



Chesapeake Chat

FALL 2019

Director's Matters

More than Mission

By Yvonne Johnson

One fine, warm fall day I found myself briefly freed from the confines of the computer that frequently takes up the days of many a park manager. In no hurry to return to my desk, I took some time to enjoy the day and stopped to observe a new staffer operating our c.1920's Hirshhaun Carousel. After quickly seeing she was doing a fine job following the safety steps and assuring all had a safe trip I turned my attention to the riders. I was struck by a warmth not coming from the sun.

I observed the details of several small groups: A man and woman, 30 something, each standing next to a young boy on the horses, perhaps 6 and 8 years old. The adults were conversing with each other and the boys, relaxed, engaged, enjoying the ride and conversation. There was a thin, elderly man wearing a burgundy Destar, his skin deeply furrowed by age with a warm smile and bright eyes that shone on a little girl of 3 or 4. She smiled back with her dark, curly hair blowing as the ride went round. They sat together on one of the carousel benches instead of a horse. A woman rode with two children. A toddler who needed help staying on the horse as it rose and fell and an older child who alternated between encouraging her own steed to go faster and explaining the finer points of how to ride to the younger.

As the horses and riders went round and round, I found myself entranced by the small human vignettes unfolding before me in short repeating snippets with each rotation. These simple scenes of families, most likely, enjoying the sunshine, the ride, their time together are precious moments, memories that build their family history, their story, their sense of home and community. This is the "more" we give our visitors. At our museums, historic houses, nature centers, zoos, parks, wetlands and woods, we offer the time and space for these moments to happen. Our one-of-a kind locations provide a uniqueness that helps build the sense of home in a world of chain restaurants and stores, and the same models of homes and malls built all over the country.

Our missions are the core of why we exist, what we build our programming and interpretation around, the heart of our identities. We would not be without them. But we are so much more to the hundreds and thousands of visitors that come to us over the years. Take a moment and look for the "more" where you are.

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Region 2 Leadership continued

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Green Bank Observatory Workshop !

September 8-9, 2019, Green Bank, WV

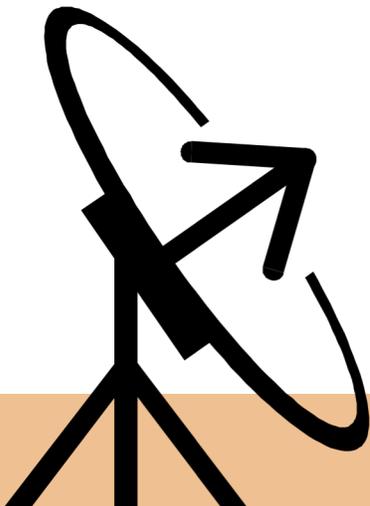
As a natural history interpreter at Huntley Meadows Park in Fairfax, Virginia, I don't often face the challenge of interpreting the night sky or astronomy, much less, radio astronomy. I was intrigued to see how veteran teacher and interpreter Sue Ann Heather of the Green Bank Observatory tackled such abstract and, literally, far-out subject matter.

Together with twenty three NAI interpreters from Region 2, I drove through beautiful West Virginia to the Green Bank Observatory for an overnight workshop on September 8, 2019. We met that afternoon in the Visitors' Center for a quick introduction to radio astronomy done by the array of eight huge telescopes that Green Bank operates. Sue Ann was a fascinating teacher, combining slides and photographs of the telescopes with hands-on demonstrations. She showed how liquid nitrogen cooled and shrunk an inflated balloon to illustrate why the radio receivers need to be kept cooled to 3 degrees above absolute zero to cancel the static their electronics generate. She explained that the Green Bank Telescope (the "GBT") is the largest movable radio telescope in the world and that it offers unparalleled glimpses into the far reaches of the universe. The radio signals it detects are so faint that any man-made radio waves will disrupt the data being collected. The telescopes occupy a radio-silent zone where cell phones, laptops, digital cameras and even conventional cars are not allowed because all of them, including the spark plugs, give off comparatively large radio wave pulses while operating. We could not take any digital photos of the telescopes within the "Zone 1" and could not use the internet or cell service at all while at the observatory.

