

IKC UPDATE

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INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, INC

PO Box 2401, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401

<http://www.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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Cover: Chris Bell climbing out of the 78-foot Eye Wash Well in Big Rock Swallow Hole (Harrison Co). Photo taken by Elliot Stahl, November, 2007.



QUARTERLY MEETING REMINDER

SATURDAY, JUNE 28th, 6:00 PM

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

IU GEOLOGY BUILDING, ROOM 143

(SAME ROOM AS THE BIG MEETING)

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

Preliminary Agenda Items: Brief recap of the last quarter's activities (Robinson Ladder workday, the Indiana Cave Symposium, Buddha Karst Preserve tree planting, etc); Treasurer's report; land acquisition activities; Buddha kiosk; and more...

Meeting directions: The Geology Building is located at 10th and Walnut Grove. Tenth Street runs east/west and is one of the major streets that run across the IU campus. Park behind the building, parking permits are not enforced on weekends. Enter the building from the rear at the west end. The room is halfway down the hall on the right.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

June 28 – IKC Quarterly Meeting, Bloomington (see above)

July 19/20 – Buckner Restoration Work Weekend, Bloomington

August 2/3 – Buckner Restoration Work Weekend, Bloomington

August 11-15 – NSS Convention, Lake City, Florida

September ?? – IKC Quarterly Meeting (date and location TBD)

September 20 – Lost River Tour (Orleans)

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

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

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RAMBLINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT...

As with any organization, from time to time the torch is passed and with it an infusion of new ideas and ways of doing things. My first thought as the new president is to introduce myself.



My mother reported that my first sentence was, “*Deys a hole in der*”, which when translated from infant to English becomes, “*There’s a hole in there.*” Clearly a preview of coming attractions in my life. As the child of an English teacher and elementary school principal we had summers off to travel. By the time I went to college we had made the circuit of commercial caves, including Wyandotte, Marengo, Mammoth, Carlsbad, and Wind.

My first “real” cave trip was in September of 1971, on a trip to Mystery Cave in eastern Missouri with the Little Egypt Student Grotto of Southern Illinois University. Although I had gone to SIU as a photography major, on that fateful first cave trip I was intrigued by the many eyeless, white cave animals that no one could identify to my satisfaction. I had been admitted to the university as a President’s Scholar and was able to use that status to enlist a faculty advisor for an independent study of cave life. Although I completed my degree in photography, as a graduate student I switched to zoology and eventually completed a MS and PhD.

The rest is, as they say, history. It boggles my mind that I first stepped into the cold water and knee deep mud of underground Missouri 37 years ago. In many ways it seems like just yesterday. In the intervening years I have been in many caves – I added up all of the ones in Indiana and came up with about 600 or so. Our biological consulting business takes us to caves in many places, although Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, and Tennessee constitute the majority. Our vacations have an odd way of turning into cave trips. In recent years we’ve been in lava tubes in Hawaii, scuba diving in Yucatan cenotes, and visited the potholes of the Yorkshire Dales in England.

My acceptance of the nomination for an officer position in the IKC was not a coincidence of timing. Since starting down the path of a caver/biologist many people have helped me, each standing at an intersection, pointing a direction. Ironically,

the entire undertaking came very close to being a path not taken. As it would happen, there was a biologist at SIU who was somewhat known for his work with cave animals. Since I was required to have a faculty sponsor for my independent study, they sent me to this person to see if he would be my advisor. At that time I was, among other things, also a hippy in training, with shoulder length hair. The would-be faculty advisor took one look at me and decided that I could not be taken seriously. Luckily, he suggested that I check with another member of the SIU zoology department. Gratefully, Dr Joe Beatty was able to see past the hair to the raw potential and enthusiasm.

The entire situation was serendipitous. Dr Beatty was a bachelor and spent much of his time, 7 days a week, working in his lab/office. I was immediately ensconced in the office and spent much of the next 5 years with essentially a private tutor. Many others, some cavers, some not, helped me along the way. To name a few, Roman Kenk and Tom Bowman (both at the Smithsonian Institution), John Holsinger (Old Dominion University – author of *Caves of Virginia*), Stewart Peck (Carleton University), and Tom Barr (University of Kentucky – past president of the NSS).

So at this point in my life and career I feel drawn to paying back some of the investment that others have made in me. In addition to my role with the IKC, Salisa and I are the associate editors of biology and conservation for the *NSS Journal of Cave & Karst Studies*. I am also on the board of the American Cave Conservation Association, with headquarters in Horse Cave, Kentucky.

While the IKC is on solid footing, our country appears to be spiraling into leaner times. An unending war continues with its attendant cost in lives and money, perhaps not coincidentally bringing with it what appears to me to be a recession. At this juncture I believe that it would be a good time for the IKC to consolidate our strengths while thinking about lessening any weaknesses. It seems that the IKC excels at identifying, purchasing, and managing cave properties – this is a strength that we should continue to cultivate. At the same time our single conservation easement at the Sinks of Indian Creek appears to be tangential to both our goals and expertise so perhaps we should investigate relinquishing this responsibility.

My hope is that my combination of experience as an Indiana caver, and the connections with a variety



of organizations developed through our consulting business, will be synergistic in my role as president of the IKC. Beyond that, maybe a recent event sums up my feelings about the IKC. It was a cold, blustery day at the Buddha Karst PreserveI was standing there with shovel in hand looking at three dozen volunteers swarming across the property, purchased by

the IKC for the conservation of Buddha Cave, spending their Saturday planting trees. All of these people had paid \$3.50/gallon and a day of sweat equity for the privilege of spending their Saturday digging in the mud to restore the property to forest. I felt very proud to be part of the IKC.

Jerry Lewis

NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ The IKC annual elections on March 29th yielded several changes to the Executive Board. Dr Jerry Lewis was elected President, James Adams was elected Secretary, and Keith Dunlap was re-elected Treasurer. Directors elected (or re-elected) were Bruce Bowman, Kriste Lindberg, Bob Sergesketter, Karen Silvers, Bob Vandeventer, and Dick Vernier. The other Directors serving on the Executive Board are Dave Haun, Steve Lockwood, Bruce Silvers, Tom Sollman, and Jamie Winner. We would like to express our appreciation to Nick Noe who has served on the IKC's Board for the past twelve years and Sue Vernier who has served for the past four years.
- ❑ On April 12th, thirty-seven volunteers joined for a pre-Earth Day project at the Buddha Karst Nature Preserve to plant 1,000 trees (chinkapin oak, shumard oak, white oak, black oak, red oak, scarlet oak, and black walnut). Including these new seedlings, over 3,900 trees (approximately eight acres) have been planted since 2002 as part of a long-term reforestation project at this 37-acre property. There were two Boy Scout Troops assisting his year. The first was Boy Scout Troop 88 from Borden, Indiana and included Jerry, Salisa, Geoffrey, & Alexandra Lewis, Steve & Kennedy Williams, Greg & Jared Sanders, Joe & Mike Lynch, and Jackie & Junior Tucker. The second group was Bloomington Troop 136 and included Cindy & Eric Sandeno, Mark & Shane Springgs, Nathan Abbott, Justin & Tyler Crohn, Matt & Tom Wieligman, Allen Headley, Sam Martin, Micah & Ysaac Walls, and Bailey Hamblen. Other volunteers included George Cesnik, Keith Dunlap, Mark Kraus, Steve Lockwood, Robbie Miller, Robert Miller, Everett Pulliam, Tom Rea, Tom Sollman,, and Dick & Sue Vernier. Partial funding for the trees this year were provided by a conservation grant from the Dogwood City Grotto.
- ❑ Complementing the tree planting at the Buddha Preserve are various maintenance tasks needing attention through out the summer. Property Manager George Cesnik and volunteer Keith Dunlap have worked one day in May mowing trails and killing multi-flora rose. Additional days will be needed to perform weed control around the newly planted trees and invasive control. Volunteers are always welcome and should contact George for additional work opportunities.
- ❑ Under-Earth Day was at the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve on April 19th and we finally completed the grape vine eradication project that was started several years ago. Also accomplished was the replacement and painting of the access lane gate that was damaged earlier this year. Our thanks to Fig Newton for donating the replacement gate. Participants included John Benton, Bambi & Keith Dunlap, Ernie & Jacqueline Payne, and Dick & Sue Vernier.



