Darwin Day—Save the Date!

By Craig Fenn

On February 12, 1809, Charles Darwin was born the son of an English doctor. Through his life he studied medicine, theology, and most famously was a naturalist. At the age of 22 he set sail on the HMS Beagle on a trip which would ultimately shape the courses of biology and science to this day.

Darwin would also be the source of a great deal of controversy as well. Soon after the publication of The Origin of Species in 1859, his ideas regarding the evolution of organisms triggered attacks and criticism. Some of that criticism has lasted to today. Regardless of where one stands on the evolution debate, it is impossible not to question Darwin’s contribution to biology.

On February 11, 2006, the CTABT will host a special event celebrating the anniversary of Darwin’s birth, now called Darwin Day. This conference will be held on the campus of Manchester Community College in Manchester, CT. This conference will focus on Darwin and evolution, and will contain many presentations and discussions dealing with evolution. There will also be a special “Lunch with Darwin” and birthday cake to celebrate Darwin’s birthday.

The keynote speaker for Darwin Day will be Dr. Kenneth Miller of Brown University, author of many books on evolution, with his most recent book entitled “Finding Darwin’s God”.

Look for an application form and more information about Darwin Day in this and future issues of CTABT News.

Events of Interest to CTABT Members

Here are some events of interest in the near future for the CTABT and CTABT members:

- The Darwin Day celebration will take place on February 11, 2006 at Manchester Community College in Manchester, CT. Sign up early for this special event!
- The next CTABT meeting will be on January 6, 2006 at CCSU at 3:30. Email zabikm@ccsu.edu for information.
- October 11-14, 2006 - The (NABT) invites you to attend its 2006 National Professional Development Conference & Exhibition, Transforming Life Science Education, at the Albuquerque Convention Center. For further information, please visit NABT’s Web site www.nabt.org, call (800) 406-0775, or e-mail: office@nabt.org.
Welcome to CTABT News

Welcome to CTABT News, the official newsletter published by the Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers (CTABT). An affiliate member group of the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT), the CTABT is a group of students and biology teachers at the high school, two-year college, and four-year college levels that seeks to increase the visibility and quality of science education in the state of Connecticut. Every quarter, CTABT News will provide useful information such as:

- Current CTABT happenings
- CTABT events such as the Life Sciences Professional Day (LSPD)
- NABT events such as the NABT Convention
- Other events that may be of interest to CTABT members
- Web sites of interest to biology teachers
- Articles about topics of interest to biology teachers
- The annual Outstanding Biology Teacher Award (OBTA)

CTABT News is published with the hopes of keeping you updated with the most current information about the CTABT, and will hopefully provide you with useful information about local and national biology education. Additional information about the CTABT can also be found at the CTABT Web site, located at the Web address www.ccsu.edu/CTABT.

The CTABT and CTABT News are, just like the science of biology, evolving and growing. If you have a suggestion for the newsletter, or if you would like to submit material to the newsletter, please contact Craig Fenn, Newsletter Editor, by E-mail at CFenn@hcc.commnet.edu. Proper grammar and source citations (if needed) are required with any submission. Any submission to CTABT News can be done by E-mail, with submissions being in either Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format. Also, submissions by regular mail are also accepted as well. Submissions to the CTABT News by regular mail should be sent to the following address:

Craig Fenn
Editor, CTABT News
Housatonic Community College
900 Lafayette Boulevard
Bridgeport, CT 06604
CFenn@hcc.commnet.edu

Thank you and I hope you enjoy this issue of CTABT News.

Sincerely,
Craig Fenn
Editor, CTABT News

CTABT Officers for 2004-2005

President – Mary Ann Zabik, Central Connecticut State University
President-Elect – Eileen Roark, Nathan Hale-Ray High School
Treasurer – Philip Jones, Manchester Community College
Secretary – Elizabeth Cowles, Eastern Connecticut State University
Minutes of the November 18, 2005 CTABT Meeting

By Elizabeth Cowles

Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers
November 18, 2005
Central Connecticut State University

I. Present: Elizabeth Cowles, Tiffany Doan, Craig Fenn, Sharon Gusky, Tom Harrington, Phil Jones, Wes Klein, Roger LaFrance, Jonathon Morris, Beth Nicholson, Eileen Roark, Jeff Sack, Jon Wilksa, Mary Ann Zabik

a. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 PM.
b. The minutes from the September 30, 2005 meeting were approved.

