

[Link to Comms Division 26/27 operational goals](#)

Division Team:

Department	Team	Name
Division Head		Jolene Creighton
Media & Marketing	Marketing	Marketing Manager (starts 9/28/2026)
	Social Media	Social Media Manager (VACANT)
		Holly McClintock = FB Community Manager
	Website Dept	Pete Johnson = Website Lead
	Email & Newsletter Dept	Jay Mrazek = Newsletter Lead
Publications	NSS News	Adam Weaver = Production & Managing Editor
		Sarah Marquart = Editor
		April Gocha = Spelean Spotlight
		Jim Kennedy = Underground Update Editor
	Journal of Cave & Karst Studies	Scott Engel = Editor-in-Chief & Production Editor
	American Caving Accidents	Adia Sovie
	Special Publications	Special Pubs Manager (VACANT)
		Dave Bunnell = Layout & design

Communications Division Report:

Division Chair: Jolene Creighton, jcreighton@caves.org

The Communications Division oversees Media & Marketing, Publications, and Partnerships (and the respective committees that fall under these categories). The following is a synopsis of the top-level Communications Division progress and issues.

- **Progress**
 - Developed [a plan](#) for paid positions and tasks vs volunteer positions and tasks within the division and a compensation framework approved by former ED
 - Finished filling the Marketing Manager position (part time, freelance role). Start date 9/28
 - Created variety of content since Marketing lead not onboarded – TAG Cave-In ad, IDCK content, etc.
 - Started rewriting the Social Media Policy governing the NSS Facebook Community with community moderators
- **Plans**
 - Will onboard the new Marketing Manager next week and begin handing off day-to-day content tasks to focus more on high-level division needs i.e. sourcing production assistance with JCKS and similar tasks
- **Problems**
 - Filling the Communications Specialist role is delayed until the Marketing manager joins and can help with the JD and source candidates

Report of the Social Media Committee:

Social Media Manager: (Vacant)

FB Community Lead: Holly McClintock, hollymcclintock.caves@gmail.com

Chair position vacant. None submitted

Report of the Special Publications Committee:

Special Pubs Manager: Vacant

- **Progress**

- Scott Engel stepped down as Production Lead. Jolene Creighton stepped in to fill this role as we look for a new volunteer.
- Scott is drafting a list of all current projects
- Met with "On Rope" team to discuss progress + distribution plans regarding print vs digital

- **Plans**

- Need to find new volunteer to manage special pubs

Report of the Email Committee:

Chair: Jay Mrazek, jay@caves.org

Editor: Sarah Marquart, smarquart@caves.org

- **Progress:**

- The NSS monthly newsletter continues to grow. The newsletter gained 244 subscribers over the past three months, bringing the total email subscription list to 11,486 members.
- This quarter, the newsletter averaged a 36.7% open rate and a 5.4% click-through rate. Both metrics have trended upward since the newsletter's launch in February 2025, indicating continued growth in audience engagement.

- **Plans:**

- The newsletter will continue to be distributed monthly, typically during the first week of each month.
- The newsletter team will continue coordinating with the NSS BoG, publications team, other volunteers, and NSS employees to highlight important updates and relevant information for members.
- Directors are encouraged to submit announcements, short updates, and relevant images for inclusion by emailing Jay Mrazek (jay@caves.org) by the first of the month.

- **Problems:**

- While subscriber growth and engagement metrics are promising, there is continued opportunity to increase engagement with the full subscriber base. Approximately one-third of subscribers regularly open the monthly emails, while approximately 5% click to interact with newsletter content. The newsletter team will continue exploring ways to provide useful, timely, and engaging content that encourages members to remain subscribed and interact with the newsletter.

Report of the JCKS Committee:

Editor-in-Chief: Malcolm Field, fieldmalcolm1@gmail.com

Production Editor: Scott Engel, sengel@caves.org

- **Progress**
 - Finished transitioning all copyediting and CrossRef work to KGL + established new SOPs to govern future production
 - Published the latest issue of JCKS in June 2026
 - Met with Sharon Weaver about assisting with production and review
- **Plans**
 - Continue conversations with interested parties about assisting with production work
- **Problems**
 - There was some slow down as we transitioned work to KGL, but now that the new operating procedures are established the publication process should increase in speed and efficiency

Report of the NSS News Committee:

Managing Editor: Adam Weaver, adam@caves.org

Editor: Sarah Marquart, srmarquart@gmail.com

Spelean Spotlight Editor: April Gocha, april.sandy.gocha@gmail.com

Underground Update Editor: Jim Kennedy, cavercrash@gmail.com

- **Progress**
 - The NSS News team has announced several changes to the publication planned for 2027, based in part on member feedback gathered at the

2026 NSS Convention:

- Beginning in 2027, each issue will have a specific theme to help guide content development and encourage contributors to submit stories, features, and other material that align with upcoming issues. Recurring columns, including Spelean Spotlight, Underground Update, Spelean History, and Society News, will continue to appear throughout the year.
- The 2027 editorial calendar is set, with themes covering American and international exploration, conservation, showcaves, science and techniques, the NSS Convention, and other topics. The calendar will be published in each issue to help contributors plan and target submissions.
- The editorial team has also clarified obituary submission guidelines. Standard obituaries will be limited to 250 words and one photograph, while expanded obituaries will be reserved for past members who have received certain high-level Society honors or served as President of the NSS or UIS.

● Plans

- The editorial team will begin implementing the new themed-issue structure for 2027, aiming to create a more cohesive and polished publication while continuing to provide a broad range of content for members.
- The team will work with contributors and partner organizations on several planned feature issues, including the June showcaves issue and the April conservation issue.
- The editorial team will continue communicating upcoming themes and submission guidelines to encourage timely contributions and help contributors develop content that aligns with planned issues.
- The new obituary guidelines will be implemented beginning with 2027 issues, with the News staff working with contributors to place expanded obituaries in issues where they are most relevant.

● Problems

- The shift to a themed-issue structure will require changes to how content is solicited, organized, and assembled, and the editorial team will need to balance themed content with recurring columns and other material readers expect.
- The success of the new approach will depend in part on receiving sufficient submissions that align with each month's theme and on

contributors having enough advance notice to prepare appropriate material.

Report of the ACA Committee:

Chair: Adia Sovie, aca@caves.org

- **Progress**

- The ACA Committee has finished collating accident reports for the 2023-2024 report and is prepared for publication in January 2027.

- **Plans**

- Ahead of the January issue, the ACA Committee is working with Adam Weaver to publish an article in the *NSS News* highlighting the accident review process and providing guidance on preparing and submitting an incident report.
- The committee is seeking submissions for themed articles to supplement this future ACA issue.

- **Problems**

- Andy Armstrong, Sarah Richards, and Brian Dickey stepped down from the committee this year, leaving several vacancies. The committee is working to identify and recruit replacement members.