□ The Buckner Cave Graffiti Removal project continues with monthly work weekends and volunteers are always welcome. Participants have found the project very rewarding through the visual accomplishment gained each day. Efforts are now concentrated in the Volcano Passage section of the cave. The IKC would like to encourage our members to support this effort. Camping is available, but please notify Bill Baus of your intentions. Bill would also appreciate it if you would notify him that you will be coming so he can plan manpower. Bill can be contacted at Baus@alumni.indiana.edu or 812-339-1210. The next work weekends are July 19/20 and August 2/3.

□ The camping area at Sullivan is utilized a dozen or more times per year and we have been trying to upgrade our ability to host larger groups. Last year we constructed a level terrace area to accommodate additional tents (those who have camped there know there were only a couple of level spots before this earthen improvement). There has also been concerns over human waste management with expanded camping use and there have been more than one heated discussion on constructing an outhouse that would meet state health regulations without costing thousands of dollars. We also looked into renting a port-a-john but the costs were equally prohibited. It was finally decided to buy a used port-a-john to better assess the actual need for such a facility before doing something more permanent. Thanks should go to Dave Haun for locating a portable privy, then donating the proceeds to buy it. Bob Vandeventer and Keith Dunlap performed some minor roof repairs on the unit prior to declaring it “open for business”.



□ Over the past 18 years, the Indiana DNR and the IKC has been monitoring Coon, Grotto, and Ray’s caves for unauthorized winter disturbances. The monitoring is done passively using electronic “speloggers” that are installed in the caves and record time and dates of disturbances (triggered by light). The monitored caves serve as significant hibernacula for the Indiana bat. Winter disturbances are thought to be one of the primary causes of the species decline, and thus it’s important to understand the levels of disturbance and to have a means of evaluating management techniques. The fence erected around Grotto in 1986 was done to reduce disturbances, but later evaluation found the fence was ineffective. Likewise “soft” signage that discouraged visitation by appealing to sensibility of protecting the bats did not work. It was not until alarm systems and threatening signs were installed 12 years ago did the unauthorized visits essentially cease. And because we have both disturbance data and winter population data, we can clearly shows a direct correlation (that is, when visitation decreases, population increases). During the 2007-2008 winter closure, there were no disturbances recorded in either Coon or Grotto and only one visit in late April at Ray’s Cave.

□ Most of the IKC’s basic operating expenses and obligations (newsletter, insurance, property taxes, routine stewardship activities) are paid with membership dues. However, we are greatly dependent upon additional donations to supplement and support the many other projects the IKC initiates. Since December of 2007, 39 individuals and 7 organizations have made general donations totally more than \$3,500. Donors include John Ahlberg, Bob Armstrong, John Benton, Ted Bice, Don Bohling, Larry Bundy, Pat & Debbi Burns, Chris Carpenter, David Carson, George Cesnik, Ariel Doucette, Keith Dunlap, Jeff Farr, Tom Gentry, Dwight Hazen, David Lasser, Jerry & Salisa Lewis, William Morrow, Carl & Louise Nelson, Nick Noe, Shannon Obendorf, Nate Pate, Ernie & Jacqueline Payne, Steve Ragsdale, Charles Rex, Kelle Reynolds, Gary Roberson, Robert Roundy, Ralph Sawyer, Bob Sergesketter, Gordon Smith, Kevin Smith, Susan Strickland, Bob Vandeventer, Dick & Sue Vernier, Stan Weinzapfel, Jack Wood, Scott Worpell, Kevin Wyatt, Bluespring Caverns, Dogwood City Grotto, Greater Cincinnati Grotto, 2007 NSS Convention, General Motors (on behalf of Keith Dunlap), BSA Troop 112, and Robert Cooper Audubon.

- ❑ And while all of our current preserve projects are fully funded, we want to be preparing for the next project and a number of members have made donations into our restricted Land Acquisition Fund. Since December, over \$1,700 in donations have been received. Donors include George Brutchen, Jeff Cody, Keith Dunlap, Jeff Farr, Scott Fee, Allen Goodcase, Nick Noe, Shannon Obendorf, Ernie & Jacqueline Payne, Don Peters, Charles Rex, Kelle Reynolds, Matt Selig, Ty Spatta, and Mark Webb.

- ❑ With the IKC having an educational mission, getting positive exposure in the mainstream media is always a good thing. On May 23rd, the IKC's website was featured in the EarthLINK environmental section of the *Herald-Times* (Bloomington). Then on June 3rd, the *Indianapolis Star* published an article that centered around caving and focused on a trip to Sullivan Cave (see the article on page 9).

- ❑ The IKC often partners with other organizations and agencies to leverage our ability to educate about caves, karst, and the unique resources they contain. The perfect example was the production of the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* video where the project scope and budget was significantly greater than we could do on our own. By joining forces with the Hoosier National Forest (and actually encouraging them to take the lead), both organizations were able to partner with Ravenswood Media to create an outstanding product to promote our education missions. All involved would agree the project greatly exceeded their original expectations from the quality of the video, the message communicated, and even the "red carpet" premiere to a packed house in Bloomington. As part of the recognition of our partnership with the Hoosier, the IKC received the 2007 *Forest Supervisor's Honor Award for Connecting Citizens to the Land*.



- ❑ Six new members have joined the IKC in the past quarter. Welcome Cindy Sandeno (472), Jacqueline Payne (473), Jason Kern (474), John Shultheis (475), Brenda Shultheis (476), and Charles Wendel (477). Also welcome back Brian Leavell (90) who rejoined after an 11 year absence. The IKC membership now stands at 194.

INDIANA CAVE SYMPOSIUM 2008

by Todd Webb

Well another Indiana Cave Symposium is behind us. For those that could not attend, following is a condensed version (the real version went from 5-11 PM).

While not planned, this year's symposium highlighted many of the ways that technology is changing the way we locate, map, analyze, and store cave/karst features data, as well as how we present that information to a wider audience. Cave radios, surveying with palm pilots, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), digitally scanned maps, phosphorescent analysis of cave sediments, and educational videos shot primarily in and around caves are changing the tools many of us use.

The Symposium site was moved to the Crawford County 4-H Fairgrounds due to flood damage

in Milltown, but I honestly thought it was a far nicer venue. There was plenty of space for both the "cook-out" and the presentations in the same room, and the parking and other amenities were great too. Keith Dunlap as usual proved an able cook although there were some anxious moments when the grill was late and we took stock of the facility kitchen as a backup.

I had asked Jamie Winner to bring his laptop so I could do a impromptu class on ArcExplorer with some folks but this didn't quite pan out. Sideshow Bob Vandeventer's computer decided to go on strike and Jamie's laptop was drafted into service as the presentation computer. So, while I didn't get much show and tell done, we did at least have



a functioning computer!

Kriste Lindberg started the presentations with a summary of the karst education efforts over the last year which included: workshops for 6th graders at Leonard Springs Nature Park (Bloomington), *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* video, Education Day at the 2007 NSS National Convention, the inflatable cave, and a Forest Service presentation in Washington DC. Karst education is growing as is the demand, which is good news for caves.

I then gave a presentation on GIS efforts using Indiana Cave Survey database to create a visual database to represent various things like aerial photos, cave locations, and maps together in a graphical format. The main points (no pun intended) were that GIS was proving very useful for organizing and sorting data, detecting errors in the database, and in incorporating outside sources of information like photos, geologic maps, etc.

Jerry Lewis then talked tongue in cheek about how great it was to live in America. In his typical entertaining way, he recapped some of his biology inventory activities over the past year including projects with the Karst Waters Institute, Indiana DNR, and The Nature Conservancy. He also completed the Sullivan Cave biological inventory. Sullivan was found to be the third most biologically diverse cave in the state with sixteen obligate species (only Binkley and Wesley Chapel Gulf have more).

Jamie Winner then gave his presentation on the radio location of Hat Dome in Hell Hole Cave and the subsequent creation of a new entrance and survey of several hundred feet of new cave. He detailed the long process of building and using the radio gear and the numerous long trips required before the new entrance could be located, dug, and surveyed.

We then had a musical intermission/break where people could restock with food and listen to cave related songs performed by Roger Gleitz and Fred Jagers.