Sue Ann piled us into a diesel van (no spark plugs) for a tour of the observatory's telescopes. Only three of the eight are currently being operated. We were able to look around inside some of the telescopes that have made famous discoveries such as traces of organic chemicals in deep space, the existence of a black hole at the center of our galaxy, and the pioneering work of SETI to radio map the universe in an effort to discover possible intelligent life. We ended our tour with a stop at the gigantic GBT. Its collection disc is comprised of nearly 3 acres of sensitive radio reflectors which collect and bounce the radio waves up to a smaller disc that beams them into the receiver. The GBT is operated remotely by radio astronomers around the world who study pulsars, neutron stars, black holes, the radiation leftover from the Big Bang, gravitational waves and other exotic topics. There are no humans operating the giant telescope on site; the research is programmed remotely and conducted by the telescope according to a packed schedule of experiments. We were excited to learn that every summer the telescope's struts, beams and under carriage needs painting and that anyone with a paint brush can apply to work. We all want to sign up to give it a fresh coat of paint and get a ride to the top of the GBT!

The Green Bank Observatory operates a dormitory and cafeteria for overnight visitors. After a pizza dinner, we met as a group at the Visitors' Center to learn ways to interpret the night sky and bring space subjects "down to Earth" for the public. We were able to do some night sky observations with a telescope that allowed us to see the moons of Jupiter and Saturn's rings. After a night's sleep, we gathered for breakfast September 9 and more programming. Sue Ann set up a radio telescope for us to operate and a solar telescope to see the sun. We then took a hike around the beautiful Green Bank campus' nature trail and gave Sue Ann recommendations for how to interpret the observatory's fields, forests and wetland habitats for visitors. The interpretation of West Virginia's plant and animal communities seemed easy compared with interpreting radio astronomy! We all learned so much about the universe thanks to Sue Ann's expert interpretation and broad knowledge of radio astronomy. I look forward to visiting the observatory again...and next time maybe bringing a paint brush!

Margaret Wohler



Region 2 Leadership continued

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James Hersick



Empowering Young People to Act on Climate Change through Youth Climate Summits

Jen Kretser - Director of Climate Initiatives, The Wild Center

Today's young people are a largely untapped resource when it comes to acting on climate change. In the last six months, particularly with the climate strike movement, this new generation's social and environmental awareness will lead our societies toward a future that is climate resilient, sustainable and equitable. Young people are actively engaging at the local, national and global levels in raising awareness and demanding action on climate change - from organizing teach-ins, promoting renewable energy, adopting environmentally friendly practices and working on climate mitigation and adaptation projects. Engaging work undertaken with and by youth is crucial for mobilizing climate action and influencing governments and communities at all levels. How can we, as educators and interpreters, work together with youth on climate action and build the social capacity to implement climate solutions?

One way to effectively engage and empower young people on climate change is by organizing a youth climate summit. A youth climate summit is a one to two day event that convenes, engages and empowers youth to learn the science, impacts and solutions and then act on climate change in their schools and communities. Through speakers, solutions-focused workshops and activities, the summit culminates with student participants writing a Climate Action Plan that can be implemented in their schools, communities and regions. Organizing a youth climate summit is a great way to educate and motivate students, connect with new partners, showcase green job pathways and build capacity for youth leadership. It can also be an effective catalyst for dialogue with local decision makers including municipalities and city-councils. This youth climate summit model was developed by [The Wild Center](#) and has been replicated and scaled over 70 times in 36 communities globally - from New York State to

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Above: Using NOAA's Science on Sphere to make climate science data visual, high school students learn the global impacts of climate change at the Adirondack Youth Climate Summit at The Wild Center.

