

FALL 2024 • VOLUME 38, ISSUE 3

# VISIONS

NAI SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

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# VISIONS

## Newsletter for NAI SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

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I would offer my sincerest of apologies for the lateness of publishing this issue. Thank you for your understanding.

Jerrel Geisler,  
Visions Co-Editor



# Artist Residency at Oxley Nature Center

by Maggie Regan, Oxley Nature Center

It doesn't take a genius to notice the naturally occurring bridge between the more-than-human world



and creative expression. For as long as art and language have existed there are endless examples of how the shifting shapes, patterns, and behaviors found in wildscapes have captivated, enamored, and inspired people to speak, sing, draw, paint, dance, sculpt, wail on various instruments and express ideas in various mediums.

In early 2023, visual artist Kayla Anley came to us with the idea of an artist residency. While we loved the idea and saw so many possibilities, we didn't know a lot about hosting an artist. We



started researching the various ways to structure a residency, taking cues from other organizations and working with Kayla to tailor a program to support both Oxley's and the artist's goals and needs.

We dedicated a small space (about 10' x 11') in the Interpretive Center to serve as an artist studio. Two exterior walls of the studio space are

floor-to-ceiling glass, overlooking a feeding station which stays active with migratory birds and hungry little mammals. Recently, the Ruby-throated hummingbirds and the Indigo and Painted buntings are moving out, while the Goldfinches are showing up and the Lincoln sparrows are moving through. Raccoons, ground hogs, cotton rats, and gray squirrels are frequent visitors.

Beyond the feeding station, the view offers BJ's Pond and a roughly 20-acre prairie inhabited by native grasses, wildflowers and two huge cottonwoods. From there the prairie gives way to the tree line where scrubby oaks dominate and the tops of the trees in the floodplain forest meet the expansive ever-changing skyscape.

Kayla moved into the studio and committed to being on site 2 days a week and to teaching one weekend workshop per month during her 6-month residency. Her time here on site consisted not only of creating graphite and charcoal artworks inspired by the flora and fauna of Oxley, but also interacting with our guests about her process and spending time out on the trails and getting

to know the land. Her presence and her artwork became vital to the workings of the nature center, and it became crystal clear that Oxley hosting an artist residency went beyond being a "good fit" and was something we would need to do in perpetuity.

We accepted applications for a 2024

residency and were floored with the amount of interest and the high caliber of applicants. After a rigorous selection process, poet and author Sasha Martin was offered the resi-

dency. Sasha's residency has highlighted how the relationships between nature and self can inform and influence the components of emotional wellbeing. She has created visual poetry pieces, a poetry trail guide that will be offered to visitors, and QR codes link-



ing to audio recordings of her poems have been temporarily installed on the trails. Sasha's artistic take on the residency has been inspired and unique, and we here at the nature center have again been astounded by the vast range of possibilities.

In the coming months, we will begin



accepting applications for the 2025 residency. Given the richness of the artist residency program so far, we are so excited to see what kinds of things can be discovered through and with the next Oxley artist.

# Seasonal Changes - Director's Report

by Ken Forman, South Central Region Director, Arkansas

The Arkansas Natural Sky Association just hosted the third annual Arkansas Dark Sky Festival, whose goal is to promote awareness of the effects of light pollution. This year's



festival focused on how light pollution specifically affects wildlife during migration. The presentations and speakers were top notch, representing an excellent variety of state agencies, NGOs, and knowledgeable individuals. Although the informa-

tion was important, and the new studies shared expanded the audience's understanding, it struck me as much "wheel spinning" and "preaching to the choir". Speaker after speaker, using different graphics, using different words (sometimes the same words), were all making the same point; essentially giving the same "talk" time and again. To be sure, the speakers (mostly) used good interpretive techniques. And for sure, they all shared their calls to action.

Bright lights at night are bad; dark skies are good. Okay, we get it. I heard the same catch phrases repeated verbatim from young speakers, and old:

"Bright lights at night are not an antiseptic to crime."

