

Sunny Southeast Region Newsletter - March 2020

NAI Sunny Southeast Region <naimail@interpnet.com>
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Welcome to *Southern Exposure*, the newsletter of the National Association for Interpretation's Sunny Southeast Region.

Photo: A Certified Interpretive Guide class in Puerto Rico. Photo by Eliezer Nieves Rodriguez.

GREETINGS, FRIENDS!

It is my pleasure to say hello to you for the first time as your new regional director! I look forward to taking on this exciting role and helping guide our region's members to new interpretive heights. With the aid of my predecessor, Marisol Asselta Castro, and our current outstanding team of officers and volunteer leaders, I know this year is going to be amazing! The Sunny Southeast has been selected to host the 2020 NAI National Conference, which will be held in St. Augustine, Florida. While this does mean we will have to put our regional conference on hold for a year, I think this is a fantastic opportunity for our region and I hope you will all seriously consider attending.

March 2020

- GREETINGS, FRIENDS
- BLOG POSTS
- REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT
- SUNNY SOUTHEASTERNS MET IN DENVER
- DO YOU DO SOCIAL MEDIA?
- TIME FOR INTERPRETATION IN BUSINESS TRAVEL?
- STATE BY COMMONWEALTH BY TERRITORY
- UPCOMING CIG TRAININGS IN OUR REGION

Save the Date

[InterpTech](#)
April 27-30, 2020
Pacific Grove, California

[NAI National Conference](#)
St Augustine, FL
November 10-14, 2020

What excites me the most about the position of Regional Director is the opportunity to meet and work with more interpreters than ever before! As an environmental educator for Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation, I have worked with a number of naturalists and educators specifically in my field. But the amazing thing about this organization is that we attract people from every walk of life: forest rangers, historical reenactors, urban recreation specialists, and more! With every NAI gathering I attend, no matter how small, I always meet someone with new and incredible interpretation skills. For me, that's the best part of NAI: getting to meet so many people and watch how they work.



Like I tell my team, my door is always open to any of you (and so is my email inbox). If you ever have any thoughts, concerns, or even emotional outbursts, I'm here to listen and to support you. I can't wait to meet more of you, and I hope you're just as excited about the new year as I am!

Submitted by Christine Lawson, our new regional director

BLOG POSTS

A few highlights and shoutouts from this year:

Thanks to this year's bloggers for all your outstanding posts!! Collectively, you wrote 47 posts with 26,611 total words - that's an average of 566 words per post. Our Facebook group grew to 411 active members, who engaged with 194 posts throughout the year, including great discussions on the blog posts.

Thanks to support from the Region's leadership, the website has several improvements, including the removal of ads, a refreshed webpage design (including the photos many of you have submitted), and upgrades to the map tool. If you haven't already, check out these changes and let us know what you think!

Submitted by Katie Hicks, BlogMaster

REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Colorado High

As many of you know, Denver is known as the "Mile High City" due to its elevation and a certain effect from a legalized substance! I enjoyed a different type of "high" as I visited Denver for the NAI conference in November. Meeting with interpreters

Sunny Southeast Workshop
Spring 2021
Could be your location!

NAI 2021 National Conference
November 30 - December 4, 2021
Palm Springs, CA

NAI 2022 National Conference
November 28 - December 3, 2022
Cleveland, OH

Regional Officers

Director
Christine Lawson
[Email](#)

Deputy Director
Brian Mast
[Email](#)

Secretary
Vacant

Treasurer
Anjoli Reynolds
[Email](#)

National Officers

Jay Miller
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Tom Mullin
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Terry Joyce
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Southern Exposure

Next submission deadline:
April 15 for publication in May

Editor
Rhana Paris
rhana.paris@ncaquariums.com

Photos

Want to showcase your site or highlight a recent event? Send photos on jpg to Rhana when you submit your information! Your photos may be used as the masthead or within the body of your article. Remember: if children are recognizable, you will want to have a photo release from the parents or guardians.

from all around the U.S. is invigorating and inspiring. Interpreters need that recharge they get from attending sessions to gain new ideas to bring back to their site, learning about the variety of sites where other interpreters work and new places to visit, and listening to others discuss the same or similar issues in their park. Does anyone have a park that is dog poop free and dogs are always on a leash? It doesn't sound like it, but I heard creative ideas of what people are doing to try to resolve that issue!

