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INTERCOM

Volume 48, Issue 1

January – February 2012

Iowa Grotto

P.O. Box 228

Iowa City, IA 52244

Grotto Website: www.caves.org/grotto/iowa

Coldwater Cave Project website:

<http://www.caves.org/project/coldwater>

Membership Dues: due January 1, \$15.00 per year, includes INTERCOM and Hotline subscriptions. INTERCOM subscriptions only are \$13.00 per year. The Iowa Grotto reserves the right to decline membership during or after a probationary period.

Due Dates: for submission of material for publication in the INTERCOM is March 1st. Send material for publication, e-mail, disk or hard copy to:

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Coordinate photographs for publication in the INTERCOM with Scott Dankof, the INTERCOM editor.

Cave Rescue: Contact the Kentucky Disaster and Emergency Services Central Dispatch at 502-564-7815 for cave emergencies only in the NCRC Central Region of Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Iowa Grotto Meetings: are the fourth Wednesday of each month, third Wednesday in December at 7:30 p.m. in Room 125 or thereabouts of Trowbridge Hall on the campus of the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

Cover Photo: Formations in Kemling Cave. Photo by Scott Dankof.



National Speleological Society

P. O. Box 228

Iowa City, Iowa 52244

Chairman - - - - - Mike Lace
Vice Chairman - - - - - Ed Klausner
Secretary - - - - - Teresa Kurtz
Treasurer - - - - - John Donahue

Volume 48

Issue 1

C O N T E N T S

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C A L E N D A R

2012 Grotto Picnic - (August 3rd thru 5th). To be held at the Brown family private campground in Ozark, Jackson County, IA .

July Grotto Meeting – July 25th, room 125, Trowbridge Hall.

Vertical training session - Sept. 8-9th (Doug Schmuecker needs a minimum of five cavers to attend; contact him at 319-642-7676)

November Grotto meeting - to be held on the fourth wed. (Nov. 28th)

No December Grotto meeting due to the holidays.

Iowa Grotto
Regular Meeting
January 25, 2012

The regular meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Ed Klausner, Vice-Chair, at 7:45pm with eleven (11) members present. Prior to the meeting, Ed Klausner gave a presentation on recent trips to various caves.

Minutes of the November 16, 2011 regular meeting were presented. No additions/comments. The Treasurer's Report was read as follows:

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| General Fund | \$2491.69 |
| Coldwater Fund | \$ 75.85 |
| Petty Cash | \$ 118.60 |

TRIP REPORTS: John Donahue reported on two trips to Mystery Cave. Ed Klausner reported on a trip to Kemling Cave's Land of Oz with Brandy Zinn, Jarrod, Alan, Chris Beck, and Mark Jones. Elizabeth Miller reported on trips to Mammoth Cave (New Discovery) and Fitten Cave (Ozarks)

FUTURE TRIPS: Ongoing survey trips to Mystery Cave. Contact Warren Netherton.

OLD BUSINESS: The 2012 Nominations for Grotto officers is closed. Welcome to Teresa Kurtz (Secretary) and John Donahue (Treasurer). Mike Lace will continue as Chairman; Ed Klausner as Vice-Chairman. Sincere gratitude and appreciation goes to Phil Larue for his many years of service as Iowa Grotto Secretary/Treasurer. Phil ceremoniously relinquished all pertinent records and documents.

Grotto t-shirts are still available. Contact Teresa Kurtz.

NEW BUSINESS: The Grotto Library has been updated and is available in an extensive excel spreadsheet. Contact Ed Klausner (Grotto Librarian) for more information.

Future presentations include: Mike Lace (February) recent expedition caving in the Caribbean; and Joe Dixon (April) bat microclimate data collection and Iowa biospeleology inventory.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Maria Perez announced

she has completed her dissertation and will be relocating to West Virginia.

Welcome to new members Alex and Sasha Zelenski.

Respectfully submitted by Teresa Kurtz, Secretary

Iowa Grotto
Regular Meeting
February 23, 2012

The regular meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Mike Lace, Chair at 7:55 pm with 10 members present. Prior to the meeting, M. Lace presented on expeditions to Haiti and Barbados in December 2011. Minutes of the January 25, 2012 regular meeting were presented with no additions/corrections. The Treasurer's Report was read with no additions/corrections.

