

National Speleological Society
Administrative Vice President's Report
Board of Governors Meeting
San Jose, California March 23, 2013

Prepared by:
Geary Schindel, AVP@caves.org March 16, 2013

INTRODUCTION / SUMMARY

The Department of the AVP consists of 4 Divisions (Cave Management, Conservation, Conventions, and Education) and two Commissions (National Cave Rescue and Vandalism Deterrence). Contained within are 19 committees and various subcommittees.

Here are some of the highlights of the Department of the Administrative Vice President

- Announced first week of February - BLM WNS response plan should allow for conservation activities in some closed caves. The new BLM plan should broaden focus toward managing entire cave resource systems rather than only the aspect of bats AND allow conservation/management activities such as monitoring closed caves for evidence of unauthorized access, vandalism, etc. Look for Federal Register notice overhaul to reflect new BLM plan. (Details –See Southwest Region in addendum.)
- Kelley Prebil has accepted the position as Conservation Website Coordinator.
- CaveSim, the crawl-through, electronically triggered cave simulation experience now has a trailer home and is seeking funding to present itself for tours at the PA NSS Convention.
- The NSS News Conservation Issue for April is on schedule and will include distribution to Basic Members.
- NSS Mammoth Cave Restoration Project gives 2388 in-cave hours to the National Park Service in 2012. Add preparation time, documentation time, travel time and expense to the in-cave hours and the NPS is receiving tremendous benefits in NSS Volunteer Value.
- The speakers for the 2013 Luminary Series at the NSS Convention are Art Palmer, Roger Brucker, and Rane Curl.
- The new NSS Webinar Series has been a big hit with topics ranging from exploration to science. Attendance has been very good, talks are archived on the NSS Web Page, and we have a number of talks lined up for the next few months.
- No major issues were identified with any preserve properties. A summary prepared by Gary Moss along with full preserve reports are included at the end of this summary.
- The Fine Arts Salon is introducing new categories for the 2013 NSS Convention.
- We have convention hosts through 2016.

CAVE MANAGEMENT DIVISION REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by John Wilson - jmwgeo@gmail.com - Division Chair

Cave and Karst Acquisition Committee - Kim Metzgar - kimmak@aol.com

Nothing to report

Cave Conservancies Committee - John M. Wilson - jmwgeo@gmail.com

Fifteenth Annual Cave Conservancy Roundtable was held at the 2012 NSS the Convention. Kelley Prebil has assumed the chairmanship of the Cave Conservancy Roundtable. She is now planning for the 2013 roundtable in Pennsylvania. Her email is: kelly@pearlsgirl.com and phone is 650-952-4732.

Contemporary Cave Use Study - Lisa Hall - caverlisa@hotmail.com

CCUS registers were at Old Timers Reunion in WV this year. Registers were distributed and input was received on CCUS from the caving community. Registers have been placed in a few heavily visited caves in SW Pa. with the help of the Department of Forestry. The Pa. Game Commission has expressed interest in register statistics from caves on state game lands. Lisa hopes to find/distribute registers to interested cave owners this year and has still not received register records from the previous chairperson yet.

NSS Nature Preserves - Gary Moss, Chairman - kd4itj@amsat.org

The NSS Nature Preserves report is included below.

CONSERVATION DIVISION REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by Jim C. Werker & Val Hildreth-Werker, werks@cunacueva.com Division Chairs

Conservation Division Summary/ Highlights

- Jim and Val planning cave conservation trips to Brazil, Australia, ICS 2013-Czech Republic as well as NSS Webinar Conservation Workshop Series for later this year.
- NSS Conservation/AGI/federal agencies coordinating in organizing National Cave and Karst Day as part of AGI Earth Science Week.
- Jim & Val express deep gratitude to the caving community for their comfort, humor, and good-will through this past year. Jim's electronic i-hand is on order. Y'all keep alert and be safe!

Conservation Committee and Subcommittee Reports

NSS Conservation Website Coordinator - Kelley Prebil web@pearlsgirl.com

- Kelley Prebil has taken on the position as NSS Conservation Website Coordinator.
- Sent basic redesign idea for the Conservation Website sent to Jim and Val for review
- Received ftp login information from NSS IT Committee
- Next report will have a lot more to say

Brochures Coordinator – Cheryl Jones cs.jones@verizon.net

- Assisted OVP with design for large outside banners to be hung at the new NSS HQ, based on the NSS brochure and exhibit.
- No plans due to budget constraints.

NSS Conservation Network – Steve Smith stevenlsmith@usa.net

- Sending out announcements and alerts approved by Jim and Val
- Quickly disseminate info among grottos, IOs, and conservation cavers who want to get info.

Conservation Grants Coordinator - Julia Germany germanyj@aol.com

- Personal job change slowed the progress.
- Working with NSS Conservation Chairs to determine specific projects for grant funding.
- One conservation grant inquiry is pending while waiting for applicant response.

Conservation Outreach with Cave Simulators - Dave Jackson jacksondmit@cavesim.com

- Dave and Tracy Jackson with their innovative cave simulator – CaveSim – are developing a great way to teach about careful caving. A “virtual” cave experience that allows users to crawl through the simulated cave passageways, avoiding electronically-triggered speleothems. The CaveSim is unfortunately too large and complex to be easily transported to events, such as school science fairs and National Speleological Society conventions. With assistance from friends and grottos, the Jacksons purchased a large trailer for the simulator, enabling logistics for transport. Using the Kickstarter online fundraising site, \$5,652 was raised in support of the purchase – just shy of the \$6,000 goal. Along with generous contributions from grottos like the Southern Colorado Mountain and Colorado Grotto, enough funds were raised to complete the purchase. With additional NSF funds, the Jacksons drove the simulator to the 2012 NSS Convention in West Virginia, as well as events in Colorado. They are now seeking funds to support transport to the 2012 Convention in Pennsylvania.
- Since participating in MayaCon, the artificial cave called CaveSim has attended six outreach events to teach cave and bat conservation: elementary school for 75 5th graders; science festival at which 320 general public kids and adults crawled through the simulator; US Air Force Academy for 43 Youth Center participants, ages 5 to 11.
- At each event, we teach participants about cave conservation prior to exploring CaveSim. Lessons included short talks, bat- and cave-related games, and hands-on activities like mapping, rock identification, and experience with a sked (donated by Nigel Dyson). Before entering CaveSim, we instruct participants to avoid touching the artificial cave formations. After exiting, visitors are invited to view computer screens that show which artificial speleothems they accidentally "damaged" by triggering the sensors in the speleothems.
- At the science festival, CaveSim was one of the most popular events for the third consecutive year, with people waiting in line for up to an hour to practice caving softly. While waiting, visitors were kept engaged with brief talks about conservation, as well as demonstrations of carbide lamps. CaveSim was kept open for an hour after the festival ended to let everyone experience the artificial cave.
- Cost for fuel for several of the CaveSim conservation outreach programs was funded by generous donations from the Colorado Grotto and Dick Blenz. An enclosed trailer now permanently holds CaveSim. One hundred individuals and organizations donated to help purchase the trailer using fundraising site kickstarter.com
- Several generous individuals have allowed us to use their 1/2-ton trucks (F150 or equivalent) to pull the 7300 pound trailer to conservation outreach events. The primary challenge that we face: a 1/2-ton truck is not rated to pull such a load (tongue weight is 0.6 tons), and it is difficult to find 3/4-ton trucks to borrow. We hope to purchase a 3/4-ton truck (F250 or equivalent) at some point, when funding presents itself.
- Additional cave education and conservation outreach programs are planned with CaveSim. In late February, a dozen archeology high school students will explore CaveSim to learn about conserving fragile environments before their trip to see petroglyphs in the canyons of Colorado. Planning is under way for a trip to the AACL Charter School in Colorado Springs, several other local organizations, and the 2013 NSS Convention. We want the CaveSim experience to be free for all NSS Convention attendees and general public visitors, as it has been the previous two years.

NSS Mammoth Cave Restoration Project – Bill Copeland boogercaver71@yahoo.com

- **March 3rd and 4th** - 54 participants went down the Elevator Entrance and proceeded to Kentucky Avenue where we removed 1000 feet of 2-inch high voltage wire, and 2000 feet of one-half inch wire, and took it to the elevator where it will be hauled out at a later date. On Sunday we went in the Historic Entrance and scoped out some future projects. 483 caver hours were donated to the National Park Service in March.
- **May 5th and 6th** - 24 volunteers entered through the Frozen Niagara Entrance to the Frozen Niagara Formation near Crystal Lake. Copeland led a crew that cleaned up a short section of trail that contained some trash and pieces of asphalt. Mary Schubert (NPS) directed the rest of the volunteers armed with brushes, spray bottles, and pump sprayers, to clean lint and algae growth from the formation.

Copeland's crew removed 600 pounds of trash and loose asphalt, while Mary's crew did an excellent job of cleaning. On Sunday everyone went in through the Historic Entrance to Giants Coffin. Copeland led a crew to cover new electric wire from Giants Coffin to the Martha Washington light switch. We covered several hundred feet of wire, and carried out 300 feet of wire we had previously cut. We donated a total of 212 caver hours to the NPS in May.

- **August 1st– 5th** - During the weeklong camp, crews cut wire, hauled wire, broke up an old concrete pad, cleaned lint, and cleaned an old latrine. A total of 1280 caver hours to the NPS were donated in August.
- **Nov 3rd and 4th** - 44 volunteers entered either through the Frozen Niagara Entrance or the Elevator Entrance. We split into 3 groups to accomplish various tasks that included carrying grass sacks of concrete, cutting old wire and removing old light fixtures. A total of 413 caver hours to the NPS were donated in November
- **A total of 2388 hours were donated to the National Park Service in 201.**

Regional Conservation Representatives

Arizona Regional Association – Steve Smith stevenlsmith@usa.net

- Fall 2012, Central Arizona Grotto (Phoenix metro-area) assisted personnel from the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) with a reconnaissance trip to a cave known in the past to be a maternity colony for the Fringed Myotis bat (*Myotis thysanodes*). A sunset emergence observation of the cave revealed that bats were actively using the cave. A trip into the cave well after sunset with the AZGFD Non-Game Specialist revealed the presence of at least one lactating female, which strongly suggests that the cave is still used as a maternity site. Based on this maternity usage, Central Arizona Grotto has recommended that the cave's current summertime closure be renewed for the foreseeable future.
- Escabrosa Grotto (Tucson area): Escabrosa manages access into Onyx Cave. To better understand summer bat usage of a maternity colony of Fringed Myotis bats (*Myotis thysanodes*) within Onyx, Escabrosa continues to gather bat population data. From May through October, members conduct twice-monthly trips to set up infrared cameras outside the entrance at twilight to count exiting bats. This continuing project is to establish and maintain a multi-year database on *M. thysanodes* maternity usage in Onyx, which allows Escabrosa to make better informed cave management decisions pertaining to the bats. Beginning in 2012, Escabrosa made the decision to close Onyx Cave to casual caving visits from May 1st through October 1st to allow the mother bats to nurse and raise their offspring without human disturbance. In the Fall of 2012, with two years of data "in the can", the members of Escabrosa voted to continue this bat population study for another three years, with the goal of building a five-year data base of *M. thysanodes* maternity usage in Onyx.
- Escabrosa Grotto members assisted NSS member Sarah Truebe's PhD research into Onyx Cave's temperature, humidity, and hydrology. A rain gauge placed on Onyx hill allows both measurement of the amount of rain falling on Onyx hill and also collection of rain samples for chemical analysis. Dripwater collection devices within the cave allow chemical analysis of the water once it has passed through the soil and rock over the cave. A large part of Sarah's research will be a comparison between these surface and subsurface waters. In the late Fall of 2012, Sarah completed her field work in Onyx, and will now reduce her voluminous data for her PhD dissertation. As stewards and conservators of the entire Onyx ecosystem, Escabrosa members are looking forward to Sarah's results and are certain her work will assist us to better understand the cave's complex hydrology, speleothem formation, and response to local climate change.

