

# Buffalo Bull

Sakatah State Park, Minnesota. Photo by Tony Webster.

National Association for Interpretation  
Region 5 Newsletter

Winter 2014-15  
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## Bob's Bombinations: Brave New World

By Bob Carter, Region 5 Director

If you have read Aldous Huxley's tale of a future world, and remember the central theme and how the book ends, I apologize for the depressing image engendered by the title of this column. I am invoking it now because I recently heard someone speak those two adjectives with NAI as the noun. The picture that entered my head was that of a future population blissfully drugged with their Soma and of the death of the Savage. Read the book. I am not going to explain it.

Anyway, following that brief flicker of memories past, I returned to the discussion from which that phrase (Brave New NAI) emerged and began considering the implications. The comment was not made facetiously, or in jest, or in anger. It came from an NAI member present at the NAI Advisory Council meeting held prior to this year's National Workshop in Denver. The Advisory Council consists of all regional and sectional directors. Two of those members, elected by the rest of the council, hold seats on the NAI National Board and represent the interests of the regions and sections, or, as they are called under the new bylaws, organizational units. More on that later, much later, like at our regional meeting during the upcoming workshop in Iowa. Or, you can e-mail me.

Back to the topic at hand: the comment came toward the end of the afternoon's discussions about the new NAI bylaws and structure, and the implications for NAI's future. It is no secret to anybody who knows me that my first concern and priority is the organizational units, uh, sorry, regions, specifically Region 5: The Heartland Region-and the sections too. I am currently in two of them after all. As an NAI member, and then as director of Region 5, I have been carefully watching all that has transpired with NAI over the last few years and I need to point out now that after I thought about the sincere enthusiasm for the future of NAI as expressed in the phrase "Brave New NAI," I could not agree more. I attended several other leadership meetings, had impromptu discussions with other NAI officers as well as NAI staff, and I left Denver feeling the best about NAI's future that I have in years.

That, however, was not the best part of the Denver workshop. As always, we had a Region 5 Membership Meeting. I have been an NAI Region 5 member for well over 20 years, and I know many Region 5 people, but I did not know the majority of the members present at that meeting. Of course, I knew the old faces, but there were plenty of new faces, and that was the very best part of the workshop. I look forward to seeing all of the old and the new faces in the near future as we experience and explore this Brave New NAI together. I'm excited!

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## 2015 Region 5 Workshop Packet Available!

### Cultivating Creativity

March 18-22, 2015

Ames, Iowa

The complete workshop packet for the 2015 Region Workshop is now available! [Download it here](#) or visit the [Region 5 website](#) for everything you need to know about what will be happening in Ames, including:

- Concurrent Sessions
- Off-Site Sessions
- Keynote Speakers
- Banquet and Awards Ceremony
- Lodging
- Entertainment
- Registration Fees



Registration by mail is open now. Online registration will be available as soon as



The National Association for Interpretation Region 5 membership consists of interpreters from state parks, county agencies, museums, zoos, park districts, recreation facilities, and many other public and private organizations from Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Manitoba, and Nunavut.

Our mission is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession.

## Quick Links

[National Association for Interpretation](#)

[NAI Region 5](#)

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## Submit to Buffalo Bull!

All are welcome to submit to Buffalo Bull. Please read our [publishing policy](#) prior to submission.

### Submission Deadlines:

Winter Issue	December 1
Spring Issue	March 1
Summer Issue	June 1
Fall Issue	September 1

Email:  
education@winneshiekwild.com

possible at [www.interpnet.com](http://www.interpnet.com).

The planning committee is doing their part...now it's your turn to help make this workshop a success by registering!

Don't miss this great opportunity! See you in Ames!

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## Cultivate Your Creativity: Apply for a Scholarship! By Jenny Sazama

**Applications for scholarships to attend the Region 5 Workshop in Ames, Iowa in March 2015 are now available!**

Five \$400 scholarships are available and will be issues as a reimbursement. Recipients receive a check after all requirements are fulfilled.