Back to the presentations, Jack Wood spoke on his thesis research in examining sediments in Porter Cave for indications of previous glacial events. He had a lot of in-depth information and the presentation was very technical in nature. The take home message was that glacial events could

be characterized by clues left in cave sediments and that they could even point to previously unrecorded/unverified local glacial events.

Keith Dunlap then spoke about his project to collect, scan, and put into a linkable spreadsheet all the available cave maps for the state of Indiana. He currently has well over 2,200 maps scanned and indexed and even without new additions, expects the number to exceed 3000 before the project is completed. Private libraries and other sources could eventually push that number higher. The map CD is very intuitive and a fantastic resource. Copies of the map CD are available to regular and contributing members of the Indiana Cave Survey.

Finally Dave Everton spoke about his work in surveying the American Bottoms complex of caves and in his use of a palm pilot and Auriga software. The caves were quite impressive in length, and in the volume of mud (as most of them completely flood!). Dave pointed out the many advantages of Auriga for survey work, as well as some of the physical hazards they faced including a dead cow that blocked one passage. Auriga was very impressive and not only allowed digital recording of data but allowed you to actually plot the cave on the fly in real time.

A hearty thanks to each of the presenters and the others not previously mentioned who assisted in the cook-out and facilities arrangements (including Jaime Fee for her grill; Dick Vernier and Bambi Dunlap for assisting the grill master; Carla Striegel-Winner for room logistics, and Gordon Smith for venue re-location expenses). Also a reminder that the IKC and the Indiana Cave Survey sponsor the event and split the expense of the burger and brats entrees, sodas, and paper/plasticware.



Summer series: Caving a thrilling adventure

Crawling through Indiana's damp, muddy caves is a thrilling adventure for young and old

by Phil Richards

Bob Vandeventer was an adventurous 22-year-old when a friend took him caving the first time in 1970. He dropped through a rocky cleft into Sullivan Cave in Lawrence County and emerged 20 hours later, enthralled, and exhausted.

"We slept right there on the ground," Vandeventer recalled. "We got in and we just couldn't get out, all the neat stuff he kept showing me. Every time we turned a corner I wanted to see more."

Vandeventer, Greenwood, was hooked. He's 60 and retired now but still entering holes, turning corners and looking for more.

That's how it works.

Tom Rea, 73, Cloverdale, first wandered into a cave at age 5. His family visited Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky.

"You'll either love it or hate it," said Rea, a retired engineer and past president of the National Speleological Society (NSS). "I've had lots of hobbies and I've given them all up, but I've never quit caving. It will take over your life."

Indiana has been the site of the NSS national convention four times: 1965, 1972, 1992 and 2007. It is the northern range of what cavers call "TAG" -- Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. That area constitutes the "Valhalla" of caving.

Most of Indiana's 3,112 known caves are located in the state's south-central karst area, within a finger of largely exposed water-soluble limestone that extends from Perry, Crawford and Harrison counties on the Ohio River up through Bloomington. Drainage is largely subterranean. The area is characterized by sinkholes, sinking streams, large springs, and caves.

Back to Sullivan

With almost 10 miles of surveyed passageways, Sullivan Cave is Indiana's fourth longest, and it still has its magic.

Vandeventer led a recent trip there that included Paul Uglum, a Noblesville engineer; Blake Fuller, a Greenwood bus driver accompanied by his daughter, Addie, 12, and son, Evan, 10; Ryan Brown, a truck driver from Fortville; and a couple of Indianapolis Star tagalongs.

Wow.

The gated entry is deceptive, perhaps 2 feet by 3 feet. The 7-foot drop plunges into another world. The dark, the sounds and smells, the size and shape of passages, rooms and rock formations are unique. So is the sense of wonder: "What's next?"

Forty feet of passageway and a couple more drops and we assembled in the "Waterfall Room," a 10-foot by 10-foot chamber whose fall was reduced to a trickle with no recent rain. There was a spider here and a cave cricket there. Bats hung from the ceiling or flitted silently past. The only light emanated from helmet lamps.

On to the aptly named "Backbreaker," a passage that stretches nearly a quarter mile with a 3-1/2- to 5-foot ceiling. Bend over and bear it.

"There was a time you couldn't walk through here without stepping on beer cans and bottles every step," Vandeventer said.

They are gone now, as is most of the graffiti that covered walls and ceilings. Sullivan Cave in 1998 became the first property acquired by the Indiana Karst Conservancy. Volunteers cleaned it out, painstakingly mud-washed away most of the graffiti, and restored the cave.

We reached the "T" and proceeded to an area where the wall is undercut by a passage that first afforded space to crawl, hands and knees, then diminished to a 1-foot-high, belly-in-the-mud wriggle to the "Canyon Passage" and the "Mountain Room" beyond.

The effort was worth it. The "Mountain Room" is 60 feet high and 100 feet across. It is a rock-lit-

tered "breakdown dome" in which an old channel of the subterranean Sullivan River has collapsed into a lower flood route.

We took a break, sat on the rocks. Conversation was sparing. Everyone just looked around. There was a shared sense of awe.

Everywhere stalactites hang from the ceiling. Almost all are snapped off, souvenirs harvested by visitors unaware that brought to the surface, they dry up and crumble to dust. Stalactites, like the caves in which they dwell, are living things.

The passage descended to the Sullivan River, flowing more than 100 feet beneath the forest. We waded its edge, then forded it to reach "Armstrong's Folly." River waters were 52 degrees, the air temperature about the same.

We were dirty, muddy, wet, chilled, exhilarated. We had covered little more than a mile. Time to start back. Our visit lasted a little more than four hours, enough to impart an appreciation for the wisdom of the NSS motto: "Leave nothing but footprints. Take nothing but pictures. Kill nothing but time."

The effect can be profound.

"My life's totally changed since I started caving," said Brown, 34, who last August joined the Central Indiana Grotto (CIG), one of 200 under the NSS umbrella. "I wish I'd found it 10 years ago."

Ladies and gentlemen

The CIG, of which Vandeventer is vice chairman, meets the first Wednesday of each month at the World War Memorial in Downtown. Membership fluctuates but has run as high as 130 in recent years, making it one of the NSS' larger grottos. Members include doctors and tradesmen, engineers and truck drivers, office and plant workers.

Of the 31 in attendance last month, nine were women, including grotto secretary Susie Strickland, 57, Indianapo-

IKC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

by Kriste Lindberg

As noted in the last *IKC Update*, “What we’re doing must be working!” Our little committee needs help keeping up with requests. We are in the process of putting together a plan to train more individuals in Project Underground and cave conservation education in general, at the state level. This model can be used as a model for the national level and was announced at the Indiana Cave Symposium. The agenda includes an IKC Education and Outreach Committee page for the IKC’s website and a database of folks who are trained in cave and karst education. With this, we will have folks in specific areas that can take care of requests in their area. Not a bad idea, especially with the high cost of fuel!

We’re starting to get the word out, including on the 2008 NSS Convention website. Check it out. If you’re going to convention, please consider joining us on August 14. Convention staff have been working to find us a contact in the area to scare up interested educators, such as we did last year. As you will recall, it was an overwhelming success with over 20 signed up for the day.

The Indiana Environmental Education Symposium in June should help with this. Both Bob Vandeventer and I will be in attendance. Ironically, I am teaching a Project Underground: Cave Critter Creations workshop at the Monroe County Public Library on the first day of the symposium but will join up with them later.

Some of the requests we have had for Project Underground activities include a science fair at Bloomington High School North and an elementary school in Greenwood. Once again, it was hard to find a time when the inflatable cave was not in

the back of my vehicle or set up at an event!

As you will see on page 14 of this newsletter, Bob Vandeventer’s granddaughter, Madison, received a National Daughters of the American Revolution award for a photo essay she did on him and his adventures, including caving and a page devoted to our education and outreach efforts. Many of us were present at the ceremony, which took place at Madison’s fifth grade graduation. There weren’t many dry eyes amongst us!

In cooperation, we arranged to do a one-hour cave education program for the entire fifth grade population at the school – approximately 90 eager, excited kids! Bob and I put together a basic PowerPoint on caves and treated them to tours (limit of 10/visit) of the inflatable cave. While others were waiting their turn, they enjoyed other cave-related activities, including Project Underground’s version of Marco Polo, Bat Echoes, where a group gathers in a circle, chooses a “bat” and a “moth” amongst themselves, and play a game of catch in the middle. Naturally, the “bat” needs to use its specialized adaptations to catch the “moth” using its echolocation. In other words, the bat says “bat” and the moth responds by saying “moth”, the “bat” must either be blind folded or close its eyes. They love it (so do adults)!

