



THE CENTER

January 2013

Welcome to *The Center*, the newsletter of the Nature Center Directors and Administrators Section of the National Association for Interpretation.

Congratulations to our new officers!

Amy Roell, Director
Brian Thill, Deputy Director

NCA Section Meeting Minutes

NAI Workshop Hampton, Virginia
11/15/12

In Attendance: Travis Williams, Naomi Thompson, Jim Fitzpatrick, Jennica Walker, Eliezer Nieves, Jamie Krupka, Bob Dispenza, Jim Nachel, Niki Schmutte, Jennifer Soles, Karl M. Pierce, Jeff Peterson, Stacey Davis, Kate Navarro, Karen Sheffield, Dodie Lewis, Mike McCaffrey, Tammy Schwab, John Shafer, Brian Thill, Roy Geiger

Board Updates

- Restructuring of the by-laws redefined regions and sections. Now there is an Advisory Council which represents regions and sections and any other kind of sub group that might be created in the future. It is made up of two representatives that sit on the Board. The overall goal is to support more members.
- Executive Director position-A Search Committee has been formed and is made up of Rachel Larimore, Jane Beede and a private consultant, headed up by Chuck Lennox.
- Waldren HR is national search firm hired to help identify the top 10-15 candidates. The Board will narrow it down to about 3 people to interview with the new person in place by March, 2013.
- Random surveys have been conducted to determine what the Executive Director should be focused on- leadership, business management, management duties not programmatic.
- IMAS software should be launched after first of the year, built for us, should track all things registration, membership, training etc.
- New website for NAI should be launched at the same time. Members can change our own information.
- Elections for our section going on right now for the Director and Deputy Director positions. NCA has two officers up for election every time, rotate so that there is always experience on the board.
- The ballot was an issue this year, it was recalled because write-in candidate lines were not included and some people were left off. The company which puts the ballots together and runs the election was directed to pull it and resend the correct ballot. If you responded to the first ballot, it will be null and void.
- The proposed By-Laws were passed and now we are in compliance with the law for non-profits. Procedural items that really need to be in a Policy Manual were removed and it allows for more flexibility for the Board. National elections will take place for all positions and at large positions. Anyone can be nominated by a member (as long as they become a member upon election to the Board). This allows NAI to look at non-active members and even those outside of NAI.

- Regionals, Sections and any other type of sub-unit can be formed and will be represented on the National Board through the Advisory Council.

Section news

- 1,156 members! This has grown significantly over the past few years. One reason could be that you can be a members of a section without paying extra.
- We have the largest fund balance of the sections. Currently \$14, 016.00. Our best fundraiser is the Interpreters Road Show. The IRS is managed by the Deputy Director.
- NCDCA awarded four \$1,000.00 scholarships to attend the 2012 NIW. Those went to Jamie Krupka, Kate Navarro, Stacy Davis and Pat Silvosky. We just ask that each recipient write an article for the Intersection. Jamie and Pat will provide a Road Show recap and Kate and Stacy will provide a conference recap. The December article will be the Road Show recap. These get e-mailed to Paul directly. NCDCA also provided one CIM grant in the amount of \$125.00 to Jim Fitzpatrick.
- What other things can this section do for you?
 - Help develop a 'Management' track of sessions at future NIWs.
 - Develop a resource which contains the contact information for members for networking purposes. Should be an open forum set up so anyone could respond. Somewhat like the Link'd In site that Paul currently runs. This is something that should be built into the new IMAS system.
 - Potential for mini Road Shows through the year. We would need to gauge interest, perhaps where the NIW never goes. Perhaps run it as a joint sectional/regional offering. Region could handle the logistics; we help get the numbers there.
 - Do we/could we offer grants for other certification programs? Not as of now, we need to see what changes come with all the changes to the structure of the board and potential new sub-units. Request that we look into offering grants for the CIP because it overlaps with the duties of NCDCA members.
 - Any thought to changing the name from NCDCA to something else more inclusive, perhaps Interpretive Management Section?
 - Any thought to offering an incentive to present at a NIW? A small discount perhaps? Maybe if someone presents a session, we could offer a discount to the Road Show or offer mini scholarships to presenters.
 - Could we have a room at future NIWs that would be set up for people to publicize a challenge they are facing so that others could offer possible solutions? Provide a forum or space to discuss issues informally. People could come and go, write things on port-it notes. Something similar to what National did for the By-law changes.