### Eligibility

All applicants must be current NAI members. This scholarship opportunity is open to members of any Region and Province. Students should be enrolled at least part time in a college or university. Professionals should be working in the field of interpretation. Members of the Scholarship Committee, their employees, and immediate family are not eligible.

### To Apply

Each applicant must submit:

1. A completed application form
2. A letter of support from a professor, supervisor or colleague
3. A simile or metaphor comparing an interpreter to an Iowa state symbol. For example: *An interpreter is like a prairie rose, vibrant with a few prickles.* Or, *The interpreter is a geode discovered on a geology field trip. Upon deeper inspection something wonderful is revealed.* If selected, your simile or metaphor may appear in the *Buffalo Bull*.

**All materials must be received or postmarked by January 1, 2015.** Recipients will be notified by late January.

### Additional Requirements

Scholarship recipients must:

1. Attend the entire workshop.
2. Volunteer in at least two areas for the workshop.
3. Bring an item for the auction.

[Download an application here](#), or on the [Region 5 2015 workshop webpage](#).

Submit materials and direct questions to:

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1899 W. Winchester Road  
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jsazama@lcpfd.org  
(847) 968-3482

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## Region 5 Members Honored at National Level Region 5 Award Nominations Now Open By Jeff Boland, Awards Chair

**Congratulations to Region 5's 2014 National Award recipients!**

You have done the region proud!

- **Heather Horstman**, Outstanding New Interpreter
- **Friends of Jackson County Conservation**, Excellence in Interpretive Support
- **Jewel Cave National Monument**, 2nd Place Interior Exhibits, Interpretive Media



You can help recognize great work by nominating someone for a 2015 Region 5 Award.

Do you know or work with someone deserving a regional award? So many individuals (and groups) in our Region are talented, dedicated, hardworking, and under-appreciated. Please share how special they are by honoring them with an award recognizing their abilities and contributions to the field of interpretation.

There are six award categories to choose from to fit your nominee:

- Master Front Line Interpreter
- Master Interpretive Manager
- Meritorious Service
- Outstanding New Interpreter
- Outstanding Contribution to the Region 5 Newsletter
- Excellence in Interpretive Support (non-members of NAI can qualify)

[Download a nomination form here](#), or on the [Region 5 website](#). Contact Jeff Boland with questions: [jeff.boland@eagle-bluff.org](mailto:jeff.boland@eagle-bluff.org) or 507-467-2437.

**Nomination forms and letters of support must be received by February 1st, 2015.**

The awards will be presented at the annual Region 5 Workshop in Ames, Iowa on March 21, 2015.

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## 2015 Mini-Grants Program Announced

By Debra Nowak

The Mini-Grants Committee is excited to offer another cycle of grants to help Region 5 accomplish some great interpretive projects in 2015! The grants committee will consider funding for interpretive projects and programs. The funds may be used for things such as exhibit design and production, workbooks, equipment, living history props, research, planning, and educational materials. Applications will be available January 2, 2015 with a deadline of February 28, 2015. Grants will be awarded to successful applicants by March 27, 2015. Visit [the Region 5 website](#) for requirements and the application form. For more information, contact Debra Nowak at (920) 766-4733 or [Debra-thousandisland@new.rr.com](mailto:Debra-thousandisland@new.rr.com).

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## Jewel Cave National Monument's Award-Winning Exhibits

By Bradley Block, Chief of Interpretation, Jewel Cave NM

Jewel Cave National Monument in the beautiful Black Hills of western South Dakota recently earned 2nd Place for the NAI Media Awards - Interior Exhibit category. Developed with Harpers Ferry Center of the National Park Service and Region 5's very own Split Rock Studios in Minnesota, the exhibits have captured the attention of thousands of visitors. Like many public land sites, the monument's visitor center is relatively small with a footprint structure dating back over 40 years. Yet, the universal design of the exhibits and displays immerses visitors into the resource through an assortment of engaging and accessible features. The outcome: a facility that surrounds guests with multiple ways to learn about Jewel Cave, using everything from interpretive panels to audio description hand wands.

