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Crafting Alternate Realities and Interpretive Adventures

Dakota Russell-Missouri

In the early hours of June 6, a portrait by George Caleb Bingham came to life and escaped from the art museum in Springfield, Missouri. To deal with this unusual problem, the museum hired art recovery specialists Shane Beckworth and Brock Hansen — better known as the Art Hunters. With the help of their volunteer reserves, the Art Hunters plunged headlong into a six-week adventure that would take them across the city of Springfield and reveal the hidden stories behind the artwork gracing the museum's walls.



If all of this sounds a little unrealistic, it may be because you're in the wrong reality. "Art Hunters" was an interpretive alternate reality game I designed for the Springfield Art Museum, which took place over the course of six weeks this summer. Players signed up to join the Art Hunters Reserves at www.arthuntersonline.com, and each week they received a mission to track down a new "escaped" artwork. These missions came in the form of ten-minute episodes from the Art Hunters' (fictional) reality series. Players could watch half of the episode immediately, but to unlock the second half, they had to venture out to the art museum and investigate the escape.

At the museum, players would find that week's artwork missing from the wall, and the area around it blocked off with crime scene tape. They would also discover the beginning of a trail of clues that would lead them first around the museum, and then to a second, secret location somewhere else in the city. After they found the remaining clues at that location, players received a code to enter into the website and alert the Art Hunters where the art had fled to. They could then watch the Art Hunters follow up on their tip and return the missing artwork.



Exhibit A: Missing Bingham portrait

The game was liberally dosed with interpretation. My goal was to engage museum visitors not just aesthetically with the art in the museum's collection, but emotionally. Each episode of the show played out like an adventure, but also included dialogue written to provoke players into wondering about the *whys* behind each artwork — Why was it created? Why does it have value? Case files, both online and at the museum, provided players with information about the artist and the piece itself. I selected secondary locations that complemented each artwork thematically. The Bingham portrait (left), for instance, escaped to the grave of its subject. These touches made the experience more personal and meaningful for players.

I've yet to begin my formal evaluation of the game to find out how many people our message reached and how deeply it resonated with them. With 150 registered users on the website, I can say that the project feels like a success. Most users lurked at the fringes, not playing, but still watching the videos and receiving the interpretive content. Those that did actively play seemed deeply devoted to the game and its themes. Based on the anecdotal evidence, I believe these kinds of interactive adventures have promise as interpretive tools for the future.

Director's Corner-Summer Adventures

John Miller

Summer is definitely a busy time for all of us. The same is true for your NAI Leadership. Strategic plans are being written on both the national and unit levels. I am especially pleased to have a great committee of Region 6 members who are working hard on identifying and clarifying our core member services.

Now you may be asking, "John, why are you excited about doing more paperwork?" The answer is that your leaders on BOTH the national and regional level are on an adventure to map the future of our organization. This is an exciting time. I was very pleased to have several members and officers answer the call to be a part of this adventure. Currently your Region 6 Strategic Planning Committee is defining what core member services we should address as well as how to ensure that those services are indeed provided. It is NEVER too late to talk to me or one of the officers to express your needs or concerns with our Unit or Organization. That type of feedback is valuable and keeps us on track during this new adventure.

Administrative endeavors are only a small part of my summer adventures. I hope that all of you seek out adventures within and outside our profession. Keep in mind that meaningful adventures don't have to involve travel.



One of our new great icons against pollution is our peanut-shaped red-eared slider named Peanut. Since 1993, when the story of a local turtle misshaped into a figure-eight (or peanut) due to wearing a plastic 6-pack ring, she has had an amazing adventure both in person and through the media. Peanut has been on posters, flyers, and even lapel pins to describe the results of pollution.

While her personal appearances have been reduced because of her age, her electronic adventures have grown by leaps and bounds. Late in 2013, I was contacted by an artist in the Netherlands who wanted detailed photos of Peanut. He wanted to carve Japanese-style carving, called netsuke. He was impressed with what had happened to her and wanted to share her story through his art medium. This July, I was contacted by an environmental group in Singapore who asked for permission to use her story and image for an anti-littering campaign in their country. Of course Peanut was gracious and agreed. By having her story shared across the globe she is promoting a healthier environment and continuing her amazing adventure.

I hope you have meaningful adventures throughout your life and your interpretive career. Our adventures teach us how to live life to the fullest and make meaning out of our successes and our foibles. So remember as you finish that fourth summer outdoor presentation at summer camp or at your facility, know that your adventure continues to enrich your life as well as those you encounter.



