

**National Speleological Society
Department of the Executive Vice President
Board of Governors Meeting
St. Augustine, Florida
October 27, 2012**

The Department of the Executive Vice President is composed of the thirteen committees listed below. The contact information for each committee can be found in the NSS Members Manual or on the internet at www.caves.org

Department of the Executive Vice President

- (1) AAA Representative Biology**
- (2) AAA Representative Geology**
- (3) AGI Delegate**
- (4) American Cave Accident Committee**
- (5) Exploration Committee International**
- (6) Exploration Committee U.S.**
- (7) Journal of Cave and Karst Studies Committee**
- (8) Marketing Analysis Committee**
- (9) Members Manual Committee**
- (10) NSS News Committee**
- (11) Research Advisory Committee**
- (12) Special Publications Committee**
- (13) Speleo Digest Committee**

This report contains the Executive Vice President's actions and activities followed by the reports from each committee listed in the order they appear from one to thirteen. All of the reports from the committee are entered as received unless otherwise noted. At the end of each committee report will be the EVP comment.

Report from the Executive Vice President

This is my first time to report as your new Executive Vice President of the NSS. I have always thought of the NSS not just as a Society but a family and I will do my best to serve in this position.

Making contact with everyone in the EVP Department was the first item on my list. It is a must to have good communication and even though I did know many of the people within all of the committees there were others I did not know yet. Gathering all of the reports was a very good introduction into what is working or not working with all of the committees in the department. Being new at the job I may not have all of the answers but I have good resources and I will get back to those who contact me even if it is just to say I don't know but I will find out and reply.

We have a very good collection of committee members volunteering their time and effort so I want to be there when or if they need me. Thanks to everyone who has helped me with the learning curve and for this job and here

Respectfully submitted;



Bob Vandeventer
Executive Vice President
National Speleological Society
(317) 625-3592
evp@caves.org

(1) AAA Representative Biology Dr. Kathleen Lavoie

Progress: I did attend the NSS Convention in West VA. Memorable. Working to help get the word out about publishing opportunities in *Biospeleology Notes*.

Plans; Will attend the ICP next summer.

Problems: None.

EVP Comment. None needed. All is under control here.

**(2) AAA Representative Geology
Dr. Art Palmer**

As described in my letter of Sept 23, and on the phone just now, there's little of importance to report to the Board concerning the NSS-AAAS liaison (AAAS = American Association for the Advancement of Science).

I have been collecting information on cave-related organizational activities by AAAS (none to speak of this year), plus relevant articles in their publication Science. Science contains frequent mention of caves, generally related to archeology or paleontology, and less commonly about karst processes and environmental impact. I collect these items for future reference and will be reporting periodically in the NSS News (for "In the Media") whenever there's something special that merits mention.

In the meantime I've been looking for NSS members who are not only qualified for AAAS fellow, but also interested in applying for fellowship. No luck this past year.

EVP Comment. I had a very interesting phone call with Art. It was good to talk with him and all is well here also

**(3) AGI Delegate
Dave Decker**

No new update. No problems

EVP Comment None needed

**(4) American Caving Accident Committee
Bonny Armstrong, Editor**

American Caving Accidents Committee Report for the October 2012 NSS BOG Meeting

submitted by:

Bonny Armstrong – Editor

NSS#43003RL

110 Timber Lakes Estates

Heber City, UT

480-861-1807

bonnyarmstrong@gmail.com

Progress - 2011-2012 Issue: Summaries of 2011 and current 2012 incidents are complete. There are 36 reported incidents for 2011, 35 incidents for 2012, and 6 previously unreported incidents.

Review Committee: The review committee consisting of Andy Armstrong, Richard Breisch, George Dasher, Ray Keeler, Mark Minton, Rene Ohms, Yvonne Droms, Forrest Wilson, Stephen Mosberg, and Jeff Bartlett continue to be a great help to the editor. Committee members have assisted with researching and writing summaries for incidents, translating incidents from foreign language sources, offering cave diving and medical expertise to the analyses, and proof reading.

Website: The current ACA web page has been cleaned up a bit and reorganized; outdated and incorrect items have been deleted. The list of reported incidents for 2011 and 2012 is now updated. Alex Sproul has uploaded copies of every ACA issue ever produced to the new Members Page on the NSS website.

Plans – Next Issue: Progress for the 2011-2012 issue is going as planned and publication of the issue is expected for April 2013. The editor is currently soliciting submissions for one or two feature articles for the issue. Jeff Bartlett is designing a new layout for the publication and the editor has been in contact with Bob Vandeventer regarding publishing.

