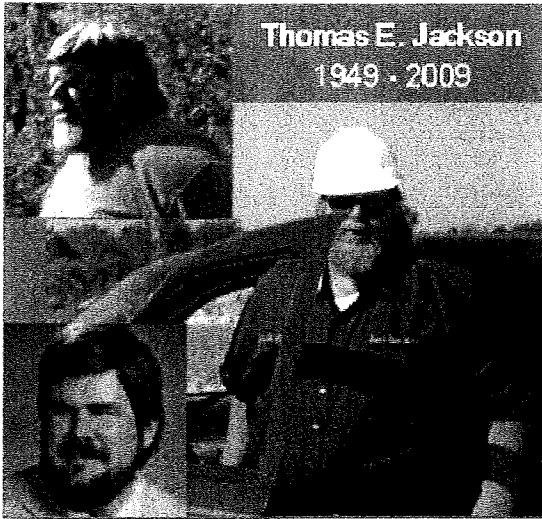


## The SEGS Remembers Tom Jackson



Jan 31, 2010 – By Dave DeWitt, SEGS President

Our SEGS President, Tom Jackson of Lakeland Florida, passed away on December 26, 2009 after a brief illness. Tom was recently elected to serve as the 2010 SEGS President, ascending from the office of Vice President where he served in 2008 and 2009, and was looking forward to an active year leading the society. Tom was 60 years old.

I first met Big Tom in 1984 when we were undergraduate students in the geology program at the University of South Florida in Tampa. We both graduated in 1986 after attending field camp together in New Mexico, and enjoyed travel experiences across the Southwest with our fellow geology classmates. After graduation Tom continued studying geology at USF and received his Masters degree before entering the work force. He was active for nearly two decades working in private sector consulting and for regulatory divisions at both the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Southwest Florida Water Management District. I stayed in contact with Tom through work associations, and more recently with the SEGS, and we shared mutual interests in hydrogeology and Florida's natural and cultural history.

Tom was passionate about Florida history pertaining to state water law and the effects of human impacts on Florida's rivers and aquifers. As a Polk County native, and a lifelong resident of Lakeland, he was deeply concerned about the diminished hydrologic condition and ecology of the Peace River. Most troubling to him was the historical disruption of base flow in the Upper Peace River from losses of spring discharge to the river due to groundwater extractions, which is especially evident at the historic Kissengen Spring site. While Tom was always pragmatic about the slim prospects of seeing Kissengen Spring flow again, he remained optimistic to the end that it could be possible to restore flow to the spring. One of his favorite sayings in this regard was, "Just follow the science", and I think Tom was always pretty good at doing that. We will all miss Tom, his sincerity, kindness, and thoughtful insights about geology.