

IKC UPDATE

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INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, INC

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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

Sunday, December 11th, 1 PM EST

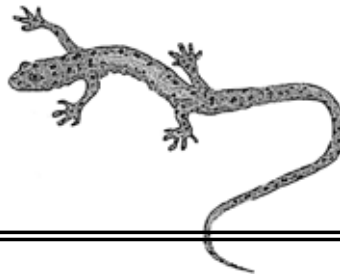
Monroe County Library - Ellettsville Branch (Room A)

600 W Temperance St, Ellettsville, IN

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 Items: Financial reports; Recap of recent preserve work projects; Promotion of upcoming preserve workdays/projects; Education/Outreach/Field Days recaps; IKC merchandise update; Low-ry Cave Preserve management personnel; Cave/land acquisition activities; Business archives and systems; Election Nomination Committee appointment; and more...

Meeting Details: The Ellettsville Branch is located at the intersection of Highway 46 (Temperance Street) and Sale Street. To reach it from Bloomington, travel west on Highway 46 until you reach the stoplight at Sale Street. Turn left. The library and parking lot will be 1 1/2 blocks on your right. Enter the front doors and proceed straight into the main library and past the service desk, continuing to Meeting Room A on your left. The meeting is an inside venue. Please mask-up and socially distance as appropriate for your level of comfort.



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Dec 11 – IKC Quarterly Board Meeting (see above)

Mar ?? – IKC Annual Business Meeting (date and location TBD)

April 22 – Indiana Cave Symposium, Orange County Community Center

For more information on the Indiana Karst Conservancy, visit our website at ikc.caves.org, our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/IndianaKarstConservancy, 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 may also be made electronically by credit card or PayPal using our on-line services on our website (see the Join Us! tab in the menu) or ikc.caves.org/join-the-ikc.

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. Back issues can be found at ikc.caves.org/ikc-updates.

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RAMBLINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Geologically speaking, we live in the Holocene Epoch, whose beginning is marked by the retreat of the last great age of glaciers, 11,700 years ago. Evidence of these glaciers can be seen in Indiana, namely in the flat crop fields of northern and central Indiana, to the moraine hill on the north side of Martinsville that one drives down when headed south towards Indiana's cave country.

There is no doubt that we look to geological evidence to tell us about the Earth's climate and how it has changed over hundreds of thousands and hundreds of millions, even billions of years. In most cases, the geological evidence is *the only* evidence we have available to study ancient climates.

With this evidence, for instance, we can tell that circa 300 million years ago, Indiana was covered by a warm, shallow ocean and we can look at the fossils in our cave limestones and infer the types of climates that sustained these life forms. We can tell what types of life lived in the oceans and what types lived on land. With other geological evidence we can demonstrate that the North American continent at that time straddled the Earth's equator.

I am no climate geologist and cannot comment in depth as to what can and can't be known about ancient climates. But I do know that much can be learned about Earth's climate history by studying the geological evidence and that up to some point, this information is non-controversial.

In recent decades a debate has taken place as to whether we should distinguish a new epoch in Earth's history. That humanity's impact on the environment and climate has been so profound that it will show in the geologic record as something distinct and different from the Holocene Epoch.

A difference as distinctive as any of the geological periods we can distinguish and that are (mostly) non-controversial. For instance, that there were once dinosaurs and now there aren't.

Or that at some point mammals became the dominant form of life on land. Or that at times there have been mass extinctions of species. Or that Indiana was once covered by a shallow ocean that gradually filled its basin with sediments that formed rocks and eventually formed the caves we love to explore.

Did this new proposed epoch, the Anthropocene (*anthropos* being Greek for "human"), begin with the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th Century? Did it begin with the explosion of the atomic bombs at the end of World War II? Or did it begin in 1950 with what the Anthropocene Working Group calls The Great Acceleration, a dramatic increase in human activity that (possibly) affects the Earth's environment?

Some argue that human activity has had and will have no effect on the Earth's climate. "Global Warming" has been an extremely controversial topic for most of my life. Belief for or against its current flavor, "Human Caused Climate Change" aligns in America almost perfectly with political affiliation and there exists nothing like the consensus that agrees the geological record demonstrates that northern and central Indiana were at times covered by continental sized glaciers that were created and then melted to nothing as a result of climate change.

I won't be here 300 million years from now to see what the geological record will say about humanity's impact on the Earth's environment. But it is a common trope of science fiction that humanity's ability to alter planetary environments *could* be powerful enough to change the climate of a planet like Mars sufficiently to support human life. If we can imagine that, is it too much a leap of the imagination to think that humanity *could* terraform *Earth*, also and more readily?

But the Indiana Karst Conservancy exists to



protect and conserve caves and karst in Indiana, not least because the health of our karst environments is in part a gauge of the health of the environment we depend on for human thriving.

I don't want to court controversy with arguments for and against the causes of climate change. The IKC is a nonpolitical organization, and we work hard to maintain our neutrality. These hopefully gentle musings about geological epochs were triggered by a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* that notes the importance of digging holes in the human psyche. The author notes that some persons believe that the Anthropocene started when humanity started digging.

My first memories of caving center around digging and the excitement that we might get past all the rocks and mud and gravel and discover a new Indiana cave. That belief was enough to swing the hammer, step on the shovel, haul another armload of debris, destroy another come-along; all in the hope of *making the connection*.

My dad (Spike Selig) is quoted in *IKC Update* # 123 regarding "Jim's Hole" in the Garrison Chapel Valley, "We tried to dig rocks out downstream, but the whole thing caved in and the dig was just too dangerous to continue." Sometimes we cavers will dig for years in the hope that just one more workday, just one more shovelful, *just one more rock* will move, and we'll be in giant walking borehole that no person has ever seen!

At Baker Springs Cave in Owen County, Jerry Bailey and I dug for five days and broke three come-alongs moving a glacially-transported granite boulder (pictured on page 4), in order to open up a body sized slot just big enough to squeeze into and enter a super-tight crawlway into one of the tightest, most constricted caves I've ever visited. We were guided by science of course, looking for a connection with Texas Bear Cave. But we were also driven by that human purposefulness – to dig.

This summer, my dad and our IKC Secretary,

Laura Demarest, spent an afternoon opening a pit in southern Indiana, maybe 20 feet deep. The science told us that it could possibly connect with an inferred very large cave in Washington County. It was blazing hot, and we were cooking in the sun with no shade (see below), but we were intently driven to move just one rock (just one rock!) that was keeping us out of the pit we could see below it. The rock yielded to our digging, and we didn't find the giant cave we'd hoped for, but in digging I believe we satisfied some very human purpose. As a bonus, we also rescued a stranded turtle in the pit, which felt great!

I'm not advocating that we should all grab our hammers and shovels and start willy-nilly digging everywhere and busting rocks in Indiana's cave

country. We need to be informed by data, have landowner permission, and be guided by a sense that we must prevent, minimize, and mitigate any damage caused looking for new caves.

