



Summer 2012

**In This Issue****Greetings!**

Welcome to *Chesapeake Chat*, the newsletter of the National Association for Interpretation's Region 2.

**Director's Note**

From the fabulous offerings of our Beltway Chapter to the amazing success of Pennsylvania State Parks, our region has been successfully training interpreters! Future opportunities abound as well. Our spring mini-workshop 2013 is looking for committee members, and our region is seeking enthusiastic individuals to consider running for a regional office (deadline fast approaching).

Of course, our regional training highlight is the national workshop, held in our own backyard of Hampton, Virginia, in mid-November. From Chesapeake Bay visionary, Ned Tillman, to naturalist extraordinaire, Doug Elliott, field trips in the Great Dismal Swamp to the Virginia Living Museum, concurrent sessions on "Reflecting on Tilden," to "Wilderness Survival Essentials," evenings at a Williamsburg Tavern to Buckroe Plantation, there will be something for everyone!

Enjoy this Chat and please train your eyes on it's worthwhile contents!

**Linda Bailey**

Linda is the Director of Region 2.

She may be reached at [lbailey@fredericksburgva.gov](mailto:lbailey@fredericksburgva.gov) or 540-372-1086 x213.

**One Train of Thought on Training**

Trainings are tough. They take much more time and energy to plan than to actually teach. They require a wide range of logistics. Where will people sleep? What will they eat? Why haven't the materials arrived yet? Instructors, registrations, special needs, cancellations...the list goes on and on. So why do

[Director's Note](#)[One Train of Thought on Training](#)[NAI National Workshop](#)[Region 2 Needs You](#)[Calendar of Events](#)[Chesapeake Chat Deadline](#)**NAI National Workshop**

Hampton, Virginia

November 13-17, 2012

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

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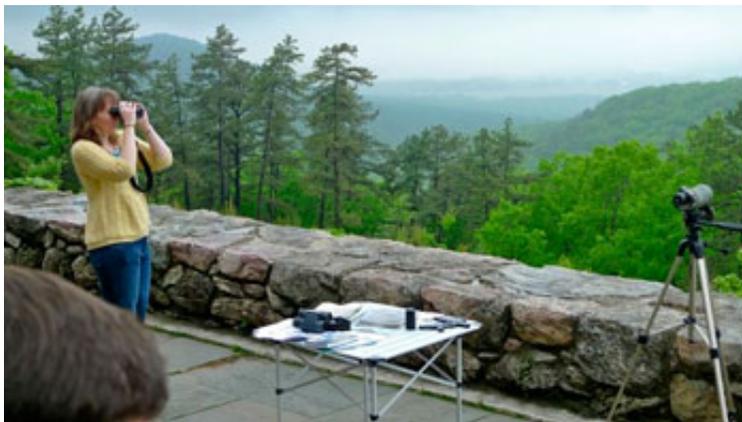
Mike Whatley

it? Why is training so vital for success? Several years ago, I recall Lisa Brochu saying something to the effect of, "if an employer requires staff to continue doing more with less, they must provide the tools needed to make that happen." I couldn't agree more.



Dictionary.com defines what it is to train as, "to make proficient by instruction and practice, as in some art, profession or work." Every job requires training to make an individual good at their profession and to keep them current. You wouldn't trust your hair to an untrained stylist. You wouldn't trust your home to an untrained plumber. You wouldn't trust a loved one to an untrained surgeon. So why would we ever consider trusting the interpretation and education of our precious natural and cultural resources to untrained interpreters? To do so is a disservice to those staff members, your visitors, the resources and your agency or organization.

Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Bureau of State Parks has long held the belief that good training leads to even better educators. Since well before my time here, we have required new employees to attend a week-long training and returning employees to attend an annual meeting or event. That training regiment has slowly evolved over the years into our current program, one piece of which integrates the Certified Interpretive Guide course.



In 2007, I participated in a Certified Interpretive Trainer course through NAI. The methods and strategies within the CIG course aligned directly with our goals for giving new employees the tools they needed to succeed in their first seasons. 2008 saw our first CIG course and we have held a minimum of one annually since with full support and backing of our central office staff. Soon after, our Bureau Director gave us a new goal; to work toward certifying every state parks' educator at some level. WHAT? We have over 100 people, many with years of experience that may resent going through a CIG course! My reservations were for

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To learn more about the national leadership team, membership updates, or upcoming events, please visit [www.interpnet.com](http://www.interpnet.com).

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naught as I am happy to report that currently, 87% of our state park education staff are certified as a CIG, CIT and/or CIP.

If you and your organization are considering a similar training approach, here are a few things to consider.

