AIBS news

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AIBS*news*

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BioOne Announces New Agreement with Allen Press, Atypon

BioOne (*www.bioone.org*) has announced that it has signed a new agreement with Allen Press, Inc., to continue the organizations' seven-year partnership and provide a superior new online platform through a strategic alliance with Atypon Systems, Inc. The aggregation will launch a new Web site in January with greater functionality and improved user experience.

Established in 1999 by AIBS and other cofounding organizations, BioOne is the product of innovative collaborations among scientific societies, libraries, academe, and the private sector, which seek a sustainable, mission-driven alternative to commercial publishing. BioOne has three full-text collections (two subscribed and one open access) representing 143 publications from 102 nonprofit societies and institutional publishers. To better serve this growing community of publishers, libraries, and end users, BioOne leadership requested online hosting services from leading industry providers in mid-2007.

Allen Press's response to this call was buoyed by its own recently signed agreement with Atypon Systems, which provided Allen Press with advanced online platform hosting services and robust technological tools.

Under the terms of this new agreement, Allen Press will continue to provide comprehensive customer service and support for BioOne, with a new platform build, content migration, and ongoing technological development managed by strategic partner Atypon Systems.

"BioOne's publisher and library communities will benefit by the enhanced technology and services afforded by this partnership," commented Susan Skomal, executive director of BioOne. "We are confident that the caliber and professionalism of Allen Press and Atypon will ensure a seamless transition."

Allen Press Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Gerald Lillian said: "We are extremely pleased to renew our partnership with BioOne and remain committed to the BioOne mission. We share their confidence that the new platform and features will meet the needs of the scientific community BioOne serves, now and into the foreseeable future."

Atypon Systems CEO Georgios Papadopoulos said that Atypon is looking forward to bringing technological innovation to BioOne and the communities that it serves. "BioOne is a critical resource for scholars and researchers all over the world, and we are committed to enhancing their user experience on a dynamic new platform."

BioOne, Allen Press, and Atypon Systems will begin development of the new BioOne platform in early 2008, and plan to launch the new interface in early January 2009. The new BioOne Web site will focus on enhanced administrative capabilities for both publishers and subscribing libraries, as well as a superior user experience for scholars and researchers.

BioOne brings to the Web a uniquely valuable aggregation of the full texts of high-impact bioscience research journals, including *BioScience*. Most of BioOne's titles are published by small societies and noncommercial publishers. BioOne provides integrated, cost-effective access to a thoroughly linked information resource of interrelated journals focused on the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences.

For more information, contact Director of Publisher Relations Lauren Kane at lauren@arl.org.

Coalition of Scientific and Teaching Organizations Issues Report on Evolution and Science Education

AIBS is pleased to be a part of the broad coalition of 17 scientific societies and organizations (representing teachers, biologists, physicists, astronomers, chemists, and social scientists) that wrote the article "You Say You Want an Evolution? A Role for Scientists in Science Education." The article is being simultaneously published online by a number of societies' journals, and can be found at *http://opa.faseb.org/pages/PolicyIssues/sciencecoalition.htm*.

The coalition is calling on the scientific community to become more involved in the promotion of science and evolution education. The article appears, among other places, in the January 2008 issue of *FASEB Journal*, a publication of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

I N S I D E

The article argues that "non-science," such as creationism and intelligent design, undermines the fundamentals of science education. Some of these fundamentals are comprehending the scientific method, understanding how to reach scientific consensus, and distinguishing between scientific and nonscientific explanations of natural phenomena.

The article is based on a professional survey of 1000 likely US voters commissioned by the coalition from across the nation. Survey respondents were queried on their attitudes toward science and scientists, their views on evolutionary science in the context of education, and their opinions about how the scientific community can effectively bolster support for teaching evolution and related subjects. The survey revealed that respondents favored teaching evolution over creationism or intelligent design. Participants also responded that they are more interested in hearing about evolution from scientists, science teachers, and clergy than from Supreme Court justices, celebrities, or school board members. The survey also found that there is a relationship between people's understanding of science and their support for teaching evolution. Respondents were asked three questions: one related to plate tectonics, one to the proper use of antibiotics, and the third to prehistory. Those who answered questions on these subjects accurately were far more likely to support the teaching of evolution in schools.

