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2006 Nathan Williams

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The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and preservation of caves and karst in Rockcastle County, Kentucky.

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Photo Credits:

Front Cover: Steve Pitts in Pinehill Cave. Photo © by Nathan Williams.

Back Cover: John Lair and Colonel Sanders during the "Cave Shows." Photo courtesy of the *Renfro Valley Bugle*.

From the Editor:

I want to thank everyone who sent articles and photos for this edition—keep them coming! After all, this is your newsletter and I can only print what you send me. It's my aim to put out the very best newsletter I can for our organization and your articles and input will help me achieve this.

The GSP Open House was a huge success. This was my first open house and I had a great time. It was quite evident to me how much hard work our volunteers put in to make this event happen. There were over 650 visitors both days and all seemed to enjoy themselves. I'm already looking forward to next year!

Don't forget, the RKC is the 2007 recipient of the Swago donation program. See page 8 for more details.

Until next time—good caving!

Mike Hood, RKC 46
RKC News Editor

Volume III, Issue III

July 2007

For more information about the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy, please visit our website at www.rkci.org. Membership is open to anyone interested in protecting the caves and karst of Rockcastle County, Kentucky. See page 15 of this issue for a membership application and the different membership levels and dues.

The *RKC News* is published quarterly for members and other interested parties. The purpose of this publication is to keep members aware of RKC activities. Articles published in the *RKC News* do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy or its represented members.

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**RKC has educational material for lending.
See the website:**

<http://rkci.org/library/index.htm>

**or contact Tammy Otten:
tammyotten@yahoo.com**



The RKC News is published during January, April, July and October. Deadline for submissions is the 10th of March, June, September, and December. Send submissions to: mhcover (at) aol (dot) com

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RKC Quick News:

- The GSP Open House was a huge success, with 650 visitors signing the log book both Saturday and Sunday.
- Be on the lookout for bark poachers stripping bark from slippery elm trees. Poachers have been stripping many trees in Rockcastle County (to include GSP) to sell for medicinal purposes. The stripping kills the tree. See the GSP Committee report on page 13 for more info.
- Do NOT bring firewood in from out of state. Kentucky has a \$2500 fine for bring in out of state firewood. The ban is to prevent the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer that is killing ash trees in Ohio.

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\$500 REWARD!

FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR STRIPPING THE ELM BARK FROM TREES AT GREAT SALTPETRE PRESERVE. CONTACT 937-296-0245, REWARD (AT) RKCI (DOT) ORG, P.O. BOX 1406, MT. VERNON, KY 40456

Practical Demonstrations for Karst Advocacy

By Roger W. Brucker, RKC 99

Karst Environmental Education and Protection, Inc.

<http://keep.kwalliance.org/>

Public meetings or hearings are likely to follow when developers or government officials reveal plans that threaten karst areas, Cavers and others interested in protecting caves and karst are often at a disadvantage in such public presentation opportunities.

This is because of five problems: 1. General ignorance by officials, developers, and the general public of karst values and karst hazards, 2. Expert testimony by engineering or geology consultants representing the developer may result in self-serving advocacy despite scientific facts – distortions and falsehoods are difficult for lay people to detect, 3. The political lure of “jobs and progress through development” trumps prudence and ignorance on the part of approval authorities, 4. Technical karst presentations are complex and hard to follow, especially since caves are mysterious and out of sight, and 5. Representatives of the public are often allocated only a few minutes to speak (usually late in the evening).

One strategy is for karst advocates to employ simple “Dr. Science” demonstrations to dramatize the truths and overcome the five problems. Simplification of scientific processes has long been an effective teaching tool in schools and museums. “Seeing is believing” based on a memorable demonstration can reinforce understanding as nothing else can. Of course, proponents of development at karst expense will charge that such demonstrations are “theatrical” or “oversimplified.” Such criticism is likely to be a tribute to the power of a good demonstration to persuade.

As a spokesperson for karst advocacy at a recent hearing for a state quarry permit near Mammoth Cave National Park, KY, I presented a variety of short demonstrations. Karst Environmental Education and Protection, Inc. (KarstEEP) opposed the issuance of this permit because the mitigation proposed by the quarry developer to prevent contamination of the Tier III outstanding underground waters

of Mammoth Cave National Park would be inadequate, impractical, and ineffective.

The principal proposed mitigation of contamination by sediments and petroleum products is two constructed sediment detention ponds whose flows are to be sampled twice per month. I demonstrated why this approach will fail to prevent contamination of the underground waters.

Exhibit A is a portion of a map showing underground watercourses as dye traced by Quinlan, Ray, and Ewers¹. It is the best informed guess about where the underground conduits are located. This map shows a major subterranean stream forming in the Sinkhole Plain and its trunk passing directly beneath the proposed quarry property. The stream emerges at Mill Hole and sinks after 400 feet, then emerges in Owl Cave/Cedar Sink in Mammoth Cave National Park, and finally rises at Turnhole Spring in Green River.

Some or all of the proposed quarry and ponds are at risk of collapsing into this underground river, in the same way that Dishman Lane in Bowling Green, KY collapsed into State Trooper Cave river. Blasting loosens subsurface rocks. The risk of probable collapse into the Tier III river is too high to risk.

