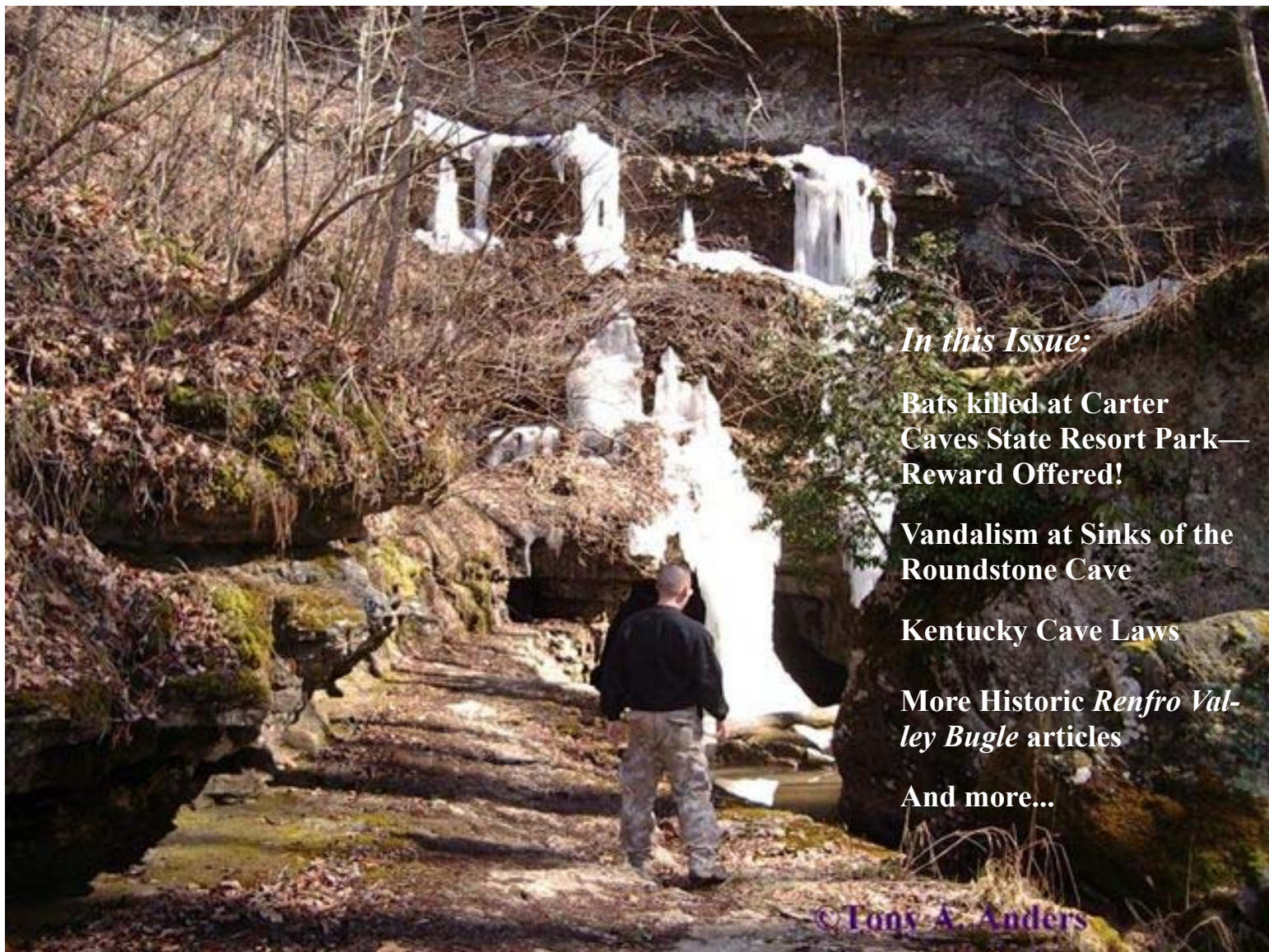




A Quarterly Publication of the
Rockcastle Karst Conservancy, Inc.
www.rkci.org



In this Issue:

**Bats killed at Carter Caves State Resort Park—
Reward Offered!**

Vandalism at Sinks of the Roundstone Cave

Kentucky Cave Laws

More Historic *Renfro Valley Bugle* articles

And more...

© Tony A. Anders

Volume IV, Issue I

Winter 2008

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

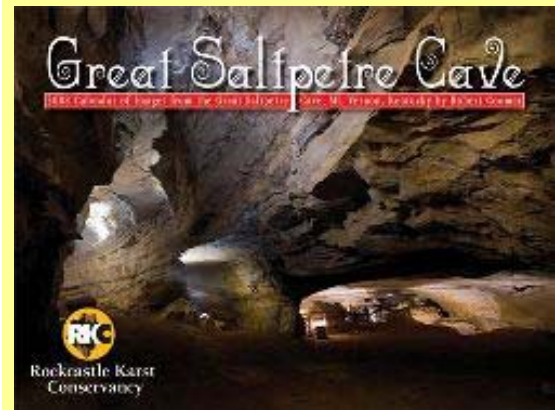
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Photo Credits:

Front Cover: Sinks of the Roundstone Cave main entrance in winter.
Photo © by Tony Anders.

Back Cover: Solitary bat. Photo courtesy of www.batward.com.



The 2008 Great Saltpetre Cave Calendar

Purchase A 2008 Rob Coomer Calendar and support RKC!

The price is \$15 + \$2 shipping.

Proceeds from the calendar sales benefit the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy.

Send a check payable to "RKC" for \$17 for each calendar and mail to:
Rockcastle Karst Conservancy
1515 Cordell Dr
Dayton, OH 45439
or visit:
<http://www.rkci.org/calendar/>



Volume IV, Issue I

January 2008

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 21 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



**Rockcastle Karst
Conservancy**

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:

- Dues are due! Pay your dues for 2008 so the RKC can continue to protect caves and Karst in Rockcastle County! Send dues (checks payable to Rockcastle Karst Conservancy) to Alan Leach, 2217 Cleneay Ave., Norwood, OH 45212.
- Bob Dobbs is the new Chairman of the Great Saltpetre Preserve Committee. His e-mail is cavepig124 (at) fuse (dot) net.
- The 2008 GSP Open House will be May 17-18, 2008. Look for more info in the Spring edition of the RKC News.
- Werner Jud is stepping down after 10-plus years as the GSP Committee treasurer. Those interested in the position should contact Werner at orion (at) one (dot) net. (See page 9 for details).
- Dr. Hilary Lambert, RKC 45, was awarded a certificate of appreciation by the Lexington-Fayette Environmental Commission on November 12th, 2007. Congratulations Hilary!
- See page 13 for info about the RKC annual meeting.



From the Editor:

Happy New Year! Welcome to 2008 and the first edition of Volume IV of the *RKC News*. It is unfortunate this issue deals primarily with the killing of bats at Carter Caves State Resort Park and the vandalism of Rockcastle County's Sinks of the Roundstone Cave. Yet, RKC is a cave and karst conservancy, so perhaps it is fitting we remind readers of our purpose and that

vandalism still occurs (even in caves outside of Rockcastle County). Education is the key to eliminating ignorance and hopefully publications like the *RKC News* will help spread the word about cave conservation. Even if we only reach one person, it is one more than before!

Thanks to Andy Niekamp for creating the www.batreward.com web page.