Website: The editor will be soliciting help to upgrade the ACA website by redesigning the overall look, bringing the incident reports up to date, and adding new features. While the new webmaster is quite capable of adding material, a person with web design experience is needed. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

Outreach: Through various media such as Cave Chat, internet groups, word of mouth, and possibly an NSS News article, an effort will be made to encourage more cavers to submit incident reports to the ACA. This committee strongly believes that sharing of reports and experiences, along with comments, analyses, editorials, and articles on caving safety and accident prevention, will make all ACA readers safer cavers – our primary goal in producing every issue of ACA. The editor would also like to make ACA issues available to the general public via the NSS website.

Problems – The 2009-2010 issue has experienced a long delay in going to print. It was recently reassigned to Tom Rea who should have it ready for print in December 2012. An NSS member recently contacted the editor regarding an incident report submitted through the webpage but was not recorded on the list of incidents. A search of the aca@caves.org emails revealed no report. It is hoped that this was due to human error during the submission process. Testing of the on-line incident report form reveals no problems.

EVP Comment Thanks to everyone involved in getting this project finished. This was one of the top items when I entered the EVP Position.

**(5) Exploration Committee International
Jole Despain**

No new update. No problems

EVP Comment None needed

**(6) Exploration Committee U.S.
Thomas Shifflett**

No new update. No problems

EVP Comment None needed

(7) Journal of Cave and Karst Studies
Malcolm Fields, Editor

Malcolm Field, Editor, 26915FE
National Center for Environmental Assessment (8623P)
Office of Research and Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460-0001
Work: (703) 347-8601
Fax: (703) 347-8692
Home: (301) 349-5712
field.malcolm@epa.gov

Scott Engel (Production Editor)
CH2M HILL
2095 Lakeside Centre Way, Suite 200
Knoxville, Tennessee 37922 Direct: (865) 560-2954
Cell: (225) 281-3914
scott.engel@ch2m.com

BOARD OF EDITORS:

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Progress: The August 2012 issue of *Journal* was only mildly late getting published because our Production Editor, Scott Engel, needed to deal with the death of his Grandmother. After the problems created by Erin Lynch, we can finally state that the *Journal* is back on schedule; credit belongs with Scott Engel.

We are continuing to receive high-quality manuscripts for consideration for publication in the *Journal* at a fairly high frequency. We also have several manuscripts working their way through the system. Our backlog appears never ending; actually it appears to be growing because the *Journal* is so well respected now. More and more authors want to get published in the *Journal* and this will continue as our *Journal* “impact factor” increases.

All this reflects very positively on the *Journal* from a scientific standpoint and on the efforts of the editors and reviewers. However, to control costs, *Journal* scientific-quality standards are continually being tightened, and the number of manuscripts published per issue are being kept to a maximum of about just five or six, depending on the number of total pages. Such a small number of published manuscripts will not alleviate our backlog. Moving more articles to EOP prior to their being ready for actual publication in an issue remains the only viable method for alleviating our backlog, but this option cannot be utilized effectively without finding a trustworthy assistant for Scott.

Plans: We plan to begin collaborating with EBSCO who will be providing free advertising for the *Journal*. EBSCO freely provides content access to targeted audiences, which could help us attract additional readers. Benefits are (1) Over 100,000 libraries worldwide to at least one EBSCOhost database, (2) Surveys of librarians show that high usage of publications on databases yields increased subscriptions and renewals, and (3) Detailed publisher profiles within EBSCO resources include a live link to the publisher’s website, driving business back to the publisher.

Permissions: Melissa Francis was granted permission to include

Hung, L.Q., Dinh, N.Q., Batelaan, O., Tam, V.T. and Lagrou, D., 2002, Remote sensing and GIS-based analysis of cave development in the Suoimuoi Catchment (Son La - NW Vietnam), *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*, v. 64, no. 1, p. 23–33.

in an institutional repository, the Flinders Academic Commons
<<http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/dspace/>>.

Dave Decker was granted permission to use a preprint of:

Shelley, V., Kaiser, S., Shelley, E., Williams, T., Kramer, M., Haman, K., Keel, K., and Barton H. A., 2012, Evaluation of Strategies for the Decontamination of Equipment for *Geomyces destructans*, the Causative Agent of White-Nose Syndrome (WNS), *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*, [in press].

for a meeting with the Deputy Director of the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Special Issue: We agreed to publish a special issue of the Journal of papers presented at the Geological Society of America meeting, Session number T28, Karst Environments: Problems, Management, Human Impact, and Environmental Sustainability. Robert Brinkman and Mario Parise are guest editors for this special issue and have been granted temporary Associate Editor Status on the PeerTrack site. This special issue was published as the August 2012 issue. Robert Brinkmann provided about \$2000 to support the cost of color figures associated with this special issue.

