

NAI Region Six Spring Board Meeting Minutes

Springfield, Missouri

3:00 p.m., February 21, 2016

Mel's additions to Lisa's original notes are in red

In attendance: Robin Gabe, Mel Harvey, Heather Runyan, Pat Silovsky, Laura Motley, Tara Humphreys, Jay Schneider, Don Simons, Clark Hancock, Andrea Joslin, Rusty Scarborough

Absent: Lisa Cole, Michelle Soenksen, Kevin Armitage, Jeannette Larson

Meeting called to order by Jay Schneider at 3:20pm

Officer/Chair/State Coordinator Reports

Director's Report – Jay Schneider

The state of “the Humble and Hospitable” Region Six is strong and active.

Leadership Positions

I have recently met with John Miller to make sure the transition of the Director position is a flawless as can be. John left the Region in great shape and will be missed in this role.

Three leadership positions are, or soon will be, vacant:

- Scholarship Chair
- Co-editor Newsletter
- Oklahoma Representative

Announcement and notices will be forthcoming to fill these positions at business meeting and Facebook/website. Jay wants to look at what states aren't represented so he'd like to fill these positions with these states so all states are well-represented on the Board. If you have any suggestions, let Jay know who you'd like to nominate/ask.

Member Services

The four core services for our Region Six Members are:

- Annual Unit Workshop
- Unit Newsletter
- Leadership and Professional Development
- Scholarships

I will be working with the Region Six leadership to make sure these services are achieved and successful.

Consider these four things as we move through the year.

Finances

Thanks to the retiring Region Six Treasurer, Andrea Johnson, her work has been wonderful. Her guidance to our newly Elected Treasurer Mel Zabecki Harvey has been great in the transition. Thanks to **Andrea** for providing the 2016 budget to the National Office **in August**.

National Advisory Council

I will be serving Region Six and the NAI members on the National Board of Directors. Please continue to let me know of any concern or issue that needs to be addressed.

New Business

- **Requests for refund of workshop registrations:**

1. **Sara Foster**. She is a student at Missouri State University and has recently had a change in her work schedule that will not allow her to attend. She is very interested in NAI, but could not get her employer to change her work schedule. She made the request for her refund of \$110 in early January which I forwarded to Mel.

Board approved refund. Rusty made the motion and Pat seconded.

2. From John Miller: Very unusual AND not at the request of the member; this is solely my recommendation. The workshop registration is for **Christie Collins** who is traveling from Knoxville, TN to attend our conference. This refund will not cost Region Six any financial hardship because it is a donation made recently by Adrienne Johnson (AR). Adrienne called me today saying that due to health reasons she will not be attending. Rather than ask for a refund for herself, she asked that I "donate her registration to a needy member." I am asking that the \$165 workshop registration for Christie Collins be refunded as a needy member for the following reasons:

- She was the next in line for the 2016 Financial Aid Stipend (she was #7 and we gave out six stipends)
 - She is a presenter at this year's Workshop
 - Except for Paul Caputo, she is traveling the farthest distance than any of our other members
 - While she does currently reside in TN (Region Three), she joined NAI while she was a volunteer in Kansas City. She truly is a member of Region 6.
- Again, Christie is unaware that I am making this request.*

Board approved transfer. Clark made the motion and Tara seconded.

3. Also from John Miller: I have another set of refunds for the board to consider. I will tell you up front that while these are staff from my own agency, THEY really dropped the ball on this. They are asking for a refund on the pre-conference Interpretive Writing class. Their supervisor, Catherine Mcgrane, has an explanation below involving their reason based on staff time. Each of the class reservations is \$85, or a total of \$255. I am a little confused why they waited so long knowing the schedule more than a month in advance. Because this involves an outside speaker who is basing her travel on the number of people signed up, I am hesitant to

recommend a refund. Again, I will defer to the wisdom of the Board to consider their refund. Here is the email from Catherine McGrane:

From: Catherine McGrane
Sent: Friday, February 19, 2016 4:38 PM
To: Rudy Martinez
Cc: John Miller; Tamie Yegge; Robyn Parker; Austin Lambert; Jonah Long
Subject: NAI pre-conference writing workshop

Hello,

As I stated in our phone conversation today, **Robyn Parker, Austin Lambert, and Jonah Long**, all Powder Valley staff, are unable to attend the NAI pre-conference writing workshop with Judy Fort Brenneman on Sunday. After reviewing the amount of time for the pre-conference and conference sessions, we realized that the staff did not have the hours available to attend the Sunday workshop.