Informal observations have suggested that the visitor experience inside the facility has lengthened since installation of the exhibits. While visits to Jewel Cave once consisted of a cave tour and then departing for other sites, they have now become a family adventure with many programming options. Visitors seem to intentionally purchase their cave tour tickets in a way that allows time to view the exhibits, perhaps taking part in the Junior Ranger Program or some other surface activity. The monument has observed increased numbers of participants for its interpretive patio talks and guided nature hikes. Time in the visitor center has adjusted from about 10-15 minutes to almost one hour of viewing. Although nothing formal has been done to capture the essence of exhibit evaluation, it is clear to monument staff that the final product has achieved its intended purpose(s).

The next time Region 5'ers head to the Black Hills, make a point of stopping at Jewel Cave. Of course, other nearby must-sees include Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Wind Cave National Park, Custer State Park, and Crazy Horse Monument. Nonetheless, the exhibits at Jewel Cave are truly world class, and the staff would be more than happy to show them off to anyone and everyone.



For a variety of reasons, some visitors do not enter Jewel Cave or take part in guided tours, so the exhibits had to showcase the natural wonders below ground. Using crystals from the monument, Split Rock Studios crafted molds that when painted and detailed give an awesome impression of the cave features.



Jewel Cave is still being explored and discovered by cavers, making the human element a focal point for interpretation. Many of the exhibits offer story-like details of what takes place on caving trips and how the resource is still being used for scientific knowledge and awareness.



Although technology has been incorporated into the displays through touchscreen monitors and cave mapping software, the overall design still included other tactile elements. Even with smartphones, tablets, and other devices entering the facility, visitors continue to enjoy "old fashioned" flip panels.



Youth visitors seem to enjoy exploring and discovering the exhibits too. Each display area offers something for kids, such as opening tree panels to learn about insects in snags. The interpretive staff has interwoven the exhibitory into the monument's new Junior Ranger Program planned for 2015.

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## ***Clone Me, Please! (And Thank You):***

### **Reflections on the 2014 National Workshop**

**By Ann Burns, 2014 National Workshop Scholarship Recipient**

Sorting through my notes and sharing what I learned with co-workers a little at a time - that's where I am right now, after returning from Denver and NAI 2014. Rather than overload them with everything at once, I bring up one or two sessions at a time. But, I will say, the plaque for Excellence in Interpretive Support that I accepted on behalf of Friends of Jackson County Conservation: that was shared immediately upon my return to the office! Thank you to the NAI Region 5 awards committee for recognizing our amazing Friends and initiating the process that lead to this national award and spurred me to attend an NAI workshop outside the great Midwest!

Looking back at the four days and nights of sessions, tours and events, my recurring wish was to be able to clone myself. Why must two (and sometimes three) sessions I need to attend be scheduled during the same block?! I wanted to participate in a roundtable discussion about working with support groups as well as learn supervisory secrets from two experienced "Plate Spinning, Cat Herding, and Scat Shoveling" people! (I hope my co-workers see an improvement in me after this!) Each block of concurrent sessions had similar difficult choices to be made.

From a session which offered a great framework for building a program about misunderstood creatures, to a session on using themes and interpretation to guide long-range plans for a site or agency, the workshop offered a range of ideas to bring back to my home base. With plans for bio blitzes in the works for our newest public property in Jackson County, I am now well-armed with the information and the contacts gained at "Seeking Out New Life" presented by two NPS staffers.

Cloning would have also come in handy when it was time to decide whether to catch up on sleep, or get together with new people to share thoughts on sessions or stories from the front. I have to admit, my age and the cold I was fighting made option # 1 the choice for me. Finding a new person to sit beside during a break and serving as a volunteer during the workshop sufficed this time around.