"Daytime crime far outweighs nighttime crime."

"Lights out for wildlife."

It felt like the whole thing was a bunch of really good ideas shared in a small echo chamber. So it makes me wonder who the speakers thought their audiences would be?

To be realistic, I would fully expect almost anyone willing to travel to a relatively remote part of the Ozarks (dark skies tend to be far away from population centers) to attend a Dark Sky Festival is probably well informed about the issues of light pollution. So what did I take away from this experience?

This time of year, I make a special effort to notice changes around me. It's a chance for me to assess my interpretive approach, too. In light of my festival experience, I'll pay closer attention to reaching a broader audience, one that is on the edge of my particular echo chamber. Oh, and I'll enjoy the leaves' color change, too.

What changes do you notice in your world?

## Meet Angel Ray, NAI South Central Deputy Director

Hello Fellow South Central NAI'ers,

I am excited to be joining the board as Deputy Director, thank you!

For those of you who don't know me,



I have been a member of NAI since 2018. I joined at the encouragement of the Missouri Department of Conservation staff, and

for that I am extremely grateful! I have since been to the conferences

in Bartlesville and Colombia and have presented at the National conference in Little Rock.

Since joining, I have lived dually in the natural and historical worlds, using interpretive tools while volunteering with MDC and working as an interpretive Park Ranger at St. Charles County Parks. I am fortunate to be able to vary my programming from Monarch tagging one day to hearth cooking the next. Regardless of what I am interpreting, I want it to engage across the ages and grow other's deep interests.

My own interests and hobbies in-

clude hiking, writing, kayaking, creating art and crafts, cooking, observing and being in nature. I enjoy all of this with my husband, and fellow interpreter, William. We live in a tiny cottage in Missouri with our hound, Sigrid.

Once again, I thank you for the election. I have every hope to glean as much as I can from the board and from members to know how best to strengthen our regional community. Let's see what goodness we can create together over the next three years.

*Photo from Facebook*

# Connections, a Book Review of *The Signature of All Things* and *Gathering Moss*

by Donna Horton, retired

It doesn't really matter which book you read first, because they are stand-alone works by two different authors. I happened to read the fictional novel first, in 2022: *The Signature of All Things*, published by Elizabeth Gilbert in 2013. The philosophical essays of Robin Wall Kimmerer were published in 2003 in the nonfiction book *Gathering Moss*, but I only got around to reading them this past summer, in 2024. The two books belong to different genres, but both appeal to someone who enjoys the way that science teaches us so much more about ourselves as we discover more about the intricate connections of our amazing world.

Gilbert's novel invents Alma Whittaker, a character born in 1800, and sets her in the midst of the botanical discoveries of her era. The idea of a woman botanist who never took her place among the real scientific pioneers of that time mirrors the stories of several true-life women scientists whose contributions are only now being uncovered and recognized. The book concludes with an imaginary friendship between the book's fictional botanist, late in her life, and Alfred Russel Wallace, the real-life colleague of Charles Darwin.

In their conversations, Whittaker and Wallace reveal to each other that both of them independently discovered and described the processes of evolution and survival of the fittest, but chose not to publish. No scientist of their time could account for the evolutionary value of self-sacrifice; putting oneself at risk for the benefit of others does not have any pragmatic value for individual survival. Darwin published the theory anyway, simply ignoring that inconvenient detail.

During the time I was reading and pondering this discussion in Gilbert's book, on July 29, 2022 I heard a riveting episode of WNYC Studio's Radiolab podcast\* called "The Humpback and the Killer." It dovetailed right into that philosophical dilemma. Marine mammal

researchers had begun sharing among themselves a number of observations from all over the world that still have them puzzled: humpback whales attacking pods of hunting orcas. There were many different accounts. The humpbacks seemed to be vigilantes, rescuing all kinds of prey from orcas. They do not kill the orcas, but they regularly disrupt the hunts of the orcas that prey on mammals rather than fish.