Exhibit B is a dinner plate. This plate represents limestone, which is quite strong in compression. If I place the plate on the floor and lay a plank over it, two of us can stand on the plank and not break it. No fear of collapse, right? Now if I take the same plate and strike it with a hammer, it shatters. The shock, comparable to quarry blasting, exceeds the yield strength of the plate. The weakened and broken parts correspond to the roof of the large underground river shown on the map to cross under the quarry site. The point of this demonstration is that collapse failures of this kind have happened too often in karst regions without blasting. With blasting, the risk of collapse into the underground Tier III river is too high.

Exhibit C is a kitchen funnel. Sediment ponds, farm ponds, and manmade lakes in the Sinkhole Plain karst are usually sinkholes. Engineering textbooks show such sinkholes in cross-section as funnels that can be easily plugged with clay, rocks, or fill. Assuming the plug remains, regional rainfall of 55-inches per year, often coming in downpours of 2- or 3-inches in a few hours, overwhelms karst ponds and lakes and washes the contents including bottom sediments over the spillway and over any rubber pond liner. The front edge of the flood carries most of the contaminants. I can demonstrate this by plugging this funnel and pouring in a deluge of water. Notice how it overflows the pond. The point of the demonstration is that karst ponds seldom have the capacity to contain runoff water, which will overflow into the nearest sinkhole.

Exhibit D is the same kitchen funnel. I use toilet tissue paper to block the bottom end to simulate a sinkhole plug. I fill the funnel with water. So far, so good: the water is contained. But when the tissue weakens and gives way, the funnel drains out. This demonstrates that karst ponds are ephemeral – they disappear without notice and empty their contents into the underground river. The point of this demonstration is that not only will the quarry store fine sediments and petroleum spills in the ponds, but that at the loss of containment, the contaminants will flow underground quickly. A 4000 gallon spill of diesel fuel only 2.3 miles from this quarry site disappeared underground before the HAZMAT crew arrived. There are NO BMPs (Best Management Practice) for ponds in karst regions in Kentucky. The Heartland Golf Course Lake in Bowling Green is a recent example of sudden loss of containment.

Exhibit E is a kitchen colander. Contrary to many engineering text books, sinkholes in the Mammoth Cave Region DO NOT resemble funnels in cross-section. They resemble a colander with holes downward and also laterally along rock bedding. In other words, most sinkhole cannot be plugged permanently. Every farmer hereabouts knows this. I will demonstrate how sinkholes drain by pouring water into this colander. Notice how it pours out all over everything. I might be able to plug a few holes in the bottom, but you can see that the contents will drain underground. The point of this demonstration is that no karst pond can be relied upon to hold

water, let alone retain contaminants such as sediments and petroleum products.

A second point of this demonstration is how would you sample the outflow twice a month? As you can see, most of the time there will be no outflow; it will be “done-gone”! Remember, most of the contaminants are carried on the front end of a flood. Can anyone believe that quarry personnel will sample when it’s pouring rain outside?

Exhibit F is a large sponge. This represents the surface of the karst land, the weathered rock fragments, the clay particles, sand, and organic matter. I will pour some dye onto the sponge surface. The dye represents a contaminant, such as oil. I will then pour water on the sponge and attempt to wash off the dye. Notice that the dye disperses throughout the sponge. Every time I pour another batch of water to clean the sponge, I get more contaminant out.

Why don’t I squeeze the sponge? I can’t do that with karst land. Instead, the contaminant that remains trapped can be remobilized by subsequent downpours. Thus, the risk of contamination is a long-range hazard, not something that can be cleaned up. Once again, the 4000 gallon diesel fuel spill on nearby I-65 warns us that contamination of karst can be a ticking bomb that can pollute wells and the underground river for months and years. In Hidden River Cave, Horse Cave, KY, periodic floods uncover and re-suspend the toxic contaminants.

In conclusion, we have been criticized for demonstrating these truths in dramatic ways. If you have been offended, I apologize. But what we have demonstrated are scientific truths and actual risks that this quarry cannot and will not be able to prevent or avoid contamination of the Tier III waters of Mammoth Cave National Park.

We ask that the water permit for this quarry be withdrawn.

What if allotted presentation time is limited? Ask the official chairing the meeting if several presenters can yield their time to increase your time to present. The above presentation takes about fifteen minutes. If the answer is NO, ask for time at the end of the

public input. If the answer is still NO, point out the unfairness of the developer's advocates having virtually unlimited time to present ONE SIDE and with no time allocated for effective PUBLIC rebuttal.

1 Quinlan, James F. and Joseph A. Ray, Groundwater Basins in the Mammoth Cave Region, Kentucky, Occasional publication no. 2, Friends of the Karst, Mammoth Cave, KY, 1989.



Dishman Lane Collapse into State Trooper Cave



Roger Brucker and RKC Chairman, Andy Niekamp, visit Floyd Collins' grave



A Landowner Relations Success Story

Greetings Cavers,

I am happy to announce that the caves along Crooked Creek in Rockcastle County, KY owned by Mr. Dennis Smith, such as Arthur Singleton's Cave, Precinct 11 Cave, Cooksburg Cave and Cooksburg Schoolhouse Cave are once again open for caver visitation. Mr. Smith has no objections if responsible cavers wish to visit his caves subject to his few restrictions. No prior permission is necessary

Mr. Smith, his family and his friends use the land for hunting and ATV riding. The use of the land by Mr. Smith, his family and his friends will take priority over caver use. Please use caution during the various hunting seasons when visiting these caves and be mindful of the needs of hunters.

