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By Bob Carter, Heartland Region Director

As I sit down to write another Winter Bull column, it is the day after Thanksgiving (USA) and shouting distance from December and its round of holidays. In past Winter Bulls, I have commented on my thankfulness for NAI and its members and reflected on the exciting new directions that NAI has undertaken in the last couple of years. Two weeks ago, I had something completely different in mind for this column from what you are about to read. Then, Paris was viciously and mindlessly attacked and our own, home-grown icon of intolerance reached new lows in his incessant, narcissistic, xenophobic, and homophobic bilious bloviating.

So, here I sit at my computer, full of rant, but what I am working on at the moment is not the place for that. Instead, I am going to take a cue from one of my heroes, Mel Brooks. In his films, specifically, *The Producers* and *Blazing Saddles*, he heavily parodied, slammed, slashed and burned, and mocked Nazism and racism, respectively. I only vaguely recall an interview in which he was asked about why he had Nazism as a focal point in *The Producers* and his response was something to the effect that it was so vile, Hitler so beastly, and what the Nazis did so horrendous, that the only thing to do was make to fun of them. He took that philosophy to new highs in *Blazing Saddles* with its merciless, and hilarious, disembowelment of racism, although campfire meals were no longer the same for me after first seeing that movie. If you do not know to what I am referring, you need to catch up on your movie watching. The bottom line is whether it is Nazis, racists, or the current crop of intolerant xenophobes and zealots, foreign and domestic, we can mock them simply by fully engaging in our annual



The National Association for Interpretation Heartland Region 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 Heartland Region](#)

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submission.

Submission Deadlines:

Winter Issue

December 1

celebrations of family, friends, and freedom-freedom to be who we
are and value others for who they are.

This year, Thanksgiving (USA) approached, as it usually does, hot
on the heels of the NAI National Conference. I prepped for a superb
and yummy family holiday while still feeling the great vibes from
visiting with my NAI family in Virginia Beach. That is a great tie-in
because I think NAI is a fine example of teaching and practicing
tolerance as exemplified in its membership diversity and
professional philosophy, and, as I have already made abundantly
clear in the past, I am very thankful for NAI and its members.
Yesterday, Thanksgiving Day (USA), was a great day for me even
though I spent a lot of it wrestling with a twenty-one-pound turkey
and the giant cookware necessary to feed our small clan. Not to
worry: I won. Today will also be a very good day, as we are going to
reenact yesterday, but, without the giant cookware wrestling. I may
even get out and fire up my DVD of *The Producers* or *Blazing
Saddles*, maybe both. But only after my granddaughters have gone
home.

So, to all of you and yours I say, Happy Thanksgiving (both USA
and Canada), Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Kwanzaa,
Happy What Ever Else You May Celebrate, and most importantly,
Happy Festivus for the Rest of Us. I hope to see you all at some
time in the New Year and together we can celebrate open-
mindedness and diversity.

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Catch the Spirit of the 2016 Heartland Region Workshop!

Catch the Spirit
[Heartland Region Workshop](#)
April 6-10, 2016
Ramada Conference Center
Bismarck, North Dakota

The North Dakota planning committee is
working hard to ensure that you "catch the
spirit" at the [Heartland Region
Workshop!](#)



The workshop kicks off with Keynote Speaker Linda Black Elk, an
ethnobiologist, restoration ecologist, and instructor at Sitting Bull
College. Her in-depth knowledge of plants and native cultures is
inspiring to all. Later that night, five-time nominee for Western Artist
of the Year Greg Hagar will bring his stories to life through music

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Summer Issue June 1
Fall Issue September 1

Email:

education@winneshiekwild.com

that appeal to all listeners. Born and raised in North Dakota, Greg entertains as he shares his successes and struggles of country life, love and faith.

At past workshops, have you ever wanted to attend more than one offsite session? In North Dakota, you will have the freedom to attend multiple half-day sessions! More information on Friday's off-site sessions will be available soon.