2. Craig plans to send out the newsletter/winter addition between December 10 and 15. Please submit articles as 1-2 page Word documents. Mary Ann will send the OBTA press release. Craig’s contact information is 203-332-5159; cfenn@hcc.commnet.edu.

3. Eileen Roark is the incoming president; the other officers begin their duties on May 1, 2006. The positions are president-elect, secretary, and treasurer.

4. Darwin Day is sponsored by Addison-Wesley/Benjamin Cummings (reps: Kathy Campbell and Tristen Kendall) and Prentice Hall (rep: Sandi Hakanson.) The keynote speaker, Kenneth Miller from Brown University, does not want an honorarium. Jen Gresham of the Jane Goodall Roots and Shoots Institute requested $200 for travel and a $200 honorarium; Kathy Campbell is sponsoring her. Robert Gendron from Indiana University of Pennsylvania needs ~$400 for travel.

Darwin Day was discussed at length.

a. Each registrant will be asked to prioritize the workshop offerings (top 3) from the 10 offerings and there are five in each time slot. We may ask popular speakers to double-up and offer their particular workshop twice.
b. A box lunch will be served at 12:30 with Charles Darwin (Donald Bockler, NABT) speaking in the auditorium at 1:10 PM. The keynote address begins at 1:45 PM.
c. The MCC folks will reserve the 360-seat auditorium, two computer laboratories, 2 biology laboratories, and 3 inside class rooms, and two Village rooms.
d. Exhibitors, such as Fisher Scientific, VWR, Evidetek, BioRad, and Flynn, will be invited. The exhibitors, including CTABT and NABT can set up tables in the rotundas. If the exhibitors can not attend in person, they will be asked to send catalogs. Exhibitors will be asked to donate door prizes.
e. Registration fees: Early Bird by February 1, 2006: $35 nonmembers, $30 CTABT members; at the door (after February 1): $50 nonmembers, $45 members. Students are $20. Fees will purchase lunch, break refreshments and birthday cake. Ressponse forms will be sent to Phil Jones. Registration forms will be available on the website; a note on the forms will indicate that space is limited.
f. The event will be advertised by email, and through other local NABT organizations in MA, RI, NY, NJ, and NH.
g. Weather cancellations will be noted on the MCC hotline (860-512-3002) and on the MCC website mcc.commnet.edu. Cancellation information will be on the Darwin Day advertisement and registration forms.
h. Mary Ann asked people to volunteer for small committees such as advertising, food, door prizes, exhibitors, and name tags/folders.
i. Liz will find gifts for the guest speakers and Jon Morris will work on media coverage for the event.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.

The next meetings are December 13, 2005 MCC (room LRCA125) at 3:30 PM and January 6, 2006 at CCSU.

Editor’s Note: Minutes from the September 30, 2005 CTABT meeting are found on Page 4 of this issue of CTABT News.

The Mission of the CTABT

From the CTABT Constitution

The CTABT is an affiliate group of the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT). The CTABT was founded in that Fall of 2003 by high school, 2-year and 4-year college biology teachers. The CTABT traces its roots to the original committee that organized the first annual Life Sciences Professional Day (LSPD). The LSPD continues now as one of the CTABT’s flagship events.

