

Interpreters Form New Organization

The 1987 National Interpreters Workshop, held Nov. 2-5 in St. Louis, Mo., was a resounding success in more ways than one. First, 600 participants were expected but about 900 actually showed up, in overwhelming response to the new National Assn. of Interpreters (NAI), formed by a merger of the Assn. of Interpretive Naturalists and the Western Interpreters Assn. The NAI became a reality on Jan. 1, 1988 and its membership now will come not only from the traditional ranks of naturalists, historians and rangers, but also from educators, museum curators, administrators, recreation specialists and so on.

About 175 NPS interpreters attended the St. Louis workshop, which showcased first rate presentations by speakers from around the nation. Highlights included a keynote address by Thomas Crum, first executive director of the Windstar Foundation, which he co-founded with John Denver. His presentation was on conflict resolution. Jim Poisant of Walt Disney World spoke about the Disney approach to people management.

A dinner buffet at the Missouri Botanical Gardens featured guest of honor NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., who presented the Freeman Tilden award to the 1987 winner – Carol Spears of Cuyahoga Valley NRA.

Following the workshop, Ken Raithel, Asst. Director for Interpretation, and Mike Watson, both of the Washington Office, met with all the Regional Chiefs of Interpretation to discuss "The Interpretive Challenge" – new directions for future NPS interpretation.

Mike Gurling, Interp. Mgt. Trainee
Pacific Northwest Regional Office