Mr. Smith would like for us to pick up any trash left behind by careless cavers and keep an eye on his property for vandals and others that should not be there.

The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy hopes to work with Mr. Smith in the near future to develop a Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU would describe in more detail the relationship between the landowner (him) and land users (us) and how our relationship can be mutually beneficial.

I met with Mr Smith and his family on Friday, April 13, and gave them a tour of the Great Saltpetre Cave and the Preserve. He was impressed with our operation and our good stewardship of the land. Many thanks to Matt Keller, Jerry Brandenburg, Tammy Otten, Jerry Dixon, James Dixon and Suzanne ? for meeting with Mr Smith and his family at their Rockcastle County residence on Saturday, April 14, and exploring a cave on his Chestnut Ridge property.

I thought you might like to know the good news.

Best Regards,

Andy Niekamp
RKC Chairman



“The Cave Shows”

Renfro Valley Bugle
April 2005

The Cave Shows

On several occasions over the years, special Renfro Valley shows were performed inside the Great Saltpetre Cave located near Renfro Valley in Rockcastle County.

A man of vision, Renfro Valley's founder, John Lair, bought the southern half of the Great Saltpetre Cave around 1940 from the Richard Mullins family, who retained ownership of the northern half. Richard Mullins great-grandfather, Calloway Mullins, bought the cave around 1860, for a horse, a rifle and \$50.

John Baker is credited with discovering the cave in 1798, though legend has it that Daniel Boone left his name on the cave walls in 1769. After its discovery, the Great Cave of Crooked Creek, as it was known then, was mined for several years for its rich deposits of saltpetre, an element of gunpowder.

Mr. Lair saw many possible uses for the cave and since the early '40s, was instrumental in its development and commercialization. By 1944, after building a gravel road to the entrance, John Lair advertised the Great Saltpetre Cave as... accessible 8 miles by car or 16 miles by horseback from Renfro Valley. Manley McGuire, sometimes assisted by his 6-year-old son, Robert, worked for Mr. Lair as the cave's tour guide in the '40s.

Over the years, Mr. Lair held several special shows in the cave. The first live broadcast from the cave was sponsored by Ballard and Ballard over the CBS Network. On Thursday, February 21, 1946, at 7:15, the Renfro Valley Folk's morning program was broadcast from the cave as part of the 155th anniversary celebration of the Renfro Valley Settlement.

Mr. Lair, Al Staas (announcer for the morning broadcasts), seven of the Renfro Valley boys (the girls didn't go) and three Louisville radio operators, spent the previous night in the cave. With the cave's ghost stories on their minds, sleep may have been hard to come by in the dark cavern. But they survived the night and everyone was still on hand for the broadcast the next morning. Quoted from the March 15, 1946, Bugle, “However, even without the haunts, the morning's program had a slightly spooky sound, coming as it did from the depths of the great cave with strange echoes creeping in through the mike, especially while Fairley Holden was singing, ‘Keep Them Cold, Icy Fingers Off Of Me.’”

Mr. Lair attempted to expand the cave as a tourist attraction. He even built a lodge near the cave for guests. Unfortunately, only two days after it was finished, the lodge burned to the ground. The commonly told story around Renfro Valley said it was the work of local moonshiners. They supposedly set up their illegal operation inside the safety of the cave and didn't take too kindly to it being turned into a tourist attraction. For years, the commercial use of the cave ceased after this incident.

In 1966, Mr. Lair began to work in earnest on the development of the Great Saltpetre Cave. It took several months to complete the project, but with Mr. Lair's persistence many improvements were made. The road leading to the cave was blacktopped. Camping and picnic areas were built. A better approach to the cave was leveled. The main entrance was enlarged to get a bulldozer inside the cave to level the floor of Echo Auditorium, the cave's largest room. Iron-barred doors from the old Rockcastle County Jail were installed to replace the wooden gate that had been burned by vandals. In 1967, the cave was open to the public again and guided tours of the cave's 2-1/2 miles of passageways continued for several years.

Mr. Lair saw Echo Auditorium as probably the most natural underground theater in America. At 155-

feet long by 65-feet at its widest point with a 50-foot-high domed ceiling, the room's acoustics are perfect. Microphones are never needed for any stage performance. With a seating capacity of over 1,500 people and a year-round temperature of 58 degrees, it's little wonder this "auditorium" was a favorite meeting place since its discovery. There were occasions when church-style "Camp Meetings" were held in the cave as well as dances, barbecues and cookouts. Local clubs often met at the cave and in October 1969, the Shriner's Club held a dinner-dance in Echo Auditorium.

The performance of the entire cast of Renfro Valley entertainers in the cave took place on Sunday, June 29, 1968. The Sunday Morning Gatherin' audience was there at Mr. Lair's invitation. The show was performed for the purpose of getting photos for an advertising brochure Mr. Lair had planned.