The members of the CTABT strive to:

1. Promote the professional growth and development of biology teachers in Connecticut to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom and community.
2. Encourage and stimulate state and local activities that will keep teachers up-to-date in their knowledge of the biological sciences, aid them in developing and sharing ideas for better teaching and provide them with a forum for consideration of state and local issues that effect biological education.
3. Provide information, guidelines, programs, and activities that confront questions regarding science, society, and the future, and to stimulate teachers and students to deal responsibly with those often value-laden issues that derive from science and technology as they relate to individuals and collective needs and wants.
### Minutes of the September 30, 2005 CTABT Meeting

**By Elizabeth Cowles**

Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers  
September 30, 2005  
Manchester Community College

1. Present: Mary Ann Zabik, Elizabeth Cowles, Wes Klein, Jonathon Morris, Phil Jones, Joanne Russell, Eileen Roark, Susan Haines Mathews; guest: Tristen Kendall (Benjamin Cummings)
   - The meeting was called to order at 6:15 PM.

2. Darwin Day, February 11, 2006, was discussed. Benjamin Cummings is sponsoring a speaker; possibilities include Lynn Margulis (UMass) and Ken Miller (Brown). Several workshop ideas were presented including Eileen/Galapagos Islands, systematics/taxonomy using a phylum of fictitious organisms (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), Bonobos (Cornell University), the evolution of the Earth, the Howard Hughes/Holiday lecture series on evolution (December event), and the DNA EpiCenter (Abby Demars). We will distribute ideas to see which workshops would be the most popular, and plan accordingly.

3. We need the keynote speaker, a list of the possible workshops and presenters, ask for the top three choices for the mailing. All CTABT members are asked for mailing lists, so we have the widest distribution of information as possible.

4. The 2005 CT OBTA recipient is Paula Meachen of New Canaan High School; the award will be presented this evening by last year’s OBTA, Eileen Roark. The lecture is “Biological Methods in Forensic Science: Biology Solves Crimes” presented by Eric Carita of the Forensic Science Laboratory, State of Connecticut.

The next meeting is November 18, 2005 at 3:30 PM.

*Editor’s Note: The minutes for the November 18, 2005 meeting are found on page 3 of this issue of CTABT News.*

### Paula Meachen: Connecticut’s 2005 Outstanding Biology Teacher

**By Craig Fenn, with information from Mary Ann Zabik**

On September 30, 2005, Connecticut’s OBTA was awarded to Paula Meachen of New Canaan High School in a ceremony at Manchester Community College. The keynote address was delivered by Eric Carita of the Connecticut State Forensic Science Laboratory. She also attended an OBTA Honors Luncheon at the NABT National Convention in Milwaukee.

Paula received her BA in Biology at the College of Notre Dame in Maryland, her MS in Biology at Southern Connecticut State University, and her MA in Teaching at Fairfield University. She currently teaches high school biology at New Canaan High School. In Paula’s words, “I hope to instill in [my students] the value of education and learning as a lifelong process as it has been for me, a respect for the living world and one another by accepting the diversity of the planet and its inhabitants, and to recognize their own personal value.”

This description of the OBTA is provided by Mary Ann Zabik: “Each year the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) in conjunction with Prentice Hall, Leica Microsystems, Inc., and Ken-A-Vision presents one high school teacher from each state with the Outstanding Biology Teacher Award (OBTA). The Connecticut OBTA Selection Committee accepted nominations, applications, observed several extremely outstanding biology teachers, and from them we chose this year’s recipient. Criteria for the award include teaching ability, experience, inventiveness, initiative, inherent teaching strengths, and cooperativeness in the school and community.”

CTABT members recently received the OBTA nomination forms in the mail. Please use them to nominate a candidate for OBTA and return them to Mary Ann Zabik as soon as possible. Maybe next year you could be Connecticut’s Outstanding Biology Teacher!
2005 in Review

By Craig Fenn

Just like one of the themes of Darwin Day will be evolution, the CTABT is also undergoing evolution as well. Many wonderful events occurred this year, as well as the planning of many wonderful events for next year as well (such as Darwin Day). Here is a short overview of what happened in the CTABT in 2005:

We Became Official!
In May, The CTABT was recognized by the NABT as an Affiliate Member. Being an affiliate member allows us many new privileges that the CTABT did not have before recognition.

