

Mooselips

NAI Region 7 Newsletter

Spring 2009, Volume 18, Number 1

Region 7 Officers

DIRECTOR

Linda J. Strand
Vortexarts@comcast.net
303-745-2026

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Deborah Price
dhprice@usa.net
970-635-0411

TREASURER

Karin Hostetter
Interpret_this@hotmail.com
720-234-5074

SECRETARY

Ken Soderberg
ksoderberg@mt.gov

EDITOR

Your name here!

IDAHO REP

Loni Manning
lonirm@basquemuseum.com
208-336-6649

MONTANA REP

Christopher Dantic
cdantic@mt.gov
406-454-5870

WYOMING REP

Becky Wiles
rebeccawiles@hotmail.com
307-739-3418

UTAH REP

Karissa DeCarlo
Karissa_DeCarlo@nps.gov
801-756-5239

COLORADO REPS

Joy Thompson
jethomps@auroragov.org

Kristen Libberton
klibberton@blufflake.org

NEW MEXICO REP

Kim Scheerer
ksche@bosqueschool.org
505-898-6388

ALBERTA REP

Ron Mason
ron@medalta.org
404-529-1070



Greetings Region 7

Hope this edition of Mooselips finds you well. I know most of you are facing challenging times, whether its budget cuts, increased pressure for fundraising, doing more with less or personal issues, we are all working harder.

As I was working with a family at our Audubon Nature Center in southwest Denver, I met a mother with three kids. Her husband is in the National Guard, coming and going from Iraq. We have just recently opened the Center and started with open hours on Saturdays and Sundays. The woman was sharing her story and it was clear she was overwhelmed with the family issues she was facing. The opportunity to bring the kids to the nature center, know that there would be fun activities and the opportunity to go for a walk through the wetlands, playing and learning, was clearly welcome in her life. It was for me, one of those moments when I remember why I do this. It also reminded me that we sometimes get tied up in the thought that we have to teach the visitors about nature, or history or animal conservation without remembering that we also provide an important service to our communities as a gathering place. For this mother, it was important she had a safe and fun place to take her kids, enjoy family time away from the troubles at home, away from the television, a respite in the storm that her life has become. She has been back every Saturday, bringing friends with more kids. We have become their home away from home. Whatever resource you are interpreting, remember the values you offer the community in simply providing a gathering place, allowing for family time, a short vacation from life's less pleasant realities.

Now for some quick Region 7 business:

Mooselips – There are about 80 of our members that have not shared their e-mail addresses with us. For those folks, this will be the last Mooselips they receive. If you are one of those people, please update your membership information with the national office so we can stay in touch. If you, for some technical reason, are unable to get Mooselips via e-mail, please let me know. Vortexarts@comcast.net.

You'll find articles in this edition about our interest in offering a **Region 7 traveling workshop** and for updating our **Strategic Plan**. Both efforts can use your time and energy.

In addition to serving as your Regional Director, the rotating responsibility of serving on the national board has come back to Region 7, allowing me to serve on the **NAI Board of Directors**. Quite the honor – a real responsibility. What this means is a unique opportunity to get Region 7 issues before the Board. I listen in on monthly Board phone conferences and will attend the next Board meeting in Fort Collins the end of May. If you have items you would like to send forward to the Board, please let me know. (Again – Vortexarts@comcast.net)

Our **Mooselips** editor, Paul Reimer, has resigned. Real life got in the way of editing Mooselips. We would like to thank Paul for his time and efforts and will now be looking for a new volunteer to take the helm. With the transition to an electronic version – someone with good computer skills and web knowledge will be needed.

That's all for now. Take a moment to enjoy one of those fabulous spring days we'll all experience in the next couple of months – you too deserve a moment away from the craziness.

Linda

Interpretive Musings

There comes a time in every career when one wonders whether or not they followed the right path. Interpretation is no exception. It's extremely rewarding, but it can be very challenging, as well. Always having to define what interpretation is (no, I don't speak another language!), explaining things over and over, often working for little money at seasonal jobs – all of this can be exhausting.

