

Kim Fleischmann, 26414RL/FE, Maryland

kfleisch@juno.com



I ran for Director in 2016 at the same time I retired after 34 years of working for the Army. I was honored to be appointed to fill the remaining two years for someone who had to resign. I attended all six in-person Board of Governors (BOG) meetings and one of our two teleconferences. I was unable to participate in the other teleconference because I was overseas. If elected, I have every intention of attending all meetings during the three-year term. Traveling to the meetings is not a problem for me.

That said, I fully support efforts to conduct meetings via Videoconference because it may allow more members to run for Director (and, of course, to comply with the current pandemic stay-at-home orders). I do prefer face-to-face meetings because we are not distracted by electronic connection difficulties and because we converse and socialize with each other and local NSS members before and after the meeting. These informal conversations often lead to ideas for solving specific Society problems. BOG members also communicate regularly by email. In the two years I was a Director, I amassed over 2,500 messages in my “NSS Director” email folder. Frequent communication throughout the year makes our meetings more efficient because we discuss issues, share information, and hone the wording of motions before arriving at the table.

My stated goal when I ran for Director in 2016 was “to understand the inner workings of the Society and to suggest improvements for efficiency and financial growth while making sure the concerns of members are addressed.” After my two years on the BOG, I understood more of how the NSS functions from a bureaucratic standpoint, and supported motions to simplify and streamline the Society’s very complicated financial management system. I won’t have that daunting initial learning period that a new Director will have.

I have spent the last two years planning the 2020 NSS Convention in Elkins, serving as the Vice-Chair for School Operations. I have agreed to remain on Staff since we are postponed until 2023 due to COVID-19. If you preregistered, and can afford to do so, please consider donating your registration fees to the NSS as Convention is commonly one of the Society’s sources of annual income. There’s no question that we need to retain our current members and encourage new people to join the NSS, so I encourage you to recruit a new caver to join the Society or to bring a former member back. We rely on our talented and seemingly tireless volunteers who spend many hours working on committees to meet our goal of exploring, studying, and protecting caves. If you are passionate about a particular issue, please consider joining or heading up one of the many committees that are the heart and soul of the Society.

I am an active recreational caver, and I take Scouts underground several times a year. I started caving and working for the Army in 1982. If you are curious about my past caving or work experience, please refer to my 2016 Director platform.