All this was captured by *Indianapolis Star* reporter, Phil Richards, who is writing a series of articles on caves, including one devoted to our education and outreach efforts and plan described previously. We are looking forward to the day and potential of adding more to our list to get the word out on cave and karst conservation!

Another education opportunity included the 5th annual Hellbender Hustle 5K run and spring fling



Mike Walsh thumbs through cave and karst information at the NSS Partnership Building Forum’s booth at the American Planning Association in Las Vegas.



hosted by The Nature Conservancy at O'Bannon Woods State Park. There, we showed the *Caves: Life Beneath the Forest* video on a continuous loop and had the IKC display up next to the break room. The event raises money for TNC.

Once again, Bloomington Parks and Recreation's endeavor with Sycamore Land Trust and the Monroe County Consolidated School Corporation, Leonard Springs Nature Days, was a *huge* success. As you may recall, this year we hosted 2/3rds of the area 6th graders to learn about nature at various inter-related stations at the park – karst, stream (emanating from the spring below Shirley Springs Shelter Cave), wetlands (created by spring and rain water), forest (surrounding all), and soils (composed, in part, by the forest and limestone rock). Thanks to Dave Everton for running one of the karst stations. Plans are already underway to host *all* of the 6th graders at the park starting this fall and commencing in the spring of 2009.

While there, we were asked by a Monroe County planner, who was overseeing one of the forest stations, if we would help educate the Monroe County commissioners on caves and karst. This was good timing as we have been organizing more with others at the national level on the endeavor.

At the end of April, Gordon Birkhimer, Meredith Hildreth, Jesse Richardson, Val Hildreth-Werker, George Veni, Jim Werker, Mike Walsh and I attended the American Planning Association's 100th National Planning Conference in Las Vegas, where we had a booth (see photo at left). Our first ever for the Partnership Building Forum of the Conservation Division of the NSS! We educated planners, contractors, and more on caves and karst in developing areas. Thanks to the National Speleological Foundation for their generous support of the endeavor. Many good contacts were made.

Two 6th grade students peer through spotting scopes at the wetlands station during Leonard Springs Nature Days. The wetlands were created by springs around the former water reservoir for the City of Bloomington.

Photo by Carroll Ritter of Sycamore Land Trust.

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

- Cave Critter Creations, Monroe County Public Library, Bloomington, June 26
- Environmental Education Symposium, Indianapolis, June 26-27
- Quarries: Old and New Tour, Bedford area, June 28
- Caves Among Us: Leonard Springs Nature Park Tour, Bloomington, July 16
- 2008 NSS Convention, Lake City, Florida, August 11-15 (Education Day, August 14)
- Spring Mill State Park "Gone Caving" 3rd Annual Event, Mitchell, August 23 – 24
- Texas Cave Conservancy Cave Day II 2008, Cedar Park, Texas, September 13
- Leonard Springs Nature Park Outing (hike and lunch), September 17
- Caves Among Us (LSNP evening hike), September 17
- Take a Child Outside, September 23-30, including Bats in the Park, a collaboration with Laura Hohman of Bat World Hoosier Hills, September 26
- Leonard Springs Nature Days, October – November plus March – May 2009

If you would like more information on any of the above and/or wish to help, please contact me at kriste.lindberg@gmail.com or (812) 339-7210.

Special thanks extended to the Bloomington Indiana Grotto and Dave Everton, Cassie Hauswald, Laura Hohman, Don Ingle, Madison Lutz, Karen Tadsen, and Bob Vandeventer.



RESTORING BAT CAVE TO BE A BAT CAVE

by Keith Dunlap

In 2005, Bat Conservation International (BCI) received a Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust grant to perform a number of cave assessments in Indiana. The assessments, were to look for caves that may have served as Indiana bat hibernacula in the past, primarily by looks for ceiling strains left by the bats from prolong use. One of the caves identified as a potential former hibernaculum was Bat Cave in Washington County. While the cave has been observed in the past to have a small number of hibernating bats and stories of larger numbers “way back when”, no Indiana bats have ever been identified there. The likely reason is that the cave has a long history of visitation (the earliest signature in the cave is 1817) and at some point in the mid-1900s, the cave entrance was blocked with a stone wall and wooden door so the cave could serve as a fruit/vegetable cellar.

Of the caves identified in the initial assessment study, Bat Cave was identified as a good restoration candidate. So Jim Kennedy of BCI contacted the landowners to discuss its potential and the landowners agreed to having the entrance wall removed and a bat-friendly angle iron gate installed. BCI submitted another grant request to the Pulliam Trust and the funding was approved. Jim then contacted me last October to see if the IKC would be interested in doing the gate construction.

In April, Tom Sollman and I visited the cave to select the gate location and take measurements. I then prepared engineering drawings, a materials list, and estimated costs. BCI approved the project and I worked with the landowner to select June

7th as the construction date. I also recruited volunteers from the pool of IKC members who previously helped to build the DNR mine gates.

The work crew consisted of Terry Clark, Bambi Dunlap, Ray Sheldon, Bruce Trotter, Bob Sergesketter, Tom Sollman, and Dick Vernier. Jim Kennedy was also present to serve in an advisory role and to photo document the construction.

The first order of business for the day was to remove all the stacked stones and wooden door/frame from the entrance. We also re-sloped the dirt in front of the entrance to provide for a more stable grade. We next dug a trench for the lower sill plate (due to a very large rock in the entrance, the base of the gate had to step over the rock requiring the sill plate to be in two sections). It took some time to get the sill perfectly positioned and the main vertical support attached and pinned to the ceiling. From that point, construction was fairly routine with the exception of aligning the second sill plate to the partial gate. From start to finish, the construction took about eight hours.

The new gate should allow the cave to cool much better (essential for Indiana bats) and allow uninhibited access by the bats into the cave while preventing human disturbance during their hibernation. It is still somewhat of a long shot that Indiana bats will re-colonize this cave, but with another hibernaculum (Neyman Cave) less than a quarter mile away, it is more than a possibility and thus the reason the IKC wanted to be a partner in this project.

The landowners are friendly to cavers and access to the cave during the non-hibernating months will still be allowed with permission.



This was the “before” condition of the entrance to Bat Cave, Washington County. The rock wall and wooden gate had been on the cave for more than fifty years, inhibiting bats from accessing the cave.

Tom Sollman, Bob Sergesketter, and Bruce Trotter positioning the third angle-iron horizontal bar in the entrance of Bat Cave.



Terry Clark (foreground) is cutting the steel to the proper length while Bob Sergesketter (center) and Bruce Trotter wait to carry it into the cave.

Jim Kennedy (sitting) and Ray Sheldon (right) in front of the nearly completed bat-friendly gate in the entrance to Bat Cave.

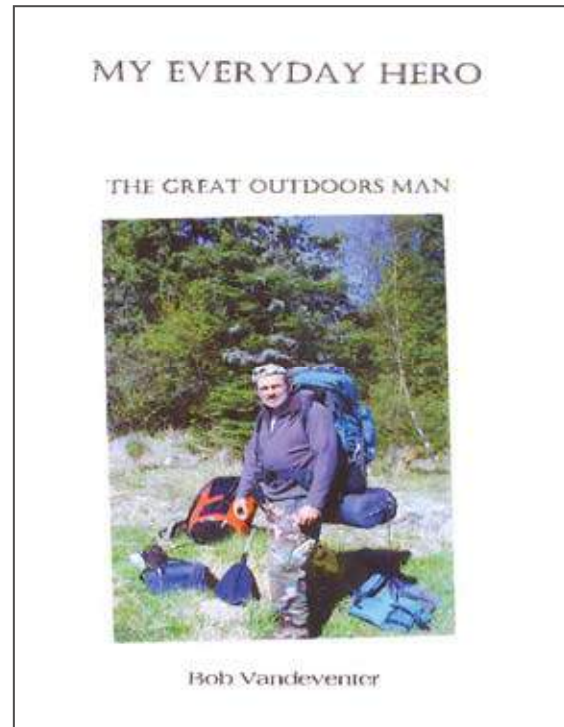


Congratulations, Madison!