But there are cavers now, perhaps even as I type, crawling in dark and muddy passages beneath Indiana, gathering the data to complete the work of connecting Wayne Cave with their new discoveries in Studebaker Pit (see the first item on page 6). We will want to discuss this more when their final reports come in, but for the moment I can say, "I get it, I understand that need to get in there and

push at the edges of maps to expand the boundaries of known caves, and those caves yet to be known."

With these thoughts, 2022 comes to a close all too soon. It's been a remarkable year at the Indiana Karst Conservancy and an honor to serve our membership. We have big plans and goals for 2023 and hope you can join us in protecting our Indiana karst – perhaps on Facebook, maybe at a workday at one of our wonderful preserves, and who knows, perhaps we'll find a hole or two that needs to be dug?

Happy Holidays and all our best wishes for a wonderful 2023!

Matt Selig



NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ On November 12th, a significant connection was made connecting Studebaker Pit with Wayne Cave. The Wayne Cave system is now over five miles long, surpassing Reeve's Cave to be the longest cave in Monroe County, and now the seventh longest cave in Indiana. Studebaker Pit has been known as a blind pit since the 1950s. About six years ago a group of dedicated cavers was able to gain permission from the private landowner and started an exploration project. They were able to work their way down through breakdown until they intersected the suspected stream passage that drains the main stream in Wayne Cave to its dye-traced resurgence spring in Blair Hollow. The upstream passage in Studebaker was not without its challenges, but this past summer, thanks to extremely dry weather, a voice connection was made with Wayne Cave in the Lake Passage area. Some additional effort was required to make the physical connection allowing cavers to their first cross-over between entrances.

- ❑ To illustrate the dynamics of karst regions, we now have a new entrance to Upper Twin Cave on the Shawnee Cave Preserve. The entrance was discovered from the inside on September 16th by Tom Sollman and Dave Everton who were conducting a cavefish census in the rarely visited upstream section. After the cave trip, they were able to locate the entrance on the surface. All evidence suggests this entrance formed this past spring or summer, likely during one of the heavy rains in the area. The new vertical entrance, that collapsed into an existing room, is about five feet in diameter and ten feet deep, thus requiring a ladder to enter. The entrance will be advantageous for upstream trips as it bypasses an unpleasant breakdown crawl.



photo courtesy Keith Dunlap

- ❑ As part of our long-term commitment to stewardship on all of our preserves, the significant multi-year effort to rid our Wayne Cave Preserve of invasives continues. In 2022 we systematically treated the southern two-thirds of the property (over 42 acres) treating multiflora rose (see page 14), autumn olive, bush honeysuckle, Japanese honeysuckle, and a few other undesirables. This took about a dozen work sessions, each three to four hours in duration. The 2022 effort was the second of a three-year commitment to eliminate the invasives. While the IKC is performing all of this work using volunteers, the costs of the materials and some equivalent compensation for labor (about \$4,000) is being funded by an NRCS EQIP grant. Any excess proceeds from the Wayne Preserve grant can then be used for invasive work at our other properties or for other stewardship activities. Property Manager Danyele Green reported that we received an "A+" from Cara Bergschneider, NRCS coordinator, during her recent inspection of our 2022 work.

- ❑ Last December the IKC acquired the 2-acre northwest corner tract adjacent to the Sullivan Cave Preserve. This tract had been part of the original Sullivan property, but was split off in 1998 to lower the initial acquisition price of the remaining 28-acre tract for the IKC. One of the justifications for the IKC to re-acquire this corner tract now (besides it being available to acquire) was to restore the original driveway to provide a level grade ingress/egress with SR 54. While the sight-line to the west is a little shorter, this "new" driveway access is a better option compared to the sloping driveway the IKC con-



photo courtesy Keith Dunlap

Continued on page 14...

WAYNE CAVE PRESERVE: BAT HIKE AND TOUR

by Goni Iskali

On October 1st the IKC conducted our third tour of 2022 to highlight our preserves. Carla Striegel-Winner skillfully handled the organizing and logistics for the tour. It's not a big ask from her to request that I talk about bats. After all, bats have seeped into my professional and overall daily life, and I love sharing my love of bats with others. These magnificent, winged creatures certainly don't get as much attention as they should, although this has started to change lately. There is more awareness about bat conservation, including the nationwide celebration of Bat Week during the last week of October. Even the White House gave Bat Week a nod this year by adding bats to their website logo for that week.

It was a beautiful Saturday evening as we hiked the roughly 1.2 miles of trail at the Wayne Cave Preserve. The trail was perfectly maintained and marked, thanks to Property Manager Danyele Green and IKC member Tymme Laun, and it was a point of pride to showcase the hard work that Danyele and the other volunteers have completed at this property in the last few years. Most of this work has included eradicating invasives, improving the woodlands, creating and maintaining the loop trail, and maintaining the picnic and camping area. We had 18 participants attend who ranged in age from elementary school to retirement, and who came from as far as Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Bloomington. The tour included six interpretive stops where we talked about bat species found in Indiana, their life cycle as it relates to their habitats such as caves and forest, current threats and what we can do to help, and methods of sampling and studying bats (see below demonstrating the IKC's new bat detector). My goal was to relay the message that protecting caves is only a part of bat conservation, as most of the bats found in Indiana use forest for the majority of their annual life cycle. It's important that



photos courtesy Carla Striegel-Winner

these forests are clear of invasives that tend to clutter the flight pathways, and include degraded trees or trees with loose bark such as shagbark hickory that are used by some bats for roosting during the summer maternity season. With insect populations on a steep decline, bats also need other ecosystems such as grasslands and riparian areas to feed and drink. This is why it's so important to protect the areas around a cave and maintain them to include a diversity of healthy ecosystems, as the IKC strives to do at the Wayne Cave Preserve, in order to aid in bat conservation. I was pleased to see that participants were engaged, caring and thoughtful, and the best part of the tour was all the smart questions they asked.

If you were unable to attend the hike and would like to learn more about bats, here are some great books that I recommend and can be found in many libraries:

- *The Secret Lives of Bats* by Merlin Tuttle. Merlin is a great storyteller and this is an easy read for both bat and non-bat biologists. You also get to learn about Merlin Tuttle, founder of Bat Conservation International, and the most renowned bat biologist in the world.
- *Bats in Question* by the Smithsonian Institute. This is a great book and another easy read about what we currently know about bats of the world.
- *Mammals of Indiana* by John O. Whitaker. A great reference about the life cycle and characteristics of Indiana's bats.
- *Bat Ecology* edited by Thomas H. Kunz and M. Brock Fenton. This is a hefty and technical book, but probably the most comprehensive book about bats that I have found.



TIME TO GET SOME KIDS IN A CAVE!

by Carla Striegel-Winner

On our August 1st Facebook tribute post for the late Ray Sheldon, his wife Beth made a touching comment, "Please continue to honor Ray by helping the cave community...respect the caves, and take your kids and grandkids caving."

