

# The COPUS Clarion

A Monthly Newsletter of the COPUS Network Volume 1 Issue 2 October 2007

*The Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science (COPUS) is a grassroots effort linking universities, scientific societies, science centers and museums, advocacy groups, media, educators, businesses, and industry in a peer network having as its goal a greater public understanding of the nature of science and its value to society.*

## COPUS Network Welcomes New Members and Hubs

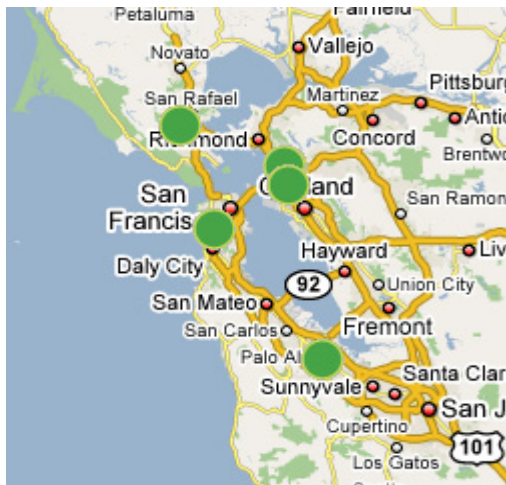
The COPUS Network announces the birth of three new hubs of activity in the COPUS Network. These new hubs are located in **Chicago, IL**, led by Erin Dragotto, C<sup>2</sup>ST; **Ann Arbor, MI**, organized by David Mindell, University of Michigan; and **South Dakota**, forming under the guidance of Chuck Berry, South Dakota State Univ. Further information about what a hub is and does is now available online at: [http://copusproject.org/regional\\_hubs.php](http://copusproject.org/regional_hubs.php).

A new interactive participant map will be launched on the COPUS Web site later this month. This map will make it easier for COPUS members to identify others in their community who are also interested in collaborating on public understanding of science. Larger societies can participate in hub development by encouraging their membership to join the COPUS network or by inviting individual members to reach out to hub leaders in their community.

Also in development are thematic hubs of activity. With thematic hubs, organizations are united by common goals in science outreach to develop resources and forge new partnerships. Potential thematic hubs are growing around developing resources for students, promoting diversity in science, and supporting informal science outreach.

*Within the UC Berkeley Natural History Museums, we are now interacting with other folks on campus in Physics, Space Science, and Nanotechnology, with whom we have never chatted before. As a result, they are becoming speakers at our Science Café, we are planning film events with scientists for 2009, hikes with scientists, and all sorts of fun stuff. We also discovered Wonderfest, started a new project with the Cal Academy and Stanford, and are finding new ways to collaborate with others in the Bay Area who are interested in working together on projects that will reach new audiences for all of us. As a hub of activity, it seems that we can spread the energy and commitment, coordinate the messages and efforts, and make a bigger difference. I thoroughly recommend it!*

— Judy Scotchmoor, San Francisco Bay Area Hub Representative



*COPUS participant and hub map will be released on the Web site later in October.*

## Welcome New Members!

- American Geophysical Union
- Association of Science-Technology Centers
- Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research
- Illinois State Museum
- International Society of Protistologists
- North American Lake Management Society
- Pacific Science Center
- Project Exploration
- Science Cabaret
- Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society
- Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology
- Southern Appalachian Botanical Society
- University of Michigan:
- UM Museum of Zoology
- UM Exhibit Museum of Natural History

## Support Hub Growth by Sharing

The COPUS Web site contains resources that will support you in sharing information about the COPUS network and Year of Science celebration with your members and colleagues. By sharing information and encouraging our peers to participate, we can help support the development of regional and thematic hubs of activity. These resources include Power Point presentations, flyers about COPUS and Year of Science 2009, the *COPUS Clarion*, and the COPUS FAQ's. These resources can be found at <http://copusproject.org/listings>. If you have lost or forgotten your log in information, please contact: [admin@copusproject.org](mailto:admin@copusproject.org)

## New Event Type: Speakers Bureau

In anticipation of events in 2009, **Speakers Bureau** has been added as a new program type to the public understanding of science program and resource directory— If your organization has a Speakers Bureau, please register that service and other programs to the COPUS Web site at: <http://copusproject.org/listings/>.