The biggest event at the cave was held July 4, 1971, when Mr. Lair celebrated his 77th birthday, along with the official grand opening of the Great Saltpetre Cave. An estimated 4,000 people attended the festivities, which included free guided tours. The Renfro Valley entertainers, together with some of the old-timers, put on two shows inside the cave that same afternoon. Colonel Harlan Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, was also there to help cut the cake and wish his old friend, John, a happy birthday.

By 1976, tours of the cave became self-guided. Later, the cave closed to the public all together. After Mr. Lair's death in 1985, the cave was sold at auction to Stanley Rain of Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. When Mr. Rain passed away in 1989, the Felburn Foundation of Robbinsville, North Carolina, purchased the property. Today, the Greater Cincinnati Grotto, part of the National Speleological Society, oversees the care of the cave for the privately owned historical foundation, which specializes in preserving exotic locations. The cave and its surrounding area is now a natural preserve. By special permission, spelunkers can explore the cave, but it is open to the public only once a year.

This year, the Great Saltpetre Cave open house will take place Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, May 15, from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. We

hope you will take advantage of this once-a-year opportunity to visit the cave with its colorful history and stories of legends and ghosts. It would be well worth your time and an enjoyable way to spend the day. Admission is free.

If you go: Located just south of Renfro Valley, the Great Saltpetre Cave can be reached by following I-75 to Exit 59, then south on US Highway 25 to the first left turn. Directions to the cave are marked along the way. For more information, contact the Rockcastle County Tourist Commission, 1-800-252-6685 or visit their website at:

www.rockcastlecokytourism.com

Cave Show Photos at:

<http://www.rkci.org/library/gsp/caveshows/>

Article Courtesy of Renfro Valley Entertainment



SWAYGO DONATION PROGRAM

Each year, SWAYGO donates a percentage of annual pack sales to an organization that is dedicated to the conservation of cave and karst resources. SWAYGO believes that this is necessary to continue with the positive impacts that the current organizations have had with the protection and conservation of karst. Cave and karst resources provide each of us an abundance of joy, excitement, wonder and exploration, and it's always a good time to give back so that future generations can receive the same unforgettable experience.

***THE ROCKCASTLE KARST CONSERVANCY
IS THE 2007 PROGRAM RECIPIENT!***

Previous program recipients:

2005 -- West Virginia Cave Conservancy

2006 -- Southeastern Cave Conservancy

www.swaygogear.com

Mount Vernon Signal

The First Trip Report From Climax Cave?

Source: The October 23, 1898 edition of the Mount Vernon Signal Newspaper - Kentucky

CLIMAX

On Sunday of the Baptist Association here we in company with Revs Mr Henry Clark, of Waco Ky, E.B. Bartlett of Manse Ky and 40 or 50 others armed themselves with lanterns and matches and went to see the other end of what is known as the old Andy Fletcher cave; so named because of this gentleman having made a saltpeter there in 1809 and 1812 for the war of 1812. When we reached the cave our party being clad in their Sunday dress, hesitated, and some like Lot's wife, turned back. About twenty went into the cave with Willis Johnson as guide. When about 200 feet from the entrance the interior becomes very large and our anxious eyes were all a stare and not noticing Rev Barlett who had preceeded our guide was seated on a pillar of salt; and when the cry was made as to where was Lots wife, Bro B. replied; "Here the old sister is" and upon looking saw him seated upon the stone which is white sand stone and bears the resemblance of a woman, her head and arms being knocked off by curiosity seekers. Her physique being perfect with these exceptions. At this point all of the party turned back but three. The next thing of interest was an elevated plateau of bout 6 feet high surrounded by a walk 6 feet wide. This table was about 50 feet long, and upon it was a beautiful pool of water about 10 feet in area. This pool is constructed like the pool of Siloam. Leaving this we next come to the main entrance and upon examination we found perfect ox tracks made there in 1812. Next we come to the torn down walls...toweres of Morro, bringing to my mind a slight representation of said castle after the bombardment. There were many other sights of interest but have not time to mention.

Here are other tidbits from the same edition of the newspaper:

I will sell you a 5-bu barrel of Michigan salt for \$1.25.

Good cut shingles at \$1.35 per thousand; sawed shingles \$1.50 delivered on switch or loaded on cars. A.E. Albright, Brodhead, Ky

Wanted..to trade Corbin property for a second hand saw mill outfit. Address, D.T. Chestnut, Corbin, Ky

Geo Johnson the merchant prince at Orlando is in Louisville this week buying another car of goods. He wants all those who owe him to come in and settle.

John Jones who has been very low with fever is some better.

Uncle Dicky Smith has sold his farm to Dvaid Hysinger for \$300.