My cousin had asked me a long while back if I could take her family caving. Life got in the way. I love her three kids and wanted to do it, but I was busy, I had "important" things to do. I was also getting stuck on the details. I wasn't sure what would be a good kid cave, when would be a good time, I'd need another caver with me, I'd have to make



The kids examined the Lowry Cave map before the trip.

photo courtesy Megan Schipp

sure they had proper gear, etc. etc. Quite simply – I put it off. Beth's words, and knowing that Ray loved to get kids excited about caving, touched me so much, and made me remember the important things in life. *Time to get some kids in a cave!*

The kids (ages four, seven, and nine) loved their first wild cave trip on Labor Day Monday... into the IKC's Lowry Cave, where Ray was Property Manager and Cave Patron until his untimely passing in an auto accident at the end of July. Lowry turned out to be a great summer kid's cave. I had forgotten how neat it actually is, with the gorgeous walk-in entrance, the stream (what kid does not love a creek, especially one in a cave?), the mouse nest Keith showed them, cool fossils, and that's just in the entrance room! We discovered a cave salamander and a fishing spider in the stream, lots of neat formations (which nine year old Amelia was able to tell us were stalactites and stalagmites), the waterfall,



Collecting the drip water sample takes concentration!

photo courtesy Megan Schipp

a bat, a mammal skull, amazing fungus growing on scat and all manner of dead things, and at the end of the passage we were awestruck by the beautiful cave spiders guarding their woven egg sacks. Let me tell you, when you are a nature nut like me, it pulls at your heartstrings to have a seven year old girl exclaim that these spiders are her favorite part of the cave. We even participated in a citizen science project by collecting a water sample from a drip near the waterfall for Dr. Tyler Huth's isotope sampling study.

Participants were my cousin Megan Schipp, her three kids: Oliver, Izzy, and Amelia, my Uncle Digger (Megan's dad), and my mom came along and enjoyed exploring the entrance area, going for a walk, reading a book, and chatting with Keith Dunlap, who was coincidentally at the Lowry Preserve spraying invasives (of course!). After the cave trip, the kids were getting a bit tired and chilled and we were all happy to get back out into the warm day. We enjoyed a picnic lunch on the

Continued on page 21...



Everyone is still smiling post-trip!

photo courtesy Keith Dunlap

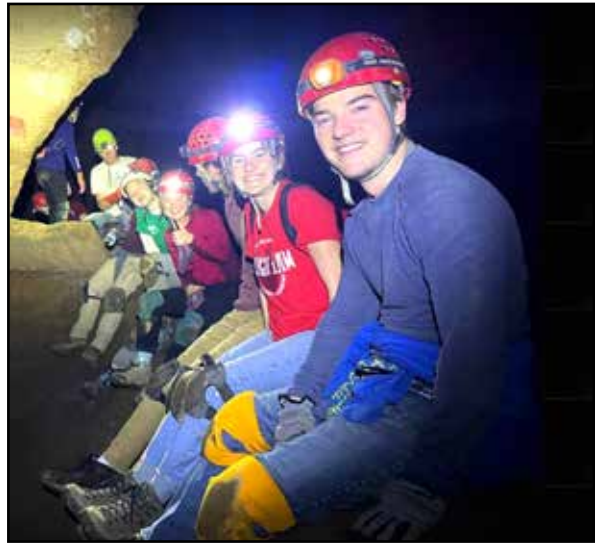
CONSTANT CONSERVATION MINDSET: LEARNING FROM THE NEXT GENERATION OF CAVERS

article and photos by Stephanie Suen

I recently took a group of college students from the University of Cincinnati's Mountaineering Club (UCMC) to their first cave trip. They were super excited about the trip and certainly wanted to get plugged into the caving community. They started their weekend by attending the Greater Cincinnati Grotto's monthly meeting on Friday night. A few of them joined grotto membership. They then started their journey down to the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve in Mt Vernon, Kentucky. On their way, they stopped at a Walmart to gather supplies for the weekend, and ate at an all-night Waffle House. By the time they arrived on site, it was 5 AM! They pitched their tents and then quickly toured the show cave before hiking back to camp for a little of sleep.

The group got back up and shared a high-speed pancake breakfast around 11AM. They were ready to head to Sinks of the Roundstone by noon. This is a notoriously graffiti and trash filled cave. As the students gained their footing, they started to have a really good time. We did a lights-out and the students were fascinated by the darkness.

After having a snack break, the UCMC group established a game. Every participant had to take at least one piece of trash out of the cave that they had found along our trip. This became a competition to see who could gather and remove the most trash. They stuffed their packs and found containers along the way that they then filled with crushed cans. They even established a prize for the winner of the competition: a Miller Lite when they got back out of the cave.



After the trip, I was approached by several students who wanted to exchange phone numbers. They were excited to come back to do more caving, but more importantly, they made offers to come back and do further clean ups. They were interested in graffiti removal efforts as well. I was touched by this since it's sometimes difficult to get volunteers to help clean up this cave.

It was great to get to cave with the UCMC group and I learned a lot from this group about having a constant mindset for improvement and an exuberant drive for life.

Stephanie is an active Indiana caver and IKC member from the Cincinnati area.



IT WAS THE BEST OF DAYS, IT WAS THE WORST OF DAYS: FALL HIKE/WORKDAY AT ROBINSON LADDER CAVE PRESERVE

by Brad Barcom

It was a bit of a miserable day as we drove into the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve for the IKC Hike and Work Day on November 5th. Fall of 2022 had some of the best weather days that I could remember, but this day was not one of them. It was rainy, chilly, and windy with gusts exceeding 30 miles per hour at times. Although we were early for our 10:00 AM meet-up time, Keith Dunlap, Brian Welp, Carla Striegel-Winner, and Jamie Winner were already there getting ready for the day. All of the other participants trickled in shortly thereafter. In spite of the rather inclement weather, thirteen people showed up for the event with attendees coming from Bloomington, Celestine, Greenwood, Louisville, and Spencer, a determined group for sure. No matter what, they were going hiking. Sounded about right for a bunch of cavers, a group undeterred by some uncomfortable conditions.

The walking tour was co-led by John Benton and Carla Striegel-Winner. They took turns talking about the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve, the caves that were on it, and other things happening on the property as well. The first thing that I learned, though, came out before we even left the parking area. Jamie Winner was talking to Brian Welp and Carla about a “buffalo trace.” I had no idea what one of those was so immediately fished for more information. They told me that a buffalo trace was the seasonal migratory path that buffalos historically used, that is before we shot and killed them all. The interesting thing is that they used the same path year after year, generation after generation, leaving a well-worn track that can still be seen to this day in some places. The reason they were talking about it this day was because Wes Roeder had sent an email the night before that he thought that the southern Indiana buffalo trace went through part of the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve. If I learned nothing else this day, the trip was worth it. How had I lived for 53 years and never heard about a buffalo trace?

