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National Speleological Society Appoints New Director on the Board of Governors, Dennis Melko

NSS Headquarters, Huntsville, AL — Following this year's annual convention in South Dakota, the National Speleological Society (NSS) appointed Dennis Melko to the Board of Governors. Dennis will be joining the elected Directors effective June 30, 2022 and will be serving for one year on the board. The NSS Board of Governors (BoG), consists of a 12-member Directorate and 5-member Executive Committee jointly conducting and supervising all business of the Society.

Before joining the NSS Directorate, Dennis served as the Pittsburgh Grotto Treasurer and has multiple years of local grotto volunteer experience including; Grotto Chairman, survey and project caving coordination, and assisting in developing protocol for cave rescues in the early 2000s. "I had the opportunity to work with Dennis in his role as the Pittsburgh Grotto Treasurer. His energy and attitude have always been positive and productive. I look forward to working with him next year," stated NSS President, Kristine Ebrey. As a volunteer, Dennis sought to improve activity, inter-grotto cooperation, promote caving locally and attract new grotto members. "Endurance and persistence matters," stated Melko.

Melko became an NSS member in the mid-1990s. From then, he continued to develop his passion for caving and promoting local Pittsburgh area grottos. As a Director, Dennis hopes to assist in continuing to move the organization in a positive direction. "My immediate focus is to learn what is necessary for effective participation on this board," stated Melko, "my understanding is that I will work with other Directors in evaluating, planning, and assisting with initiatives that will keep the NSS a viable and important organization for those interested in caves, caving, and the pursuit of exploration." Working with the Directorate, Dennis Melko strives to improve the NSS internal organizations and Grottos stating, "I'd like to focus on the concerns and needs of our Grottos to ensure their health and continuity."

The BoG meets three times a year, including a summer meeting during the Annual NSS Convention. The other two meetings are hosted by grottos in various parts of the country in the fall and spring, providing Board members the opportunity to learn about local activities and discuss issues with cavers throughout the country. The variety of venues is important in encouraging as many NSS members as possible to attend and participate in the Board meetings. The Nominating Committee obtains candidates for the director elections and the Executive Search Committee locates officer candidates.

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For over 70 years, the National Speleological Society has promoted safe and responsible caving practices, effective cave and karst management, speleology, and conservation. Our members are bound together by their love of caves, their desire to learn about the underground wilderness, and their commitment to protect it for future generations.

NSS membership offers worldwide caver camaraderie, networking opportunities, and access to information about discoveries and developments in caving, speleology, equipment, and techniques through our publications, annual conventions, grottos, internal organizations, and NSS-sponsored projects, expeditions, and surveys.

With 7,000+ members and more than 200 grottos (chapters), the National Speleological Society is the largest organization in the world working every day to further the exploration, study, and protection of caves and their environments, and foster fellowship among cavers.