## Contribute to the Clarion

Your organization is invited to submit contributions to the monthly COPUS newsletter. Please direct inquiries and submissions to: Sheri Potter [spotter@copusproject.org](mailto:spotter@copusproject.org)

# Featured Programs:

## Wonderfest: the Bay Area Science Festival

Wonderfest is coming! Wonderfest is the San Francisco Bay Area Festival of Science, a celebration of curiosity and reason that happens in mid-autumn every year. The heart of each Wonderfest is a series of public dialogues

between articulate researchers in discussion of provocative scientific questions, e.g., "Have We Passed the Tipping Point on Climate Change?" "Are We Wired To Be Kind?" "Will the Universe Have a Happy Ending?"



Wonderfest 2007 begins at the Exploratorium in San Francisco on Sunday, October 21, with a dialogue entitled "Is Cultural Diversity Like Biological Diversity?" Anthropologists Michael Ghiselin and Peter Richerson will examine, among other things, whether or not there are ideas—cultural universals—that are common to ALL human societies. The following weekend, Oct. 27-28, Wonderfest will feature numerous additional dialogues at Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley, all available to the public for free. Wonderfest also sponsors a contest for teams of high school science students that begins online and culminates in an on-stage "Mind Duel." After numerous students have won thousands of dollars in prizes, the Mind Duel pits the top team against an intrepid squad of university researchers in a just-for-fun science quiz.

To encourage scientists to reach out, Wonderfest annually presents the \$5000 Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization. This year's award goes to Stanford Mathematician Keith Devlin for his many popular books and his dedication to science on the airwaves as NPR's "Math Guy."

Wonderfest is produced as a public service by The Branson School (Ross, CA). It is co-produced by the Stanford Chemistry Department and the UC Berkeley Physics Department, and is funded by numerous individuals and private institutions. Wonderfest's founder and director is Tucker Hiatt, a high school physics teacher who dedicates Wonderfest to the memory of astronomer Carl Sagan.

<http://www.wonderfest.org>

## Student Pugwash

*Student Pugwash will be using the social networking resource, Facebook, to survey 18-25 year olds.*

While many organizations will be tracking 2008 Presidential candidates' opinions on many issues, Student Pugwash will probe deeper, asking students about the science policy issues that matter to them. Student Pugwash will be using the social networking resource, Facebook, to survey 18-25 year olds. The survey will ask general questions regarding the relevance of science and technology policy issues on voting choices; specific questions on peace and security, energy and environment, and health to gauge young people's opinions and levels of understanding; and inquire about demographic data and prior voting history to get a better snapshot of the respondent pool.

*Why use Facebook and other social utilities?* Social networking communities are ready-made platforms for surveying and communicating about science. 30 million active users are signed on to Facebook; half of these users are college students, making Facebook a ready-made community of young people. These individuals are reached through Facebook advertising and through Facebook groups established by a range of non-profit organizations. SPUSA has contracted with a leading expert in Facebook surveys to develop the poll. The survey is available online now through mid-December, and can be accessed through the Student Pugwash USA Website at

[http://www.spusa.org/2008\\_elections/index.html](http://www.spusa.org/2008_elections/index.html).

*What you can do:*

- Encourage students and young adults age 18-25 to take part in the survey before November 9th.
- Share your experiences with using social networking for outreach on the COPUS blog at <http://blogs.aibs.org/copus/>

**Questions? Comments? Ideas?** Contact Sheri Potter at [spotter@copusproject.org](mailto:spotter@copusproject.org).

Support for COPUS planning workshops was provided by the National Science Foundation under Grant Nos. EAR-0606600 and EAR-0628790 to the University of California Museum of Paleontology. The cognizant fiduciary body for COPUS and the Year of Science 2009 project is the American Institute of Biological Sciences Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which is providing staffing support, IT, and other resources. The Geological Society of America, the University of California Museum of Paleontology, and the National Science Teachers Association are also contributing funds for COPUS and Year of Science 2009. The Steering Committee welcomes support from additional scientific organizations and is also pursuing funding from federal agencies and private foundations.