Here is a link (usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=3d76729e954f4b63ba73cd5956e8039f) to an interactive map of the trace as it goes through Indiana. We were near number 19 on the map, Clarks Ford Crossing of the Blue River.

One of our first hike stops was Robinson Lad-



photos courtesy Carla Striegel-Winner

der Cave, the eponymous feature of the preserve we were visiting. Even though it was raining and windy, everyone stood around eager to hear what John Benton had to say about the history of the cave, what it was like, and who had surveyed it. This cave is known to be home to the federally protected Indiana bat and therefore is seasonally closed to visitors between September 1st and April 30th. While the bat population has dropped significantly since the onset of White-nose Syndrome, a small winter colony is still present in the cave and hopefully over time the population will recover.

An unexpected surprise for me this day was to learn that the IKC had obtained and planted fifty hybrid American Chestnut trees from The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) in 2016 and was taking part in a larger project to bring this once near-ubiquitous tree back from extinction. The only time I had ever heard about this tree was in reading Bill Bryson's *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* (if one hasn't read this book, they should – it will make you laugh so hard you cry and edify you at the same time, something most of Bryson's works do). The way Bryson told it, the American Chestnut was the “redwood of east,” but had all but disappeared in the first part of the 20th century. I remember thinking that was an amazing thing. There existed a tree that grew to over 100 feet tall and 10 feet wide and was one of the most dominant trees in the east, and then it just disappeared. Well, almost ...

If the buffalo trace thing hadn't gotten my attention, the fact that there were still some Ameri-



can Chestnuts in existence and the IKC had obtained 50 of them certainly did. Keith Dunlap jumped in at this point and joined John and Carla in explaining how the IKC, with assistance from Purdue and TACF had created a deer-proof enclosed area and planted 50 American Chestnuts, along with 150 trees of other compatible species, inside in an attempt to bring said tree back from the brink of extinction. Turns out, a few natural American Chestnuts had survived and TACF undertook a long-term project to hybridize the American Chestnut with a Chinese variety that was naturally resistant to the blight that had originally killed the American Chestnut. Keith said that the IKC has had some successes with our trees, but also some setbacks as well. Some of the chestnuts had died from beetle infestation and some were showing signs of the blight, but that was all part of the process. Hopefully some of our trees will mature and remain healthy. One of the chestnuts this year had actually bore fruit (nuts) which we got a chance to touch. The best way I can describe the prickly bur is a sea urchin that grows on a tree. Someone said that these fruits were popular with both animals and humans. I thought someone or something would have to be really hungry to be willing to tangle with one.

After visiting the trees, our rainy hike continued to the second known cave on the property, Break-down Falls Cave. It was a smaller cave than the first, but this one didn't require vertical gear to get in. Either way, I wanted to see both caves sometime. I was intrigued to learn that two of the people that helped survey this cave were Tom Rea and Bob Vandeventer, two people who first welcomed me into the caving community when I joined the Central Indiana Grotto in 2009. Small world.

Eventually, our hiking group found ourselves on a bluff overlooking the Blue River more than 250 feet below. It was almost straight down from where we stood on the road above. This was the place where it was thought the buffalo trace went through the property, following Clarks Ford Road. It made sense because this was a natural boundary and the animals would have skirted the bluff and almost certainly wouldn't have tried going down it willingly.

As we finished our hike at an interesting swallowhole, the weather conveniently cleared and we made our way to the lunch area that Carla and others had prepared for us. Once again Carla and the team had outdone themselves. We had all the

fixings for cold-cut sandwiches, not to mention chips, cookies, and more. We started eating at about 12:30 PM and finished at about 12:35 PM. A bit nippy out, people weren't too keen to stand idly around. Instead, we all finished our food and then set about starting the work part of our hike/work day at the Robinson Ladder Preserve. It was not lost on me that of the thirteen people who came for the hike and lunch, all of them stayed to work, even the kids who had uncomplainingly braved the weather and the hike, a remarkable fact indeed. Additional volunteers included John Benton, Keith Dunlap, George Garr, Goni Iskali, Luke Pascual, Charley Shipley, Carla Striegel-Winner, Brian Welp, Jamie Winner, and Sara, Gabriel, and Laura Whetstone.



In true caver fashion, the crew made quick work of our objective that day which was to clear the over-hanging branches and trees that were encroaching the property's quarter-mile access lane (it seemed longer when you looked at all we accomplished). Everyone worked together, some chain-sawing, some pole-sawing, some hauling branches, and some manually lopping/trimming. Carla would later say that we got more done than she ever expected and that we finished an hour earlier than allotted. Keith said that the first lane trimming took place in April of 2005 (soon after we acquired the property) followed by a second trimming in June 2014.

All in all, in spite of imperfect weather, it was a perfect day, a day that reminded me just how important the IKC is. Not only did we all have

Continued on page 21...

A LOOK BACK AT INDIANA KARST

compiled by John M Benton

The below narrative is from the Marengo Cave website (www.marengocave.com/individuals/the-cave/timeline). Thanks to Gordon and Judy Smith, Gary and Laura Roberson (past owners), and Steve and Mary Jo Calhoun (present owners).

"In September of 1883, Blanche Hiestand, a 15 year old girl was working as a cook at the Marengo (Indiana) Academy Boarding School during the fall normals. She overheard some of the students at the school talking about a hole they had found about a half a mile east of the Academy at the base of a deep sinkhole. The boys were planning a trip to see if there was a cave inside the hole or just a pocket. Blanche felt her adrenaline begin to flow as she listened to their plans. She decided she would get there before the boys could. That afternoon after work, she raced home about a quarter a mile away. She hastily recruited her brother Orris (who was only 11 or 12 at the time), grabbed some candles, and they snuck out of the house so their parents would not stop them from their adventure.

To reach the sinkhole, they had to cross Whiskey Run Creek, pass two large springs (known today as Stewarts Spring and Old Town Spring) and hike up the hill to the town meeting house (church) and cemetery. Just above the cemetery was a grove of trees surrounding a deep sinkhole (see above as the now-closed entrance looks today). As they climbed down to the bottom of the depression, they could see a small opening in the rocks on the southeast side; it was partially hidden by dangling tree roots. Cool air was streaming out of the opening. Here they paused to light their candles. Blanche dropped to her belly smearing the front of her long dress with damp mud as she tried to peer into the opening. She could barely see the slope of loose rock descending into the



darkness. Her heart pounding with excitement, she crawled down into the opening with her back nearly scraping the rock above. Quickly, she was able to get up on her hands and knees as she followed the slope down. She yelled back at her brother Orris, 'It's getting bigger! Come on in!'

