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Kensington Metroparks Farm Center Receives Interpretive Project Grant from the National Association for Interpretation - Region 4

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Region 4 recently announced its Interpretive Project Grant Award Winners and is pleased to report the Kensington Metroparks Farm Center is among the 2015 recipients.

The Interpretive Project Grants (IPG) program is designed to provide a source of funding for small projects by Association members within the Great Lakes region including Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Ontario. Projects may include exhibitry, signage, programs, or other ideas that enhance visitors' interpretive experience. Applications are submitted annually, and reviewed by the IPG Committee consisting of members of NAI Region 4 who guide the grant process and make recommendations to the Region 4 Board of Directors.

Kensington Metropark Farm Center's project – *The Farm Center Kid's Corner: Day in the Life of Today's Farm Kid* – will provide new educational and interpretive stations to engage children about animal care and daily chores in the life of a farm family. According to grant applicant Debbie Cavallaro, "the farm center's main focus is offering interpretive programming for the purpose of educating children from the surrounding greater Detroit metropolitan area about life on the farm and the purpose of keeping animals for consumptive goods." Planned interactive activities include milking a cow, cleaning animal stalls, turning compost, collecting chicken eggs, locking the barn, and planting crops. Additional future expansion may include seasonal aspects on the farm like maple sugaring, sheep shearing and wool production, and the fall harvest.

IPG funds from NAI Region 4 will add financial support for the project, acquiring raw materials for set construction and educational teaching props to complement the activity stations.

"It is always interesting and enlightening for the Committee to see all of the wonderful projects underway in Region 4 - we have very passionate and creative members in our region," said Jennifer McDowell, Chair of the Interpretive Project Grants Committee. "Congratulations to the Farm Center on their work to educate metropolitan and suburban families on the importance of life in agriculture and to engage children through interactive and multi-sensory experiences."

Applicants receiving funding this year along with the Kensington Metropark Farm Center's *Kid's Corner* include Sturgeon for Tomorrow, Black Lake Chapter's *Great Lakes Ecological Stewardship: Lake Sturgeon in the Classroom* project (MI) and Jim Witter with Wood County Park District's *Interpretive Signage Project* (OH).

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to advancing the profession of heritage interpretation, currently serving about 5,000 members in the United States, Canada, and over thirty other nations. Individual members include those who work at parks, museums, nature centers, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, historical and cultural sites, commercial tour companies, and theme parks. Commercial and institutional members include those who provide services to the heritage interpretation industry.

The Association is divided into ten geographical regions to help members network with others near them through professional development opportunities, workshops, and periodical newsletters. Region 4 – the Great Lakes Region - includes Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario.

NAI's Mission is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession.
