



ON THE LOOKOUT

From the
National Chairman
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Vienna, Virginia
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NOW IN ALL 50 STATES!

For several years FFLA has had members in all 50 states; now in 2009 I am delighted to report that we will have either a Chapter/Division Director or an Area Representative in every state. Their names and contact information appear on the back cover of this issue.

Why is this important? It means that anyone with a copy of LOOKOUT NETWORK Magazine or surfing the Internet will be able to make a contact with the FFLA closer to his or her area of interest. Someone wanting information in Southern California, or Florida for instance, will be able to communicate with an FFLA contact directly. This can be especially important when a member of the press wants to confirm a report or do a story about fire lookouts. The popularity of those stories among editors suggests they are getting favorable response from readers.

The more publicity, the better the special and important role of fire lookouts is understood, not only by the public but by forest managers as well. Folks are more likely to think twice about a decision to pull a tower down if they remember news stories and have an understanding that people love to see and occasionally visit lookouts. In eastern and southern areas, where rocky tops above the trees are less common, fire towers are one of the few places where hikers or car travelers can stop and climb up to get a view of the surrounding countryside.

2009 NATIONAL BOARD MEETING

In this issue (p.3) you will find a report of our excellent National Board meeting co-hosted by our new Florida Chapter and the Florida Division of Forestry in Bradenton, Florida. The annual meeting of the Board of Directors is the official

business meeting of FFLA. The gathering is always held the third weekend of January (Martin Luther King holiday) so members will miss only one day at work. Friday is a travel day with an informal evening gathering, Saturday is the day of the meeting, Sunday is used to visit lookouts nearby, and Monday is again usually used for travel. In practice, we find many officers and directors do some lookout visits on Friday and some more on Monday. This flexible schedule has certainly aided in building friendships and camaraderie among members of the Board.

Scheduling the meeting in January causes us to wrap up the previous year's business and financial dealings promptly after the holidays, while still early enough to approve a budget for the current year. In order to make these meetings available to as many members as possible, we alternate their location between the east and the west. Because of weather concerns, more folks have preferred having the eastern meeting held in southern venues. By then the Yanks and westerners have usually had enough snow for their liking and welcome several days of sunny meetings and travels to our favorite destinations: fire lookouts. For 2010, we will again go south, this time to the Riverside/SanBernadino area of southern California.

TWO GREAT SUMMER MEETINGS PLANNED

We have always noted that the summer meetings are where the real strength of FFLA shines. We call it Lookout Magic and somehow it is very real. When people of good will gather to have a good time as well as fulfill their mission of inventorying, saving, restoring, and visiting lookouts, this magic becomes very real. But don't just take my word for it, come see for yourself!

This year we will have summer meetings in both the east and the west, and both will be in new locations. The eastern meeting will be hosted by our dynamic new North Carolina Chapter in the mountains near Asheville, planned for the weekend of July 24-26. We will be returning to Washington State, always a well-attended location for lookout gatherings, on September 18-20, but this time on the western side of the Cascades in Snohomish.

Both are sure to be wonderful gatherings. Set those dates on your calendar now and plan to attend. I look forward to seeing you there!

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