gullett Tim Heppner Shawn Hogbin	Jon Miller William Morrow Stanley Nieder Ernie & Jacqueline Payne	Jennifer & Gene Pelter Joe Powers Kevin Rasmus Sam Richey	Gary Roberson Ray Sheldon Ty Spatta Kevin Wyatt
Project goal: \$78,500				
Raised as of 3/9/2021: \$86,100 (109.7% of goal)				

GET TO KNOW YOUR INVASIVES: GARLIC MUSTARD

by Danyele Green

The first in a planned installment of invasive species education series.

Fast Facts:

- Herbaceous biennial (flowers and seeds in the 2nd year).
- Can grow two to four feet tall.
- Edible – Check out the recipe at the end of this article that is a huge hit with all ages of my family.
- Leaves are alternate, triangular, toothed, and smell like garlic (thus the name) when crushed.
- Flowers are white with four petals.
- Seed pods are long projections that appear once flowering ends.
- Seed bank can last *ten* years (the reason to go back year after year).
- This plant secretes a chemical that disrupts the fungal systems in the soil. This alters the soil to make it less habitable to native species which affects food for birds, mammals, insects, etc.
- The plant does respond to chemical persuasion, but the safest and cheapest method of control is to “Pull & Bag” in the earliest days of flowering (April). Put in trash bags and dispose of in trash.
- When pulling up plants, be sure to grab at the base and gently pull up to remove all of the root.
- Pulling First Year rosettes is also an option – but harder to identify as Garlic Mustard, as there are native species that can look very similar, so pulling the Second Year plants is ideal.
- Seed pods can begin to appear in late May, so start pulling as soon as you see the flowers.



Garlic Chips

Not only will you have fun pulling and bagging Garlic Mustard plants, but fixing a snack afterwards is the icing on the cake.

- Remove the large basal leaves of the adult plants you have pulled. Rinse and pat dry.
- Lightly brush both sides with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, and bake on a cookie tray at 275 F for ~ 4 minutes.

They are lightly crispy and melt in your mouth delicious!

ORANGEVILLE RISE NATURE PRESERVE PLAY DATE

Saturday, May 1st – 9 AM to 12 noon EDT

- ✓ Garlic mustard pull
- ✓ Lite trash pick up
- ✓ Poison hemlock dig-up
- ✓ Possible treatment of other invasives
- ✓ Informal visit to nearby HNF Wesley Chapel Gulf property at 12-ish



Please contact Property Manager Carla Striegel-Winner at carlastriegel@gmail.com or 812-367-1602 if you think you might attend. Additional details will be sent to interested folks and it makes planning easier to know possible attendees in advance. Covid safety guidelines will be used.

SULFUR CYCLING IN SOUTH-CENTRAL INDIANA KARST

by Sarah Burgess

The classic karst landscape of the Mitchell Plateau evolved in Mississippian-age carbonates with layers of siliciclastics and evaporites. Drainage in the plateau is through extensive cave systems; surface streams are generally short and ephemeral. Water-rock interactions and mixing waters dictate the resultant geochemistry. This article focuses on the role of sulfur in these systems across two karst basins, Bluespring northwest of Mitchell, and the Lost River centered on Orleans. Recharge at Bluespring is largely autogenic with flow converging in the cave and discharging below the East Fork White River. Recharge to the Lost River is largely allogenic, including the largest sinking stream in Indiana, and ultimately rises at two springs: the Orangeville Rise, and the Rise of the Lost River.

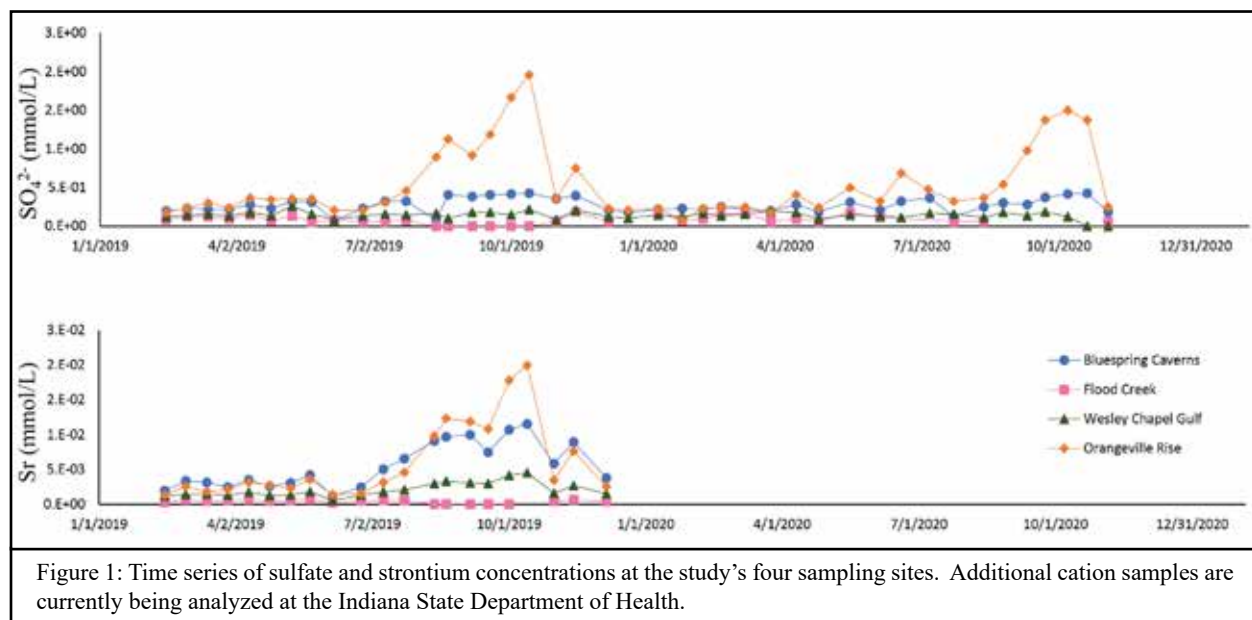
Sulfate concentrations and isotopic data provide key information about groundwater flow and the sulfur cycle in the Mitchell Plateau. Primary sources of sulfate in groundwater include meteoric recharge and water-rock interactions. The concentration of precipitation-sourced sulfate was 5 mg/L, similar to concentrations at Flood Creek in Orleans. Concentrations from other sites are mostly higher than this background. At the Orangeville Rise, higher flow conditions have much lower sulfate concentration than the dry season; sulfates increase during the dry season to peak values of 180 ± 10 mg/L and are directly proportional to strontium ($R^2 = 0.979$); see Figure 1 below. At Bluespring