About 11% of the time witnesses have observed them charging to the rescue of humpback calves. This developed into a theory called "kin selection." It may or may not be their own child, but it makes evolutionary sense to defend a calf that could be a member of your family, a carrier of your own genetic heritage. There is part of the answer to the evolutionary success of risking your own safety on behalf of others.

But what about the other 89% of prey rescued from orcas? Gray whales, minke whales, all kinds of seals, sea lions... mostly mammals but including one very large ocean sunfish. What about humpbacks preventing orcas from eating dead whale calves or seals, holding vigil beside the body for hours? Are they unable to tell the difference between species? Too fired up to care that it's not a humpback calf? Altruism? Revenge? Something else? The bottom line is, no one really knows for sure what is going on in the minds and behaviors of the humpbacks, because we humans are like the five blind men trying to describe an elephant. We are not able to perceive the entire story. It may be far outside of anything familiar to us, and it mostly takes place in the ocean, with sensory data that is likely more complex than our simple visual and auditory perceptions from the ocean's surface zone and above.

In light of Alfred Russel Wallace's dilemma, though, perhaps the humpbacks are proving that putting oneself at risk to defend a stranger may indeed have evolutionary strategies behind it, maybe

something like kin selection.

I think Elizabeth Gilbert wrote her entire novel in order to set the stage for that final chapter, to ask the question that Darwin never addressed. Along the way, I very much enjoyed looking for the references to real people like Wallace, and real places like Kew Gardens in London and Bartram's Garden near Philadelphia, and the very real history of botanical discoveries. And then this summer, I discovered one of the real-life models for Gilbert's botanist. Many of us have read Robin Wall Kimmerer's popular 2013 book, *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Her earlier book, *Gathering Moss*, is equally deep and insightful. Both of those books took me months to read, because I had to take a week to process each chapter. Mosses have been around for eons, long before vascular plants, and they are found everywhere. Most of us do not even pay attention to them, because they seem to be so small and so ordinary. Kimmerer shares the profound lessons that the various kinds of moss species can teach us. In Kimmerer's writing I noticed some of the pattern for Alma Whittaker, Gilbert's fictional botanist, who also bases her life's work on studying the amazing diversity and ecological relationships of mosses. Gilbert acknowledges Dr. Kimmerer's contributions to making her own novel possible, calling her her Moss Mentor.

The connections between their very different books, along with the connections to contemporary ecological puzzles like humpback and orcas, are satisfying to a reader who believes we are all connected.

P. S. I am looking forward to Dr. Kimmerer's next book, due to be published in November 2024: *The Serviceberry, Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, illustrated by John Burgoyne.  
[\\*https://radiolab.org/podcast/humpback-and-killer\\*](https://radiolab.org/podcast/humpback-and-killer)

# Announcing the 2024 Freeman Tilden Scholarship Winners

The South Central Scholarship and Professional Development Committee is pleased to announce Sabrina Hansen and Katherine Huffman, both of Missouri, will receive scholarships to attend the National Conference in St. Augustine, Florida, December 1-6, 2024. We are excited to foster their growth as interpreters and look forward to seeing them at the conference!



## Meet Sabrina Hansen

### What We've Heard

Sabrina has a gift when it comes to interpretation, making informative, relevant, and engaging programs. Sabrina has encouraged others to become involved in the NAI by promoting different groups within NAI and encouraging people to look into training and programs like CIG.

### What Inspires

One webinar inspired Sabrina to create a goofy program about scat, that ended up being one of my favorite programs ever. The speaker said, "talk about poop at every opportunity, kids LOVE poop". This got her

thinking, "what else do kids love?", which resulted in a program where focused on talking about mammals, feeder types, and scat composition and included making scat-inspired slime with mammal-food inspired charms like sequins (fish scales), flower beads (plants), and more.