TRIP REPORTS: (Submit detailed trip reports to Scott Dankof for inclusion in the Intercom publication)

John Donahue reported on a survey in Mystery Cave with John Lovaas, Jason Rogers, and Jeff Brandon. Ed Klausner, Elizabeth Miller, Chris Beck, and Jeanette surveyed in Carlsbad Caverns and attended the Carlsbad Grotto meeting.

Joe Dixon reported on a bat survey with Alex and Sasha Zelinski at Indian Bluff Cave.

Mike Lace described expeditions to Haiti (16 caves), Barbados (45 caves), Puerto Rico, and Coldwater. Others attending the Coldwater trip were Jason Rogers (and his mom) and John Lovaas.

FUTURE TRIPS: Mystery Cave, MN—February 25. Contact Warren Netherton for ongoing survey trips. Bat Survey scheduled for March 3—last one of the season. Coldwater—March 17

OLD BUSINESS: The Grotto picnic will be held the first weekend in August (3-5) in Jackson County.

There is some small cave work that needs to be done; work in Clayton County offers vertical opportunity.

NEW BUSINESS: Ed Klausner mentioned the spread of Whitenose into Ohio and

Kentucky.

The July/August and September/October issues of the Intercom were distributed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Liz Robinson mentioned the upcoming musical "Bat Boy" will be on stage at Augustana College, Rock Island in May.

The 2012 NSS Convention is scheduled for June 25-29 in Lewisburg, WV.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by Teresa Kurtz, Secretary.

National Cave and Karst Resource Management Symposium

Timpanogoes Cave National Monument,
Utah.

October 2011

Dawn Ryan

I have been remiss about writing trip reports - school and work and WNS issues, I suppose. But of note this past year I did attend the cave and karst symposium and would recommend this to anyone involved in cave management. Many talks were presented on different issues such as hydrology, public caves, WNS and I presented a talk on the role interpretation plays in cave protection. My main theme was discussing educating the public about the public lands, caves in particular, that they must make decisions about how to protect. The symposium was the entire week. I also attended a Project Underground class that gave different ideas about how to teach school kids about karst and caves. This same class will be given at this year's convention and again, I would recommend this to anyone who comes in contact with the public and wants to teach about cave resources. While at the symposium we had the opportunity to swim in a mudpot, drink beer aptly named for Utah (Evolution Ale and Polygamy Porter), and attended several field trips to a beautiful karst spring, Timpanogos cave and after the symposium I went with some local cavers to Blowhole Cave. Blowhole cave is right next to

Nutty Putty Cave, a cave no longer open and is the grave of a young man who died while trapped last year. I've never rappelled into an extinct geyser and couldn't miss this opportunity. After descending 450 on a rope and doing two change overs along the way and climbing out successfully on rope, I was awarded the Muddy Levi award!



Blowhole Cave entrance. Photo by Dawn Ryan.



Formations in Timpanogos Cave. Photo by Dawn Ryan.

Clough Cave Restoration

Sequoia National Park, CA
October 2011, January 2012 and April 2012

Joel Despain and Dawn Ryan and many cavers from the area.

Clough Cave has been a heavily visited cave through much of Sequoia National Park's history. There are old documents by Walter Fry, the first civilian superintendant in 1914 that tell of his desire to commercialize the cave. But Crystal Cave was discovered and his attention turned to that cave. However, Clough cave was left open for people to visit on their own, and because of this visitation the cave has been extremely vandalized. The formations in this cave looked at one time to be impressive but there are only broken and cut off formations now. A gate was installed in the 1980's but the gate has been vandalized over and over again. So this last spring, cavers from the area came up to the park and installed a second gate. It was quite the effort getting the gate material across the river with pulley and ropes rigged but they did a great job.

We returned this week in October to do a bat and invertebrate count and clean up the years of garbage left behind by partiers and visitors. I spent the first day with a couple of cavers who helped me "biologise" as Joel calls it. In spite of the heavy vandalism, the cave is very diverse. We found brackenridgea, a type of isopod, centipedes, springtails and an endemic scorpion. I've attached photos here. During the evening we sat at the entrance and did a bat count. Historic records indicated at least 200 bats used this cave but today we only counted 5 bats. There is hope that with this new double gate on the entrance and less disturbance the populations will return to the past numbers. It doesn't mean that no one will get to visit the cave. There are plans to allow supervised visitation in the summer except for during

the time in the summer when the Townsend Big Eared bats reproduce and during winter hibernation. Some cavers at the campground served us dinner provided by the park to the volunteers.