Caverns, sulfate concentration increases during the dry season to a plateau of 40 ± 5 mg/L, while the strontium concentration increases beyond this plateau, also see Figure 1 below.

Prior isotope work at the Orangeville Rise suggested a mixing between shallow, primarily meteoric waters, and those from a deeper flow path with soluble gypsum. The observed increase in sulfate concentration in the dry season supports this hypothesis. The association between sulfate and strontium at the Orangeville Rise also indicates a relationship between base flow and evaporite dissolution because of trace strontium in the original sea water.

Our $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values at the Orangeville Rise [$+4.763\%$, $+11.676\%$] ($n = 9$) also agree with prior research; however, our work adds an additional layer. During the summer 2019, we detected hydrogen sulfide at the Orangeville Rise and the next year began the arduous process of sulfide collection – samples must be collected without agitation or exposing the water to air, see Figure 2. Isotopes of sulfide compared to gypsum-sourced sulfate, can be used to calculate bacterial digestion where upper and lower Lost River aquifers mix.

Sulfate concentrations and $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values in Bluespring Caverns contrast to the Lost River. $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values [-0.559% , -3.086%] ($n = 8$) are more depleted than other samples in our data set. In the spring 2020, Nik Kaufman reported a natural sulfur seep in Bluespring Caverns (confirmed on March 7, 2020; see Figure 3). The seep was rich



in hydrogen sulfide. While no sulfide was detected at the boat docks, the depleted $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values suggest sulfate sourcing from the anoxic seeps.

Preliminary results of our investigations have yielded insight into the diverse role of sulfur in the Mitchell Plateau. In particular, hydrogen sulfide could play a yet undescribed role in fracture enlargement in caves in the Midwest. Sampling concluded on November 3, 2020, and analysis will be ongoing. For example, we will use sulfide collected from Bluespring Caverns and the Oran-

geville Rise to quantify a critical part of the sulfur cycle in the Midwest. $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ analysis of remaining samples is in progress at the University of Kentucky and will be incorporated into future reports.

This study has been a collaborative effort by the Center for Rural Engagement at Indiana University, and the Indiana Geological and Water Survey, and has been facilitated by the Indiana Karst Conservancy, and Bluespring Caverns. We thank everyone who has been involved in this work and welcome community input.



Figure 2 (left): Sarah Burgess sampling sulfide at Orangeville Rise using a syringe, a two-way valve, and a bottle containing a zinc acetate solution. Figure 3 (right): Sulfur seep found near the Second Discovery in Bluespring Caverns. The black residue is from organic matter while the white haze is created by sulfur oxidizing bacteria.

WAYNE CAVE PRESERVE PLAY DATES

Sunday, March 14th – 10 AM to 1 PM EDT

- ✓ Trash pick up
- ✓ Trail Maintenance Activities

Sunday, April 18th – 10 AM to 1 PM EDT

- ✓ Garlic mustard pull (luckily not much!!)
- ✓ Trash pick up
- ✓ Flagging and Pulling of Invasives on Tracts 1 & 3 (possibly Tract 2 also)
- ✓ Possible Trail Maintenance Activities



Please contact property manager Danyeale Green at iluvlabs2006@yahoo.com or 317-370-7891 if you think you might attend. Additional details will be sent to interested folks and it makes planning easier to know possible attendees in advance. COVID safety guidelines will be used.

PORTER CAVE CONSERVATION WORK

by Jeff Cody

Porter Cave is a stream cave in Owen County with what I consider to be the most beautiful entrance in Indiana (see cover and below). This entrance sits in a bluff about 65 feet tall with the opening about halfway up and a small (most of the time) waterfall flowing out of it. In the winter, this scene can create some spectacular ice formations. The front part of the cave is mostly walking passage in a stream and goes back eight hundred feet to a second entrance. There are many nice formations along the way. Once out the second entrance, there is a continuation of the cave into a second hole that is low and wet and many times sumped. I am told the second entrance goes back a similar distance as the first and then connects to No Name Cave. I had done the front part of Porter Cave a couple times prior to this description, with the most recent being maybe seventeen years ago.

In early November 2020, I was contacted by fellow Indianapolis caver (and fellow IKC Director) Scott Frosch about a trip to remove graffiti that was recently spray painted not far inside the entrance. Scott works as a field investigator for Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). Scott and I recently worked together to hopefully solve the decades-long pollution problem at Doghill, as I may have been at the right place and right time to locate a source of the runoff into the cave (see article in *IKC Update* #139).