I realize this is very late but am hoping you will consider refunding the cost of the Sunday workshop for each of the three named above. Please let me know your decision via email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Catherine

Catherine McGrane, CIT, CIP
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[314-301-1506, ext. 4218](tel:314-301-1506)
Catherine.McGrane@mdc.mo.gov

Board disagreed with refund. Clark moved that we reject the proposal and Pat seconded.

- **Association of Missouri Interpreters (AMI) Chapter/Unit status**

Deputy Director's Report—Clark Hancock

Board members are asked to check with Cyndi Cogbill, Volunteer Coordinator for the Springfield workshop, as there may be need for our assistance in manning the registration table and to act as room monitors.

As part of this year's regional workshop, we are hosting a Collegiate Competition Tuesday evening. **We have 2 universities that are competing. There are personal and non-personal tracks with 10-minute**

presentations. There are 4 students competing for the personal track and only one grad student submitting the non-personal (poster) track.

The Traveling Trunk will be making an appearance. This is a great promotional opportunity. Ken Forman, the current curator of the trunk, has set up a FaceBook page. Talk it up! This is a fun Region tradition worth continuing. There are cute advertisements for the traveling trunk and Clark passed them out to get people to start thinking about the traveling trunk before the auction.

Arkansas is hosting the 2017 Regional Workshop. Dates are set for Feb 26 - March 1 in Rogers, AR. Lori Spencer is the conference chair. She has asked whether the Region will have a booth at the National Workshop in Corpus and would like to put together an Arkansas State Symbol Basket for a drawing.

Texas is slated for 2018. The folks from Texas will be meeting during this year's workshop to start forming the committee. We are currently looking at the Dallas area.

The National Workshop in Corpus is taking shape. The committee is listed below:

Lari Jo Johnston	Workshop Chair
Julie Galbraith	Program Chair
Clark Hancock	Publicity/Promo Chair
Toya Jervay	Volunteer Chair
Rebecca Harris	Local Arrangements Committee Chair

Region Six is a primary target for recruiting volunteers for Corpus. Anyone who is interested, contact one of the Committee Members. If anyone is interested in doing anything to promote Region 6, let Clark know.

Thanks to iZone, we now have a Region Six banner for our booth. John Miller has also provided other pieces including state flags. We will need to figure out the logistics of moving it around but it is a start. Thanks to John and Kathy, the booth in Virginia Beach was a great success. We hope to take a look at it at this meeting!

The Deputy Director position is up for election this year. I am happy to talk with anyone who is interested in running.

Secretary's Report –Lisa Cole

I have a new email address, and am not checking my old one any longer. You can find me at lcole@cityoflewsville.com. Thanks for sending me your information for this meeting.

Treasurer's Report—Mel Harvey (with lots of help from Andrea Joslin)

Balance

- Fourth Quarter - \$36,689.58 was the balance as of December 31, 2015 but a lot is currently changing because of the workshop expenses and deposits.

- \$9,377.87 in the black for the year, which is a lot but again subject to change when we finish settling workshop expenses.
- AMI has officially dissolved as an NAI chapter, so we will no longer see them in our financials.

Springfield, MO Workshop Current Status

- 152 people registered, \$26,181.00 made so far. This is revenue though, no expenses have been taken out yet.
- Budget status for current workshop: John Miller reports that Rudy and Chris (who made the budget) are staying well within it. Kudos to them!

Scholarship Disbursements

- \$3,345.00 for three student scholarships @ \$1,115 each (includes registration, travel stipend, and scholarship). The hotel was also able to comp two rooms for the students so they don't have to spend their travel stipends on hotel but can use it for transportation and food, great news!
- \$940.00 for six financial aid recipients' registration (we paid two student registrations and four regular registrations)

Virginia Beach Booth

- \$150 paid out to have a booth at the National Conference and we made \$272 (totaling a profit of \$122 made at the booth). We may want to budget \$150 in for next year's budget to cover the cost of the booth.