Region 6 Director John Miller is the Facility Manager at Shepherd of the Hills Conservation Center in Branson, Missouri.

"Life is a daring adventure ...or nothing."

-Helen Keller



Don't forget!

Nominations for Region 6 Awards and scholarship applications are due November 15, 2014. Nominate a deserving fellow interpreter today!

<http://nairegion6.wordpress.com/awards-scholarships/>

The Biggs Family Summer Adventure

Diane Key-Biggs-Missouri

As an interpreter, it's often hard to relax on vacation. Wherever I go — even if it is the beach — I want to learn something about the area's ecosystem. This year, our family travelled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Driving with a teenager and a six year old is an adventure in itself. The teenager sees everything as black and white and the six year old is a dreamer with a million questions. The sixteen-hour drive over two days seemed a long even with the DVD player on and cooler stocked with snacks.

The next day we made it to the beach. All the anxiety from the drive disappeared as we placed our toes in the Atlantic Ocean. Joyously picking up as many sea shells as possible, the six year old stated, "This is the best place ever!" After identifying the shells and finding a live whelk, we called it a night.

But I wanted to show the kids the *real* Myrtle Beach. You know, the one without ice cream or miniature golf course? Our adventure began at Brookgreen Gardens. It is amazing combination of art and nature where fantastic sculpture gardens and native zoo mingle. My son and I even caught tad poles and a couple of snakes. A couple from New Jersey followed us around the zoo because I could not resist sharing my knowledge. My teenage daughter is accustomed to me talking to strangers would just roll her eyes at me (which means "I love you lots" in teen speak) and walk ahead of us.

While we ate lunch, the waitress asked us about where I was from and what I did, and a huge sigh escaped from the teenager. The waitress loved to hear about my work. Counteracting the teenager broodiness, my son piped in to tell how cool the Gateway Arch is.

If you're an interpreter, it is hard to relax on vacation. You get into the habit of picking up trash, helping people find the closest bathroom, and talking about what you see. My teenager might disagree, but I believe it's the best job in the world!

"We live for the most part in a very iron mask of forms. Our daily ways are at bottom so joyless, so trite, so compulsory, that we must be free and simple sometimes, or we break. Our present world is a world of remarkable civilization and of very superior virtue, but it is not very natural and not very happy. We need yet some snatches of the life of youth-to be for a season simply happy and simply healthy. We need to draw sometimes great drafts of simplicity and beauty. We need sometimes that poetry should be not droned into our ears, but flashed into our senses. And man, with all his knowledge and his pride, needs sometimes to know nothing and to feel nothing but that he is a marvelous atom in a marvelous world."

—Frederic Harrison



You can invest in the future of NAI and the profession by making a contribution to the Enos Mills Fund. For the past 54 years National Association for Interpretation (NAI) has served as a professional family for people working with parks, historic sites, zoos, aquariums, museums, nature centers, and tour companies.

NAI has grown to more than 5,500 members to date, committed to our mission of "inspiring leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession." Member services are fundamental to NAI's success, such as:

- Rebates to regions and sections for newsletters
- Regional, national, and international workshops and conferences

- Publication of magazines and books
- Peer-juried Journal of Interpretation Research
- Interpnet.com website with online Member Directory and Member Forum
- On-line Legacy magazine
- Training courses
- 7,000 individuals certified in six categories
- Association store
- Interpretunities – jobs listings
- Standards of Practices – NEW publications on best practices
- Interpretation Roadmap coalition – NEW collaboration to help members find the right professional development and recognition opportunities

Please join us in support of the interpretive profession and insuring the long-term stability of NAI by making a donation or a pledge to the Enos Mills Fund today.

A Little Night(jar) Music

Ted Cable— Kansas

It's twilight at Madera Canyon in southeastern Arizona. I am here to hear nightjars. Specifically, I have come to listen to the staccato song of the rare Buff-collared Nightjar. This bird's range is mostly in Mexico, but it extends north just barely across the border into Arizona.

In the past, birders made a difficult and potentially dangerous drive into a remote area called California Gulch to listen for these night birds. But for the past two years, Buff-collared Nightjars have been heard at this easily accessible location. So these birds typically play to good crowds lining a dirt road at the mouth of the canyon. But being a Wednesday night it was a small "house" for this performance. Waiting for the curtain of darkness to rise, the audience's ears were tuned to a rocky slope, but our eyes were drawn to the sky. The desert sky was on fire with a blazing sunset, while simultaneously the moon peeked over the mountains to the east.