Scott was going to do the Porter's work alone, and I offered my help. I had been on several IKC graffiti removal trips in the past and figured I could be of help. I arrived at the cave a bit early because I misunderstood the meeting time. I texted Scott that I was there and he was still about an hour away at his Indianapolis home. He said he would leave and would be there in an hour, so I drove around the area a bit taking photos. We

met at around noon and made the short walk down to the spectacular entrance. Scott had a bucket with rags, Goof-Off paint remover, scrub brushes, and rubber gloves. I suggested mud painting to Scott, but he wanted to try the remover first. Scott had secured permission from the landowner prior to our trip and the landowner was made aware of what we were doing. The landowner does not live on site, but has renters there at times. Before entering the cave, Scott and I took some photos of the impressive area around the entrance, a drop off right next to the road above. Scott told me the story of a fatal car accident a few years back where a car did not stop at the T-intersection and drove right off the cliff – *Thelma and Louise*-style. The car ending up hung-up in a large tree with the force of the impact ripping the motor and transmission right through the front of the car, falling below the tree. This accident reportedly killing the three occupants. Some of the car parts are still on the valley floor below, including the motor. We are planning a trip to remove the remaining debris. We also were scouting spots on the bluff areas for above-ground vertical practice. Scott will contact the landowner to see if he will allow this.

After spending some time outside, we decided to go do what we sat out to do. While at the entrance, a group of “kids” in their early twenties came down.



photos by Scott Frosch, 2020



Two said they were nephews of the landowner and one had scuba gear to do the sump area. We talked to them for a bit and went inside the cave. We soon found the bright yellow spray paint (see photo to right) and sprayed the Goof-Off remover on the vandalism, then decided to let it sit, and go do the cave before attempting to remove the paint.

I did not remember how beautiful the cave was. We made it back to the second smaller entrance and climbed up and out, and I got photos of that entrance also. Scott pointed me in the direction of nearby Lost Boy Cave. By then the group of “kids” were coming out. Scott went in the second wet/upper part to check water level and came right back out. We went back in the downstream passage and backtracked to the graffiti area and went to work. We were able to remove most of the yellow paint, but it still left obvious markings. Also the smell of the paint remover in the confines of a cave was not a pleasant experience. Sometimes wire brushing can leave an unsightly mess as well. First we tried mud painting with mud from inside the cave, but it was mostly sand and did not cover much. Surprisingly there was not any “real” mud inside the cave near this area. I took our bucket outside the entrance and dug up some dirt, mixed that with some cave water, and made a batch of “good” mud that *did* cover the areas well. This left some obvious dark areas, but looks better than the spray paint. And past experience tells me the mud will lighten in color as it dries, and will blend in better and be less obvious. The question is will it stay above the flood water level... if so this will work. The back entrance area shows evidence of sometimes impressive water intake so time will tell. We used this mud painting in the Backbreaker passage in Sullivan Cave decades ago and it worked well. We then planned to return in a few weeks to remove the car parts from the valley and re-check the mud paint areas to see if it lightened up. Regardless, we left it better than we found it.

Scott, Brittney Woods, and myself made another trip on Thanksgiving weekend. We were later joined by Rosario Murello (Roy) and his young daughter. On this trip we removed trash along the roadside between the old store building and the T-intersection. Scott arrived first, then Brittney and I arrived. Scott had already been on the slope down from the road throwing cans and bottles and other trash up near the road. Brittney and I joined him as soon as we arrived. Some of this trash had been there some time as we found several old cans with pull tabs. I explained to young Brittney that those



were commonplace when I was a kid. Of course this made me the subject of age-shaming jokes by Scott. Scott once told me he likes me on his trips so he will not be the oldest one. We spent two or three hours filling three or four large trash bags. During this process a local guy drove by and stopped. We told him we were cleaning the roadside and were cavers from Indianapolis hoping to build goodwill with the landowner. He thanked us. After this, all five of us went into the cave as Brittney had never been there before. The water was pumping impressively that day due to recent rains. This created great photos of the entrance. I had not seen it pump water like that. It reminded me of some of the large waterfalls you see in Tennessee. After multiple photos, we made a through trip in the cave to check the progress of the drying of the mud painting. It had lightened since the day of the painting. Not as pristine as before the spray paint, but it looked much better. I was somewhat amazed that the water level in the cave did not seem to be significantly higher than it was, considering the large waterfall at the entrance. A good time was had by all, Brittney got to see a new cave, and more progress was made.

I want to point out a couple things about the cave. One is that the landowner appears to be building a house or some kind of structure close to the entrance with a direct view of the cave's entrance, partway down the hill from the old store building next to the road. He is in the early stages of this. Not sure when this will be completed. If he lives there full time, it may prevent the unauthorized access from groups like those responsible for the spray paint. The bad part is this will put a structure in the sight lines of the beautiful entrance area. This cave has some history behind it. Years back, it was used as a kids camp. The old store next to the road appears to have been converted to a house and sometimes has renters there. Also one other thing of note that I saw inside the cave



on that trip. We saw four snakes a couple hundred feet in on small ledges above the stream, maybe four or five feet up (see photo to right). I was told they stay all winter. I sent the photos to a snake identification Facebook group. I was told they were gray rat snakes (although they were not gray color) and they were not hibernating but “bro-mating”, a term I had never heard before. This is similar to hibernation, but not exactly the same, as the cold-blooded snakes can wake and leave the area during this time. I had been caving in Indiana caves for forty years now and had never seen this.

Hopefully the spray paint was an isolated incident. There is still work to be done, removing the car parts back up to the road. Not sure how to get the engine up. Maybe a winch? Maybe a rope with a 3-to-1 haul system? The fluids had supposedly been removed from the motor by the towing



company that removed the rest of the car after the accident. Not sure how the car was removed. I assume a winch was used from a tow truck, but I bet that was not easy. Hopefully we can get permission to use the site for vertical practice.

THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

by Danyelee Green

Volunteering is one of the easiest ways to give back to your community in a way that benefits both you and the group you volunteer with. Not only is the group itself benefiting from the time you give, but the benefactors of the group also benefit. Maybe that is other people, animals, the environment, etc.

Volunteering has some surprising benefits:

- Connects you with other like-minded individuals if you are looking for that human connection.
- If you prefer the quiet and solitude, there are also volunteer opportunities that allow for you to relax and be alone.
- Brings you the sense of purpose and fulfillment:
 - This in turn releases feel-good chemicals in your body that combat stress hormones that can lead to health issues.
 - Volunteering is shown to combat depression.
- Volunteering roles look *great* on a resume.
- There are volunteer opportunities no matter how able-bodied you are. If there is an organization you are interested in, just let them know of any special skills you have or just that you would

like to volunteer. Something will be found for you to do... trust me!

Volunteering with the IKC:

- The IKC offers many volunteer opportunities and welcome your help.
- Workdays will be posted in the *IKC Update* and posted on social media, or just contact the respective Property Manager (see page 2) if there is a particular preserve you'd like help.



- Because of recent grants we have received, we have the ability to provide drinks and snacks for volunteers during our organized workdays. It is a token

of gratitude for the time you share out of your day to benefit any of the properties we provide stewardship activities for.

- Contact information will be provided for any of our volunteer activities and we encourage you to let the Organizer know of your attendance so we can plan accordingly.

Thank you in advance for volunteering, donating, sharing opportunities with your friends and family and for being a member of this great organization.

Mid-States preferred corridor to be identified in 2021

The Mid-States Corridor Project Team issued a statement regarding the upgraded timeline for the Tier I study.

Lochmueller Group expects to identify a preferred corridor for the improved highway connection in southern Indiana later this year. The corridor will be identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which is expected to be published this fall.

The DEIS will compare benefits, impacts and costs of detailed alternatives. Public hearings will be held after the DEIS is published and there will be a formal comment period. The Project Team will consider all comments and further refine the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The final corridor will be selected in a Record of Decision (ROD) from the Federal Highway Administration. The Tier 1 FEIS and ROD are expected in summer 2022.

“The review process is a lengthy one to thoroughly analyze benefits, impacts and costs for large projects that will include federal funding,” said Jason DuPont, Mid-States Corridor project manager. “We’ve been even more deliberate in this Tier 1 environmental study to reflect some of the challenges

raised by the pandemic, the feedback received from stakeholders and comments from the public. There’s a lot of interest in this project and it’s important to share our updated timeline so people have a better idea of what to expect and next steps.”

Modifying Alternatives

The Project Team is identifying working alignments within each two-mile study band presented last year. In addition, the team is modifying the alternatives to incorporate feedback from the public and agencies. That includes examining combinations of alignments and considering upgrades to existing US 231.

Selection of a facility type will be deferred to Tier 2 environmental studies to offer more flexibility when specific alignments are selected. Freeway options will no longer be considered because of the higher costs. Expressway and Super-2 options will be considered for all routes. An expressway has at least two lanes in each direction and access at both interchanges and at-grade intersections. A Super-2 includes one travel lane in each direction and a passing/auxiliary lane or wider shoulders

where appropriate. It can be used as one direction of a future expressway.

Next Steps

Alternatives will be detailed and analyzed in the DEIS, which will include screening revisions. The DEIS will be published this fall and followed by a set of public hearings. The hearings will comply with health guidelines in place at the time and include a virtual component. Comments will also be accepted in person, online or by mail during a formal comment period of at least 30 days. All comments received will be considered by the Project Team and addressed in the FEIS.

The Tier 1 FEIS and ROD are anticipated to be published in summer 2022. These will be followed by more detailed Tier 2 environmental studies if a Build Alternative is selected. There’s no timetable for the start of Tier 2 studies, but each is expected to take about two years to complete. Those studies will determine specific alignments and preferred alternatives within the selected Tier 1 corridor.

Excerpted from the Dubois County Free Press, February 9, 2021.

Letter to the Editor - Questioning the Mid-States Corridor

I read your article on the front page of last week’s [*Dubois County Free Press*] about the Mid-States Corridor highway with concern. I noted that you said that a study paid for by the Cook Group and the French Lick Parkway Coalition said that the highway would bring \$150 million dollars to our area.

I assume that the Cook Group and French Lick Parkway Coalition would collect quite a bit of that \$150 million and that in paying for the study, they got the result that they paid for. Of course, the highway would be built with taxpayer dollars. Route O is one of the most expensive to taxpayers at approximately \$731 million. The highway simply benefits those who are already wealthy enough to get their projects funded by government officials who have probably received campaign donations from highway backers.

In exchange for our money being

spent on an unnecessary road, Route O results in the loss of 1,677 acres of woodland, 1,407 acres of farmland, 119 homes and 10 businesses. I don’t see how paying \$731 million and losing huge portions of our county add up to any benefit for Orange County residents. These numbers are from a Fact Sheet put together by the Hoosier Environmental Council.

Besides the obvious damage to the environment and family homes and farms, this road is essentially a bypass of Paoli and Orleans and a study could easily prove that the economies of two of our county towns would be decimated.

I believe that one of the things that draws tourists to our area is the small-town atmosphere. If \$150 million dollars of development occurs along the highway, we are going to have more fast-food restaurants and gas stations, national chains that

would make Orange County just like everywhere else, thus negating any reason to come here as a getaway. As well, we can plan on more litter all over our county roads.

The price of the destruction of woodland, farmland and karst topography cannot be overestimated. Orange County provides excellent habitat which allows us and visitors to the area to see animals, birds and many other precious creatures. This enriches our lives and our economy. Many visitors come here to experience nature. Destroying it will not benefit our economy!