Southeast Conservation Specialists - John Hoffelt (TN) MossyGuy@comcast.net

Allen Padgett (GA) on_rope@windstream.net

Sean Roberts – (FL) citraman@yahoo.com Vacant (AL)

- Southeast Regional Association Karst Task Force plans to conduct 7 sinkhole and cave cleanups over the next six months in Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia.

- The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee built an artificial “cave” (\$300,000) on the property of a large Grey Bat cave with the intent of evaluating mitigation and treatment methods for White Nose Syndrome (WNS).
- Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation is spearheading a drive to purchase the remainder of the Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness for State ownership and inclusion in the Virgin Falls State Natural Area. Currently, the State leases and manages the property and all caves in the Pocket Wilderness are covered under the blanket closure of all State caves due to WNS. Management of the Pocket Wilderness is not expected to change with State ownership; however, managers will likely seek permits for exploration and recreation in the caves (will be the first such request made to the State).
- For the first time in 50 years, researchers found a colony of Indiana Bats in Georgia. Researchers found the bats in a dead pine tree on the Chattahoochee National Forest, Rich Mountain Wilderness Area, which is not near any cave.

Southwestern Region – Kathy Peerman (NM) speleobabe@comcast.net

- BLM instituted a closure of 28 caves in New Mexico in January 2011, by publishing a Federal Register Notice that provided for exceptions to the closure for certain activities. The 2011 wording of the notice implied that those activities were limited to WNS research.
- Good news! A new 2013 BLM closure order announced at public meetings the first week of February (which has not been instituted just yet) will again be announced through Federal Register Notice, but will be changed in these ways: 1) Specific abandoned mines with known bat populations will be added to the closure order. 2) Specific caves will be removed from the closure list. These caves do not have significant bat populations and probably do not have environments that would support the growth of *Geomyces destructans*. 3) There will be language in the closure order to allow for revision to the list of closed caves, as more information becomes available, i.e. to add or remove caves from the list. 4) Language for exceptions to the closure will be clarified so that caving projects in the closed caves are not limited to WNS research.
- The BLM's Cave Management Team (CMT), headed by Jim Goodbar, has been tasked with review of proposals for activities in the closed caves.
- The last two years of closure of BLM caves in New Mexico have impacted recreational caving. We are sometimes able to access closed caves with scientific permits, which enables monitoring of the systems. Science has a direct correlation with conservation projects—we use science data to help make decisions in maintaining, monitoring, and improving cave and karst ecosystems. Regional reports show an increase in cleanup projects and conservation science studies within SWR caves.
- SWR grotto reports reveal decreased permitted caving across the state with closures and WNS decon procedures before and after caving. Decon protocol changes over the past two years are consistently followed by organized, permitted caving groups.
- Carlsbad Cavers are working on cave and karst surface evaluations since oil companies have huge impact on karst in southeastern NM.
- Guads Restoration continues with projects every month. Even though limited numbers are permitted to enter the caves for administrative and restoration tasks, HGRP racks up impressive annual contributions in Volunteer Value. (See HGRP, this document).
- Ft. Stanton Cave Study Project is allowed access only three times per year. The limited numbers of cavers permitted for each trip are expected to do the exploration, survey and science all in one trip. Surface projects include cleaning up the entrance and following stringent WNS protocols.
- Grottos work closely with federal agencies such as Forest Service, BLM, NPS, yet are few permits for clean ups, research, and monitoring are issued each year. Access to the caves is extremely limited due to WNS threats, therefore we have very few conservation projects going on.
- SWR cavers are assisting with more bat studies, especially with the possible threat of WNS looming.
- New Mexico Tech and the University of New Mexico are producing much needed cave research data in the speleological fields of geomicrobiology, paleoclimate, geohydrology, and human impact studies – these data contribute to conservation and management decisions and project proposals.

- Photomonitoring is a significant tool for monitoring changes, impacts, and processes in our caves, but during the past two years this work has again been limited by WNS restrictions.
- Lincoln National Forest Service: High Guads Restoration group is accomplishing tangible and visible progress, thus a couple of caves will be opened for limited, permitted, caving groups accompanied by an approved trip leader. Trip leaders will maintain a strict conservation ethic in keeping cavers on trails in the Guad caves.
- The Lincoln does a lot of informing the public about WNS and what is needed to go caving in New Mexico. The public needs more education about WNS and why they need to decon gear each time. Decon for the Lincoln includes bagging caving clothes and gear, then taking the contained gear home and cleansing it in your washer with water at 120°F for 20 minutes.
- Bat Logger Project lead by Debbie Buecher partners with Forest Service in placing new equipment to help identify bat species by sounds, Sm2Bat, Anabat Roost-logger (counts bats), Patterson D500X.
- The Lincoln still uses the Cave Management plan approved in 1990.
- Sinkhole clean up projects to remove trash are in the planning stages.
- BLM, Roswell - Currently no conservation projects going on, except for a little science in Fort Stanton Cave.
- BLM, Carlsbad - Cave and Karst Surface Evaluation Project is looking for surface features due to the explosion of the oil companies coming into Carlsbad.

Mid Atlantic Region – Douglas Soroka (PA) snowshoe7@verizon.net

- Franklin County Grotto performed cleanup of an unnamed local cave to benefit land owner relations.
- Baltimore Grotto held cleanup of a local cave and surrounding area.
- Bucks County Grotto hosted a cleanup class.
- Nittney Grotto had a water shed cleanup.
- DC Grotto continues to clean and disinfect cave clothing in between cave trips.
- Greater Allentown Grotto will resume the wishing well project at Lost River Caverns during warmer weather. Cleaning of Crystal Cave in Kutztown PA continues and during their closed season, members are working 3 days per week at the cave doing restoration. There is a new effort to locate and recover speleothems that were lost, hidden, or simply tossed aside during construction of walkways in the 1800s. A radio location surface survey was done on the cave during the past summer to locate surface features which could impact the cave environment.

Northeast Region – Mike Warner

No report received.

Rocky Mountain Region - Rick Rhinehart (CO) nss@rockymountaincaving.com and Camille Pullham McKinney (UT) cami_mckinney@nps.gov

- Status of WNS cave closures

With the stated threat of regional extinction of bat species through White Nose Syndrome, Forest Service officials implemented a third emergency closure order in early August, legally preventing entry to all caves and abandoned mines on Forest lands throughout the Rocky Mountain Region. This includes caves on Forest lands in Colorado, in the Black Hills of South Dakota and in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming. Other Forest lands in Utah, the Tetons of Wyoming and Montana remain open to all visitors, at least for now. Caves on Bureau of Land Management, National Park, state and local lands also remain open to visitors.

With the new USFS “non-permit” permit system working well, there’s indication that the Forest Service may be seeking to permanently implement a similar access system in 2013. In mid-November, the Golden Region 2 office announced the pending preparation of an Environmental Assessment for “options” in handling White Nose Syndrome among bats in the Rocky Mountain Region. This assessment is legally required by federal law for new non-emergency regulations and policies for federal lands.

According to information posted on the Forest website, and provided in releases to area media, the National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to provide “a purpose and need for a proposed action.” In regard to the potential spread of the *Geomyces destructans* pathogen and the resulting White-Nose Syndrome to specific bat species in the Rocky Mountain Region at some future time, the Forest Service needs to develop management options for all caves and abandoned mines within Forest lands and grasslands in the region that reflects potential needs to close these lands to the public. The Forest Service is specifically determining proposed strategies that could minimize “chances of human-facilitated transmission of the disease, and potential impacts of the disease, while permitting access consistent with WNS management.”

Cave management actions to be considered in view of these strategies includes access restrictions to the public, seasonal restrictions, inventory and monitoring of caves and cave features, application and permit requirements for entry, decontamination requirements for entry, and fungicidal application.

The Forest is also seeking to identify “trigger points” in which specific management actions would be taken, following a pre-determined plan. As an example, the USFS suggested that “the presence of WNS within a 200-mile radius of a cave, or abandoned mine, could be considered a threshold for closure.” The USFS also suggests that some activities regarding the protection of bats could be implemented proactively, “before the presence of WNS.”

To meet minimum federal requirements for public involvement in setting policy, the Forest Service set a 30-day period for receiving comments that ended on December 17, 2012. The Colorado Cave Survey, the National Speleological Society and several cavers provided comments by the deadline.

No public hearings or meetings have yet been set to discuss potential policies, though they may be expected in the coming months prior to an August 2013 implementation. Hearings may be held throughout the Rocky Mountain Region at selected Forest regional offices to allow public involvement.

- A new book by a University of Wyoming history professor tells the intriguing story of Shoshone Caverns National Monument near Cody. Now managed by the Bureau of Land Management as Spirit Mountain Caverns, the cave was discovered in 1909 by local rancher Ned Frost. Professor Phil Roberts’ book, “Cody’s Cave: National Monuments and the Politics of Public Lands in the 20th Century West,” was released in September 2012 by Laramie’s Skyline West Press. Providing a detailed history of the cave’s discovery and attempts to commercialize, including a 1950s opening as a privately-managed cave for the city of Cody, Dr. Roberts’ book also serves as a cautionary tale. Designations as federal national parks and monuments are not always permanent, and Congress may de-list parks through legislation. The book is available through bookstores and gift shops throughout Wyoming.
- Glenwood Caverns owner and general manager Steve Beckley came out in favor of a ballot issue in Garfield County to establish an Open Lands Program. Though Mr. Beckley and other conservationists encouraged county residents to support the issue, voters defeated it in the November 6 election. The issue would have temporarily raised funds in the county through a small increase in sales tax; these funds would have been used to protect natural areas, provide trails, parks and access to public lands and conserve and protect water supplies and wildlife habitats.
- Colorado’s historic Cave of the Winds has created several commercial cave tours for student groups. Trips include educational visits for children in pre-school and first grade, children in grades two through four, children in grades five through eight and an advanced class for teens in grades nine through twelve. Many of the trips include a visit to the Manitou Grand Caverns and Heavenly Hall, a well-decorated chamber discovered by cavers from the Williams Canyon Project of the National Speleological Society in April 1989. Conservation of caves is one of the topics covered in the classes.
- Girl Scout Troop 3964 in Montana provided timely assistance to Montana State Parks in cleaning Lewis and Clark Caverns. Eight girls participated in the project, which removed lint, hair and other materials from the walls and formations of the popular southern Montana cave. Since the cave’s last cleaning in the early 1990s, a large amount of visitor material had accumulated. Scouts worked in the cave following its seasonal closure in October.

- A mist netting project in Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park by retired National Park Service biologist Cay Ogden identified four species of bats. Previous studies have indicated seven species live within the park, with speculation that two more species may also live in the high altitude mountains west of Denver. No caves are currently known within the national park.
- *Audubon Magazine* in its September-October 2012 edition reported on the elusive black swift birds that live in the high Rocky Mountains. One of the favorite nesting sites of the bird is in Colorado's Fulton Resurgence Cave, a seldom-visited cave north of Glenwood Springs in the high White River Plateau. The birds were first identified by Donald G. Davis, but have been extensively studied in the decades since Donald's report. Biologists from the White River National Forest have studied the birds, which migrate to South America each winter.
- The state of Montana, working with local National Speleological Society cavers, Bigfork High School students, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, and tribal governments, have begun a comprehensive study of bats in the state. With the concern of White-Nose Syndrome potentially infecting bat populations within the next decade, additional research and documentation of the bats will play a role in determining policies and procedures in the state. Automated data loggers are critical in gaining scientific information about caves and bats throughout Montana.
- Colorado cave biologist David Steinmann has self-published a softbound book, "Cave Creatures of Glenwood Caverns," about the cave's many spiders and insects. Many of these creatures are new species, previously unknown to science. The book includes numerous large photographs of the tiny animals. It is for sale at the commercial cave's visitor's center.
- The Donning Company Publishers and Colorado's Glenwood Caverns released a new softbound book in late October, "Eighth Wonder." The book, by Richard Rhinehart with photographs by Norman Thompson and Ken Headrick, provides an extensive history of the commercial cave. Also included is a strong conservation message for visitors to the cave on Iron Mountain above Glenwood Springs.

