



## **NSS-CDS BOD Meeting – August 17, 2026**

**BOD Quorum (at least 4 directors):** Yes

**BOD Present:** Fred Stratton (FS), Daniel Alix (DA), Shannon Perry (SP), Steve Dalcher (SD), John Rutledge (JR)

**BOD Absent:** Jenny Dillaman (JD), Chris Brock (CB)

**Members Present:** Renee Power - Board Member Emerita (RP), Adam Hughes (AH), Barbara Dwyer (BD), Chad Dalton (CD), Kevin Stiegler (KS)

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### **Meeting Convened – FS**

Meeting called to order by FS at 7:02 PM EST.

### **Minutes Approved – FS**

FS made a motion to accept the minutes from July 20, 2026. DA seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

### **Secretary Report – SP**

- SP finalized minutes from July meeting. SP will post to website following this meeting.
- News of Forrest Wilson's passing was posted on social media and sent via eblast to the membership.
- Eblast for Midwest Workshop went out along with posts on Social Media. We'll continue working on getting the word out over the next few weeks leading up to the event.
- A few more posts will also be going out before the end of the month that will wrap up the post-event marketing for ICDC26.
- SP working with CM (Chloe Marcum) on content strategy. She is going to be working on content a month out for the launch of our TikTok channel.
- In review of posts on our NSS-CDS group, there were still a few questions on what to approve or deny because some could go either way. SP created a Quick Reference guide for post approvals that we'll continue to build on.

### **Underwater Speleology – BD**

- BD is planning the next issue (end of September), dedicated primarily to Forrest Wilson, with stories and photos, a story from Guy Bryant on his trip to Madagascar, and other content.
- BD said she is not entirely satisfied with the magazine's current direction and wants more exploration content. She plans to survey the membership on their interests and recruit writers.



- FS has set aside older articles for possible reprinting to discuss with BD: a 30-plus-year-old piece by India Young on the origin of the Abe Davis Award, and an article by Woody Jasper on the “stupid meter.”

### **Treasurer’s Report – DA**

*\*Report attached.*

#### **Cash in Bank (as of August 10, 2026)**

Checking: \$48,216.05

Savings (Training Fund): \$6,946.66

Savings (Meeting House Fund): \$4,867.77

**Total Cash-in-Bank: \$60,030.48**

Please note that these balances reflect activity in early July, as well as some activity from late June that was not included in my previous manager's report.

- Finances are healthy: about \$42,000 in checking, just under \$7,000 in savings (training fund), and under \$5,000 in the Meeting House account, for total cash in bank a little over \$60,000.
- Major expenditures in the last month: deposit on the 2027 Winter Workshop venue, a new certification card printer (3-year warranty), Cow Springs waiver and website updates, coffee mug restock, and Underwater Speleology layout fees.
- DA confirmed he will attend DEMA with SP and RP and expects to be there most or all of the show.

### **Operation Manager’s Report – AH**

*\*Report attached.*

- Spending is currently elevated, consistent with the normal pattern of holding expenses until immediately after the conference.
- AH paid off the remaining balance on the 2026 Winter Workshop raffle prize.
- No large expenditures anticipated until closer to year end.
- The new certification card printer is running well; AH has completed three or four batches with improved card quality.
- AH plans to restock the store in the next month or two, including a new shirt design and a hoodie design ahead of fall sales. FS asked whether AH wanted to reorder the current hoodie design or redesign it; AH said the current design sells well with good margins and deferred styling to SP. AH said he is low on gray UV hoodies (a popular item); mugs continue to sell well.
  - FS noted some members have asked about a no-zip hoodie option; no decision was made on demand.
  - SP suggested keeping the current hoodie design and adding a pullover design she has started but not finished; she will complete it and send it to AH.
  - SP also suggested a members-only discount or promo code on select merchandise, citing the bylaws’ mention of member discounts. AH said the store already has the infrastructure to toggle a members-only discount.
- FS clarified AH does not need board approval to reorder existing inventory and should order as needed to avoid missing sales.



- FS asked AH and SP to develop a member pricing/discount strategy (options discussed: hold prices flat and offer a member discount or adjust member vs. non-member prices) and present it back to the board.