Do you ever wonder why we do this? Do we really make an impact on our audiences? Being an interpreter is good gig during summers in college. And, when you tell people what you do, they always think the job sounds cool. Interpreters have some of the best "offices" in the world – whether they be parks, historic sites, or wildlife refuges. The fan worship can be heady, too. But, aren't we supposed to grow up at some point and get a 'real-job' with a good salary and great retirement? After all, interpretation programs are some of the hardest hit during budget cuts. That means more work with less staff and fewer resources. We hear the same questions day after day. We deal with the same ignorant attitudes. Even with all of our effort, it sometimes feels like we don't make a difference.

But, strange phenomena make one wonder...

When people ask how you do your job, you tell them you sacrifice glamour for passion. And, isn't better to be a whole person, anyway?

When you are grocery shopping with your children, and they ask you a question, you suddenly find yourself interpreting the history of lettuce.

When attending a child's birthday party, you automatically figure out the intangibles behind the superhero theme.

When your young relative goes on a school field trip, you send him with a note that says "my mother/uncle/cousin is a naturalist", to explain to the teacher why the child wants to lead the program.

When the process of getting to work is so much harder than the job itself, you find yourself centered after simply seeing a hawk soaring in the sky.

If you find yourself relating to, or resembling, any of these, you are an interpreter at heart. Without a doubt, you have chosen the right career path. (After all, did you really have a choice? It's in your blood.) What a wonderful discovery! Armed with this knowledge, we know that every encounter makes an indelible impression on our visitors. Our message does get out, and we do make a difference.

Kristin Libberton

Colorado – Region 7 Happenings

On Friday, Feb. 27th, the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education held the 11th annual awards and recognition program. Each year individuals and organizations from around the state of Colorado are recognized and honored for their hard work and dedication in the field of environmental education at an Awards Banquet. Awards honor and celebrate up to 10 environmental education programs, the lifetime accomplishments of an individual in the field of environmental education, and retiring environmental educators. –ML

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2008 EE Awards!

- Eagle's Nest/Owl's Roost Environmental Day Camp, Golden- Government Award
- Forest to Faucets: Aurora's Water Resources Workshop (Aurora Water), Aurora- Government Award
- Plant PARTners (Lookout Mountain Nature Center), Golden- Best New Program Award
- Cripple Creek Junior Master Gardener Program, Cripple Creek- Agriculture Award
- Parks in Education (PIE) (Ridgeway State Park), Ridgeway- PreK- Elementary Award
- Wildwood School, Aspen- Non profit Award
- Regis Highlander Student Newspaper, Denver- Media Award
- Green the Meeting (Mountain View Friends Meeting), Evergreen- Religious/Spiritual Award
- Enos Mills Lifetime Achievement Award: Dave Van Manen, Mountain Park Environmental Center
- Julie Wrend President's Award: Chips Barry, Denver Water

REGION 7 MEETINGS

Over the next month, we'll be working with your State Coordinators to set-up networking meetings for each state in the region. The meetings will have two objectives:

- 1) Networking (AKA – getting to know the other professionals in your area over a beer, wine and some goodies.)
- 2) Obtain input into your opinions about services offered by NAI and Region 7.

If you don't hear from your State Coordinator – contact them and if you want to host the meeting I'm sure they'll be delighted to hear from you. This is our way of having region wide meetings without taking too much time, using too much gas or impacting tight budgets.

Help us make this work – Let us know what you think!

REGION 7 WORKSHOP

Ham, Caputo and Wheeler in Helena!

Monday and Tuesday, April 26 and 27; Helena, Montana

A cooperative effort between Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Montana Historical Society and NAI Region 7 to bring National Workshop caliber training to Region 7 members will take place April 27 and 28 in Helena, Montana.

Sam Ham author of *Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide*, will lead a day long workshop on Monday, April 27. Sam will show participants how to find the T (theme) the O (organization) the R (relevance) and the E (enjoyable) pieces and put them together in a package for our audiences. Interpreters will learn how critically important it is to know your audience, especially those aspects that make audiences different from people like us.

On Tuesday April 28 participants will choose one of 2 day long workshops.

Paul Caputo, Art and Publications director for NIA will lead *Interpretation by Design*. The workshop is designed for interpreters who have little or no training in graphic design but find themselves responsible for creating non-personal media. Interpreters use exhibits, brochures, signs, web sites, site publications, and other visual media to tell their stories.