Together they carefully climbed down the steep slope of broken rock. This rock had fallen long ago when the ceiling of the cave had collapsed to form the sinkhole. The rock was slick and water was dripping down from the numerous small openings in the ceiling. As they continued downward, they were soon able to stand up as they scrambled down the breakdown. They could hear water falling from the ceiling and sparkling formations were visible ahead in the distant darkness. The floor was becoming more level as they began to enter a large chamber. They were only about a hundred feet below the surface, but to the two youngsters it seemed a long way. They quickly looked around the room. It was very big. They could barely see the

far wall with their flickering candles. There were glistening mounds of "pretty rock" and large stalactite formations hanging down. The room appeared to continue in several directions. Pools of crystal clear water covered the floor behind delicate rock (rimstone) dams. By now their courage was gone. They were awed by the huge chamber that they had found. The beauty was overwhelming, even in the dim candlelight, but they were alone, and no one knew where they were. So they decided to turn back.

They scrambled back up the slope toward the sinkhole. It was harder climbing back up. The slimy mud covered their clothes and the wet rocks slid under their muddy shoes. The mud was cold. By the time they squeezed out the low slot into the bottom of the sink, they were a mess. It was a great relief to stand up outside, see the blue sky, and feel the warmth of the late summer sun."

I think every caver can identify with all the feelings and adventures that Blanche and Orris experienced.

Soon, the Stewart family who owned the property became aware of the cave discovery, made some improvements such as steps in the cave, and started a commercial venture. Twenty-five cents a person was the initial show cave fee, but after a few more trail improvements were made, the price increased to fifty cents. Today, Marengo Cave continues on as a successful show cave, and has been in operation for over 139 years!

Orris Hiestand, one of the two original discoverers of Marengo Cave, is buried nearby the cave in the Marengo Cemetery. His tombstone states, "Orris S. Hiestand, 1872-1958, discovered Marengo Cave in 1883". The Hiestands were born in southern Indiana. After the Marengo Cave discovery, Orris became a skilled carpenter, and worked for Southern Railway in Indiana, later moving in 1901 to Oklahoma and worked for a water tank company, and as a ship builder in Mississippi. He purchased a farm near Marengo, moved back to Indiana and spent his later years there.

Orris's sister, Blanche is more of a mystery - she married a Peter Grant in 1901 in Colorado. In 1904 she had a daughter in Missouri. However it is unknown where or how she died. It is believed she passed away in 1928 and despite searches by her great nephew, Peter Foster Hiestand (grandson of Orris Hiestand), no record of her death or burial place has been found.



photos courtesy John Benton

A signed affidavit from 1946, by Orris Hiestand, relating the discovery of Marengo Cave, can be found in my article in the *IKC Update* #126 (September, 2017), pages 14-15. It states that the Hiestands were not chasing a rabbit when they discovered Marengo Cave in 1883, as has sometimes been rumored, but that they set out to explore the cave that Blanche had heard school boys from the Marengo Academy talking about previously, but not gone into. The Hiestands were the first explorers.

Sources:

Wikipedia entries, Orris and Blanche Hiestand, courtesy Peter F. Hiestand.

Personal communication emails from Peter Hiestand dated November 2022. The author gratefully thanks Peter for his information.

WHAT FIELD HIKES AND TOURS DO WE HAVE IN STORE FOR 2023?

This year we sought to offer hikes and tours in order to help IKC members and the public become more familiar with the features of our preserves. For the four field events we conducted in 2022, we invited folks to the Orangeville Rise, Buddha Karst Preserve, Wayne Cave Preserve, and Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve. We covered everything from bat habitat to the Buffalo Trace, and had a great time doing it.

Our preserve events will continue in 2023 and we hope to see you there! We intend to feature the properties we missed in 2022: Lowry Karst Preserve, Shawnee Karst Preserve, and Sullivan Cave Preserve. We will add another location into the mix to make four field events. Topics for 2023 are likely to include the Shawnee Cave System, caving safety, a general hiking tour, geology, and history. At printing, everything is still in the works. However, events will be announced in the *IKC Update*, on our Facebook page, and please consider going to www.eventbrite.com/o/indiana-karst-conservancy-42238885883 and clicking "follow" to be notified once we post an event on the site.

Questions and suggestions may be directed to the IKC's Outreach Chair Carla Striegel-Winner (CarlaStriegel@gmail.com or 812-639-9628).

GET TO KNOW YOUR INVASIVES: MULTIFLORA ROSE

by Danyele Green



photos courtesy www.mc-iris.org

Left: showing the 'hairy' stipules. Right: showing flowers in late spring through summer.

The seventh installment of our invasive species education series.

Fast Facts:

- Latin name *Rosa multiflora*
- Invasive and prolific in our areas
- Hikers detest this plant as it forms thick thorny masses which are well known to scratch you and your clothing!
- Leaves are alternate, pinnately compound
- Flowers range from white to light pink
- Fruits are small red rosehips that spread via birds
- How to ID: It can be very difficult to tell this invasive species from our native roses, but the

'hairy' or 'fringed' stipule at the base the stems are the clear giveaway!!

- Best methods of control: Chemical warfare (one for woody shrubs) in a foliar sprayer is highly effective. Spraying in *early* spring just as the leaves are showing and before our natives poke through is showing to be highly effective at eradicating this invasive while not harming nearby plants.

Native alternatives to Multiflora rose:

- *Rosa blanda* (and many more!)
- Winterberry
- Flowering raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*)

For more information on identifying and managing invasives in Indiana, go to www.sicim.info

...continued from page 6

structed in 2000 that continued to need maintenance every few years. In order to restore the previous driveway, Jamie Winner volunteered his tractor/blade services to prepare the drive and on September 23rd we spread 20 tons of #2 coarse crushed stone, then another layer of 20 tons of #53 packing stone. The new driveway at 2088 SR 54 W is now operational and is now the preferred driveway to access the Sullivan Cave Preserve. At some point, the old "2100" driveway will be vacated and blocked. The next time you visit Sullivan Cave and use this new driveway, think about your membership dues and general donations at work.

- ❑ Save the date of April 22, 2023 for the Indiana Cave Symposium. The evening event will again be held at the Orange County Community Center in Paoli. We plan to continue the pitch-in meal prior to the presentations. If you would like to make a presentation on your cave exploration or study project, or volunteer to help with the Symposium, please contact Bruce Trotter (BruceATrotter@gmail.com).
- ❑ We would like to acknowledge and thank our subject experts/tour leaders for our four 2022 field events: Sarah Burgess, Sam Frushour (Orangeville Rise and Wesley Chapel Gulf); Keith Dunlap, Wyatt Williams (Buddha Karst Preserve); Goni Iskali (Wayne Cave Preserve); and John Benton (Robinson Ladder

Continued on page 15...

