



BREAKDOWN

Volume 41, Number 1, April 2026

The *MAR Breakdown* is the journal of the Mid Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society. It is published three times a year; prior to the annual business meeting and prior to the Spring and Fall field meets.

Subscriptions-

Event notices and MAR Breakdown newsletters are distributed electronically. When you attend a field meet, the email address provided on your registration form is added to the distribution list. You may also add yourself to distribution by going to <http://eepurl.com/P2f5j> and completing a short registration form.

Meetings and Meets-

The annual business meeting is held the last Saturday in February. Each spring and fall there is a field meet. Watch for dates.

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Inside

Page

MAR Business Meeting 2026 Minutes (forthcoming)	2
MAR Treasurer's Report (forthcoming)	2
MAR Bulletin Sales Report (forthcoming)	2
PCC Meeting Minutes	3
Tell the NSS about your Cave Conservation Efforts!	6
Save the Date! – 2026 Fall MAR!	6
Hosts Needed for 2027 Spring and Fall MARs	6
2026 Spring MAR Information	7
2026 Spring MAR Registration Form	9
Upcoming Events	10
MAR Bulletins for Sale	11

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Mid-Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

February 28, 2026

[Held at the Mt. Laurel Church of God in Harrisburg and via Zoom]

MAR Business Meeting minutes, treasurer's report, and bulletin sales unavailable at time of publication. Information forthcoming.



Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy, Inc.

P.O. Box 373, Neffs, PA 18065

Minutes of Regular Meeting – February 28, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 pm by President Ryan Cale at the Mt Laurel Church of God, Harrisburg, PA on Saturday, February 28, 2026. Ryan welcomed everyone and thanked them for participating in the PCC meeting.

The following officers were present: **President** Ryan Cale **Vice President** Eli Yearick
Treasurer Tom Griffin **Secretary** Gretchen Schock

Representation was as follows:

Bald Eagle Grotto	JD Lewis	Huntingdon Co. Cave Hunters	Dean Snyder (proxy)
Baltimore Grotto	Kim Fleischmann	Nittany Grotto	Paul Winter
Bucks County Grotto	--	Out of Bounds Grotto	--
Central New Jersey Grotto	Amos Mincin	Philadelphia Grotto	Amos Mincin
Commander Cody Caving Club	--	Seven Valleys Grotto	Joe Schock
Franklin County Grotto	Pat Minnick	York Grotto	Randy Hurst
Greater Allentown Grotto	Dean Snyder	MAKC (Associate)	Tom Metzgar

Secretary Report: The minutes from the September 28, 2025 meeting were published in January 2026 issue of the MAR Breakdown. Amos Mincin moved and Randy Hurst seconded to approve the meeting minutes as published in the MAR Breakdown. The motion passed.

Treasurer Report: Tom Griffin reviewed the PCC account activity since the last meeting (provided below). Tom and Ryan reminded the attendees that PCC funds are available to assist with any cave conservation project in the area. Please reach out to the PCC officers with any requests for cave conservation assistance.

Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy

Financial Summary

9-28-25 through 2-28-26

Interest Checking Account

Date

Checking Balance 9/28/25	F&M Trust Bank checking	9/28/2025	\$1,664.72
Deposit	Interest	9/30/2025	\$0.03
PCC Pancake Breakfast at Lincoln Caverns:			
77 tickets via Nittany Fall MAR pre-reg: \$385.00			
13 tickets sold on site/cash \$65.00			
MAKC coffee service (Thank you!): \$90.00			
Breakfast food/supplies donation: \$233.76			
Actual net earnings if food wasn't donated: \$126.24			
Deposit	PCC Breakfast cash sales	10/6/2025	\$65.00
Deposit	PCC T-shirt sales (6)	10/6/2025	\$30.00
Deposit	Donations to PCC during Fall MAR	10/6/2025	\$23.00
Deposit	Fall PCC Breakfast 2025 - Nittany	10/29/2025	\$385.00
Deposit	Interest	10/31/2025	\$0.03
Deposit	Interest	11/28/2025	\$0.03
Withdrawal	Check to MAKC (PCC Breakfast Coffee –	12/18/2025	(\$90.00)