Erica Wheeler, keynote speaker at the 2007 NAI National Workshop will lead an interpretive writing workshop. This workshop offers a dynamic framework for exploring the ways we see and relate to the land. Using song, story, and visual arts as inspiration, Erica empowers participants to find their own creative voice through a series of writing exercises, followed by group sharing and discussion. An accomplished singer / songwriter, Erica will also perform Monday evening.

The workshop is made possible by the Montana Historical Society; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; The Montana Committee for the Humanities; and Region 7 of the National Association for Interpretation.

For more information visit:

<http://mhs.mt.gov/education/InterpretiveTrainingWorkshop.asp>

Or contact Ken Soderberg at (406) 444-3701 of Deb Mitchell at (406) 444-4789

Region 7 Strategic Plan

Each of the NAI regions and sections are required to have a strategic plan that maps their goals and objectives. Our latest plan was completed in 2007 and is available on our Region 7 website. (Go to the NAI website and access our Region 7 website through the regions and sections area.)

We will be updating the Region 7 Strategic Plan in 2009. We need your input. In order to obtain your thoughts, we are providing several opportunities:

- 1) If you just want to send me your thoughts, please feel free to do so by sending me an e-mail to Vortexarts@comcast.net.
- 2) Each of the State coordinators will be hosting a get together. Realizing that you may not want to travel for this event, you should feel free to contact your state coordinators. They are listed below.
- 3) You'll see a first draft in the September Mooselips – you are welcome to comment on that draft.
- 4) We'll also seek comments on the final draft at the Region 7 meeting in Hartford (November 16 – 21, 2009).

This is the guiding document for your region – **your input is critical.**

Contact these folks:

Alberta, Canada – Ron Mason – ron@medalta.org
 Idaho – Loni Manning – lonirm@basquemuseum.org
 Montana – Christopher Dantic – cdantic@mt.gov
 Wyoming – Becky Wiles – rebeccawiles@hotmail.com
 Colorado – Joy Thompson – jethomps@auroragov.org or Kristin Libberton at klibberton@blufflake.org
 Utah – Karissa DeCarlo – karissa_decarlo@nps.gov
 New Mexico – Kim Scheerer – ksche@bosqueschool.org -ML

A Fond Farewell

For the past three years, I have enjoyed editing your Region 7 newsletter. However, due to increasing commitments both at work and at home, I am passing the “torch” to a new Region 7 member, who will continue the now 18 – year tradition of your Regional Newsletter, Mooselips! So, will it be you?

If you have some editing experience and love to work with words, interface with other great Region 7 Officers, and occasionally write editorials and articles, please send inquiries regarding this fun volunteer position to Linda Strand (vortexarts@comcast.net).

Paul Reimer

Upcoming events:

Don't be a FOOL – Be COOL: Global Warming Workshop

Wednesday, April 1; 10:00am – 4:00pm, Littleton, Colorado

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver and National Audubon Society are teaming to present information to help teachers, naturalists, interpreters, volunteers and other educators who teach or give programs about climate change and global warming. National Audubon's power points and printed materials will be available to participants to use. There will be time for sharing your expertise and success stories.

Workshop is on **Wednesday, April 1** at the Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield, Littleton, Colorado. Times are 10:00 am – 4:00 pm and cost is \$12. If you would like to see the schedule log on to www.denveraudubon.org or call 303-973-9530, e-mail to info@denveraudubon.org. Registration is limited to 30 participants.

Region 5 Workshop

April 1- 4, Rapid City, South Dakota

Region 5 has invited all Region 7 members to attend their annual workshop in Rapid City, South Dakota. For more information to the Region 5 website. (NAI website – Regions and Sections area)

Teaching OUTSIDE the Box

Colorado's Conference on Environmental Education!



April 24-26, 2009
YMCA of the Rockies

Snow Mountain Ranch (near Winter Park)

Teaching OUTSIDE the Box is an action-packed workshop that brings together the best in environmental education for a weekend of engaging presentations, networking, resource sharing, and more... all at the spectacular YMCA of the Rockies - Snow Mountain Ranch near Winter Park.

This conference is for: Teachers, Interpreters, Environmental Educators, Youth Group Leaders, Naturalists, anyone who appreciates and wants to learn about environmental education – and you.