BIG DAY WAS FOR THE BIRDS!

article and photos by Carla Striegel-Winner

We had a beautiful autumn day at Shawnee Karst Preserve in Lawrence County for our Big Day hike on October 8. Big Day is an annual bird count day during fall migration, and Indiana Land Protection Alliance (ILPA) member land trusts partnered with Indiana Audubon Society to host hikes at over a dozen different land trust properties throughout the state. Each site was provided with an expert birder to lead the hike, and we were lucky enough to have IndiGo Birding Nature Tours owner, David Rupp of Bloomington. David was a wonderful leader, and easily catered to the expert and novice among us.

We started the morning with donuts from the local Huckleberry's Bakery and a quick round of introductions. About half of our group of fourteen were IKC members, and most folks had not been to the property before. In addition to enjoying our prairie remnant and other open and wooded areas, the group loved realizing they were hiking in and out of huge sinkholes and enjoyed a stop at the IKC entrance to Upper Twin Cave, complete with an impromptu talk about the entrance and cave by Property Manager Keith Dunlap.

We ended up not seeing or hearing anything that was uncommon – David explained that fall birding is often like that; we heard and saw a mixed species group feeding early along the hike route and David said we probably should have stuck with them instead of heading to the next stopping point. We all had a really nice time, were able to chat, and we did count 22 species which were all added to Indiana's list for the day. My favorite was the group of cedar waxwings. It was wonderful that the IKC could be a part of this nationwide citizen science project. ILPA and Indiana Audubon intend to partner again next October, so if you missed it this time, perhaps next year another one of our preserves will host a hike. If you are interested in our bird list for the day: www.ebird.org/checklist/S120229727



...continued from page 14

Cave Preserve). We'd also like to especially thank Carla Striegel-Winner who organized and served as host for all four events. We could not offer such great opportunities without these folks volunteering their knowledge and time! And we will do it all over in 2023.

- ❑ The IKC recently switched over to using MailChimp email automation software to send our member communications (previously we were using personal accounts). We are currently using the free version of MailChimp that does have some limitation, but for now seems adequate. We have received feedback that some members are reporting emails going into their spam folder (or in the case of gmail, the promotions or updates folder). If you are having issues, please whitelist email from IndianaKarstConservancy@gmail.com.
- ❑ December is when the IKC starts thinking about the upcoming March elections for the Executive Board. The three officers are elected annually, while the twelve directors serve staggered three year terms, so typically there are four Director positions open each election cycle. While candidates do not need any specific skills, they should have a good understanding that the IKC is a business with important assets to manage and protect. Further, candidates need to commit to being involved in various IKC activities, and especially in attending the quarterly Executive Board meetings (or

Continued on page 16...

NEW INDIANA LAND TRUSTS NATURE PRESERVES GUIDE

article and photo by Carla Striegel-Winner

The Indiana Land Protection Alliance (ILPA) worked tirelessly with member land trusts to put together an amazing new fold out map and guide of land trust-owned preserves in Indiana that are open to the public. The map was completed and printed in time to hand out to the participants of the October 8th Big Day hikes across Indiana. The vibrant 16 x 27 inch foldout map shows approximate locations of 89 preserves throughout the state, with the reverse side giving a few key details and the websites of the trusts so preserve visitation details can be found. The goal of the guide is to attract individuals and families who are interested in nature and conservation, but may not realize how important Indiana's land trusts are to the overall protection and access of special places in Indiana.

Preserves from 18 different land trusts are included, and the Indiana Karst Conservancy

chose to feature our two preserves that are state-dedicated nature preserves – the Orangeville Rise and Buddha Karst Preserve. Although members

and others may visit the surface of our preserves at any time, these two preserves are more accessible as they do not have locked access gates.

The maps, designed to fit in brochure racks, are currently only available in limited quantities. The plan for the future is to have more copies printed and have a web page which complements the map and its contents. We have handed them out to participants at both the Big Day hike and the Early Winter Hike at Robinson Ladder Preserve. If you would like a copy, there will be a limited number available at the IKC

board meeting in December, and we will continue to offer them at our field events in 2023. Our display table at the Indiana Cave Symposium this spring will feature them as well.



Andrea Huntington, Executive Director, Indiana Land Protection Alliance, holds up the brand new fold out map of featured land trust preserves throughout the state.

...continued from page 15

when there is a conflict, to appoint a proxy). If you are interested in learning more about becoming involved in managing the IKC, please contact President Matt Selig by early January.

- ❑ The IKC has recently enrolled in the Kroger Community Rewards program. If you shop at Kroger and use their Plus discount card, we would appreciate if you would designate the “Indiana Karst Conservancy” (or use code IX056) as your non-profit of choice (this has to be done from your on-line account). It also appears that the organizations are segregated regionally so if you live outside of “central” Indiana, the IKC may not show up when you try to search for it.
- ❑ While the IKC attempts to limit its general donation solicitation to once a year (in February as part of the renewal cycle), we will nevertheless mention that year-end donations for tax deductions are always appreciated. Donations can be for our general operating fund that includes stewardship activities and education opportunities, or designated for our restricted Cave Acquisition fund. Just mail a check to our PO box, or use the donation button on our website (ikc.caves.org).
- ❑ The IKC has gained *ten* new members in the last quarter. Welcome Elliott Burnette, M Chipko, J Michael Davisson, Daniel Garrette, Charles Lewis III, William Lyons, Deborah Nelson, Jeff Sticker, Lindsey VanDeMark, and Britney Woods. IKC membership currently stands at 263.

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

Income/Expense Statement From July 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022

INCOME:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|
| Dues Apportionment and Residuals | 987.50 | |
| Donations - General | 2,172.16 | |
| Donations - Land Acquisition Fund | 1,504.00 | |
| EQIP stewardship grant | 4,238.79 | |
| General Investment Earnings | 3.74 | |
| | | \$8,906.19 |

EXPENSES:

| | | |
|--|----------|--------------|
| IKC Update (printing, production, mailing) | 437.61 | |
| Education / Outreach | 349.46 | |
| Stewardship / Conservation | 1,257.49 | |
| Business (PayPal fees, postage, etc) | 53.72 | |
| Transfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments | 1,504.00 | |
| | | (\$3,602.28) |

NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD: \$5,303.91

Balance Sheet September 30, 2022

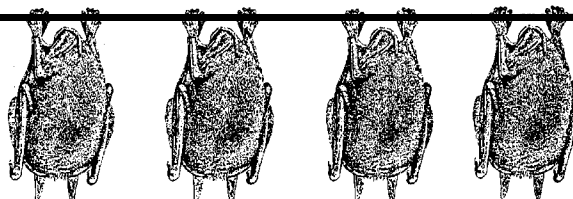
ASSETS:

| | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|
| Cash in Checking/Saving/Brokerage accounts | 545,242.82 | |
| Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (73.48 acres) | 162,000.00 | |
| Shawnee Karst Preserve (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 (30.00 acres) | 88,000.00 | |
| 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>\$1,227,255.98</u> |

FUNDS & OPERATING EXCESS:

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Land Acquisition Restricted Fund | 65,585.42 | |
| Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (257 members) | 6,037.50 | |
| Stewardship Endowment Fund (-4.82%) | 75,795.09 | |
| Gale & Ray Beach Endowment Fund (-4.18%) | 310,695.41 | |
| Previous General Fund (total) | 81,838.65 | |
| Net Excess (Deficit) This Period | <u>5,303.91</u> | |
| Current General Fund (unrestricted) | 87,142.56 | |
| Current General Fund (committed) | 1,972.87 | |
| Real Estate Basis (excluding value of CE) | <u>682,000.00</u> | |

Total Liabilities & Operating Excess \$1,227,255.98



IKC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, September 11th, 2022 – 1:00 PM EDT

Home of Danyele Green – 6888 E Bender Rd, Bloomington, Indiana

Board Members Present:

Matt Selig, President
 Laura Demarest, Secretary
 Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
 Jim Adams
 Jeff Cody
 Scott Frosch
 Danyele Green
 Dave Haun*
 Goniela Iskali
 Joe Kinder (via Zoom)
 Tom Sollman
 Carla Striegel-Winner
 Paul Uglum
 Richard Vernier

* represented by proxy (see below)

Board Members Absent:

Rand Heazlitt

Others Present: Tymme Laun, Christina Seuell, Kevin Strunk, Sue Vernier, and Tom Zeller

Call to Order/Reading of Exempt Purpose/Introductions

Meeting was called to order by Matt Selig at 1:03 PM EDT.

Acceptance of Proxies

Kevin Strunk for Dave Haun.

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting were approved as published in the September 2022 *IKC Update*. Paul Uglum made the motion to approve the minutes as written and Jim Adams seconded. 13-0 in favor with no abstentions and 2 absent. Motion passed.

E-mail Motions Since Last Meeting

Email Motion #1 – On June 15th, 2022 Carla Striegel-Winner moved that the IKC include the Dunlap parcels adjacent to the Sullivan Cave Preserve in our application for the Next Level Conservation Trust funds approved at our June 4, 2022 Board meeting. Danyele Green seconded the motion. 13-0 in favor with one abstention. (Keith Dunlap was excluded from discussion and voting). Motion passed.

Email Motion #2 – On July 9th, 2022 Keith Dunlap moved to approve up to \$500 for crushed stone to harden the interior lane at the Lowry Karst Preserve. Richard Vernier seconded. 15-0 in favor with no abstentions. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report

Keith outlined the current financial status of the organization:

Assets:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Cash assets totaling | \$582,242.66 |
| Land assets totaling | \$682,000.00 |
| Total Assets | \$1,264,242.66 |

Dedicated Funds:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Land Acquisition Fund | \$64,111.42 |
| Stewardship Endowment | \$84,170.65 |
| Gale & Ray Beach Endowment | \$342,419.80 |
| Deferred Dues | \$6,690.00 |
| General Fund | \$84,850.79 |
| Total Dedicated Funds | \$582,242.66 |

Membership currently stands at 253 paid members, which is the highest number to date. There were 25 members dropped for non-renewal.

Updates were also provided on Endowment funds and investments.

Allocation of Ray Sheldon Donations – The IKC has received \$1,000 in lieu of flowers for Ray's funeral service donations. Keith suggested this funding be moved into the land acquisition fund so that the next purchase the IKC makes can be made "In Memory of Ray Sheldon". There were no objections.

Education/Outreach

Recent Purchases/Updates – Carla has purchased a new display table and some IKC "yard" signs for upcoming field days.

Online Store Results – Joe summarized the results of the recent IKC merchandise fundraiser: 95 shirts, 3 sweatshirts, and 6 hats were sold. Organic Robot (Charlie Vettors) donated 25% of the proceeds (\$466.16) back to the IKC.

Holiday Pop-Up Store – After this recent successful fundraiser, Carla talked to Charlie Vettors of Organic Robot about doing a reprisal of the online store November 4-20th for holiday sales.

Order More IKC Stickers – Keith conveyed that a reorder of IKC stickers will cost \$115 for future distribution and fund-raising.

Outdoor Indiana Story – Carla said that the IKC will be featured in the July/August 2023 issue to showcase Indiana land preserves. Photos were recently taken (to match the timing for next year's publication) at the entrances of Lowry and Buddha caves.



2022 and 2023 Events – Carla summarized recent field days to Orangeville Rise and Buddha Karst Preserve that were held in 2022 and provided information about an upcoming field day on October 1st, 2022. This event ‘Hike with a Bat Biologist’ has 22 enrolled and will be held at the Wayne Cave Preserve with Goni Iskali as the material-expert interpreter. On October 8th there will be a Big Day with Indiana Audubon Society, Indiana Land Protection Alliance, and expert birder, David Rupp. The event will be held at the Shawnee Karst Preserve and details can be found on Eventbrite. On November 5th there will be a field day at Robinson Cave Preserve with John Benton serving as principal guide. The field day will offer an educational property hike and workday opportunity. Carla provided event flyers. In 2023, Carla is looking to hold events at Sullivan, Lowry, and Shawnee Preserves to highlight properties that have not already been featured during a field day event. Ideas and suggestions can be sent to Carla. The purposes of the field days are to increase engagement, promote the IKC, and attract potential new members and supporters. Keith also mentioned that the Indiana Cave Symposium will be April 22nd, 2023 at the Orange County Community Center.

Advocacy

Lawrence County SWCD/NRCS Advocacy Day – Laura summarized the event that included taking five local SWCD and NRCS employees on a property tour and caving trip at the Sullivan Cave Preserve with the assistance of Keith Dunlap and Carla Striegel-Winner, who planned and coordinated this excursion. Matt also mentioned that the social media coverage of that event got a lot of engagement and several ‘shares’ which helps promote the IKC’s mission.

State Legislators – Possible Preserve Visit – Earlier this year, Matt, Carla, and Laura attended a virtual workshop hosted by ILPA to share ideas about how land trusts can increase awareness about their organizations’ missions by reaching out to political affiliates and other groups who may have overlapping goals. Recently, Carla spoke with Andrea Huntington of ILPA about inviting legislators to schedule some future advocacy days if there is any interest. Location will likely be Buddha with the help of Keith Dunlap. Carla will be contacting legislators soon to extend invitations.

Cave/Land Acquisition Activities

Next Level Conservation Trust – Keith provided updates on the NLCT grant that was discussed at the June Quarterly meeting. Unfortunately, there were some complications that arose and the IKC was unable to submit an application in August. There are other potential options to consider such as a property that neighbors the Wayne Cave Preserve, but nothing is definite at this time and the funding will likely be completely committed to other projects quickly.

Big Bat Cave/Kentucky Karst Conservancy – Adam Hjermunrud, the President of Kentucky Karst Conservancy, recently reached out to Matt to ask if the IKC would be interested in being listed in their organization’s succession plan to take ownership of Big Bat Cave property in Kentucky in the unlikely event that the KKC disbanded. After some discussion, the IKC wishes to focus on caves/karst located in Indiana, but the consensus was that more information might be needed. Matt will follow up and get more information.