### Hiking the Path

- Naturalist, August A Busch Memorial Conservation Area, Missouri Department of Conservation, Weldon Spring, MO
- Association of Missouri Interpreters
- NAI Young Professionals Section



## Meet Katherine Huffman

### What We've Heard

She is a talented Interpretative Specialist at the Boone Home and Museum Specialist at the Heritage Museum. Kate's guided tours of the Daniel Boone Home and the exhibitions at the Heritage Museum are always very thought out, researched,

and relevant to her individual audiences. Kate has taken the lessons she has learned as a Certified Interpretive Guide and applied them with great effectiveness at both sites.

### What Inspires

As a child, Katherine was always the one repeatedly asking, "...but why?" She wanted – needed – to know the why behind everything. By aiming "to present a whole rather than a part," we can truly grasp the interconnectedness of past and present, enriching our collective knowledge and understanding. In history, there is always a reason for the why, and it's finding that why that fuels her love of interpretation.

### Favorite Quote

*"The present is the past rolled up for action, and the past is the present unrolled for understanding."* Will Durant, *The Lessons of History*.

### Strolling through History

- Interpretive Specialist, Historic Daniel Boone Home
- St. Charles County Parks, St. Charles MO

# Visions seeks new co-editor

by Jerrel Geisler, *Visions* Co-Editor

First, I need to apologize for the lateness of the Fall Newsletter. I have no excuse, except that my end of summer and beginning of Fall has been busy both professionally and personally.

Second, I have not heard from anyone and I hope someone would step

up to fill in the newsletter editor gap. Perhaps the Board has a new plan, but it would be nice to have someone come up and help out.

I will continue at least through the Winter edition, which would take us to the Texas Conference.

Please let me know, or Chris Pistole know, if you are willing to step up to this role for the future. Thanks to everyone in NAI for your support.

Jerrel Geisler  
*Visions* Co-Editor

## Getting ready for the Conference Quiz

Some practice questions to get you ready

by Jerrel Geisler, Texas

I am planning to head up the **Brian Barnette All American Naturalist Quiz** during the upcoming Amarillo, TX conference. I always love games and trivia. But better than playing the game is designing it. I am looking for help. If anyone would be willing to help plan it, please let me know so I can let the conference committee know.

But I am also looking for everyone's help. I would like to know what type of questions you want for the quiz. It is your quiz, so it is only fair that you participate. I don't want actual questions I just want themes and ideas.

I have already been watching plenty of the Game Show Network and have some Science, some History and Popular Culture covered, but

I need more. If you have any ideas please send ideas to my email, [jerrelgeisler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jerrelgeisler@sbcglobal.net).

Below are a few practice questions to get you in the mood. Please let me know what you think and if you are willing to help.

Jerrel Geisler, *Visions* Co-Editor, Texas

### Quiz Practice Questions:

I know we all love acronyms, especially those of us who work for a governmental agency.

**What are the words associated with the following acronyms?** Guess first - look them up later!

1. LASER
2. YAHOO
3. SHIELD (yes, from the Marvel movies)

#### 4. Which of these words is NOT like the others?

- A. Campgrounds
- B. Countryside
- C. Earthenware
- D. Disgraceful
- E. Stenography

**These are the original names of which modern popular companies?**

5. Blue Ribbon Games
6. Cadabra

GOOD LUCK! - Answers on page 15



## **State reports**

Arkansas - Chris Pistole

Kansas - Lindsay Evans

Louisiana - Rusty Scarborough

Missouri - John Miller

Oklahoma - Neil Garrison

Texas - Lisa Cole

# ARKANSAS REPORT

**Arkansas State Report compiled by Chris Pistole, Rogers, AR:**

**Jay Schneider, Devil's Den State Park:**

After 15 years at Hobbs State Park as the Assistant Superintendent, Jay Schneider was promoted to Superintendent of Devil's Den State Park.

**Chris Pistole, Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area:**

The staff at Hobbs was recently awarded the *Watershed Champion – Forestry Award by the Beaver Watershed Alliance* for “outstanding work to manage the Hobbs forested areas, an important landscape in the watershed, your partnership with the Alliance, event engagement and championing water quality improvement for the Beaver Lake watershed.