The coalition members that produced the article, in addition to AIBS, are as follows: American Association of Physics Teachers, American Astronomical Society, American Chemical Society, American Institute of Physics, American Physical Society, American Physiological Society, American Society for Investigative Pathology, American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, American Society of Human Genetics, Biophysical Society, Consortium of Social Science Associations, Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, Geological Society of America, National Academy of Sciences, National Science Teachers Association, and Society for Developmental Biology.

For more information about the coalition, contact Jennifer A. Hobin at jhobin@faseb.org.

Updates to the AIBS Annual Meeting This May

The 2008 AIBS annual meeting, to be held 12–13 May, will explore the theme of climate, environment, and infectious diseases. Relationships among climate, the environment, and human health are manifested in infectious disease patterns, notably seasonality. Vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue, avian influenza, and SARS, are known to be closely linked to the environment and, more recently, to climate. Investigators in the United States and abroad have studied interactions among climate, climate change, and the environment extensively, and the AIBS annual meeting will address these issues.

The meeting will take place at the Westin Arlington Gateway hotel in Arlington, Virginia. The program chair is 2008 AIBS President Rita Colwell, of the University of Maryland at College Park. Registration and poster submission forms are online at *www.aibs.org/annual-meeting/annual_meeting_2008.html.*

Speakers and sessions

- Newt Gingrich (former speaker of the US House of Representatives): "A Contract with the Earth"
- James E. Hansen (National Aeronautics and Space Administration): "Global Warming: The Threat to Life"
- Durland Fish (Yale University): "Environmental Determinants of Lyme Disease Risk"
- Howard Frumkin (National Center for Environmental Health): "The Public Health Response to Climate Change"
- David Rogers (University of Oxford): "Infectious Diseases and the Environment"
- Stephen Morse (Columbia University): "How Could Climate Change Affect Avian Influenza?"
- Robert Morris (author of *The Blue Death: Disease, Disaster, and the Water We Drink*) and Kim Stanley Robinson (author of *Sixty Days and Counting*): "Science and Society: the Art of Communication"
- Andrew Dobson (Princeton University:) "Disentangling the Role of Climate, Immunity, and Biotic Interactions in the Dynamics of Infectious Diseases"
- Duane Gubler (University of Hawaii): "The 20th Century Emergence and Spread of Epidemic Dengue/Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever: Is Climate or Environmental Change Responsible?"
- David Blockstein (National Council for Science and the Environment): "Climate Change and Human Health: Developing Collaborations with the Public Health Community"
- Stephen Hoffman (Sanaria Inc., Rockville, Maryland): "Malaria"
- Workshop 1: "Your Classroom: Making Study of the Climate, Environment, and Infectious Diseases Meaningful for Your Students." Convenors: Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, National Association of Biology Teachers
- Workshop 2: "A Scientist Walks into a Bar: Using Science Cafés to Reach the Public." Convenors: WGBH Educational Foundation, Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science

AIBS is pleased to be collaborating on this meeting with the National Council for Science and the Environment, whose conference on "Climate Change: Science and Solutions" was held 16–18 January in Washington, DC. For more information, see *http://ncseonline.org/2008 conference/.*

AIBS Messes with Texas

The year 2007 ended with the eruption of several evolution education controversies, positioning Texas as the next battleground for science education.

In November 2007, Christine Castillo Comer, with nearly three decades of experience as a science teacher, was pressured to resign from her post as director of science curriculum for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) after forwarding an e-mail about an upcoming talk in Austin by Barbara Forrest. Forrest, a professor of philosophy at Southeastern Louisiana University, is the coauthor of *Creationism's Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design,* a book that chronicles how

creationist politics are behind the movement to insert intelligent design into the public school science curriculum. She was an expert witness in the landmark 2005 *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District* case, which ruled against the teaching of intelligent design in the public schools of Dover, Pennsylvania. The e-mail, which originated from the National Center for Science Education, titled "FYI" by Comer, was distributed to a few people and members of a local online community.

According to a memo from TEA officials calling for Comer's dismissal, "Ms. Comer's e-mail implies endorsement of the speaker and implies that TEA endorses the speaker's position on a subject on which the agency must remain neutral."