Lowry Preserve Manager

Carla has volunteered to manage cave visitation requests in the interim until a permanent replacement can be found to act as Property Manager and Cave Patron. Some potential candidates were discussed with the intention to approve a new manager at the December meeting.

Henderson Park Caves Management

Kevin Strunk, Keith, and Matt recently met with a The Nature Conservancy representative about cave access management. The sense of the IKC Board was that discussion be continued and an arrangement be pursued if a mutually beneficial agreement can be reached.

Recap of Preserves Work Projects & Upcoming Preserve Projects/Updates

Buddha Karst Nature Preserve – Keith has recently treated about half of the trail for multiflora rose and Stiltgrass (two separate treatments with different herbicides). Results viewed last week were positive. He plans to mow again one more time this fall. A fallen tree will need to be cleared and Goni said that she and Brad could take care of it this fall.

Lowry Karst Preserve – Keith reported that Ray had managed to get the new gravel completed on the driveway. Keith visited recently and treated a significant amount of stiltgrass. There have been improvements, but more work will be needed. More small broadleaf invasives will need to be treated, but it can probably wait until next spring.

Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve – Carla and Keith visited about a month ago and treated invasives. Air potato, aka Chinese Yam, was identified last year which is an aggressive invasive that is being treated. There are also plans to treat some wintercreeper this winter.

Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve – Carla and Jamie were on-site over Labor Day weekend to mow the camping area and trails. Some Tree-of-Heaven was also treated during that time in preparation for the upcoming tour and work day on November 5th. Branches over the lane need to be trimmed for better vehicle clearance and access lane mowing.

Shawnee Karst Preserve – Keith treated invasives and noted positive results after our experimental winter mowing of the prairie area. The native grasses responded

well. Winter mowing may be our preferable to the logistics of planning a prescribed burn. Keith will also mow the trails ahead of the October 8th event. Stiltgrass is still a significant problem there and he will be treating.

Sullivan Cave Preserve – Joe was able to mow and weed-eat the main camping area and along the current driveway in July. The porta-potty is now being serviced by a new company, which is the same that services the Wayne Cave porta-potty. He may opt to schedule more regular servicing in the future. Some offensive graffiti was recently sanded off the inside of the porta-potty after being mentioned by some recent visitors. Future workdays are being scheduled (Sept 24-25 and Nov 5-6) and upcoming projects include shed roof improvements, fallen tree removal, construction of new driveway and parking area. The old driveway will also need to be decommissioned and the street address sign moved. Keith will help spearhead the new driveway construction and gave a summary of what this will entail, including the need for crushed stone. Jamie Winner will help with grading and construction. *Joe Kinder moved to approve up to \$1,000 for crushed stone to create the new entrance driveway and to provide additional stone to the existing drive into the Sullivan Cave Preserve. Paul Uglum seconded the motion. 14-0 with no abstentions and one absent. Motion passed.*

Wayne Cave Preserve – Danyeale reports at least one camp trip per month and the site is looking very nice. A recent EQIP inspection by Cara Bergschneider from NRCS noted very positive results. Danyeale will follow up about payments and confirm. There is a significant amount of Stiltgrass in tract 3 and Cara suggested not conducting prescribed burns as some research has shown that it is not effective for Stiltgrass control. Winter mowing may be a more favorable option. New research for multiflora rose shows it is most effectively controlled in early spring. There is an upcoming field day on October 1st. Downed trees have been taken care of in the past month or so as well.

Indian Creek Easement – No report from Rand and inspection was due this past July.

Document/Photo Archives/Email Service

Laura recently set up a Google Drive and a gmail address for the IKC that can be used as needed. She volunteered to act as archivist and will consult with the other officers about naming conventions and best practices for document storage. Carla also set up a free MailChimp service for sending out emails to a large number of recipients and is looking into the ability to group contacts into volunteer lists, etc. Keith, Carla, and Laura will discuss integrating these tools further for best business practices.

Items from the Floor

- NCRC Central Region Coordinator, Jess Deli, re-

quested to use Sullivan Cave for the ICEE course on January 14th-15th, 2023 and Paul has approved the special request for this overnight class.

- Jim Adams was contacted by Julie Brown with the NSS Landowner Relations Committee in response to a recent IKC Update discussing Shiloh Cave and suggested the IKC consider nominating Elliot Stone Company for a national recognition award. Jim volunteered to spearhead this initiative with help and input from others. The IKC can consider other potential recipients as well.
- Keith and Carla have discussed tokens of gratitude for IKC patrons, property managers, etc. *Laura made a motion to allocate up to \$300 for stewardship appreciation items. Goni seconded. Discussion ensued. 12-0 with 1 abstention and 2 absent. Motion passed.*
- The Bluespring Caverns kayak trip needs to be rescheduled in December. Goni can send around another poll to choose a weekend date to reschedule in the future.
- Goni discussed status for Endless Cave and potential future closure due to gray bats being present in the cave during the late summer. The cave was closed this year early in August and changes to future visitation protocol are being discussed.
- Carla has been contacted by several folks opposing the Buffalo Springs project in Hoosier National Forest and have asked for her insight on the matter. She explained that the IKC has advised HNF personnel about karst management in the past and suggested the concerned individuals continue to monitor the situation. She wanted to make the IKC aware that there is a group of concerned citizens trying to halt the project.
- Division of Forestry is working on a permit system for state owned caves that should be operational soon.
- Danyeale and Matt discussed the possibility of offering a future Wilderness First Aid weekend class and could possibly use an IKC property for a class. Danyeale and Tymme are WFA Instructors and could help coordinate and the IKC could potentially offer to help sponsor and/or promote. Danyeale will bring more info to the December meeting.

Next Meeting Date and Place Selection

The next IKC Quarterly meeting will be Sunday, December 11th, 2022 at 1:00 PM EST. Location will be at the Ellettsville Public Library.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 PM EDT.

Respectfully compiled and submitted by Laura Demarest, IKC Secretary

...continued from page 8

property and a short hike before parting ways. It was a great experience, not just for them, but to see my young cousins truly appreciate the cave envi-

ronment. It was inspiring to me. I hope you, too, are inspired to get some kids in a cave. And really, is there anything cuter than kids in cave gear?

...continued from page 11

a chance to meet new people, but also, we got to see people that we may not have seen in years. Most importantly, though, we had a chance to be reminded how important it is to volunteer and do-

nate to the IKC. Goni and I committed to doing more of both on our drive home from the event. We hope others can commit to doing the same and to see you at the next IKC outing.



photo courtesy Keith Dunlap

The new access driveway at the Sullivan Cave Preserve (left). The old driveway that will be vacated in the future (right). See page 6 for more details.

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.

