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**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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## **Independence National Historical Park Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site Badlands National Park News Release**

June 29, 2011

For Immediate Release

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### **Junior Rangers Connect Through Video Conference**

**Philadelphia** — Junior rangers from Independence National Historical Park (INHP) and the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site in Philadelphia, PA, and Badlands National Park in South Dakota recently connected through a videoconference program. The children had a great exchange of natural and cultural history and confirmed their intentions to help protect their communities and preserve their history. Junior rangers from Philadelphia learned about the scenic spaces, wildlife, and fossils of Badlands National Park while junior rangers from Wall and Wasta, SD learned about several historic sites in the Northeast Region. The junior rangers were obviously excited to be involved in the program and to share their national parks with new friends from across the country.

Interpretive staff at both sites worked together to implement best practices in video conferencing to make the connection a success. The program theme was, "Protecting our communities and preserving our heritage." Participants were well prepared through pre-conference activities that included classroom experiences, park explorations, reading, writing and research. During the conference, both groups took notes on graphic organizers which helped the children organize their learning through language and images. There was much interaction between the kids. They introduced themselves, read from their learning journals, shared objects and artifacts, and asked and answered questions. Junior rangers from Philadelphia were surprised to learn that Badlands National Park has more bison than the neighboring town of Wall has people. Junior rangers at Badlands wanted to know if the Philadelphia kids would like to visit.

"Even though the children's backgrounds and communities are very different, they soon learned how much they had in common as they shared with pride the stories of their communities and their culture," said Rhonda Schier, NPS Supervisory Park Ranger at INHP and co-host of the program.

To learn more about distance learning video conference opportunities with the National Park Service see [nps.gov](http://nps.gov).

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**NPS Photo:** Edgar Allan Poe NHS Junior Rangers in Philadelphia listen to Badlands Junior Rangers in South Dakota teach about fossils. (Photo Credit: NPS)

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