On behalf of AIBS, 2007 President Douglas J. Futuyma issued a statement on 6 December 2007 responding to the TEA policy that requires "neutrality" when talking about evolution and creationism: "When it comes to science education, we absolutely cannot remain neutral on evolution. Evolution is the unifying principle of modern biology," Futuyma asserted. "Within biological science, the reality of evolution is not controversial. Creationism and its thinly veiled relative, 'intelligent design,' continue to pose a real threat to science education and the public understanding of science throughout the United States. It is the responsibility of science educators at all levels to stay well informed, and to inform their students on the major principles in every area of science. With biology, evolution is the leading principle. We must remain vigilant."

The Texas State Board of Education will soon undertake its 10-year review of the science portion of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, the curriculum that determines what will be taught statewide in classrooms. The chairman of the state board, Don McLeroy, has spoken favorably about intelligent design in the past, and voted against the state's current high-school biology textbook because it did not include discussions of the weaknesses of evolution. The AIBS Public Policy Office will carefully monitor, report, and respond as necessary to the latest news as the review of the Texas science curriculum proceeds.

In mid-December 2007, more disconcerting news broke in Texas. The Certification Advisory Council of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) recommended that the Dallas-based Institute for Creation Research (ICR) be allowed to offer online master's degrees in science education. ICR, like Answers in Genesis, espouses young-earth creationism, a literal view of the Bible that contends Earth is less than 10,000 years old. This worldview permeates the ICR graduate program in science teacher education. ICR is seeking approval from the THECB to begin offering degrees immediately while waiting for accreditation from the state-recognized Southern Association of Schools and Colleges.

In light of this development, Futuyma wrote THECB Commissioner Raymund Paredes on behalf of AIBS expressing his serious concerns with the ICR request and encouraging the THECB to deny certification. Futuyma wrote, "It is unacceptable for the state to sanction the training of science educators committed to the practice of advancing their religious beliefs in a science classroom." He continued, "The THECB will ill serve science students if it certifies a science teacher education program based on a religious worldview rather than modern science." The letter may be viewed in its entirety at *www.aibs.org/position-statements/*.

In response to the AIBS letter and to those from many other science education advocates, Paredes has appointed a second evaluation committee, composed of scientists and science education specialists, to reevaluate the ICR application to grant graduate degrees in science education.

ActionBioscience.org Continues to Grow

ActionBioscience.org page views exceeded two million for the second year in a row. A page view occurs every time a visitor loads a page on the Web site. The site's traffic-tracking service, SuperStats, reported 2,356,954 page views in 2007. ActionBioscience.org has experienced

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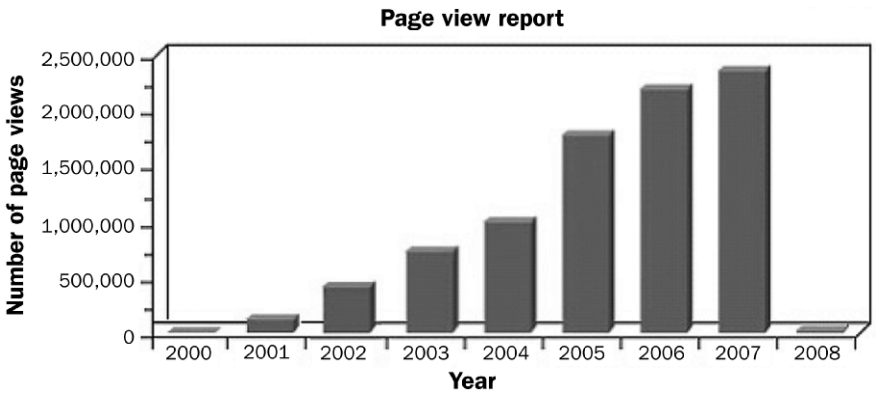

significant growth since AIBS took over the site in 2004; at the end of 2003, the page-view count was 728,236. The number of countries whose users accessed the site has also increased since 2004, from 144 to 171. US users are the most frequent site visitors, followed by users from Mexico, Australia, Colombia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Visitors may either come from other Web sites that recommend ActionBioscience. org or find the site through a browser. Increasingly, ActionBioscience. org is cited or listed as a resource in hardcopy publications. The most recent citation was in the 2008 National Academies Press paperback *Science, Evolution, and Creationism.* The book quoted from an interview conducted by ActionBioscience. org with Kenneth R. Miller, of Brown University (see "Science and Religion," at *www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/miller.html*).