A new feature introduced in this issue is the "Letters to the Editor" section (below). If you have anything you wish to comment on, discuss, or criticize (constructively), please send it to me.

And, as in past issues, Andy Niekamp has provided some historic GSP articles from the *Renfro Valley Bugle*, courtesy of the Renfro Valley Entertainment Center. Enjoy!

Cave softly,

Mike Hood, RKC 46
RKC News Editor

Letter to the Editor:

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy was initially created for the long term protection of the Great Saltpeter Preserve. In so doing we have a vehicle to help protect other areas from development and harm and to conserve the natural resources thereon. But strangely enough our first Preserve exists as it does today because of major environmental impact by military and commercial exploitation in the past.

As individuals and members of grass root organizations, nonprofits, and various environmentally conscious organizations we believe in the priceless value of our natural environment. As a nation, however, governed by our representatives who are lobbied and bribed by corporate giants, the political platform of so-called environmentalism is mostly hype designed to keep true environmentalists sedated. We get tossed a few bones now and then (the stopping of the Red River Gorge Dam in the 70's comes to my mind. I know there are some others). But plundering our natural resources by whatever means possible has been standard operating procedure. This is spurred by necessity, convenience, or greed. This administration for example

has THE worst environmental record ever. Making money is what drives our system and personal gain steers big societal decisions and many private ones, not high ideals. The spirit of Manifest Destiny is still as strong now as it was when it was first declared in 1845.

Increasing population and the corresponding demand for supporting infrastructure will only become more critical. I-66 and the Trans-park are recent examples. It is like a cancer on this planet. Some dislike hearing this comparison as it demonizes our way of life. It could be argued that our progress, developments and improvement is precisely our nature. It is part of what defines human beings. As I read in a book recently, "it is odd that the term "man-made" and "natural" are perceived as antithetical". Well, be that as it may, too much of anything causes problems. Every other life form, their habitat and ecosystems have taken a pounding from us. We are at the time where all these environmental issues are becoming blatantly obvious and anyone who thinks it's a hoax or not very serious is just plain naïve. The term Anthropocene is being used by many scientists to describe the most recent

(Continued on page 20)



From the Chairman:

Greetings fellow RKC members!

I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable New Year! I hope 2008 is filled with lots of caving and outdoor pursuits for you. Each

year bring change and new opportunities for all of us.

To help usher in change for the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy I will be stepping down as chairman when my term expires in March. Also, I plan to leave the RKC Board to make room for new and more motivated people.

I enjoyed my terms as chairman and serving on the RKC Board. It began on November 11, 2003 when Ellie Schiller, of the Felburn Foundation, visited the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve. She presented us with her wonderful proposal. If we formed a new, non-profit corporation, she would donate GSP to us. From that day the idea of RKC was born.

Much work had to be done. A non-profit corporation had to be formed, a name chosen, articles of incorporation written and bylaws had to be finalized. If you were part of this process you know how much work it was and how long it took. We prepared a lengthy and detailed application for the IRS to become a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. We needed members too. And in nine short months in 2005 RKC went from no members to over 80 members. There was the challenging task of reassuring skeptical cavers that forming a karst conservancy and owning GSP was a good idea.

In early 2006 the final negotiations with the Felburn Foundation began. Land surveys, a property appraisal, an MOU, management plan and a deed were needed to make owning GSP a reality. By summer of 2006 we finally had "all of our ducks in a row" as the saying goes.

All of our hard work culminated on August 20, 2006 when Ellie Schiller returned to GSP and signed the deed transferring ownership. The high-

light of my involvement with RKC was when I signed my name on the deed too and accepted ownership of GSP on behalf of the members of RKC. My first visit to GSP was in the summer of 1989. Little did I realize then that one day I would affix my signature to the deed of this wonderful Preserve. We worked hard and accomplished a lot.

I have always said that part of being a good volunteer means knowing when to no longer volunteer. Stepping down and making room for new leaders is the best way to help an organization move forward. Too many people continue to volunteer long after they are burned out and become unwilling to change.

The Rockcastle Karst Conservancy has much potential. There are caves to acquire, caves to protect and great opportunities to educate the public. We can do anything we put our minds too. If you have an interest in serving on the RKC Board and perhaps even serving as chairman please contact me or send an email to officers@rkci.org. The future of RKC belongs to you!

Thank you for your continued support.

Andy Niekamp
RKC Chairman



NEW RKC MEMBERS

As of this Publication
(RKC Membership Number in Parenthesis)

Jennifer Adler (160), Paris, KY (Individual)
Mark Adler (161), Paris, KY (Individual)

The RKC now has
132 Individual Members
And
6 Organization Members
Welcome!

Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources News Release

Reward offered for information leading to conviction in killing of rare bats

December 3, 2007

Contact: Traci Hemberger

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1-800-852-0942, ext. 373

Frankfort, Ky. – A \$4,700 reward is being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for killing more than 100 federally endangered Indiana bats at a state park in late October.

A number of wildlife conservation organizations, cavers, environmental consultants and others have pooled their money to offer the reward. Vandals smashed the bats with rocks and knocked several into a stream to drown on two occasions while the animals were in a hibernating cluster at Carter Caves State Resort Park near Olive Hill.

Investigators believe the first incident occurred Oct. 21-24. Officials discovered the second incident Oct. 27, and believe the bat killings may have occurred the previous night.

Traci Hemberger, endangered species biologist for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, noted that a \$500 reward offered in a similar 1987 case led to the convictions of four men. "We're hoping that this reward will lead to a breakthrough in the Carter Caves case," she said.

Hemberger said a number of organizations, starting with Bat Conservation International, began raising money for the reward after word spread about the bat killings. "There's been an outpouring of support from the bat and caving communities," she said. "It is inspiring to see everyone banding together."

Jim Kennedy, cave resources specialist for Bat Conservation International, said cases of bat killings such as the Carter Caves incident are rare. "We definitely would like to resolve this problem, and we also want to draw attention to the bigger need for bat protection," he said.

Kennedy said there are fewer than half a million Indiana bats known to exist in the world. Approximately 62,000 of the bats reside in Kentucky.

Members of the Dayton (Ohio) Underground Grotto and Eastern States Speleological Organization have also contributed toward the reward. "We are a group of responsible cavers and conservation-minded individuals, so when we hear about cases such as this, it makes us very upset," said Andy Niekamp, a member of both groups. "We want to do our part to help catch whoever did this."

Other contributors to the reward fund include the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network, Defenders of Wildlife, Eco-Tech Consultants, Inc., Apogee Environmental Consultants, LLC, Copperhead Environmental Consulting, Inc. and the Indiana State Center for North American Bat Research and Conservation.

Indiana bats first received protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1966. Until recently, their numbers have decreased steadily. The caves at Carter Caves State Resort Park harbor the largest hibernating population of Indiana bats in Kentucky.

"Everybody is disgusted with the killings," Hemberger said. "It's hard to believe someone would do something like this."

Violations of the Endangered Species Act can result in a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and a year in prison. Anyone with information about the bat deaths should contact Special Agent Bob Snow of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (502) 582-5989, ext. 29.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources manages, regulates, enforces and promotes responsible use of all fish and wildlife species, their habitats, public wildlife areas and waterways for the benefit of those resources and for public enjoyment. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, an agency of the Commerce Cabinet, has an economic impact to the state of \$4.8 billion annually. For more information on the department, visit our web site at fw.ky.gov.