Visit www.CAEE.org for details and to register.

National Get Outdoors Day

National Get Outdoors Day is a new annual event to encourage healthy, active outdoor fun. Participating partners will offer opportunities for American families to experience traditional and non-traditional types of outdoor activities. Prime goals of the day are reaching first-time visitors to public lands and reconnecting our youth to the great outdoors. This year the celebration will take place on June 13, 2009. Denver will host a gathering featuring kids' activities, fun booths, entertainment and many local outdoor resources. Check your local communities for ways to celebrate in your area. -ML

Green Festival – May 2-3, 2009

Welcome to Green Festival™, a joint project of Global Exchange and Green America. We're celebrating what's working in our communities—for people, business and the environment. Join us at the nation's premier sustainability event in Denver for 2 days filled with the best in green!

- 125 renowned authors, leaders & educators
- 350 eco-friendly businesses in a unique marketplace
- Workshops, green films, kids' activities, live music & more
- Delicious, organic. Vegetarian cuisine

For more information go to www.greenfestivals.org.

TAKE ACTION FOR EARTH HOUR

Mark your calendar and plan to join millions of people in 1,000 cities around the world in turning off the lights for **Earth Hour**, a global climate event led by the World Wildlife Fund on Saturday, **March 28, 2009 from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.** to raise awareness and take action to fight climate change.

This is a critical moment for our planet, which is already feeling the impact of climate change. International political negotiations on climate change solutions have begun and will culminate in a major United Nations conference on a new climate treaty in Copenhagen next December.

"As lights go out in cities and counties around the U.S. and the world on March 28th, **Earth Hour** will provide world leaders with an unmistakable mandate to negotiate a new international climate change agreement," said WWF President and CEO Carter Roberts. "The climate crisis threatens the ability of our planet to support its inhabitants, and it has never been more urgent that the voice of the people be heard on this issue. **Earth Hour** not only focuses global attention on the need to find solutions to climate change, but demonstrates the power that each of us has to make a difference in the future of our planet."

More than 50 million people called for action on climate change by switching off their lights for **Earth Hour** 2008.

Visit the **Earth Hour** website:

<http://www.earthhourUS.org/> for more information about the event and about climate change.

NAI TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES COMING SOON TO YOUR AREA!

Interpretation By Design

This 2-day workshop is designed for those who have responsibility for creating publications, flyers, newsletters, signs, and exhibits but who have never received training in graphic design or interpretive writing skills. Participants will learn to apply interpretive principles to graphic design decisions and persuasive communication.

April 20-21, 2009 NAI Office, Fort Collins

Certified Interpretive Trainer

This 5-day workshop is for those who want to train their staff and volunteers using the NAI Certified Interpretive Guide or Host curriculum (Host requires an additional two-day training at a later date). The Guide curriculum focuses on personal presentation skills and the social science research that explains why interpretation works as a persuasive communication strategy.

June 8-12, 2009 NAI Office, Fort Collins

Certified Interpretive Host Trainer

This 2-day workshop is the add-on for CIG Instructors to become eligible to use NAI's Certified Interpretive Host curriculum. The Host curriculum is designed for those who have public contact but who don't give programs – receptionists, sales clerks, maintenance workers, lab technicians, security personnel. When this course is finished, your staff and volunteers will understand, value, and be able to communicate your organization's mission as well as turning every visitor contact into an interpretive opportunity. Note: CIT workshop is required before taking the Host Trainer workshop.

May 27-28, 2009 NAI Office, Fort Collins

Certified Interpretive Planner

This 5-day workshop is an intensive project-based learning opportunity. Participants spend the first part of each day in the classroom, learning the basics of interpretive planning: management, marketing, message, mechanics, and media, based on the book "Interpretive Planning: the 5-M Model for Successful Planning Projects" by Lisa Brochu. In the afternoons, the class breaks into work groups to tackle a real project at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's Stone House property. Project work can be applied to certification requirements if desired.

June 1-5, 2009 RMBO Stone House, Brighton

Certified Interpretive Manager

This 5-day workshop helps participants analyze their current operations and build a business plan, as well as brushing up on supervisory, leadership and contract management skills. Project work during the week can be applied to certification requirements if desired.