Do you have a presentation that will educate or inspire your fellow interpreters? Fill out a presenter's application! The [Call for Presenters](#) can be found on the workshop website. Submissions will now be accepted through February 15, 2016. Concurrent sessions will take place throughout the workshop.

The [Call for Exhibitors](#) is also now open until February 15, 2016. Vendors and organizations are encouraged to come highlight their products, programs, and services! Exhibitors may sell their products or services during the workshop.

Still not convinced? Then join us Friday night as we watch Steve Stark perform his magic, bringing history to life through story-telling and drawing before your eyes with great accuracy and speed on 20-30 foot rolls of paper. On Saturday, meet Theodore Roosevelt, portrayed by Arch Ellwein! And, of course, there's always the competitive silent and entertaining live auctions and the amazing Awards Banquet to be held at the newly expanded Heritage Center.

Bismarck is easily reachable by car, train, or plane. Enjoy wildlife watching on one of many highways as you traverse North Dakota's wide open spaces, or utilize the Ramada's free shuttle service to the Bismarck airport. The committee will also organize a shuttle from the Fargo airport (2.5 hours) or Minot train station (2 hours) if there is sufficient demand.

More information on lodging, registration, and the entire workshop can be found on the [workshop website](#). Mail registration is available now; online registration will be available as soon as possible. Regular registration rates end March 15!

We are looking forward to seeing you all in North Dakota!

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2016 Workshop Scholarship Application Open

By Jenny Sazama, Scholarships Chair

Perhaps a Scholarship to the Regional Workshop will help you "Catch the Spirit" in Bismarck this April? Submit your application by Jan 15, 2016!

Several scholarships are available and each scholarship will cover the workshop fee and some or all of lodging costs. They are issued as a reimbursement. Recipients receive a check after 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 personal statement:
 1. Students: Share an experience that inspired you to "catch the spirit" and be passionate about natural or cultural history or the interpretive profession. Maximum of 150 words.
 2. Professionals: Describe one moment that inspired you in the interpretive field and offer one tip on how you inspire/engage an audience to "catch the spirit." Maximum of 200 words.

If selected, your submission may appear in the *Buffalo Bull*. Selection criteria include grammar, organization and flow, following direction, relevance and universal appeal, career goals (for students) and contribution/involvement in NAI/interpretive field (for professionals).

All materials must be received or postmarked by January 15, 2016.

Recipients notified by late January.

Scholarship recipients must:

1. Attend the entire workshop.

2. Volunteer in at least two areas for the workshop. Recipients are expected to volunteer at the live auction.
3. Bring an item for the auction.

The application form is available on the [Heartland Region website](#).

Request Application Form & Submit Materials to:

Jenny Sazama
LCFPD-EE Services
1899 W. Winchester Road
Libertyville, IL 60048
jsazama@lcpd.org
847/968-3482

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Mini-Grant Applications Available in January By Debra Nowak, Mini-Grants Chair

The Mini-Grants committee is excited to offer another cycle of grants to help the Heartland Region accomplish some great interpretive projects in 2016.

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.

The application will be available January 4, 2016 with a deadline of February 29, 2016. Grants will be awarded to successful applicants by March 31, 2016.

Visit the [Heartland Region website](#) for requirements, the application form, and to check out what previous recipients have done with their funding.

For more information, contact Debra Nowak at (920) 766-4733 or Debra-thousandisland@new.rr.com.

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2016 Award Nominations Now Open

By Jeff Boland, Awards Chair

Please consider nominating someone for a 2016 Heartland Region Award!

Do you know or work with someone deserving an 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 Heartland Region Newsletter, and Excellence in Interpretive Support (non-members of NAI can qualify).

Check out the [Heartland Region website](#) to download a nomination form and contact Jeff Boland if you have any questions: jeff.boland@eagle-bluff.org or call at 507-467-2437.