On May 27th, Bob Vandeventer's granddaughter, Madison Lutz, not only graduated from the 5th grade, but received a distinguished Daughters of the American Revolution award for a photo essay she produced on him, "My Everyday Hero, The Great Outdoors Man, Bob Vandeventer". It rose from chapter to state to regional levels to take **first place** in the *national* competition. The booklet features many of Bob's pursuits with the Indiana Karst Conservancy and beyond. Included in this announcement are a few of the related images.

We are very proud of her... and him.

Keep up the good work!



ANNUAL CAVE PATRON / PROPERTY MANAGER REPORTS

Each year at the Annual Business Meeting, the Cave Patrons and Property Managers are asked to give a verbal report and submit a written report summarizing the prior year's activities and incidents, and to make any future recommendations needing implementing. The following is a compilation of the reports for calendar year 2007:

Buddha Cave Patron Report (Jeff Cody)

This past year we saw 15 trips into Buddha. These trips involved 76 people who filled out waivers. All trips went off with out any incidents reported to me. Unlike Shaft Cave, these trips were spread out through out the whole year. I asked each leader to report to me any trash or signs of vandalism, none were reported to me. I also ask each leader who has not been in the cave to pass packs at the climb up near the entrance and spot anyone who may need it to avoid a fall.

Buddha saw a busy couple of days during the NSS convention. We had a total of 26 people who filled out waivers go into the cave. There were several people from out of state and one from Mexico go in during convention. One trip during this time involved surveying toward the connection, probably because of the dry summer. The past year saw more visitation than the year before. A neat photo of the entrance was on the back cover of the *NSS News* a few months ago, It was a photo taken when it was dark outside and light just inside the entrance. The photo was shot outside looking into the entrance.

Buddha Property Report (George Cesnik)

We had a number of workdays last year:

- April 14: Indiana Karst Consevancy members, friends, and a Boy Scout Troop planted 500 oak trees.
- May 19: Keith Dunlap mowed the hiking trail on the property. George Cesnik and Keith sprayed Roundup around the bases of planted trees for weed control. George sprayed Weed-Be-Gone on multiflora rose bushes in an ongoing effort to eliminate this invasive from the property.
- May 26: Keith and George sprayed Roundup around the bases of the rest of the trees planted this year and also some planted in previous years. Keith cut down some autumn olive trees. George continued the spraying of Weed-Be-Gone on more of the multiflora rose bushes.

- July 14: Keith mowed the parking area and trail. George and Keith sprayed Weed-Be-Gone on multiflora rose.
- November 7: George met with Jason Larson of the DNR to walk the property. They discussed the activities such as tree plantings and invasive controls that are being conducted on the Nature Preserve.
- March 2 (2008): Keith and George determined and marked where a section of the trail through the property will be rerouted. They also decided where the next planting of trees will be located.

Future activities: We are planning to plant 1,000 trees on the property starting at 10 AM, Saturday, April 12, 2008. Some of the trees will be used to replace ones that died, most likely because of the drought conditions last year. The effort to spray and kill multiflora rose bushes will also continue this spring.

Sullivan Cave Patron Report (B Vandeventer)

This was the first year in several years that the number of visitors decreased. There were 418 visitors into the cave this year. Of those, approximately one-fourth (126) were arranged through our grotto liaisons. There were at least three trips associated with last year's NSS convention.

There were eight groups that arranged for camping on the property (and we know of several impromptu campers).

During 2007 (and early 2008) Dr Jerry Lewis conducted a bio-inventory in the cave with impressive results.

Sullivan Property Report (Keith Dunlap)

This was the IKC's ninth full year of ownership. For the most part, we are now in "maintenance mode". The trees in the small field, planted in 2000, have grown impressively. Those in the larger field planted in 2001 have not done as well, but are holding their own. No tree replanting or spraying was done in 2007.

The "camping" area was mowed three times, as was the area by the driveway out by the road. Several water bars on the trail to the cave were replaced due to rot, and the sign over the entrance was removed (it was also starting to fall apart).

In September, two truck-loads of top soil were dumped in the camping clearing and later leveled to create a terraced spot for tents. After the draught broke, four bales of straw were thatched, and grass



and fertilizer spread. The grass sprouted before winter to control erosion. Over-seeding and re-fertilizing will be done again this spring.

Several members took advantage of the camping area and firewood over the past year. Several firewood donations were received as well as other donations from those who visited the cave.

In October, two limestone benches were installed near the cave entrance in memory of Eric Schnieder.

There were no major problems or concerns encountered during 2007. Activities planned for 2008 include the usual maintenance activities and hopefully progress will be made on acquiring a port-a-john.

Wayne Cave Patron Report (Dave Everton)

Approximately 87 persons visited Wayne Cave during calendar year 2007 in a total of 19 trips, representing 4 grottos through the liaison program, as well as other groups of cavers. The breakout follows, not listed in any particular order:

- Near Normal Grotto (IL): 2 trips, 12 cavers
- St Joseph Valley Grotto: 1 trip, 5 cavers
- Central Indiana Grotto: 2 trips, 10 cavers
- Bloomington Indiana Grotto: 8 trips, 30 cavers
- Patron-arranged: 6 trips, 30 cavers

There was a group at least once a month except for August and September. Some of the trips represent repeat visitations by some cavers; there were a total of 74 waiver forms collected, with some visitors completing more than the required one per person each calendar year. The patron participated on three of the trips. No problems were noted, other than minor difficulties with the lock, which was changed at least once.

One item previously reported in last year's report (and also sent along in February 2008 to Keith Dunlap, asking for advice), was the ongoing, repeated finding of a particular type of marking found in many places in the cave. It is believed that one particular group is responsible for the markings, which have also been seen in Sullivan Cave. The cavers responsible for leaving the marks really need to be educated regarding wayfinding without leaving marks, because the places the markings have been found are in obvious, one way to go (other than up and over versus down low, etc.) passages. The patron respectfully asks that action be taken to check cave visitation records to try and determine possible offenders between visitors to Sullivan and Wayne Cave, and make an effort to de-

termine the responsible party. In the meantime, all that the Patron can do is continue to mention to every trip leader that no marks are to be left inside the cave. Other than those markings, Wayne Cave seems to be in very reasonable shape. Inevitably, small pieces of trash are inadvertently left in both the cave and parking area, but removed when found. Some individuals have expressed difficulty lifting the cave gate from the inside, but it is suspected that fatigue and poor technique both contribute to that problem.

Wayne Cave continues to be a source of enjoyment and pleasure for the average visitor. Thank you to the IKC for many years of protection and restoration, as well as continued protection and property improvements.

Wayne Property Report (Robert Sollman)

The Wayne Cave Property remains in good shape. The woods are recovering from the logging done there before we acquired the land. We are basically in a "care-taking" mode but some projects and maintenance were done last year which includes:

- Last spring two Poplar trees were planted in the clearing at the top of the hill by the parking area. To preserve the local bio-diversity the trees were transplanted from the surrounding woods. Examination later in the year revealed one tree was really an Oak tree and one was a dead tree. We'll try it again this year.
- The clearing was mowed infrequently by volunteers and myself. Native wild flowers are spreading into the clearing and an effort was made to mow around them.
- The foot trail to the cave was cleared a couple of times of small trees fallen across it.
- Trash was picked up from the road frontage.
- The brush pile in the center of the clearing finally rotted away. The dirt left was spread around and leveled out.
- Property lines were marked with steel posts and 2-inch white PVC "sleeves".
- Funds were moved from the general fund to the stewardship fund to bring the Wayne Cave portion up to its full 10% property value level.

Robinson Ladder Cave (John Benton)

- January 20 – Bat census trip in RLC; 6 cavers in group; leader, Keith Dunlap.