### Program Director Reports – JR

- Patty Spellman is working with Andy Johnston on water sampling projects with KUR.
- JR is still waiting to hear back from Chelsea Dinion on conservation items she wants to share.
- JR attended a Florida Springs Council meeting; the Council is retaining its own lawyer rather than relying on volunteer legal help.
- JR has been in contact with Ryan Smart of the Florida Springs Council on current drought conditions and may sit in at some of their meetings.
- JR proposed a NSS-CDS Exploration Project in October, with a social media call inviting members in exploring sinkholes and other areas that may lead to undiscovered cave systems, possibly using LIDAR. JR asked the board for feedback before proceeding. He noted he has drones but has not completed FAA Part 107 certification, which would be needed for state park use.
  - Board response: SD and DA voiced informal support; no formal motion or vote was taken.
  - JR to work up social media post for ridge walking and send out for review before posting.
- JR, FS and SD welcomed the Divers Atlas QR plaque at Cow Springs on August 19<sup>th</sup> with Divers Atlas Director Fino BP. The plaque features a QR code to scan to learn more about the site while members are there, with the ability to add a conditions report or access note after the dive.
- FS worked on the dressing rooms at Cow Springs. JR also reported that Cow Springs is doing great right now and received compliments of the site.
- SD added that FS and JR also cleared a tree on the path at Cow Springs earlier this month.

### Program Director Reports – SD

- SD reported some developments on the 630-acre surrounding Cow Springs. Susan Carr, Senior Conservation Project Manager of the Putnam Land Conservancy (understood to be based in North Carolina) was retained by landowner Gina Drew, who wants the land conserved rather than developed. Negotiations have been ongoing for about four years, with litigation similar to the Jewel Sink matter.
  - Susan Carr met with the Suwannee River Water Management District on August 11th and indicated intent to purchase the property (estimated sale price \$3.5 million), having allocated 25% of the needed funds; it is seeking additional funding (Nature Conservancy mentioned as one possible source) and intends to remove a pivot irrigation system to reduce draw on the aquifer. The matter goes to the district's governing board on September 8th.
  - SD asked whether the board agreed drafting a statement to Susan Carr expressing support for the district pursuing the purchase. FS agreed and suggested SD could draft it himself or consult outside scientific contacts (Chris Werner, Thomas Sawicki, Bob Knight, or Ryan Smart) on the aquifer-benefit language. This was informal board consensus, not a formal motion.



- JR raised a separate issue: a proposed data center north of Dive Outpost. JR said he'd heard it may already be approved, but this is unconfirmed and should not be treated as fact until verified. If built, it would draw on the aquifer and could increase local electricity costs. JR has not been able to confirm awareness of the project through county contacts, and has found no public documentation, only secondhand reports and photos of tree clearing on Dive Outpost owner's property. JR asked SD to check with water management contacts and will forward what information he has to the board.
  - SD agreed to look into the data center matter once JR forwards his information. SD and JR both noted the organization can share factual information but cannot take a political position or express opposition; the board can make people aware and invite them to express their own opinions.
- FS noted conversations with Bill Main and Rick Robinson in the Section helping to build new stairs at Hart Springs. The county has already removed the old stairs, platform and the tree that was slowly leaning into the spring and into the sink. The county would be willing to provide lumber, if the Section could provide the labor. FS expects the project to be a one-day build once approved. FS and SD are working with Syndey Ruetz on a structural plan.
- SD reported the Florida State Parks have gone out to bid on repairs at Troy Springs (tearing out and rebuilding the walkway). Manager Nick Brown asked if NSS-CDS could help repair the Olsen Overlook; SD agreed the organization would provide labor if the county provided materials, likely to happen in the fall.
- CD relayed a report from a member, who had trouble signing the Cow Springs waiver online (stuck in a login loop). JR offered to help directly; CD will pass along contact information. SD noted no Cow Springs waivers had come through that day, though there were some the day before. KS submitted a test waiver during the meeting to confirm the system was working.

### Training Director Report – CB

*\*Report submitted prior to the meeting.*

### NSS-CDS Midwest Workshop Update – CD, AH

- CD picked up the event banner; no issues.
- A food vendor has been secured for lunch catering, with an option to bring ice cream to Rubidoux on Sunday.
- Donations received from Dive Rite, OrcaTorch, ScubaPro, and OmniSwivel for giveaways/raffle.
- Currently there are 24 registered participants, with a known 10 additional people that will be registering. Additional social media pushes should help to increase registration.
- CD and AH working to confirm registered participants T-Shirt sizes.
- SP and CM to collaborate with CD to recognize sponsors and donors in upcoming social media posts and eblasts, and push to increase registration.