Nomination forms and letters of support must be received by February 5th, 2016.

The awards will be presented at the annual Heartland Region Workshop in Bismarck, North Dakota April 9, 2016.

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Friends of Spruce Woods Receives National Award

Congratulations to Friends of Spruce Woods on receiving the 2015 Excellence in Interpretive Support from the NAI National Office! Friends of Spruce Woods, located in Carberry, Manitoba, was the recipient of the 2015 Excellence in Interpretive Support award from the Heartland Region.



Since their formation in 1986, the Friends of Spruce Woods have been instrumental in ensuring the interpretation program at Spruce Woods Provincial Park is well supported and funded. They conducted an aggressive fundraising campaign in the 1990s to fund a new interpretive center for the park, which was opened in 1999. The group continues to support maintenance and upgrades at the center, helps promote events and programs, and purchases additional program supplies and equipment. Without the Friends of Spruce Woods, the park's interpretive program would not have survived over the years.

Photo Caption: Rosalie Sigurdson (left) of the Friends of Spruce Woods receives the 2015 NAI Excellence in Interpretive Support Award from NAI President Amy Lethbridge (right) in Virginia Beach, VA on November 13, 2015.



Heartland Region Election Results

Following elections earlier this fall, Laura Kohn has been re-elected Deputy Director for the Heartland Region. Nina Baki, previous state coordinator for Illinois, has been elected regional secretary. Congrats to both! Contact information for all regional officials, committee chairs, state coordinators, and other positions can be found at the close of every *Buffalo Bull* and on the [Heartland Region website](#).

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Heartland Region Media Updates

Please update your records to include the new website and social media contact info for the region, reflecting our embracing of Heartland Region in place of Region 5.

- **Website:** <http://naiheartlandregion.weebly.com/>
- **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/NAIHeartland>
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/NAIHeartlandRegion

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Around the Region:

Workshops, Resources, and Announcements

NAI CERTIFICATION and CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) Training Workshops

The Certified Interpretive Guide program is designed for anyone who delivers interpretive programs to the public. It combines both the theoretical foundations of the profession with practical skills in delivering quality interpretive programming to visitors.

Anita Purves Nature Center/Museum of the Grand Prairie

Urbana, IL and Mahomet, IL

February 12, 19, 26 and March 4, 2016

Co-Hosted by Urbana Park District and Champaign County Forest Preserve District.

Registration open now until January 18, 2016

For more information, visit the [workshop website](#) or contact Bob Carter (bobcarter.13@gmail.com)

or 815 289-7930) or Stacey Clementz (sclementz@ccfpd.org or 217-896-2455).

Brookfield Zoo Great Bear Wilderness Classroom

Brookfield, IL

February 15-19, 2016

Registration open until February 1, 2016

For more information, visit the [workshop website](#) or contact Andre Copeland at andre.copeland@czs.org or (708) 688-8845.

Lake Villa, Illinois

February 25; March 3, 10, and 17, 2016

8:30am-5:00pm

Contact Jenny Sazama at (847) 968-3482 for details.

Visit the [workshop website](#) for more information.

Fontenelle Forest, Camp Brewster Lodge

Bellevue, Nebraska

August 22-25, 2016

For more information, visit the [workshop website](#) or contact Debra K. Beck at dbeck@fontenelleforest.org or (402) 731-3140, ext. 1017.

Certified Interpretive Host Train-the-Trainers Workshop

Looking for training that combines non-formal interpretation skills with customer service? Do you want to train/certify staff and others on behalf of NAI? If so, this is the course for you!

Lost Valley Visitor Center, McHenry Co. Conservation District

Ringwood, Illinois

May 3-6, 2016 (non-CIT-certified attendees)

May 4-5, 2016 (CIT/CIG-certified attendees)

For more information, visit the [NAI training website](#).

