

Kevin Tate Platform Statement

As a veteran, retired law enforcement officer and active cave and technical diving instructor, I understand the meaning of the word *responsibility*. Serving on the NSS-CDS Board is a huge responsibility and one I take seriously. Here are some things you should know about me and my vision for the CDS.

Missed Opportunities

Successful nonprofit organizations have many things in common. Among these are proven ways of doing things that help ensure the organization is financially healthy and maintains a strong and growing membership. Unfortunately, these are opportunities the NSS-CDS often misses. Here are just some examples:

- ! Successful nonprofits will have a written plan for growing and maintain their membership. These plans will include specific goals that can be used to measure planned performance against actual performance. To the best of my knowledge, the CDS has no such plan or, if it does, that plan is not being followed.

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! Healthy nonprofits manage their membership through the use of a dedicated database. This not only facilitates communication with members it helps ensure that things such as membership renewal notices go out when they need to. Howard Ehrenberg of Duck Diver LLC created just such a database for us. But, for reasons passing understanding, it is not being used. Instead, our membership records exist only on a series of Excel spreadsheets. This doesn't help us at all.

! Successful nonprofits communicate regularly with members through email newsletters, typically at least once a month. Such emails not only help keep members better informed but also promote volunteerism and encourage members to support worthy projects. Currently, our member communication seems to be limited largely to sporadic PDFs of *Underwater Speleology*, a format that nearly impossible to read on your phone.

Among my goals as a CDS Board members is to help ensure opportunities such as these aren't being missed.

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Do your research

Vote for the NSS-CDS Board members you think best reflect your feelings about the Section. But, whatever you do, *do not* base your decision solely on a candidate's platform statement. Instead:

- ! Check out each candidate's social media pages. This is a much better indication of who they really are.
- ! If you do not know the candidate personally, ask friends who do. What do your friends think about this person? Does this person have a track record for working well with others?
- ! Be especially wary of individuals with a record of saying things in public, at Board meetings or on social media that would reflect poorly on the section. Such behavior can discourage new members from joining and existing members from renewing.

Promises I can keep

All too often, candidates make promises they have no way of knowing whether they can keep. The promises candidates can keep are the ones that relate to character. Here are the promises I know I can deliver on:

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- ! I will never say anything in public, at Board meetings or on social media that will embarrass the Section or discourage people from being part of the organization.

- ! For whatever position I end up holding on the Board, I will ensure that any usernames and passwords related to that position are also in the possession of the NSS-CDS Board Chairman and Business Manager. This way should anything unforeseen happen, others will be able to carry on in my place.

- ! Similarly, I will ensure that my duties and responsibilities for whatever Board position I hold are well documented. After my term is up, this will make my successor's job easier. And should I be unable to continue my duties on the Board, someone else will be able to pick up and continue where I left off.

This is why I know I can effectively serve the CDS as a member of the Board of Directors.