ActionBioscience.org has undergone some changes in the past few years. The site began posting Spanish translations in 2003; lessons for curriculum planning were added in 2002. This year, the site will be transferred from Front Page to a new platform, Movable Type, which will allow more flexibility and ease of management. This change will also set the stage for a redesign of other page elements to make the site easier to navigate, more economical to print, and better able to accommodate technology-driven resources, such as podcasts and blogs.

NEON Expands Its Board of Directors

The National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) has announced seven additions to its Board of Directors. The NEON, Inc., board conducted an at-large election to fill two open seats, adding Margaret Leinen and David Douglas to the board; five of the new members—Jim Ehleringer, Nancy B. Grimm, Margaret Palmer, Debra Peters, and David S. White—were chosen by voting representatives of NEON founding and institutional member organizations. The representatives nominated 10 candidates from among their ranks to stand for election to five open board seats. This election brings the Board of Directors to its full complement of 15 members. Subsequent elections will be held annually in the fall to fill seats vacated by members whose terms have ended.

David Douglas holds both BS and MS degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since May 2006, he has served as vice president for eco-responsibility at Sun Microsystems, Inc., where he is responsible for the strategy and execution of environmental initiatives across the organization. This responsibility extends to cooling technologies, product recycling, clean manufacturing, energy efficiency, and improvements in day-to-day operations.

Jim Ehleringer served as a member of the NEON Research Infrastructure Subcommittee. His research focuses on understanding terrestrial ecosystem processes through stable isotope analyses. Ehleringer is particularly interested in gas exchange and biosphere-atmosphere interactions, water relations in arid land and urban ecosystems, and homeland security issues. He has served as editor in chief for *Oecologia,* chaired the Biosphere-Atmosphere Stable Isotope Network, and was involved in guiding the Global Change and Terrestrial Ecosystems Project of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme. He is a distinguished professor of biology at the University of Utah, and he serves as director of the Stable Isotope Ratio Facility for Environmental Research.

Nancy B. Grimm is an ecosystem ecologist, biogeochemist, and professor at Arizona State University, where she is lead principal investigator and co-director of the Central Arizona–Phoenix Long Term Ecological Research project. Grimm's research asks how landscape heterogeneity and climate variability influence retention, cycling, and transport of nitrogen, in both desert and urban landscapes. Grimm has published approximately 110 scholarly works, and has received more than $25 million in collaborative research and training awards. She has mentored 42 graduate scholars, 29 postdoctoral scholars, and 41 undergraduate research scholars. She is an assigning editor for *Ecological Applications* and an editor for *Ecohydrology.* She is past president of the North American Benthological Society and of the Ecological Society of America (ESA).

Margaret Leinen is the chief science officer at Climos, a company dedicated to using natural processes to remove carbon from the atmosphere, assisting companies in reducing their carbon footprints and becoming carbon neutral. Before joining Climos, Leinen was the director of the geosciences directorate of the National Science Foundation (NSF) from 2000 to 2006, the second largest directorate at the foundation, with an annual budget of $700 million. While at the NSF, Leinen oversaw the development of the Ocean Observatories Initiative, the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program, and the NSF's Biocomplexity in the Environment Priority Area. She aggressively sought to attract more women and minorities to the geosciences. Before her tenure at the NSF, Leinen served in academia as dean of the Graduate School of Oceanography and vice provost for marine and environmental programs at the University of Rhode Island, and as a research scientist with a focus on paleoceanogra-

phy and paleoclimatology. She received a BS from the University of Illinois, her MS from Oregon State University, and a PhD in geological oceanography from the University of Rhode Island.

Margaret Palmer is a professor, director of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, and part of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, who also holds a joint appointment at the University of Maryland, College Park. She received her BS in biology from Emory University and a PhD in coastal oceanography in 1983 from the University of South Carolina. An aquatic ecologist focusing on riverine science and restoration ecology, Palmer has more than 100 publications with research awards from the NSF, the Environmetal Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the C. S. Mott Foundation, and the David and Lucille Packard Foundation. She has been a key leader in the National River Restoration Science Synthesis project and directs a large research lab. In 2004, she was the lead scientist on a strategic plan for the ESA outlining the future of ecological science. She serves on a number of boards, including the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the National Center for Earth Surface Dynamics, the National Long Term Ecological Research Board, and American Rivers. Palmer is a former program officer for the NSF's Ecology Program.

