



# Florida Academy of Sciences

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Where Science Happens®

*E news* Edward A. Haddad, Executive Director : Julie Regier, Office Manager November 2008

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

All of us are busily engaged in the responsibilities that are upon us every fall. The office here is no exception! Preparations are well underway for our 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting which is to be held at St. Leo University, St. Leo Florida March 20 and 21, 2009. We have toured the facilities there last month and found them to be convenient and attractive and we are sure you will enjoy your time there! **The registration form for the Annual Meeting is posted on our website.** It is to your advantage to register for the meeting as early as possible. The early registration fee is less if you register early. Check the website for complete information and pricing.

### COPUS

We have mentioned to you before the efforts underway with the COPUS (Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science) network. Their website is <http://www.copusproject.org/>. There are two regional COPUS hubs in Florida: one in the Tampa Bay Region and the other in Central Florida, Orlando. FAS is the head of the Orlando Science regional hub. There are many other such hubs throughout the USA. The Year of Science 2009 will be here shortly. There is a different theme for each month and activities will be going on nationwide supporting the monthly theme. Jointly with the Orlando Science Center, we are having a different presentation each month here at the Science Center. WE hope to have some of the COPUS officials at our upcoming Annual Meeting with a display and information about COPUS. Also, we are trying to have the Governor of Florida issue a proclamation for the Year of Science 2009.

### SCIENCE CAFES

FAS has taken the leading role in the science café movement here in Central Florida. We recently received a small grant from WGBH/NOVA to help out. We now have three monthly cafes operating here in the Orlando area: one for the general public in an area restaurant, one here at Orlando Science Center for members and their families, and one at Oviedo High School for science teachers and Science Honor Society students. We are particularly proud of this last one, as it is the first cafe to be held in a high school in the state of Florida to the best of our knowledge. Each of these cafes meets monthly and the majority of the presenters are members of the Academy. If they are not, we make every effort to have them join FAS! Thanks to our members who have stepped up to the plate to make presentations to the general public. We are addressing a strong national concern about increasing public awareness of what is happening in the STEM fields. We are compiling an "Informal Science Faculty" for Central Florida of scientists and engineers who are willing to speak to the public about their work and research when it is convenient for them to do so. It is an objective to expand this Informal Faculty throughout the state of Florida. If any of you would like to part of this, please let us know at the office. Many grants encourage a public outreach component and your willingness to participate in the Informal Science Faculty is an excellent way to respond to that!

## MEMBERSHIP

Increasing our membership is a constant goal of FAS. We generally say that in every newsletter. It is especially important in the fall season, as it is now time to renew your membership for next year, if you have not already done so. We would like to encourage students, in particular, to join the Academy or to renew their membership again this year. For less than the cost of a movie ticket and some refreshments, a student can become a member of the Academy and enjoy and benefit from their membership and receive copies of the *Florida Scientist*. Students who plan to attend the Annual Meeting are also eligible for special registration fees. Please also tell your colleagues about the Academy and its membership benefits.

### HELP WANTED!

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Academy's work through membership on one of our committees, participating in one of our outreach programs, or becoming an officer of the Academy, please contact us at the office! Also, we have issued an advertisement to our membership in search of a new editor(s) for the *Florida Scientist*. If you or a colleague is interested in this position, please let us know.

### FAS MEMBERS IN ACTION!

FAS member Stephen D. McCulloch is the Founder / Program Manager of the Marine Mammal Research and Conservation, Center for Coastal Research at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, Inc. in Fort Pierce, FL. The picture below shows Lead Rescuer Steve McCulloch (L) and NMFS Stranding Coordinator Blair Mase-Guthrie (R) manage a multi-agency effort to rescue a juvenile bottlenose dolphin from the St. Johns River (Jacksonville). The dolphin was entangled in fishing line and had been in fresh water for several weeks. Despite a successful rescue and heroic efforts, the dolphin's condition was grave and he was humanely euthanized. A subsequent necropsy at Harbor Branch confirmed several medical complications.