Editor's note: The Greater Cincinnati Grotto pledged additional funds, increasing the reward to \$5000.



Vandalism at Sinks of the Roundstone Cave

By Thor Bahrman, III

I've always had an affection for Sinks of the Roundstone Cave. Many cavers think of Sinks as a cave to take beginners to, but not visit for their own pleasure. But, to me the cave has a special place in my heart. Years ago, two friends took me into Sinks for a wild cave trip. Though the friends weren't members of the organized caving community, I did seek out organized cavers afterward.

Sinks of the Roundstone led me to the world of caving. In that world, I found like-minded people who taught me how to visit the underground while practicing techniques that would keep not only me relatively safe, but the cave as well. I quickly learned how important the world beneath us is. I soon realized the connections between sky, surface, sea, and subsurface. My eyes were opened to the disgust of graffiti, trash, and other horrible items in caves. Yet, my spirits were lifted when I attended my first cave cleanup. I decided that as much as I caved for pleasure, I needed to give back to the underground world, and I committed to attend as many cave cleanups as I could.

Over the years of visiting Sinks of the Roundstone and taking students and other groups there, I have been alarmed at the utter disrespect some people have for the cave. Cavers have found everything from spray paint and broken beer bottles to tea candles and, sadly, dead bats. A couple of years ago during the RKC cleanup of the cave, we found all these things and more. But, through the hard work of many cavers, we left Sinks a lot better than when we entered it. But, that wouldn't last long.

A few weeks ago, I was taking a group of college students through Sinks and discovered an enormous amount of tea candles, numbering in the hundreds. As we traveled through the cave, we were astonished at how many candles had been brought in, and we talked about the lack of respect in leaving the candles, graffiti, trash, and even feces. The following week was this year's cleanup of Sinks, and I looked forward to, again, cleaning the cave.

The morning was chilly; I was tired; my spirits weren't very high. How could they be when a place I hold sacred had been desecrated yet again? But, my spirits picked up as more cavers showed up to tend to the cave. Ironically, a large portion of the tea candles had been removed over the week between my visits. There had not been any rain to speak of, so one could only assume someone else got fed up and at least did a bit of tidying.

The lack of most of the tea candles gave us more time to focus on removing the graffiti, trash, broken glass, and other refuse we found. I was impressed that at least one caver had brought his young son along to show him the right way to treat our environment. After all, our youth are our future.

The cleanup was not easy. Twice I had bags break from the broken glass, yielding an aromatic concoction of stale beer, mold, spit, random garbage, and things I would rather not imagine. Yet, we persevered. And, we made a difference.

But yet again, the difference wouldn't last long.

Two weeks later I returned, bringing yet another college group with me, and yet again we found more tea candles, more broken beer bottles, more snack bags, and more feces. If I had caught the perpetrators in the act, I would have shoved their faces in it.

Two weeks.

As I am writing this, I have just returned from taking a church group through the cave. As we went along, many of the kids couldn't understand why anyone would treat the cave so badly. Some started picking up trash, bottles, and discarded batteries. As often as I am shocked at the filth of some people, I am impressed by the caring of individuals who had nothing to do with the act, yet are willing to do their part to repair the damage.

(Continued on page 9)

Stewardship of Great Saltpetre Preserve: A September 2007 Report on Funds and Expenditures

by **Werner Jud, RKC 6**
GCG and GSP Treasurer

The Grotto had a good return from KOR this year even after we paid GSP for the camping use of the property. We're using some of that money to donate to several other nonprofit organizations related to karst and the regional environment. The new GCG board will be planning the 2008 budget soon. Come to a board meeting sometime to see how things are done. We encourage participation. Great Saltpetre Preserve is financially independent from the Grotto and must sustain itself through generous donations and camping revenues. As many of you have noticed, we invested some of those dollars back into GSP this past couple of years. The kitchen received the most attention by remodeling, and rearranging the countertops, shelving, and installation of a new window over the sink. A tankless hot water heater was installed last year.

This year a new gas stove with a buried LP tank was installed. (GCG paid for a nice new outdoor propane grill which gets lots of use). A new electric panel for the campground with new GFCI outlets at the electric sites was recently installed and awaits final inspection by local officials. 'No Hunting' signs, with 'Great Saltpetre Preserve' printed on them, are being posted around various locations at the perimeter of the property. Additionally, repairs and maintenance underlie all these projects and constantly demand attention, e.g. mowing, keeping the gravel road in reasonable condition, fixing sagging shelter support posts, keeping the cave lights working, and keeping the tractor and other equipment in operating condition. This is where donations and camping money is going but buying all this stuff is only one part. It's the VOLUNTEER labor expended to get this work accomplished that is so critical. There are many other less obvious jobs that quietly get attention by grotto members. Many pour their time and energy in GSP to make it a comfortable, functional, and enjoyable place to visit.

These expenditures had a significant drain on GSP funds; however, it is in much better financial condition since recent KOR. Your donations of camping money in the pipe at the GSP kiosk are always necessary and appreciated. \$4.00/night/person is the standard expectation — and if you use an electrical site, add \$4.00/night to that. These amounts defray the cost of the electric from Jackson Energy, the port-o-lets from Loveless Sanitation and the water piped into the kitchen and shower house from Rockcastle Water. 2008 Camping Passes are available: \$50 for family; \$30 for individuals.

Expect a new sign to be posted in the near future as you drive down the road toward the shelter. It will pretty much say what the small note says on the kiosk and under the shelter, welcoming cavers and visitors to the property and reminding them of the general campground rules. We had a large sign like this years ago but it became weathered and ugly. At that time, the GSP committee decided to move the information to the kiosk to be more low key-ask; however, apparently many don't seem to pay much attention. It is surprising how often people ask what the camping rates are or even claim that they did not know there was a place to put money. So we decided it was time to put the information back in the large sign format. A reminder for anyone who wants their donations logged for the record: put your first and last name on the payment envelope and print legibly. Add your Grotto affiliation and if you want a receipt, provide an address. There are many donations with no identification written on them at all, and if there is but I can't read it ... that's the same as no identification. Oh, and try to remember to sign the register book.

More projects are in the works, two of which are at the forefront. Construction of new outhouses built to LEED principals (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design — google it) and an exhaust hood for the gas stove to vent heat and combustion gases. The outhouse plans are a far cry from just digging a hole and plopping a shack over it. Environmental consciousness, efficiency of design, load demand (pun intended), location,

and long life time, will guide the construction. Upgrading and updating the cave lighting circuit is also required with low energy consumption, high output devices. Getting the shower house operational year-round is something I'd like to see happen, but this too will require good planning and careful remodeling ... but I hate plumbing work. And there is still a group of people who want to see the swinging bridge restored over Crooked Creek.

As a conservancy we are OBLIGATED to follow principles of sustainability and being eco-friendly. As work continues at GSP we must not forget the pledge stated in the GSP management plan: our long-term mission is to preserve and protect the natural resources of the Great Saltpetre Preserve, maintain and restore those buildings and structures that are important and/or historically significant to the campground area, and in so doing, continue to provide a pleasant and convenient haven for cavers while protecting a vital part of Kentucky history and landscape. Each idea, project, and plan shall be measured against this.