Laura expressed concern about the award plaques coming out of workshop funds, but that money comes out of Region 6 miscellaneous expenses, so no workshop funds are used for these awards (if anyone expresses concern about this).

Other Items

- The 2017 Workshop Budget will be created soon.

Awards Chair's Report –Laura Motley

We have received less than ten nominations this year, so it will be a light year for awards. The deadline for National Awards is May 31, and the deadline for Regional Awards is November 15. I want to thank my Committee for many years of service. They continue to do a great job! Thank you, Tara Humphreys (TX), Judy Sneed (LA), Pat Silovsky (KS), Kendra Swee (MO), Amy Morris Marcoux (OK), and Mary Anne Parker (AR). **Note: Award winners need to be NAI members. Our award nominations mirror the NAI National awards very closely.**

Election Chair's Report –Robin Gabe

In fall 2015 we held elections for the positions of Director and Treasurer. Congratulations to Jay Schneider (Region 6 director) and Mel Harvey (Region 6 treasurer)! **Robin says it's nice to have more than one person on the ballot and there were two for each of these elections.**

In fall 2016 we will hold elections for the positions of Deputy Director and Secretary. Interested individuals should contact the existing officers or me for more information on the positions' job descriptions. I will need candidate bios and photos by midsummer.

Membership Chairs' Report –Jeanette Larson/Shelley Flanary

None received prior to the meeting.

They always have a good updated welcome letter for new people in the region but are looking for other tasks for their job. Clark said that one duty that would be nice would be to keep track of when Region VI NAI members' membership was coming up for renewal that they could send friendly reminders to the members. Laura wonders why people don't renew and Clark suggested that maybe as part of the reminder they could ask for non-renewing people why they are not renewing.

Newsletter Editors' Report—Katie Raney

The Newsletter is chugging along. Editor Katie is seeking a co-editor. Region Sixers with editing and/or layout experience or interest should let Katie or Jay know.

Scholarship Chair's Report—Heather Runyan

Three scholarships were awarded for the 2016 Freeman Tilden Scholarships and the recipients were notified in early December. The recipients this year are Rebecca Matrow, a graduate student at Wichita State University, Ojetunde Ojewola, a graduate student at the University of Missouri - Columbia, and Porscha Brents, a junior at Arkansas Tech University. Thank you to John Miller, Clark Hancock, Andrea Joslin, and Lisa Cole for reviewing the applications and selecting the recipients.

Different from previous years, this year's scholarships will be announced at the opening ceremonies tonight.

Andrea asked for a clarification for applicants needing to be NAI members. In future years they are going to have to be NAI members to apply. Clark mentioned that folks need to be NAI members to apply for the financial aid as well.

Website Report—Stephen Brueggerhoff

None received prior to the meeting.

Arkansas State Report—Don Simons

None received prior to the meeting.

Arkansas State Parks has been busy interviewing for seasonal interpreters, 20 will be hired. ASP has a new Executive Director and State Park Director. Some State Parks are getting new visitor centers and new exhibits are being created (Logoly, Hampson, and Davidsonville).

Kansas State Report—Pat Silovsky

Johnson County Park and Recreation hosted a Certified Interpretive Guide Training at **Ernie Miller Nature Center** in December. Six people went through the training. This included three part-time staff, one volunteer and two Park Police Officers. Three of these people are also Kansas Master Naturalists and at least three of these participants will be attending the Region Six Workshop this year.

The **Johnson County Museum** just became a part of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District. They will be moving their museum in the next year to a new facility at Johnson County's new Arts and

Heritage Center. The new facility will give them the ability to move their All Electric House to an interior location. One of their Education staff, **Michele Brewer**, just became an NAI member and will be attending the Region Six Workshop.

Ted Cable will be hosting a CIG workshop for KDWPT and the staff of the **Great Plains Nature Center** in Wichita in early March. It will be at the Nature Center and a few other organizations are sending people as well. If you are interested in this training, you can contact Ted.