NCDCA Issues & Solutions: A Roundtable of Ideas and Answers

11/14/12

NAI Workshop Hampton, VA

26 people in attendance

Three main topic areas were chosen to talk about during the meeting: Personnel issues-conflict/training, funding and increasing memberships.

Personnel issues-conflict/training

- One participant has two outstanding interpreters, one had 20 yrs and the other 15 yrs with the organization, whose personality differences are so acute and things have deteriorated so badly they cannot be in the same room anymore. She has met with each of them individually and has found out that they both want the same thing-respect from each other. Their definitions of respect are the same too. She wonders if it is time to meet with them together and get it all out in the open, have a mediator of some kind, lay down the law on expectations and what the consequences are if those expectations are not met. She is friends with both of them. Ideas discussed: Is this due to a generational gap? That is not the case here. Another thing to consider with older employees is that perhaps there is a medical situation that you would be unaware of that could be the root cause for altered personalities. Perhaps they have to take medicine and the dosages are not correct, resulting in behaviors not typical for that individual. You would want to consult your HR department on how to handle anything like that to be sure and follow all labor laws. The end result was that

perhaps this is the time to bring in a mediator with the understanding that this behavior cannot continue and we either find a way to get along professionally or we agree to part ways because this is negatively affecting the entire office.

- Whole Staff Training- When there are mandatory trainings, should all centers be closed so that all employees can attend on work time and pay those employees who have to come in on their day off overtime or offer an multiple days so that all can get there? Part of the benefit to these 'all' meetings is getting the entire staff together for team building. The group didn't come up with alternatives if absolutely needed/wanted all staff in the same room at the same time. You would have to pay overtime to those that came in on their day off and close centers. If you didn't absolutely need all staff in the same room at the same time, then offering multiple sessions, webinars would help to get people the training they needed without hurting the budget.

Funding issues

- Grant Writing
 - Have a specific grant writer for your organization.
 - You need to include information about the changing demographics in your area and demonstrate ways you plan to engage new audiences.
 - Have a solid evaluation process for your programs so you can show the impact of them. Google 'logic models'. You should find templates on the short-term and medium range impact that can be done. University research helps with long term impacts. E-mail Rob Bixler for research rbixler@clermson.edu. Rob would be happy to share this information with you.
 - Gear you grant requests towards STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) for school-related programming.
- Health & Wellness is an up and coming topic, especially for corporation. Making contacts with local companies for this type of programming and financial support increase the chances you will be successful in securing some funding.
- Establish or work through a 'Friends' group or a Foundation whose sole purpose is to financial support your organization's programs and projects. Make sure you find people with connections to the money in your community to serve on the boards of these groups.
- Library programs can be a great revenue resource depending on whether or not you are separate organizations. If you are both county agencies, then you most likely will not be able to charge them for programs.
- Partner with other community organizations-walk around with your hand out, be ready to talk about your organization and the good that it does. Have an elevator speech ready to go so that you can take advantage of any opportunity as it presents itself. People want to give to good causes-we have the causes!

Increasing Memberships

- In order for memberships to really make a difference in your budget, you have to average a 30% renewal rate. If you do not have that percentage, then you must find out why people are not renewing. The national average for being a member of any kind of organization is 7-10 years.
 - Sell your skills.
 - Ask your members to display your stickers, so that others in the community will see it and be reminded of the organization.
 - Promote Legacy giving.
 - Look for partnership with other like-minded organizations.
 - Are your volunteers required to be members?
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