In one of those moments of profundity that deserts and mountains evoke, a birder poignantly noted the positive energy we were experiencing as we were caught between the sunlight and the moonlight. Well technically it's *all* sunlight, but the moon seemed to not only be reflecting it, but amplifying it. I felt the luminous energy too.

Amidst these celestial vibes, the nervous tension felt by birders awaiting lifers soon surfaced. I paced up down the sandy road, holding my cupped hands to my ears and slowly swiveled my head back and forth creating a goatsucker-seeking radar.

Pugnacious poorwills vied for our attention, incessantly calling out of their name. These attention-seeking Common Poorwills seemed to be saying, "Look here! Look here!" But we stayed true to listening for their Buff-collared cousin.

First planets and then the brightest stars appeared. More pacing. Then at exactly 7:51 pm the feathered diva of this star-studded evening began calling. It was soft and choppy at first. Like an orchestra tuning up. Was that it? I froze and my radar ears focused on the rocky hillside to the south. Yes! A Buff-colored Nightjar was now calling enthusiastically. Soon another of its tribe began singing along.

Unlike the mellow easily imitated songs of Whip-poor-wills, Poor-wills and Chuck-wills-widows, the Buff-collared has a rising rapid fire song like the firing of a toy Tommy gun. These Tommy guns shot it out between the boulders for about 10 minutes. Then there was silence. Was it intermission or the end of the show? I did not wait to find out. I had a third goatsucker that I wanted to hear on this night.

The Mexican Whip-poor-will is a new species recently split from the Eastern Whip-poor-will. The Mexican Whip-poor-will sounds much like the Eastern, except it says "Whip-Olé! Whip-Olé! Just kidding. Actually, it sounds almost identical to the Eastern except that the voice is raspy – like Eastern Whip-poor-will with a cold.

I drove up the canyon to the campground amphitheater – a fitting venue for another vocal performance. The bold Madera moon bravely illuminated the landscape, casting sharp shadows as if competing with the now retreated sun. I was late for this performance. As I stepped out of the car I immediately heard two Mexican Whip-poor-wills already singing. I lingered and listened to this duet while hanging the moon and stars from silhouetted branches in the canopy.

With the satisfaction that only two lifers can bring, I leisurely drove down out of the canyon and back out into the desert. I kept the windows down and listened for yet a fourth member of the goatsucker family -- a Lesser Night-hawk. Just before getting back to town a nighthawk flashed through my headlights. I had completed the *Grand Slam of Goatsuckers!*

Hey maybe that should have been the title!

Note: I gave the title considerable thought. With apologies to Mozart and Sondheim I decided on "A Little Night (jar) Music." But it was not an easy decision. "Goatsuckers Gone Wild" sounded fun, but a little sleazy and "Caprimulgidae – The Musical" was succinct, but a bit stuffy. A *Cornucopia of Caprimulgs* sounded like a Chamber of Commerce exaggeration. So "A Little Night(jar) Music" it is.



Adventure awaits as the moon rises over Madera Canyon.

My Bucket List

Vinnie Robinson-Oklahoma

On June 5, 2014 we embarked on a journey north across three states to reach Michigan, to learn the trade of coopering. The word *cooper* comes from *kuper*, a Lower Saxon word meaning "a tub," and was conferred on one who makes tubs, along with casks, barrels, buckets and similar items.

Our final destination was Tillers International, a farm outside of Kalamazoo where they teach old time crafts. My traveling companion was my good friend and our director at Oxley Nature Center, Eddie Reese. Eddie first got me interested in making buckets about a year ago when we cut some staves on a table saw and fitted them together. Those first buckets leaked like a sieve. We knew there had to be a way to make them without leaking, because people did it for hundreds of years without modern power tools. We learned a lot about this on our journey.

We stayed upstairs in one of the converted bedrooms of the farm house and ate lunch everyday family-style around a large table with others who had traveled, some farther than us to make buckets or learn blacksmithing or to make cheese.

We greeted the first morning with enthusiasm. I was ready to get my hands on some wood and start whittling it down. By the end of the afternoon, I had 14 beautiful pieces of redwood on their way to becoming staves. We used drawknives, scorps, inshaves and chisels to sculpt our buckets. It was easy to sleep after spending a day sitting on a shaving horse and pulling a drawknife. The nights were peaceful. Without television, the only thing to listen to was light rain falling.