- Don't reinvent the wheel. If you do not already have a training course regime, NAI's CIG course is a wonderful training, particularly for new employees. Becoming a trainer is likely a more direct and less stressful approach than development of a new course from scratch.
- Support from upper level management is ideal. Thankfully, we have a wonderful Bureau Director who has always supported our programming but the arguments listed above can help make a case for training.
- CITs on staff - Maintaining a core of Certified Interpretive Trainers that are able to teach the CIG course is a wonderful bonus. It provides you with a great deal of flexibility in offering the CIG courses throughout the year and when the dates work best for your organization. It also decreases the need for you to send your new staff "away" for training which may decrease travel costs in the long-run.
- Payment - we committed to paying the initial certification fee for our employees. It is then up to them if they choose to maintain their credential. Additionally, as long as our CITs help teach a CIG course within a specific time, we pay their recertification fee.
- Mixed classes - My favorite CIG classes include new and seasoned employees. I find that veterans will often take new employees under their wing and provide help while still refreshing their own skills. It also provides new employees with a chance to see veterans present, allowing them to emulate a style they identify with when they return to their park.
- Be flexible - Several veteran, full-time employees requested a class to be held in the winter when their schedules are typically somewhat slower. The class was small, consisting of all seasoned employees so we adjusted as needed. We included a great deal more time for discussion amongst the group as to what has worked for them and to share ideas and resources related to the concepts rather than a more typical introduction.
- Be patient - Getting such a large group of employees through this course when the maximum attendance is 30 people can take time. There are the inevitable schedule conflicts, illnesses and other reasons that remove at least one or two people from the roster each course.
- Lastly, be realistic. Do I think we will ever reach 100%? Maybe for a week or two but I am sure that as soon as that number is spoken out of my mouth, a new employee will be hired while a veteran will move on.

Yes, trainings can be tough. But by a warm, Friday afternoon in May, another round of sessions had been facilitated, presentations had been given, friends were made, skills were honed, confidence was strengthened and new ideas had been

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filed. As the class smiles and compares notes over a very large lunch of soup, chicken, veggies and more; they celebrate the end to a long week with a sense of accomplishment. I understand how they feel as I look out at the talented folks before me knowing they are better prepared for the summer season ahead and I am prepared...for cheesecake.



Amy L. R. Hill  
Natural Resource Program Specialist  
Pennsylvania DCNR - Bureau of State Parks

## NAI National Workshop

Are you going to the National Workshop this year? Whether you've already registered or you're still waiting here is a sneak peak at a couple of sessions being offered by Region 2 board members.

### Interpretive Tips, Tricks, and Techniques

by Alonso Abugattas

Regardless of how experienced we are, it is always great to get new ideas and reinforce the basics of conducting interpretive programs and trail walks. Here's an opportunity to check out how another experienced interpreter conducts his programs and walks, get some great handouts and examples of ideas that can be used, and have an opportunity to share your own as well. In addition to tips, tricks, and techniques to be used on trail walks and more formal settings, many attention-getting ideas, time-fillers, games, props, program ideas, and resources will be shown that should benefit both novice and seasoned naturalists.

While there are basics every interpreter should use when conducting his or her own programs and walks, everyone also does things a bit differently. Based on over 20 years of interpretive experience and watching many other interpreters practicing their trade, I hope to provide you with some additional ideas you may want to use or try. Not every one of these may work for you, but I'm sure you will find many that you can add to your own arsenal of tricks, tips, and techniques. Being in the business of "edutainment," these will help to make everyone's presentations more fun and memorable as well as educational!

Alonso's session at the workshop will be on Thursday, November 15 from 9:15-11:15am.

### Sizing Up the Solar System!

by Linda Bailey

From the moon to the far reaches of the Solar System, we'll explore our fascinating nearest night sky neighbors. Join Linda

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### New Jersey

vacant

Bailey, Certified Heritage Interpreter, and a recent participant in "Sky Rangers" online astronomy workshop as we soar through activities illustrating the phases of the moon, the relative sizes of the planets, the vast distances between them, and more.

We'll be up and moving, acting out positions of the quarter and crescent moon, and rolling Playdough to illustrate scale model sizes of the planets. We'll look at planet extremes...like where's the deepest valley and the highest mountain and how they compare to similar spots on the earth. An activity titled "Pocket Solar System Guide" will get us awe-struck at the vast distances between the planets, evoking Carl Sagan's poetic "Pale Blue Dot." After several other activities, we'll participate in "Earth as a Peppercorn," to give us a graphic glimpse of the vastness of the Solar System.

Come, discover a world full of interpretive ideas to share with audiences of all ages including school groups, summer camps, and astronomy programs.

Linda's Session at the workshop will be on Saturday, November 17.