The Outer Island Trip
The CTABT made their annual trip to the Stewart B. McKinney Wildlife Refuge in Outer Island in June. Clayton Penniman of Central Connecticut State University led our tour of the island, examining many different forms of plant, algal, and animal life.

OBTA Awarded to Paula Meachen
On September 30, Paula Meachen of New Canaan High School received the OBTA during a ceremony at Manchester Community College.

New CTABT Members
Since the CTABT’s strength is in its members, it is the pleasure of the CTABT to announce the following people who have joined the CTABT in 2005:

Tiffany Doan
Valerie Gange
Marjorie Guerin
Heather Harkins
Tom Harrington
Bruce Kopec
Susan Haines Matthews
Paula Meachen
Peter Osei
Jeffrey Sack
Catherine Smith
Brian Vitelli
Marianne Walczak
Chris Williams
George Wine
Sarah Woerz

As you can see, 2005 was a great year for the CTABT, and hopefully 2006 can be even better!

Look for your registration to Darwin Day
In this issue of CTABT News!
**Useful Web Sites for Biology Teachers**

By Craig Fenn

This edition of Web Sites has a distinct evolution flavor in this issue of CTABT News.

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/
PBS: Evolution—An interactive Web site dealing with the PBS series on evolution. Learn about Darwin, how evolution works, how extinctions occur, and the debate of evolution versus creation.

Wikipedia: Evolution—This Web site is hosted by Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia. This site provides a basic description of the history of evolution and the mechanisms of evolution.

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/origins/
Nova: Origins– A Web site devoted to exploring the history of life on Earth and in the universe. Another interactive Web site hosted by PBS.

http://www.hhmi.org/lectures/
Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s (HHMI) Holiday Lectures on Science—Every year the HHMI hosts a lecture in early December dealing with a specific topic in science. This year the topic is evolution. You may view a webcast of the lecture on the Web site, or you may order a DVD of the lecture once they are available.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/darwin/index.shtml
BBC Education: Evolution—This Web site, hosted by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), contains biographies of important figures in evolution, and also contains the full text of Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*.

http://www.darwinday.org/
Darwin Day–The official Web site for the celebration of Darwin’s birthday which the CTABT will itself be celebrating in 2006. The Web site also contains information about Darwin’s life and the theory of evolution.

http://www.life.umd.edu/emeritus/reveal/pbio/darwin/darwinindex.html
The Darwin-Wallace 1858 Evolution Paper—This is a Web site describing the work of Darwin and Alfred Wallace, who also developed a theory of evolution very similar to Darwin’s.

http://evolution.berkeley.edu/
Understanding Evolution—Hosted by the University of California, this is an educational site dealing with the theory of evolution.

Know of a Web site that may be useful to other biology teachers? E-mail the address of the Web site and a short description of the Web site to Craig Fenn, Editor of CTABT News, at CFenn@hcc.commnet.edu.

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**CollegeBoard Course Audits of Advanced Placement Courses**

By Elizabeth Cowles

The CollegeBoard is requiring audits for all Advanced Placement (AP) courses beginning with the 2007-8 academic year. Draft audits were sent this fall and the final versions will be distributed in April 2006; materials can be submitted until April 1, 2007. Schools will be authorized to use the AP designation on approved courses. The CollegeBoard posted details about the process on the AP Central website

http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/article/0,3045,151-165-0-46361,00.html

The purposes for this new requirement are to ensure that schools are following the curricular guidelines and that any course designated as AP is of college-level rigor. Misuses of the AP designation led to concern among the colleges in awarding credit, therefore, these audits will be instituted.