The next day we all helped pick up garbage from the cave. We picked up buckets of garbage, broken glass, beer cans and some things you don't even want to know about.

I returned to Clough Cave to continue the bat monitoring and found 7 bats this month- January 2012. We also did an inventory. And with the help of some volunteer cavers, we were able to photo-document some of the animals with a camera that has a macro lens. This is really useful in putting a face, so to speak, with the animal. These animals are tiny; often looking like tiny white specks and for some caving regions are not given much attention by the local cavers. Through these photos, the hope is that awareness is raised and that cavers will begin to appreciate these animals that are our neighbors and we don't realize it.

Our April bat inventory produced the same number of bats - 7.



Scorpion specimen. Photo by Dawn Ryan.

Ozark National Scenic Riverways
January 2012

By Ed Klausner

Scott House (CRF Ozarks Operations Manager) invited cavers to a meeting in Powder Mill Research Station to discuss the funding situation in the federal parks and to both survey and monitor caves in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways. Quite a few cavers responded and it looked like it was going to be a productive weekend.

The park does not have the personnel to monitor their resources and the Cave Research Foundation has an agreement with the park to monitor and survey caves in the park. With additional cuts in the federal budget, they are even more dependent on our help.

I met Scott a day early so we could spend an additional day monitoring caves. We spent the day in the south east portion of the park in the Tunnel Bluff vicinity. There are a cluster of 8 caves that we monitored. The bats were all healthy and we found Big Brown, Indiana, Pipistrell, and Northern Long Eared bats. The amazing thing to me is that there are vast areas that we passed on the way to the caves THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN RIDGE-WALKED! During the next several days, Scott pointed out many more areas that have, again, never been ridge-walked.

By the evening, several more people showed up and on Saturday, there were multiple trips going to monitor caves. Scott led a trip to Bear Hollow. Jim Cooley led another. Max White, Jon Beard, Robert Kramer, Eric Hertzler and I went to Jam Up Cave. We had no trouble finding Jam Up cave although there was no trail to it. Jam Up has 3 entrances. The upstream entrance is only enterable for a few feet before it sumps. The middle sinkhole entrance was our first stop and we counted a number of healthy bats. There is a drop into a pool of water separating the middle area from the downstream bluff entrance area

that makes it much easier to reach the downstream section from that entrance. That is, easier in the summer as the 130 foot high entrance is only accessible by either wading in the Jacks Fork River or using a canoe.

On Sunday, several of us went to Bluff Cave, a short walk from the Powder Mill Research Center. Mick Sutton, Sue Hagan, Robert Kramer and Ken Grush monitored bats while Andy Free, Kayla New and I followed them and then surveyed down a side passage towards a constriction followed by a 25 foot deep pit. Spike Crews and Vida Lux took vertical gear and followed us to drop the pit and survey the passage beyond. Spike and Vida returned to Bluff Cave the following day as well. There is still more to survey.

On Monday, Scott, Don Dunham and I went to the northwest corner of the park to monitor caves in the area. We monitored McDonald Cave, Wallace Cave, Anderson Cave and Jug Cave. Anderson was interesting in that it was both wet and very muddy. We found about 60 healthy bats and a huge guano pile, about 5 feet high.



Photo by Ed Klausner.



Max White in the entrance of Jam up Cave, Mo. Photo by Ed Klausner.