Changes: Gregory Springer retired as an Associate Editor for Earth Sciences. Mario Parise was hired as a replacement Associate Editor for Earth Sciences for Greg Springer.

Problems: The only real problem remains funding. To be able to maintain publishing the *Journal* three times a year, the *Journal* must be funded at an absolute minimum of no less than \$42,000. This figure is really much too low, but we are able to keep the *Journal* afloat for that amount of money.

It should be noted that we have done much over the last several years to reduce costs. For example, under our current negotiated printing rates from AllenPress, including the use of color and composition support, has averaged around \$2 per printed copy of the *Journal* for the last several years. Of course, this price is, in part, based on volume, so that the individual copy cost will increase as we decrease the number of copies.

To help alleviate expenses for the *Journal*, we would recommend setting the non-member rate at \$45.

Upon retiring, Greg Springer expressed frustration that high-quality PDFs of published manuscripts are not available from the NSS without paying a steep fee. Typically, scientific journals offer authors of manuscripts one free high-quality PDF for their use. However, our funding does not currently support this benefit to authors and should be changed (our regular PDFs from our web site are of low-quality and not acceptable).

Frustrations: Lastly, I would like to express my frustration on two points; (1) Why are we continuing to give the *Journal* away for free? and (2) Why is the *Journal* continuing to be treated as the "poor stepchild" of the NSS?

Point No. 1

There is no good reason for anyone to become a member of NSS if they only wish to obtain the *Journal*, or for libraries or individuals to subscribe to the *Journal* as long as it is available for free on the NSS web site. Given our serious budgetary problems, we should immediately limit free access to the *Journal* on the NSS web site to members and subscribers only. Essentially, the BOG should move to (1) permanently restrict

access to the *Journal* web page to active NSS members and subscribers, or (2) make free access to the *Journal* material available only after one year from the publication date as is required for the NSS News. Why do we require this for our internal newsletter but not for an actual international scientific publication?

Point No. 2

Funding for the *Journal* has remained far below its needs for far too many years while other entities within the NSS receive far more generous funding. For example, the *News* has a budget many times larger than the *Journal* even though both the *News* and the *Journal* publish about the same number of pages each year. It may be argued that the *News* comes out monthly and the *Journal* only quarterly, but that is based on historic precedent and severe budget restrictions --- it is long since past time when the *Journal* should be getting published bimonthly. Also, it should be noted that the *News* is often scrambling to find enough material to publish while the *Journal* has a massive and growing backlog that is causing considerable friction with authors who are frustrated with the extreme delays (>1 year) in having their manuscripts published. In addition, while we have offered an opt out option for the *Journal* for several years, why is this not offered for the *News*? We have spoken with a number of members who would be happy to receive the *News* online only. Why is this not an option?

Publication Request: I recently attended the 2012 IAH (International Associate of Hydrogeologists) Congress in Canada and was asked to consider publishing karst manuscripts presented at the Congress in the *Journal* as a special issue. I deflected a decision on this request because (1) there were a very large number of karst papers presented, (2) special issues always cause a set of regular papers to get delayed by three months, (3) no additional funding for the IAH papers was immediately forthcoming. Publication of the requested special issue would be desirable, but our funding currently does

EVP Comment This was my first opportunity to talk with Malcolm on the phone. The amount of work and time that goes into a quality publication sometimes is unknown to those who have not been involved in editing and publication process. There are more items to address but we have communication will move on from here.

(8) Marketing Analysis Committee Debra Young

No new update. No problems

EVP Comment None needed

(9) Members Manual Kelly Smallwood, Editor

The transition from Meredith is going smoothly. She has been sending me all of the files from last years manual as a reference for me to go on. I have already reached out to

several of the contributors including requesting images from all of the directors. Each officer will also be receiving emails from me within the next week to update their departments information that is also published in the members manual. I have also requested several ads from the NSS office.

I have set a soft deadline of November 16 for the contributors to get all updated information back to me. The request for submissions on a cover photo have also been posted on various cover web sites, Facebook group pages, and I have asked Dave Bunnell to post it in the NSS News. The deadline for photo submissions is January 31st. I am aiming to have the layout completed by early February which will give us a print date by March. Meredith says it generally takes up to 6 weeks at the printer and then Bob Hoke helps with getting them out to members.