NSS Conservation Task Forces - Jonathan Beard monkanman@att.net

High Guads Restoration Project CTF

Jennifer Foote highguads@yahoo.com

- 2012 summary: 21 volunteers donated \$29,000 in work and materials. This year, our primary project was Virgin Cave, and we conducted multiple trips to clean mud tracked onto flowstone in the past. We also surveyed some smaller caves, relocated a cave, monitored caves including assessment for bat use, marked trails, trained trip leaders, and assisted with banding of swallows at a cave entrance for a study that has been ongoing for 20 years.
- 2013 plans: Trips will be scheduled at the request of the Forest or volunteers. Project work will vary based on skills and ability of volunteers as well as what the USFS indicates as a priority.
- Honored with beautiful certificate of appreciation from Lincoln National Forest signed by District Ranger Jim Gumm. See our website www.hgrp.org

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Ozark CTF - Kathy Kriska katentrygrl@sbcglobal.net

- Ozark conservation Task Force raised \$69.00. This money will be used applying for our 501 when we get enough money together) with a drawing of a camping chair, tent, and headlamp which was donated by Colman Camping Equipment this drawing was held at MVOR.
- Due to bat hibernation there have not been any resto trips.
- Funds were donated by myself and Ed and Mary Kriska for postage for sending out letters, business cards, and brochures to 25 different businesses inquiring donations for the Ozark Conservation Task Force. In addition, writing pens were purchased for advertisement
- Springfield has voted to donate a backpack sprayer and a cordless [drill](#).

Klamath Mountains CTF - Steve Knutson SssKnutson@aol.com

- The Klamath National Forest continues to be unresponsive regarding a new MOU for the Marble Mountain caves. They initiated talk on a new MOU a couple years ago, as a new ranger had arrived at Scott River, Dave Hays. A biologist, Sam Cuenca was assigned to be the go between and develop the MOU. For about 6 months we had an exchange of emails and Sam requested suggestions on what we thought might be included. The main issue is that the old MOU said nothing about cave management or the Forest Service developing a plan at all. It has been approximately 22 years since a federal law specified that the agencies were to do such plans and protect and manage significant caves. Nothing has occurred for Marble Mountain caves, the biggest concentration of solution caves west of the Rockies. I sent a number of suggestions about two years ago and I got an email from the ranger last spring telling me to not give up on them as they are working on it. Inquiries as to progress go unanswered.
- Another management item ongoing is the seeking of an MOU for Cave Next Door, a newly found cave north of Oregon Caves. David Hodges and I decided it might be better if a permit were sought privately or perhaps under the WCC. The FS suggested a use permit and Hodges applied a year ago this past December. The WCC got on board with wanting to support the endeavor this past summer, but I haven't heard if that alters anything. To date I have heard nothing of actually getting the permit. The caves are not greatly threatened regarding vandalism as most are of difficult access and all are 5+ miles from a road. But the Pacific Crest Trail runs right through the area and the presence of the caves is noted in hiking guides. Packers have been seen taking clients to caves. Some have well-decorated parts and rare features still in virgin condition.
- On the quest for cataloging the Marbles caves, we made good progress last summer on sketching and GPSing the upper karst, and I am in the process of computerizing the sketching. The end product will be a GIS map of the upper karst with WGS 84 coordinate grid.

Twin Lakes CTF - John Durall TwinLakesCCSTF1@aol.com and Steve Gentry SGentry177@aol.com

- September 2012 to present, Twin Lakes CTF has provided \$16,085.25 Volunteer Value using the NSS Volunteer Value structure and templates. We still need to calculate one additional large project.
- Cave Creek Cave Conservation Project. Completed survey of Cave on 10-24-2013 and a Bat Gate design turned in to Army Corps of Engineers in November, 2012-waiting on approval. Will submit map to Army Corps of Engineers in March. Waiting for gate and cleanup approval from Army Corps of Engineers
- Lost River Cave Conservation Project. October 27, 2012 we assisted in cleanup of Lost River Cave. Eight volunteers were present and Volunteer Value assessment was \$2610.36. We removed 600-to-700 pounds of debris and trash from cave and received thank you card from Lost River Cave
- Completed evaluation of Onyx Cave Conservation Project in October, 2012
- Completed evaluation of Outlaw Cave Conservation Project in November, 2012
- TWCTF currently has 27 members
- Parkersburg Area Grotto offered their assistance on various projects
- Diamond Caverns stated they would call TWCTF if needed
- Kentucky Caverns evaluation slated for February 1, 2013
- Outlaw Cave slated for cleanup February 2, 2013
- Onyx Cave slated for cleanup February 3, 2013
- Floyd's Fork Environmental Association contacted the Kentucky Geological Survey, who then referred them to Kentucky Speleological Survey who recommended they contact Twin Lakes CTF. Now assisting Floyd's Fork Environmental Association to locate caves, sinkholes, drainage areas and run off paths entering Floyd's Fork Creek System in Bullet County, KY; identify sensitive areas; help determine current impact and hazards plus additional problems that may arise from human activities on the surface. To date three caves have been located with one successfully mapped; additional research in the area will yield a more comprehensive overview of the honeycomb cave system located in the Floyd's Fork Creek area. Geological specimens, identification, and specific locations are being

cataloged, mapped. Referring archeological data to University of Louisville professor who conducted archeological survey of caves in this area in 1980s.

NSS C/M Section Networking Update

No update received.

External Conservation Organization Networking Updates

Nothing received from TNC, BCI, KEEP, or other entities for this reporting period.

CONVENTION DIVISION REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by Carol Tideman - ctider@ymail.com

HIGHLIGHTS:

- See highlights posted in AVP Summary

PROGRESS:

- Communicating with the confirmed groups. Checking on their progress and passing along new information, filling requests for data, history and other materials and answering any questions.
- Working with the group hosting the 2013 Convention in Shippensburg, PA.
- Working with the group hosting the 2014 Convention in Huntsville, AL.
- Working with the Rolla MO group hosting the 2015 Convention.
- Working with the Ely, NV group hosting the 2016 Convention..

PLANS:

- Attend convention committee planning meetings (any year's) whenever possible.
- Continue working with confirmed groups.
- Continue working with groups interested in hosting a convention.
- Continue to solicit new host groups.

PROBLEMS:

- None at this time.

2012 NSS Convention

Final 2012 West Virginia Convention Budget – Submitted by Nick Schaer (Treasurer)

Account Balance 12/31/12	\$7,507.93
Outstanding Debt	
Salon Projector Fee	\$1,234.00
Un-cashed checks	~\$1,300.00
Honorarium Final Party	\$1,000.00
Banks Fees post 2012	~\$100.00
Start Up	\$2,500.00
Outstanding Credit	
NSS Discount Ticket (21)	\$840.00

Guidebooks to NSS Store (264)	\$3,168.00
Bounced Co-Op Check	\$29.63 * (Emailed and called, I give up)
NSS Radio Purchase	\$1,964.58

2012 NSS Convention Treasurer and Co-Chair Notes:

The Caver Consignment and JSS were both issues. In regards to the person the NSS had running each of these functions, and at least in the case of JSS, the coordinator walked just before MayaCon. The Caver Consignment person had to help deal with Registration issues, partially due to the problems we had with our merchant account coordinator (which climaxed at the start of convention). This impacted the co-chairs tremendously in the case of JSS, and our registration staff in regards to caver consignment. Both were dealt with on the fly during convention and we are pretty lucky no one died or was shot.

The COGS purchases (Marco/Purrington) were more than expected but we had a lot of SWAG. Mugs, wine glasses, shot glass, carry bags, mini-wallets, posters, etc. But this was because we were advised by the board to have more SWAG and better meals and perks rather than lower the cost of attendance to those coming to convention.

In the end we had about 1,000 bucks in Derecho Storm damage. It could have been a lot worse. We were told not to submit anything on the insurance, and at least one person simply didn't follow through on collecting from us. Again, we were lucky. But we were prepared, which is something!

My biggest belly ache was Credit Service (Merchant Account) bank fees. We had over \$5,500 in credit service fees and this does not include the automated cut for using the NSS Bookstore credit card machine. Plus, the credit card machines never did show up, which was the second problem (of three) we had with that issue. We were very disappointed to be forgotten about in regards to our merchant account in Colorado for pre-registrations, and then when it repeated itself for our onsite registration, it made us more upset. Then, most recently, to find out our merchant account was still active and charging us fees until recently was the final kick in the butt. What's worse, is that by our research, we would have been much better off getting our own merchant account. The fees we were charged were on the high end of the spectrum for the service. We feel the NSS needs to seriously look at this situation and rectify it. It shouldn't be the responsibility of the convention staff (who are volunteers like everyone else) to read our merchant account provider's minds on what needs to happen when. Communication was extremely poor, and the rates were outrageous.

The amount of donations that Jeff and John brought in has to be an all-time record (over \$19,000). Much of this went towards dedicated but very worthy projects such as - WNS Deacon, WNS/Bat Workshops, Horton Hobbs Dinner, WNS Awareness Road Sign and much more. This is not my first Convention and I must say this figure is jaw dropping. Salute... (This note was from Nick Schaer our treasurer---the co-chairs didn't persuade him to write this. But our work in fundraising shows what a little extra work at fundraising can do for our conventions).

Overall, we feel it was successful. We were proud to not be in the red, and we hope that the excess money will be set aside to be used to help future conventions that may not be as lucky as we were to break even.

There are some points we would like to bring up in person at the meeting in Shippensburg, so while we do consider this our final MayaCon 2012 report to the board, we do respectfully request time to address the board in person at that meeting.

We do plan to have the bank account closed by the end of February, 2013, and will have absolute final numbers to present with a final, cleaned summary file with cost per unit notations in time for presentation by the summer meeting.

Respectfully submitted
Jeff Bray & John Pearson

2013 NSS Convention & Salon:

Craig Hindman, Co-Chairman – Administration
7600 Pindell School Rd
Fulton, MD 20759-9725
410-792-0742
craighindman@verizon.net

Gordon Birkhimer (42778RL)(FE), Co-Chairman - Operations
2807 Hogan Court
Falls Church, Virginia 22043
703-573-4653
birkhimer@cox.net

Attachments:

- 1) 2013 Facilities Assignments
- 2) 2013 Convention Staff Letter July 22, 2012

PLANS

An Executive Committee Meeting was conducted on January 29, 2013 to discuss the overall status of all aspects of the convention. We will have meetings at the upcoming Spring VAR and MAR events.

PROGRESS

The 2013 Convention Website is up and running! The following progress was reported by various committees:

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Bill Jackson as our Staff Communications person has done an excellent job of making all documentation available for our Staff by placing it on Google Documents. So far we have the Convention Manual, NSS 2013 Convention Staff Listing, Radio Inventory, NSS Convention 2013 Shirts, 2013 Official Logos, Facilities Listing, and License for the Use of Facilities, CUB Floor Diagrams, Shippensburg University Campus Map, Shippensburg University Sample Conference Bulletin, IRS 501c3 Letter for NSS, Parking Map, and Catering Guide. There are photographs of all important areas including the location of Registration, the Art Salon, Vertical Sessions, Cave Simulator, Photo Salon, Vendor Areas, Special Events Areas, and the Dining Hall. Google Groups Drive is the central repository where all of our

working documents are readily available to all Staff Personnel. This has proven so beneficial that I recommend all future conventions utilize it or some similar tool for staff communications. Bill also provided recommendations regarding the purchase of new radios.