Debra Peters is the lead scientist with the Agricultural Research Service of the US Department of Agriculture, adjunct associate professor at New Mexico State University, and principal investigator of the Jornada Basin Long Term Ecological Research program. Peters's research interests are associated with cross-scale interactions, extrapolation of information across scales, and nonlinear propagation of catastrophic events under varying climatic and disturbance regimes. In 2005, she served as cochair of the Climate Change Subcommittee for the NEON Design Consortium. She received her BS from Iowa State University, an MS from San Diego State University, and a PhD from Colorado State University.

David S. White is a professor of biology, endowed chair for ecosystem studies, and director of the Hancock Biological Station and Center for Reservoir Research. Among his research interests are long-term changes in human-dominated ecosystems, particularly related to major reservoirs. He has helped establish a long-term monitoring program—now in its 20th year—on Kentucky Lake (physicochemical and biological). He has served in a variety of capacities for many organizations: as president of the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers, and as a member of the Board of Directors for the Organization of Biological Field Stations, the Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, the Ohio River Basin Consortium for Research and Education, the North American Benthological Society, the Smithsonian Institutional Libraries, and the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography.

AIBS and NESCent Cohost Evolution Symposium for Biology Teachers

AIBS and the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent) cohosted the fourth annual evolution symposium, "Evolution: Applications in Human Health and Populations," at the National Association of Biology Teachers conference in Atlanta on 1 December 2007. Speakers from the Centers for Disease Control and from Cornell, Harvard, Emory, Stanford, and Binghamton universities presented information on a range of evolutionary biology research and topics concerning human health, including disease, bioethics, genetics, and human social traits. More than 100 high-school teachers and university faculty attended the all-day session. Educators who attended the conference received an instructional CD-ROM developed for the symposium, containing teaching resources, curricular materials, and video and audio clips for use in the classroom. More information about the speakers, evolution resources, and links to previous symposia are at *www.aibs.org/special-symposia.*

Ask-a-Biologist Podcast in the National Science Digital Library

AIBS Director of Education and Outreach Samantha Katz was interviewed for a podcast shown on the Arizona State University "Ask a Biologist" Web site. The podcast focused on the National Science Digital Library (NSDL) and its role in the biological community. While at the NSDL annual meeting, Katz spoke about the BiosciEdNet (BEN) Collaborative, detailing how the resources from AIBS and other participating organizations on the BEN Web site are useful to both students and teachers. To download this podcast, visit *http://askabiologist.asu.edu/podcasts/content_logs/vol25_log_aab_podcast.html.*

Recent Executive Director's Blog Entries Online at *http://blogs.aibs.org/richardogrady/*

- A presidential debate on science
- AIBS and National Council for Science and the Environment meetings on climate science: 16–18 January and 12–13 May

Recent Articles Online at *www.actionbioscience.org*

Original article in English

- "Evolution for Everyone," by David Sloan Wilson, professor in the Departments of Biology and Anthropology at Binghamton University

Original lesson to accompany an article

- "Save Our Frogs" ["Why Do We Need an Amphibian Ark?" by Kevin Zippel, program officer for Amphibian Ark]

American Institute of Biological Sciences

Recent Public Policy Reports Online at *www.aibs.org*

Public Policy Report for 22 January 2008

- Ecologists issue biofuels statement
- NSB releases 2008 *Science and Engineering Indicators*
- New Academies book on evolution
- Collections community workshop on curating small collections
- Attention biology grad students: Deadline approaches for 2008 EPPLA applications
- AIBS employment opportunity: Program assistant
- From the *Federal Register*

Public Policy Report for 7 January 2008

- Bush signs FY 2008 appropriations: Science community disappointed
- AIBS writes to Texas Commissioner of Higher Education
- New resource from AIBS
- Graduate student policy training opportunity
- Gingrich, Hansen to speak at AIBS 2008 annual meeting: "Climate, Environment, and Infectious Diseases"
- New in *BioScience:* "FYI: Threats to Evolution Education Remain"
- From the *Federal Register*

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