Thanks,
Kelly

**(10) NSS News Committee
Dave Bunnell, Editor**

Editor

Dave Bunnell 14760RL (OS, FE)
P.O. Box 879
Angels Camp, CA 95222
(209) 736-1689
davebunnell@comcast.net

Caving Chronicles

Philip Rykwald
livetocave@hotmail.com

Conservation:

Jim & Val Hildreth-Werker
PO Box 207
Hillsboro, NM 88042-0207
(505) 895-5050
werks@zianet.com

Technology Reviews:

Dave Bunnell
davebunnell@comcast.net

Newsletter Review:

Kelly Smallwood
331 Mountain View Circle
Jasper, TN 37347
rowland7840@bellsouth.net

Spelean Spotlight:

Ron Zuber
ronzuber@comcast.net

Safety & Techniques:

Aaron Bird
bird2@Oakland.edu

In the Media:

Bill Klimack
23 Monet Bend Place
The Woodlands, TX 77382
bklimack@aol.com
(281)-362-5001

Underground Online

Buford Pruitt Jr.
PO Box 526
McIntosh, FL 32664
bpruitt570@gmail.com

Progress:

We have a new column from Buford Pruitt called Underground Online covering cave news that is strictly online, on listserves or blogs or caving News, as opposed to an "in the media" for print media. I'd like to see that column revived but the current editor hasn't sent me anything for months.

The NSS News is now available to members online. Instead of the lower-quality scans provided by the Karst Information Portal, I have provided native PDFs for our use, in some cases revisiting old issues to create them. Every issue from Jan 2010 on will be full color in this venue.

All is well with the print version which chugs along on time and well within budgets.

Plans:

December will include a foldout color map and article on the now largest UW cave in the Yucatan. Future issue plans include one on the Arts organized by Ken Storey and Carolina Shrewsbury (January). Ice caves issue for February. And still on the table, issues on Isla de Mona and Mammoth Cave, and one on some record-making sea caves in New Zealand.

Ebsco Media has been trying to persuade me to put the News in their databases as each new issue comes out. It might be a good idea but I explained that we don't make them available electronically until a year later. Perhaps the BOG should look at their proposal and decide if we want to participate. Apparently the JOCKS has already made an agreement with them.

Problems:

None really. Article submission has picked up and I'm not having to scramble to fill the issues as I was just a few months back.

EVP Comment Great work from everyone involved as always.

Research Advisory Committee
Donald McFarlane

RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Donald A. McFarlane, Chairman, 23523RE
Professor of Biology, W. M. Keck Science Center, the Claremont Colleges
925 North Mills Avenue,
Claremont, CA 91711-5916
909-607 2564
Fax: 909-621 8588
dmcfarlane@jsd.claremont.edu

Web page: <http://jsd.claremont.edu/faculty/mcfarlane/index.htm>

National Speleological Society Research Advisory Committee:
<http://www.caves.org/committee/rac/>

Committee Members: Joyce Lundberg, (Assoc. Prof, Carleton University), Joseph Troester (USGS), Keith Christenson

Progress:

We have awarded one research grant, in the amount of \$1000 to Gilman Ouellette for a project titled "Paleohydrology and Climate Change in the Eastern Caribbean from Barbadian Speleothems"

We have also provided input into the White Nose Syndrome grant program, and to a proposal to collect invertebrates from NSS-owned Shelta Cave.

Plans: RAC continues to provide input to the NSS White Nose Syndrome coordinator. No new applications for NSS Project status have been received.

EVP Comment This was another good first time phone conversation.

(11) Special Publications Committee
Tom Rea

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Tom Rea, Chairman
109 E Blue Ridge Dr
Bloomington IN 47408-1017
Home: 812-339-7391
Cellular: 765-719-1004
tom.rea@att.net

Progress:

The Snail Shell Cave book is now available in the Bookstore.

Plans:

Marion McConnell has been working on a book on her cave, Murder Hole. The book is being prepared for printing. This book needs approval.

Problems:

Ron DeLano's proposals for his Lechuguilla history book, *What a Fine Cave* needs to be discussed by the Board.

EVP Comment Tom has been a big help to me in getting started in the EVP position. He is a good example of doing the above and beyond when you need him.

**(12) Speleo Digest Committee
Danny Brass**

I continue to receive sporadic newsletters in the mail although I believe there are many newsletters that I am simply not getting. Unfortunately, I have no idea how many this might be. I had read through and selected material from all of 2009 and 2011, as well as what I had to date from 2012 and was hoping to have been made considerable strides in getting this material formatted. However, this is now much delayed, with material simply accumulating in a pile as it is received, since I am unable to proceed without the Adobe Acrobat Pro program that we had previously talked about.

Sincerely,
Danny