Our stewardship of the land means not developing the property or creating high impact improvements. GSP is not a scouting jamboree site, a commercial campground, nor are we a public park. GSP is a karst preserve. Visible and permanent changes on or to the property, or in the cave, must be thoroughly evaluated so as not to clash with our mission. Low impact and low visibility improvements such as running water, telephone, cave lighting, inconspicuous outhouses, are usually acceptable since they enhance comfort and security without compromising our mission. Any such improvement or restoration project shall be evaluated to keep long-term (lifecycle) costs down and minimize ecological impact. Think "Green."



**2008
Dues
Are
Due!**

Vandalism at Sinks of the Roundstone Cave (Continued from page 7)

The work we all do makes a difference. We do need to find out who is damaging Sinks of the Roundstone and other area caves. We need to stop them. We need to conserve our fragile cave environment. We need to educate young people, college kids, and even adults. The work done through RKC is very important, and much of the time very hard. But, perhaps through this hard work and dedication, there will be a time when we don't need to do regular cleanup efforts for Sinks, Fletcher's, and other area caves.



GREAT SALTPETRE PRESERVE WAIVERS

Anyone camping at Great Saltpetre Preserve is required to sign a liability waiver for insurance reasons. Any version of the waiver that does not match the version below is invalid. A waiver must be signed by each individual over the age of 18. All minor children must have a waiver signed by their legal guardian.

Members of the area grottos, GCG/DUG/BGG must sign and return a waiver to their grotto:

- GCG - Mike Dietmaring
- DUG - Alan Leach 2217 Cleneay Ave, Norwood, OH 45212
- BGG - Jerry Dixon - 8066 Shelby St. Maysville, KY 41056

All non-member visitors including scouts, youth group members, and grotto guests must submit a waiver to their grotto sponsor for each visit to the campground.

Last revised 9/4/2006. All previous versions are obsolete. Get your waiver at:

<http://www.caves.org/conservancy/gsp/info/waiver.shtml>





\$5000 Reward

For information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for killing hibernating bats at Carter Caves State Resort Park in Kentucky on or around October 21-27, 2007.

OLIVE HILL, Ky. - State and federal wildlife authorities are investigating the deaths of more than 100 federally endangered Indiana bats at Carter Caves State Resort Park near Olive Hill.

Vandals entered a cave at the park and struck a hibernating colony of Indiana bats with rocks on two different occasions in late October. Some bats were crushed, while others died after being knocked into a stream. Authorities believe the first incident occurred between Oct. 21-24, while the second incident was reported Oct. 27 and may have occurred the previous night. The cave is not being identified to prevent further harm to the remaining bats or other vandalism.

Indiana bats first received protection under the Endangered Species Act in 1966. Until recently, their numbers have decreased steadily. The caves at Carter Caves State Resort Park harbor the largest hibernating population of Indiana bats in Kentucky.

Violations of the Endangered Species Act can result in a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and a year in prison. Anyone with information about the bat deaths should contact Special Agent Bob Snow of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (502) 582-5989.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.batreward.com

A SUMMARY OF KENTUCKY CAVE LAWS

Provided by Roger Brucker, RKC 99

Kentucky Revised Statutes 433.873

Wrongful disturbance or damage to cave surfaces or material found therein.

It shall be unlawful for any person, to willfully and knowingly:

(a) Break, break off, crack, carve upon, write, burn, or otherwise mark upon, remove, or in any manner destroy, disturb, deface, mar or harm the surfaces of any cave or any material which may be found therein, notwithstanding whether such material is attached or broken, including speleothems, speleogens, and sedimentary deposits.

(b) Deface, tamper with or remove a sign stating that a cave is posted or citing provisions of this chapter.

(c) Excavate, remove, destroy, injure, deface, or in any other manner disturb any burial grounds, historic or prehistoric resources, archaeological or paleontological site or any part thereof, including fossils, bones, relics, inscriptions, saltpeter workings, remains of historical human activity, or any other such features which may be found in any cave.

Kentucky Revised Statutes 433.875

Unlawful dumping, disposal or burning within cave.

It shall be unlawful to store, dump, litter, dispose of or otherwise place any refuse, garbage, dead animals, sewage, toxic substances harmful to cave life or humans, or to store other such similar materials in any quantity in any cave. It shall also be unlawful to burn within a cave any material which produces any smoke or gas which is harmful to any naturally occurring organisms in the cave, except acetylene gas produced by carbide lamps.

Kentucky Revised Statutes 433.877

Unlawful removal or disturbance of naturally occurring organisms in cave.

(1) It shall be unlawful to remove, kill, harm, or otherwise disturb any naturally occurring organism found within any cave, except for safety or health reasons. Scientific collecting permits may be obtained from the state nongame biologist.

(2) It shall also be unlawful to collect any form of troglitic or trogliphilic cave life for commercial sale, whether or not a profit is gained by such sale.

Kentucky Revised Statutes 164.990

Summary:

(1) Declares that a person is guilty of a Class D felony who willfully injures, destroys or defaces an archeological site or object of antiquity situated on lands owned or leased by the commonwealth or a state agency or a political subdivision of the commonwealth or who explores, excavates, appropriates or removes an archeological site or object of antiquity located on such lands without a permit obtained from the Department of anthropology at the University of Kentucky. Requires that the violator shall forfeit to the state all equipment used in committing the offense.

Class D felonies are punishable by 1-5 years imprisonment; fines of \$1,000 to \$10,000, or double the gain from the commission of the offense and up to \$20,000 for corporations.

YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE KENTUCKY CAVE LAWS HERE:

<http://www.rkci.org/documents/kycavelaw.htm>



Cluster of Indiana Bats © batreward.com



Bats are probably the most mistreated and misunderstood mammals

From www.batreward.com

People believe that bats are carriers of rabies or that they have a desire to fly into women's hair. Neither of these rumors is true, as well as the vampire stories that surround these harmless creatures.

Bats are clean animals and are no more apt to carry rabies than a dog or a cat. Contrary to popular belief, bats are gentle creatures that benefit man by consuming large quantities of pesky insects.

Indiana bats feed entirely on night flying insects, and a colony of bats can consume thousands of insects each night. Bats locate these insects by emitting high-pitched sounds and waiting for the echo, which allows them to zoom in on the bug's location. The fat reserves accumulated by devouring these large quantities of insects during the summer and fall allow the bat to sustain itself dur-

The clusters of hibernating bats are very susceptible to disturbance and vandalism. People touring caves can disturb bats and cause them to awaken. When a bat is aroused, it uses energy at a higher rate, which decreases the energy supply available for the rest of the winter. Vandals have

knocked down and killed large clusters of bats, and although illegal, some people shoot bats for entertainment.



Cluster of Indiana Bats © batreward.com

SINKS OF THE ROUNDSTONE CAVE CLEANUP

By Deb Bledsoe, RKC 43

Saturday, October 29, was this year's Sinks of the Roundstone Cave cleanup in Rockcastle County. Organized by the Conservation Committee of the Greater Cincinnati Grotto, it was announced as a "combined organizations event" and lived up to its billing! The cave owner and thirty five cavers and community members from four different grottoes, the RKC, and Rockcastle County PRIDE turned out to mudpaint graffiti, and clean trash and tires from the cave, roadway and parking areas at both entrances.