On the second day, we began to put the pieces together. With some fitting, planning, and refitting, a bucket began to take shape. After all the cracks disappeared and the edges were tight it was time to cut out the croes. A croes is the groove where the bottom fits in place. With that being completed we began to calculate the diameter of the bottom, again using very simple tools and very little mathematics — a truly amazing process. We cut out the bottoms, and using the drawknife we whittled the edge down to fit into the groove. It looked tight. We even made the metal bands, hand riveting them together. As we hammered the bands into place, the buckets became very solid and I could tell right away they were superior to any we had previously constructed back home.

I returned with a great respect for the coopers of old times. I'm happy with the outcome of my work but do not consider myself a cooper, not yet. I plan to make more buckets and teach others what I learned.



Vinnie can cross "buckets" off the bucket list.



Eddie Reese, director of Oxley Nature Center



The 2014 NAI National Workshop, November 18–22 in Denver, Colorado, will bring interpreters to the foot of the Rocky Mountains for five days of learning, inspiring, and networking. You'll take away new ideas and a refreshed spirit after exploring Denver and the surroundings with your interpretive colleagues! This year's NAI Workshop will feature new presentation formats and opportunities for frontline interpreters, managers, planners, and media creators. We look forward to seeing you in Denver!

For more information about the workshop, visit http://www.interpnet.com/nai/Events/NAI_National_Workshop/nai/_events/NAI_National_Workshop.aspx or the Facebook page www.facebook.com/NAIWorkshop.

Jay Schneider is the Assistant Superintendent for Hobbs State Park on Beaver Lake in northwestern Arkansas. He has set a goal for himself to kayak along the entire 483-mile shoreline of that reservoir. During an afterhours party held by Lori Spencer and Don Simons upon completion of the 2013 Mount Magazine Butterfly Festival Jay described his adventure to the group. Well, Kelly and Donna Mulhollan, a.k.a. Still on the Hill (they entertained Region 6 at the 2011 workshop in Eureka Springs), happened to be working on a collection of songs and a concert series about the Beaver Lake Watershed. Struck by inspiration Kelly and Donna wrote and recorded a lively tune that lists every creek, cove, and holler in said watershed. "Jay's Song" is track 10 on their album *Once a River*. Listen to "Jay's Song" on the Region 6 website.



(From editor **Jamie Hubert**)

My son and I found adventure at Petit Jean State Park in Arkansas. My goal was to see Cedar Falls, a 90 foot waterfall, located deep within the park. There is always a limit to what you can do when traveling with a 6-year-old, and when we saw t-shirts in the gift shop reading "I survived the Cedar Falls trail!", I got a bit nervous. I grabbed a trail map, and learned that the trail is a very rigorous 2 miles. It was at least 95 degrees that day, and we had forgotten my son's tennis shoes at the campsite 40 minutes away. I had given up on the idea of seeing the falls, but my adventurous son insisted. "I can handle it, mom! I want to see the waterfall!" So we began our adventure with the instructions that if it got to be too much, we would turn around. My son never ceases to amaze me-not only did he make the entire journey without complaint, but he made friends along the way and even insisted that we climb the rocks on the other side of the creek to get under the waterfall. At that point I said no (partly because I wasn't too sure that the park staff wanted people doing that, and partly because I worried about him not having appropriate footwear). But his sense of wonder was so switched on, it was like a moth to a flame-he couldn't resist. He practically dragged me over the large boulders to reach the waterfall....and I watched and laughed as he danced under the falling water. Sometimes our kids can teach us to be better adventurers!



You never know what's below your feet until you take a look! Editor **Katie Raney (TX)** took a recent trip underneath Austin, Texas in Whirlpool Cave, a karst cavern located beneath one of the city's major highways. The three-hour journey through just a small part of the cave takes cavers through the largest room in the county, a narrow passage called the Birth Canal, and the Rat Hole (pictured with Katie exiting). [Editor's note: Coincidentally, co-editor Jamie has also been "reborn" in this cave. While traumatic, it was quite the adventure!]



Tara Humphreys (TX) hangs out on the job and experiences Colorado Bend State Park in a fun way!



Lead Naturalist **Tiffany Gorrell (TX)** takes Lucy, the River Legacy Living Science Center's education opossum, on a walk as part of Lucy's daily enrichment activities.

The **Fort Smith National Historic Site** is hosting a series of activities for children to explore various eras of the site's history. Program cover all kinds of topics, like making coiled clay pottery, being an architectural detective, and learning what it took to be a U.S. Deputy Marshal in the late 1800s. What an exciting way to connect with local history!