During the Saturday morning NAI Town Hall meeting it was obvious that we are fortunate to have a strong Region 5. That is clearly THANKS to the people who have stepped up to leadership

and active committee membership duties. My thanks, at this time in particular, go to the Region 5 scholarship committee members for the opportunity to attend the national workshop this year. And thanks, again, to the Region 5 Awards Committee for recognizing Friends of Jackson County Conservation.

Back in Northeast Iowa, I am grateful for capable and enthusiastic co-workers and volunteers who can help implement the ideas I am bringing back - no cloning needed!

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## A Perfect Egret

By John M. Elliott

Pure white in the sharp sunlight of early morning, an egret struggles with a fish as big as its head. The bird drops the fat bullhead, pecks at it, picks it up, tosses it into a new hold, drops it again, over and over. A ten minute job-is it trying to pick off sharp spiny whiskers before swallowing?



In the clear air of early autumn the bird's yellow bill and black legs are a stark contrast to feathers whiter than white. A dozen mallards lounging at the other end of the pier, a crowd of swifts chattering over the water, yellow-rump and palm warblers in hawthorns bearing dark red fruit, one, two wood ducks dropping into glassy water from low branches, the first gaudy color in small maples-this is a picture of the drama and the peace of the wild.

Is this perfect vignette playing on a back country lake?

No. Reflected along with the egret's graceful form are cars on the boulevard just beyond the shore. Mowers trim lawns, saws and chippers rumble where a crew disposes of borer-killed ash trees on the golf course. From the far side of the park the constant rumble of expressway traffic and the big, rhythmic steam piston-like whoosh from a foundry firmly place us. Wilderness this is not.

I came here this morning for some relief from reading yet another disturbing treatise on our failure to deal with the climate crisis. The park does its best as antidote. I didn't burn any fossil fuel to get here, and walking itself always helps.

I could appreciate less urban din, but at least the chipper has gone quiet for the moment. And the dead trees-over 400 already removed from this one park of less than a half-mile square-are yet another symptom of our impact. Keeping this oasis a haven requires management: lawns for picnics and fields for ball games, paths for joggers, bikes, walkers with and without dogs, manicured fairways and greens for golfers, and, yes, small but productive areas for trees and flowers, birds, butterflies, and nature nuts. Even the egret's breakfast is a product of management for a very popular recreational fishery.

Management requires fuel. No one mows a golf course by hand. Ecological services come by trucks with power tools. Most park users, birders no exception, drive here.

To care for a place we must know it. Knowing is personal, being there. Want to get to know a national park? Fly and drive! Putting out fire with gasoline?

There is a general disconnect between what we love and the lives we lead. The reading that sent me here today is George Marshall, *Don't Even Think About It*.<sup>\*</sup> A strength of this book, however unsettling, is Marshall's review of how we process information and our ability to place conflicting facts and values into different compartments, in our heads and in our lives. There are, as the title clearly says, much more disturbing stories about our inability as individuals and society to deal with climate crisis.

Is this morning perfect? Hardly, but as close as I will come today. I linger as long as I can, settling my head again for routine chores and other business of living every day. After 200+ pretty grim pages, Marshall does offer a strategy for hope. I will go to my own daily struggle with conscience, and search for a personal ethical place on this earth.

<sup>\*</sup>Marshall, George. *Don't Even Think About It, Why our Brains are Wired to Ignore Climate Change*. Bloomsbury, 2014

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## Enos Mills' Legacy

By Ann Burns, 2014 National Workshop Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to Ann Burns, Environmental Education Coordinator for Jackson County Conservation (JCC), based out of the Hurstville Interpretive Center in Iowa, on receiving the \$800 scholarship to the 2014 National Workshop in Denver. Ann has been a member of NAI

since 2001, is active in the Iowa Association of Naturalists, and is the staff liaison to the Friends of JCC. The Friends of JCC was the 2014 recipient of both the Region 5 and National Excellence in Interpretive Support award. Ann's general reflection on the national workshop is elsewhere in this newsletter.