Nittany Fall MAR)

Deposit	Interest	12/31/2025	\$0.04
Deposit	Interest	1/30/2026	\$0.04
Ending Balance :			\$2,077.89

Money Market Account:

		<u>Date</u>	
Beginning Balance	9/28/25	9/28/2025	\$8,876.63
Deposit	Interest	9/30/2025	\$22.50
Deposit	Interest	10/31/2025	\$22.21
Deposit	Interest	11/28/2025	\$19.94
Deposit	Interest	12/31/2025	\$20.62
Deposit	Interest	1/30/2026	\$19.56
Ending Balance :			\$8,981.46

COMBINED TOTAL :

\$11,059.35

Web Page: The PCC officers met with Dave Fricke in September 2025 regarding a plan of action for the PCC website that was no longer operational. Dave agreed to reach out to the NSS to resurrect the PCC web site under their new web environment. Dave coordinated with Ryan and successfully establish the web page with a url of <https://pccconservancy.caves.org/>. Ryan has agreed to maintain the PCC web page going forward. The PCC would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to Dave Fricke for his years of service maintaining the PCC web site.

PCC Breakfast: The PCC is available to provide a fund raising pancake breakfast during Sunday morning of the MAR field meets. The PCC has agreed to host a pancake breakfast for the upcoming 2026 Spring and Fall MAR field meets. Breakfast tickets will be available through pre-registration for each event. Tom Griffin and Red Schock are currently storing all the equipment/supplies for the PCC Breakfasts.

PCC Brochure: Dave Briggs has the supply of PCC brochures. The PCC officers plan to obtain the brochures from Dave. Once the existing brochures are received, they can be evaluated to either be made available during future caving events or revised/updated, if necessary.

Mail: Dean Snyder delivered two mail items to the PCC board. The first item was a generous donation of \$100 from Central New Jersey Grotto (Thank you very much CNJG!). The second item was an acceptance letter from the IRS for the PCC's submitted 990 Form.

Christmas Cards: Kim Kehs assumed the task of sending PCC Christmas Cards to cave/landowners beginning in 2018. Please contact Kim if you know of a landowner you would like added to the PCC Christmas card list.

T-shirts: The PCC t-shirt price was reduced to \$5 during the May 2023 PCC meeting. Please contact Tom Griffin or Red Schock if you are interested in purchasing a shirt. Tom and Red plan to make the t-shirts available for sale at upcoming caving events. Sizes available are Small, Medium, and Large. During the Fall 2025 PCC meeting, there was some discussion about a possible new design for a PCC t-shirt. Ryan Cale inquired if anyone had submitted a design idea since the last meeting. No submissions had been received to date.

PA Cave Database: Paul Winter reported that the PA Cave Database is up and running, as usual. Paul indicated that there was potential to expand the database site in various ways, possibly re-introducing the Longest and Deepest cave list or even incorporating access to cave maps into the database. The new environment offers many new possibilities for interesting enhancements.

OLD BUSINESS:

Project and Caves of Interest List:

Do you or your grotto have an idea or suggestion for a PCC project? Share your idea at a PCC meeting or contact the PCC officers to discuss your ideas.

Cleversburg Sink Conservation Project: Tom Griffin reported on the activities of Franklin County Grotto's (FCG) conservation project at Cleversburg Sink in Cumberland County on Saturday, October 25, 2025. Eleven (11) volunteers made quick work of replacing 9 rotting railroad tie steps as well as some concrete work to reinforce/enhance the existing cave gate area. Tom stated that the PCC offered to assist with expenses related to the project efforts although various participants donated most of the materials and did not desire reimbursement. After a job well done, most of the group enjoyed a meal at a local Mexican Restaurant after the work was complete.