Stop the Mid-States Corridor Project!

Sincerely,

Janet Kennedy, Paoli

Excerpted from the Dubois County Free Press, February 25, 2021.

A LOOK BACK AT INDIANA KARST

by John M Benton

Will Ott recently found an old newspaper clipping from *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville, KY) of a “group shot” photo taken at Pillar of Constitution in Wyandotte. The caption said it was taken in 1954. After some digging, I determined this photo was associated with the *very first* Cave Capers. The 1954 Indiana Cave Capers was held at Wyandotte Cave, in late August. The sponsor was the now defunct Scotto Grotto, based in Scottsburg, Indiana. Roy Davis, who later went on to be a cave owner (Cumberland Caverns, TN) and cave developer (numerous show caves he electrically lit), was the Vice-President of the Scotto Grotto. Of course Wyandotte Cave was fea-

ured, along with Boone’s Mill (now known as Squire Boone Caverns), Devils Graveyard (Danners) and others such as Finn Cave (a very obscure name today for Bryants Cave). Registration was a whopping 50 cents! Lewis Lamon and Roy Davis were listed as trip leaders. Coincidentally, I already had in my possession from the estate of the late George Jackson an original copy of the double-sided flyer announcing the event (see opposite page), and I located a “recap” article printed in the December 1954 *NSS News* (reprinted below). The same photo printed in *The Courier-Journal* was also printed as a full page photo in the *NSS News* (below).

35 ATTEND INDIANA CAVE CAPERS

(by Roy Davis)

New speleological vistas were sighted by the cave explorers of Indiana who attended the 1954 Indiana Cave Capers – the first in a series of annual get-togethers, sponsored by the Scotto Grotto – and held this year at Indiana’s famous, historic Wyandotte Cave. Of the thirty-five attending, five states were represented, four grottoes, and several unrecognized caving groups.

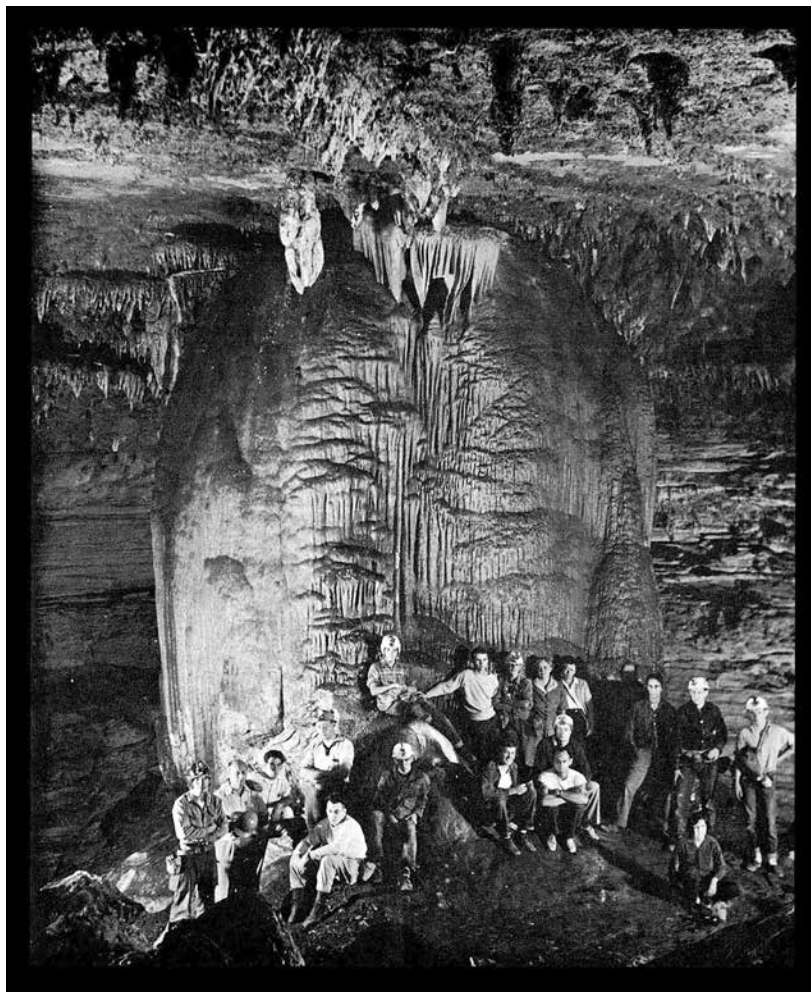
Rustic Wyandotte Cave Hotel, amidst southern Indiana’s scenic splendor, provided just the right atmosphere for the fun and fellowship that took place the weekend of August 27, 28, and 29. The Lodge became “Convention Headquarters” and all participants enjoyed either the splendid accommodations of the Hotel or tried to sleep in the ample campground provided.

Only a handful were present the first afternoon, but a sufficient number had accumulated to visit Devil’s Graveyard or Danner’s Cave; note its oyx-studded interior and become thoroughly grimy – to return to the campsite for the evening meal – which was in the form of a steak-fry – with all the trimmings – prepared and eaten in the open air.

Saturday morning, under the able leadership of Lewis Lamon and Julian Longest, the group, now grown to twenty-five, entered Big Wyandotte and spent six hours

viewing the great cavern, including in their trip the seldom-visited “Pillar of the Constitution”. Emerging, the party decreased in size, and visited Little Wyandotte, enjoying its dripstone beauty, and its very spectacular lighting system, not to mention the very entertaining patter of one of the capable guides.