Watershed Champions demonstrate leadership in restoration and conservation activities as well as educational outreach that further advances Source Water Protection in the Beaver Lake watershed.” In several of our public programs we consistently point out the role the park plays in protecting the Beaver Lake watershed, from kayaking trips to forest hikes and of course school field trips focused on learning about forests and aquatic ecosystems.

We now have 2 more trails open to the public after the May 26th tornadoes closed nearly all of them. That brings the total miles open now to 10 out of 54. Progress working with FEMA continues to roll along and we recently got approval to contract out the repair work for the 8 miles of the Monument Trail Karst Loop and the 6 primitive campsites located on it.



# KANSAS REPORT

Kansas State Report compiled by Lindsay Evans, Ernie Miller Nature Center, Olathe, KS:

Patrice Gonzalez, Mr. And Mrs. F.L. Schlagle Library, shares some fun fliers highlighting some programs happening soon at their site.

**Alisa Grunewald, Ernie Miller Nature Center:** This summer, Ernie Miller Nature Center partnered with the Johnson County Library to host its first ever Walk and Read. Visitors were able to walk along the Bittersweet Trail while reading the book *Kitty* by Rebecca Jordan-Glum. When the visitors reached the end of the story, they had the option to scan a QR code to leave feedback and register for the chance to win a free book. The Walk and Read proved to be rather successful and there will be another one September 20-29th.



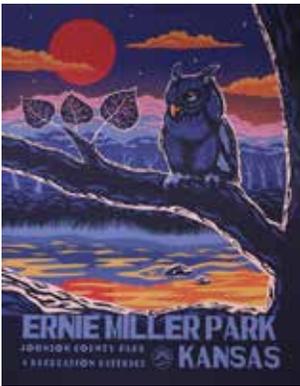
**KS Report continued Page 10**

# KANSAS REPORT



**Safe Skies with Ernie Miller Nature Center:** Earlier this year, Ernie Miller Nature Center decided to help our feathered friends by reducing bird strikes at the center with the help of some of our very talon-ted volunteers. According to US Fish and Wildlife, “nearly 1 billion birds collide with glass in the United States each year.” The birds only see the way through the glass and not as a barrier keeping them from flying to where they want to go.

Many organizations have brought attention to bird strike prevention with many “how to” methods. Here at the center, we took some cord and secured it with eye hooks across the top of the windows. From that secured cord, we tied smaller cords 2” apart from one another and knotted them on the end. This set up has been rather successful in the reduction of bird strikes at the center. Not to mention, the materials are rather inexpensive.



**Andrea Joslin, Ernie Miller Nature Center:** In other news, Ernie Miller Nature Center had very successful summer camps with 1,267 weekly camp enrollments. The Johnson County Park & Recreation District revealed the Ernie Miller Park poster as a part of its Public Art Program. The park posters are created using the iconic style used by the Federal Art Project artists of the 1930’s. Visit JCPRD Poster Project | Johnson County Park & Rec, KS to learn more about the project and the artists.

**Emily Davis, Great Plains Nature Center:** This year at the Great Plains Nature Center, we’ve hired two new naturalists: Colt Ewert (ACE Environmental Education Intern) and Haley Kester (KDWP Part-Time Naturalist). These two have been wonderful additions to the GPNC team. Our Lead Naturalist, Bailey Ritchey, was just named one of the Next Gen Under 30 Kansas honorees for her contributions to our awesome state. Congrats to her!



Over the summer, we hosted Moonlit Mania on July 26th from 9-11pm featuring nocturnal Kansas creatures. It reached 500 people, teaching them about owls, moths, spiders, and more. Now, we’re happy to be back in full swing with fall field trips and outreach programs, including our Aquatic Education field trips for high schoolers, and the upcoming Eco-Meet competition. Up next, we have our Art on the Trail event on October 19th, which features a stroll in our park to interact with artists inspired by nature and enjoying libations. Come join us if you can!



# LOUISIANA REPORT

## NO REPORT AVAILABLE

for Louisiana

Catch you in the next Edition.