### 2026 DEMA Show (T-10 weeks to the Show) – RP, SP

- Lodging is arranged; DA will join RP and SP at the show. The hotel is directly across from the convention center, reducing the need for vehicle rental or transport.
- A new trade show backdrop is being developed to replace the three current backdrops; the case doubles as a sales podium. SP is working on the design with collaboration from JD.



- NSS-CDS will participate in the DEMA Silent Auction for the first time. Planned donation items include an e-learning code (training-focused; DEMA requires a minimum \$100 wholesale value, already approved by CB), a t-shirt, and possibly a Grim Reaper sign and reference books. FS asked that costs be kept to the minimum; RP confirmed.
- A new DEMA t-shirt is planned, featuring a photograph design; SP is coordinating with JD on the design and print vendor.

### Other Business

- FS brought up the project at the Black Lagoon dive site in Hart Springs County Park. The acting park manager approved a cooperative project with the NSS-CDS to remove and replace the badly deteriorating platform and stairs. We will work with Sidney Ruetz to develop a design and submit a Build of Materials (BOM) to the park staff for approval. The NSS-CDS will provide the labor to build the new infrastructure.
- RP asked if we had considered replacing the pool ladder at Manatee State Park's Catfish Hotel. FS replied that he had advised park staff that the NSS-CDS could build and install, at no expense to the state, a new Peacock-like (angled) entry ladder more suitable for gear-laden divers. FS will pass park contact to SD.

### The 2027 Winter Workshop - Early Planning – FS

- FS sent out a team structure and task list; most people have responded positively. RP is reviewing the details line by line.
- FS is developing a speaker list. FS asked board members to think about repeat speakers to invite back, citing the bench-building session and Michael Poucher's cave survey introduction as well attended in the past.

### The Year Ahead – FS

- FS confirmed he received everyone's goals. He will add his and over the course of the next couple of weeks, distill everything down into a usable package to run back through the board and staff.

### Modernizing our website – KS

- KS presented the current site (inherited, largely unchanged over the past year) and outlined goals to modernize and streamline navigation, modeling the redesign more closely on the parent NSS site.
- KS noted performance issues (slow load times, intermittent waiver-submission problems) and demonstrated the admin dashboard, including duplicate/overlapping event-management modules and inconsistent data entry (e.g., multiple database entries for "Peacock Spring").
- KS proposed cleaning up the backend database and image library (many outdated or duplicate images) before addressing front-end design and asked for board input on redesigning the front page for a more streamlined, modern look.
- KS proposed longer term separating the site into three platforms (informational/main site, training site, and store) on a single sign-on, to improve speed, security, and scalability, and raised the idea of an eventual member-facing app.
- AH supported the plan and described extensive back-end problems (slow admin panel, manual workarounds for automated processes that no longer work) rooted in legacy plugin and integration choices, the dual events pages (created originally for name-tag

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printing and bylaws-required meeting postings), and outdated placeholder images. AH offered to review plugins and integrations with KS directly.

- DA recommended prioritizing separation into three distinct sites/platforms (store, training, informational) first, for both functionality and cybersecurity reasons, and offered his experience to help.
- SD said he would like to see the website functional. JR agreed cleanup is needed and offered to help with backend testing once changes are made.
- FS supported starting with what AH and KS can address immediately, particularly any process AH currently performs manually because the automated version no longer works.

### **Next BOD Meeting**

The next Board meeting will be at 7:00 P.M. Eastern / 6:00 Central / 4:00 Pacific on Monday, 21 September 2026.

### **Meeting Adjourned – FS**

FS make motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM. DA seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

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## Operation Manager's Report – AH

### **General Update and Financials**

We have had a fairly expense-heavy month, although this was expected and is consistent with what I discussed in last month's report. This is typically our most expensive time of year, as many of our larger annual expenses come due immediately following ICDC. We are also restocking inventory and wrapping up several additional projects, including the website waiver work with Howard.

Despite the recent expenses, we remain in a healthy financial position. After this month, most of our larger expenditures for the year should be behind us, aside from expenses associated with insurance and upcoming events such as the Midwest Workshop and Winter Workshop.

Some of the larger expenses paid since my last report include:

- **2027 Winter Workshop venue:** \$850.00
- **New certification card printer and three-year warranty:** \$2,005.42
- **Cow Springs waiver/website update:** \$1,176.06
- **Coffee mug restock:** \$541.00
- **UWS layout fees (Barbara):** \$600.00

Howard indicated that there will likely be one additional, much smaller invoice for some catch-up work performed during August, but the \$1,176.06 invoice should represent the bulk of the remaining cost for that project.

