



Hello again all, I want to thank everyone for the support I received in my election last year. Over the course of my first term, I learned a great deal about the inner workings of the NSS. From the outside, the board can appear to some as an obtuse governing body, as ineffective, or even to be hiding its goals from the membership. In reality, the Board of Governors is a dedicated group of volunteers who give their time to try to make our society better. To be an effective member of the board you have to enter into the role selflessly, with the sincere hope to steer the NSS into a better position. This is why I am involved and why I ask you for your support again this year. I also ask you to consider this component of the job as you select the candidates you support. Carol

Tideman, who is also running this year, has spent countless hours bettering the society, and we on the board benefit greatly from her institutional knowledge.

Last year, I spoke about answering “what does the NSS do for me?” In recent months, that question has been voiced frequently by members. Fundamentally, as I’ve tried answering that to various cavers over the past year, I’ve come to realize that it is a flawed question. When I joined the NSS, I felt that my membership dues were going to improve cave conservation, education, and access. I see my volunteer hours to the organization the same way. The NSS is, and should remain, the world leader in cave and karst education, conservation, and protection. Everything I do is in support of that mission. How do we get members to see that to be a member of the NSS is to be steward of cave conservation as well as a constant advocate for cave access?

To me, that answer lies in educational outreach. In the last year, the NSS educational department has blossomed under new leadership. I have been fortunate to be involved with the inception of the Cave Preservation Network and am excited to continue to see that program grow.

In my first term as Director, I was elected by my peers to serve as Chair of the Directorate on a platform of cohesion and continuity. This places the Strategic Planning Committee under my purview. This committee is working to redefine how the NSS governance can best be structured to serve our society. As those important answers begin emerging, I will remain involved to ensure that we blend our future plans with our rich history.

My greatest impact over the last year has been as Co-chair of the Internal Organizations Committee. Our committee has worked to better serve the most important asset of our community: the grottos, surveys, sections, and regions. These local microcosms are the NSS boots on the ground, carrying out our mission nationwide. We have dedicated hundreds of hours optimizing how information gets from the NSS to every single grotto. I am most excited about our new initiative, the relaunch of “Find a Grotto”. In the coming months, there will be a seamless process for every IO to login and update their information, for every member or nonmember to find a grotto near them. To me, this is the most important thing the NSS can do for you: connecting you to a local subsidiary of the NSS to further our mission.

Ultimately, going caving should always take priority over talking about caves. While my commitment to the NSS takes up most of my above-ground time, I still find time to project cave. In the last year, I’ve worked in Great-X in Wyoming, Fort Stanton in New Mexico, Blowhole in Tennessee, and numerous South Dakota Caves. I am excited to participate in international expeditions this coming summer.

Communication continues to be important to me. I've already had the opportunity to help many cavers one-on-one and will continue to do so. I am readily available to support the most essential part of our organization: the members. I might not always know the answers, but I will work endlessly to find someone who does. I am always happy to talk caving so please feel free to reach out to me anytime at [anderson@caves.org](mailto:anderson@caves.org) or at 507-640-0073.