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Newsletter no. 1, July 2009

Happy Canada Day! CFES/FCST has come a long way in the past 3 years and as part of this process we are now starting a more structured way of communicating with our constituency through this newsletter, which we plan to issue every quarter. The newsletter will replace some of the unscheduled e-mail flurry. What better date to start than Canada Day?

CFES/FCST semi-annual meeting.

The next semi-annual CFES/FCST meeting will take place on October 24/25 in the University Club of the University of Regina. It is at this meeting that the CFES/FCST Board meets with its member society representatives. Agendas, Minutes and accompanying documentation of previous meetings can be found on our website at www.geoscience.ca/minutes.html. The last meeting took place in Montreal last April, the photo below shows who represented you there. An article summarizing the 2008 CFES/FCST highlights is published in the June issue of the Geological Association of Canada's "Geoscience Canada".

While in Regina, we will also meet with regional and local earth scientists and students. Member society representatives will be informed separately, but the meeting is open to any observers, so please contact Elisabeth Kusters (ekusters_cfes@magma.ca) if you would like to attend.



*CFES/FCST semi-annual meeting, April 2009, Montreal. **Back row, left to right:** Peter Bobrowsky (CFES/FCST), Scott Jobin Bevans (PDAC), Dan Smith (GAC), Pat Ryall (CFES/FCST), Lisa Griffith (CSPG), Jon Downton (CSEG), Godfrey Nowlan (CFES/FCST and CNC-IYPE), Jeff Packard (CFES/FCST), Michel Aubertin (CGS), Marc d'Iorio (GSC). **Front row, left to right:** Dominique Potvin (UNESCO), Ian Young (CFES/FCST), Elisabeth Kusters (CFES/FCST), Bill Mercer (CFES/FCST), Michel Parent (CanQua), Steve Holysh (CFES/FCST), Martin Head (CCCESD), Fran Haidl (CFES/FCST and CGEN). Missing: Jean Vavrek (CIM).*



Mentorship Award

During the Joint Assembly in Toronto, CFES/FCST awarded its first mentorship medal to Dr. Paul Williams, prof. Emeritus of the University of New Brunswick. The medal was created in Paul's honour. The Call for Nominations for next year's medal is out and you can find it and the guidelines at www.geoscience.ca/awards.html. The Mentorship Medal committee is chaired by Shoufa Lin of the University of Waterloo.



Paul Williams receives the mentorship medal from CFES/FCST President Bill Mercer, May 23, 2009.

Outreach

Increasing the Earth Science Literacy of Canadians, young and old, is of crucial importance. CFES/FCST is host to CGEN, and was heavily involved in the Canadian activities of the International Year of Planet Earth, which ends this year and yielded the 'Where Challenge', Careers website and 'Four Billion Years and Counting' book (to be published later this year. See www.earthsciencescanada.com). South of the border, the US National Science Foundation has published an excellent document on Earth Science Literacy at www.earthscienceliteracy.org. Along similar lines, no less than 13 US government organizations cooperated in the recent publication of a document on Climate Literacy, which can be found at www.climatescience.gov.



Insurance

Individuals who are members of CFES/FCST member organizations can benefit from a very competitive insurance package that was developed over the past year as part of our efforts and aided greatly by the support of member association PDAC. Read all about it on www.geoscience.ca/Insurance_brochure.pdf.

UNESCO GeoParks

A Geopark is “*an area with a geological heritage of significance, with a coherent and strong management structure and where a sustainable economic development strategy is in place*” (<http://portal.unesco.org>). A Geopark creates enhanced employment opportunities for the people who live there, bringing economic benefit (usually tourism). In a Geopark, geological heritage and knowledge is shared with the public and linked with broader aspects of the natural and cultural environment. Geoparks are therefore not ‘parks’ in the traditional sense of the word, because a GeoPark may consist of a number of sites throughout a region and while conservation is important, economic development is equally important. The concept of GeoParks was initiated within UNESCO in the last 10 years. It has linkage with the International Biosphere Program which initiated Biosphere Reserves of which there are 7 in Canada. To date, there are 58 GeoParks in 18 countries and these are all members of the Global GeoPark Network, assisted by UNESCO. Canada does not yet have a GeoPark, but proposals are in the works and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (www.unesco.ca) has requested CFES/FCST, as the unified Canadian Earth Science platform, to host the Canadian National Committee for GeoParks, so that proposals for Canadian GeoParks can be vetted within Canada first, which is the preferred route. The CNC-GeoParks is currently getting organized under interim chairmanship of Godfrey Nowlan, CFES/FCST outreach director. More about this new initiative in a next newsletter.