FACILITIES

Chairman – Larry Cohen reports all the sessions, with the small exceptions Bob Hoke noted in his report, have been allocated to excellent rooms. In essence, except for the largest sessions and vertical, everything is in the CUB. I need to inform the biology/geology sections, etc. that they need to make contact with the appropriate SU faculty chairs and professorial counterparts. (This could assist locating the best venue for the Stygrobromus folks.)

- The current Facilities Matrix outlining the entities that need tables and their assigned rooms are attached.
- The vendor space will be in the MPR A-C with an overflow for one vendor into a room 20 ' away. The vendor layout designed by Emily has been approved by SU. The MPRs currently contain about 270 horizontal feet of pipe and drape, most of it of 10' height. This is almost enough for Emily's vendor floor plan. Additional pipe & drape may be available from Reisner Hall.
- The new dorm rooms look great!
- The search continues for someone to Chair the Campground and accompanying Campground Staff. In the meantime, we will begin to solve campground-specific issues such as, water, trash, etc. until someone emerges as the manager that we can hand it over to. Luckily, most of those issues are included in the contract. We will need a group of scheduled volunteers to assist transporting camping gear and we are obtaining mechanized vehicles to make that job easier. There are volunteers that have offered to help, there just has been nobody to step up and manage. We will double our efforts and hope to locate someone soon. *We are pleased to announce Lee Hartwick has volunteered to handle the Port-a-Johns.
- Larry requested the webmaster to make some changes to the outdated information on the website:
 - Auction will now be in Orendorf Theatre at 7:00 PM until...
 - Caption on Tuscarora Room photo must be changed
 - Photos I sent recently, especially the dorms, need to be uploaded

SALON COMMITTEE - 2013 Convention Plans

7 Display Salons (Judging Sunday; Display Monday - Friday): Cartography, Cover Arts, Crafts & Design, Fine Arts, Prints, Symbolic Emblems, T-Shirts, Video

2 Workshops (Tues-Wed): Cartography, Fine Arts

2 Salon Awards/Photo Salon Shows (Thursday Evening): Quiet and Full Awards Presentation

Predicted Salon Awards/Photo Salon Show attendance (80-90% of total convention attendees on Thursday) is greater than the available on-campus theatre, so we plan to continue to provide 2 shows.

Show 1: A *'Quiet'* show (5:15pm to 7pm) PowerPoint with winners, no salon chairs. 95 minute show.

Show 2: *Full Awards Show:* All 11 Salons and their awards presented formally by Salon chairs. 135 minute show (intro music from 7:00 to 7:30pm, show from 7:30 to 9:45pm).

Salon Critique Sessions (Friday): Meet the judges (if available) and find out what makes a good entry. Cartography, Crafts & Design, Fine Arts, Prints, Photo, Symbolic Emblems, T-Shirts, and Video.

The **NSS Salons web site** displays each year's winners, generates interest in next year's salon entries, and provides the entry forms. Alex Sproul updated the web site with the 2012 NSS Convention award winners and 2013 NSS Salon chairs, deadlines & information.

The *NSS News* publicizes salon entry requirements and deadlines. David Bunnell has featured and will feature Salon award winners in upcoming issues of the *NSS News*, the most notable being the entire *NSS News* being devoted to the Arts and Letters Section of the NSS (January) and the information for 2013 NSS Salon chairs, deadlines and information in the March 2013 issue.

2013 NSS Convention: Art & Music Salons

NSS Art & Music Salons promote and recognize excellent cave-related art, artists, and musicians. NSS Salons are open to everyone; those who enter need not be members of the NSS.

CARTOGRAPHIC MAPS - Cave and karst-related maps

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Cartographic.shtml>

DEADLINE: Mail: July 15, 2013. Convention: 9am Monday, August 5, 2013.

Mailed to Chair (label package clearly "Cartographic Salon") to arrive no later than July 15, 2013 (Dwight Livingston, 1908 Angleside Road, Fallston, MD 21047-1739 410-877-9098); delivered to the Cartographic Salon display area at the NSS Convention by 9am Monday, August 5, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/cartoentry.pdf>

MORE INFORMATION: Judging criteria and a history of the salon at the Survey and Cartography Section website (<http://www.caves.org/section/sacs/>) Contact Dwight at cartsalon@caves.org

CAVE BALLADS - Cave-related songs and music

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/ballads/Cave%20Ballad.shtml>

DEADLINE: June 15, 2013.

Entries must be received by Roland Vinyard no later than June 15, 2013 (Roland Vinyard 597 State highway, 162 Sprakers, NY 12166 518-673-3212).

ENTRY FEE: \$5.00 per entry.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Roland at balladsalon@caves.org or (518) 673-3212.

COVER ART - Printed cave publication covers

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Cover%20Art.shtml>

DEADLINE: May 5, 2013.

All entries must be mailed to Brian Killingbeck (316 Tremont St., Apt 2, Chattanooga, TN 37405), with Entry Form, and received no later than May 5, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/coverentry.pdf>

ENTRY FEE: \$6.00 per organization, regardless of the number of covers submitted.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Brian at coverartsalon@caves.org

CRAFTS AND DESIGN - Hand-crafted items - quilts, embroidery, and more

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/finearts/Fine%20Arts.shtml>

DEADLINE: Shipped/Delivered to Convention by 5pm SATURDAY August 3, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/finearts/FineArtsEntryFormAlex.pdf>

ENTRY FEE: Entry fees per person: \$10 for adults who can assist with Salon week; \$15 for those who cannot assist with Salon week; \$5 for youth (12 and under).

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Carolina at fineartsalon@caves.org

FINE ARTS - Stalactites, Silicates and Mineralogy

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/finearts/Fine%20Arts.shtml>

DEADLINE: Entry Forms: July 15, 2013. Artwork (after acceptance only, please): Shipped/Delivered to Convention by 5pm SATURDAY August 3, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/finearts/FineArtsEntryFormAlex.pdf>

ENTRY FEE: Entry fees per person: \$10 for adults who can assist with Salon week; \$15 for those who cannot assist with Salon week; \$5 for youth (12 and under). Entry number limited to 4 per person for competition; an additional 4 may be entered for show-only for an additional \$10 fee; they do not have to be themed entries. Non-theme entries are a provision for artwork to be displayed but not judged as the artist wishes.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Carolina at fineartsalon@caves.org

MULTIMEDIA PROGRAMS - Multiple image computer programs

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/MultiMedia.shtml>

DEADLINE: Mail: June 1, 2013.

All entries must be sent to Dave Bunnell, P.O. Box 879, Angels Camp, CA 95222 no later than June 1, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/multientry.pdf>

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Dave Bunnell - multimediasalon@caves.org

PRINTS - Photographic prints

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Print.shtml>

DEADLINE: Mail: August 1, 2012. NSS Convention: Sunday, August 4, 2013 before 10 a.m.

All entries must be delivered to Print Salon area on Saturday, August 3rd between 9am-5pm, or on Sunday, August 4th between 8-10:00am at the NSS Convention Print Salon exhibition area, or mailed so that we receive it before June 1st (contact Pat Seiser at printsalon@caves.org or call 505-292-5793).

Please include your email address on the outside of the package so that we can let you know by email that your package has arrived.

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee is \$1 per print. There is no fee if the print is donated to the NSS.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/printentry.pdf>

SALES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: For questions concerning entries or sales of prints, please e-mail Pat Seiser at printsalon@caves.org or call 505-292-5793. If you have trouble with the deadline, please contact Pat before July 1st, 2013.

PHOTOS - Photographic slides & digital images

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Slide.shtml>

DEADLINE: April 30, 2013. All entries mailed to Cady Soukup (P.O. Box 600 Flint Hill VA 22627-0600; cadyasoukup@icloud.com) to arrive no later than April 30, 2013. If you have trouble with the deadline, please contact Cady before April 30!

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/photoentry.pdf>

ENTRY FEES: \$1.00 per film slide or \$0.25 per digital image. There is no fee if the film slide / digital image are donated to the NSS. No more than 30 entries per photographer.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Ray Cole / Cady Soukup at photosalon@caves.org

SYMBOLIC EMBLEMS - Patches, decals, pins, etc. related to caves or caving

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Symbolic%20Emblems.shtml>

DEADLINE: Mail: July 29, 2013. NSS Convention: Saturday noon, August 3, 2013.

All entries must be mailed to David Decker (5117 Fairfax Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114) to arrive no later than Saturday, July 29, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/shirtentry.pdf>

ENTRY FEES: The entry fee is \$3.00 for the entrant's first entry and \$1.00 for each additional entry.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact David Decker - emblemsalon@caves.org

T-SHIRTS - T-shirts related to caves or caving

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/T-Shirt.shtml>

DEADLINE: Mail: July 29, 2013. NSS Convention: Saturday noon, August 3, 2013.

All entries must be mailed to David Decker (5117 Fairfax Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114) to arrive no later than Saturday, July 29, 2013.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/shirtentry.pdf>

ENTRY FEES: The entry fee is \$3.00 for the entrant's first entry and \$1.00 for each additional entry.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact David Decker - tshirtsalon@caves.org

VIDEOS - Cave-related films and videos

<http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/Video.shtml>

DEADLINE: June 1, 2013. Entries must be mailed to David Socky (6572 Woodbrook Drive SW, Roanoke, VA 24018-5402) to arrive no later than June 1, 2013. Each entry must be accompanied by an official entry form.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.caves.org/committee/salons/videoentry.pdf>

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee is \$5.00 for each entry.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Dave Socky - videosalon@caves.org

Current Salon Committee Personnel

Dave Lester, Co-Chairman - salonschair@caves.org

Cady Soukup, Co-Chairman - salonschair@caves.org

Cave Arts & Music (Salons) Web Pages

Alex Sproul, Cave Arts & Music Web Master - webmaster@caves.org

Arts & Design

Kriste Lindberg, Chair (retiring)

Cartographic Maps Salon

Jim Kennedy, Coordinator - cartsalon@caves.org

Cave Ballads Salon

Barbara am Ende, Chair (retiring) - balladsalon@caves.org

Cover Arts Salon

Brian Killingbeck, Chair - coverartsalon@caves.org

Fine Arts Salon

Carolina Shrewsbury, Chair - fineartsalon@caves.org

WEBSITE: <http://www.speleoart.net/>

Multimedia Salon

Dave Bunnell, Chairman - multimediasalon@caves.org

Photographic Prints Salon

Pat Seiser, Chairman - printsalon@caves.org

Photo Salon

Ray Cole, Co-Chairman - photosalon@caves.org

Cady Soukup, Co-Chairman (entries) - photosalon@caves.org

T-Shirts and Symbolic Emblems Salon

Kim Fleischmann, Chairman (retiring) - emblemsalon@caves.org

Video Salon

David Socky, Chairman - videosalon@caves.org

Salon Awards Show Backstage Crew

Bill Boehle, Technical (Audio)

Dave Lester, Production & Stage Manager

David Socky, Technical (Backstage Equipment / Video / Switching)

Ray Cole, Technical (Communications, Computers)

2012 Personnel Changes and Kudos

The Salons Committee has had several people retire from service. Bill Boehle has been a key Photo Salon/Salon Awards Show volunteer for 30 years! Below are Bill's reminiscences for his years of service – a handy bit of history of the Salons and how they developed as well as personal memories: My salon "career" just sort of evolved. I was taking the usual cave pictures of trips with the grotto with an instamatic camera. That evolved into a better camera and flash to improve the pictures. When I started going to conventions on a regular basis starting in 1983, the photo salon was a "must see". About that time Karen Kastning got the Cave Photography Section off the ground and I signed on hoping to learn more about how to take better pictures underground. I hung around and soaked up information on what people were using and how they were doing it. Eventually, I got roped into being Section Chair for a couple of years and helping to pull together the Cave Photography Session at convention. I entered the Salon and had a few shots "Accepted for Show" but nothing beyond that.