Saturday evening, the party assembled in the dining room of the spacious hotel to enjoy a delightful banquet. Following the banquet, everyone adjourned to the lobby, where various members showed their slides and shared their experiences, ideas, and plans with their friends. Much better relationships



Announcing
THE 1954 INDIANA CAVE CAPERS
 Sponsored by the Scotto Grotto of the National Speleological Society
 To be held August 27, 28, & 29, 1954, at WYANDOTTE CAVE, Ind.
 * * * * *

Dear Hoosier Caver...

Here is your chance to see some of Southern Indiana's most spectacular caves--WYANDOTTE, Boone's Mill, Devil's Graveyard, etc., while at the same time visiting with old friends and making new ones; sharing experiences and ideas; and enjoying the fun and fellowship which just naturally results when a group of NSS members get together--all in one fabulous speleological weekend.

Cave Convention Headquarters will be, appropriately enough, at Wyandotte Cave Hotel--where participants will find camping and hotel accommodations. ...and all cave-trips will leave from the Hotel according to the schedule below. Wyandotte Cave extends its cooperation and hospitality to the cavers--by providing use of campgrounds, and, a specially conducted, special priced 5 hour tour of the big cave... On Saturday night, a fellowship dinner will be held in the Hotel Dining Room--followed by a slide-showing session and discussion period which will be both informative and entertaining.

Let's make this get-to-gether a real occasion...**YOU ARE INVITED!**
 --Bring along interested friends...bring your slides and cave-photos
 ...represent Indiana...help put Hoosierland in the NSS spotlight!

REMEMBER THIS DATE--AUGUST 27, 28, & 29--AND PLAN TO ATTEND THE 1954 INDIANA CAVE CONVENTION!!!

Speleologically yours,
Roy Davis
 Roy Davis
 V. Pres., SCOTTO GROTTTO

SCHEDULE

Friday, August 27--1 pm - 10 pm -- Check-in & registration (50¢) at Wyandotte Cave Hotel. (8 miles West of Corydon, Ind., on rte.62)

3 pm -- Meet at Hotel for trip to Devil's Graveyard (Denner's) Cave--photogenic for the camera-minded--but involves climbing & some rope-work for the energetic. Cave is dry--filled with giant onyx-type formations. ...If time will permit, a visit to the as yet unexplored 75 ft. Watson's Pit will be run--although the party must necessarily be limited to save time...

were established between the members, and enthusiasm ran high. It was announced during the meeting that night that plans were underway for the organization of the Indianapolis Grotto in the near future, and the Bedford-Bloomington area seems on the verge of organization.

Sunday morning found the cavers engaged in various activities. Some were in church; some were visiting Binkley's Cave; and some were in bed. Sunday afternoon, remaining participants visited one of Indiana's finest - beautiful Boone's Mill Cave. This cave was photographed and written up by *Indianapolis Times* reporter Ed Lacey. The Cave Capers were officially closed as participants left Boone's Mill Cave. Everyone is looking forward to next year's get-together, when attendance should be doubled.

A rousing "three cheers" for the management of Wyandotte Cave and particularly for Mr Samuel Riely, whose hospitality and generosity were appreciated by all.

Saturday, August 28--9 am. Two trips leave Hotel at same time. Special 5 hour trip into Wyandotte, guided by either Lewis Lamson or George Jackson...special rates for Convention participants... Members of this party should carry food & water...lights will be furnished by cave management. Remember, this is a Commercial Cave and spelunkers are expected to follow cave-regulations the same as tourists do. This is not an exploratory trip--merely a sightseeing one!

Also at 9 am--A side trip for those who have already seen Wyandotte. This will include formational, but small Langdon's Cave; delicate, exquisite, soda-straw filled Jewel-Box Cave; Borden's Cave--onyx studded, and featuring a 60 FT. entrance drop--and, the thrilling 115 ft. Borden's Pit.

3 pm. -- Meet at Hotel for trip to Finn Cave--the most beautiful crawlways known...

7 pm. -- Banquet in Wyandotte Hotel Dining Room--followed by a slide-showing session and a caver's "bull-session" of "shep-talk."

Sunday, August 29--No scheduled trips on Sunday morning. Participants may attend Church, or sleep late...

1 pm -- Meet at Hotel for departure to beautiful, exciting Boone's Mill Cave--filled with lovely onyx formations, including one of the world's largest soda-straws. This will be the final feature of the Convention, which will be considered closed as participants leave Boone Mill.

DON'T FORGET--AUGUST 27, 28, & 29--THE INDIANA CAVE CAPERS...!See you then...

Important--Participants desiring room accommodations must send card to cave stating accommodations desired...far in advance of the Convention. Those wanting to save expenses can camp-out...Address cards to Mr. Samuel Riley, WYANDOTTE CAVE, Wyandotte, Indiana. For further information, write Roy Davis, 1492 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, Tenn.

ROY DAVIS
 BOX 770
 DAVID LIPSICOMBS COLLEGE
 NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Mr. Lewis D. Lamson
 C/O Lamson-Davis Hardware
 Corydon, Indiana

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

**Income/Expense Statement
From October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020**

INCOME:

Dues Apportionment and Residuals	861.25	
Donations - General	305.00	
Donations - Land Acquisition Fund	26,170.00	
Specia Fundraiser	366.00	
Property tax credit	170.91	
Investment Earnings	118.02	
	<u>118.02</u>	\$27,991.18

EXPENSES:

IKC Update (printing, production, mailing)	246.47	
Education / Outreach	250.00	
Stewardship/Conservation	155.99	
Business (PayPal fees, postage, PO box rental)	198.14	
Liability Insurance premium	1,796.00	
Land Acquisition (Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion)	70,628.00	
Transfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments	-44,346.84	
	<u>-44,346.84</u>	(\$28,927.76)

NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD: (\$936.58)

**Balance Sheet
December 31, 2020**

ASSETS:

