

VOL. 30 ISSUE 1 • FEBRUARY 2022

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Official Newsletter of Sunny Southeast Region



Director's Update:

A chilly winter's greeting to you all!

Now that we are all home safe and sound from Palm Springs, I hope we have all mostly recovered from the always thrilling conference experience. It always takes me a while to really process everything I heard and learned. It was so exciting to reunite with members of the Sunny Southeast all the way out there in California!

One of the best parts of each workshop or conference I attend is the chance to reconnect with other interpreters in the field. I love hearing about what other people are doing at their sites and how they're reaching their audience. A conference is a chance for an "interpretive recharge", where we can think about what interpretation means to us and decide how we want to connect with the visitors at our sites.

What is interpretation? What does it mean? According to a quick Google search, interpretation is defined as "the action of explaining the meaning of something." If you ask someone outside of our field, it is the act of translating one language to another. Tilden himself states that to "resort to the dictionary for a competent definition is fruitless." However, NAI has offered a new definition which states, "Interpretation is a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us."

I believe interpretation does mean translation, but not of languages. Instead, as an interpreter of the natural world, I'm transforming local flora and fauna into ideas, feelings, and experiences. Would you rather listen to a lecture about logging or take a walk in woods to discover why some trees are marked and not others? By providing visitors with tangible and enjoyable experiences, I can help a person translate their relationship to nature and in turn, help lend meaning to that relationship.

In what ways do you translate at your site? How do you keep your interpretive tool bag a fun resource to dive into again and again? If you're losing steam, consider signing up for a local training or workshop to help recharge your interpretive battery. It always works for me! And as always, know that your regional leadership team is here to support you.

Until next time,

Christine



Transmissions from the South:

GEORGIA

Zoo Atlanta

- Every year we have a conservation theme for our blog (www.zooatlanta.org/healthy-new-year). This year's theme is One Health. Our first blog of the year, written by Sarah Hamilton, Interpretation Specialist, explains the concept of One Health.
- The first semester of internships for the year has started. For upcoming internship opportunities, check out our website: www.zooatlanta.org/program/internships/.
 - Interpretive Resources Internship, focuses more on creating resources for interpreters, non-personal media for the public, and exhibit evaluation.
 - Education Public Programs Internship, focuses on live interpretation and activities with guests.

Sandy Creek Nature Center

- Snake Day is our largest event of the year and is planning to be held onsite this year. We are looking for potential exhibitors to attend and bring snakes, other reptiles or amphibians to the event. For those that live farther away, we are also looking for guests to create a short video about snakes in their areas. If interested in participating either at the event or virtually, please contact Michelle Cash at Michelle.Cash@accgov.com
- A storybook trail was installed along our boardwalk trail this fall. Our first book to debut was "In a Nutshell." We are looking for other books that we could have printed for later this year. If you have books that you were given publishers permission to have printed, please share the titles and publishers with Kate Mowbray at Kate.Mowbray@accgov.com



Sites to See:

El Yunque National Forest Portal



The El Yunque National Forest Portal will reopen its doors in February 2022. The El Portal visitor center was closed four years ago due to damage from Hurricane Maria. With an investment of recovery funds from the Forest Service, the facility now has new interpretive trails, exhibits, film, art and other amenities. For more information you can visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/el-yunque>



Want to Feature Your Site?
Email a description and your best photos to:
Corinne.Rizzo@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Transmissions from the South:

Sandy Creek Nature Center (continued)

- Over the winter holiday break, our classroom was turned into a Naturalist themed escape room. Six families enjoyed an hour of detective work to discover which animal was being studied for the answer to escape. Animal coverings, tracks, scat and smells were all incorporated into the puzzle.



NORTH CAROLINA

Stevens Creek Nature Center

- A special and rare occurrence for Charlotte, not only did we get snow, but we were able to play in it with students while collecting specimens for a lesson on microbiomes!



SOUTH CAROLINA

Roper Mountain Science Center

- We'd like to highlight our Nature Exchange Program, a nature trading system where visitors can get points for items they bring in from nature and trade for other items in our "store". The program is a hit!



Spotlight:

Remembering Doctor Frank H. Wadsworth 1915-2022



Founder of the Santa Ana Nature Center in the Julio E. Monagas National Park, Frank H. Wadsworth earned his doctorate in forestry from the University of Michigan and is considered a world authority on tropical forests. His greatest legacy was with the Boy Scouts of America and his dedication to Guajataka Scout Camp. In 1952 he created the Nature Team as part of the summer camp staff. From there, he began to train young people in the areas of trees, birds, astronomy, and conservation. Many of those young people today are nature interpreters, managers or conservationists who continue his legacy.