Right: Understanding energy efficiency and learning how to conduct a school-wide energy audit is one of the first goals of many high school green teams when they return back to their schools following a youth climate summit. Learning practical, transferrable skills in a hands-on workshop environment, is one of the key components of a successful youth climate summit.



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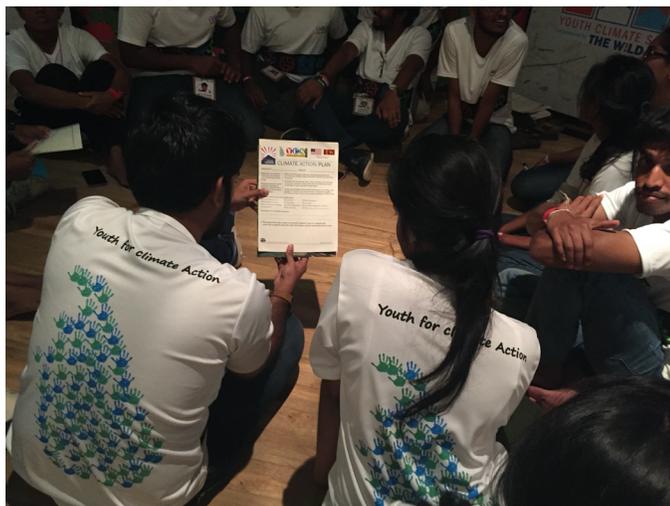
eastern shore of Maryland and from Finland to Sri Lanka. Summits have been hosted by science centers, zoos, aquariums, museums, schools, cities, and other non-profits - and can be scaled to fit almost any place and any budget. The program has been instrumental in building environmental literacy by focusing on place-based climate impacts and project based learning to make climate resilience more relatable by allowing students to understand how they can take action. The program uses the best available science and teaching resources - such as NOAA's [Climate Resiliency Toolkit](#), [National Climate Assessment](#), but also works across the curriculum to include the arts, civics, humanities, health, technology and innovation -recognizing the complex intersectionality of understanding climate change impacts and solutions. The culmination of each summit is the student teams creation of a Climate Action Plan for a project to improve resilience in their school or community. These projects range from school gardens and water bottle refilling stations, to large scale community events and leading a community climate task force. For many youth participants, this is a transformative opportunity to understand the effects of their actions on the world around them. Students make essential connections between their lives and the natural world while acquiring leadership skills. Cooperative abilities, a sense of community and an enduring passion for the environment and a sustainable global future.

"My experience at the Adirondack Youth Climate Summit taught me so many things about climate change and action. Knowledge is power and the youth climate summit gives students the knowledge and skills to take on climate change at full force."

Nathalie Munn, Saranac Lake High School

The Wild Center has free [youth climate summit planning toolkit](#) where you'll find an essential framework for hosting a successful summit virtually anywhere, including the "secret sauce" that makes a Youth Climate Summit a transformational experience for so many participants. As the next generation of leaders, change-makers and activities, youth are key to a climate resilient and post-carbon future.

Interested in learning more about hosting a youth climate summit? Contact Jen Kretser, Director of Climate Initiatives at The Wild Center jkretser@wildcenter.org



Above: Students in Sri Lanka work on Climate Action Plans focused on food security, public health risks like severe flooding, and loss of fisheries due to ocean acidification. Connecting young people to climate impacts that are local, place-based and relevant are key to motivating action.

Meet the Board!

Maddie Koenig - Secretary.

I currently work as the Senior Environmental Educator with the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS).

In the past, I worked as the Membership and Volunteer Coordinator here at AWS. I spent about three years in that role before leaving for an opportunity with Howard County Recreation and Parks as an Environmental Educator at Robinson Nature Center. While working at Robinson, I became a CIG, starting my involvement with NAI! I then hopped over to Carroll County Recreation and Parks where I had greater responsibility working as the Park Naturalist at Bear Branch Nature Center. After commuting more than 100 miles each day for two years (phew!), I came back to AWS to work as a member of the education team, right here in my backyard (almost, anyways). I hold a dual master's degree in Environmental Education and Park and Resource Management.

