



THE CENTER

May 2014

Dear Naomi,

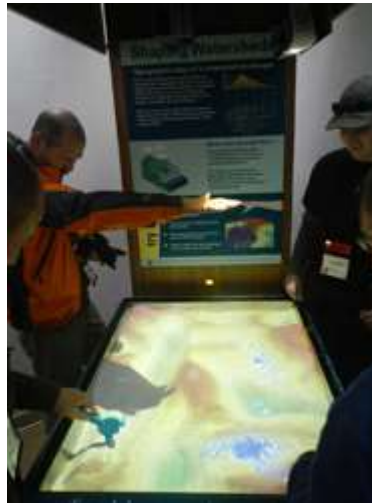
Welcome to *The Center*, the newsletter of the Nature Center Directors and Administrators Section of the National Association for Interpretation.

Director's note...

Spring... Training!

As I write this, Major League Baseball's spring training is winding down. Next Monday-March 31st, is a holiday here in Cincinnati, complete with an Opening Day Parade and the ceremonial first pitch of the 2014 season. This momentous day has been a long time coming. The media outlets in the Cincinnati market start reporting the countdown to spring training right after the holidays -and then they begin the countdown to Opening Day. But the players didn't start getting ready for the season after the holidays-that began shortly after the season ended last fall. Just as major league players prepare by working out- lifting weights, running, getting into the batting cage, scrimmaging etc., so must we. As professional interpreters and managers, we must train all year; prepare ourselves for the public, for our staff and volunteers. It is good to stay in shape, both our bodies and our minds. Professional trainings can help keep us in great interpretive shape and also keep our managerial skills sharp.

Training comes in all shapes and sizes; it can be large conferences or small informal gatherings of likeminded professionals sharing their experiences. Whatever form it takes, it can be valuable. Good training is essential to keep your Center and program running smoothly. It can recharge your own batteries, help you deal effectively with difficult staff or public, or make better connections between your guests and the resource you protect.



In This Issue

[Director's note](#)

[Dear NCD Section Members](#)

[CIM Certification Grants 2014](#)

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

[2013 Interpreters Road Show](#)

[Summit and Meetings](#)

[NAI training webinars](#)

[NAI NCD 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



If your budget can handle it, attending the National Workshop next November in Colorado is a great way to obtain first rate training in a wide array of topics from cultural and natural history tips and techniques to the ever important supervisory skills. Another wonderful training opportunity is the Interpreter's Road Show. This outstanding pre-workshop (ok, I'm a little biased!) is a professional development opportunity that is open to all interpreters and provides a unique look at a variety of interpretive properties. The group goes behind the scenes at each of these locations and talks with staff to learn how they manage volunteers, programs, building and facility development, master planning, funding development, exhibits and much more. Participants discuss things they see during meals and travel time between locations. [This Road Show](#) enables the participants to network and learn from their fellow NAI interpreters and administrators.

And what can you do if your budget just doesn't allow for participation in these national opportunities? I suggest getting on the phone and gathering other interpreters and managers in your region and arrange a day where you can get together, tour a site and discuss topics that you need help with in a round table type situation. We are a valuable resource ourselves and can help each other in so many ways. Sometimes the best training is just talking one on one while walking in the woods, prairie, meadow or along a marsh.

So my challenge to you is to find a way to take care of yourself professionally. Participate in training or create one and invite others. You'll see and feel the benefits!

Amy Roell
Section Director
www.interpnet.com/ncda



Dear NCD Section Members

I am honored to have received the 2013 Certified Interpretive Manager grant award from the NAI's NCD section. I applied for the grant because I saw the certification process as an opportunity to identify my strengths and weaknesses in

excellence to advance natural and cultural interpretation as a profession. Visit: www.interpnet.com for more information.

NCD Section

www.interpnet.com/ncda

Amy Roell

Director

10245 Winton Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45231
513-521-7275
aroell@greatparks.org

Brian Thill

Deputy Director

South Carolina Aquarium
Charleston, SC 29401
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

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

doing what I consider to be a very challenging job. After all, it's not easy thinking like an interpreter, a marketing expert, a zoo keeper (because I work at a zoo), a financial analyst, a customer service rep, a human resource officer, a security guard, and sometimes even a psychologist all at the same time. But that is my job, and I want to do it well because I want the organization to do well.

For those of you that have hesitated on pursuing any of NAI's certification opportunities, my advice is to move forward and try it. Grants such as the one I received from NCDA make it affordable and available. Not only will certification prove to others that you have the competence to do your job well, it will also help you to prove it to yourself. It might not be an easy process, but what is success without a little challenge, anyway?

Sincerely,
Allison Meador
Director of Conservation Education
Micke Grove Zoological Society &
NAI Region 9 Secretary

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.

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 with any questions.



Interpreter's Road Show Attendance Scholarship

NCDCA Section members are invited to apply for a \$500 scholarship that can be used to cover costs to attend the Denver Interpreter's Road Show in November, 2014. This year, the NCDCA Section will offer two \$500 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. Read about the [2013 Roadshow](#).

[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 NCDCA Section. Grant applications must be received by May 10. Applications will be evaluated and recipients will be notified of their award the last week of May.

[Note: If you are awarded a scholarship, you must plan to register by July 15 for the National Workshop and Road show. No scholarships will be processed after this date.]

Contact Amy Roell, 513-521-7275, aroell@greatparks.org with any questions.

2013 Interpreters Road Show

Reno, Nevada

I have been fortunate to attend 24 of the 25 total National Interpreters Workshops. The generosity of the Nature Center Directors and Administrators Section finally allowed me to join my first-ever Interpreters Road Show.

Brian Thill set up a diverse itinerary: the Discovery Museum in the city of Reno, Oxbow Nature Study Area, a partnership between the City and Nevada Fish & Wildlife, Animal Ark, a sanctuary on the outskirts of the city that provides home for certain species of wild animals, Galena Creek Visitor Center, a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service, Clarke County, Great Basin Institute, Audubon, and finally the Tahoe Environmental Research Center, yet another partnership (University of California - Davis and Sierra Nevada College).

Our two days provided a wonderful forum for seeing an array of interpretive sites, facilities, and exhibits. We were enlightened about their programs, partnerships, and volunteers. I benefited from it immensely and enjoyed it all. As an interpretive naturalist at heart,

because we were able to hike through nature (and along the Truckee River) on gorgeous sunny days, my favorites were probably Oxbow and Galena.

Time spent with staff was perhaps most valuable. Learning about the human side-both the joys and sorrows-of their work, helps to remind me that, despite our struggles, we all strive to do our best for our noble profession.

I consider NAI members to be my second family. Spending two days with a busload of gave me a bunch more cousins!



Thank you again NCA Section for making my participation possible. If you missed this inaugural Reno Road Show, NAI is scheduled back in 2016.

Ray Novotny
Life Member

Summit and Meetings

Save the Date!
Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) Summit 2014
Beyond Boundaries
August 20-23, 2014
at the Kalamazoo Nature Center

Kalamazoo, MI
<http://natctr.org/index.php?id=7>

ANCA regional meetings throughout North America for nature and environmental center administrators. Find more information here,
<http://natctr.org/index.php?id=20>.

NAI training webinars

Managing Volunteer Programs: Challenges and Solutions
May 6, 2014 Karin Hostetter

NAI Members: \$35, Nonmembers: \$50
[Register here](#). (Last day to register is May 4)



NAI NCDA Section on Facebook

Join us on our own [Facebook page](#).

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!

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