In talking with Karen I learned more about what went in behind the scenes before convention to get the slide salon judged. At that time the judging was a two-day affair with a whole bunch of people just to crunch the judge's scores by hand. Personal computers were still relatively new, but I was amazed that all that work was being done by hand with calculators. So I volunteered to see if I could design a spreadsheet to streamline the process and speed up the judging. I wrote the original spreadsheet in Lotus and shortly converted it to Excel. I tested it on the previous year's data and found that there were a bunch of errors in the hand calculations, although none of them affected the results since the judges always have had the final say.

I took the spreadsheet, my computer and dot matrix printer to the next judging and did the data entry with one other person. We were able to calculate the scores, sort the data, and reorder the slides for further review by the judges in a much timelier manner than previously. Although the judging wasn't completed until about midnight, we were able to get the job done in one day.

This new system was initiated in Karen's last year as Photo Salon Chair. In the next year when Paul and Lee Stevens took over, I went along as part of the deal. I continued to do this job with Paul and Lee while now also helping out with the setup of the Photo Salon at convention. My job there was basically "Chief Gofer" helping to carry equipment in and assist in setup. I spend a lot of time working with Roswell Jones running wires and taping down cables. During the show I did whatever was necessary. After the show, I helped with breakdown and actually took the show slides from Bruce Bannerman so that I could "break the show down" and return the slides to the photographers the next morning. I would start first thing in the morning and remove the slides from the trays, sort them by photographer, and package them for return, usually during and after the salon critique on Friday morning.

That's how I got started on the Photo Salon committee. This routine of slide judging, show setup, and slide breakdown and return continued all during Paul and Lee's stint as Salon Chair's and continued when they retired from that job and Cady Soukup and Ray Cole took over the job. In recent years the job has evolved as there are now no slides to breakdown and return with the move to digital photography. Also in the last ten years I picked up the job of running the soundboard during the show, cueing music and other sound feeds. Time flies when you're having fun.....and, despite all the work, it was fun. We had a great team which overcame a lot of adversities, but always managed to have a good time!

The other retirees were mentioned in the previous report – to repeat:

Bruce Bannerman was a Photo Salon/Salon Awards Show volunteer for over 30 years, working with the slide projectors. He's back as the NSS dual-screen system technical dude and protector.

Barbara am Ende retired after being the Cave Ballad Salon Chair for 25 years!

Kim Fleischmann retired after being the Symbolic Emblems and T-Shirt Salons chair for 11 years.

Jim Kennedy was the Cartography Salon chair for 6 years, 2007 to 2012.

Wm Shrewsbury retired in 2011 after 1 year of being the Print Salon Chair.

2013 Salon Progress

- Fine Arts Salon chair Carolina Shrewsbury inaugurated the first (annual!) NSS News Arts & Letters Section issue. It has been received very well.
- The Fine Arts Salon proposed a new Salon category for Crafts and Design. The Crafts & Design Salon will have its first ‘formal’ salon display at the 2013 convention.
- The Salons Committee are working with the 2013 Shippensburg, PA NSS Convention staff to create the best display salons and salon awards/photo salon show ever!
- Salon Awards Show and NSS Banquet coordination
- The 2013 Convention Staff plan to have the Salon Awards Show ‘backstage crew’, candid photographers, and required equipment in place for the Banquet presentations for a seamless presentation.

NSS Equipment & Budget Considerations

- **Salon Awards – Budget \$600.00**
- Most of the NSS Salons use common ribbon awards for the Honorable Mention (green) and Merit (blue) awards, with the Best in Show / Best in Salon Category awards provided by the individual salon, as reported below.
- The ribbons used by the Salons for the past 11 years were originally obtained by Paul and Lee Stevens, possibly as long as 20 years ago. We may have almost enough ribbons for 2013, depending on the number of entries and awards, but it will be very tight.

<i>Salon</i>	<i>Honorable Mention / Merit Awards (ribbons/pins)</i>	<i>Best in Category / Best in Show Awards</i>	<i>Convention Budget</i>
Cartography	Awards funded via SACS	Best in Category Awards	- - -
Cave Ballads	General Salon Awards	Best in Show Flowstone Award by Doug Bradford	\$50.00
Cover Arts	General Salon Awards	Best in Category (3)	\$50.00
Crafts & Design	General Salon Awards	Best in Show	\$50.00
Fine Arts	General Salon Awards	Best in Category / Caver’s Award	\$100.00
Multimedia	General Salon Awards	Best in Show	\$50.00
Photo	General Salon Awards	Best in Show	\$75.00
Prints	General Salon Awards	Best in Category	\$75.00
Symbolic Emblems	Symbolic Emblem Awards	Best in Show	\$50.00
T-Shirts	T-Shirts Awards	Best in Show	\$50.00
Video	General Salon Awards	Best in Show	\$50.00
Total			\$600.00

- * Cartography Salon awards are largely underwritten by the Survey and Cartography Section.
- * Fine Arts Salon awards are partially underwritten by the Arts and Letters Section.

Carolina Shrewsbury volunteered to design award pins, as illustrated below. The cost of the pins is comparable to that of ribbons (based on the purchases of 3 sets of award ribbons for the 2009 ICS, for which we budgeted – and used - \$450.00). We have decided to move forward to purchase the pins as awards for 2013. For those salons that wish to continue to use ribbons, we can use the existing ribbons at no cost. Note that neither the ribbons nor the pins have a year on them, making them suitable for any convention year.



Honorable Mention (Green)



Merit Award (Blue)

Carolina will also design an award certificate for 'Accepted for Show' - an award that the NSS offered salon entrants only for the 2009 ICS Salons (every caver who had an entry 'Accepted for Show' received a white ribbon with the ICS logo). The certificate will be filled out by the Salon Chair with the name of the art/music and the year of the award.

Salon Judging – Budget \$120.00

The Photo Salon requires extensive judging and processing prior to convention. Since the Photo Salon judges become a captive audience for up to 16 hours, the Salon Co-Chairs provide simple refreshments. The budget for simple sandwich makings, chips, fruit, and sodas/water for 10 people for 3 meals is about \$120.00. The Photo Salon/NSS does not reimburse the judges for travel or expenses. Judging is done in the auditorium of a rural high school as we can get the facility for no cost, it is very similar to the convention venue, it does not require extensive security clearances, and it is available when needed.

Display Salons – Budget _____

Expenses for the Display Salons are generally found directly in the Convention budget. These include items such as the Display Stands (and their storage / transportation), and other expenses related to being able to provide adequate presentation for the display salon entries.

The Video Salon usually requires either a dedicated room, or a 'kiosk' for display of the entries in their entirety. The Multimedia Salon, depending on the number of entries, may also need a display room.

Fine Arts Workshops – Budget _____

The Fine Arts collaborative workshops during Convention week also require a budget. Some of the costs are handled by the Arts and Letters Section, but not all. Carolina Shrewsbury has been the responsible person for the workshops, their presentation, and their budget items.

Video Equipment – Budget \$50.00

Dave Socky stores the NSS-owned video cables and equipment. He adds personally-owned equipment to create the required setup for the Salon Awards Show and the Banquet presentations. The equipment list has not changed since the previous report. The one piece of equipment that we beg, borrow, or rent for the convention shows is a video monitor so the backstage staff can see what the audience sees. We use it in addition to a quality control person (or persons) in the audience who provides immediate feedback of show sound and presentation quality. At the most, a simple video monitor is a \$50.00 rental. Often we are able to borrow a monitor for no fee.

Radios – Long-Term Budget

A group of cavers evaluated radio equipment for use at NSS Conventions and other venues, and have acquired radios that can be used to coordinate security during convention and the Salon Awards Show on

Thursday night. We look forward to being able to use a portion of the new radios at the 2013 Convention and to purchase some additional radios from the salon budget.

Digital Projectors – Long-Term Budget

The two identical NSS Optoma digital projectors are used almost every day of convention:

- 3-D shows (Tuesday and Wednesday; one of the NSS screens was also used in 2012)
- Salon Awards Show (Thursday all-day setup, evening shows)
Photo Salon Critique (Friday morning)
- Banquet Presentation (Friday evening)

The Optoma projectors remain adequate; they are rated at 4200 lumens, 1024 x 768, but do not have HDMI. Obtaining new projectors does not need to happen soon. The NSS is wise to look ahead to budget for projector upgrade. A current estimate is that upgrading projectors, if done in 2013, will require approximately \$4,000 (\$1,7500 per projector, plus \$400 for spare projector bulbs). Prices are coming down and quality going up, but projectors are not advancing as quickly as what is evident in most other types of digital equipment.

Film Slide Projectors – Income _____

The Photo Salon and Salon Awards Show has been 100% digital (scanning submitted film slides) for 3 years. Bruce Bannerman stores the existing NSS-owned high-quality slide projectors and the NSS-owned projection screens. Slide projectors are listed on eBay for from \$30 to \$150 each, depending on quality. Selling the equipment may or may not be an acceptable option to defray costs.

Salon Displays – Gordon Birkhimer will somehow deliver the displays to the University.

Signs – Randy Hurst is in charge of putting up the signs for convention.

LOGISTICS

Chairman – Amber Lehmann reports she is aware of all the responsibilities and is ready. POC is Amber Lehmann amber.lehmann@gmail.com

PROGRAMS

Chairman – Bob Hoke reports contact has been made with all session chairs and a draft session schedule is now posted on the Web site.

- He expects a few minor changes, and hopefully some additions, but no significant changes.
- Rooms have been assigned for all sessions except the Stygobromus Workshop (which needs a biology lab with microscopes) and the SpeleoArt Workshop (which needs work tables and a sink). Both these requirements are under discussion with our University contact.
- Larry Cohen has allocated space for the various special events and activities. Bob will be starting to prepare the schedule section of the Program soon. It will include the daily schedules and event descriptions.
- The abstracts will be added as they arrive, but the deadline for them isn't until June 1, 2013. Kim Metzger will integrate my material into the actual Program. Currently, he sees no significant issues or problems with the session and events schedule or space. POC is Bob Hoke bob@rhoke.net or bobhoke@gmail.com

EVENING EVENTS

Monday - Howdy Party – Red (Gretchen) Schock reports the Howdy Party will be held Monday evening in the pavilion area bordering the convention camping area at Shippensburg University. A picnic style

meal will be provided beginning around 5:30 followed by live entertainment beginning around 8:00 by the band Hucklebuck. We expect the band to wrap up around 11:00. POC is Red (Gretchen) Schock - redcaver@verizon.net

Tuesday - Fellows / New Members Reception – The Fellows & New Member Reception will be held from 5:00-7:00 PM in the Tuscarora Room in the Reisner Dining Hall Building. The plan is to have Beer/Wine, light hors d'oeuvres, and a cake. Fellows & New Members is good. POCs are Dawn Ryan - dwn_ryan41@yahoo.com and Bonny Armstrong - bonnyarmstrong@gmail.com

Tuesday - MAR Anniversary Party - The MAR 60th Anniversary and the Shippensburg Grotto Reunion Party will be held at 7:30 PM in the Tuscarora Room in the Reisner Dining Hall Building. That time was chosen to provide a little break in between for setting up since they are in the same room and right after the Fellows & New Member Reception (5:00-7:00 PM). It should probably end around 10:00 PM. POCs are Dean Snyder - dsnyder3@ptd.net and Gretchen Schock - redcaver@verizon.net. The plan is to have Beer/Wine, light hors d'oeuvres, and a cake.

