



## National Association for Interpretation

*Buffalo Bull*: Heartland Region Newsletter

Winter 2016

Volume 28, Number 4

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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

## Bob's Bombinations

By Bob Carter, Heartland Region Director

As I sit down at the computer to knock out my ramblings for this issue of the *Bull*, we are getting our first snowfall here, such as it is. I say that because the only evidence of the early morning flurries is a dusting on my deck in back of the house. Out in front, for all you can tell, we had a brief rain shower. However sluggishly, winter is finally on its way to central Illinois. Of course, some parts of the Heartland Region are already well into their winter weather.

I have to admit to having a long term love-hate relationship with snow. I love it when I go visit it, but I hate it when it comes to visit me. My preferred snow removal technique is waiting until a thaw, but I still cannot resist the urge to make a snow angel and mourn its loss when it is blown over or the defining edges melt away. But snow is much more than an object of scorn or adoration, it is an opportunity. At least that is the way I always looked at it professionally. I always loved teaching in snow. In snow, under snow, over snow, around snow, and about snow. S'no kidding. Sorry, I had to do that.

I am waxing philosophical about snow because, with those first few flakes early this morning I realized that for the first time in decades I am not prepping to teach in snow. No programs, no classes. Why? Because last May I retired from Northern Illinois University, and I haven't done winter nonformal programs for at least 15 years. Will I miss it? You bet. Not the griping, "We're going outside? But it's cold and wet!" But I will miss the little epiphanies and attitude changes as the once unenlightened begin to learn just what a rich experience the winter outdoors can be. So, I am tipping my floppy-eared hat to all of you who are, or will be, out sharing the wonders of this season with potential future winter lovers. For those of you who aren't doing winter programs, go find someone who is and follow them. I will be. With any luck, I won't have to shovel this first snowfall, but then I worry that when I sit by my fireplace with a mug of steaming hot chocolate later today I will feel like I haven't earned it. Nah. I earned it.

As is usual for this issue of the *Bull*, I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Regional Board and the Leadership Council for making sure the region continues to run smoothly and I want to thank all of you Heartland Region NAI members for your continued dedication to NAI, the region, and interpretation. As you look ahead to the New Year, keep in mind important upcoming events, particularly the Regional Workshop/Conference in Deadwood, SD and also the nominations for NAI Regional Awards. The Deadwood call for presentations is out on the regional website as are the details for nominating someone for a regional award. Check 'em out, and Happy Holidays to one and all.

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

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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

## 2017 Heartland Region Workshop: Call for Papers Available

"The Future is Now...  
The Rest is History"  
2017 Heartland Region Workshop  
April 5-9, 2017  
Deadwood, South Dakota

**The Call for Papers is now available.**  
Submissions are due January 9, 2017.

We are planning another great workshop and look forward to meeting new members and reuniting with old friends! If you're looking to enhance your professional development, please consider presenting at the workshop. Below is a list of categories of development to help guide you. We hope to see in you April in South Dakota!

- Natural and Cultural History
- Program Development/Educational Programs
- Communication/Customer Service
- Administration
- Volunteerism
- Technology/Social Media

[Download the form here](#) or on the [workshop webpage](#).



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## Workshop Scholarship Applications Available By Jenny Sazama, Scholarships Chair

**Your future could include a scholarship to the 2017 Regional Workshop in Deadwood, South Dakota, April 5-9!**

Submit your application and you may make history as one of the scholarship recipients!

Several scholarships are available and each will cover the workshop fee and some or all of lodging costs. They are issued as a reimbursement. Recipients receive a check after all scholarship 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 brief statement (maximum 200 words) as outlined below. Visit <https://www.deadwood.com/history/> for inspiration.



Students: Deadwood attracted many people who were seeking adventure and fortune. Imagine the interpretive profession as Deadwood and explain why you're attracted to the interpretive field and what you hope to achieve there.

Professionals: Deadwood "boomed into a town that played by its own rules." Provide an example when you played by your own rules and became a legend in your career (even if it's a legend in your own mind or for a small audience).