Course descriptions, textbook recommendations, and the audit forms are available as PDF forms on AP Central.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Elizabeth Cowles coordinates the AP Biology Summer Institute at Eastern Connecticut State University. She is an Associate Professor of Biology at ECSU.
My First NABT Convention

By Paula Meachen

In early October, 2005, I attended the NABT Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin as a First Time Attendee and Outstanding Biology Teacher Award (OBTA) Recipient. This was one of the more memorable experiences of my teaching career. It was intellectually stimulating, informative, and allowed me the opportunity to meet colleagues from the US, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii who are as enthusiastic about teaching Biology as I am. Workshops and presentations occurred in three adjacent buildings, the Midwest Airlines Convention Center, and the Hyatt and Hilton Hotels which helped immensely in making travel time between programs very efficient. There were 20-25 selections of programs relating to diverse topics in Biology education on the high school and college levels, and every program lasted one to one and a half hours. It was difficult to choose which to attend because they were all so interesting. They afforded me the opportunity to bring something new to my classroom, to update my background information, and to give me new ideas for approaches and strategies to what I already teach. It was nice to be able to move around the buildings between sessions and not be confined to any set location. Although I traveled with MaryAnn Zabik and Eileen Roark, we all had slightly different agendas when we arrived and I had no problem venturing off on my own. When you put teachers together, there is always something to discuss and when those teachers are committed to excellence in Biology education, it becomes absolutely invigorating!

My schedule was packed during the two and one half days I was there but it was never tiring. It began with the Welcoming Reception on Wednesday Evening which consisted primarily of introductions of the officers of the NABT and feasting on food and drink. Thursday morning began at 7:15 am with the First Timers Breakfast and an interesting presentation of recent research on obesity. I attended programs continuously until 4:00 pm when the Exhibit Hall opened with yet another reception including food and drink. Here we stocked up on marvelous materials and freebees from the exhibitors who were eager to answer your questions but were never overbearing. This lasted until the early evening. On Friday, a Symposium on Evolution and the Environment occupied most of my day. The Symposium consisted of biologists sharing their most recent research on a variety of topics. At about noon I attended the Honors Luncheon where I was presented with the OBTA for Connecticut. Following this, OBTA recipients from many states attended a Share-a-thon, and then I returned to the symposium for a couple more presentations. The symposium ended with a very large group discussion on the impact of individuals in communities who support Creationism and Intelligent Design and their attempt to implement their agenda into Biology curricula in local school districts.

I would be remiss if I did not relate some of the more interesting escapades of our trip which evolved on the Saturday of our return trip. The day began on a positive note as we were all able to go to one more workshop before departing for the airport. We began by arriving at the wrong terminal (fortunately we were just a few feet away) and were informed by the airline personnel that he didn’t see how we could possibly make our connecting flight in Chicago for Bradley. Whoever scheduled our flight plans didn’t leave us enough time. “If you really move quickly”, he said, “there is a small chance you could make it but unfortunately, the baggage won’t.” It would arrive later in the evening. I decided to keep my two bags which were carry on size with me as I live about an hour and a half from the airport and the alternative sounded too complicated! Unfortunately, I had packed all my freebees from exhibitors as well as handouts from presenters in the one suitcase that I thought would be checked but now was forced to carry. If traveling without the luggage wasn’t disappointing enough, we were also informed that we and our baggage were randomly selected for a complete security search. Our laughter abruptly ceased when we realized he wasn’t joking. I couldn’t help but wonder how three female teachers obviously coming from a convention could be a threat to security. Charlie’s Angels came to mind as the security personnel waved her wand across my body. We weren’t even on the plane fifteen minutes when it landed in Chicago at 12:45 pm and our connection was leaving at 1:15 pm. We were getting anxious when it took 15 to 20 minutes for the aircraft to pull to a stop. We jettisoned from the plane at the C hanger and began our jog to the F hanger. As I gasped for air from the weight of the suitcase with the reams of paper and books, Eileen came to my rescue and offered to take the heavier piece of luggage. We could not see the sign for the shuttle to take us to the F hanger because we were running in the wrong direction. When we finally did arrive at the shuttle, Eileen had to convince the driver to wait for me as I was trailing behind. We exhaustingly embarked on our flight home and in less than five minutes the plane took off. The checked baggage never made it on our plane and I was very grateful that Eileen came to my assistance.

