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## 2020 Regional Award Winners Honored By Jen Guest, Awards Chair

Congratulations to our 2020 Heartland Region award winners Lindsey Mitton & Rob Nedotiakfo. Both these award-winning professionals have gone above and beyond with their dedication and passion for the field of interpretation. Cheers to your success and accomplishments! Winners were acknowledged during a virtual awards banquet on April 17 as part of the 2020 Heartland Region Workshop.

### Lindsey Mitton - Master Frontline Interpreter

Lindsey has served as an interpreter for Manitoba Parks since 2001, mostly in Birds Hill Provincial Park where she expanded the interpretive program from a few spring and fall school programs to a year-round operation. Lindsey is in her element when leading guided programs, especially when connecting with students and helping them appreciate and understand the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources. She takes a senior role in recruiting, training, coaching, and mentoring seasonal interpretive staff across the province. Her masterful skills lead the way and set the bar for frontline interpreters in Manitoba.



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 Illinois, Iowa, Manitoba, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Nunavut, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

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

### Quick Links

[National Association for Interpretation](#)

[NAI Heartland Region](#)

**Buffalo Bull** is published quarterly by the Heartland Region of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI).

For change of address or

### Rob Nedotiakfo - Excellence in Interpretive Support

Rob is the Director of Manitoba Parks and Protected Spaces and Acting Assistant Deputy Minister for the Parks and Resource Protection Division.

Rob made a significant achievement for interpreters in 2018 when he supported and shepherded through a reclassification of the Senior Park Interpreter position that it brought professional respect and a living wage. Rob continues to champion the work of Manitoba's park interpreters and actively promotes their programming.

As Manitoba embarks on a new provincial tourism strategy, Rob has ensured that the provincial parks are prominent in the strategy and recognizes that interpreters play a key role in developing and promoting visitor experiences.

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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

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He is a remarkable leader, pushing his staff to take risks, accept new challenges, try new ideas, build partnerships, and grow their programming. Rob believes in the importance of highly trained interpreters able to provide quality programs and experiences in parks. He often says interpreters are the "face of parks" and play a vital role in providing park visitors with positive, educational, and influential experiences.



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**2021 Regional Conference Announcement  
By Bob Carter, 2021 Conference Chair**

As everyone reading this probably knows, our annual regional workshop, the face to face (F2F) one at least, was one of the events impacted by COVID-19. As disappointing as it was for me, I can't fully imagine how disappointing it was for Workshop Chair Sloan Cathcart and his team who worked so long and hard to put on a workshop that would have been memorable for things other than being the first one canceled. That said, thanks to that same dedicated crew, we still had a memorable week, albeit virtually.

From the opening session to the concurrent sessions, and even a really interesting auction, the Heartland Region's first experiment in internet conferencing was, in my opinion, a huge success. So, as the chair of the next workshop, I want to send a huge "Thank You" to Sloan Cathcart, Lindsey Mitton, Jennifer Bryson, Adam Collicutt, Alex Sawchyn, and Patrick McDermott.

Now, on to next year and the event we are calling a conference this time. The Call for Presenters opened during the Manitoba Regional and will remain open until September. So, think about a session to offer. There will be more on that later. Right now, I just want to assure all our regional members that the committee is forging ahead with plans for a full F2F regional come next March. But we are also taking into consideration that life may not be completely back to normal by then. So we are also planning for two different contingencies: one being having to have another fully virtual conference, the other that we might be offering something in between. We will keep everyone informed through our regional web site and of course, through the *Buffalo Bull*.

I'm an optimist, most of the time, so I say be sure to mark your calendars for March 24-27, 2021 so that one way or the other you can join us as:



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**2021 Regional Conference: Call for Presenters**



## Interpretation Plays in Peoria

March 24-27, 2021

Holiday Inn & Suites

East Peoria, Illinois



We know you are all talented, creative, and have something to share with the rest of the Heartland Region members!

Join us next spring and see how your ideas play in Peoria! Submit your presentation proposal by emailing the following information to Kim Compton, Program Chair, at [kcompton@mccdDistrict.org](mailto:kcompton@mccdDistrict.org). Proposals are due by November 1, 2020.

- Presentation title
- Presentation description for booklet (40 word max) and description for selection committee (150 words); please include whether or not it can be offered as an online session
- Presentation length (1 hour or 1.5 hours)
- Presentation topic category and audience level (ex. IT for frontline interpreters)
- Name of presenter(s)
- Job title(s)
- Address, phone number, and email

Visit the [conference website](#) to learn more and stay updated!

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## Scholarships for National Conference By Jenny Sazama, Scholarship Chair

NAI Heartland Region is making \$2,000 available for scholarships for the NAI National Conference to be held November 10-14, 2020 in St. Augustine, Florida.

Details will be posted to the [Heartland Region website](#) and [Facebook page](#) by June 15.

Questions can be directed to Jenny Sazama at [jsazama@lcfpd.org](mailto:jsazama@lcfpd.org) or 847-968-3482.