Cash in Checking / Saving / CDs / Brokerage acc'ts	204,367.60	
Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (73.48 acres)	162,000.00	
Shawnee Karst Preserve ¹ (67.78 acres)	175,000.00	
Wayne Cave Preserve (57.59 acres)	188,000.00	
Buddha Karst Nature Preserve (36.84 acres)	29,000.00	
Sullivan Cave Preserve (28.00 acres)	72,000.00	
Lowry Karst Preserve (6.66 acres)	33,000.00	
Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve (3.01 acres)	7,000.00	
Indian Creek Conservation Easement (valued at \$1/acre)	13.16	
	<u>13.16</u>	<u>\$870,380.76</u>

FUNDS & OPERATING EXCESS:

Land Acquisition Restricted Fund	60,538.42	
Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (236 members)	4,335.00	
Stewardship Endowment Restricted Fund	74,216.34	
Previous General Fund (total)	66,227.58	
Net Excess (Deficit) This Period	<u>-936.58</u>	
Current General Fund (unrestricted)	65,291.00	
Current General Fund (committed)	1,100.00	
Real Estate Basis (excluding value of CE)	<u>666,000.00</u>	
Total Liabilities & Operating Excess		<u>\$870,380.76</u>

NOTES:

1) Added the Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion (17.47 acres)

IKC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 12, 2020 - 10:00 AM EST

Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present:

Jerry Lewis, President
 Marc Milne, Secretary
 Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
 Jeff Cody
 Laura Demarest
 Scott Frosch
 Danyeale Green
 Dave Haun
 Goni Iskali
 Matt Selig
 Bob Sergesketter
 Tom Sollman
 Carla Striegel-Winner
 Richard Vernier
 Sue Vernier

Board Members Absent:

(none)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Jerry Lewis at 10:00 AM in a virtual setting.

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the September Board meeting were approved as published in the December 2020 *IKC Update*.

Treasurer's Report

Keith outlined the current financial status of the organization: Cash assets totaling \$185,870.17 and land assets totaling \$666,000.00, for total assets: \$851,870.17. Funds include Stewardship Endowment: \$74,123.68; Land Acquisition: \$42,173.42; Deferred Dues: \$5,456.25; and General Operating Fund (unrestricted): \$64,116.82. The main changes from the last report were the acquisition of the expansion of the Shawnee Karst Preserve which increased our land assets by \$70,000 and decreased our Land Acquisition fund by a similar amount.

Membership: Currently stands at 232 members. Twelve members were dropped for non-renewal, though some of those then returned after being dropped. The IKC gained 10 new members since the last quarter.

Keith said that we renewed our insurance with the previous level of liability coverage. He also relayed the quote for insuring the Shawnee Karst Preserve pole barn. The Board discussed insurance coverage for the Pole Barn. The Board considered the cost of rebuilding the barn ourselves versus the cost of insuring a low-value asset that isn't getting much use at the

moment. In the end, the Board decided to only carry liability coverage on the building.

Shawnee Karst Preserve

The 17.5 acre preserve expansion to Shawnee Karst Preserve is now owned by the IKC since Jerry signed the transfer documents on November 19th. We have raised approximately \$60,000 for the property. Another \$3,000 in pledges will come through soon (\$2,000 from the National Speleological Foundation and \$1,000 from the Central Indiana Grotto). The \$2,000 grant that was approved by the National Speleological Society has already been received and included into the fund.

It is anticipated that the IKC Board will approve the transfer of \$7000 from the General fund to the Stewardship Fund. Put together, we have raised just under \$70,000 of the \$78,500 needed to completely fund the project. Matt's company, Servaas Labs, has agreed to match money raised from now until the end of the year up to \$6,000. Keith will email membership detailing Servaas Labs' generous promotion.

Keith also mentioned that donations made in 2020 up to \$300 can be deducted from donor's federal tax return per 2020 IRS rules, even for those filers who take the standard deduction.

Jeff suggested erecting a kiosk with the names of donors to add incentive to donation. Construction of the kiosk was started in 2019, but only the foundation excavation was completed prior to the pandemic stopping construction. Keith suggested that it would be done by summer 2021.

Wayne Cave Preserve

Danyeale updated the Board about EQIP funding and invasive control at Wayne Cave Preserve. She stated that we are getting ready to start on the third year of work for Tract 1. She explained that two possible workdays will be coming in late spring / early summer to finish it up. The Board discussed moving workdays to dates when ticks are less prevalent, but it was agreed that workdays have to take place when invasives are fully leafed, which naturally correlate with dates of higher tick densities.

Danyeale stated that in Tract 3, which is about 20 acres, multiflora rose and other invasives are mostly on the eastern side of the property. By August 2021, invasives control work targeted for completion in Year 1 will be finished.

Keith discussed our EQIP application for Tract 2 and said that Tract 2 is 22.6 acres and the least amount of invasive plants of all three tracts. Backpack spraying



will be the main control method rather than using a chainsaw to take down larger invasives. The tract is ready to be enrolled in EQIP funding for invasive control. If we enrolled the tract this year, we would have until July 2022 to complete the treatment, which should be relatively easy. Danyeale stated that the invasives on this tract are mostly multiflora rose. The Board discussed increasing volunteering attendance for future workdays for Wayne Cave Preserve. The Board was in favor of applying for funding.

Danyeale informed the Board that a neighbor to the property reported evidence of a squatter discovered while hiking on the property. Specifically, the squatter's presence was evidenced by an old tent, blanket, etc. The Board discussed putting up a trail cam by the kiosk to monitor unauthorized visitation to the property. Unrelated, the Board discussed the possibility of installing a port-o-john on the property.