## Region 2 Needs You

### **Come one, come all!**

We need your help to put on the best NAI National Workshop yet! This year's workshop will be in Hampton, VA November 13-17, 2012 - right in our region 2 backyard. It takes about 200 volunteers to run a national conference -will you be one of those folks? Help us show the rest of the country how great region 2 really is! Contact Tania Gale, Volunteer Chair ([galete@co.cal.md.us](mailto:galete@co.cal.md.us)) to find out more.

### **NAI's Region 2 Needs a Few Good Interpreters!**

Do you value the resources and opportunities you receive through the National Association for Interpretation? Have you been searching for a way to become more involved? Now is your chance! In a rare series of events, four regional leadership opportunities within Region 2 will be open for election this fall: Director, Deputy Director, Secretary and Treasurer. Detailed job descriptions can be viewed on the NAI Region 2 website at <http://nairegions.org/2>. We hope to have two to three candidates for each position. To be eligible, you must...

- Maintain a current individual membership throughout the course of the election process and term of office, if elected.
- State a willingness to sign the NAI Code of Ethics for Elected Officers.
- Be an NAI member in good standing and maintain that status throughout the election process and term of office, if elected.

Those interested should submit 1) a statement explaining their desire to serve (including their desired position) and their goals if

elected, 2) a brief biographical statement, and 3) a head/shoulders digital or scanned photo to be used in the ballots. Please email submissions to Amy Hill at [ahill@pa.gov](mailto:ahill@pa.gov) no later than September 1, 2012. Remember... "the growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership" (Harvey S. Firestone.)

### **Region 2 Spring Workshop**

Region 2 is in the planning stages for a 1-day spring workshop. The workshop will tentatively occur near the end of March 2013. If you are interested on being on the planning committee for this event please contact Yvonne Johnson ([Yvonne.Johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Yvonne.Johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov)) or Mona Enquist-Johnston ([mogar@cox.net](mailto:mogar@cox.net)) as soon as possible.

### **Attention New Jersey Interpreters**

Cynthia Sonowski who has been the state representative for New Jersey is retiring and New Jersey is in need of someone to fill her shoes. If you are interested please contact Linda Bailey ([lbailey@fredericksburgva.gov](mailto:lbailey@fredericksburgva.gov)). Many thanks to Cynthia for her years of service.

## **Calendar of Events**

### **Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine**

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

10:15am - noon  
Baltimore, Maryland

"Oh, say can you see...?" Or shall we say, Oh, say do you know... of Fort McHenry's impact on American history and its relationship to our national anthem? Step back in time with the Beltway Chapter to learn about the fort's role in the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Also, explore the location where, during a battle with the British, a waving flag inspired Francis Scott Key to pen words that later became our national anthem. Unearth the fort's fascinating history with a video, exhibits and a tour.

Please arrive at the site no later than 10:15am. As a group we'll watch the introductory video scheduled at 10:30am. Beginning at 11am, a National Park Service interpreter will lead us on a special hour-long tour of the fort. Afterwards, you are invited to further examine the exhibits or visit the bookstore.

As a professional courtesy, the site has graciously waived the fee for local interpreters. When you arrive at the site you are requested to stop by the Visitor Center Information Desk. Please identify yourself as a member of the Beltway Chapter. At that time you'll receive an entrance ticket and brochure.

The session is limited to 50 interpreters. To register, please contact Mona Enquist-Johnston, Beltway Chapter Co-Chair, at [mogar@cox.net](mailto:mogar@cox.net).

Fort McHenry is located at 2400 E. Fort Avenue in Baltimore, MD

21230. For directions and to learn more visit their website:  
<http://www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm>.

### Of Note

Registration for the NAI National Workshop is open. If you haven't already done so be sure to register for this great interpretive event. This year's workshop is in our region from November 13-17.

Be sure to keep an eye on the Region 2 website for additional upcoming workshops, news and other information that may be of interest. (<http://nairegions.org/2>)

## Chesapeake Chat Deadline

The deadline for the Fall Newsletter will be November 24, 2012. This newsletter will focus on the National Workshop so if you go consider writing an article about a session you found particularly interesting or useful. Pictures as an attachment to your email can also be submitted so if you get a good picture at an offsite or other session please get those to us as well. If you have any suggestions for a theme for future newsletters, please send your suggestions or requests. Themes can be anything related to interpretation that would be of interest to the region. Newsletter submissions including calendar items should be sent to Cynthia Rabbers ([c\\_rabbers@yahoo.com](mailto:c_rabbers@yahoo.com)) with "Chesapeake Chat Submission" in the subject line.

Scholarship Applications will be available on the Region 2 website soon. If you are looking for a scholarship to attend the National Workshop continue checking the website or contact scholarship chair Tess Belcher ([theresa.belcher@state.de.us](mailto:theresa.belcher@state.de.us)) for additional information.

NAI Region 2: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia

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