Tytoona Cave Preserve: Preserve Manager Ann Dunlavy reported opportunities for volunteer work are ongoing at the preserve site. Current needs include installing cameras as well as perimeter markers for the preserve property. Trash and graffiti removal are continuing needs. Contact Ann for additional details. Ann also mentioned that the PCC was welcome to add their brochures to the Tytoona kiosk.

Wind Cave: Eli Yearick stated that he has been in contact with Keith Williams of the Lancaster County Conservancy. Eli's discussions with the conservancy were well received and they are excited and appreciative of the PCC's offer to do a clean-up at Wind Cave. Trash removal will be the primary focus of this effort with wax cleanup from candles being a secondary objective. The Lancaster County Conservancy will provide trash bags and will coordinate pick up/disposal of trash via UTV. We will need to get the trash bags from the cave to the UTV trail, which is about half a mile from the cave. Eli recommended that a date after April would be preferable, since ice can often be found in the cave entrance through April. It was decided that we would target **Saturday, June 6, 2026 for the clean-up project**. Eli will contact the conservancy to continue to coordinate arrangements. Additional information will be available at the upcoming PCC meeting on Sunday, May 3rd. If you have any questions in the interim, please contact the PCC officers.

Cave Conservation Reporting: Tom Griffin is serving as the MAR point of contact to collect conservation reports for Val Hildreth, NSS Cave Conservation Committee Chair. Tom encourages all grottos and cavers in the MAR region to report cave conservation efforts to him (caver182@gmail.com) for inclusion in the annual MAR conservation report to the NSS. Tom is collecting data on any conservation activity that any individual or group takes part in throughout the year. Some examples include trash/graffiti cleanup in or around caves, cave gate installation/repair, constructing fence for landowner, providing karst education at events, leading scouts or school groups on field trips, etc. These reports serve as a method of letting the NSS know about conservation efforts by its membership.

2026 Spring MAR: Bald Eagle Grotto (BEG) will be hosting the 2026 Spring MAR the weekend of 1-3 May at the McClure Bean Soup Festival in McClure, PA. Additional information will be posted on the MAR website as it becomes available (<https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm>).

2026 NSS Convention: From July 6-10, 2026, the NSS will host the society's 83rd annual convention in Corydon, Indiana. This week-long event includes extensive presentations across all disciplines related to cave science. Additional information can be found on the convention website <https://caves.org/convention/2026-nss-convention/>.

NEW BUSINESS:

PCC Stickers / Patches: As a possible alternative to PCC t-shirts, Ryan Cale indicated that he has the means to produce high quality PCC stickers/decals, if there was interest and a preferred design. Anyone who has ideas for a PCC sticker design can submit them to Ryan for review by the PCC community. Joe Schock suggested that a PCC Patch may be another item of interest. The advantage of these items is that they are more portable and would not require extensive effort to store and transport to various caving events. Interest in these items can be discussed at future meetings.

2026 Fall MAR: York Grotto will be hosting the 2026 Fall MAR the weekend of 25-27 September at the Newville Lions Club Fairgrounds in Newville, PA. Additional information will be posted on the MAR website as it becomes available (<https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm>).

Elections: Amos Mincin moved and Randy Hurst seconded to nominate the existing officers to serve another term. The motion passed.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the PCC will be at 9:30 am on Sunday, May 3, 2026 in McClure, PA at the McClure Bean Soup Festival and Fairgrounds.

Amos Mincin moved and Paul Winter seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 4:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen (Red) Schock, Recording Secretary

Tell the NSS about your Cave Conservation Efforts!

Tom Griffin is serving as the MAR point of contact to collect cave conservation reports for the NSS Cave Conservation Committee Chair. Tom encourages all grottos and cavers in the MAR region to report cave conservation efforts to him (caver182@gmail.com) for inclusion in the annual MAR conservation report to the NSS. Tom is collecting data on any conservation activity that any individual or group takes part in throughout the year. Some examples include trash/graffiti cleanup in or around caves, cave gate installation/repair, constructing fence for landowner, providing karst education at events, leading scouts or school groups on field trips, etc. Don't be shy! Tell the NSS about your good cave deeds!