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

**All materials must be received or postmarked by January 15, 2017.** Recipients will be notified by late January.

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. Submit a creative picture with a caption of themselves at the workshop.

Application forms are available for [download here](#) or on the [Heartland Region website](#).

Submit materials and questions to:

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

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## 2017 Award Nominations Open

### By Jeff Boland, Awards Chair

Kick off 2017 by nominating someone for a 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 underappreciated. 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
- Excellence in Interpretive Support (non-members of NAI can qualify).

Nomination forms and supporting materials must be received by January 31, 2017. Awards will be presented at the 2017 Heartland Region Workshop in Deadwood, South Dakota.

Download nomination forms here ([Word Document](#) or [PDF](#)) or find them on the [regional website](#).

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## **NEW! Student Membership Grants**

### **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 so they can take advantage of the opportunities NAI can offer, including mini-grants for projects and scholarships to workshops.

This new program will award membership grants on a first-apply basis and awardees will be selected by the Scholarship Committee through a lottery.

To be eligible for a 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

**All materials must be emails or postmarked by January 15, 2017** to Jenny Sazama  
LCFPD-EE Services  
1899 W. Winchester Road  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
[jsazama@lcpfd.org](mailto:jsazama@lcpfd.org).

Questions? Contact Jenny at 847-968-3482.

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## **Live Where Your Feet Are Right Now**

### **By Megan Cook**

*Live where your feet are right now.* This statement is one of the most relevant I took away from my time attending the 2016 NAI National Conference in Corpus Christi in November. One would think that it was spoken in a concurrent session to inspire, by a keynote speaker to disclose a secret of how to get the most out of life, or during the awards banquet honoring one of the greats in our organization. However, this was a statement made during, of all else, the NAI business meeting. I had the privilege of attending this conference by being the recipient of the Region V Scholarship and I am very grateful that it was an event I was able to experience.



"Living where my feet are," on a sea wall outside the conference center.

Not only was this my first National conference, but this was a conference being held during a very important time in history. I am so very glad that I was able to be with a supportive group of people during a very turbulent time for the whole country. The conference officially began with an opening night reception and dinner on Tuesday, November 8th, election night. As we were discovering the museum of science and history and partaking in some authentic south Texas cuisine and music the country was in a battle to elect the next president. This topic

was not taken lightly by the participants of the conference and was a reminder of why we all work so hard to do what we do for our communities and organizations by interpreting our knowledge to others.

The next few days we all dived into learning during keynote speakers and concurrent sessions. As an interpretive naturalist for a county in Iowa, I leaned towards sessions that would help me reach my audiences, provide background knowledge in natural resources, and that looked generally interesting to me. A few of my favorite sessions included learning how to ask the right questions for crowd participation, geocaching, and how to utilize live streaming for interpretation.

During my time at the conference I was able to help out by volunteering. I was a room moderator twice and a ticket taker for the banquet. I was glad to help out and interact with presenters and fellow attendees alike! As a first-time attendee I think that volunteering helped me connect to the experience as well as find my way around the large conference building!

Saturday was the last official day of the conference with off-site adventures. I participated in "Coastal Inhabitants," focusing on the restoration of the Kemp's Sea Turtles, Padre Island National Seashore, and other wildlife in the Gulf of Mexico. The morning began with a trip to the beach (yes please!) to learn about interpretive programming offered in that unique environment, then we continued on to park headquarters to learn all about the efforts being made to restore sea turtle populations, and lastly we traveled to the University of Texas Marine Science Institute to board a 57-foot research vessel named *Katy*.



Lowering the troll net aboard the research vessel *Katy*.

Aboard the boat the group did plankton and fish net trolls. Some creatures that we were able to observe and then place back in the Gulf included moon fish, squid, shrimp, catfish, diatoms, and algae. This was a very exciting way to end my conference experience and every minute of the conference after the business meeting I was reminded to take every experience in and live where my feet were right at that time. I hope to attend national and regional conferences during my career and hope that you all will be able to live in the moment of wherever your feet carry you in the future.



A squid recovered during trolling.

—

Megan Cook is a naturalist with the Sac County Conservation Board in Iowa.