The KSU interpretation students will be working at the **Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve** helping the National Park Service with Junior Ranger Days on April 16. The students are also helping to design a summer day camp for the Preserve.

Jared Bixby from **Sunset Zoo** is coordinating a new program called **Portal to the Public** to Kansas informal educators and museums. Currently, Sunset Zoo is the only Portal site in Kansas so they are willing to train and mentor other sites to get involved in this new Kansas Consortium. The goal of the project is to increase the ability of individual informal science educators and museum professionals to partner with scientists, facilitate professional development and execute public programs featuring scientists. In short, this will help visitors to your site become more science literate and give scientists a chance to communicate the results of their research or projects with the public. Contact Jared for more information about this opportunity to get involved in the Portal to the Public Network.

Milford Nature Center and KDWPT are working alongside conservation organizations and tourism groups to host the **Kansas Birding Festival** April 29-30, 2016. Over 300 species of birds can be seen in the Milford Lake area. Between the Lake, the wetlands, and the native prairie right at your fingertips, you have one of the best kept secrets in Kansas for bird sightings.

Louisiana State Report—Rusty Scarborough

None received prior to the meeting.

At Walter Jacobs Park, a giftshop will be opening for their 40th year celebration. They held a CIG training in August with 6 participants from 4 different agencies. Rusty and Jay Miller offered another CIG training last week in Natchitoches with 19 participants. Rusty is happy about the number of agencies coming on board for CIG certifications for teaching. Clark added that the 2018 Nationals will be in New Orleans!!! Committee will come together (with Deb Tewell organizing) in Spring 2017.

Missouri State Report—Michelle Soenksen

Missouri may be opening some new parks in the next year and Missouri State Parks will be celebrating their 100 year anniversary this year! Clark notes that this coincides with National Parks' anniversary!!

Missouri State Parks will host the 77th annual Spring Interpretive Training School May 22– 25 at Camp Sherwood in **Cuivre River State Park**. This four-day training offers Missouri State Park's seasonal interpreters an intensive training on the elements of interpretation and developing quality interpretive programs. Students also have the opportunity to take the training for their Certified Interpretive Guide certification.

Catherine McGrane reports two new naturalists joined the **Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center** Interpretive Staff. **Jonah Long** and **Austin Lambert** are both great additions to the team.

Also Autumn Anderson was born wide eyed and ready for her new life at 1:08 a.m. on November 7, 2015 weighing 6 lbs. 13 oz. and 20 in. long. Autumn's mom, **Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center** naturalist **Rebecca Rodriguez**, and her dad, Dionte Anderson, are enjoying their little girl.

Steve Jacobsen reports the **Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center** in Kansas City will be offering its Nature and Arts Camp June 8– 12. This camp is for children ages 9-12. While attending the week-long camp, participants will have the chance to learn outdoor skills and discover nature and art through various hands-on activities. The Discovery Center is looking forward to a fun, adventure-packed week with the campers.

Also, this will be the second summer for the Discovery Center's Adult Summer Series. This series will include programs on nature photography, canoeing, archery, atlatl, and a trip on the Missouri River. The staff at the Discovery Center is looking forward to a fun experience working with adults and helping them discover nature.

During the week of June 22– 26, **James A. Reed Wildlife Area** in Kansas City will be the host site for Discover Nature Field Days. This week-long event allows participants of all ages and backgrounds to try new outdoor skills, explore the wonders of nature, and much more. Several MDC employees and volunteers come together to put on this great annual event in Kansas City.

Missouri State Parks is looking to fill seasonal interpreter positions at several sites throughout the state. Please contact **John Cunning** or **Kendra Swee** for more information.

Oklahoma State Report—Karena Minor

Neil Garrison reports that he has been successful in working out a partnership with *The Oklahoman*, i.e., OKC's major daily newspaper. Neil is now writing a weekly "Nature & You" column for that media format. The focus of the weekly column is natural history tidbits related to the outdoor world in central Oklahoma. If you'd like to read some of Neil's archived writings, you can do so here: <http://www.newsok.com>. Scroll down the right side of that page until you arrive at the "Contributors" listings; Neil's columns can be found if you click on the "More" icon at the bottom of the page. Neil says, be extra nice to him... or you'll risk the danger of appearing in his next novel! Ha!