July 27-31, 2009 NAI Office, Fort Collins

For details on costs and other information, please visit www.interpnet.com/certification, click on training calendar, then on the specific workshop in which you are interested.

REGION 7 WORKSHOP

It has been several years since Region 7 has offered a workshop. We have heard from many of you that traveling is simply not in your budgets for 2009. We are floating the idea of a traveling workshop. To initiate that process we will be issuing an RFP for an interpreter(s) to present 4 – 6 sessions of a single workshop.

The RFP will set out the requirements to work with various State Coordinators, subject matter, cost and other logistics. The subjects we've discussed for the RFP are:

a) An Interpreter's Role in Managing Organizational Challenges - Using interpretation to ease organizational/management issues such as problem wildlife issues like coyotes or prairie dogs, or resource issues like vandalism of cultural resources.

b) Helping Parents to Expand Their Comfort Level when getting their kids out into nature, or connecting with history. Much of the issue with getting children to investigate a new subject or resource is a parent's lack of confidence due to lack of expertise or information. This workshop would be about working with the parents so they can encourage their child to investigate new worlds.

c) Using an "Icon" as a way to introduce people to a broader understanding of a subject. For example, teaching about birds leads to a larger appreciation of nature, teaching about heritage gardening leads to a larger appreciation of historic life styles, teaching about a specific endangered species leads to a greater appreciation of habitat loss.

The workshop could be about one, two or all three topics. The person or firm chosen would develop the curriculum, finalize the logistics and deliver the workshop in 4 – 6 locations within Region 7.

We would ask for written proposals along with a video to be evaluated by a committee - followed by an interview, selection of a person or firm and contract for 4-6 workshops. The cost of the would be the same for all workshops and would cover the full cost of the contract.

Our proposed schedule is:

April – Issue RFP

May – receive proposals

June – review proposals, conduct interviews

July/August – prepare workshop curriculum

September /October – offer workshops

If you would like to offer input or assist with making this idea a reality please contact Deborah Price at dhprice@usa.net or Linda Strand at vortexarts@comcast.net.

Debra Mitchell – NIW Memories

Writing has never been my strong suit, so when something inspires me to the point of writing about it on the plane home (when usually all I want to do is sleep) I know that it was well worth the time, money, and effort. NAI in Portland was just such an event.

Being a first time attendee to this conference, I was unsure as what to expect. I have been to many conferences and workshops in the past, and I have more often than not brought back with me applicable information to use in developing and sustaining our tour programs at the Montana Historical Society's three historical sites—the Montana State Capitol, the Original Governor's Mansion, and the Montana Historical Society Museum—but this was overwhelmingly true for this NAI Conference. Being the proverbial "kid in the candy store" I wanted it all. And I wanted it now! Since that was not possible, I had to whittle down my choices, usually not making a definite decision until the very last minute.

The choice for my first session resulted from my visit to the Oregon Museum and Science Institute. Since I arrived in Portland a few days early, I was able to spend time enjoying some of the many sites available. I loved the Omni Max Theater, and the planetarium, however, the eye opener for me was the "Mindbender Mansion." This was a truly amazing exhibit where you had the opportunity to solve numerous puzzles that were supplied. The space was very crowded, with lots of young people who were very adept at "thinking outside the box." I found that this was a necessity when it came to completing these feats, and it occurred to me that the same was true with any interpretive process or information seeking... we all need to think outside the box.

While looking at the program for the first group of sessions, I decided to attend "From Keeper to Interpreter," with Kris Whipple from Disney Animal Kingdom in Florida. Basically, the class focused on how to train animal keepers to interpret to the visitors. OK, so we are not zookeepers here at the Historical Society—even though some days it feels like it. But the basic premise is the same: how to teach a good interpreter to become an outstanding interpreter. The learning materials that they used were certainly applicable to any museum docent program, and the assessment results were quite helpful. Thinking outside that box was a good choice in this case.

One of the other sessions that I attended was "First Nations, First Voices." This program was quite enjoyable for me since I love learning about Native American culture. Coming from Montana, it is a big part of our history. I was pleased to walk away from this session with the affirmation that we are on the right track in Montana with our "Indian Education for All" mandate, along with the partnership that we have with the state's Office of Public Instruction

in teaching Native American history and culture in our schools statewide.