- February – While the ground was frozen, several dump truck loads of crushed stone were dumped on road going up the hill to the barn.
- April 21 – IKC workday was held at the property and at the adjacent TNC property. An old fence line on the north boundary was removed. A replacement BAT CLOSURE sign was installed at the cave entrance to replace a deteriorating sign and support. On the Campbell tract, recently purchased by the TNC, an old camper shell was demolished and put in containers furnished by TNC.
- May 5 – Local caver Steve Douzema leads a trip into RLC with 3 other people.
- June 22 – Neighbor, Alice Baggett, inquires about having the fields cut for hay for her use and at her expense. It was decided to allow this later in the Fall. It was a very dry year, drought conditions.
- June 24-25 – IKC member Glenn LeMasters camps at the property.
- July 14 – CIG caver Paul Lindberg leads a trip to RLC.
- July 21-27 – NSS Convention trips; at least 4 trips into RLC, 30 signed waivers, trips led by Reese, Dick Vernier, Jim Adler, and Dave Everton. States represented were IN, OH, NY, NJ, KY, MD, FL, CO, and PA. Heard positive comments on cave and property. During Convention week, ladders were installed and left in place at the entrance to ease any possible congestion there. All went well.
- Late August – Neighbor Alice Baggett, at her expense; had upper field and part of lower field hay, cut, baled and removed for her horses.
- November – Ongoing WHIP management of the property, in consultation with IDNR (Mark Bennett, biologist), Jennifer Knable (USDA), IKC member Jamie Winner arranged to have the fields sprayed for fescue eradication. This was done and contract sprayer, R Harvey, inadvertently sprayed the lower field. Upon being notified of his error, he sprayed the top field at his expense. It was deemed to be little, if any harm, to having both fields sprayed. Plans are to do burn for continued fescue eradication in the spring or fall of 2008. Jamie Winner is heading this up.

- The Jan 2007 bat census showed 333 Indiana bats, 108 little browns, 7 pips, and 2 big browns. It should be noted that the high dome location of the bats, makes it difficult to distinguish between Indianas and Little Browns, so the split is more art than science, noted by Keith Dunlap. The total number of bats has been pretty stable, slightly up (not significantly) for 2007.
- Carla Striegel-Winner was in contact with Jennifer Knable about staying in compliance with WHIP agreement. And Carla and Jamie mowed the lane and camping areas from time to time.

Coon & Grotto Patron Report (Keith Dunlap)

There was one incident reported to the Patron during CY2007. At Coon Cave, an unauthorized and inexperienced family attempted to visit the cave without the proper equipment. The mother of the family fell, resulting in a head injury and requiring emergency assistance. The responding agencies did not call for caver assistance, but several cavers ended up performing the vertical rescue. I did not pursue legal action as it's best to not stir the liability pot.

There were 5 authorized recreational trips and 3 service trips (e.g., bat census, equipment maintenance) into Coon Cave involving 30 cavers. Trips were arranged through the CIG, BIG, and NNG liaisons and the Patron.

There were 5 authorized recreational trips and 4 service trips into Grotto Cave involving 30 cavers. Likewise trips were arranged through the same contacts.

The annual report to the property owner was drafted and mailed on 12/22/07.

I made several "drive-by" checks of the property during the past year.

There were no unauthorized visits recorded in either cave by the monitoring speloggers during the hibernacula closure period (9/2006 to 4/2007). In the past 10 years since the alarm systems were installed, there has only been one violation.

The temperature-monitoring project continued in both caves (started the 14th year of deployment on 9/18).

In April, a large rock was found in Grotto, partially blocking the flight path and airflow near the entrance. After consulting with USFWS and DNR, it was decided the rock should be removed. This was accomplished in June.

The results from the 2007 bat census were impressive. Both caves had contemporary record populations, 14,099 Indiana bats for Coon and



12,891 Indiana bats for Grotto. There were also near record numbers of little browns. One "white" bat was observed in Coon Cave.

The caves remain in good condition and no in-cave clean-ups are planned.

Shiloh Patron Report (James Adams)

The system of permitting up to six trips into Shiloh Cave for the general caving community continued in 2007. Each trip is limited to ten participants with three vehicles permitted to park at the site.

After conversations with the landowner in 2005, the IKC is no longer paying a token sum to the owner as specified by earlier lease agreements. Verbal agreements remain in effect since 2003 and the conservancy's relationship with the landowner remains healthy.

Elliott Stone Company has completed its move of their main offices from Bedford to the Eureka quarry. Extensive renovations have taken place in the former ESP gift shop and this building is now Elliott Stone's headquarters. Since most trips to Shiloh Cave are scheduled on the weekend, this may not impact cavers; however, visitors should be mindful that the building that had stood empty for several years is now in use. Parking should be kept as far from the building as possible and changing in or out of cave gear behind the former ESP building is not advisable.

In 2007, only three of the six allocated trips were taken into Shiloh Cave. On Saturday, June 2, a group of nine cavers affiliated with the Bloomington Indiana Grotto visited the cave.

The annual convention of the National Speleological Society (NSS) was held in Southern Indiana and two trips were scheduled for attendees of this event. The first was just prior to the convention on Sunday, July 22 for seven NSS members. The second trip was during the convention on Thursday, July 26 for ten.

The NSS Convention attracts members and guests from all over the world. Visitors to Shiloh Cave represented the states of California, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, plus two visitors from Montreal, Canada.

Shaft Patron Report (Jeff Cody)

In the past year Shaft Cave saw a total of 5 trips with permits. These trips involved a total of 20 people who filled out waivers. All

five trips went off with no incidents reported to me. I spoke to two groups after their trips and asked about the new bolts and they said placements seemed fine. The bolt placements are a little different than the old ones. On March 9 I took my annual trip into the cave. I went all the way back to the big room. I did not see anything out of the ordinary, the formations in the big room looked like always with no vandalism. I did pick up a little trash at the bottom of the main drop and some into the crevice after the main drop.

I have also visited the property a couple of other times when I was in the area and did not see anything out of the ordinary in the way of trash. On June 16th, Keith Dunlap led a group to fix the fence that was damaged from a down tree in a storm. A corner was smashed when a tree fell on it. Keith reported to me the fence repair did not take long. Most of the visits were in the warm weather months, just like last year.

Orangeville Rise Report (Steve Lockwood)

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

The fence built in 2003 on the western side of the property has collected more flood debris but remains straight and structurally sound. The concrete property markers installed in 2004 are still intact on the east and west sides of the property. The west bank of the Orangeville Rise streambed at the intersection of the Lost River streambed continues to erode closer to the fence posts along the west property line.

The National Natural Landmark plaque was removed, straightened and had new brass bolts installed in it. The old bolts and epoxy were removed from the limestone base. The plaque was then reinstalled onto the base using new epoxy in June, prior to the NSS National Convention.

Activities planned for 2008 include quarterly trash pickups, and cleaning further trash from a small ravine located on the west side of the property which contains old bicycles, fencing, boards, posts, and other items.

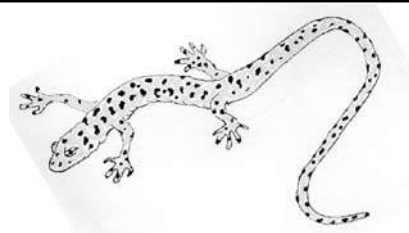
INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

**Income/Expense Statement
From January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2008**

INCOME:			
Dues Apportionment and Residuals	708.75		
Donations - General	2515.77		
Donations - Land Acquisition Fund	346.00		
Interest	<u>511.36</u>		
			\$4,081.88
EXPENSES:			
IKC Update (printing, production, mailing)	300.50		
Stewardship/Conservation	31.10		
Education / Outreach	695.22		
Membership	34.94		
Donations (HEC & ISU Bat Research Center)	350.00		
Business (PO Box rental, insurance)	7.14		
Transfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments	<u>592.76</u>		
			(\$2,011.66)
NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD:			<u><u>\$2,070.22</u></u>

**Balance Sheet
March 31, 2008**

ASSETS:			
Cash in Checking / Saving Accounts / CDs	93477.69		
Wayne Cave Preserve (20.00 acres)	75000.00		
Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (40.40 acres)	75000.00		
Sullivan Cave Preserve (28.00 acres)	72000.00		
Buddha Karst Nature Preserve (36.84 acres)	29000.00		
Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve (3.01 acres)	7000.00		
Indian Creek Conservation Easement (valued at \$1/acre)	<u>13.16</u>		
			<u><u>\$351,490.85</u></u>
LIABILITIES & OPERATING EXCESS:			
Land Acquisition Restricted Fund	32379.40		
Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (190 members)	3495.00		
Stewardship Endowment Restricted Fund	29023.64		
Previous Operating Excess	26522.59		
Net Excess (Deficit) This Period	<u>2070.22</u>		
Current Operating Excess (unrestricted funds)	28592.81		
Real estate liquidity (basis value)	<u>258000.00</u>		
Total Liabilities & Operating Excess			<u><u>\$351,490.85</u></u>



IKC ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, March 29, 2008 – Greenwood, Indiana

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Vernier, President
 Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
 Bob Sergesketter, Secretary
 James Adams
 Dave Haun
 Don Ingle
 Jerry Lewis
 Kriste Lindberg
 Steve Lockwood
 Bruce Silvers
 Tom Sollman
 Bob Vandeventer
 Sue Vernier
 Jamie Winner

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Nick Noe

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 AM at the Greenwood Public Library in Greenwood, Indiana, President Richard Vernier presiding. The minutes from the January meeting were accepted as published in the March, 2008 *IKC Update* with two corrections. Kriste Lindberg was present at the January meeting and Dave Haun was represented by proxy Karen Silvers, not Brent Grist.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Dunlap reported total assets of \$351,459.84. Our land holdings are valued at \$258,013.16 and we have cash in the various funds totaling \$93,446.68. A detailed Treasury Report is published in the *IKC Update*. We have 190 members. About 140 are paid up for 2008. Dunlap said that we are in good shape and we need to find a cave to buy.