Send any State updates to your state representative or the *Visions* editors by the deadline posted on the publication information page.

# MISSOURI REPORT

Missouri State Report compiled by John Miller, Reed Spring, MO:



**Jamie Hubert, Weldon Spring Site Interpretive Center:** On Saturday, September 14, the Weldon Spring Site Interpretive Center (St. Charles, MO) hosted its annual Monarch Madness pollinator festival. Over 400 visitors enjoyed educational activities, vendors, and monarch butterfly tagging. The family-friendly festival is a partnership between the Department of Energy, Missouri Pollinator Network, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Master Naturalists.

**MO Report continued  
Page 12**

# MISSOURI REPORT



## **Leah Eden, Shepherd of the Hills Conservation Education Center:**

Staff at Shepherd of the Hills Conservation Education Center are set to take possession of their new building in September. Major furniture items have been ordered and are scheduled to arrive the week of September 16th . The job post for a new full-time Administrative Assistant position closed September 23rd, with interviews to take place in early October. We still have a full-time Facilities Maintenance Technician, an hourly Administrative Assistant, and an hourly Naturalist to hire as

well. Exhibits staff will be here the first week of October to start installing exhibits and prepping for the exhibit installation contractor that will start work on October 14th. Exhibit installation will take the majority of October to complete.



Though the building looks finished from the outside, there is still work on-going to get the building stocked with supplies and organized so that we are ready to receive the public. The task list is long and keeping staff busy. No opening date has been set yet.

**Jamin Bray, Salem, Missouri:** I am honored to submit a summary of our recent Association of Missouri Interpreters (AMI) Annual Conference which we offered September 8-11 at Cape Girardeau, in the beautiful southeast region of our State! A wonderful planning committee took shape in the summer of '23, and over the past year we designed a conference that would focus on a theme that encompassed the spirit of the Cape Girardeau region. I am so grateful to the committee members who (even during times of struggle, health issues, and other challenges) continued to provide the vision and energy to make this gathering possible! The SE region of Missouri includes diverse landscapes: from the highest and oldest mountains in the MO Ozarks, to the flat floodplains of the "bootheel", to the mighty Mississippi River hills. These landscapes influenced diverse cultures and a fascinating time line of history – stories of Indigenous Peoples and early French, German and other European immigrant settlements and so many other stories relevant to our profession. As interpreters, the Conference Planning Team chose a theme that would invite these stories to be told: Interpretation Through Diverse Lenses.

We offered three "pre-conference" events on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 8th, including two professional development workshops: Project Wet and Wild-Early Childhood, and Invasive Species Mock Trial; and an in-person tour of the natural and cultural resources of Trail of Tears State Park. Our Keynote Speaker, Carla L. Jordan (Director, Cape Girardeau County Historical Society's History Center) kicked off our presentations on Monday by capturing the relevant and sometimes complicated history of this region in her riveting address entitled: Interpreting the History of "Other." We offered a total of 10 concurrent sessions and 2 table presentations that included such options as outdoor learning activities, new technology and techniques for interpretation, paths to leadership, and artistic connections. Our field sessions on Day 3 offered choices ranging from hiking and conservation area explorations to experiencing Cape Girardeau as a river town and its historic sites. Our annual conferences also include raising funds for student scholarships during an auction, and our recognition of outstanding Missouri interpreters during our awards banquet.

**MO Report continued  
Page 13**

# MISSOURI REPORT

This conference was a reminder to me (now that I am an ‘elder’ in this profession!) that we should and CAN be life-long learners, to continue to lift up and mentor young folks moving into Interpretation so it will continue to thrive, and to relish our regional natural and cultural features as unique and rare. My challenge to us all, as a reflection on the theme of this particular gathering, is to spread the concept of diversity in all of its forms, and to expand interpretation beyond our state agencies. Let’s engage with the broader interpretation community that also includes our friends in the environmental education realm, our multiple federal agency outreach and interpretation staff, non-profit organizations, municipal parks and recreation providers, history centers and museums, and beyond! We have important stories to tell, and no one can do this better than a diverse and inclusive profession of resource interpreters.



