



THE CENTER

Spring 2018

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

Just A Note...

S.W.O.T.-Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats. You may be familiar with this term as a part of the development of a strategic plan. Perhaps you have worked on your organization's plan or one for a group where you volunteer. Identifying these for an organization can be very useful, but have you ever thought about doing one for yourself?

If you are anything like me, probably the only time you come close to doing something like this is when you are applying for a job or updating your resume. For some, that might have been last week, last month, last year or more than a decade ago. Why wait for that situation? You are already stressed, and racking your brain to remember every little detail can drive you insane. Instead, take some time now to pull your thoughts together. It can actually help you develop a path to make your future seem more in your control.

Review your skills, knowledge base, experiences and categorize them. Identify your strong points and determine how you can keep them sharp. For the skills that are not strengths, identify ways to improve them and what kind of commitment it will take to improve them. Determine the priority of what you will work on and set some goals for realistic timeframes.

Examine your opportunities. What new challenge can you take on that will give you a new experience, sharpen and hone your skills? Likewise, what are the threats to your ability to improve, grow or advance? What can you do preemptively to neutralize those?

Taking the time, just a few minutes each day for a week, to go through each of these four steps will put your future back in your hands. Creating a map of where you are and where you want to be enables you to be prepared when that next big opportunity comes along.

The Center is published quarterly by the Nature Center Directors and Administrators section of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). The NAI mission is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance natural and cultural interpretation as a profession. Visit: www.interpnet.com for more information.

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Interpreter's Road Show Attendance Scholarship



NCDA Section members are invited to apply for a \$600 scholarship that can be used to cover costs to attend the New Orleans Interpreter's Road Show in 2018. This year, the NCDA Section will offer two \$600 scholarships.

The Interpreters Road Show provides an intensive behind-the-scenes, two-day tour to a variety of nature centers, visitor centers and other interpretive facilities.

[Roadshow Scholarship Online Application form](#)

Recipients will be chosen based on involvement in NAI and the interpretive field. Applicants must be individual NAI members and a member of the NCDA Section. Recipients are automatically registered for the Road Show. NCDA will pay the Road Show fee and the remaining amount will be sent to the recipient for use to cover other meals during the pre-Conference. Recipients will be asked to participate in NCDA activities, such as article writing, gathering management tips, board elections, or scholarship grading, for up to a year after they receive the scholarship.

Grant applications must be received by June 24. Applications will be evaluated and recipients will be notified of their award soon thereafter.

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Hello, How May I Help You!



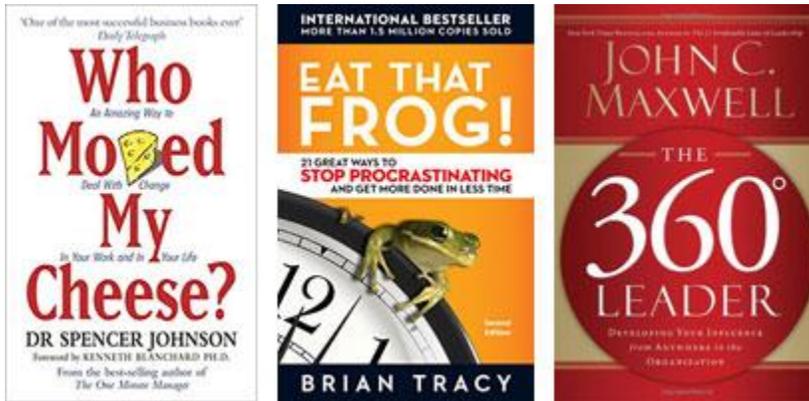
Hello, my name is Julie Robinson. I have been an employee of Great Parks of Hamilton County in Cincinnati, Ohio for almost 20 years. I currently hold the title of Regional Education Manager and oversee programming at two of our organization's five nature centers. These two centers are very different in regard to structure, ambiance and visitor traffic (15,789 vs. 58,362 last year).

In 2017, we presented 700 programs between the two locations (on-site and remote) and cared for both center's captive wildlife collections all while navigating our way through an organizational wide restructuring process.

At home, I am a wife and mother of five, plus the dog. With three 12 year olds and two eight year olds we are always on the go. School, scouts, baseball, soccer, Lego league, gymnastics... the list just goes on and on.

My life in many ways is just like all of yours. We all manage family, a team and even ourselves in one way or another. Here is where I hope to help! Nope, I am not signing up as your therapist, but as your new Nature Center Directors and Administrators newsletter editor. Hopefully this newsletter will provide you with information to make your job easier.

This isn't just a one way street however. All of you can make this even better. Let's take advantage of diverse backgrounds and see how we can all help each other. Please email me articles, notes or any tips you feel could assist someone else. I can be reached at jrobinson@greatparks.org



To get the ball rolling, here are three books that have helped me in the past year...

1. Who Moved My Cheese, by Dr. Spencer Johnson

This is a quick read that I would recommend for managers and staff that are going through some sort of change. Our park reorganization has been a huge change for all of us. This book has been a real eye opener to me and other staff. Our reorg is a big change, but this book could assist someone with an even a smaller situation.

2. Eat that Frog, by Brian Tracy

I accepted the role of newsletter editor in Nov, 2017 and am just now writing my first one. I have had plenty of excuses on why I was putting it off, but this past week, I have saw the cover of the book and reminded myself, EAT THAT FROG! This is a great book to help manage your procrastination.

3. The 360 Degree Leader, by John C Maxwell

This book I read in early 2017 as part of a team to develop a new meeting style within Great Parks. Whether you are the CEO or the front line staff anyone can be a leader. This book helps to show that leadership can be found on every level in the workplace.

NCDA Mission: To provide leadership and inspire excellence in nature center administration