Thanks to the Sunny Southeast region, I was able to attend the national workshop with the aid of the regional scholarship. It had been 11 years since I last attended a national workshop and Denver was a perfect opportunity to attend again. I enjoy our local and regional gatherings, but the opportunity to meet with others from around the country is a high on its own. Thank you to everyone that has bid on auction items or made donations that help support our region's scholarship fund. Without it, many interpreters in our region wouldn't be able to attend the valuable workshops offered. I can tell you the many benefits of attending regional or national workshops, but it is a high best experienced than described.

Submitted by Kate Mowbray, GA State Rep

SUNNY SOUTHEASTERNERS MET IN DENVER

Here are some tidbits gleaned from our meeting:

- Thirty-two of us met during the 2019 national conference—they hailed from SC, AL, NC, FL, GA, Bahamas, PR, and TN
- We now have 1,217 NAI members in our region-but that number will go up with the national later this year!
- While we might not be meeting as a region in 2020, there is talk of getting together for more than just an hour while in St Augustine-stay tuned!
- There is money for state meetings-see the short list of those being set up in the coming months in the State by Commonwealth by Territory section below.
- The national conference for 2020 will be in our region-think about volunteering, presenting, going! Deadline for submitting presentation proposals is March 27! Go to the national website for more info!
- The Secretary position is open with Christine moving into the Director position-think about applying-contact Chris Smith for more info.
- There was a discussion about where to hold the next regional in early 2021-talk of Myrtle Beach, SC, was floated but stay tuned!

Submitted by Rhana Paris, your wayward newsletter editor

DO YOU DO SOCIAL MEDIA?

Do you manage a social media page at your organization? Share the link to your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, or any other social media your organization uses with the Sunny

Regional Chairpersons

Awards & Scholarships
Jessica Goodrich Watts
jessica.goodrich.cig@gmail.com

Webmaster/Blogmaster
Katie Hicks
kathryn.c.hicks@gmail.com

Finance
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Kate.Mowbray@athensclarkecounty.com

Student Rep
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GA: Kate Mowbray
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KY: Wren Smith
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MS: Bob Brzuszek
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NC: Eli Strull
estrull@ashevillenc.gov

PR & VI: Eliezer Nieves
rezeile@hotmail.com

SC: Ashley Zalabak
azalabak@scaquarium.org

TN: Laura Franklin
Laura.Franklin@tn.gov

Southeast Region to help create a resource page for others to gain inspiration and gather techniques to increase interpretive engagement through social media. Email Chris Radek cradek@nashvillezoo.org to share your link.

Submitted by Chris Radek

TIME FOR INTERPRETATION IN BUSINESS TRAVEL?

After being steadily employed at Myrtle Beach State Park and getting nowhere in finding my next steps in interpretation, financial adulthood required that I take some detours. I am now in my third job in three years. While each position had its perks and burdens, my current position has some seriously interesting perks-business travel.

As the Human Resources Coordinator at a Hilton property in Myrtle Beach, SC, I spend most of my days in front of a computer and the rest of them dealing with employee issues (the internal customer, with whom I use many interpretive techniques including starting with what they already know). My office doesn't even have a window, so it is fair to say I am a far cry from my park ranger uniform and beach of three years ago. So when I was offered the chance to be temporarily assigned to Caribe Hilton in San Juan, Puerto Rico, I jumped at the chance.

I asked around, did my research, made sure to get the safety tips for a woman traveling alone to ease my husband's many fears, made all sorts of plans, and went on my way. To my dismay, I found my ability to move around the city pretty limited - "don't go anywhere alone after dark" I had been told. Well, since the sun goes down at 6:15pm EDT in PR and I got off work at 6pm, I felt stuck. I went to investigate the little fort I could see from my hotel room, which was open 9am-2pm Monday through Friday. Considering my workday was 9am to 6pm Monday through Friday, I had to content myself with the information on the locked gates.