SOR, also known traditionally as Mullins Station Cave, has seen heavy traffic over the years, and especially troubling, is sporting an abundance of new spray-painted graffiti which has appeared since the RKC-sponsored cleanup in October of 2005. Although it is on private land, it is easily accessible from the roadway and is used as a picnic and party spot by many different types of visitors, some of whom are more responsible than others.

Sadly, among the items found in and around the cave were various types of drug paraphernalia. In the weeks before the cleanup, thousands of tealight candle cups left in the main stream had already been removed by cavers. All together, on this day over 115 bags of trash and a number of tires were removed, with Rockcastle County Solid Waste Coordinator James Renner and crew handling loading and disposal.

It has been agreed that something proactive needs to be done to stem the further degradation of this cave ecosystem, and there are plans to give educational presentations on *Leave No Trace Caving* at local colleges and schools, with the first presentation to be by Deb Bledsoe at Eastern Kentucky



Sinks of the Roundstone Cave Cleanup Crew

University in January. In addition, it is likely that we will hold another work day in the spring of 2008 to specifically focus on spray-paint removal, so stay tuned for more info on that.

MT. VERNON ELEMENTARY KARST FIELD TRIP

By Deb Bledsoe, RKC 43

Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve was the host for Mt Vernon Elementary's second and fourth grade karst field trips on a Thursday and Friday in mid-October. Again this year, over 110 kids, teachers, parents, and grandparents participated each day, arriving early in the morning and leaving mid-afternoon.

This school year's trips were scheduled in October to better complement the school's life science curriculum. Each day's group was divided into two smaller groups, with one touring the cave and the other having a presentation under the shelter on cave life, ecology, and formation. As the cave tour returned, all sat down to lunch, and afterwards, the groups switched. When the kids left to return to school, they took additional cave and bat crosswords and trivia sheets with them.

The kids are wonderful and the days are a blast, but producing the program and curriculum is a lot of work and wouldn't be possible without the full support of a generous bunch of cavers who take vacation days to be there. This year's tour guides and program presenters were Deb Bledsoe, Nancy Seaberg, David Anders, Austin Anders, Tony Anders, Kevin Anders, Bob Dobbs, Bill Simpson, Hilary Lambert, Duke Hopper, and Jim Perkins.



GREAT SALTPETRE PRESERVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Bob Dobbs, RKC 9
GSP Committee Chairman

GSP COMMITTEE:

Bob Dobbs - Chairman
Werner Jud - Treasurer
Richard Duncan - GCG Representative
Mike McNabb - GCG Representative
James Dixon - BGG Representative
Patrick Hutson - BGG Representative
Tim Hale - DUG Representative
Bob Yuellig - DUG Representative
Bill Carr - GSP Caretaker

Thanks to Mary Gratsch for chairing the GSP committee for the last couple of years. She helped make some of the following things happen.

Projects completed in 2007: The kitchen cabinets and countertops got rearranged to make way for a commercial gas stove to help handle the hungry cavers at Karst-O-Rama. A propane gas tank to supply the stove was buried on the hillside next to the shelter. A new outdoor propane grill was donated by GCG. A new electric panel for the campground with GFCI outlets was installed. "No hunting" signs were purchased and are being installed around the perimeter of the property. Posts supporting the shelter were adjusted (raised) to fix the sagging roof along the front. The culvert going into the back field was recently extended to widen the road a couple of feet. These are in addition to the normal mowing, trimming, road maintenance, tractor repair, and constant electrical repair in the cave.

In May the 2007 Open House hosted around 600 guests in two days.

This year GSP hosted two Mt. Vernon Elementary school field trips for two days each, one in the spring and one in Oct. In the future these will only be in the fall.

A property and cave walk-through was done on Sat, Oct 27 to evaluate our maintenance needs and plan projects for 2008. The committee came up with a long list of smaller projects and several larger projects that we would like to do. These projects will be prioritized at our next GSP committee meeting on December 11 when we make out our budget for 2008.

Bob Dobbs
GSP Committee Chairman

UPPER CUMBERLAND WATERSHED WATCH ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCED

The Upper Cumberland Watershed Watch (UCWW) will hold its Annual Meeting Saturday, February 9, 2008. The event will take place from 9 AM to 3 PM at the Somerset Community College, Somerset, KY.

The program, which is free and open to the caving public as well as all our karst water samplers, will include presentations on this year's water sampling results, who to call when you have water contamination issues or questions, reports on Citizen Action Plans including activities by our Rockcastle Region karst water samplers, info for people interested in becoming samplers, refresher training for samplers, and more.

Lunch will be provided! This is traditionally a fun and educational event, so if you're interested in learning more about the water you are caving through, come on out and join in. Mark your calendars now, and RSVP soon to Deb Bledsoe: debcaves (at) yahoo (dot) com.

RKC ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, March 1, 2008
1pm to 3pm

North Central Branch of the
Cincinnati Public Library

11109 Hamilton Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231

[www.cincinnati.org/branches/
Northcentral.html](http://www.cincinnati.org/branches/Northcentral.html)



ROCKCASTLE KARST CONSERVANCY, INC.

RKC Board Meeting Minutes

October 24, 2007 7:03pm EST

North Central Branch Library – Cincinnati, Ohio

THOSE PRESENT:

Andy Niekamp, Werner Jud, Mike Rzesutock, Bob Yuellig, Bob Dobbs, Michael McNabb, Pete Stowe, Tammy Otten, Neena Jud, Ron Fulcher, Steve Greene, Pat Hutson, Joetta Hutson, Mary Gratsch, Howard Kalnitz, Bill Addington, Lisa Pruitt-Thorner, Roger June, Jim Perkins

Meeting called to order promptly at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman, Andy Niekamp.

INSURANCE/COMMUNICATION

First issue discussed was insurance. Andy Niekamp informed those present that through Werner Jud's efforts, an insurance quote was proposed and accepted which will cover RKC and GCG. This insurance is a Commercial General Liability policy. In addition to the CGL, directors and officers liability coverage was also obtained. The quote for insurance is as follows:

\$2,128.75 CGL
\$ 744.00 D&O

\$2,872.75 total annual premium

The insurance rider specifically listed coverage as club liability, campgrounds and cave with tours. Coverage provided was one million.

Directors and Officers coverage is protection against a breach of "duty" by the directors and officers. Lisa Pruitt-Thorner informed those in attendance generally as to the purpose of Directors and Officers coverage. D&O insurance pays for actual or alleged wrong decisions, what the policy calls "wrongful acts." Although each insurer defines coverage in its own way, D&O insurance generally includes: "any actual or alleged act or omission, error, misstatement, misleading statement, neglect or breach of duty by an Insured person in the discharge of his/her duties." Some examples of claims under D&O are employment related issues such as discrimination, harassment, and wrongful termination, failure to provide services and mismanagement of assets.

Andy Niekamp covered the history of RKC's efforts to obtain CGL insurance. It was originally planned to only switch entities, from GCG to RKC but the prior agent kept it as it was previously. Neither Andy, nor Werner were entirely comfortable with the recommendations of the prior agent. Nautilus would not add RKC as an additional insured. RKC elected to keep policy as it was and face the issue upon the policy's termination date.

Bob Yuellig said he gave his usual courtesy call to Nautilus around the time of renewal. RKC had been listed an additional insured under prior policy but this was only in event of indemnity or if RKC was liable only because GCG was liable. RKC had no real coverage under old policy.