I'm really enthusiastic about providing engaging, high-quality, local outdoor experiences for kids and grownups alike!

I'm looking forward to getting more involved in NAI by serving as your secretary.



Habitat Hike!

by **Stacey Evers**

Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary spans 1,700 acres near Lothian, Maryland. Thick, spindly stands of wild rice extend across the bay, fronted by a carpet of spatterdock. In the freshwater tidal marsh, thumbprint-sized green treefrogs hide in plain sight against green foliage. Turtleheads bloom in the low marsh, while royal and cinnamon ferns emerge in the more shallow swamp. On September 4 this Beltway Chapter event afforded 14 interpreters from DC, Maryland and Virginia the privilege of taking an intimate guided tour of Jug Bay, led by former sanctuary naturalist and education coordinator Elaine Friebele.

From the boardwalk and extensive system of trails, Ms. Friebele identified diverse flora and fauna in the sanctuary's habitats, which also include a forest, a meadow, Two Run Branch stream, and a pond that is home to killifish and mummichogs. She brought the site to life with ethnobotanical details from indigenous and colonial cultures, including that the earliest inhabitants stuffed their baby diapers with catkins. The training concluded with a visit to the pollinator garden at nearby Glendening Nature Preserve.

Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary (www.jugbay.org) is at 1361 Wrighton Road, Lothian, MD. The entrance fee is \$6/vehicle; the site is open



Clockwise from top left: Networking at the Beltway Chapter Jug Bay outing; All eyes on the freshwater marsh; Into the freshwater marsh with Elaine in the lead; Green tree frogs galore.

Upcoming Events

WATER
CONNECTS
US ALL

SPRING 2020
WORKSHOP



SAVE THE DATE
March 17-20, 2020

NAI Region 2 Spring Workshop will be **March 17-20, 2020 at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station** on the beautiful Eastern Shore in VA. Pre-workshop will be held at the Del Marva Discovery Center.

Many thanks to our host sites, both the Chincoteague Bay Field Station and Del Marva Discovery Center for their generous support and workshop sponsorship.

Preliminary costs to help with your planning: Early bird rate on the full workshop will be about \$250 including meals. Onsite housing will be \$42 per night with double or triple occupancy in suite style residential halls. Pre-workshop will be about \$60 including lunch Friday off-sites TBD

Join the planning team to support the workshop, develop your professional network and get to work with lots of fun interpreters.

Chair/co-chair positions open for:

- **Entertainment & Social**– Receives suggestions, researches, arranges details for evening dinner out.

NAI REGION 2:

Delaware

District of Columbia

Maryland

New Jersey

Pennsylvania

Virginia

West Virginia

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.interpnet.com/2/



National Association for
Interpretation Region 2
Chesapeake

Submission Guidelines

Each edition will be theme-based so if you have something to contribute short or long refer to the table below for upcoming deadlines and themes. Submissions for other sections can be sent at any time but if it fits in with a particular theme send it by that edition's deadline otherwise it will be used for a future edition.

Recommended lengths for submissions: 500-600 words for articles
100 words for each tip or trick

Pictures should be submitted as an attachment to your email. Other materials may be sent in the body of your email or as an attachment.

If you have any suggestions for a theme for future newsletters, please send your suggestions or requests. Themes can be anything related to interpretation that would be of interest to the region.

Newsletter submissions including calendar items should be sent to: ChesapeakeChat@gmail.com

	Deadline	Theme
Winter Newsletter	January 15	Using Art in Interpretation: Art sparks Interpretation
Spring Newsletter	April 15	Integrating Active Recreation in Interp; Certification Success
Summer Newsletter	July 15	
Fall Newsletter	October 15	