Old San Juan was a different experience in that the forts were too large to close. The walls extend for miles and the whole city was probably part of the fort at one time or another. Still, I had no luck getting into a visitor center or other interpretive area with my work schedule what with wanting to avoid the baking heat of the afternoon sun. I had found various small museums, but once arriving, I discovered they were open only during the week and often limited hours.



For the business traveler, visiting interpretive sites is much like the standard office worker trying to visit sites in their own hometown. Business travel isn't a vacation. Business travelers are a hard population to engage since their priorities for time are not like vacationers. While they are enjoying their surroundings, work is the priority, and work scheduling is a significant constraint to utilizing interpretive sites.

Submitted by Jessica Goodrich Watts

STATE BY COMMONWEALTH BY TERRITORY

GEORGIA

Georgia State Meeting
Saturday, March 7

Zoo Atlanta

Details will be shared in February. Contact Kate Mowbray, GA State Rep.

KENTUCKY

Certified Interpretive Guide Training

March 27-30

Bernheim, Clermont

We have some very inexpensive housing for early bird registrants. [Here's the link.](#)

TENNESSEE

Planning a State Meeting for 2020

Laura Franklin and I have been discussing possibility of co-hosting a Kentucky-Tennessee state meeting. We do not have dates or location yet but would certainly appreciate feedback from any of our state members about preferred location & dates. For more info, contact Wren at wren@bernheim.org

NORTH CAROLINA

Flying WILD

Saturday, March 7, 9a-4p

Haw River State Park, Browns Summit.

Email Kelley.king@ncparks.gov to register.

Project WET Workshop

Saturday, March 14, 9a-4p

McDowell Nature Center, 15222 York Road, Charlotte

Cost: \$25 RSVP: Email Rachel Smith at

rachel.smith@mecknc.gov

Growing Up WILD

Tuesday, March 24, and Tuesday, March 31, 6-9p

Montreat College, Montreat.

Email dshuman@montreat.edu to register.

Aquatic WILD

Wednesday, March 25, and Wednesday, April 1, 2-5p

[Brevard College, Brevard.](#)

Email jefrick@brevard.edu to register.

Coastal Birding

Friday, March 27, 9-11a

Serenity Point, Topsail Beach (parking at Access 19).

Email Rebecca.skiba@ncwildlife.org to register.

Project WET Workshop

Tuesday, May 5, 9A-3:30P

Wilkes County Cooperative Extension, [416 Executive Drive, Suite A, Wilkesboro](#)

Cost: \$25 Credits: Six contact hours CEU credit; EE Certification

Criteria one. RSVP: Email Julia Hardy at jhardy.wilkes@gmail.com

PUERTO RICO

From the CIG Course held in January 2020, we'd like to welcome our new members from Puerto Rico:

- Villa Comunitaria Crozier Corp. (Bosque Río Abajo)
- Protectores de Cuenca
- Comité Pro-Desarrollo de Maunabo, Inc.
- CABACOO: Proyecto Cabachuelas, Morovis
- San Juan National Historic Site, NPS
- Compañía de Turismo de Puerto Rico

SOUTH CAROLINA

State Brown Bag Lunch

March 11, 10a-1p

Hampton Plantation in McClellanville, SC.

Christopher Reid, Assistant Park Ranger, will be hosting us!

We'll have coffee, snacks, and a lot of networking at a beautiful site. Fingers crossed it's warm! To sign up, just email Ashley Zalabak at azalabak@scaquarium.org or cell 843-579-8531

TENNESSEE

Planning a State Meeting for 2020

Wren Smith and I have been discussing possibility of co-hosting a Kentucky-Tennessee state meeting. We do not have dates or location yet but would certainly appreciate feedback from any of our state members there about preferred location & dates. For more info, contact Laura at Laura.Franklin@tn.gov

UPCOMING CIG TRAININGS IN OUR REGION

Visit www.interpnet.com/certification for information.

Certified Interpretive Guide Courses

March 27-30

Clermont, KY

Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest

April 6-9

Birmingham, AL

Birmingham Zoo