



July 2026 Newsletter

**You are invited to the NSS Perkins Cave Preserve Open House
on September 18-20, 2026.**

New this year, we are planning a carbide-only tour of the Historic Section in Perkins Cave on Friday evening. Dust off and tune up your old lamps and plan to arrive by 5:30 pm if you will be joining us for this 6:00 pm trip. We should have plenty of carbide available, and possibly a spare lamp or two available to lend out. This will be a relatively short outing (no carbide changes in the cave).

On Saturday we are planning guided trips to First Discovery, Forest Trail, Ghosttown, and more, departing around 9:00 am, 10:00 am, and 11:00 am, with the 9:00 am trip being the longer/more strenuous option. All trips are horizontal and require some crawling and may feature limited vertical exposure. The 9:00 am trip will have some longer crawls and more significant vertical exposure (and is also the only trip where you may get wet). These trips are intended only for experienced cavers. Our highest priority is conservation of the cave, which contains a multitude of pristine and highly diverse speleothem displays, which can easily be damaged by inattentive or novice cavers.

There will be a cook-out supper at about 6:00 pm Saturday, with food provided by ACC. BYOB.

On Sunday morning the annual ACC membership meeting is at 10:00 am, to be followed immediately by a board of directors meeting, which will run until about 12:30 pm.

Also new this year, we are offering a Sunday afternoon trip to a seldom-visited nearby vertical cave with 140 ft entrance pit. Participants should be proficient with [basic vertical caving techniques](#). Space is limited!

Primitive camping is available onsite Friday and Saturday evening. There is no running water, and bathroom facilities consist of a simple outhouse, so plan accordingly. Bring water. You may also want to bring your own camp chair. A small finished fieldhouse space has electricity available, and new this year: WiFi.

Please register online at [2026 Appalachian Cave Conservancy Open House and Annual Meeting](#)

After registration, an online release form, which is **required** for visiting the preserve, will be emailed to you prior to your visit.

This year, Perkins has received many tons of gravel spread on the driveway, internet, WIFI, and phone connections. A big thank you to Steve and Jeannie Bailey for spending their personal time at the preserve and managing the property. The property has also had an offer from [The American Chestnut Foundation](#) to add about a dozen trees to the property in the future in hopes of helping to restore the American Chestnut population.



Perkins Preserve Caverns photo by Janet Manning

Daniel Boone Caverns Gating Project

Daniel Boone Caverns got a face lift in June [thanks](#) to Justin Strong, Crash Kennedy from Cave Gators, Laura Young for planning, and a good group of volunteers from both the Walker Mountain and Flittermouse Grottos who spent several days in June installing a new steel gate at the entrance. All gates on the property have received new locks, and a game camera.

*Daniel Boone Cavers photo by Justin Strong



About the ACC

The [Appalachian Cave Conservancy](#), founded in 1978, is a tax-exempt nonprofit Virginia corporation and a conservancy of the [National Speleological Society](#). Its primary mission is to **protect caves through effective stewardship and conservation practices**, ensuring that these natural resources are preserved for scientific study, education, and recreational exploration. The organization is composed of **cave owners, managers, cavers, speleologists, and other specialists** who actively study, map, photograph, and document caves and karst landscapes.

History

Originally known as the **Perkins Cave Conservation and Management Society**, the ACC has expanded its scope to manage multiple cave properties in Southwest Virginia and surrounding areas. It has been instrumental in acquiring and managing preserves, including **Perkins Cave, Daniel Boone Cave**, and several other privately owned caves in the southern Appalachian region.

Conservation and Management Practices

The ACC emphasizes **responsible cave stewardship**, including:

- **Scientific study and documentation** of cave systems
- **Resource protection** to maintain ecological and geological integrity
- **Education** for cavers and the public about cave conservation
- **Controlled access** to caves, often requiring permits or adherence to management plans to ensure safety and preservation

The organization operates under a **Memorandum of Understanding with the [National Speleological Society](#)**, which outlines best management practices, prohibits commercial exploitation, and ensures that cave modifications are compatible with conservation principles

Your [memberships and donations](#) make this possible. Thank you!