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## Enjoying the Little Things in the Sparkling City by the Sea By Melissa Alexander

With Veterans Day and Election Day in the same week, there is a lot for the country's population to take in. This year, this particular week caused a variety of emotions throughout the nation. I too was affected by these events in different ways. With all of the intense feelings floating around, there is no group of people I would have rather been with while away from home than the

NAI Tribe. I had the pleasure and privilege of joining these amazing people in Corpus Christi, Texas for the National Conference as a student scholarship recipient. This was my second time attending the National Conference.

Wednesday morning, we were addressed by Dr. Larry McKinney. After an entertaining PowerPoint filled with fun images and humor throughout, I spent the day enjoying presentations about protecting our most important interpretive instrument (our body), how we can use popular games, such as Minecraft, to get students involved in helping create virtual tours of our sites, and how important it is to research your audience and topic before you interpret to the public. Even with all of these amazing presentations, what struck me about this day were the events of that evening. While mingling with folks, I met a gentleman who would be presenting on later that week. I quickly found out that he would be presenting with two other people he had never met. Shortly after we started speaking, this cheerful woman started walking up and exclaimed "Larry!" The response, "Jenn!" Well, there was one of the other presenters. Within minutes, along came Jill to finish the happy trio. With a whirlwind of a day, this short encounter reminded me of how the smallest thing, such as meeting someone new, can affect you. For them to find that much joy in one moment really struck me.

The next day was full of equally phenomenal presentations. We listened to the experiences of Walt Dabney and his time with Freeman Tilden. I enjoyed a presentation on how to build your creativity. Later I had the pleasure of watching my supervisors give a presentation on effective techniques for wayside exhibits. I like to think I am not biased, but their presentation added another small, yet important, component to my NAI adventure. While watching them present, a gentleman next to me mentioned how he enjoys watching them and had watched them present the year before. I enjoy watching them as well. With anything they present, they have fun. To not only present information, but have fun doing it, makes watching any presentation more entertaining.

I will say, I am nowhere near as comfortable in front of a crowd as my supervisors. Friday I spent the day stressing about a presentation I would be giving later that day about my research. I woke up early and practiced nonstop throughout the day. I was scheduled for the last slot of the day. Truthfully, I was just hoping one or two folks would pop in to hear what I had to say. Right before this presentation, my nerves hit and I felt terrified. I was about to present in front of experts in the field of interpretation. Who was I to try adding to their wealth of knowledge? The presentation went well. I had a full room and had the pleasure of talking to amazing people about their sites and programming. I must give credit to my support team for this outcome. My advisor and one of my wonderful supervisors sat with me before the program to remind me that I could do this, that I was the expert of my topic. A friend of mine that happened to be at the conference chose to come to my presentation for support. I was surrounded by people that wanted me to succeed. This little thing, people taking time out of their day to support me, made me feel empowered, capable and loved.

After a jam-packed week, I actually found time to enjoy the area on a field trip. While visiting Padre Island National Seashore, I met up with Jenn and Jill, two of those geocachers from before. With them I found my first geocache, but the best part was walking along the beautiful shore enjoying various birds and the rolling dunes just taking in the amazing world we help interpret. Regardless of the situations you find yourself, one should always remember to enjoy the little things. It is amazing what these tiny moments in time can do for you.



Attendees of the 2016 National Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas.  
*From Left to Right:* Megan Espe, Mike Gross, Jim Buchholz, Ron Zimmerman, Melissa Alexander, and Brenda Lackey.

—  
Melissa Alexander is a student at University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. She was the recipient of a student scholarship from the Heartland Region to attend the 2016 National Conference.

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## Heartland Region Media

Find out more about workshops, scholarships, mini-grants, and the Heartland Region in general! Please note the sites below now reflect our embracing of "Heartland Region" in place of "Region 5" and update your records accordingly.

- **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.