- Eliezer Nieves-Rodriguez

Congratulations!

Over at Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, Reshma Patel and Nadean Coufal have just completed their first year on the interpretive team and will complete their CIG this spring!



Transmissions from the South:

PUERTO RICO

Discovering the Forest Project

- The Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation and its Dona Ines Mendoza Park in San Juan will be starting their project "Discovering the Forest: Nature as a Didactic and Scientific Resource." The objective is to offer interpretive tours to highlight the flora endemic to Puerto Rico and the Caribbean and urban biodiversity as elements of education and the research opportunities they offer us. This project is funded by the Angel Ramos Foundation. <https://luismunozmarin.org/parque/>

Santa Ana Nature Center

- The Santa Ana Nature Center (CASA) continues its educational offerings and tours of the forest for groups. Among the offerings are the already famous tours through the forest, talks, workshops for educators, festivals and evening tours. To contact CASA, you can search for them on Facebook as: Centro Ambiental Santa Ana.



Save the Date:

FAIRY HOUSE FESTIVAL

Join us for this annual festival that will inspire appreciation of the environment with storytelling, children's crafts, activities, and games - all focused on fairies and nature!



QUEST @ Latta Nature Preserve
February 26, 2022
www.parkandrec.com (search for #117865)

WATER DROP DASH 5K

The Water Drop Dash 5K is a flat course along the banks of the Chattahoochee River in Roswell, Georgia with the mission to raise awareness about water conservation.



Chattahoochee Nature Center
March 19, 2022
www.chattnaturecenter.org/special-events/water-drop-dash/

ASL FAMILY DAY

Our third ASL Family Day will be on Saturday, April 30 in collaboration with our partner, the Georgia Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. ASL Interpreters will be at animal habitats with Zoo education team members.



Zoo Atlanta
April 30, 2022
www.zooatlanta.org

Get Involved:

SUNNY SOUTHEAST LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Position: Director**Contact:** Christine Lawson, Christine.lawson@mecknc.gov**Role:** The Community Director plays a critical role in helping NAI achieve its vision, mission and goals by delivering exceptional member services and professional development. The Director is responsible for all community operations via its leadership team. They are accountable to NAI's National Board via the Advisory Council. This director is instrumental in ensuring consistent and effective internal processes and communications in order to strengthen NAI's nonprofit programs and position the organization for continued success.**Time Obligations:** 5 hours per week**Term:** 3 years**Position:** Treasurer**Contact:** Anjoli Reynolds, Anjoli.reynolds@mecklenburgcountync.gov**Role:** The Community Treasurer will play a critical role in helping NAI achieve its vision, mission & goals by delivering exceptional member services & professional development. The Treasurer is a voting officer & will be directly responsible for community chairs. They will be accountable to the Community Director. This position will be instrumental in ensuring consistent & effective internal processes & communications in order to strengthen NAI's nonprofit programs & position the organization for continued success.**Time Obligations:** 2-4 hours per month**Term:** 3 years**Position:** Elections Chair**Contact:** Christine Lawson, Christine.lawson@mecknc.gov**Role:** The Elections Chair is responsible for recruiting candidates for regional leadership positions in the Spring of an election year through coordination with newsletter, website and social media. The Chair verifies that potential candidates meet pre-requisites (candidates must be active NAI members). Candidates submit 300-word election statements to the Elections Chair who collects and sends them all to the National Elections Chair by mid-August for a September election.**Time Obligations:** 1-2 hours per month

Get Involved:

SUNNY SOUTHEAST LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Position: Webmaster

Contact: Christine Lawson, Christine.lawson@mecknc.gov

Role: The Webmaster is responsible for updating & maintaining all of the Region's online platforms, including social media and the regional website. The Webmaster will also assist in sending emails to the regional membership as requested by officers and chairpersons.

Time Obligations: 6 - 8 hours per month

Position: State Representatives: Florida, Alabama, Mississippi

Contact: Christine Lawson, Christine.lawson@mecknc.gov

Role: State, area, & /or provincial coordinators serve as ambassadors between the community membership & the community executive committee. This position serves the membership by acting as an informational & motivational voice, not only to inform members of regional happenings, but to also encourage involvement by members within Community events, committee projects, & various other tasks. The Directors may select & appoint them, or they may respond to requests for volunteers posted on Community websites or Newsletters. Having a roles & responsibilities sheet that outlines the expectations of this position, & the relative amount of time required to live up to this commitment is key to the success of this position. A Community is not limited to these representative positions & any of these responsibilities can be altered to meet the needs of the Community.

Time Obligations: 2-4 hours per month