A documentary film about the life of **John James Audubon** is in the works. Filming of some keelboat scenes will be shot on the Arkansas River with members of the **Early Arkansas Reenactment Association**. EARA has a full sized keelboat, called *Aux Arc*, which they built over ten years ago and have used to reenact the first landing at Belle Point and retracing the Hunter and Dunbar expedition down the Ouachita River. *Aux Arc* is powered by sail and/or a six-oar crew and is armed with a swivel gun.



**ARKANSAS
State Report**
Don Simons

Greg Butts, Director of Arkansas State Parks, announced that parks department has been awarded \$5.5 million from the **Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resource Council**. Projects range from building new playgrounds to renovating facilities such as campgrounds, restrooms, and a WPA-era amphitheater. State park interpreters from all across Arkansas will gather at **DeGray State Park** in August for their annual workshop.

The **Ozark Plateau National Wildlife Refuge/Mary and Murray Looney Education and Research Center** partnered with the **Ozark Tracker Society** to conduct a nature education program for the public on June 28th. The topic was Wild Green Thumbs and was an exploration into the common Ozark plants which can feed us and heal us.

Congratulations to the **Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History**! The museum is a winner of the 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, and is one of only five museums nationwide to receive the prestigious honor in this year. The medal was awarded to the museum staff director at a special ceremony at the nation's White House.



**OKLAHOMA
State Report**
Karina Minor



**Supervisory Park Ranger
Frank Torres**

The **Oklahoma National Memorial** staff is pleased to welcome **Frank Torres** (photo, left) as the new Supervisory Park Ranger for the Oklahoma City National Memorial. Frank's presence brings new found energy with his sense of direction for the Oklahoma City Memorial. The memorial recently completed phase one of a planned seven-phase enhancement project to upgrade the Memorial Museum.

The annual **Lesser Prairie Chicken Festival**, organized by Lek Treks, was held on the first weekend in May. This rare bird was recently added to the federal government's list of endangered species. The event was designed to give the public an opportunity to view this elusive bird and to learn more about their conservation needs.

Oklahoma welcomes **Dwight Lawson**, the new director of the Oklahoma City Zoo. Formerly, Dwight was the director of Zoo Atlanta in Georgia.

The **Oklahoma State Parks** system has unveiled a new initiative for children. With the **State Parks Passport**, parks hope to encourage youngsters to undertake some physical fitness challenges during their visits.

Washita Battlefield National Historic Site has implemented new programs this summer season including the Summer Lecture Series. This program has brought in guest speakers from the area including Art Peters; the curator of the Hinton Museum. Art Peters presented a slide show, entitled "California Road." Other speakers have included local historian, Dale Tracy who presented "*Pictures and Tales of Old Cheyenne*." So far the Summer Lecture Series has had a wonderful turn out from visitors and the local community.

In an era where the trend within the National Park Service is to work a year or two in one location before moving on to another one, **Joel Shockley** and **Richard Zahm** celebrated a decade of service to **Washita Battlefield NHS** on May 30th. Shockley is a Park Guide, with additional duties such as historian, librarian, archivist and museum technician. Richard Zahm is a Natural Resources Park Ranger. He has spent the last decade dedicated to restoring the battlefield to its 1868 appearance.



**Joel Shockley (left)
Richard Zahm (right)**



**OKLAHOMA
State Report
(cont)**
Karina Minor

Washita Battlefield NHS also welcomed **Barbara Ford** as their new permanent Park Guide this July. Barbara has previously worked at the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park in Johnson City, Texas.



**Barbara Ford
joins the staff
at Washita.**

Chickasaw National Recreation Area is introducing a new program this year on Thursday nights. Beginning at 8:30 pm, park rangers will set up one or more telescopes at the Veterans Lake Dam for viewing the planets, the moon and other astronomical objects. There



**Park Guide Don Yates
setting up equipment for
the Night Sky program**

will be other activities for overcast nights. This program is in support of the National Park Service's Night Sky Program. The Park Service has determined that its mission to conserve the scenic and natural places in America includes the night skies or, in Park Service terms, the "natural lightscape." The preservation of these natural lightscapes are important not only to viewing night time scenery but also to maintain the natural environment of nocturnal wildlife.