Lowry Karst Preserve

Keith discussed stewardship activities at Lowry Karst Preserve by stating that Ray Sheldon has been visiting the property almost every weekend. Ray wants to modify the location of the lane gate on the property to improve the ability to turn around in front of the gate.

Website Migration

IKC webmaster, Bruce Bowman, informed the Board about the current situation of the IKC website as NSS transfers its servers. IKC may need outside help to transfer the website to the new servers. The IKC needs to get the website off of the old servers by December 31st to retain the information. Robert Sollman has offered to transfer the website to a different server for free, but it may take some time as he has other website jobs to consider. The Board discussed giving Robert an honorarium for his work for IKC. Laura suggested asking Raymond Moul to help with server migration. Bruce agreed to reach out to the NSS to get some clarity on migration dates. The Board decided to ask Robert for help first, to ask Ray, if Robert is unavailable, and to ask another web developer if neither Robert, nor Ray are available. The NSS has reserved the sub-domain for our website already.

Land acquisition activities

Jerry said that the IKC has completed the purchase of the Shawnee Karst Preserve expansion.

Keith discussed the Ranard School Cave property. He said that the Sycamore Land Trust, the Central Indiana Land Trust, and the IKC all passed on purchasing the property. Therefore, the property will likely end up on the open market. The property is large, expensive, and has other issues. IKC's involvement in the possible purchase of the property is likely done.

Keith told the Board about his purchase of a two-acre

tract adjacent to Sullivan Cave Preserve. Keith bought this property before it was listed and is in the process of demolishing the buildings on the property. Keith will offer it to the IKC in the future. The property contained two septic systems. The Board discussed purchasing the property from Keith at some point.

Election Committee Update/Status for Candidate Nomination Process

Carla gave an update on the Election Committee and projects to engage general membership. The Committee contacted other non-profits to help determine some options to find and recruit candidates. The Committee also examined many bylaws and regulations of these non-profits to create suggestions for the Board moving forward. The Committee requested the names of non-profits from the Board to ask for regulations.

Keith suggesting sending a questionnaire to the IKC membership to ask about feedback about IKC priorities, how to elect Board members, how to appoint the Board, etc. The Board discussed and agreed to the option of sending out a questionnaire to members. The Board discussed and agreed to both a mailed and an online version of the questionnaire.

The Board discussed final approval of the Election Committee's nominating guidelines. Danyeale made a motion to accept the guidelines as written with a yearly review. Dave Haun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Proxy List Development

Carla said that the latest *IKC Update* had an article that encouraged members to become proxy members. Carla encouraged Board members to reach out to IKC members to become proxies. Jerry said that it's a good gateway to become more involved in the IKC. Danyeale suggested that the proxy question be included on the questionnaire.

Education and Outreach Report

Salisa gave a presentation about IKC at the 2019 NCK-MS in Bristol, Virginia. The proceedings from that conference have now been published and are up on their website.

Items From the Floor

Danyeale said that at the B.I.G. meeting last week someone asked if there were plans to donate a property to Mammoth Cave National Park. It was discussed that talks were in place to happen in the near future. She asked, when we get donations from TNC or another conservancy, are there stipulations on those donations? Jerry answered, yes, but it depends on the conservancy and how the land is being used. For example, the purchase of Buddha Cave had stipulations because it's a dedicated IDNR nature preserve and therefore there were several strings attached. TNC commonly buys properties and



then passes them to another organization, with stipulations. Management plans for some of IKC’s properties have these stipulations in them. Keith further explained that Robinson’s Ladder and Orangeville Rise have reverter clauses that say the property would go back to TNC should something happen to IKC. In more recent years, TNC have placed stipulations on selling properties that TNC has “invested in” such that a proportional amount would be returned to TNC if the IKC decided to sell the property (i.e., TNC gained indirect “ownership interests” in the property). Laura asked if the Board gets to see the stipulations of contracts of owners or conservation organizations when we’re purchasing properties. Keith answered that among properties acquired by the IKC, generally only TNC places stipulations on the properties to which they donate funds. That said, yes, these stipulations concerning property purchases are discussed at Board meetings, but may have been missed with the Lowry acquisition.

Carla asked that the monitoring of the Indian Creek Easement be passed to a new person rather than Jaime Winner. Jerry said that the March IKC meeting is when we do property evaluations; we could transfer it then.

March Election Nomination Committee

Jerry asked for volunteers to be on the Nomination Committee. Goni volunteered to be the Chair of the Committee. The Board discussed reaching out to IKC members for volunteers on the Nomination Committee.

Jerry asked incumbents with terms expiring if they were interested in running again for their current position and these were their responses:

- President: Jerry is not running again
- Secretary: Marc is not running again

- Treasurer: Keith is running again
- Board members Laura, Dave, Tom and Sue are running again

Election Logistics Under COVID-19

Keith explained that because the bylaws were updated a few years ago, we are already an all-mail ballot system. Keith listed and the Board discussed logistical options for an election during a pandemic, since ballots cannot be delivered in-person to the meeting per our bylaws. The Board agreed to “noon on the Thursday before the meeting” for the deadline to receive all mail-in and electronic-sent ballots. Danyele and Goni were selected as Election Tellers for 2021. With the agreed upon deadline, the tellers will have the results tabulated and will be ready to announce the results at the Annual meeting.

Jerry recommended Matt Selig for President.

Carla recommended creating job descriptions for each position. Keith responded that the requirements for the positions are in the bylaws. Jerry agreed that creating an account of the job description for president was something he could do before he ended his 13-year term as President.

March Business Meeting Scheduling

The Board discussed a virtual versus an in-person meeting during March and agreed to a virtual meeting. The Board then decided on March 27th at 10:00 AM as the date and time for the next business meeting.

Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 12:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Marc Milne.

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.