In a typical situation new land for public parks is just a transfer of ownership from one entity to another. The **City of Tulsa** is doing something entirely different; they are actually creating brand new park land where, prior to the start of the project, there was just air. No less than 67 acres of new park land is being built 30 feet above street level. This elevated portion of new park land is situated so that it connects two pieces of park land that were previously bisected by a busy city street. The automobile traffic will now be routed through tunnels.

Most of us know **Amy Stephens**. (Education Dept., **OKC Zoo**) But, did you know that Amy has a singing voice? On a Saturday prior to Christmas, Amy led a "Sing-A-Long" event at the zoo. The tune was the popular, "I Want A Hippopotamus For Christmas." Gayla Peevey Henderson made the song famous in 1953 when she sang the song; she was 10 years old at the time. Ms. Henderson now lives in San Diego, California, but the OKC Zoo made arrangements via a Skype broadcast to have her sing the song once again for this special public event.

On December 11-12, National Park Service employees dressed up in historically-accurate clothing in order to lead the "Historic Candlelight Tours" at the **Chickasaw National Recreation Area** (Sulphur, Oklahoma).

What better place to hold an event such as this? I'm speaking of a program called, "The Halloween Bash." The **Museum of Osteology** (Moore, OK) was the location. For those of you familiar with that site, you know that it is filled, floor-to-ceiling, with all kinds of bones and skeletons. It is a "holiday-appropriate" sort of place!

There is a 100-acre lake in Oklahoma City that is filled with crystal-clear water. Not surprisingly, it is dubbed **Crystal Lake**. It was the site where a sand-dredging company made a big hole in the earth. After the site was no longer used commercially in the 1970s, the sand-filtered water transferred the hole in the ground into a magical lake. The ownership of the site was transferred to the Oklahoma City Parks and Recreation Department. For the last several years, an organization called **City Care Inc.** has operated the site to offer outdoor programs to inner-city children. The lake is only minutes away from downtown. Plans are underway to add horseback riding, camping, fishing and archery to the sites program schedule.

Western Oklahoma had lots of dirt, but few trees back in the pioneer times. Folks back then built sod houses. Today, there is a **Sod House Museum** near Aline, Oklahoma. The site is owned and operated by the **Oklahoma Historical Society**. On December 12, a special event was held at the museum; cowboy poets were there, as were pioneer tall tale-tellers. The "Friends of the Museum" organization served up cookies and hot cider.

During the months of October and December, **Science Museum Oklahoma** (OKC) held a couple of holiday events. Just prior to Halloween, it was the event titled: "Not-So-Frightening Fun Night." Children got a chance to snack on meal worm cookies. Madagascar hissing cockroaches were on hand for those who weren't too squeamish to stick out their hand and let the critters crawl all over their exposed epidermis. Add to that the opportunity to manufacture glow-in-the-dark "radioactive" quicksand as well as other science-creation stations where ooey-goey slime was being turned out by the bucketful. That was followed up in December by a "Science Overnight" event. It was dubbed "The Science Behind Star Wars." **Clint Stone** is the Director of Education; he showed the children how to craft a home-made version of a hovercraft...as well as other nifty things.

Oklahoma City's **Red Earth Art Center** sponsored a month-long event called: "Red Earth Tree-fest." This Christmas-themed event was, of course, held during the month of December. The Christmas tree ornaments featured Native Culture themes.

The **Community Center at Edmond** (Oklahoma) hosted a unique event on December 10. The Director of the Comanche Nation's eagle conservation project gave a presentation. A live golden eagle was part of the program.

Lake Arcadia is situated on the south side of Edmond, Oklahoma. A new trail is being proposed for the perimeter of the lake. When completed, the trail will be 19 miles in length. The guess is that it will take five years to complete the project.