After great efforts, many meetings, emails and telephone calls, Werner finally brought in a quote from the Hal Kresser Insurance Agency, 3041 Symmes Road, Hamilton, Ohio. Our CGL insurance is provided through Capital Specialty Insurance and the D&O coverage is through USLI.

Bob Yuellig talked about lack of communication regarding RKC/GCG/GSP generally and the insurance situation specifically. Had there been better communication, more people could have helped out and it wouldn't have been a last minute scramble. GCG didn't know it was being taken off policy.

As to the communication problem, Bob felt that better communication was key and that anything involving GSP or RKC should be sent out to all involved groups.

Andy Niekamp said it was recognized early on that RKC would be getting an insurance policy. At the annual meeting of RKC in March, insurance was discussed. The plan was to get an insurance policy in RKC's name. When denied the policy switch recently, plan was to wait until renewal period and get different insurance.

Andy mentioned that if/when more insurance issues come up, will seek input and help. Lines of communication should be open.

Mary Gratsch said that GCG administration didn't understand they were being taken off policy.

Werner Jud said there was a lesson to be learned here. RKC can and should be more receptive to assistance from its members and key people. Werner felt the insurance issue fell on his shoulders and so did Andy. They could have used help and lack of communication caused problems.

Ron Fulcher asked why GCG has insurance coverage connected with RKC when DUG and BGG do not.

Roger June asked about whether event insurance could be added as a rider to CGL.

GCG/RKC MOU

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between GCG and RKC was thoroughly discussed next.

Werner informed those at meeting that the purpose of the MOU was to continue the relationship between GCG and GSP. Since GCG managed and maintained GSP, developed GSP, once had a long term lease and had a long existing relationship with GSP, and since much of GSP's volunteer base comes from GCG, GCG's special relationship with GSP should be recognized. The recognition should come in the form of an agreement.

Originally Mark Moore drafted a Memorandum of Understanding which was in effect currently. Mark Moore, the Felburn Foundation and the organizers of RKC found it prudent to have a MOU with GCG rather than a lease or management contract since RKC was seeking to become a 501(c)(3) public charity and if it divested itself of its primary asset by leasing the land at the same time it was applying for a 501(c)(3), its public charitable status could be compromised.

Werner had a lawyer review the current MOU and make revisions so that a better MOU for RKC/GCG could be obtained. The revised MOU draft was emailed and provided to several people. The revised MOU was reviewed by those in attendance. The proposed revised MOU terminates in 2016. Lisa Pruitt-Thorner proposed that the MOU automatically renew afterward for a period of five years each. She suggested that the MOU be revised so that as long as neither party objects in writing the MOU automatically renews every five years after the initial period. She drafted a revised renewal clause, Werner typed it in and read it to those in attendance.

Revised renewal clause is as follows: "At the end of this initial term, this contract will be automatically renewed for five year periods unless either party submits a written objection within 30 days of termination".

All Board Members stated that once the revised MOU with the revised automatic renewal clause was provided, they would agree to it, approve it and sign it. The MOU will be sent around to all Board members and signed in the very near future.

EQUIPMENT LEASE

Questions arose about GCG's intentions regarding leasing the tractor and other equipment at GSP to RKC. At one time GCG suggested it would lease the equipment to RKC for \$1 a year but a formal lease arrangement was never made. Pete Stowe and Bob Dobbs said that GCG would discuss this and make a decision.

CARETAKER LEASE

Werner drew up a new caretaker lease for Bill Carr and/or successive caretakers. Modifications were made which included a provision that caretaker expend 10 hours of work a month toward maintenance of property.

The current caretaker wasn't enthusiastic about the 10 hours a month provision and felt that security was the primary reason for caretaker on property, not maintenance. In initial lease there were certain hours mandated/stipulated. According to those present, including Werner, Bill Carr didn't want provision for specific number of hours, didn't want to promise to "mow 300 acres".

The caretaker was concerned at one time about RKC takeover as landowner of property. Werner wrote Bill Carr a letter, signed by others, that Bill Carr would get same consideration under RKC and all would consider the unique situation.

A new lease does need to specify that the land being leased by caretaker is the specific plot of land where he resides, not entire 300 acres. Jim Perkins asked if there is language in lease about what happens if there is a successor caretaker someday.

Renewal clause of caretaker lease discussed in detail. Suggested revision: "this lease shall be extended for additional consecutive periods of one year on the same terms as provided for in this lease, unless either party gives 90 days written notice of the intent to terminate." This discussed clause was a change from 6 months to 90 days.

It was suggested that the new lease specify the caretaker should furnish a monthly report to the GSP committee. Nothing was decided about caretaker lease and the discussion was tabled.

BANK SIGNATURE CARD FOR GSP ACCOUNT

A resolution was earlier passed (a couple of months ago) by RKC Board to add Mike Rzesutock, treasurer of RKC, to signature card for GSP account at bank. The resolution was voted upon and passed through internet/email resolution and voting.

However, even though a resolution was passed, Mike Rzesutock has not yet been added because of bank regulations regarding approval by other persons on signature card.

Werner Jud said he started the controversy because he knew that some people had a problem with the RKC treasurer being on the signature card, even though the GSP Committee is a Committee of RKC and the GSP account is therefore an account of RKC. He said that some people, specifically members of RKC (and the GSP Committee) were concerned that having the RKC treasurer on the account could mean that RKC could empty the account arbitrarily, leaving Great Saltwater Preserve with no operating/maintenance funds.

Mike Rzesutock said that RKC would have no incentive to remove funds from GSP account and that his CPA recommended the RKC treasurer be on the account since the RKC treasurer is the person with the largest

financial fiduciary duty. Lisa Pruitt-Thorner, secretary herein, stated that in her opinion it was important for the RKC treasurer to be on the account for tax, legal, and ethical reasons.

Andy Niekamp read email correspondence from a well known cave conservancy administrator who opined very vehemently that the RKC treasurer should be a signatory to the GSP account. It is important because of record keeping and because RKC is ultimately responsible for the financial management of the assets of RKC and GSP is the largest asset.

Werner Jud said that even though he voted against the resolution initially, it was because he did not agree with the way it was being rushed through and he thought it should be discussed and explained better first. He stated that he no longer had a problem with the RKC treasurer being on the account.

Mary Gratsch asked about the proposed resolution that Lisa Pruitt-Thorner had drafted and emailed. She wanted to know the status of it. Others agreed that such a resolution was a good idea in order to ensure that the GSP bank account was designated as a GSP maintenance fund and to ensure that RKC would not arbitrarily remove funds that are needed for GSP. The RKC Board all said they didn't have a problem with such a resolution even though the proposed resolution of Lisa Pruitt-Thorner had not yet been discussed or reviewed in much detail since it was circulated while Andy was on his extended hike.

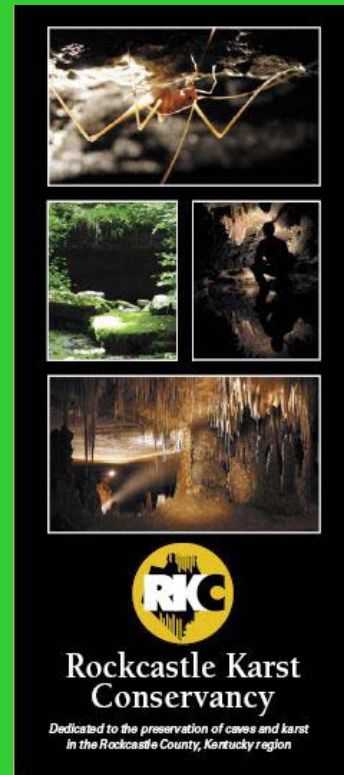
Lisa Pruitt-Thorner said she would email the resolution to everyone again. The following is Lisa Pruitt-Thorner's proposed resolution. It is reproduced herein for information only, is subject to revisions, and is not yet a formal resolution of RKC.