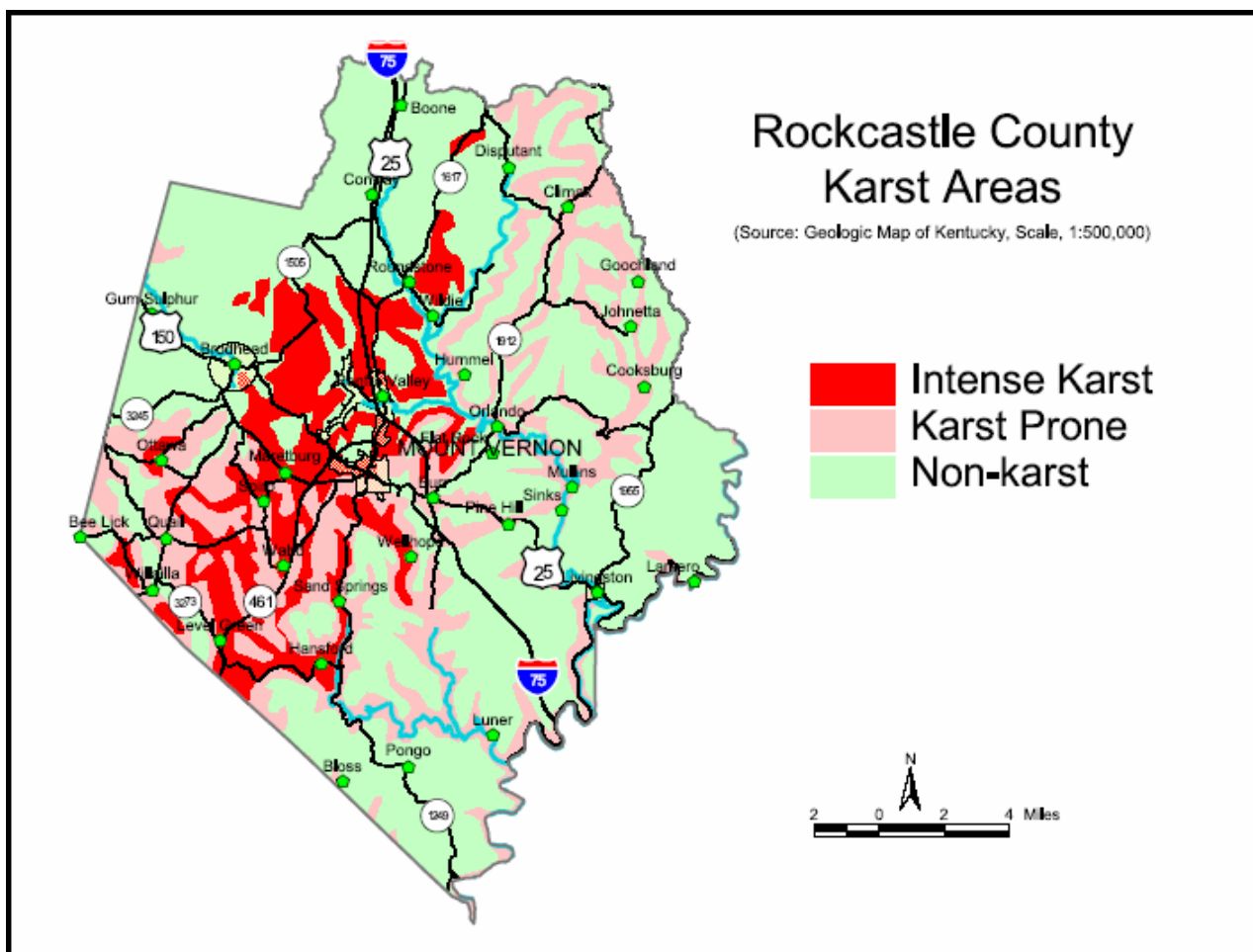
Judge Colyer attended Squire Sigman's court at Wildie last week

Solomon Riddle of the West End is giving his house a coat of paint.

Mount Vernon Signal

Moonshine Raid at Great Saltpetre Cave, July 23, 1897

The story is telegraphed from Harrodsburg to the Louisville Post that deputy collectors J.C. Wilson of Louisville and Tom Austin of Garrard county had just made a raid into the great Salt Peter cave on Crooked Creek this county. From the description given of the cave it would appear to be one of the most wonderful holes in the ground to be found not excepting the mammoth. This correspondent claims that two stills of 100 gallon capacity each were found a mile under ground and several hundred feet below the surface and that two or three boxes of human bones were discovered. Half a dozen Winchester rifles were picked up at the two stills that were singing merrily the lullaby of intoxication as the steam and smoke lazily rolled up. No mention is made of the officers having seen a human being anywhere in the cave precincts. Now it strikes us that these correspondents have been sending in their cock and bull stories about the mountains long enough and intelligent readers throughout the state ought to know by this time that all the salt peter contained in the great cave above mentioned and there are thousands of tons of it there, would scarcely suffice to save the reporters on account of their misstatements whom so often draw upon their imagination for news items especially when it has reference to the mountains of Kentucky and its people. We are heartily tired of this abuse. Of course we have some bad men, but show us any county or community that is clear of them. Give the mountains a small rest brothers and look after your toll gate raiders and other lawbreakers in a land that has so long been lauded to the skies as the greatest on God's earth and where every citizen is supposed to be a leader in church and Sunday School. Give us a rest.



Mystery Boy in Photograph Identified!

Submitted by Jennifer Pinkley

This picture of an overall-clad little boy standing at the entrance to the Great Saltpetre Cave has been run at different times in the *Bugle*; however, the little fellow was simply referred to as "an unidentified young man.". That's no longer so.