Officers of the Appalachian Cave Conservancy

Chairman of the Board: Tia Bednar

President - Jason Lachniet

Vice President of Cave Management - Terri Brown

Vice President of Development & Public Relations - Steve Bailey

Vice President of Membership, Finance and Information Systems - Ellen Hofler

Legal Officer - Renee Gaskins

Treasurer - Janet Manning

Secretary - Brooke Barthen

Appalachian Cave Conservancy Directors and Term

Terri Brown 2029

Dan Henry 2027

Josh Garrett 2029

John Wilson 2027

Bill James 2029

John Matthews 2027

Janet Manning 2029

Bill Grose 2027

Justin Strong 2029

Robert Hunter 2027

Paul Gaskins 2029

Brooke Barthen 2027

Pete Kirchner 2028

Gary Fielden 2026*

Steve Bailey 2028

Tia Bednar 2026*

Jeannie Bailey 2028

LauraLee Cascada 2026*

Ellen Hofler 2028

Ken Clark 2026*

Jason Lachniet 2028

Renee Gaskins 2026*

Geoffery Wren 2028

*Directors standing for re-election 2026

Appalachian Cave Conservancy

Financial Statement Year ending December 31, 2025

Cash Flow:	Assets:
Income: \$\$4,136.03	Liquid : \$\$22716.33
Expenses: \$ 1,473.71	Fixed:\$0
Net: \$\$2,662.52	Gilley Cave Preserve Liabilities: none

Visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/acave/

Instagram: [@appalachiancaveconservancy](https://www.instagram.com/appalachiancaveconservancy)

Visit our Website: [Appalachian Cave Conservancy](http://AppalachianCaveConservancy.org)

Become a member: [ACC Membership-Payment Form-SQUARE](#)

Access to ACC-managed caves is generally **regulated by permits** or specific management plans. This ensures that exploration and research activities do not compromise the caves' natural state. Volunteers and members often participate in **mapping, monitoring, and maintenance activities**, contributing to the long-term preservation of these unique environments

Appalachian Cave Conservancy

Caves Owned, Managed, and/or Leased

The ACC recommends that cave clothing and equipment be cleaned before entering any ACC managed cave.

Cave Name	Virginia County	Manager	Cave Property Owned by	Gate	Access permission required	Access
Gilley Cave	Lee	Terri Brown	ACC	Yes	Yes	1
Daniel Boone Caverns aka Ellington and Gillenwater Caves	Scott	Terri Brown	ACC	Yes	Temporarily closed, management plan in process	2
Winding Stair	Scott	Terri Brown	Friend of ACC	No	Suggested	2
Dungeon aka Brickley's Pit	Scott	Terri Brown	Friend of ACC	No	Suggested	2
Funnel	Scott	Terri Brown	Friend of ACC	No	Closed temporarily - unstable passage	
Coley Cave # 1	Scott	Bill James	Friend of ACC	No	Yes	2
Coley Cave # 2	Scott	Bill James	Friend of ACC	No	Yes	2
Cox Ridge Cave	Scott	Bill James	Friend of ACC	Yes	Yes	1
Perkins Cave Preserve	Washington	Jason Lachniet – cave Steve and Jeannie Bailey - property	National Speleological Society	Yes	Yes	3

Manager	Email or text contact	Cell Phone	City	State
Terri Brown	tlb9fd@uvawise.edu	865-274-3526	Wise	VA
Bill James	2dark2c1@gmail.com	423-534-9354	Gray	TN
Jason Lachniet	jason.lachniet@gmail.com	276-492-4376	Glade Spring	VA
Steve and Jeannie Bailey	steveandjbailey@aol.com	704-740-9290	Vale	NC

Access summary:

1. Cave is open to all responsible cavers. Please refer to the management plan for details. The lock combination or key is available from the manager.
2. Cave is open to all responsible cavers. Suggest that a courtesy permission request be made to the manger.
3. At the request of the property owner, the cave is not available for unsupervised recreational caving. All access to this cave will have a leader and supervisor from the management committee. Generally most trips into this cave are for conservation, science or other important management purposes.

Visit us online at <http://www.acave.us>
Join us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/groups/acave/



Gilley Cave photo by Janet Manning

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)