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy, Inc. ("RKC"), through its Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve Committee ("GSP Committee"), shall maintain and manage a separate bank account for the preservation, maintenance and improvement of the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve. The GSP Committee bank account shall be designated as the GSP maintenance fund and monies deposited, held, and spent therein shall be used solely for GSP unless there is an emergency requiring withdrawal of funds by RKC. "Emergency" is defined as a condition requiring urgent action by RKC in order to protect the funds or assets of GSP from accidental or intentional misuse and/or to respond to a sudden, unforeseen and serious incident which threatens the security of Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve. Before any emergency condition is established which requires withdrawal of GSP maintenance monies from the maintenance fund, there must be a 2/3rds majority [original proposal specified unanimous vote, which is often impossible, so amended to 2/3rds] vote by the RKC Board of Directors. Drafted by Lisa Pruitt-Thorner, RKC Secretary

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Lisa Pruitt-Thorner, secretary



Tell people about the RKC!

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www.rkci.org/brochure.htm

RKC DONORS FOR 2007

Levels:

\$1 to \$99 - Contributor

\$100 to \$199 - Friend

\$200 to \$499 - Supporter

\$500 to \$999 - Sponsor

\$1,000 to \$4,999 - Benefactor

\$5,000 and Above - Karst Castle Benefactor

Benefactor:

Greater Cincinnati Grotto

Sponsors:

David Lee

Dayton Underground Grotto

(Continued on next page)

Supporter:

Suzanne Parker
 Nathan Jud
 Robert Thurber
 Bryan Garness
 Jim Perkins
 Mt. Vernon Elementary School
 Ron Crawford

Friend:

Bob & Pat Yuellig
 New Hope Community Church
 Michael Rzesutock
 Joe Gibson

Contributor:

Nathan Williams
 Lisa Pruitt-Thorner
 Roger June
 Patricia Forman
 Wayne Barton
 Boy Scout Troop 951
 Perry Noland
 Boy Scout Troop 621
 Colin Gatland
 Annette Crosley
 Jeff Gillette
 Sharon Faulkner
 Ernest Payne, Jr.
 Alan Fearday
 Roy Vanhoozer

FUEL OIL SMELL IN PINE HILL CAVE

By Deb Bledsoe, RKC 43

Hi cavers!

I have received a report from cavers who were in Pine Hill that the fuel oil smell is back. That is consistent with an historic, persistent karst contamination issue - the fuel, which very well may have spilled or leaked years ago, is in a reservoir in the limestone somewhere and when the water comes up, it washes it out into the cave. We had heavy rains early in the week, and water is high all over the county.

I have also, sadly, received a report of a faint fuel oil smell in Sinks of the Roundstone Cave. That is also consistent with this whole problem, as Sinks of the Roundstone is in the same conduit as the water makes its way downstream.

I'm interested in continuing to track this, and am reporting it to the state. Please let me know if you smell or see anything in the passages and waters of Pine Hill, Blue Hole, Middle, or Sinks of the Roundstone Cave. I need to know when, where, and how much you saw/smelled, and who was in the party reporting.

Also if anyone in the Rockcastle region is interested in a quick trip into Pine Hill to verify the situation, please give me a shout.



Pine Hill Cave's Skylight Dome. Photo © Nathan Williams



RENFRO VALLEY BUGLE

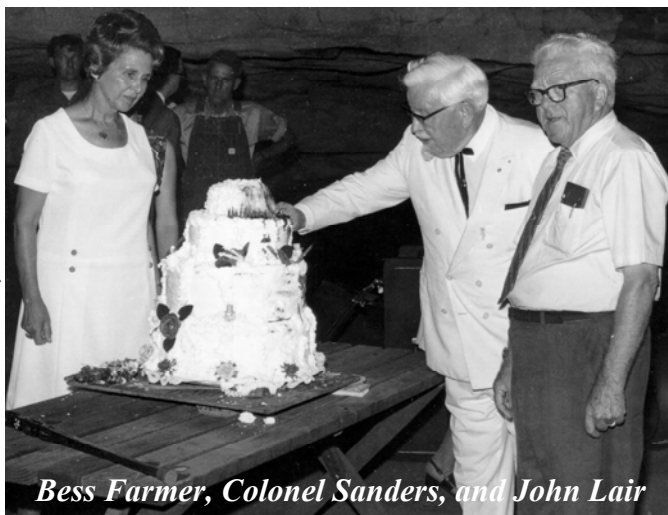
Renfro Valley Bugle

1971

Announcement

To show our appreciation to Mr. John Lair, originator, promoter and former owner of The Renfro Valley Complex, for returning to the management of the Renfro Valley radio programs and the Renfro Valley Bugle after an absence of more than two years, we are honoring him with the celebration of his 77th birthday.

We are joined in this by all the Renfro Valley Folks, his former employees and in order to make it possible for his many radio friends and long time listener to also have a share in this expression of appreciation, we are staging the party at Great Saltpetre Cave, where facilities are adequate for the big crowd expected.



Bess Farmer, Colonel Sanders, and John Lair

Mr. Lair's good friend of long standing, Colonel Harlan Sanders, is taking time off from a busy schedule to make an appearance at the party to preside over a mammoth birthday cake big enough to serve 1,000 people. The Mt. Vernon Junior Chamber of Commerce, through its president, Sammy Ford, will present Mr. Lair with a plaque naming him the outstanding citizen of Rockcastle County. The Renfro Valley entertainers will present continuous stage shows in the big natural theatre inside the cave. All in all, it will be a momentous occasion and we hope Mr. Lair's friends from everywhere will be there to share it with him,

J. Hal Smith
Hank Cochran

GRAND OPENING
Great Saltpetre Cave
SUNDAY, JULY 4

IN CONNECTION WITH JOHN LAIR'S 77th BIRTHDAY PARTY, SPONSORED BY HAL SMITH, HANK COCHRAN AND THE RENFRO VALLEY FOLK.

Colonel Harlan Sanders of Ky. Fried Chicken Fame, will preside over a mammoth birthday cake big enough to serve 1,000 people.

Guided tour of the cave, plus Renfro Valley Folks on the stage in the big Echo Auditorium inside the Cave.

Continuous From One to Five P.M.

Adults \$1.00 - Children 50 cents.

FREE PARKING; FREE PICNIC GROUNDS; FREE PLAYGROUNDS.

BRING THE FAMILY AND SPEND THE DAY WITH US.

Part of the event will be filmed for TV, including real stage coach rides.

GREAT SALTPETRE CAVE IS LOCATED ON RT. 1004, BLACKTOP ALL THE WAY, BEGINNING AT THE INTERSECTION OF US 25 AND I-75 AT MT, VERNON - LIVINGSTON INTERCHANGE, THE CAVE IS 9 MILES EAST OF THIS INTERCHANGE.

Article Courtesy of Renfro Valley Entertainment Center.

