The New IO Newsletter

This new newsletter format is aimed at helping the leadership of the internal organizations know and share what the NSS is working on at the national level. Hopefully providing you with the ability to brief your membership on what the NSS is doing for them, and keeping you in the know.

NSS Volunteer Opportunities

- The NSS is always looking for more volunteers. If you're interested in getting more involved with the organization, there are almost endless opportunities. There is a new web-link to look at the biggest needs here. For additions or help with this webpage, please contact cindy@caves.org. Additional information can be found at: https://caves.org/info/volunteer.shtml

NSS Headquarters Updates

- The NSS had two more donations for the Patron of the Arts Program, which continues to make the HQ a more inviting space.
- Work has been completed to get the museum cases that were purchased earlier this year, stocked and ready for display.

NSS Leadership

- The NSS BoG selected a New Operations Vice-Chairman, Maureen Handler, at its fall 2019 meeting. She is available for contact ovp@caves.org.
- Kristine Ebrey was selected as the new NSS Secretary/Treasurer effective at the Spring NSS board meeting. She will be replacing Gaylene Speaeect who has served for many years in that position. Gaylene has worked tirelessly to implement the movement of the NSS to the QuickBooks accounting system.
- Jason Ballensky was confirmed as the chair of the US Exploration Committee and Amanda Willis was confirmed as the chair of the NSS Public Relations Division.

What can the NSS do for you?

Did you know? NSS Liability Insurance coverage extends to all I/O’s and affiliated organizations. The NSS Insurance Committee recommends that all grottoes and internal organizations ensure liability waivers are signed by both members and participants on caving trips, vertical training, or events. This is particularly important if the trip includes minors. Local organizations need to maintain a file of properly signed waivers. For more info contact Ted Kays, Insurance Committee Chairman.
The Hawai‘i Grotto

The Hawai‘i Grotto has some exciting things happening waaaay out west. First in a very interesting offer, they have offered that NSS members may join the grotto free. For information on this, send an email to membership chair Kim Fedrick, kfdrck@gmail.com, stating you want to be a member and include your NSS number. Also, they are getting ready to celebrate Hawaii Cave Week, January 26th to February 2nd, 2020. Goals of the Hawai‘i Grotto include encouraging cavers to participate in speleological endeavors on the island, which consist of cave research, conservation, and management. By far, the most significant lava cave site in the world, Hawaii Island is an ideal place for cavers to study and explore the many exceptional caves. Some cavers own property and even live close to these caves on the Island. Cave programs, a banquet, and a party are scheduled by the Hawai‘i Grotto before the first weekend in February 2020. Opportunities to help during one afternoon with invasive plant removal on Cave Conservancy property is an example of a conservation activity. There will also be cave trips in the recently caver acquired caves that are now open to cavers for the first time in many years. They are looking for more cavers to help advance speleology and cave conservation in Hawaii. More info can be found from jmwgeo@gmail.com.

NSS Preserve—Spotlight—Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve

Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve is located in Sinking Valley, Blair County, Pennsylvania, between the cities of Tyrone and Altoona (hence the name). This preserve was the ninth nature preserve owned by the NSS. Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve, containing 6.8 acres of property, was purchased in 1997.

The first 1000 feet of passage offers easy caving for both young and old. As a well-known natural landmark, Tytoona attracts it's own publicity. This cave has an exceptionally attractive entrance. Along with the photogenic qualities of the landscape, it's a popular site for cavers, conservationists, and others.

This past year, the location saw a number of improvements, including some stairs maintenance descending into its sinkhole entrance and some graffiti removal.

For access and more information contact the Preserve Management Committee Chair: Garrett Czmore at tytoonacommittee@caves.org