Along with the many sensational classes that were offered, I was also able to network with a good number of people, many being from the same area (regional and professional) as me. It is always great to talk with other folks who have the same interests as you, and I have to say, these people who attend this conference are some of the most friendly, helpful, and cheerful people in the world. You can tell that they are truly passionate about their profession, as it comes across when they are talking about any one of the many projects that they are currently working on.

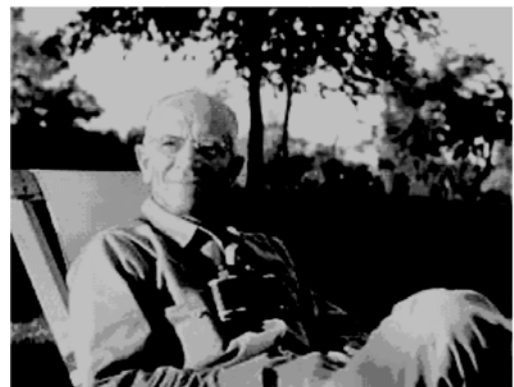
All in all, the experience was truly educational, and I came back to work refreshed and excited to make some changes for the better. Thank you Region 7 for the scholarship that helped to give me this opportunity.

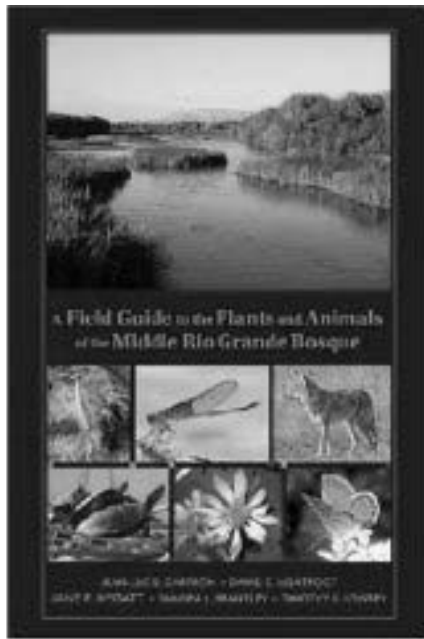
Living the Leopold Legacy

Those of you familiar with *A Sand County Almanac* will be happy to know that the Aldo Leopold Centennial Celebration 2009 had its kickoff event: *Aldo Leopold, the Southwest, and the Evolution of a Land Ethic for the Future* in Albuquerque, New Mexico on February 13th and 14th at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. Leopold, who worked with the Forest Service in New Mexico during the early years of his career, is an icon for land management and smart resource practices. Several hundred multi-cultural and multi-generational community members came together to learn and discuss current and future techniques for a lasting land ethic here in the southwest. Highlighting keynote speaker, author Gary Paul Nabhan (*The Geography of Childhood*), the conference shared community viewpoints and historic stories of the Native Americans, Hispanics and Caucasians of our green chile loving lands.

For more information and upcoming events, check out the website at:

<http://www.leopoldcelebration.org>.





A Field Guide of the Middle Rio Grande Bosque

If you live in the middle Rio Grande valley... get excited – the coming spring weather will no doubt drive you outside and there is now something new and delightful to take along with you on your stroll. University of New Mexico (UNM) Press released *A Field Guide to the Plants and Animals of the Middle Rio Grande Bosque* this past November. Authors, and UNM researchers, Jean-Luc Cartron, David Lighthfoot, Jane Mygatt, Sandra Brantley and Timothy Lowrey have compiled the first (and most fabulous) guide and resource for New Mexico's middle Rio Grande valley. Filled with beautiful photos, seasonal details and great identification tips – this book opens the beauty of the bosque up to professionals and amateurs alike.

With a prologue by Dr. Cliff Crawford, this guide reviews the diverse connections of our natural habitat (helping us to understand the role of our river system) and also how to access it for everyday exploration. With generous spirits, the authors are donating book sale profits towards local education endeavors! So far more than 60 copies have been distributed to local schools, teachers, students, administrators and other educators within the valley. So if you're looking for a great gift to share with family and friends that gets you OUTSIDE – this is a perfect spring choice!

For more information visit UNM Press at:
<http://unmpress.unm.edu>.