Scanning and OCR work done by Andy Niekamp



RENFRO VALLEY BUGLE

Renfro Valley Bugle
Volume 24 – Number 10
July 1971

"Short Cake"

It was made of the ingredients common to any birthday cake, but somebody gave it the name of "Shortcake" when it fell so far short of serving the big crowd in attendance at Mr. Lair's seventy-seventh birthday party and the grand opening of Great Saltpetre Cave on July 4th. The cake referred

to, a huge affair indeed, was baked to serve one thousand people on the long chance that that many people might possibly be there. Nobody had any idea that between thirty-five hundred and four thousand people would show up. By actual count thirty-two hundred had come through the entrance to the grounds at three fifteen in the afternoon, at which time the counting was discontinued. Cars continued to roll in until past 5 p.m. so the estimated total of thirty-five hundred seems low.

True to his promise, Colonel Sanders was there to cut the cake and extend birthday greetings to his old friend. The boys and girls from Renfro Valley, together with some of the old-timers, put on two shows from the big auditorium inside the cave and made the cavern walls ring with "Happy Birthday to You." Hal Smith and Hank Cochran, accompanied by Mrs. Smith, co-owners of Renfro Valley and co-sponsors of the birthday party started the ball rolling with a letter of congratulations for Mr. Lair from Governor Nunn. President and Mrs. Nixon also sent congratulations and Mrs. Lair made one of her rare personal appearances to accept from Colonel Sanders the first piece of the birthday cake and his compliments on her fried

chicken (he had eaten picnic lunch with the Lairs that day) which he gallantly declared was better than his own. The Colonel added quite a bit to the party and in spite of his eighty-one years square-danced with the Renfro Valley entertainers with his usual vim and vigor.

Newspaper and TV coverage was on hand and Associated Press carried the story over a wide area. Estimates were that the crowd was fairly evenly divided between local and out-of-state friends of Mr. Lair. License plates from many Kentucky

counties were in evidence on the parking lot, together with those of nine different states, Iowa, Texas, Virginia, Tennessee, Michigan, Illinois, Alabama, Indiana, Ohio and Canada. Among seventy-seven year-old visitors who helped Mr. Lair blow out the seventy-seven candles was a Miss Brown, from Ontario, who had just finished six thousand miles by bicycle this year.



Mr. Lair asks us to present his sincere thanks to all who helped to make this event possible and to all who by their attendance crowned it with such amazing success.

Article Courtesy of Renfro Valley Entertainment Center.

Scanning and OCR work done by Andy Niekamp



Great Saltpetre Cave's Richard's Run passage. Photo © Nathan Williams

Letter to the Editor (Continued from page 4)

period in our planet's history. It designates the influence of mankind as so significant as to constitute a new [geological era](#).

By and large public consciousness has begun to wake up and see that we should not continue to treat this planet the way we do. But I am afraid the course we are following cannot really be slowed down except by imminent threat or actual occurrence of an enormous catastrophe, probably a biological or environmental one. I'm still waiting for that darn asteroid. The immigration of Europeans washing over this continent obliterated nearly all the Indians and bison and represented one of the many scourges on the environment. Even in present time this behavior continues to threaten the rest of the wildlife, the land, and the ecosystem all in the name of economic growth. I recognize as the population increases, people have to live somewhere. Having driven up and down I-75 for 30 years between Mt. Vernon and Cincinnati, observing the changes, I know this is a fact. There is continual demand for real estate to build more and more and more.

This threat is not everywhere or immediate, thank goodness. Not yet. Having recently been to very remote regions in Utah, 40 mile radius from any town and not seeing another person for a whole day, it was wonderfully pristine. Huge tracts of land have been set aside as National Parks and Forests to tell the public that we, as a nation, care about our scenic and natural beauty. The sprawling malls sell Ansel Adams photos which hang up in our homes, offices, and public spaces. But what about in a 100 years? Yes, I could see these remote places being developed and those photos will become historical reminders of what we once had. This may take many generations just as it has to get where we are now. It is basically limited by water. If there is no water, we can not live or work there on a permanent basis. But as technology develops and we can collect, pipe, tap, filter, or even manufacture water at places we cannot now, then expansion is constrained only by economic factors. "Can we make a profit if we develop here?" The lure of making a fast buck has consistently outweighed the concern for the broader ecosystem. Boundaries of our protected parks, forests, and private properties will be encroached on. It is happening now.

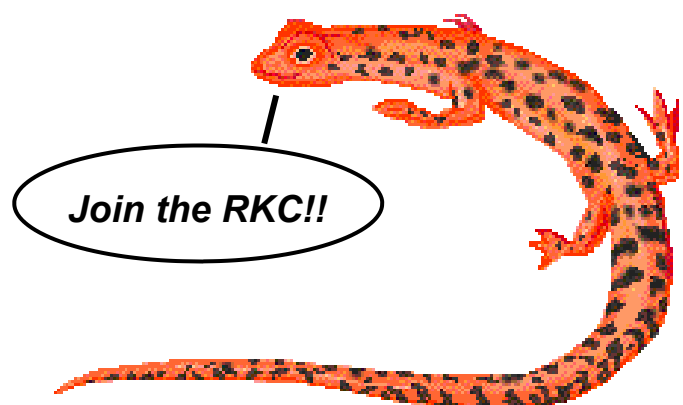
Development and improvement is not inherently evil. I enjoy comfortable shelters, hot water, convenient mode of transportation, and other benefits of modern technology. We all hate to pollute the air but we can't stop driving. We wish we didn't have to eat so much processed foods from factory farms and feed lots but we can't all have organic gardens

or buy from 'Wild Oats.' The distressing aspect is the waste we generate with scarcely a thought or concern about what becomes of it. The human mentally must shift toward less harmful, intrusive, and wasteful methods. With the realization that once reliable resources are reaching a limit, the increased cost and impact in harvesting them, plus the increase in energy demand, the American public is starting to wake up, slowly, about renewable, alternative energy sources. Solar, wind, biofuels, geothermal, and so forth, represent a renaissance in how the general population will be staying warm and comfy. We can build it stronger, faster, and smarter; more efficiently, with more longevity, recycle the waste, and even make it look good. "We have the technology". We have to wean ourselves off the throw-it-away thinking and that means corporations have to stop manufacturing so much disposable crap. What happened to returnable bottles?

In writing this editorial I wish to encourage RKC members and others to look at Karst land acquisition and management in the long term. Cherish what is available. Bring your skills into the mix. If you know how to write grants, if you're looking for a charitable cause, if you know how to raise funds, we need you. We need big picture people and detail oriented people. We need people who like to deal with people and people who like to deal with stuff. Leave your ego at home. This is all about the land and non-human life forms. It's about knowing what to do and when to do it and when to just leave it be. We need people whose hearts are in it and will take ownership of their efforts and see it through. This is how GSP will remain protected and is also the only way RKC will grow and make a difference.

Aldo Leopold, an early conservationist, said in 1949 in the foreword to his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, "In short, a land ethic changes the role of homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it."

Werner G. Jud
November 2007



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 _____

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



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 \$ _____

Make checks payable to the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy.

Mail completed form and payment to:

Rockcastle Karst Conservancy
C/O Alan Leach
2217 Cleneay Ave
Norwood, OH 45212



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.

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RKC Life Member T-Shirt

Green with RKC logo

See membership details for more information.



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