Save the Date! - 2026 Fall MAR!

York Grotto will be hosting the 2026 Fall MAR Field Meet on Sept 25-27, 2026 at the Newville Lions Club Fairgrounds in Newville, PA. More details will be posted on the MAR web site as they become available: <https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm>

Hosts Needed for the 2027 Spring and Fall MARs

As of April 2026 there is no grotto, or individual, slated to host the 2027 Spring or Fall MAR Field Meets. If you are interested in hosting an event, a helpful guide to hosting a MAR field meet can be found on the MAR website (<https://mar.caves.org/hosting.htm>). Think about it - can you or your grotto host an event? If there are no volunteers there will be no field meet. If you're interested in hosting an event, please contact a MAR officer.

Spring MAR 2026

McClure Bean Soup Festival & Fairgrounds



Bald Eagle Grotto is proud to celebrate 40 years underground, and we are excited to serve as your host for the 2026 Spring MAR Field Meet, held at the McClure Bean Soup Festival & Fairgrounds in McClure, Pennsylvania.

Time & Location

May 1, 2026, 12:00 PM – May 3, 2026, 12:00 PM
McClure Bean Soup Festival & Fairgrounds
7 E Ohio St
McClure, PA 17841, USA

About the Event

We extend our sincere thanks to the many individuals who contributed their time and effort to organizing this MAR meet. Special appreciation goes to the landowners who graciously allow the MAR community access to their caves. As always, please respect all landowners and their requests—both above and below ground.

MAR Breakdown Volume 41 Number 1 April 2026

The event web site will be updated regularly as new information becomes available, so please check back often:

<https://www.baldeaglegrotto.com/events-1/spring-mar-2026>

Cave softly, and plan for a great weekend!
— Bald Eagle Grotto

Registration Information

Registration is open through April 30th

Meal guarantee deadline: April 17th

(Sign up by April 17th to be guaranteed meals — after that date, meals cannot be guaranteed.)

Registration Fees

Adults: \$35

Children ages 6–16: \$15

Children 5 & under: FREE

Heading underground on Saturday?

Let us pack you a cave-ready lunch for \$5 — includes a sandwich, chips, and a drink. Cave Pack Lunch, Choices of: Turkey & Cheese, Ham & Cheese, PB&J Lunch can be picked up at Registration.

Enjoy a warm breakfast Sunday morning. Let the Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC) do the cooking! For a \$5 donation, you will receive pancakes & syrup, sausage, coffee, tea, and/or orange juice to start your day!

Camping

While RV hookups are not available, campers and tents are welcome on the property. Bathrooms and showers are available 24/7.

Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are BYOB. Please be discreet when drinking and remember the legal drinking age is 21.

Campfires


No individual campfires will be permitted in the camping areas. There will be a bonfire centrally located in the event area for all to enjoy.


Pets


Pets are welcome but must be kept on a leash at all times, and owners are responsible for cleanup. Please note that pets are not permitted on cave properties.

Vendors

We're excited to welcome some fantastic vendors to Spring MAR this year! Be sure to stop by and check out:

 **Out Standing Stitches** – Specializing in custom sewing for your outdoor adventure gear. Custom bibs that boldly refuse to be boring!

 **Sophi Reapress Designs** – Unique, creative cave suits made with care and a whole lot of talent.

 **Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy (MAKC)** – Doing incredible work to protect caves, karst, and the bats that call them home.

Please take a moment to visit their tables, say hello, and support the people and organizations that help make our caving community so great. We're thrilled to have them as part of Spring MAR!