Stemler Cave

December 17, 2011

Aaron Addison, Bob Weck, Dan Lamping,
John Lovaas and Dawn Ryan

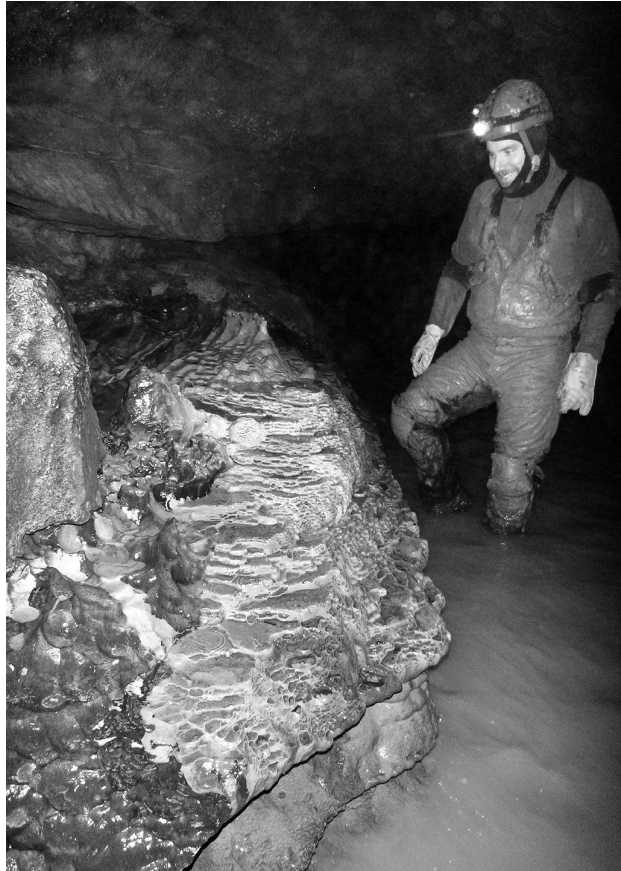
This weeks caving trip went much better than the Mystery Cave survey and I actually feel a little redeemed. Stemler Cave is located in Monroe County, Illinois; just south of St. Louis, Missouri. If you aren't familiar with Monroe County it is famous for its sinkhole plain. In some areas there are over 20 sink holes per square mile and Stemler Cave is in this area. The owner of the property, Bob Weck, is very nice and is interested in his cave; he even initiated the survey of it. He has gone to quite a bit of effort to protect the cave putting it into the Illinois State Natural Areas program.

I changed into my wetsuit in Bob's barn and was entertained by one of Bob's very friendly cats. Before entering the cave Bob and Aaron decided they were going to do some ridge walking on the neighbors' property. John, Dan and I would go into the cave and continue with a previous survey. Stemler reminds me of a smaller version of Coldwater Cave in Iowa. There is a stream running through the main trunk passage with some nice formations of different colors. It is all easy walking passage too just like Coldwater. There are also the muddy and slimy smaller side passages, again just like Coldwater. The only difference is that the entrance of Stemler is through a sinkhole that is filled with the usual debris of logs and other organic debris that you would normally find in sinks; this cave floods often from what Dan described. As we climbed down the sinkhole Dan described just how much the entrance has changed from the last flood event; heavy logs had been moved to other locations. The cave goes under the road and as we walked we passed many domes above us. One dome Bob described to us had broken toilet porcelain that he cleaned up. Apparently someone had dropped their old toilet into the sinkhole and it fell into the middle of the cave passage and shattered. Bob also told us a story of how he had pulled out several large tractor or truck tires from his entrance and tried to find a place that disposes of tires in a responsible manner. Bob told us it was difficult to find a place that would take them, with one shop asking him, "why not just drop them down a sinkhole?" It seems there is still much work to be done educating folks about ground water and recharge areas.

We arrived at the previous station and began our survey. I pulled tape and read back shots; John did front shots while Dan sketched. Our first shot was over 30 feet and came to a dog leg curve in the passage and quickly got very low in the water. While Dan sketched I poked my head up

the passage as far as I could laying in the water, it was silted so much it wasn't passable but did continue if we could only get through this spot. Dan caught up with his sketching and came to look too. John and I had wetsuits on but Dan did not. The passage was close to 30 feet of laying flat in water and if Dan went through it, he wouldn't last long for getting cold from being soaked. We discussed our options and Dan said, "Let's go where no man has gone before." And so the decision was made to dig out the silt and try to continue the survey beyond. And besides, Dan said, he has a shovel with him. For some reason, I had the idea he had a folding shovel in his pack but no, he pulled out a small orange trowel. But being optimistic, he showed me just how well the little trowel worked. Dan lay in the water and began digging and made some progress until he was too cold. I went next and got about half way through, then John dug some more. Dan then shoveled some more and pushed ahead and finally made it to the other side. Dan returned and confirmed that the passage did indeed continue on. So we continued the survey. I grabbed the tape, laid down flat in the water and pushed through the low, flat passage. The mud was slippery, which really helped but the water was deep and with no way to lift my head any higher, it was scraping on the ceiling as it was, half of my face was under water and one nostril and eye above water but I made it to the other side. We measured just over 30 feet. While I was waiting for the others, I got the chance to look around and noticed cave adapted amphipods wiggling by in the water and an empty turtle shell in the middle of the passage. It was John's turn to try to get through but he wasn't able to squeeze through the tightest spot. And Dan, without a wetsuit, didn't want to continue lying in the water, so I came back. We'll have to come back with wetsuits another time and continue the survey. I was trying to be optimistic when I said, "Hey at

least we got more footage than last week and we got into virgin passage." Dan looked at me and rolled his eyes as that wasn't comforting. I know, I said, virgin passage...been there, done that.