As part of the scholarship application, Region 5 members were asked to submit a haiku about Enos Mills. Here is Ann's haiku, followed by a brief explanation:

Bear prints in trail dust  
Stop observe inspire others  
Enos Mills was right

My first exposure to Enos Mills was reading his book *The Grizzly*. I purchased the book on my first trip to Rocky Mountain National Park with my husband. Years later, on two different family backpacking trips, we stopped to observe black bear prints on the dusty surface of the trail (yes, the book is about grizzlies). Each time, the observations led to discussions of our feelings about sharing the wilderness with others: human, small and cuddly, large and not-so-cuddly, and things in-between.

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## ***Around the Region:*** **Workshops, Resources, and Announcements**

### **NAI CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **Certified Interpretive Guide Training Workshop**

Feb. 26, March 5, 12, and 19, 2015 - 9am-5:30pm

\$245

Greenbelt Cultural Center

1215 Green Bay Road, North Chicago, IL

[Register here.](#)

For more information, contact Jenny Sazama at [jsazama@lcfpd.org](mailto:jsazama@lcfpd.org) or 847-968-3482

### **EXTERNAL WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES, and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Driven to Discover: Using Citizen Science to Spark Scientific Investigations**

Minnesota Naturalists' Association (MNA) Quarterly Training

Monday, January 12

9am-12pm

Schaar's Bluff Gathering Center in Hastings, MN.

For more information: <http://mnnaturalists.org/TRAININGS>.

#### **Growing Up WILD Educator Training**

Saturday, January 31, 2015

9am-12pm; \$25 (includes book and supplies)

Reservations: 630-206-9586

Mayslake Peabody Estate, Oak Brook, IL

#### **Sixth Biennial Wild Things Conference**

Saturday, January 31, 2015

8am-5pm

University of Illinois at Chicago - Student Center East

Join this great gathering of the inspiring souls who live and breathe Chicago nature. Find out

more at: <http://www.habitatproject.org/WildThings2015>

#### **"Where Have All the Birds Gone?" with Dr. Gerald "Jerry" Niemi**

Minnesota Zoo's Our World Speaker Series

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

7-9pm

Free, but pre-registration is required through the zoo's website:

<http://mnzoo.org/blog/programs/world-speaker-series>

#### **National Science Teachers Association National Conference**

Chicago: Great Lakes/Great Ideas

March 12-15, 2015

The 2015 NSTA National Conference will be held in the 'Windy City' and this grand event is something you MUST consider for the highlight of your professional development in 2015. For more information and to register, visit the NSTA website:

<http://www.nsta.org/conferences/national.aspx>

#### **2015 Environmental Education Association of Illinois Annual Conference**

April 9-11, 2015

Touch of Nature Environmental Center, Makanda, IL

Call for Proposals due by January 16, 2015

If you have any questions please contact Linda Hauser at [lhauser@fs.fed.us](mailto:lhauser@fs.fed.us).

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources' ENTICE** (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) educator workshops are scheduled for 2015! These workshops include hands-on activities, lessons, and supplemental resources. For more information, dates, and to register visit <https://www.enticeworkshops.com/>. Many more workshops than those listed below are available on the website. Upcoming workshops include:

*Illinois Woodlands 101*

January 12-25, 2015  
Online

*Animal Communities*

February 21, 2015  
9am-3:30pm  
The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago

*Tracks, Scats and Habitats*

March 21, 2015  
9am-3pm  
Shawnee National Forest Office, Harrisburg

## RESOURCES

**EE Cohort in Minnesota:** You are invited to join a dedicated group of non-formal and formal environmental elementary educators focused on integrating and embedding environmental education and outdoor instruction into every-day school instruction. This group usually meets the first Saturday of each month from 9:30-12:00 noon. Join us for one Saturday morning workshop or as many as you can! For an updated list of session dates, locations, and themes please go Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge website: [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Minnesota\\_Valley/visitfor\\_educators/workshops.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Minnesota_Valley/visitfor_educators/workshops.html).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sandi Kinzer is the new Visitor Services Supervisor at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

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