Texas State Report—Tara Humphreys

Lari Jo Johnston, Director of Environmental Education **Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program**, is chairing the upcoming **NAI National Workshop in Corpus Christi** in November, 2016. Want to help? She's at the conference or you can reach her at ljjohnston@cbbep.org

Speaking of planning, the **NAI Region Six Workshop in 2018** will be in the Dallas/Fort Worth Area. If you're interested in being on the planning committee, let **Lisa Cole** know.

Over 100 people from Texas State Parks interpretation attended the **Texas State Park Interpreters Conference** Feb. 15-19 at Camp Buckner near Burnet, TX. The theme was, "Amplifying the Voice of Texas State Parks," and they learned to do that through new programs, recreation-based training, and networking. Photo at right.

It's an exciting time for **Texas State Parks**! Recent breakthrough legislation is providing a significant increase in dedicated funding for Texas State Parks. HB 158 dedicates 94% of sporting goods sales tax revenue to parks, which will be dedicated to capital repairs and improvements. To put this into perspective, the 2012-13 biennium was \$23 million, the 2014-15 biennium was just \$11 million, and this biennium of 2016-17 is \$90.6 million!



Job opportunity!! The **Regional Interpretive Specialist for Region 5 State Parks (Waco)** is now open! It closes on March 9 (**Rusty's birthday**). For more information, see the link or contact Tara Humphreys. <http://tinyurl.com/h6hd5m5>

Rudy Martinez (Conference Committee Co-chair) updated us on current conference stuff. We have 172 people registered! 132 are students! There are some new fun events offered this time like the collegiate competition and a little bit of a change up in events. They've been organizing this conference for 3 years (and it shows!). Clark mentioned that National has taken over a lot of the financial organization and this committee had to adjust to a lot of the changes. Rudy said the most difficult part of the budget organization was trying to figure out the food/catering. Everything has to be tweaked around the main price. Changes were even made up to last week. He anticipates we may make as much as \$1,000 profit from this meeting. Break-even number even changed because of the cost of the student registrations and food items and dietary needs. Initially the break-even number was 100 and then it went up as stuff got added. Clark commended them on setting a realistic number. Andrea pointed out that this year it's different because we go tax-exempt status for this conference but Margo go approved for some special status this year. All future workshop committees should try to get this done because it can save thousands of dollars.

Action Items

1. Approval of Minutes from Fall 2015 Region Six Board Meeting

Pat made a motion to approve and Rusty seconded. Motion passed.

2. Follow up to Fall 2015 Region Six fundraising proposal:

Grady Manus offered to split proceeds from publication of a book of his poetry, with Region Six receiving 60% and Grady receiving 40% of the book sales profits. Details are in the Fall 2015 Board Meeting Minutes. What is the status of this proposal?

No money committed right now. This is a similar proposal to the Whisper on the Wind CDs. John is concerned that it may take years to sell these if we have to print 1,000 of them and is going to pursue figuring out if there can be a print-on-demand possibility. Don asked how big the book is, Pat says it's 50 poems, 50 pages of color. John will report back with specifics on how much the printing will cost in the different printing options at our August meeting.

As an aside: Clark motioned that we create a fundraising committee. This is something that Jay can designate. Clark said it can raise \$ for the organization but will also raise awareness to our organization. Laura suggested that maybe this duty can be added to the membership co-chair responsibility? John suggested that the fundraising chair could take control of the advertising at the National mention and do other visuals. Mel suggested we check with other Regions to see what their fundraising committees are doing. Clark asked John to coordinate with the membership committee folks (Shelly and Jeannette) to see if that's something they will take on.

3. Any other business?

Clark asked if we want a booth at National. Lori Spencer offered to make a basket to represent AR for a raffle. Pat suggested other states should get involved with baskets and she will do the Kansas basket. If the fundraising committee is created, they could organize this.

Clark made a motion for Region 6 to have a booth at National and Pat seconded.

Mel made a proposal to combine the scholarship chair duties with the duties of the professional development committee to form a "Scholarship and Professional Development Committee". Heather agrees with combining them so the application review committees can be the same. It will be brought up at the business meeting. Heather made the motion to bring this issue in front of the general membership at the business meeting tomorrow. Mel seconded it.

Heather motioned the meeting to be adjourned, Rusty seconded.

Jay Schneider called the meeting to a close at 4:50 p.m.