Wednesday - Auction – Craig reports the Auction will begin in the Orendorf Theatre at 7:00 PM and will continue as long as it takes to conclude.

Wednesday - Campground Party with the Terminal Siphons – Vik Garg is scheduling the band to begin at 8:00 PM. POC is Vik Garg cavervik@chilitech.net

Thursday - Photo Salon – Please refer to Cady Soukup, Co-Chairman's Salon Report for details. POCs are Cady Soukup salonschair@caves.org and Dave Lester, Co-Chairman salonschair@caves.org

Friday - Awards Banquet – Kim Kehs is planning to visit the University soon and is arranging the food and wine to be served. She has the agenda and continues to prepare for a very special evening. POC is Kim Kehs kimanded@verizon.net

ACTIVITIES

Chair – Pat Minnick reports things are taking shape. Pre & Post Camps have been added to the website. Cave information for caving trips during convention is being sent to Kim Metzgar for publishing in the Guidebook. Information on Non-Caving Activities has been provided and General Robert E. Lee is getting ready to cross the Potomac once again. POC is Pat Minnick patanne@pa.net

Geology Field Trip – Tom Feeney of Shippensburg University will be leading the trip assisted by Katie Schmid. POCs are Tom Feeney TPFeen@ship.edu and Katie Schmid geodragon2001@yahoo.com

Historic and current show caves – Jack Speece reports he is almost finished with this effort and he needs one more day on the road to complete everything. He has decided to create a driving tour because there are so many sites it will be impossible to accomplish it all in one day. Jack says there are still reports of many of the caves that need written, but he will do them one at a time so it will be finished on time. POC is Jack Speece - jhspeece@gmail.com

Gettysburg History Field Trip – Gregg Clemmer and George Dasher will each take a bus with 80 seats on the Battlefield Tour. George reports the Gettysburg field trip is ready to go and there will be 13 stops. The text is written for the Guidebook, and has been submitted for publishing. He suggests that something be added to the Convention website letting everyone know the Park Service Visitors Center has computers where you can look up and see where your ancestors fought during the battle. If you know the regiment, brigade, division, or corps your ancestor fought in, you can see where they were on the battlefield. Attendees might want to do a little research beforehand to determine that information. There are also fees to get into the museum (\$8.00) in the visitors center and the Cyclorama (\$12.50). The cost of the field trip does not include these fees. George expects the battlefield to be very crowded because of the 150th Anniversary in 2013. POC is Gregg Clemmer yorkst@aol.com and George Dasher wvcaver@juno.com

Pre & Post Field Camps – Ken Tayman is the Coordinator for all these efforts. So far MAKC has one Pre-Field Camps and there will be others. POC is Ken Tayman ktayman@karst.org

Cave Trips – Matt Saltzer and Gordy Ley are the Coordinators for cave trips and they will be offering many led and non-led trips. POCs are Matt Saltzer msaltzer@ptd.net and Gordy Ley gordyley@embarqmail.com

Vertical Contests – POC is Bill Cuddington 13078.mg@gmail.com

Non-caving activities – Bill Schultz wrote up and categorized a variety of non-caving activities. This information was submitted to Gordon for review and submission for publication on the convention website. All of it has been forwarded to Kim Metzgar for inclusion in the convention guidebook. As far as planned activities during convention week, Bill plans on leading a speleo-biking trip on the C&O Canal Towpath. He is also plan on leading a day hike on the Appalachian Trail that will include a visit to the Appalachian Trail museum. Mike Mostardi will be leading a mining history tour in the East Broad Top area, even though the East Broad Top Railroad will not be running next season. Bill is also trying to include a kayak trip on the Potomac River as an activity. Look for updates on this. POC is Bill Schultz wschu56889@aol.com

JSS – Alan Maddox is our NSS Liaison with the NSS JSS Chairman unknown at this time. POC is Alan Maddox trailsitter@yahoo.com

Speleology for Cavers – Steve Stokowski reports he revised and submitted a write up for course to be published, “A one-day course entitled "Speleology for Cavers" will be offered on Friday, August 9, 2013. Experts in Speleology will lecture on Geology, Geochemistry, Karst Hydrology, Biology, and Paleontology. The course will go the full day, cost \$45, and includes extensive printed course notes and lunch. Registration is limited to 35 people.” He also revised his budget and sent that to Treasurer Kim Fleischmann. And, he sent his table request for room setup to Larry Cohen and edited the spreadsheet for T-shirts for Lecturers. POC is Steve Stokowski - caversteve@aol.com

Project Underground – POC is Carol Zokaite czokaite@vt.edu

CaveSim – Dave Jackson reports CaveSim is now installed in a large enclosed trailer, thanks to great support from many cavers. Larry Cohen has been helping me with where the trailer will be located. I have been working on getting grant money to help defray the cost of hauling the cave simulator between Colorado and Pennsylvania. I have been working (via cavechat posts) on finding someone who has a truck that we can use to transport CaveSim. Despite our efforts, we have not yet secured any grant money to help with transportation costs. Also, we do not yet have a vehicle (Ford F250 or equivalent or larger) to transport CaveSim. In previous years, we have been successful at borrowing vehicles. Finally, we have not identified someone who can lend us field phones yet. Cave Simulator – POC is Dave Jackson jacksondmit@cavesim.com

Speleolympics – Dave Jackson reports he plans to do Speleolympic events similar to the events that we did at MayaCon. For the Speleolympics and also for education of young cavers, we plan to use the sked donated generously to us at MayaCon, and we plan to borrow field phones. CaveSim will of course be free to all convention attendees, and it will be available for general-public outreach. We will leave it set up in the trailer, so it will be possible to move it throughout the week if events call for this. Speleolympics - POC is Dave Jackson jacksondmit@cavesim.com

Problems

- We need to locate a Chairman for the Campground to manage the accompanying Campground Staff. We also need a number of volunteers for transporting camping gear from the parking areas to the campground before and after convention.
- Craig was involved in an accident that injured his leg. His recovery will be slow and lengthy, but he is becoming more active, and we have everything covered.
- We need volunteers to help with the DECON Station.

- The old NSS radios will be obsolete and must not be used after 1 JAN 13 because of narrow banding requirement of the FCC. This is an FCC rule and violation could result in fines and revocation of license. It is illegal to use FRS radios for commercial enterprises. Bill Jackson has taken possession of 12 radios from 2012 Convention. A donation from OTR's Robertson Association has facilitated the purchase of 8 more radios. Bill Jackson is putting together a report regarding how many additional radios will be required for 2013 Convention and beyond

Respectfully Submitted,

Gordon Birkhimer
2013 Convention Co-Chairman

2013 NSS Shippensburg, PA Convention Staff Letter – February 5, 2013

The Executive Committee met on Tuesday January 29th, 2013 to discuss all items related to our 2013 Convention. After going through every item line by line I can report with confidence everything is place to have a fantastic convention in Pennsylvania. It was great to see our Co-Chairman Craig Hindman up and about and Treasurer Kim Fleischman of course as we worked through the evening. As long as we maintain your continued support for the next 6 months, we should be very pleased with all the effort everyone has put forth.

Facilities Chairman Larry Cohen and Program Chairman Bob Hoke recently travelled to Shippensburg to tie up some final details at the University. They have completed mapping out the location of all sessions, vendors, and events. Our Webmaster Jim McConkey has insured out website is fully operational, and Karen Kastning worked hard to ensure registration is up and running, including the lodging choices of On-Campus Suites and Apartments.

The Google Group that Bill Jackson set up during last year's meeting at OTR is operating excellently. Not only is it handy to send out important information that the whole group needs to know like this message, but the Google Group "Drive" segment stores all of our important documentation such as maps, photos, and all general guidance in one convenient place. We will continue to communicate to smaller sets of the staff so you won't be bombarded with messages that are way outside your realm of care.

There is one critical area that I am concerned about. We have not located a volunteer to manage the campground duties. I am desperately asking everyone to consider volunteering for this role, or recommending a responsible person capable of operating the campground for the week! We also need volunteers to transport camp gear from the parking areas to the campground before and after convention.

At some point when I can arrange to move the Salon Displays, I need a place to store them at, or near the college in Shippensburg, PA. I would prefer to move them early this year if possible, to avoid crunch time madness just before Convention. Please help me find a 10' x 10' x 10' storage space in a barn, garage, or basement. **Please help if you have storage space!**

Please consider helping at the WNS DECON Station because we do intend on running that this year.

Please check the Staff Spreadsheet I have attached and verify the information for you is correct. Also, please add missing information like your cell number and address.

That's all I have for now and thanks to everyone! I have attached my report that will go to the Board of Governors in San Jose, CA on Saturday, March 23rd, 2013.

Gordon Birkhimer
2013 NSS Convention Co-Chair

2014 NSS Convention Update:

Prepared by: Julie E. Schenck Brown, 2014 NSS Convention Chair – February 2013 Julie Schenck Brown
jeschenck@hotmail.com

Planning activities continue for the 2014 NSS Convention, to be held July 14-18-2014 at the new headquarters of the NSS office in Huntsville, Alabama. This report summarizes the progress, the planning activities and problems of the 2014 NSS Convention Planning Committee.

Staff:

- Planning meetings continue to be held monthly at staff member's homes and rotate throughout the TAG region to optimize staff attendance. An AnyMeeting.com account has been established to encourage participation from staff that lives out of the area.
- John "Rocco" Stembel has accepted the position of JSS Director and will be coordinating all JSS activities for the 2014 NSS Convention.
- Lisa Andrews has accepted the position of Fund Raising/ Special Events Coordinator and will be soliciting corporate businesses in Huntsville, as well as cave related benefactors. Lisa has also made contact with the Superintendent of Cathedral Caverns State Park to negotiate free access to the commercial cave during the week of the 2014 NSS Convention for anyone with a badge or day pass from the 2014 NSS Convention.
- Alicia Nelson has accepted the position of BOG Liaison and will also be coordinating activities for the opening ceremony of the 2014 NSS Convention, including the invitation of local dignitaries.
- An updated staff list is attached at the end of this report.

Budget:

- A copy of the NSS Convention Fiscal policies was received in January 2013.
- A copy of the new Chart of Accounts has been received and our budget is being transferred to the new COA.
- It is our understanding that we need to submit our budget to the NSS AVP, NSS Treasurer and NSS Convention Liaison for review and approval, prior to opening a bank account. We plan to submit an updated budget by February 24th. Pending any changes or suggestions from the NSS AVP or NSS Treasurer, we will also have this budget available for the spring BOG meeting.
- After the budget is approved will be able to open the account for the 2014 NSS Convention?
- When we open the bank account for the 2014 NSS Convention, we will have the following people on the account: Wm Shrewsbury, NSS President; Debra Young, NSS Treasurer; Valerie Howell, 2014 NSS Convention Treasurer; and Julie Schenck Brown, 2014 NSS Convention Chair.

- The staff of the 2014 NSS Convention were under the impression that the \$ for Registration #1 and #2 for the 2014 NSS Convention that were auctioned at the 2012 NSS Convention are seed \$ for the 2014 NSS Convention bank account. What is the verdict on the seed \$?