Schedule of Events (subject to change)

Water and soda will be provided to registered participants on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

Friday

- Check in and on-site registration opens at Noon at the upper pavilion by the restrooms.
- Cave trip sign-ups for Saturday's organized (led) cave trips will take place Friday evening at the Bingo Hall around 9:30pm.
- Bonfire in the Grove

Saturday

- Doughnuts & coffee will be provided at the registration area starting at 8:30am.
- Guided and Self-Guided Cave Trips
 - If you are going on an unguided tour, please sign out at the registration area and include your destination, names of the people in your group, license plate number of all vehicles and expected return time.
- Saturday afternoon non-caving activities.
- Enjoy Snyder County and the surrounding areas.

Saturday Evening

- Dinner will begin at 6:30 so don't be late! The Saturday evening meal will consist of BBQ chicken or a vegetarian choice of cabbage steak, sides, and dessert. All prepared by Airy Dale Farm Market of Beaver Springs and served in the Bean Soup Pavilion.
- @ 8:30PM a Presentation.
- Enjoy the rest of the night with friends and a bonfire.

Sunday

- PCC Breakfast is served starting around 7:30am
- The PCC meeting will take place around 9:30am in the pavilion of the registration area.
- 2026 Spring MAR closes up at 12pm
- Enjoy Snyder County and the surrounding areas. Have a safe ride home and see you at the next MAR field meet.



SPRING MAR 2026
May 1st-3rd
 McClure Bean Soup Festival & Fair Grounds
 7 East Ohio St, McClure, PA 17841



Registration

On-line pre-registration and payment is available at:

www.BaldEagleGrotto.com

Principal Adult

Registrant: _____ **NSS #:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone #: _____ **Alternate #:** _____

Email Address: _____ **Primary Grotto Affiliation:** _____

Additional Attendees: (from same household)

Name	Age (Indicate 'adult' if 18+)	Email

	Qty (#)	Vegetarian Meal (#)	Post Marked By April 17 th	Total
Adults (17+)			\$35	
Children (6-16)			\$15	
Children 5 and under			FREE	
Cave Pack Lunch			\$5	
PCC Breakfasts			\$5	
TOTAL ENCLOSED:				

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME AND PHONE #:

* Print this form and mail it with your check or money order payable to "Bald Eagle Grotto" to:

Bald Eagle Grotto, c/o Sara Bidlespacher
 PO Box 71
 Cogan Station, PA 17728

* OR complete the online registration and payment at:

www.BaldEagleGrotto.com

**** Note:** Registration must be postmarked on or before **April 17th, 2026** to qualify for pre-registration prices. **We cannot guarantee dinner for those who do not make the Pre-Registration deadline.** On-site registration is \$35 per adult and \$15 per child (6-12 years old).

Upcoming Events

- 2026 Spring MAR Field Meet** May 1-3, 2026
 McClure Bean Soup and Festival grounds
 McClure, PA
 Hosted by Bald Eagle Grotto
 URL: <https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm>
- 2026 Spring VAR Field Meet** May 8-10, 2026
 Endless Caverns
 New Market, VA
 Hosted by Tri-State Grotto
 URL: <https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/spring-var>
- 2026 Spring NRO Field Meet** May 15-17, 2026
 Thompson's Lake Campground, Thacher State Park
 East Berne, NY
 Hosted by Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) and Northeastern Cave
 Conservancy (NCC)
 URL: <https://sites.google.com/view/centralconnecticutgrotto>
- PCC Wind Cave Cleanup** June 6, 2026
 Wind Cave
 Lancaster County, PA
 Hosted by Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC)
- 2026 NSS Convention** July 6-10, 2026
 Ohio River Valley
 Corydon, IN
 URL: <https://caves.org/convention/2026-nss-convention/>
- Old Timers Reunion (OTR)** Sept. 3-7, 2026
 OTR Site/Campgrounds
 Dailey, WV (Randolph County)
 URL: www.otr.org
- 2026 Fall MAR Field Meet** Sept. 25-27, 2026
 Newville Lions Club Fairgrounds
 Newville, PA
 Hosted by York Grotto
 URL: <https://mar.caves.org/fieldmeets.htm>
- 2026 Fall VAR Field Meet** Fall 2026
 Location: TBD
 Hosted by TBD
 URL: <https://var.caves.org/index.php/events/fall-var>
- 2026 Bridge Day** October 17, 2026
 New River Gorge Bridge
 Fayetteville, WV
 URL: www.officialbridgeday.com -or- <https://www.nps.gov/neri/>
- 2027 MAR Annual Business Meeting** February 27, 2027
 Mt. Laurel Church of God
 1295 Picketown Road, Linglestown, PA
 URL: <https://mar.caves.org/busnmtg.htm>
- 2027 NSS Convention** June 14-18, 2027
 Tex-Mex Theme
 Location: TBD
 Del Rio, Texas
 84th Anniversary
 URL: TBD