##### **Brookfield Zoo**

February 13-17, 2017

Brookfield, Illinois

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

##### **Lincoln Heritage Museum**

March 6-9, 2017

Lincoln, Illinois

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

##### **Cincinnati Nature Center**

August 22-25, 2017

Milford, Ohio

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

## **NAI Webinars**

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

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

### **Coaching Workshop for Reflecting on Practice**

January 25 & 26, 2017

Brookfield Zoo - Brookfield, Illinois

*Reflecting on Practice* is a professional learning program for informal science educators in zoos, aquariums, museums, nature centers, and cultural institutes. For more information, contact Marilyn Brink at [Marilyn.brink@czs.org](mailto:Marilyn.brink@czs.org) or 708-688-8210.

### **Spreading our Wings with Science Standards: Pollinators, Monarchs, and Conservation Education**

Iowa Conservation Education Coalition

February 3-4, 2017

Springbrook Conservation Education Center

Guthrie Center, Iowa

[More information here.](#)

### **Student Experiential Environmental Education Conference (SEEEC)**

March 10-12, 2017

Touch of Nature Environmental Center, Southern Illinois University  
Carbondale, Illinois

SEEEC is a conference geared towards (college) students, environmental educators, teachers, and individuals interested in EE. Keynote Speaker Michelle Nichols from Chicago's Adler Planetarium will feature programming relating to the upcoming eclipse. Details, pricing, and promotion is in the works. Keep an eye on [ton.siu.edu](http://ton.siu.edu) for information as it develops! Questions, comments, suggestions on workshops etc. can be sent to [mammoth@siu.edu](mailto:mammoth@siu.edu).

### **ENTICE Professional Development Workshops**

The Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education are professional development workshops sponsored by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. A variety of workshops are being planned for 2017 and 2018 and [can be viewed here](#). Additional workshops will continue to be added, so check back often.

Save the Date:

### **Midwest Environmental Education Conference**

October 14-17, 2017

Q Center

St. Charles, Illinois

From climate change and local/regional environmental advocacy, to grant writing, NGSS, and the facts about GMOs...MEEC 2017 will provide an all-inclusive experience of local to global EE! Embrace the opportunity to engage with captivating regional and national speakers, diverse concurrent sessions, exhilarating off-site field studies, meaningful workshops, and lively social gatherings! Call for Proposals and Call for Exhibitors coming early 2017.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant**

Deadline: January 31st, 2017

Teachers of all grades from Pre-K through 12 in Illinois, including home-schoolers, can apply to the IDNR to receive funding for natural resources-related field trips. Funding priority is given to single day, outdoor field trips. [Apply here.](#)

The Illinois DNR Division of Education is in the process of converting the information and images from the **Biodiversity of Illinois CD-ROM series** into a searchable, web-based format. Files are being added as they are



completed, so check [the website](#) often. There will be approximately 1,500 species in this field guide when it is finished.

**Surrounded by Science Educator Toolkit Available.** Collated by the National Environmental Education Foundation, this collection of K-12 lesson plans and curriculum guides from leading environmental and education organizations helps teachers introduce students to the kinds of science occurring around them, both in the classroom and in the field. The resources address four topic areas: pollinators (At Home), wildlife habitat (In the Neighborhood), watersheds (In Your Region), and weather and climate (In the World). Each topic has activities for elementary, middle, and high school levels, along with links to related citizen science projects for students. [Access the toolkit here.](#)

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Need Recertification Hours?**

Emily Jacobs can be reached at [ejacobs@interpnet.com](mailto:ejacobs@interpnet.com).

- Read any book from the NAI book club list and send Emily Jacobs an email with two paragraphs: one summarizing the book, the other explaining what you took from the book for your work and experience as an interpreter.
- Watch any recorded webinar for free on the NAI website and send Emily Jacobs an email with two paragraphs: one summarizing the webinar, the other explaining what you took from the session for your work and experience as an interpreter.

### **PD with the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands**

NAI will be teaming up with Indiana University's The Eppley Institute to update current interpretation courses and to add more to the site. Email Emily Jacobs ([ejacobs@interpnet.com](mailto:ejacobs@interpnet.com)) for a \$20 discount code (must be an NAI member or certified). Members have free access to a Foundations of Interpretation course!

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## **Contact NAI Heartland Region Leadership**

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