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Caving found me after college when a high school friend pestered me into coming on a Birmingham Grotto trip. After a 2-3/4 mile hike, we arrived at what I was told was the cave - except all I saw was a waterfall. Turned out the cave entrance was 12' up, through the waterfall and, due to high water levels, we didn't get into a cave that day. But I fell in with the Grotto, eventually getting a weeknight trip to one of the muddiest caves in the area, where I lost my flashlight but kept on my shoes and discovered the joys of

caving. I became a caver, married a caver and birthed a second generation caver. I gained a second family and community and continue to wonder at this turn of events.

I joined the NSS and Birmingham Grotto shortly after that first non-trip. I've since served in most of the Grotto offices, currently co-editor of the *Birmingham Grotto Newsletter* with husband Dave, and have helped out with various Grotto-sponsored events, including the upcoming SERA. I'm a charter member of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy (SCCi), long time member of the Alabama Cave Survey, served as Treasurer for the 2014 NSS Convention in Huntsville, AL, and was honored at the 2015 NSS Convention as overall winner of the original cave ballad category and to be named a Fellow.

My day job was with the Department of Veteran Affairs, where I grew up with computers (from dumb terminals and punch cards to biometrics and the cloud). I worked across the organization over the years: at the local medical center education office, overseeing an annual \$2 million+ budget and related paperwork for physician, nurse and associated health trainees; with the regional education center in bringing training to staff across the southeast; documenting software packages for the national system and developing quality assurance measures for incorporating changes to the software.

The NSS and the caving community do good work and share several challenges: protecting caves and their occupants, promoting research and responsible caving, finding financial means to support the organizations and efforts, attracting and educating new cavers, appreciating the landowners -- these are part of the list. I'd like to put my skills to work, to do my part to identify and implement solutions that benefit all levels of the caving community and foster the support, encouragement and cooperation that drew me into the caving world and has kept me here over the years.