### **Certification Card Printer**

I apparently jinxed myself in last month's report when I mentioned that our certification card printer was circling the drain. About a week later, the ribbon completely bound up in the belt. I spent several hours attempting to repair it, but unfortunately was unable to get it operational again.

We had initially budgeted approximately \$1,500 for a replacement printer. Much to my surprise, the cost of these printers has increased somewhat since our last purchase. The replacement printer itself was approximately \$1,600, and I opted to purchase an additional three-year warranty for approximately \$300. The warranty includes service should we run into another failure during that period.

The total cost of the printer, warranty, and associated fees was \$2,005.42. I also purchased a new ribbon for approximately \$150.

The new printer is now installed and operational.

### **COW Waiver Update**

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Howard submitted his first invoice for the COW waiver update in the amount of \$1,176.06, which has been paid.

He indicated that there will likely be one additional invoice for work performed during August, although he expects that amount to be considerably smaller. The invoice already paid should represent the bulk of the cost associated with this project.



## Training Director's Report – CB

### Training Report August 2026

#### **Certifications :**

YTD – 61

2025 YTD – 71

#### **YTD Courses with Certifications:**

Apprentice Cave – 18

Cave Diver – 13

CCR Trimix – 2

Cave Trimix - 1

CCR Cave – 2

Cave Survey - 1

DPV Cave Diver – 6

Tec Cavern – 4

Stage Cave - 10

#### **Top Producing Instructors:**

Ricardo Castillo 5

Chris Brock 5

Timmy Young 5

Rob McGann 3

Cristina Zenato 4

Ken Sallot 3

Rob McGann 3

Paul Heinerth 3

Steve Dalcher 3

Max Kuznetsov 6

Joerg Hess 5

Brian Kakuk 5

#### **Training Committee:**

Trimix Standards are being worked on with Helitrox almost finished.

A few issues with technology this month but Howard fixed the problems rather quickly. One dealing with pictures on cards and the other with e-learning.

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## Treasurer's Report - DA

# CAVE DIVING SECTION OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Statement of Activity  
January-July, 2026

|                                                    | Total              |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                     |                    |
| Donations Income                                   | 100.00             |
| E-Learning Revenue                                 | 1,400.00           |
| Instructor Fees Income                             | 400.00             |
| International Conference Income                    |                    |
| Dive Rite Shopping Spree Raffle Sales              | 4,725.00           |
| Door Prize Raffle Sales                            | 8,665.00           |
| Event Registration                                 | 11,900.00          |
| Seacraft GO! Raffle Sales                          | 7,310.00           |
| Sponsor Income                                     | 1,500.00           |
| <b>Total for International Conference Income</b>   | <b>\$34,100.00</b> |
| Membership Dues                                    | 14,985.00          |
| Merchandise Sales                                  | 6,760.96           |
| Midwest Workshop Income                            |                    |
| Midwest Workshop Registration Income               | 840.00             |
| <b>Total for Midwest Workshop Income</b>           | <b>\$840.00</b>    |
| Student Registrations                              | 800.00             |
| Winter Workshop Income                             |                    |
| Winter Workshop Grand Prize Raffle                 | 2,300.00           |
| Winter Workshop Raffle Ticket Sales                | 1,252.00           |
| Winter Workshop Registration Income                | 300.00             |
| Winter Workshop Sponsor Income                     | 500.00             |
| <b>Total for Winter Workshop Income</b>            | <b>\$4,352.00</b>  |
| <b>Total for Revenue</b>                           | <b>\$63,737.96</b> |
| <b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>                          |                    |
| BOD Polos                                          | 94.02              |
| Books - Blueprint for Survival                     | 389.08             |
| COGS - Books                                       | 1,035.86           |
| COGS - Coffee Mugs                                 | 541.00             |
| COGS - Flags                                       | 1,680.00           |
| COGS - Pods                                        | 310.00             |
| Stickers - Logo/Round                              | 540.39             |
| <b>Total for Cost of Goods Sold</b>                | <b>\$4,590.35</b>  |
| <b>Gross Profit</b>                                | <b>\$59,147.61</b> |
| <b>Expenditures</b>                                |                    |
| Awards Expenses                                    | 363.81             |
| Certification Card Printing Costs                  |                    |
| Card Printer Supplies                              | 543.14             |
| <b>Total for Certification Card Printing Costs</b> | <b>\$543.14</b>    |