Elections

Tom Rea served as election teller. Ballots were passed out to members present who had not already sent in a ballot. Vernier asked for nominations from the floor. There were none. The ballots were collected and turned over to the teller. While the votes were being tallied we proceeded with the meeting.

Education and Outreach Report

Lindberg reported that the past year has probably been the biggest year ever for Education and Outreach activities involving the IKC. She is writing a report for the annual conservation issue of the *NSS News* and she will also have a Education and Outreach report in the *IKC Update*.

Funding for Indiana Cave Symposium

Dunlap reported that the Indiana Cave Symposium will be April 19 and due to recent flooding in Milltown, the symposium will be held at the Crawford County Fairgrounds. The lineup of presentations is in the *IKC Update*. Typically the cost of the meat for the cookout is shared by the IKC and the Indiana Cave Survey. Usually this amounts to fifty to sixty dollars but this year there will be the added expense of renting the Clover Room at the fairgrounds so Dunlap moved to fund

the IKC's share of the cost of the Indiana Cave Symposium with an amount not to exceed \$100.00. The motion was seconded by Lockwood. During the discussion Dunlap said that he thinks we should figure our share of the cost of the meat will be more like \$75.00. The room rent will be \$50.00. Our share of that would be \$25.00. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

The Nature Conservancy

Vernier introduced Alan Pursell, Southern Regional Manager of TNC in Indiana. Pursell spoke of the excellent relationship between TNC and the IKC and he said that his intention in attending this meeting is to invigorate this relationship. During the past year, TNC has been holding meetings attempting to set priorities for the next few years and they have put together a five year plan on what they should be focusing on. One of the things that came out of the plan is that they should become more active in subterranean conservation and so they have set that as a goal. Pursell said that TNC has always felt that the IKC has more expertise in matters of cave conservation and he proposed that the two organizations sit down together and discuss what the priorities are and to see if we can join forces in meeting each group's goals. Dunlap pointed out that TNC was the major contributor to the IKC's purchase of the Robinson Ladder property and we probably would not have been able to buy it without TNC's financial help and encouragement. No date was set to meet.

Western Indiana Grotto: Grotto Liaison Application

Doug Hanna, Chairman of the Western Indiana Grotto at Terre Haute, was present to request entry into a Grotto Liaison Agreement between the WIG and the IKC. He said that the WIG has been reinstated as an NSS grotto for a little over a year and they have been fairly active. At present they have about twelve members.

Dunlap made a motion that the IKC and the WIG enter into a Grotto Liaison Agreement, seconded by Vandeventer. Dunlap asked Hanna if he had read the agreement and Hanna replied that he had and he saw no problems with complying with the terms of the agreement. Adams asked who the actual grotto liaison would be. Hanna said that he would be the liaison for the WIG. The vote was taken and the motion passed 13 for, 0 against, and 1 abstention.

Bat Census Report

Dunlap said that this was discussed at the last meeting but if anyone wants a hard copy of the report he can print some or send one electronically.

Adams asked if Dunlap had any new information about White Nose Syndrome. He wanted to know if, in the area where White Nose Syndrome is occurring, are Indiana Bats affected? Dunlap replied that *Myotis* seems to be the primary species affected. This includes the Indiana Bat, the Little Brown Bat, Northern Bat, and others. He said that he just received an updated chart from Fish and Wildlife identifying eleven sites in New York, Vermont, and Connecticut where infected bats have been found. Dunlap said that the situation is serious, no one knows how fast it will spread and it is a huge concern.



Vernier said that the Center For North American Bat Research And Conservation at Indiana State University is soliciting donations to fund research on White Nose Syndrome.

Haun moved that the IKC donate \$50.00, seconded by Ingle. Dunlap said that if we're going to make a donation he would like it to be bigger. Adams said that if we're going to make a donation he would like to know more about what they are doing in their research. Dunlap said that it would probably go to fund grad student research. He said that he knows they have a number of people working on things related to bat hibernation and he feels like they would spend any money we donated appropriately. Adams said that he would rather see our donation go to some specific project instead of general grad student research.

Dunlap said that he would like to see the amount of our proposed donation increased to \$250.00. Haun and Ingle were both agreeable to the amendment. The vote was taken and the motion passed with 12 in favor, none opposed, and 2 abstaining.

Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve

The 2007 RLCP Cave Patron and Property Manager's report was presented and it will be published in the *IKC Update*. The rest of the annual reports that will be presented today will also be published in the *IKC Update*.

Winner reported on restoration activities. The burn has been put off to a later date. There was not enough vegetation in the hayed area to support a burn this spring. It could be done this fall or next spring. Dunlap said that we need to get a cost estimate for conducting the burn. Winner will take care of that.

Dunlap said that he will be installing two or three temperature monitoring probes in the bat areas of Robinson Ladder Cave. This matter was discussed at the last IKC meeting.

Dunlap said that Under Earth Day will be held at the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve on April 19. Main activities will be the replacement of the driveway gate and grapevine cutting.

Orangeville Rise

Steve Lockwood, Orangeville Rise Property Manager, presented his annual report.

Wayne Cave Preserve

Property Manager Robert Sollman's report was presented by Tom Sollman. Cave Patron Dave Everton's report was presented by Keith Dunlap.

Lewis wants to conduct a bio-inventory of Wayne cave. Dunlap made a motion to approve the bio-inventory of Wayne Cave by Dr. Lewis, seconded by Adams. The vote was taken and the motion passed, 13 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstaining.

Indian Creek Conservation Easement

Dunlap reported that he received a voice mail from Richard Newton informing us that he, John Benton, and Gary Roberson went out and walked the conservation easement. He reported that it looks good. His only concern was that the lane that runs back to the sink shows signs of high traffic on it and he was concerned about possible erosion. He noted that there are lots of new homes up on the hill.

Dunlap said that we are obligated to monitor the easement once a year and we also need to be doing the paperwork to show that we are monitoring it and also communicating with

the landowners that the easement runs across and that's the part that we've not been doing. He said that he is going to put Newton's comments into an e-mail and send it to TNC. We still need to figure out the process of proper documentation and properly communicating with the landowners so that they understand what the conservation easement is all about.

Lindberg asked if someone else in the area might be willing to take on the job if Newton is not able to do it. Winner asked what the procedures were for monitoring the easement. Dunlap said that the landowners must be notified prior to visiting to let them know that monitoring will take place. Follow up with the landowners after monitoring takes place to let them know what was observed during the visit to let them know that someone is watching. He said that most people who buy a piece of property that has a conservation easement on it have no idea what it means. Lewis said that he will have a meeting soon with Ellen Jacquard and he would like to know what the Board's long term intentions are concerning the Indian Creek conservation easement. Sue Vernier said that the issue she sees is that this is our only conservation easement and that when we took it on, we didn't know what we were getting into. She said that she would like to see the IKC at least investigate whether some other land conservancy organization, one with more experience in the administration of conservation easements, could do a better job of managing this easement. She thinks it will be an ongoing struggle for us to administer this thing properly.

Dunlap also brought up the question of what do we do if and when we find that someone is violating the terms of the easement. How far is the IKC prepared to go to correct a violation.