NSS MEMBER PRICE LIST

Effective October 2018

MID-APPALACHIAN REGION BULLETINS (including reprinted Bulletins)

1-4	Bulletins Caves of Shippensburg Area #1-4 REPRINT		7.00 + postage A
5	Caves of Western PA: REPRINT	29 caves, 19 maps	8.00 + postage A
6	Caves of S. Cumberland Valley REPRINT	93 caves 69 maps+6 large maps	17.00 + postage B
7	Caves of Fulton Co, PA Revised/Corrected	4 caves, 4 maps	5.00 + postage A
8	Caves of Blair Co., PA REPRINT	89 caves, 40 maps	7.00 + postage A
9	Caves of Huntingdon Co., PA REPRINT	94 caves, 36 maps	10.00 + postage B
10	Caves of Snyder Co., PA	20 caves, 14 maps	6.00 + postage A
11	Caves of Centre Co., PA	71 caves, 56 maps+1 large map	10.00 + postage B
12	Caves of Mifflin Co., PA	47 caves, 31 maps+5 large maps	10.00 + postage B
13	Caves of Perry Co., PA	13 caves, 6 maps	10.00 + postage A
14	Caves of Bucks Co., PA REPRINT	24 caves, 6 maps	5.00 + postage A
15	Caves of Lehigh Co., PA REPRINT	25 caves, 13 maps	6.00 + postage A
16	Caves of Northampton Co., PA	24 caves, 13 maps+1 large map	6.00 + postage A
17	Caves of Northumberland Co., PA	20 caves, 10 maps	5.00 + postage A
18	Caves of Berks Co., PA	64 caves, 32 maps	10.00 + postage B
19	Caves of Bedford Co., PA	54 caves, 33 maps	7.00 + postage A
20	Caves of Westmoreland Co., PA	337 caves, 187 maps/10 large maps	29.50 + postage C
21	Karst of Sinking Valley and Kookon Cave Huntingdon and Blair Counties	103 pages with color photos , 4 fold-out maps, 2 large maps	27.50 + postage B
22	Caves of Middle Susquehanna Valley	140 pages with color photos	16.00 + postage D

U.S. Postage:

A \$2.00 postage first copy; \$0.50 each additional to same address.

B \$2.50 postage first copy; \$0.50 each additional to same address.

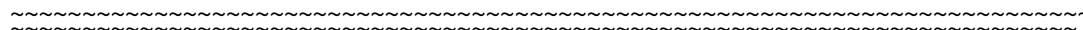
C \$3.00 postage for each bulletin #20.

D \$3.50 postage for each bulletin #22

MAR Bulletin Orders: Please make checks payable to MAR



NOTE: All checks must be payable in U.S. dollars on U.S. bank or U.S. money order



*** New MAR Bulletin Order Coordinator - **Olivia McAllister**, NSS 69461 ***

Info on ordering is available at <https://mar.caves.org/bulletins.htm>

Send bulletin orders to: MAR Bulletins
 % Olivia McAllister
 1208 W Pine Grove Road
 Penn. Furnace, PA 16865