



# THE CENTER

Summer 2014

Dear Jamie,

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

## Director's note...

### Seasonal Shifts

By now, the hectic summer season is over and our minds and bodies have begun to transition into autumn mode. The pace may not slow down, but the patterns of visitation and programs certainly change. Many of our seasonal employees have left for the year and for many of us, that means we will spend a little more time on the front lines.

That's a good thing; it helps us to remember what our staff handles on a daily basis, it is a break from our routine and may even stretch our skills a little too. For me, it means I better get serious about my first person character for our now-annual program about the darker side of Ohio history. I threw my hat in the ring to be a part of this program during its inaugural year and was amazed at the impact it had on the staff. I was very nervous about doing first person interpretation and in the years since that first character, never felt that I quite measure up to my staff, but they want me back every year. It is such a morale booster to have me right there in the trenches with them-having the same nervous butterflies in my stomach before the first group, juggling prepping myself and my 'script' all season long with everything else that has to be done.



## In This Issue

[Director's note](#)

[Forging a Perfect Partnership for New Exhibits](#)

[CIM Certification Grants 2014](#)

[Interpreter's Road Show Attendance Scholarship](#)

[NCDA Roundtable Session](#)

[NAI NCDA Section on Facebook](#)

## Upcoming Events

[NAI National Workshop](#)  
November 18-22, 2014  
Denver, Colorado

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

The best part though is just spending time with them, not as an observer or evaluator, but as a co-worker. They get a chance to open up and talk to me about what is going on with them-in their work life and often their home life. It gives us a chance to get to know one another and see each other's strengths and weaknesses. It's good for them to see I struggle with self-confidence. As a boss, it is my job to look as though I can handle anything. Reality is that there are times when my knees are shaking uncontrollably under that cool demeanor! This program gives us a chance to commiserate with each other and help each other. It builds a good, solid foundation for a relationship that you can really count on.

After all, we are in the business of creating or enhancing relationships-relationships with our guests and between our guests and the resources we protect. So why not create and enhance our relationships with our co-workers?



Amy Roell  
Section Director  
[www.interpnet.com/ncda](http://www.interpnet.com/ncda)

## Forging a Perfect Partnership for New Exhibits

Many of us are responsible for exhibit design at our sites. Sandy Creek Nature Center decided to expand their exhibits for their facility that educates over 55,000 individuals annually. Randy Smith, Facility Supervisor, has shared their process of developing an exhibit with you. The focus is on finding a good partnership to be sure you get the exhibit you want and that works for your site.

View the [Perfect Partnership Powerpoint](#) for tips on pre-planning, project management, and working together.

## CIM Certification Grants 2014

NCDA Section members are invited to apply for a grant that will pay for the cost of one certification packet (value \$125), per individual in the CIM category. This year, the NCDA Section will offer two grants. Recipients will be chosen based on financial need, NAI involvement, and/or the desire to become certified.

interpretation as a profession. Visit: [www.interpnet.com](http://www.interpnet.com) for more information.

### NCDA Section

[www.interpnet.com/ncda](http://www.interpnet.com/ncda)

#### Amy Roell

##### Director

Great Parks of Hamilton County  
10245 Winton Rd.  
Cincinnati, OH 45231  
513-521-7275  
[aroell@greatparks.org](mailto:aroell@greatparks.org)

#### Brian Thill

##### Deputy Director

South Carolina Aquarium  
Charleston, SC 29401  
[bthill@scaquarium.org](mailto:bthill@scaquarium.org)

#### Randy Smith

##### Secretary

Sandy Creek Nature Center  
390 Forest Heights Dr.  
Athens, GA 30606  
706-613-3615 x233  
[RandySmith@co.clarke.ga.us](mailto:RandySmith@co.clarke.ga.us)

#### Naomi Thompson

##### Treasurer and Website/Newsletter Editor

Stone Mountain Memorial Association  
PO Box 689  
Stone Mountain, GA 30086  
770-498-5619  
[n.thompson@stonemountainpark.org](mailto:n.thompson@stonemountainpark.org)

Once the recipient receives the packet, he/she must complete the written certification test and provide evidences of performance to the NAI Certification Program as required. Certification is granted upon successful completion of the test and successful review of the required evidences of performance. (The NCDA Section is not responsible for evaluating or granting certification.)

Applicants must be individual NAI members and a member of the NCDA Section. Certification Category/Packet is for the Certified Interpretive Manager only.

[CIM Online Application form](#)

Grant applications can be submitted at any time during the current (2014 postmark) calendar year. Applications are evaluated as received and grants are awarded until the total dollars budgeted for the years are distributed. Applications submitted after certification grant funds for the year have been exhausted must be updated and resubmitted in the next calendar year.

Contact Amy Roell, 513-521-7275, [aroell@greatparks.org](mailto:aroell@greatparks.org) with any questions.



### **Interpreter's Road Show Attendance Scholarship**

Congratulations to this year's scholarship awardees: Jim Fitzpatrick and Megan Espe!

Make plans to attend and meet our awardees during the 2014 Roadshow. Open to all interpreters, the Road Show provides an exceptional look at four very different sites in Denver and Colorado Springs.

We will visit Plains Conservation Center, Bluff Lake Nature Center, Garden of the Gods Visitor and Nature Center, and Bear Creek Nature Center. Professional development will include learning about volunteer management, programs, building and facility development, master planning, funding, unique partnerships, and creative exhibits. See you in Colorado.



## **NCDA Roundtable Session**

Thursday, November 20, 2014  
8:00 am

Join us in Colorado for the Nature Center Directors and Administrators Roundtable session to have discussions on any topics you need advice and feedback on as an Interpretive Manager. We always have great discussions, problem solving session, and end up networking for follow up help.



## **NAI NCDA Section on Facebook**

Join us on our own facebook page. [www.facebook.com/naincdasection](http://www.facebook.com/naincdasection)

We're looking forward to the NCDA page becoming a place for discussion and hopefully some answers to tough questions.

Check out our website too!! [www.interpnet.com/ncda](http://www.interpnet.com/ncda)

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