Bruce Bowman said that he thinks we went into this with our eyes open. He was President of the IKC when we took this on and we knew that it was a legal responsibility. It would be incumbent upon us to enforce the tenets of the easement through legal action if necessary and he thinks that the IKC leadership understood that. It was an opportunity for the IKC to extend its reach into southern Indiana and to further our relationship with TNC. It was a stepping stone. He said the bottom line is that we started off doing a pretty good job of stewardship but somewhere along the way we dropped the ball. The question now is, are we going pick it up again or not and if we're not, we need to take the opportunity to find an organization that will.

Winner said that if we want to keep the easement, he and Carla could take care of it if Newton no longer wants to do it.

Adams asked if we have a list of landowners affected by the easement. Dunlap said no but Harrison county has a web site GIS system from which we could retrieve the information. It could also be obtained at the courthouse. Adams said that the duties of the person in charge of overseeing the easement are, as he understands them, to send a letter to the landowner(s) informing them that an inspection visit will take place at a certain time, be there at the appointed time, and then follow up with another letter and this is to take place once each year. Dunlap said that those three steps are the minimum requirements. We should also monitor changes in ownership and send letters explaining the conservation easement to new owners.

Alan Pursell said that communication between the landowners and the owners of the conservation easement is the most important element in a successful relationship. He said that

he concurs with Bowman that we knew what we were getting into but the rules got changed. The IRS changed the requirements for monitoring conservation easements and that happened after we took possession of it.

Pursell said that if we get to the point where we don't want to own it any more, we have a couple of options. The Sycamore Land Trust would probably be interested and there is also a mechanism in place within the Harrison County government that would take on a conservation easement.

Adams asked if there are any statistics regarding legal actions taken because of violations on conservation easements in Indiana. Pursell said that he knows of no court cases. He said there have been violations but they have always been able to work them out informally. Dunlap also said that he was not aware of any violations actually going to court. He said a major problem with the Indian Creek easement is that it involves so many landowners and none of them are the original owners from when the easement was established. On the plus side, however, part of the easement is in the flood plain so it's not likely that someone will build a house on it.

Dunlap said it's unlikely that we'll ever have to do any kind of enforcement beyond working with a landowner but that is a liability that we need to be prepared for and we're not really prepared for it. He also thinks we went into this knowing what we were getting into but in hindsight, he is more nervous about the liability issue. Another thing is that when we went into it, we thought conservation easements were going to be something we could expand upon but we are now more gun shy on that so maintaining the infrastructure to support one conservation easement may be more than what we want to step up to. It's going to be someone nagging someone to do something all the time. We should be able to do it but there might be other organizations that have more conservation easements, that have professional staffs with procedures in place to make sure that things get done, that could do it better. This might be the time to think about exiting. He said we probably don't want to take any action yet but we need to investigate the two alternatives that Pursell mentioned.

Adams took an opposite view, saying that he wants the IKC to keep the easement. He said that the duties and responsibilities of the overseer need to be summarized so that whoever has the job knows what to do and how to do it. He thinks that this needs to be done within the next 30 days.

Bowman said that he wants the best stewardship for that property. If another organization can do a better job, it may be time for the IKC to let it go. In the meantime we need to explore all the options and discuss it later.

Adams asked Lewis if he had any questions for the Board. Lewis said that he agrees with the idea of exploring options and deciding later what to do.

Dunlap said that we could probably still be involved, even if another organization takes on the easement.

Election Results

Vernier announced the election results. Dr Jerry Lewis was elected President, Jim Adams was elected Secretary, Keith Dunlap was re-elected Treasurer.

Elected to the Board of Directors for three year terms were Bruce Bowman, Bob Sergesketter, Bob Vandeventer, and Richard Vernier. Elected to the Board of Directors for a two

year term was Kriste Lindberg. Elected to the Board of Directors for a one year term was Karen Silvers.

At this time an intermission was taken.

Vernier called the meeting back to order.

Sergesketter moved that he ballots be destroyed, seconded by Adams. The motion passed unanimously.

Buddha Cave Preserve

Buddha Cave Patron Jeff Cody presented the annual report on the cave. Dunlap presented Property Manager George Cesnik's property report.

Dunlap reported that multiflora rose eradication efforts are continuing, 1000 trees are scheduled to be planted on April 12, and the Buddha Cave Preserve is not yet listed in the IDNR on line Nature Preserves website.

Sullivan Cave Preserve

Sullivan Cave Patron Bob Vandeventer presented the annual report on the cave. Property Manager Keith Dunlap presented the annual report on the property.

Lewis reported that the bio-inventory will be completed soon. He said that the cave is very biologically diverse with at least one new species discovered.

Dunlap reported that Haun and Vandeventer have placed a used porta-john at the Sullivan Cave Preserve.

Shiloh Cave

Shiloh Cave Patron James Adams presented the annual report on the cave.

Suicide Cave

No report was received from Cave Patron Ronnie Burns.

Coon and Grotto Caves

Cave Patron Keith Dunlap presented the annual report on the caves.

Shaft Cave

Shaft Cave Patron Jeff Cody presented the annual report on the cave.

Buddha Cave Preserve Kiosk

Dunlap reported that he has received feedback about the artwork from 3 or 4 people and he is incorporating their ideas into the final design. He led a discussion about the design and several good ideas were made. The approximate cost is \$348.00.

Adams made a motion to fund the signage for the kiosk up to \$400.00, seconded by Ingle. The motion passed unanimously.

Vernier asked how long it will be until we get the artwork. Dunlap said he was told two or three months. We may have it by the June meeting.

Land Acquisition Activities

Dunlap said that communicated by e-mail recently with the owner of Salamander Cave, just to let him know that we are still interested. He lives in Idaho and keeps telling Dunlap that we will be the first to know if he decides to sell.



Truitt Cave Gate

Dunlap said it's on his list of things to do.

Items From the Floor

Vernier reported that the IKC has received the 2007 *Forest Supervisor's Honor Award* for our part in producing the *Caves; Life Beneath the Forest* video. The award was presented at the last Hoosier National Forest meeting.

Dunlap reported that Bat Conservation International has

asked if we would be interested in putting a gate on Bat Cave in Washington County. He has had some recent communications with Jim Kennedy and we are pursuing the project. It will probably be done this summer.

The next meeting will be on June 28, 2008, at 6:00 PM, EDT in room 143 in the Geology Building on the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Sergesketter, Secretary.

...continued from page 9

lis. Strickland began caving at 35, and she found more than mud, bats, blind crawfish, and wondrous formations. She found her husband, Dave.

"Yeah, and the name of the cave?" she teased, "Suicide Cave near Salem. Go figure."

Dave and Susie aren't the only caving couple on the CIG's membership roll.

"It is a crawl-around, get-dirty-nasty, can be physically-hard-on-you sport," said Dave, a carpenter. "But there are a few women out there who say, 'Bring it on.'"

Rea joined in 1961 but the CIG's senior member is Bob Armstrong, 73, Indianapolis, a retired engineer. He has been a member for 50 years.

"Armstrong's Folly" in Sullivan Cave is his namesake. He camped

weekends in the cave during the 1960s while tunneling more than 100 feet through densely packed, hard-dried silt to reach another passage. He gave up because his equipment was repeatedly vandalized or stolen by midweek visitors to the cave.

"I had a reputation for being what you might call a 'tunnel rat,'" Armstrong said. "I wasn't afraid to squiggle into where I had to exhale before I could move forward or backward."

Armstrong and Rea were among the organizers who in 1986 incorporated the Indiana Karst Conservancy, which now owns five caves and manages other karst properties and preaches cave conservation.

Harrison County is named for William Henry Harrison (1773-1841), ninth president of the United States

and one-time governor of the Indiana Territory. Harrison explored Wyandotte Cave in Crawford County, where he left his now-illegible signature. That's now a caving no-no.

Caving facts

- Indiana caves: 3,112.
- Entrances: 3,416.
- Pits: 711.
- Counties: 37.

Information: Much is available online. Consult the Central Indiana Grotto at caves.org/grotto/cig/, the Indiana Karst Conservancy at caves.org/conservancy/ikc and the National Speleological Society at caves.org.

[This article was reprinted from the June 3rd issue of the Indianapolis Star.]

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.