Facilities:

- Huntsville City School district personnel want to have another meeting to discuss security and offering a cafeteria meal plan during the week of the 2014 NSS Convention; the Facilities Chair has attempted to schedule this meeting with the Huntsville City School POC and Convention Chairman, but this meeting has been delayed several times by the Huntsville City School POC.
- A contract has not been signed with the school, but the Huntsville City School POC continues to report they are receptive to our event. After the meeting with the school district personnel, the contract for rental of Johnson High School will be sent to Jay Clark, 2014 NSS Convention Legal Counsel for review.
- A fee schedule has been received for Johnson High School, but the POC at Huntsville City Schools has suggested that the NSS make a donation in lieu of the rental fees; the POC at the Huntsville City Schools wants to make a press release when the NSS makes the donation, however, we are still not able to secure a meeting date to discuss what size donation the school district has in mind for use of the school. NSS officials need to be involved in the press release.
- Huntsville City Schools had reported during our initial meeting at the school in January 2012 that there could possibly be renovations for the existing main structure at Johnson High School, which would be completed before the 2014 NSS Convention. There are no current plans to renovate the school at this time.
- A contract for the Von Braun Center (VBC) where the Awards Banquet will be held has been submitted for review and approved by the NSS AVP and the legal counsel and will be signed by the BOG.
- A liquor license from the City of Huntsville needs to be processed and will be reviewed by Jay Clark, 2014 NSS Convention Legal Counsel.
- A local coffee house has been contacted about the possibility of selling coffee & pastries at the campsite from 6:00-9:00 AM during the week of the 2014 NSS Convention; a confirmation has not been reached with this local coffee vendor.

Howdy & Campground Party:

- Straight to Ale, which is a Huntsville brewery has been contacted about supplying beer for the Howdy Party and Campground Party.
- Kozmic Mama, a local Huntsville band, has been approached about playing at the Howdy Party; a contract will be sent to the NSS AVP and Jay Clark, NSS Legal Consultant, for review.
- The Howdy Party theme is “A Legendary Homecoming,” as we welcome cavers home to the new NSS HQ. We have discussed ideas related to the Howdy Party, including a homecoming court of TAG cavers.

Logistics:

- Salon stands from 2013 NSS convention will need to be moved to the NSS headquarters for the 2014 NSS Convention; we need to identify a volunteer who will transport these to the NSS HQ after the 2013 NSS Convention. Any suggestions?
- Prior to the start of the 2014 NSS Convention, the Guidebooks, Program Guides and symbolic items will be stored at the NSS HQ and an area has been identified for storage by Michelle Vaughn, 2014 NSS Registration Chair, who is also employed as the NSS Bookstore Manager; these items will be

prepared at the NSS HQ and then mobilized to Johnson High School, where registration for the 2014 NSS Convention will be held.

Programs:

- The Program Chair continues to work with the 2013 NSS Convention Program Chair and has begun organizational tasks related to the 2014 NSS Convention.
- Selection of individual Session Chairs has not been completed.
- Contact has been made with workshop leaders including:
 - Speleology for Cavers
 - Project Underground
 - Vertical Workshop
 - SpeleoArt, 3 workshops available
 - Photography-- Peter Jones and John Woods are considering a Sunday all day photo workshop for which they would charge. This would be in addition to the free week-day workshop/session.
 - Bat Workshop led by Jim “Crash” Kennedy
- The Program Chair will begin drafting the master schedule of sessions, workshops, meetings, and other officially scheduled activities at the 2014 NSS Convention as Sessions Chairs are selected.

Public Relations/ Publicity:

- A rough draft of the 2014 NSS Convention logo has been outlined and will be developed pending suggestions for revision from key staff.
- Pre-Convention staff t-shirts will be printed for staff prior to May 2013 and can be worn at regional caving events and the 2013 NSS Convention.
- The dates of the 2014 NSS Convention and a contact person, phone number and e-mail address are listed on the Calendar of Events on the NSS website; inquiries are answered within a 24 hour period.
- The Publications Chair, who has experience with designing the on-line registration software for the TAG Fall Cave-In, will be assisting the Public Relations Chair and Alex Sproul, NSS Webmaster, with the development of the 2014 NSS Convention website. A specific question that our staff would like answered is whether or not the NSS requires particular software for NSS Convention websites.
- Registration software from the 2011 NSS Convention has been received, but the registration software from the TAG Fall Cave-In may be utilized instead as the website team has more familiarity with the software from the TAG Fall Cave-in.
- A Facebook page has been secured and will go live once a logo is confirmed.
- A timeline and schedule of articles for publication in the *NSS News* has been developed and will be reviewed with Dave Bunnell, Editor of the *NSS News*.
- We plan to have a promotional video ready by the 2013 NSS Convention; this video will not be made available to grottos until after the 2013 NSS Convention.

Publications:

- Planning needs to begin on the layout and list of articles, as well as cave descriptions.
- Norma Dee Peacock had initially agreed to edit the daily newsletter during the week of Convention, but has now resigned the position, thus Meredith Hall Johnson will be approached about accepting the position.

Registration:

- A rough draft of the registration form has been created.
- Interactive testing of the online registration will begin as website development progresses.

Vendors:

- The layout of the vendors for the 2014 NSS Convention is pending based on the final floor plan from school officials; Personnel from the City of Huntsville school district have not confirmed if construction will start at Johnson High School as initially planned in 2012; currently other city schools have been targeted for relocation and/ or renovation.
- During the negotiation of the donation for the use of Johnson High School, we will determine if the school will allow use of tables and chairs; if not available, we will rent these items.
- Need to follow up with tax and vendor fees through the city of Huntsville contact.

Special Events & Activities:

- Both Lin Guy and Tom Whitehurst will lead a half day field trip that features the Caves of Huntsville.
- Alan Cressler has been approached as a banquet Speaker in which he presents a comedy roast of the TAG legends. If Alan declines this position, Dick Mitchell has been suggested as a possible speaker.
- Discussing the possibility of having a field trip that is focused around “geology for cavers.”

2014 NSS Convention Staff

Chairs:	Julie Schenck Brown 146 Shooting Star Trail Gurley, AL 35748 jeschenck@hotmail.com	Peter “Mudpuppy” Michaud 1164 Old Sewanee Rd Sewanee, TN 37375 pup@mud-puppy.com
Treasurer:	Valerie Howell 4183 Cliff Road S Birmingham, AL 35222 vdshowell@yahoo.com	
Facilities Chair:	Julie Uselton 338 Sweetland Drive Chattanooga, TN julie_uselton@yahoo.com	
Logistics Chair:	Jim Wilbanks PO Box 34 Rising Fawn, GA jimgail69@earthlink.com	
Programs Chair:	Cheryl Jones	

1865 Old Meadow Road
Apt. 202
McLean, VA 22102
Cs.jones@verizon.net

Publications Chair:

Louis Towles
831 Essie Ave
Atlanta, GA 30316

Publicity Chair:

Olivia McKinsey
4273 Cary Drive
Snellville, GA 30039
oliviamck@gmail.com

Registration Chair:

Michelle Vaughn
188 Pops Corner
Huntsville, AL 35811
ladycaver55064@gmail.com

On-Site Registration Director:

Tricia Spiliotis
11210 Mountaincrest Drive
Huntsville, AL 35803
Tishka42@hotmail.com

Salons Chair:

Carolina Shrewsbury
124 4th Ave NW
Largo, FL 33770
speleoart@hawaiiflow.com

Vendors Chair:

Nina Martin
41 Herald Drive
Bethlehem, GA 30620
imo@caves.org

Security Director:

Chris Hacker
1714 Arundel Ct
Loveland, OH 45140
smgcaver@gmail.com

Assistant Security Director:

Michael McKinsey
4273 Cary Drive
Snellville, GA 30039
tagcavewolf@gmail.com

Auction Coordinator:

Craig Hindman
7600 Pindell School Road
Fulton, MD 20759
craig.hindman@netzero.com

Awards Banquet MC:

Nancy Aulenbach
195 Windy Ct SW

Lilburn, GA 30047
flittermice@bellsouth.net

BOG Liaison: Alicia Nelson
395 Edwards DR NE
Marietta, GA 30060
Kickit.alicia@gmail.com

Cave Trip Coordinator: Andy Zellner
3673 Heatherwood Dr
Marietta, GA 30066
andyzellner@hotmail.com

Daily Rag: Merdith Hall Johnson???

JSS Director: John "Rocco" Stembel
4475 Leonora Drive
Tucker, GA 30084
rocco@mindspring.com

Legal Counsel: Jay Clark, Esq.
1000 Urban Center Dr, Ste 125
Birmingham, AL 35242
jclark@chslaw.com

Sponsorship Coordinator: Lisa Andrews
325 Falcon Creek Drive
Suwanee, GA 30024
lisawa@bellsouth.net

Volunteer Coordinator: Teri Stephens
440 Douglas Lane
Clinton, TN 37716
teri.leadlizard@gmail.com

NSS Website Liaison: Alex Sproul
5715 Lee Jackson Hwy
Greenville, VA 24440
webmaster@caves.org

EDUCATION DIVISION REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by Diane Gillespie djoop@nckri.org

Education Division Activities

The Education Division has a number of vacancies.

- **Safety and Techniques Committee:** Search conducted via the *NSS News*, did not yield any candidates. Joop is recruiting and contacting potential candidates.
- **Environmental Education Committee:** Search conducted via the *NSS News*, did not yield any candidates. Joop is recruiting and contacting potential candidates.
- **Environmental Education Committee:** Chairman, Vacant
- **Youth Groups Liaison Committee** Chairman - Allen Maddox nssyouth@caves.org
 - **Publications Review**
 - Currently conducting a review and suggesting revisions for “*Caving: A Policy Statement and Guidelines on Caving Prepared by the Youth Groups Liaison Committee of the National Speleological Society and the Boy Scouts of America*”.
 - Currently conducting a review and update for the YGLC web pages.
 - **Database**
 - Overseeing the development of an online database to store and track YGLC contact information for cavers, grottos, and youth organization contacts in the specific NSS regions. Necessary funding for this objective is being explored through possible sponsors or fundraising.
 - **Committee Structure**
 - Traditionally, the YGLC has not conducted outreach or initiated contact with youth organizations. Up to now the Committee has been taking a passive approach to interfacing with youth organizations, relying on them to make the initial contact. We have a web page that shows what we have to offer youth organizations. From what I have been told that web page received about 100 views last month. With the millions of youth organizations members across the US this is not good. Maddox is initiating a tactical change with the YGLC, to include an aggressive outreach approach targeting youth organizations, informing and illustrating what the NSS YGLC has to offer for their programs. Currently we are developing outreach and marketing strategies. Necessary funding for this objective is being explored through possible sponsors or fundraising.
- **Regional Reports**
 - **Arizona Regional Association** (Vacant)
 - **Mid-Atlantic Region** (Allen Maddox)
 - Active program with numerous scout talks and trips
 - **Mississippi Valley-Ozark Region** (Vacant)
 - **Northeastern Regional Organization** (Vacant)
 - **Northwestern Regional Organization** (Vacant)
 - **Ozark Valley Region** (Eric Edelman) No Report.
 - **Rocky Mountain Region** (Vacant)
 - **Southeastern Regional Association** (Lewis Baker) No Report.
 - **Southwestern Region** (Deanna Younger) No Report.
 - **Texas Speleological Association** (Mark Alman)
 - Active program involving presentations and caving trips.
 - **Virginal Area Region** (Joey Fagan) No Report.
 - **Western Region** (Steve Deveny)
 - Active program using web page and upcoming webinar, presentations an cave trips.

- **Problems** - Dan Sullivan has retired from his position as Regional Coordinator for RMR. This position remains unfilled at this time.

- **Education Grants and Scholarship Committee** - Chairman, Pam Tegelman Mallabad
Pam.teg.mal@gmail.com
 No grant applications submitted this reporting period.

