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### **Firefighters and Paramedics Contribute to ELC New Discovery Station**

**Wabasso Island, FL** – At the May 1, 2010 grand opening of the Environmental Learning Center's Discovery Station, the Indian River County Firefighters and Paramedics presented a check in the amount of \$1,145 as their contribution to ELC's Fire Fund campaign.

ELC's Wet Lab exhibit space and classroom were struck by lightning in a June 2008 evening storm. Residents of the Wabasso area heard the strike and could see the resulting blaze from miles away. Indian River County's firefighters fought the fire all night long successfully keeping the blaze from reaching other buildings including the entry pavilion, gift shop and administrative office.

ELC rebuilt the 4,500 sq ft of destroyed buildings over the last year. Funding came from insurance proceeds, donations from private individuals, grants from family foundations and government agencies, and fundraising events including walks, runs, read-a-thons, and lemonade sales. The new buildings were officially opened on May 1<sup>st</sup> at a public celebration where the firefighters and paramedics prepared and sold barbecue lunch plates. At the end of the day, they donated all proceeds to the ELC. Their efforts were spearheaded by Capt. Robert VonBuelow, Donna Garofalo, and dozens of firefighters and paramedics.

The Environmental Learning Center is located north of Vero Beach off County road 510 at the end of the Wabasso Bridge. Its 64-acre campus includes a brand new Discovery Station with aquariums, touchable exhibits, native plant gardens, picnic facilities, gift shop, and visitor center. A list of its summer ecology experiences for children and young adults may be found at [www.DiscoverELC.org](http://www.DiscoverELC.org).



**Photo caption: Firefighters and Paramedics Stacy Zedek, Donna Garofalo, Capt Robert VonBuelow, and Ryan Kruger present ELC Executive Director Holly Dill with a commemorative tee-shirt and a \$1,145 check toward ELC's Fire Fund Campaign. [Photo by Doug Graybill]**  
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