# CAVE DIVING SECTION OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Statement of Activity  
January-July, 2026

|                                                 | Total              |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| DEMA Expense                                    |                    |
| DEMA - Cart Fee                                 | -88.25             |
| DEMA - Registration Fees                        | 691.20             |
| <b>Total for DEMA Expense</b>                   | <b>\$602.95</b>    |
| FDACS Reporting                                 | 61.25              |
| International Conference Costs                  |                    |
| Beer - Conference                               | 712.25             |
| Breakfast - Conference                          | 229.36             |
| Catering - Conference                           | 3,100.58           |
| Cavenger Shirts - Conference                    | 127.00             |
| Coffee & Dining Supplies                        | 160.18             |
| Drinks & Materials                              | 672.57             |
| Event Liability Insurance                       | 121.92             |
| Food - Social                                   | 1,198.55           |
| Ice                                             | 94.39              |
| Misc. Event Supplies                            | 372.95             |
| Seacraft GO! Cost                               | 4,750.00           |
| Shirts - Conference                             | 2,910.00           |
| U-Haul Rental                                   | 247.95             |
| Venue Cost & Cleaning Fees                      | 2,500.00           |
| <b>Total for International Conference Costs</b> | <b>\$17,197.70</b> |
| JMCo Annual Filing Expense                      | 3,500.00           |
| Midwest Workshop Expenses                       |                    |
| Midwest Workshop - Venue                        | 649.35             |
| <b>Total for Midwest Workshop Expenses</b>      | <b>\$649.35</b>    |
| Office Administrator                            | 7,000.00           |
| Office expenses                                 |                    |
| iContact Email Membership                       | 386.63             |
| Merchant (Credit Card) Fees                     | 2,008.34           |
| Misc Supplies                                   | 701.36             |
| Printer Toner                                   | 135.48             |
| Small Equipment - Mnemo Survey Tool             | 947.77             |
| <b>Total for Office expenses</b>                | <b>\$4,179.58</b>  |
| PA Equipment                                    | 1,253.46           |
| Postage & Shipping                              | 1,073.23           |
| Property Taxes                                  | 58.96              |
| Repairs & maintenance                           |                    |
| Clearcut Construction                           | 1,104.15           |
| Cow Porta Potty                                 | 536.75             |
| Cow Repairs                                     | 107.00             |
| Edwards Construction                            | 657.73             |
| <b>Total for Repairs &amp; maintenance</b>      | <b>\$2,405.63</b>  |

# CAVE DIVING SECTION OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Statement of Activity  
January-July, 2026

|                                           | Total              |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Small Equipment - Card Printer            | 2,005.42           |
| Software Expense                          |                    |
| Checkstock                                | 261.57             |
| Microsoft 365                             | 90.93              |
| QuickBooks Online Fees                    | 579.00             |
| Voting Software                           | 99.00              |
| ZOOM Meeting Subscription                 | 307.86             |
| <b>Total for Software Expense</b>         | <b>\$1,338.36</b>  |
| UWS Expenses                              |                    |
| Adobe Publishing Software                 | 489.86             |
| Layout & Drafting Fees                    | 1,800.00           |
| <b>Total for UWS Expenses</b>             | <b>\$2,289.86</b>  |
| Website Expense                           |                    |
| Hosting Fees                              | 276.00             |
| Webmaster Fees                            | 1,400.00           |
| Website Design & Maintenance              | 595.03             |
| WooCommerce Fees                          | 587.00             |
| <b>Total for Website Expense</b>          | <b>\$2,858.03</b>  |
| Winter Workshop Expenses                  |                    |
| Winter Workshop - Credit Card Fees        | 558.22             |
| Winter Workshop - Food                    | 2,592.55           |
| Winter Workshop - Grand Prize Raffle Cost | 1,400.00           |
| Winter Workshop - Misc Supplies           | 647.67             |
| Winter Workshop - Shirts                  | 860.65             |
| Winter Workshop - Soda                    | 133.30             |
| Winter Workshop - Venue                   | 850.00             |
| <b>Total for Winter Workshop Expenses</b> | <b>\$7,042.39</b>  |
| <b>Total for Expenditures</b>             | <b>\$54,423.12</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Revenue</b>              | <b>\$4,724.49</b>  |
| Other Revenue                             |                    |
| Interest Income                           | 24.05              |
| <b>Total for Other Revenue</b>            | <b>\$24.05</b>     |
| <b>Net Other Revenue</b>                  | <b>\$24.05</b>     |
| <b>Net Revenue</b>                        | <b>\$4,748.54</b>  |