



From the President

Mark D. Little
NABT President – 2013

Making a Commitment to NABT

With conference quickly approaching, I asked myself the question “Is NABT one of the top three professional organizations I belong to?” I believe this is a question that all of us need to ask ourselves and be able to answer with a resounding yes. For me personally, the answer is yes and I started thinking about all the personal and professional benefits that belonging to the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) provides me. There are many benefits for belonging to NABT and the following are some of the benefits I receive from being an active member. In each publication of *The American Biology Teacher*, there are many articles of interest and teaching ideas that stimulate my thinking. There are reviews written of books, products, and pieces of technology that benefit my students and me as a teacher. At the NABT Conference, I greatly enjoy attending sessions because I discover many new ideas or I see a new twist with an old idea or activity that enhances my students’ learning experience. I find visiting with and attending exhibitor sessions is beneficial because I become aware of new products that may help my teaching and I find it helpful to establish relationships with the exhibitors so that they can better understand my needs and can be of more assistance with future product purchases.

For me, the personal benefit of being a NABT member is the relationships that I have established with colleagues from middle school, high school, and higher education. Over the many years, these colleagues have become close friends that I look forward to seeing each year. These colleagues/friends are an important part of my professional development because we have many conversations at dinners (BELS), movie nights and other social events during conference about many aspects of teaching biology. These conversations have helped mold me into the professional I am today.

Revisiting the question, “Is NABT one of the top three professional organizations I belong to?” We all have our personal reasons for belonging and I shared some of my reasons. Please think about how you would explain to a colleague who is not a member of NABT why you belong? In addition, what can you do as a member of NABT to help NABT? If NABT is important to you, please consider giving a gift membership to a colleague, who is not a member of NABT. By the time this article is published, I will have given at least two memberships to younger teachers that I know. My hopes are that they experience the professional and personal benefits of belonging to NABT similar to the ones I do.

In 2013, the Long-Range Planning committee put out a survey. One of the questions asked what other benefits would NABT members like to see. The top two responses were that NABT host regional events and NABT be able to support regional topic specific workshops or summits. Over 56% of the members who responded selected these two responses, as additional NABT benefit members would like to see. To make this happen, money is required. If NABT is a one of your top three professional organizations, please consider donating \$75 to the 75th or donate to NABT to help make regional events possible. If we all contribute, regions could sponsor events and perhaps each region could send a colleague to conference in the future.

Lastly, if NABT is one of your top three professional organizations, please share a discounted membership code. Share the discounted membership code with your colleagues, on list serves and anywhere you go and

meet with science/biology colleagues. This is an easy way for ALL OF US to inform others about the benefits of being a NABT member.

If NABT is not one of your top three professional organizations, what can NABT do to become one of your top three organizations? Are there services or benefits NABT could offer? Please email NABT with suggestions at office@nabt.org.

The success of NABT is the result of everyone working together as a community. As current president of this organization, I am very fortunate to have been able to work with a very dedicated, hard-working team. As 2013 winds down, I would like to thank each member of the Board of Directors for his/ her commitment to NABT. These members are past-president Donald French, president-elect Stacey Kiser, Directors at Large/Coordinators Harry McDonald and Margaret Carroll and Directors at Large Sandra Latourelle, and Caryn Babaian. I personally wish Stacey Kiser the best in her new role as president of NABT and I am sure she will guide NABT to new and greater levels of success.

I would like to thank Dr. Bill Leonard, the editor for *The American Biology Teacher* for his years of service and dedication to the journal. Bill devoted many hours of service to the ABT and passes the torch to Dr. William McComas, who will continue the high standards of the journal. In addition, I would like to thank John Moore, for his many hours of work on the NABT Facebook page, helping NABT improve its presence in the social network media.

I would like to thank the many committee and section chairs and their members for all the time and dedication to NABT. Without your tireless work and dedication, NABT would not have accomplished what it has this past year.

I want to thank in particular Bob Melton and Jacki Reeves-Pepin. Bob is the Secretary-Treasurer for NABT and he spends many, many hours working on the budget. He also found the time to answer all my questions about a variety of issues. Jacki Reeves-Pepin is the Executive Director of NABT and she is the face of NABT. Thanks to Jacki’s dedication, NABT has the exposure and credibility in the life science community that is so very important to NABT’s sustainability.

In conclusion, NABT is MY organization and it is YOUR organization. I encourage you to become an active member and put your talents and skills to work for the betterment of NABT. With all of us working together, NABT will continue to be a leader in life science education.

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