## Oklahoma State Report compiled by Neil Garrison, Yukon, OK:

**Amy Stephens, Edmond History Museum:** The Edmond History Museum had a record-breaking year! Not only did they open 17 exhibits, instead of the usual 10—they DOUBLED attendance in one year. Some of that is due to a revitalization of the area around the museum, but it is also a result of creative programming that is gaining a following. The museum won two awards at the Oklahoma Museum Association awards program: Outstanding Exhibit for “UnVeiled: Edmond’s Bridal Fashion, 1875-2020 and Outstanding Program for “Songs & Stripes: Patriotic Big Band Show.”

**Laura Motley, retired:** I am retiring from estate sales, doing a living estate sale at my house in November. Right now I’m helping a lady who lost her sister, and has painted ponies, Dept. 56 items, Jim Shore and other vintage items. I still take teddy bears to the Affair of the Heart in OKC and Tulsa five times a year. I still take vintage items to the Old Chicken Farm Vintage Sale in Jones twice a year. I can’t wait to see everyone in Texas in February.

**Neil Garrison, retired:** Prior to his retirement in 2009, Neil was the Naturalist at OKC’s Martin Park Nature Center. Nowadays, Neil is keeping busy by volunteering at this nature center. His primary contribution is to conduct nature programming on Mondays (a day in which the park is not open to the public and when the staff have their days off work, so Neil fills in when there is a public demand for programming on Mondays). One example is when the Veterans Administration (VA) asked for a guide for some birding hikes. It is a component of their Pain Management Program for Veterans, where patients can take advantage of nature walks in a healthy outdoor setting. Yet one other example of how Neil does Monday programming is when he stepped up to be the guest speaker on Oklahoma birds for the youth services division of OKC’s Lynn Institute. The youngsters in this audience were 13-15 years of age. The court system had deemed their misbehavior to be in need of “community service” so that they might mend their ways and become more-constructive members of the community.



**Texas State Report compiled by Lisa Cole, Helotes, TX:**

**Ricky Dolifka, Buffalo Soldier Interpreter, Texas State Parks:**

Texas State Parks recently hired Coy Poitier as the Buffalo Soldier Program Coordinator. Recognized in “Who’s Who In Black Dallas,” Coy is a multifaceted leader weaving diverse threads into a tapestry of positive change. He has excelled as an award-winning filmmaker, impactful keynote speaker, talented music producer, and dedicated Dallas County Historical Commissioner. Coy’s passion for sustainable food systems fuels his work as co-owner of Poitier and Associates, an agricultural consulting firm dedicated to green landscapes, vibrant gardens, and food-secure communities in Dallas. His expertise extends to the ground level as a Texas Certified Master Gardener and urban farmer.



Leadership resonates in Coy’s commitment to public service. He chairs the USDA Farm Service Agency’s Dallas Urban County Committee and serves as Northwest Director of the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees, championing sustainable agriculture on a broader scale. Beyond these endeavors, Coy’s life finds harmony in music. He skillfully plays the organ and drums, and even produces his own music, adding a creative dimension to his journey. Coy Poitier’s story is a testament to the power of passion and dedication, reminding us that positive change can bloom in countless forms.

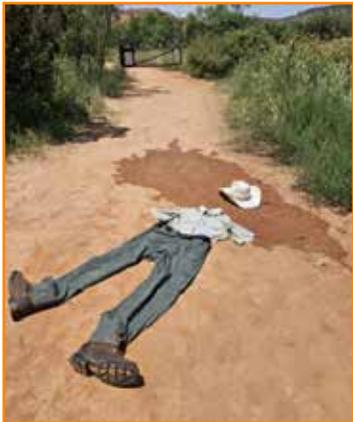
**Lauren Brown, LV Brown Studio:**

The Hill Country Alliance recently worked with Lauren to complete an interpretive illustrated map of the Texas Hill Country for use in their organizational storytelling, especially their four program areas of Land, Water, Night Skies, and Communities. LVB used geospatial layers from GIS to interpret land and water features into a digitally illustrated map. They used a combination of digital watercolor, colored pencil and vector drawing techniques. Five illustrated landscape vignette sketches surround the map and offer a glimpse into the character of the program’s themes and resources. The Hill Country Alliance anticipates using the map in technical reports, social media campaigns, interpretive programs, and more.