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## Engaging Visitors with Podcasts By Bradley Block, Chief of Interpretation Jewel Cave National Monument

Podcasts are no longer only associated with audio files, such as books and reference materials. Multiple public land agencies, historic sites, and zoos/aquariums are creating videos that include interpretive narration and even animation. Whether they are called podcasts, videocasts, or interpretive vignettes, these sorts of productions offer additional opportunities to engage with the public.



Jewel Cave National Monument in the Black Hills of South Dakota continues with its development of video productions for online visitor engagement. With the completion of a new park film, staff decided to use the additional footage to create twelve interpretive podcasts. Each podcast is about three to five minutes in length and complements thematic areas for both the surface and subsurface resources. Most important, the thematic areas offer answers to common visitor questions throughout the year, such as "Which cave tour is best for a family?" and "Is the cave home to bats?"

Although originally planned for release once each month, COVID-19 created an opportunity to educate and creatively interact with visitors through social media videos. Starting in mid-March, the interpretive podcasts were uploaded to the [monument's website](#). Since then, the various podcasts have been shared on the monument's Facebook Page, with links back to the website for additional titles. To accommodate all audiences, each podcast is captioned and provides audio description to

complement 508 compliance for federal agencies.

A special thanks to the NPS Harper's Ferry Center for assistance with the initial Scope of Work, as well as multiple local park units with editorial suggestions, feedback, and shared resources. As a small park site, the monument is happy to share these additional productions for even greater visitor awareness. Best of all, the productions can be viewed from anywhere in the world and at any time on the website. This has already proven to be very beneficial for student reports and visitor inquiries, as well as accommodating "missed" school field trips this past spring.

For more information or to view the various podcasts, please visit [www.nps.gov/jeca/learn/photosmultimedia/multimedia.htm](http://www.nps.gov/jeca/learn/photosmultimedia/multimedia.htm).

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## Membership Grants for Full-time Students By Jenny Sazama, Scholarship Chair

NAI is a great organization full of opportunities for students who want to network, find employment and gain professional skills in the field of interpretation. The Heartland Region wants to encourage students to become members to take advantage of these opportunities and benefits like mini-grants for projects and scholarships to workshops by providing grants on a first-apply basis. Awardees will be selected by the Scholarship Committee through a lottery.

To be eligible for an NAI student membership grant the student must be at full-time status and must submit the following:

- A letter from a university/college faculty or staff verifying that the student is full-time
- A 200-word statement on why he/she wants to be a member of NAI

**Submit these documents along with your contact information to:**

Jenny Sazama  
LCFPD-EE Services  
1899 W. Winchester Road  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
[jsazama@lcpd.org](mailto:jsazama@lcpd.org).

Questions? Contact Jenny at 847-968-3482.

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## Heartland Region Media

Find out more about workshops, scholarships, mini-grants, and the Heartland Region in general!

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

*Note: In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, NAI is allowing CIG to be taught virtually for a limited time. The certification requirements are the same. Note the location of your instructor as this may conflict with your time zone/location. The courses listed below are "live" trainings scheduled in the Heartland Region. Additional virtual opportunities are listed on the national NAI website.*

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.

#### **Sugar Grove Nature Center**

August 10-31, 2020  
McLean, Illinois  
[Visit the workshop website for more information.](#)

#### **Brookfield Zoo**

August 17-21, 2020  
Brookfield, Illinois

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

#### **Lincoln Park Zoo**

October 19-23, 2020  
Chicago, Illinois

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

#### **Touch of Nature Environmental Center**

November 5-8, 2020  
Makanda, Illinois

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

#### **NAI Webinars**

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

#### **NAI Credits**

Members can now earn credit toward conference registration fees, membership renewals, and re-certification fees in one of two ways: referring a new NAI member or serving as a peer reviewer for certain documents. If you have ever done either of those in the past, you may have credits available. A new section on your "My Account" page on the NAI website lists credits available on your account -- Please note that they do expire.

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

##### **Teaching in the Outdoor Classroom**

Prairie Wetlands Learning Center - Fergus Falls, Minnesota  
June 22-25, 2020

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

##### **Save the Date: Midwest Environmental Education Conference (MEEC)**

July 26-29, 2021

Luther College - Decorah, Iowa

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

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RESOURCES**

Visit [USAJobs.gov](#) to search, view, apply for, and set alerts on jobs with the National Park Service. The process can take time, so applicants are encouraged to begin early and upload documents in advance of job postings.

**Minnesota** Jobs and Happenings: [SEEK \(Sharing Environmental Education Knowledge\)](#) website.

**UW - Stevens Point's** [Job Board in EE and Interpretation Careers](#).

Career Resources from **NAI and the Heartland Region!**

[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](mailto:jvainterp@aol.com) . [Click here for more information on InterpNEWS](#) .

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## **Contact NAI Heartland Region Leadership**

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