The "young man" walked into the Bugle office recently and identified himself as Robert McGuire of West Chester, Ohio. His wife, Wilma, stopped by also.

Robert's dad, Manley McGuire, worked for John Lair in the 1940's at the cave and often conducted tours though its dark passage ways. Little Robert who was about six years old sometimes served as a guide. He also whittled horses, ashtrays, and other items from the saltpetre and sold them to the tourists for 25 to 35 cents each. It was the only souvenirs available from the cave at that time, and Robert says he once had a half-gallon jar full of coins he had earned from his sales. "Then Christmas came and it disappeared," he tells us.

The job of guiding folks through the cave later was handled by Richard Mullins, Robert's mother's first cousin.

Author Unknown.

Article Courtesy of Renfro Valley Entertainment Center

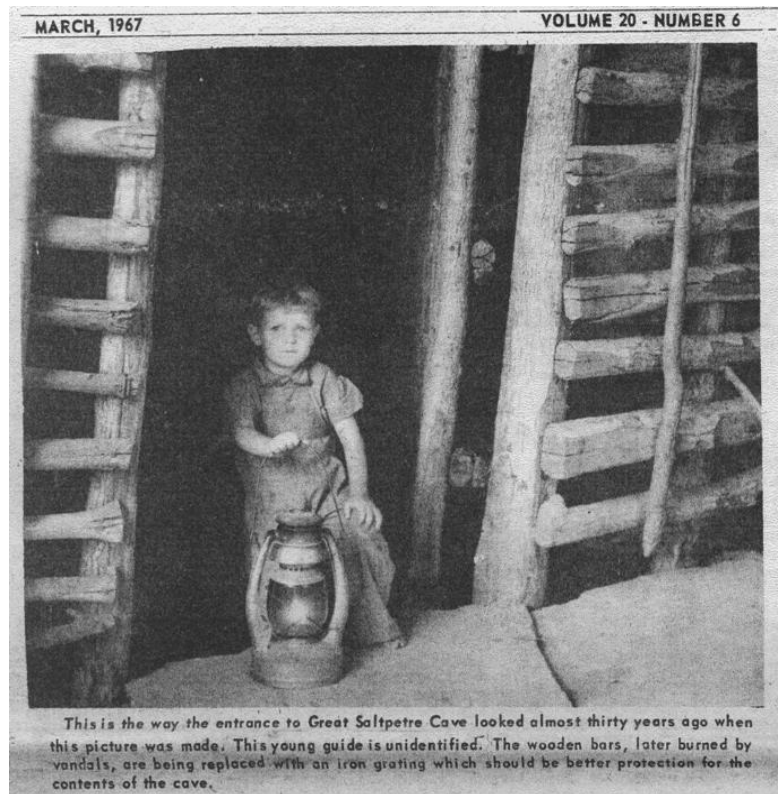


Photo circa 1945 or 1946

"Swinging the Sword of Moral Indignation"

By Roger Brucker, RKC 99

(In the late 1950s the "Saturday Review of Literature", "Harpers", or "Atlantic Monthly" published the best article I have seen on this subject. It analyzed why the technique works and why it is so hard to counter. I wish I had kept it!)

In political debate we have become accustomed to spin, and other forms of word or idea manipulation to gain maximum kill in the arena of issues. Kill means silencing opponents, backing them into the electric fan of ridicule, or discrediting their posi-

tions. Proponents of the KY Transpark, I-66, and the BioLab are now using the slash-and-burn rhetorical tactics of "Swinging the Sword of Moral Indignation." In its most crude form, these tactics accuse the opponents of being against "jobs and progress." In elevated shrillness they accuse opponents of being out-of-town tree-huggers, unpatriotic traitors, or impractical morons who are behind the times.

Lots of luck to those brave enough to speak against the rhetoric of expert swordsmen! By the time ra-

tional responders have framed their argument with facts and logic, the debate has swept onward. Newspapers won't publish "old news", especially from opponents that the editor and publisher hate. Can anything be done? Perhaps we can learn some useful lessons from a better understanding of the tactics of *Moral Indignation Sword Swinging*.

Lesson 1: Use rhetorical questions to frame arguments for which you have no evidence or complex evidence. Example: "Why not FIX Plum Island if it is so safe?"

Lesson 2: Attack the messenger with *ad hominum* charges and labels. Example: "Any dunce knows that there IS limestone under the site, so only a liar would tell you there isn't any."

Lesson 3: Avoid citing scientific evidence; it only confuses and it makes you sound anti-intelligent design. Example: "Every farmer knows you can't fix sinkholes. They leak, collapse, or flood every time."

Lesson 4: Use "for instances" close to home. Example: "The Somerset landfill was supposed to be sealed by the same Pennington formation they want to put the death lab on. That landfill leaked so much toxic poison into the caves and Lake Cumberland that they had to close it."

Lesson 5: Pick robust, memorable names for opposed things and stick to them. Examples: "The bio-death lab is not pro-life. It is population control described in a way to fool the ignorant. Get real!" They don't call it the KY Taxpark for nothing...they spent \$20 million in 7 years for 1 customer, and sucker taxpayers are now stuck with the bill."