**Lisa Cole, Government Canyon State Natural Area, TX State Parks:**

We’ve had some dangerous heat this summer, and several State Parks have gone all out to spread heat safety messaging to visitors. It’s hard to find new ways to re-say the same necessary info, but Palo Duro Canyon SP and others found creative ways to get the word out on social media.

“It’s so hot even our rangers are melting! The air temperature in the canyon is 104 degrees, with the ground temperature of 131 degrees. If our rangers that are avid hikers are melting, you and your pets will too. Stay safe not rescued!”





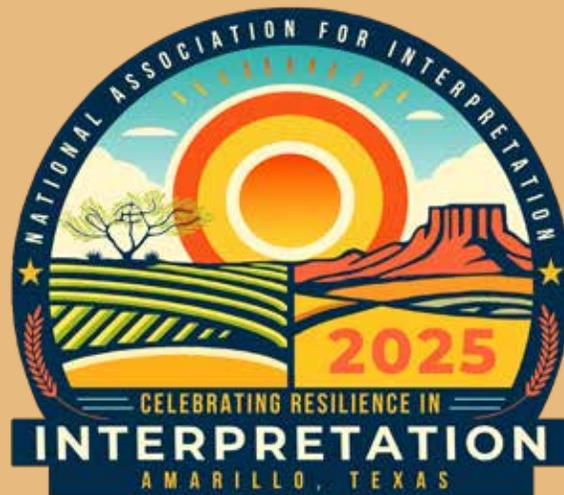
According to the NAI South Central Region website, the regional board is in need of help with the following board positions:

### **Elections Chair**

Please contact Ken Forman for more information if interested

#### **INTERPRETER'S QUIZ - PRACTICE QUESTIONS - ANSWERS**

1. LASER - "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation."
2. YAHOO - Yet Another Hierarchical Official Oracle
3. SHIELD - Strategic Homeland Intervention, Enforcement and Logistics Division
4. C. Earthenware (the word has repeated letters). The other words are isograms. An isogram is a word with no letters repeated within the word.
5. Blue Ribbon Games- Nike
6. Cadabra- Amazon



## **Celebrating Resilience in Interpretation**

FEBRUARY 16th-19th, 2025

Embassy Suites Downtown Amarillo

550 S Buchanan St

Amarillo, TX 79101

**Conference registration is open.**

Find the registration links now at <https://naisouthcentral.com/>

# NAI SOUTH CENTRAL REGION VISIONS NEWSLETTER

## PUBLICATION INFORMATION



**Visions** Newsletter is the newsletter for South Central Region of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). The South Central Region includes states of Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. For Region 6 information go to [www.nairegion6.wordpress.com](http://www.nairegion6.wordpress.com). Board member email: [NAISouthCentral@gmail.com](mailto:NAISouthCentral@gmail.com). The national office for NAI is located in Ft. Collins, Colorado. The website is [www.interpnet.com](http://www.interpnet.com).

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Ken Forman, CIG  
Yellville, AR

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### **NAI National Office**

P.O. Box 2246  
Fort Collins, CO 80522  
970-484-8283  
888-900-8283

### **State Coordinators**

**ARKANSAS:** Chris Pistole, CIG, Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area, Rogers, AR

**KANSAS:** Lindsay Evans, Ernie Miller Nature Center, Olathe, KS

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To email a board member: [NAISouthCentral@gmail.com](mailto:NAISouthCentral@gmail.com)

### DEADLINES FOR *VISIONS* ARE:

Spring: March 20 • Summer: June 20 • Fall: September 20 • Winter: December 20