- **Safety & Techniques Committee** - Chairman, Vacant

- **Webinar Committee** – Acting Chairman, Debbie Spoons webinar@caves.org
 - **Activities**
 - **Webinar Planning**
 Currently recruiting presenters and scheduling presentations, Four webinars were conducted during this reporting period with 195 total attendees.
 - **Fundraising**
 Donations this reporting period totaling \$1,500 were given from the Edwards Aquifer Authority and Virginia Karstlands. Other donations are expected and advertising costs for the webinar and the NSS web page being determined. Current webinar expenses for the year are about \$900.
 - **Webinar Reports**
 - i. **Alaska Caving – the Final Frontier, Carlene and Kevin Allred**, April 2012
 - ii. **Caving Robot Conquers the Deepest Sinkhole in the World, Marcus Gary**, May 7, 2012
 - iii. **The Edwards Aquifer of South Central Texas USA – An Aquifer Under Stress, Geary Schindel**, January 2013
 - iv. **Cave Biota of Great Basin National Park, Gretchen Baker**
 05 December 2012 Duration: 84 minutes
 519 Opened Invitation / 216 Registered / 77 Registered
 101 Attended/ Attendee Average Duration: _____
 - v. **What is the Youth Group Liaison Committee, Allan Maddox**
 02 January 2012 Duration: 100 minutes
 154 Opened Invitation / 120 Registration Link / 15 Registered
 11 Attended / Attendee Average Duration: 52 Minutes
 - vi. **The Mysteries of Easter Island, Jut Wynn**
 11 January 2013 Duration: 79 minutes
 858 Opened Invitation / 278 Registration Link / 67 Registered
 28 Attended / Attendee Average Duration: 61 minutes
 - vii. **A Tour of West Virginia Caves and Karst, George Dasher**
 13 February 2013 Duration: 89 minutes
 217 Opened Invitation / 200 Registration Link / ___ Registered
 55 Attended / Attendee Average Duration: _____
 - viii. **The Use of Geophysics to Detect Solutional Features in Karst, Ron Green.**
 11 May 2013 Duration: 119 minutes
 809 Opened Invitation / 234 Registration Link /Registered 79 Attended

NATURE PRESERVES REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by Gary Moss kd4itj@amsat.org

March 2013

Barton Hill Nature Preserve (NY)

Dave Engle - bartonhillcommittee@caves.org

Report pending

Donald R. Russell Nature Preserve (OK)

Clayton Russell – drussellcommittee@caves.org

Donald R. Russell Nature Preserve

The cave is fine with little to report. The cave is closed but not gated and there is very little visitation. The Bats are still at the cave and no unusual bat activity was seen so far this winter. In caves in the area there are some dead bats found in the summer but they seem to be mostly babies first learning to fly.

The Donald R. Russell Cave Preserve is established as a biologic preserve to protect two distinct bat habitats. The management plan for the caves and properties provides for little disturbance of the habitats and is written to achieve this goal. The intent of the preserve is being met.

Great Expectations Nature Preserve (WY)

Bob Montgomery – greatxcommittee@caves.org

Projects: This year's proposed projects, for the preserve are: a noxious weed survey (and proposed treatments), fence repair and construction, and maintenance of the Great X Cave gate, as discussed below. These and other projects on the Great X Cave Preserve are scheduled for this year's field season, which probably will not start until late July.

Problems: Since the gate was moved, there may be sufficient space beneath the gate for a small person to squeeze through, or get trapped. We intend to remedy the situation by installing a steel bar projecting down from the gate into this space. This was measured during a trip to change the lock and survey the property. During several trips, it has been noted that the gates in the fences on the preserve have been left open. I suspect that lazy individuals on 4 wheel ATV's are the culprits here. The gates have been wired shut. We intend to check and repair the fences again this year.

In addition, it was noted that there are several areas infested with Canadian Thistle on the property. Since these are a noxious weed we are attempting to eradicate them over the next several years.

With the closure of all Forest Service caves in this area, due to White Nose Syndrome, it was decided to keep all caves on the Great Expectations Cave Preserve open. There have only been a few bats sighted in the caves and these apparently only roost there in the summer if at all. We are requiring all persons entering the caves to use proper decontamination procedures. The BLM caves in the area are still open to caving.

The Hole-in-the-Wall Grotto will probably host the 2013 Rock Mountain Regional in the Great X area over the Labor Day Weekend.

Plans: In addition to the above mentioned projects, we intend to cut some dead timber on the property above the cave entrance. A conservation trip is being discussed to do a clean up in the Milky Way area of the cave. The management plan is currently being reviewed and revised to more accurately reflect the level and type of usage of the property and caves. A rescue plan is being developed and there are plans to

place a rescue cash in the cave. There is also a proposal to more accurately map and sketch the section of the cave from the entrance to the end of the Great Hall and to the Cephalopod Malt Shop.

Summary:

Overall last year's caving season was mostly uneventful. Usage of the cave was been about the same as previous years, with no through trips.

Lack of time available by volunteers has limited the work being done on the preserve.

Requests:

The individuals who lease the adjacent lands for livestock grazing have asked about the potential of grazing on the preserve. We had offered the prior land owner the ability to continue grazing on the preserve, but he declined the offer. This individual would maintain the fences and additionally fence off the cave entrance, along with creating a diversion and tank to provide water for the livestock. I think we need a vote of the board to allow this use of the preserve.

John Guilday Caves Nature Preserve (WV)

Dave West – jguildaycommittee@caves.org

Bat counts scheduled for the last week of February (Trout) and second week of March (Hamilton and New Trout). Nothing else to report from Guilday for now.

Kingston Saltpeter Cave Nature Preserve (GA)

Larry O. Blair - kingstoncommittee@caves.org

On September 29, 2012 a special trip was led to the preserve and into the cave at the request of and for officials of the Anheuser-Busch Company. Note the Preserve is surrounded by "A.-B." property and we use their gates and roads to access the KSCNP property. Committee members Kevin and Shannon Glenn and myself led eight people on this informative trip. It was a very good public relations effort and we got some very positive feedback. All was in order. All bats observed seemed to be healthy and some were very active. We collected a small amount of old trash also.

December 31, 2012 found the Glenns once again checking the property. They walked the perimeter of the Big Entrance enclosure and found everything okay. Everything inside the cave was alright as well.

I have located two more unbeknown to us references to the cave in a book published in 1996 concerning Civil War sites in the state of Georgia. This is very interesting in light of the fact that we acquired the property in 1983. These references probably were made possible due to articles and published reports we of the committee had made as part of our research.

On the evening of January 30, 2013 a category EF3 tornado packing 160 miles per hour winds struck close to the Preserve! As of yet we have been unable to visit the property due to many days of rain to check for downed trees and possible damage to our gates and enclosures. As far as is known from the direction taken by the storm we should be okay. But will check as soon as possible.

As of this date we have no problems at the Preserve and look forward to several planned trips concerning several aspects of the study of the cave.

McFail's Cave Nature Preserve (NY)

Tommy Rider - mcfailscommittee@caves.org

Progress: McFails Cave is closed for the season.

Plans: No immediate plans. This Spring I hope to conduct a cleanup on the property to take care of some trees leaning over the Hall's Hole entrance. Also, I hope that some of the trips this year can start removing the old supply cache at the Northwest Dome as it is in a state of disrepair. Need to consider whether it's even worth replacing.

Problems: - No problems to report.

Mill Creek Sink Preserve, Alachua (FL)

Robert Anderson – millcreekcommittee@caves.org

We had 3 guides take guests in to Mill Creek sink this quarter. Wayne Kinard, Rick Crawford and Mark Messersmith. Visibility in the system has been poor due to heavy rains. Water levels are back up to a normal level.

We had a guides meeting February 16th and everything is going smoothly.

Richard Blenz Nature Preserve, Monroe (IN)

Anmar Mirza – blenzcommittee@caves.org

Progress: Several oak and tulip poplar trees were felled and started to be milled for the shelter we want to build on the old barn site. More cleanup has been done in the cave. The Volcano Passage is close to being done

Plans:

We are awaiting better weather to finish milling the lumber to build the shelter. During the fall we poured footers on the concrete pad for the posts for the shelter, as soon as the ground firms up we will get the lumber finished and set a work day to work on the shelter. We have a volunteer who is a roofer who can get us roofing material donated. This summer the Queen Blair entrance will be stabilized so that regular visitation can start. Because of the increase in unauthorized visitation the RBNC is discussing whether a gate on the cave is appropriate. No decisions have been made.

Problems:

We have had several instances of unauthorized access to the cave that resulted in graffiti being left. We also have had two incidents where authorized visitors left graffiti.

Schoharie Nature Preserve (NY)

Christa Hay – schohariecommittee@caves.org

The cave is currently closed for the winter and will reopen May 15th. Property and cabin are still open and there has been some groups staying in the cabin. The gate was not fixed before the weather changed. A work weekend will be set up in the spring/summer to address the gate issue. The last visit I made out to the property I noticed the lower gate to the camping area was taken down and it looks like someone was doing donuts. Since there was snow coverage I am unsure how much damage was actually done to the ground.

Budget needs will be approximately \$600 for the gate repair. The outhouse will also need some maintenance. Structurally it seems fine but the wood is starting to deteriorate in some areas. The driveway also needs to be graded and I will be checking on prices come spring. There is a local caver with some equipment so hoping to use that for the driveway.

Shelta Cave Preserve (AL)

Chris Miller – sheltacommittee@caves.org

Plans: Continue bat exit counts in early spring and monitoring for WNS (*G. destructans*).

Progress: Bio Surveys -

- Winter bat survey was completed on 10 February. A total of 48 bats were observed. All bats appeared to be of species *P. subflavus*. One specimen was observed in flight during the count. Of the 48 bats counted, 30 were observed up close and displayed no obvious indications of WNS. There were no dead specimens encountered. This count is the same as last year.
- During the bat count, one cave fish and one cave crayfish were observed in East Lake.
- Water levels were down for this time of year. Based on the indicator poles, the water level during the survey was at 17 feet.
- Repairs to the perimeter gate appear to be holding up very well. Sliding latches and locks are working fine.

Tytoona Cave Nature Preserve (PA)

Garrett Czmor - tytoonacommittee@caves.org

For this period, not much has changed from the last report as it seems the same old ... same old. But, here are some tidbits of information that might be helpful. The conservation visit by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy did take place and they seemed satisfied by our efforts to preserve the property. The petroleum pollution experiment / study from a New York state college was abandoned when the college found a closer site in distance to them. Future plans include putting a water proof coating on the wood railings and kiosk for further weather protection.

It is anticipated; due to the NSS Convention that caver visitation will increase this year. I plan to have the kiosk fully stocked with brochures for the event.

In general, the condition of the property and cave is very good.

Warren's Cave Preserve, (FL) –

William H. Oldacre – warrencommittee@caves.org

Bill Oldacre, who has been the Warren Cave Nature Preserve Committee chairman for many years, is currently indisposed due to health issues. He has requested that I take over his duties until his health improves. At his request, I am the preserve committee chairman. I am directing the key and will begin to direct people into the cave. Other committee members are Les Cochram and Dr. Sarah Cervone, who will be technical advisor. We also have Erik Amsbury and Buford Pruitt available for extended problems. Upon Bill Oldacre's return everything will go back to normal.

We have had light visitation recently, three groups of three to four people. The cave gate had to be dug open due to rainfall and was in otherwise good condition with no evidence of vandalism. Several new members of the local grotto (Florida Speleological Society) were present. Due to the amount of crawling necessary to explore even a modest amount of the cave, the local grotto regards Warren Cave as a "Noob Filter." If new members love it, they are likely genuine cavers at heart. There has been talk of a new push to the back but this has not materialized yet.

The water table is low and a few solitary bats can be seen, as is usually the case.

The FSS will host the annual Florida Cave Cavort on the weekend of March 8th. We anticipate a weekend of somewhat heavier visitation. There is some brush and a fallen tree close to the entrance of the preserve and we will try to remove it before that weekend.

No other issues exist.

Wells Cave Nature Preserve, Pulaski, KY

William (Bill) Walden – wellscommittee@caves.org

There has been little to report over the winter months for Wells Cave.

We will be going over there later this month or in February to do the annual bat count and check for WNS. Will keep you posted on this.