Lesson 6: Don't complain, don't explain. Example: "The opposition says that only one case of brucellosis was found and that was cured successfully in three days. How do respond you to that?"

"Dozens and hundreds of people have died from diseases, like Karen Silkwood, from poisonous, toxic releases of various kinds -- ALL of which were hushed up by authorities who wanted to save their own behinds. Trusting the government is a good way to get your pocket picked or wind up dead. Would you trust your government or Halibur-

ton to protect you?"

What makes Moral Sword Swinging communication so devastating is that if you try to respond with a rational explanation, it takes so long to describe the truth that the public has forgotten the sensational charge. The present administration in Washington has honed this art to a high level: Oppose the war and you sell out our troops and aid the enemy, you unpatriotic traitor!!!

I'm not advocating a war here, but the proponents of the BioLab, I-66, KY Transpark, or karst-threatening quarries will use all this crap against the wimps and traitors who oppose their plans. Aren't the naysayers playing into the hands of Al Quaida with their effete, egghead, out-of-town, high-hifalutin', namby-pamby crap? Dam betcha!

The economic argument is hard to trump, and Deb Bledsoe has understood that. "It costs 10 times as much to develop on karst land as anywhere else."

"What's your proof of that?"

"Ever heard of the KY Transpark? It is on a karst and they have spent \$20 million and only have one customer after 7 years. Sucker taxpayers will eat the bill. Companies know better than to build on swamp land, or karst, or Mt St. Helens." or

"They tried to build Wolf Creek Dam on the cheap on karst. The dam cost \$5 million to build, \$100 million to fix the first time, and they're spending \$300 million now. If you are in a sinkhole, STOP DIGGING!"

Try Your Hand.

One karst expert came up with these zingers:

"As one who had to leave the county to get a job, I sure hope there is a safe place to come back to."


"If this BioLab is so important, why don't they rehab Plum Island and get it done sooner...or is it an excuse to make land deals and use government money to siphon into private pockets?"

"Why do the same people who complain how inefficient government projects are want to use government projects for risky, dangerous, unproven experiments on us? (i.e., State of the Art Technology)?"

“Why do the same people who want to cut tax spending on welfare, who think a health care system is unworkable, want to spend money on untested systems?”

“To encourage job growth, wouldn't it be best to encourage small businesses? Government money dries up and big industry ships jobs overseas, like the call center in our area.”

Try your informed response to these:

- You just want to keep us Kentuckians in poverty.
- They wouldn't allow anything to contaminate our food and water supply.
- Shut up and go back to the city where you belong.
- Who should we believe? The experts, or you?
- Who cares about a bunch of mussels and cave fish? Fish kills are common. 

The Great Saltpetre Preserve Committee Update

Greetings from the GSP Chair...

Open House at GSP was a big success once again! We had perfect weather and a record turn out of volunteers! A great big THANK YOU! to all who helped out. Head count on visitors signing the Guest Book was 650 for both days. After all the expenses are accounted for I think we may have brought in a little more in donations than we spent.

When camping at GSP please watch out for bark poachers. These folks are stripping all the bark from Slippery (Red) Elm trees to sell for its supposed medicinal properties. Stripping the bark kills the tree! Soon I hope to number and catalog all the trees that have been killed so we will be able to notice new occurrences. Over a dozen large trees have already been killed. If you notice stripped trees on Forest Service land, please contact John Strojjan, London District Ranger, 606-864-4163 to make report.

Also I need to ask everyone NOT to bring firewood from OHIO to the preserve. Kentucky has passed a state law with a \$2500 fine for bringing out of state firewood into Kentucky. Please help stop the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer that is killing ash trees in Ohio. This insect is able to kill even healthy trees, so please do your part to help prevent it spreading. The

movement of firewood has been the primary method of infecting new areas, as on its own it has a range of about a half mile.

Several incidents this year of vandalism, scratching names and the year in 3" letters on the cave walls, in Great Saltpetre have made the GSP Committee more aware of a need to educate everyone who uses the cave that it is NOT A PLAYGROUND. There is plenty of space in the fields for running around and plenty of 'wild' caves to explore. GSC should be considered a **museum** and treated accordingly. If you open the cave for a group, **you are responsible for their conduct!** Everyone needs to stay together: supervised, on the trails, NO WANDERING OR EXPLORING! If a few common sense rules can't be followed we will have to become more restrictive about access. No one wants this - but the protection of the cave is our first priority! Let's give GSC the respect it is due!

Upcoming GSP events:

KOR – June 22-24 Come early and help with set up!
Email Tammy Otten to volunteer: tammyotten (at) yahoo (dot) com.

Caver Appreciation Weekend – September 14-16;
Tammy Otten sponsor

Halloween party – October 27-28 - We need a sponsor for this event!