Dan Lamping in Stemler Cvae. Photo by Dawn Ryan.

The Land of Oz

Kemling Cave, Dubuque County, Iowa
By Ed Klausner
Jared Allen, Chris Beck, Mark Jones,
Ed Klausner, Larry Welch and Brandi Zinn

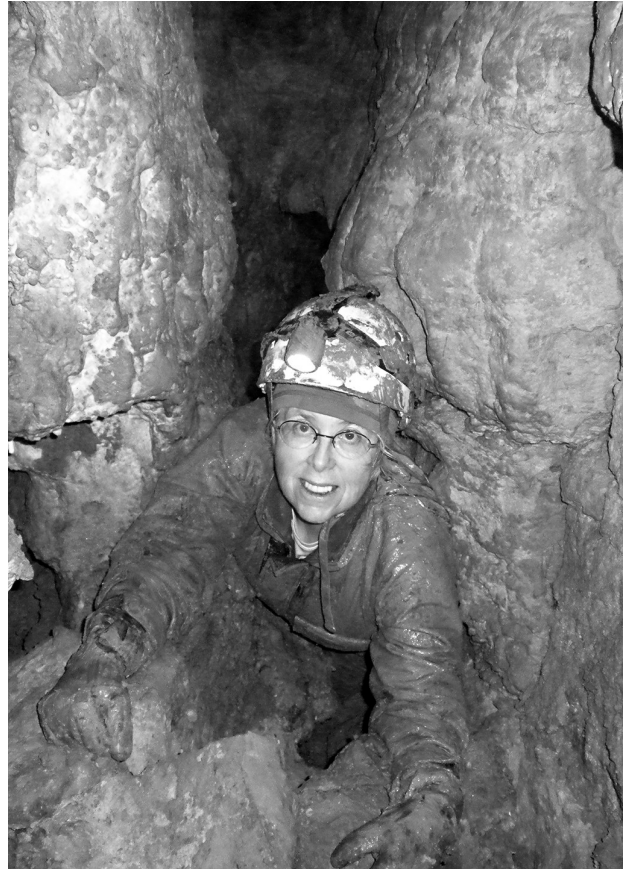
Since it has been an unusually warm and dry winter, Chris made plans for an assault on the Land of Oz in Kemling Cave. We had enough for two survey crews. Larry brought several radon detectors that we placed in the

cave that will be picked up later by Chris so Larry can determine the radon levels in the cave at various locations.

Jared, Chris, Mark, Brandi and I made our way towards the Land of Oz and weren't slowed down much by the pre dip, just before the bridge. It was wet, but not sumped. The Whippy Dip was the worst we've seen it, over a foot deep of liquid mud. Chris lost his headlight in the mud (later found by Mark) and Mark temporarily lost his pack as well. Getting through the Whippy Dip made it easier to slide through the tight tube just beyond as we were slimed and able to slip through the tube. We quickly got to the "T" junction at the south end of the Land of Oz.

Here, we split up. Chris and Mark went to the left (east) to cross the pit and survey what had already been seen. Jared, Brandi and I went right (west) because this area had good air when Brandi, Elizabeth Miller and I stopped our survey there on a previous trip. The air was even stronger this time. After two shots, the passage was too low to continue without doing some digging. It was actually cold from the air movement.

Since we needed vertical gear to join Chris and Mark, we headed out. Chris and Mark surveyed 217 feet bringing out total to less than a hundred feet shy of 2 miles. That will be easy to get as there are several hundred feet left to survey where Chris and Mark were, plus the survey that needs to be done in the Elbow Crusher passage. John Donahue also knows of a lead in the southern portion of the Land of Oz and there are numerous cross joints that appear to have surveyable passage in the main passage heading south in the Land of Oz. Of course, if the western passage with good air is dug open, that could be a major extension of the cave.



Elizabeth Miller in a muddy part of Kemling Cave. Photo by Ed Klausner.



Bacon formation, Kemling Cave. Photo by Scott Dankof.



The survey crew that discovered The Land Of Oz. Photo by Ed Klausner



Formations in Kemling Cave. Photo by Scott Dankof.