NAI Webinars

Don't forget about NAI's webinars! [Check them out here!](#)

EXTERNAL WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES, and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Iowa Conservation Education Coalition Conference

"Contemporary Environmental Issues and New Iowa Science Standards:

Transforming Conservation Outreach"

February 4-5, 2016

Springbrook Conservation Education Coalition

Guthrie Center, Iowa
For more information, visit www.iowae.org.

Illinois Association of Conservation Districts Conference

"Strengthening Conservation through Partnerships"

February 25 & 26, 2016

Starved Rock State Park

Utica, Illinois

For more information and registration, visit www.iacd.online.

Environmental Education Association of Illinois Annual Meeting and Conference

"Restoring and Recharging Environmental Education"

March 11-12, 2016

Spoon River College and Conference Center

Canton, Illinois

Call for Proposals: Due December 15, 2015

For more information, visit www.EEAI.net.

Children & Nature Network Summit and Conference

"Inspiration and Action for Healthy Communities"

May 25-27, 2016

Saint Paul RiverCentre

Saint Paul, Minnesota

This year's conference will be co-hosted by C&NN and the Minnesota Children and Nature Connection.

[Registration is now open.](#)

Midwest Early Childhood Educator Symposium "Second Nature: Reintroducing Children to the Outdoors"

Saturday, June 4, 2016

The Morton Arboretum

Lisle, Illinois

Registration opens February 1, 2016

Visit the [Morton Arboretum website](#) for more information.

The **Environmental Education Association of Illinois** has a calendar of a wide range of training opportunities, including Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, and more. Visit [their website](#) for a detailed list.

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/>.

RESOURCES

Does your area have **Green Drinks chapter**? These lively mixtures of like-minded folks get together monthly to network, share ideas, and be inspired. They are informal, organic, self-organizing networks. Learn more and see if there's one near you, or start one yourself! <http://www.greendrinks.org/>.

The mission of the **University of Illinois Extension: Master Naturalist Program** is to provide science-based educational opportunities that connect people with nature and help them become engaged environmental stewards. The training will prepare volunteer Master Naturalists to more effectively participate in local environmental stewardship. Find more information at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/mn/who.cfm>.

Looking for a job or internship? Don't forget to check out these great resources from NAI and Region 5!

[NAI's Career Center](#) (National Office)

[NAI Heartland Region Job Board](#)

[SEEK](#) (Minnesota)

[MyCountyParks](#) (Iowa; seasonal and full-time)

Call for Articles: InterpNEWS

If you are interested in submitted articles and/or research to this free, international heritage interpretation e-magazine, please contact John Veverka (CIT, CIP, NAI Fellow) at jvainterp@aol.com. [Click here for more information on InterpNEWS.](#)

Blueraven Creative creates custom tactile, visual, and auditory experiences that are accessible, educational, entertaining, and memorable. Their SensoryPEN connects visitors directly to the exhibit or trail they came to experience, and not to their smart phone. A special 15% discount is offered on any SensoryPEN order that mentions this ad. Visit www.blueravencreative.com for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minnesota will not be hosting the 2017 Regional Workshop, but will be in 2018. All Minnesota members, please begin pooling resources and brainstorming host locations as the start of the planning process!

SEEK (Sharing Environmental Education Knowledge) has updated their website. Check it out here: <https://www.seek.state.mn.us/>.

Congratulations to the **2015 MAEE Award Winners**. These

individuals have made significant contributions to environmental education in Minnesota. Visit the [MAEE website](#) for more information on their accomplishments!

Art Widerstrom: Lifetime Achievement Award

Elizabeth Bartel: Formal Educator of the Year

Jeff Ledermann: Non-formal Educator of the Year

Earlier this year, NAI members

from Chicagoland area got together for an informal visit to the Morton Arboretum.

Thanks to Cindy Crosby for her incredible hosting. It was a great way to get together with some great people and share ideas. Contact Jessica Preston (jlpreston12@gmail.com) for information on future gatherings or host a field trip at your own site!



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