Lastly, a big THANK YOU! to all who have volunteered and worked to maintain GSP. Without the countless hours that these volunteers and Bill Carr,
(Continued on page 12)

NEW RKC MEMBERS

**As of this Publication
(RKC Membership Number in Parenthesis)**

Suzanne Parker (136), Cincinnati, OH (Life Member)
Tim Bowman (137), Germantown, OH (Individual)
Bob Eggers (138), Dayton, OH (Individual)

**The RKC has
108 Individual Members
And
6 Organization Members
Welcome!**

the caretaker, put in, campers/cavers would not be able to enjoy the shelter, kitchen, shower house, trails, Great Saltpetre Cave or other amenities that the preserve offers. Many thankless hours are spent mowing the fields, cleaning the shower house and shelter, repairing the water/electric lines, keeping finances straight, clearing the trails, planning future upgrades, replacing bulbs and fixtures in the cave, helping with scout trips (which brings in much needed revenue), etc... You are all an integral part of the continued preservation of Great Saltpetre Preserve!

Mary Gratsch
Chair, GSP Committee

Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve Open House

by Ernie Payne, NSS 4996LF, RKC 130

The local neighbors must really enjoy their chance to see the Great Saltpetre Cave near Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. This year over 600 came. Open house was held on Saturday and Sunday. The local volunteer fire department sold burgers, hot dogs, and drinks. Caver members of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy hosted the event and led cave tours.

Jacqueline and I drove to the GSCP Open House on Sunday, May 13, 2007, after a two-day square and round dance festival at Shepherdsville, KY. As a member of the RKC, I thought we should help out in some way so we helped to tear down the tarps and move picnic tables when open house concluded since we couldn't be there earlier.

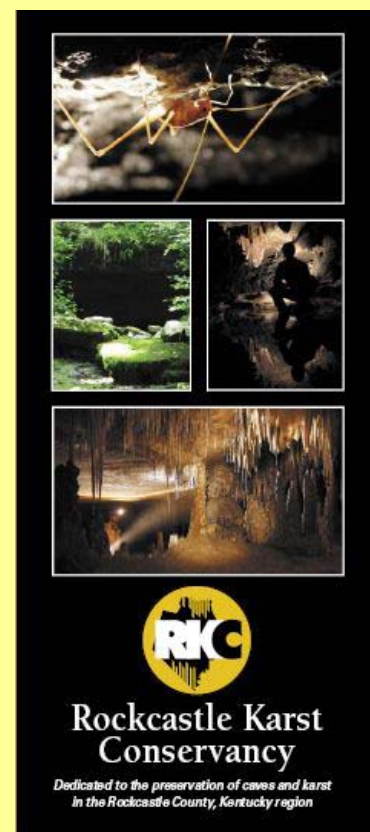
We did take one of the tours to see what the public experienced. Our guide June Dawson did a real nice presentation. There were about 25 on this tour. Our observation was that the public enjoyed going into the cave.

I asked Andy Niekamp, Chairman of RKC, if Jackie and I could camp that night. He indicated we could camp next to a fifth-wheel trailer. We did and it turned out that it was owned by June and her husband Delbert Dawson from West Virginia. We commented that we wouldn't want to pull our 26-foot travel trailer over the hilly, curvy road to the GSC property. Then Delbert told about their experience

getting there. As they went down the steep hill on KY 1004 leading to the railroad crossing, a school bus came up the road and didn't give them room so their fifth-wheel scraped the guardrail. Damage was not too bad but bad enough and could have been worse. I know other EMG members who have been there can understand about the road.

We enjoyed camping and visiting with the Dawsons and their young granddaughter. Then Monday morning Delbert took us into the cave for a few photo shots. There were only two other cavers camping that night off away from our campsite. To look at an empty main camping area on Monday morning was a real change from a Karst-O-Rama or the scene when the NSS convention camped there.

Not only did our neighbors seem to enjoy the day at the GSP open house, but also this probably earned some goodwill toward the cavers. Good landowner relations are always needed to help keep caves open.



Tell people about the RKC!

Give them a brochure!

GET YOUR BROCHURES AT:
www.rkci.org/brochure.htm

Become a Member of RKC!

Join RKC and help preserve caves and cave access in the Rockcastle County, Kentucky region! Your membership dues go directly to efforts to purchase and manage caves.

Date _____

Name - Please print clearly _____

Street _____

City, State & Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Telephone _____



Dues expire on January 1 of each year. Individual and Supporting Member dues are half the amount after June 30.

Membership Amount \$ _____

Additional Donation \$ _____

Total \$ _____

MEMBERSHIP FOR INDIVIDUALS - VOTING

- _____ Individual Member \$15/year
- _____ Sustaining Member \$75/year (After five consecutive years a sustaining member becomes a Life Member (along with a special T-shirt))
- _____ Life Member \$300/one time

MEMBERSHIPS FOR ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS - NON-VOTING

- _____ Supporting Member - Non-profit, grottos, and youth organizations \$25/year
- _____ Supporting Member - All other organizations \$50/year
- _____ Benefactor Member - \$1,000/one time

Make checks payable to the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy.

Mail completed form and payment to:

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy
1515 Cordell Drive
Dayton, Ohio 45439



RKC T-Shirts!

Price: \$15.00, RKC member price \$10.00
100% Pre-shrunk Heavy Weight Cotton, Navy Blue / Gold
Designed by Robert Coomer
Sizes: M, L, XL, XXL (sorry no S). Quantities are limited.

All proceeds benefit The RKC. Order on line:
<http://www.rkci.org/tshirt.htm>



RKC Life Member T-Shirt

Green with RKC logo
See membership details for more information.



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