By: Kimi Scheerer, NAI New Mexico state representative
Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP) Education
Coordinator

Get Your Game On!

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to The Mating Game, where choosing the right mate can make the difference between reproductive success and an evolutionary dead end! Are you looking for your one, true life mate? Do you long for someone to be there year after year, to help you raise many generations of offspring? Or, is your Mr. or Mrs. Right more of a "right now?" Either way, maybe you should try your luck! Of course, you need to be a member of the wild world to qualify.....

Contestants on The Mating Game have been, shall we say, a little down on their luck in finding a mate; the guys with the good genes haven't been willing to hang around, or that perfect pollinator was always one field too far over. In this action packed, fun-filled scenario, the bachelor or bachelorette seeking out that special someone can choose between three potential mates by asking a series of questions. But, they have to be careful, because they may have more in common with an animal of a different species than they think!

In Round One, the Round of Everlasting Love, Camilla, a female coyote, looks for the perfect man to woo her with a dinner brought right to her den, all the right moves in mating, and the ability to stick around to hunt for and help raise a litter of strong pups. Round Two, The Mrs. Right Now Round, introduces us to Buddy Bull snake, who, after an hour or so of tough loving, slithers off into the fields, not to be seen or heard from again by either mate or offspring. That's ok with his lady though, as she doesn't stick around after the eggs are laid, either! In Round Three, the It's Not Easy Being Green Round, Pamela Penstamon looks for her perfect pollinator: long tongue, a bit of a night owl, and good about noticing subtleties, such as color change. And in the final Round, the Sexual Selection Round, Wendy has to choose between three Western Grebes. Who has the best genes, will woo her to her heart's content, and isn't ashamed to be seen with his offspring riding on his back?

So many questions, so little time, such qualified and eligible suitors! In the end, though, our contestants need to make their choice, and when they do, they're awarded with a fabulous getaway. Whether it's the Cottonwood Grove Resort, The Big Sandy Hills Field, or the Lovers' Lagoon, our little lovebirds (and I use the term loosely) are guaranteed the time of their lives, and with any luck, produce some viable offspring and ensure their species meets with reproductive success and not an evolutionary dead end!

Sound like a good time? That's putting it mildly! In the handful of times we've performed this program, it has been met with nothing but positive feedback, and more than a few pink cheeks! Whether you call it education, interpretation or interpretainment, programs that incorporate games and fun, such as a spin-off on the 1960s TV series *The Dating Game*, re-tooled to explore mating and reproduction in nature, have the power not only to educate, but to make such education fun and memorable, and to make an audience want to return for more. Therein lies the beauty of our chosen field, folks: imagination and creativity know no bounds.

So, the next time you're putting together a program, on anything from birds to bees, or from water to the rock cycle, don't be afraid to let your imagination run a little wild. Who knows, you may just end up guaranteeing your own evolutionary success in the field of interpretation!

Joy Thompson



c/o NAI
PO Box 2246
Fort Collins, Colorado 80522

THIS IS THE LAST PRINTED MOOSELIPS!

The next edition will be delivered electronically. (If, for technical reasons, you CANNOT receive Mooselips electronically – you must let us know - vortexarts@comcast.net.)

If you received this printed copy of Mooselips it means NAI does not have your e-mail address .
You must contact them and change your membership data.

REGION 7 – MARK YOUR CALENDARS and VOLUNTEER

Region 7 – 2009 Newsletter Articles Due
June 1 – September 1 – December 1
Send copy to Vortexarts@comcast.net

Don't be a Fool – Be Cool!
Global Warming Workshop
April 1, 2009 – www.denveraudubon.org

Region 5 Workshop – Rapid City, S.D.
April 1 – 4, 2009 – NAI Region 5 website

CAEE Teaching OUTSIDE the Box Conference
April 24 – 26, 2009 - www.caee.org

REGION 7 WORKSHOP
Ham, Caputo and Wheeler in Helena, MT.
April 26 and 27, 2009 – NAI Region 7 website

NAI National Training Opportunities
See Page 5 - this edition Mooselips

Volunteer to be the new Mooselips Editor – contact vortexarts@comcast.net.

LOOK FOR SCHOLARSHIP INFO in the June MOOSELIPS.