**TEXAS State
Report**
Tara Humphreys

Amanda Hughes-Horan has had a busy spring with **Interpretive Insights**. They recently completed an exciting new interactive children's discovery trail for The Shlenker School in Houston, signage for the Fort Worth Nature Center and also for the George Ranch Historical Park. Current projects include interpretive signage for the City of Denton, new signage for Dinosaur Valley State Park, and interpretive master planning for the Bayou Preservation Association in Houston. Stay tuned for future projects at Texas Tech's Llano River Field Station and Houston's Intercontinental Airport.



**Installing signage along
the newly completed
George Ranch Heritage
Trail**

Kristi Payne shares that **River Legacy Living Science Center** in Arlington houses more than 50 wildlife ambassadors. These animals provide a way for Nature Center visitors to learn more about these native animals and to interact with them in a safe environment. Starting in August 2014, the Center is launching an Animal Ambassador Adoption program, allowing guests to symbolically adopt their favorite Wildlife Ambassador from opossums to turtles and snakes! Adoptees will receive a photo of the ambassador, a fact card, and more for higher levels of support. Through this program, our visitors and friends can support their favorite animal, while also assisting the education programs that strive to encourage understanding and preservation of their natural habitats. Naturalist Mary Johnson is heading up this program. Look for information to be posted soon on our Web site at www.riverlegacy.org, or call Mary at 817.860.6752, ext. 119.

Alisa Koslowski reports that Coppell, Texas recently completed a new education center. The **Biodiversity Education Center** held its grand opening on Earth Day this year. This green building was the vision of a dedicated Friends of Coppell Nature Park. Through a joint effort of the Friends, City of Coppell, Coppell ISD, and Northlake College this dream became reality. All entities now enjoy a new home for their programs and visits to the Coppell Nature Park. Still in its infancy, programs will continue to be developed. Come hike the beautiful trails of the Coppell Nature Park and peak through the windows of this new center.

The **Bullock Texas State History Museum** in Austin is expanding its interpretation to families this summer, according to program manager **Katie Raney**. One popular program called Create Your Own... encourages families to make their own quality artifacts to take home. So far, kids and families have made their own rock art, bison hide paintings, screen prints and more in this workshop.



**Bison hide painting
created by a Bullock
Museum visitor.**

No report submitted, so we have no choice but to assume that Rusty Scarborough has been carried off by mosquitoes.



LOUISIANA
State Report
Rusty
Scarborough



Missouri State Parks celebrated 75 years of Spring Interpreters Training School this year, with George Kastler as guest speaker.

Kendra Swee reports that **Missouri State Parks** held the 75th Annual Spring Interpreter’s Training School May 18th – 21st, 2014 at Roaring River State Park near Cassville, MO. Approximately 90 full-time, seasonal, and volunteer staff attended this training from the MO Department of Natural Resources, Missouri State Parks, MO Department of Conservation, Missouri Master Naturalists, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to the training there was a special celebration of the 75th year of Spring Interpreter’s Training complete many faces from the past including George Kastler, Maureen McHalem Larry Larson, and of course Merle Rogers. This year’s training was considered a success! Attendees left training re-invigorated, full of new ideas, and ready to meet the interpretive needs for their sites this season. Out of the large class, 15 students received their CIG certifications. Congratulations to them!



MISSOURI State
Report
Michelle
Soenksen



The **Association of Missouri Interpreters** (AMI) workshop will be in Sedalia, Missouri this year on September 14-16. The theme for this year’s workshop is “Finding your interpretive center in the heart of Missouri!” Registration is open and anyone is welcome to attend! To get more information or register, visit www.mointerp.net.



Jared Bixby reports that the **Sunset Zoo's** nature-based childcare program, Zoo Sprouts, created a unique partnership that was a great experience for all involved. Here, they observed the zoo’s vets work on a tortoise, and then participated in a teddy bear clinic. [INSERT PHOTOS [zoo_adventure.jpg](#) and [zoo_adventure2.jpg](#)]. The zoo partners with KSU College of Veterinary Medicine and the KSU Vet Health Center for their veterinary needs, and they in turn use the zoo as a teaching tool for their vet students. Bixby says, "In this situation, we had our preschool-age kids observing a real-life vet procedure, then interact one-on-one with veterinary students and exotic animal veterinarians. It’s moments like these that connect the dots for everyone in why we all do what we do from the professional exotic animal veterinarians to the two-and-half-year-old child in Sunset Zoo’s childcare program."



KANSAS
State Report
Pat Silovosky



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Spring 2014: February 20 Summer 2014: May 20

Fall 2014: August 20 Winter 2014: November 20

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