Attending the NABT Convention was an incredible learning opportunity which I believe more biology teachers should experience. It revitalizes and rejuvenates an excitement about teaching Biology. It is so easy to get caught up in the everyday duties of teaching such as grading papers, committee work, dealing with administrators and parents, that we sometimes lose track of why we became biology teachers in the first place. We are passionate about the subject matter!

Paula Meachen teaches biology at New Canaan High School and is the 2005 winner of the Outstanding Biology Teacher Award (OBTA).
National Association of Biology Teachers

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Complete and return to:
National Association of Biology Teachers
P.O. Box 791048
Baltimore, MD 21279-1048
FAX (703)264-7778

☐ YES, I want to join the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) and receive all member benefits, including:
- 9 issues of The American Biology Teacher
- monthly electronic issues of News & Views
- convention and publication discounts
- and more!

Dr./M __________________________

Street Address __________________________

City __________________________

State __________ Zip __________

This is my ☐ home ☐ business address.

E-mail Address __________________________

Fax __________________________

Payment Method

NABT accepts checks drawn on U.S. banks and international money orders (payable to NABT), MasterCard, VISA, and Purchase Orders.
☐ Check ☐ Purchase Order # __________ (please attach)
☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

If paying by credit card, please complete the information below:

Acct. # __________________________
Expiration date __________________________
Card holder __________________________
Signature __________________________

Professional Information

Please complete the following to help NABT better serve your needs:

1. Professional Class
   B ☐ Biology Teacher
   D ☐ Department Head
   S ☐ Supervisor/Administrator
   T ☐ Teacher Educator
   U ☐ Student
   O ☐ Other __________________________

2. Teaching Level
   EL ☐ Elementary
   JH ☐ Middle/Junior High
   HS ☐ High School
   JC ☐ Two-Year College
   CU ☐ Four-Year College/University
   O ☐ Other __________________________

3. Interest in NABT Sections
   A ☐ Elementary/Middle School Section
   B ☐ High School Section
   C ☐ Two-Year College Section
   D ☐ Four-Year College Section
   E ☐ Role & Status of Women in Biology Education
   F ☐ Multicultural Affairs Section
   R ☐ Retired Section

4. Do not provide my name & address to other companies ☐

NOTE: $40 of membership dues goes toward a subscription to The American Biology Teacher, for each year joined, except spouse members, in which case only the sponsoring active member receives a subscription to be shared by the two persons.

Type of Membership

☐ FULL MEMBER $70/yr
☐ COMPREHENSIVE MEMBER $95/yr (includes two NABT books)
☐ FOREIGN MEMBER* $110/yr (U.S. check or international money order only)
☐ STUDENT MEMBER $35/yr (open to regularly matriculated students not in full-time employment)
Signature of faculty member required below:

☐ SPOUSE MEMBER $30/yr
   (when accompanied by an active membership)
☐ SUSTAINING MEMBER ($625/yr)
☐ ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER ($145/yr)

*U.S. rates apply to citizens of Canada and Mexico.
Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers

Membership Form

The Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers (CTABT) is a new affiliate member group of the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT). As a member of CTABT you will receive a newsletter, discounted registration to the annual Life Science Professional Day meeting, and the chance to network locally with other biology teachers.

Yearly dues for CTABT membership are $20.00. You do not have to be a member of the NABT to belong, but if you are interested, the membership for the NABT is also enclosed. Learn more about the NABT at www.nabt.org.

If you would like to become a member of the Connecticut Association of Biology Teachers, please fill out the information below and mail this form to:

| Phil Jones  |
| MS#17      |
| Manchester Community College |
| Great Path |
| Manchester, CT 06045-1046 |

_____ I want to join CTABT. I am enclosing a check for $20.00.
_____ Student membership $10.00
(For all memberships, make checks payable to “CTABT.”)
_____ I am currently a member of NABT.

Name:______________________________________________________
Home Address:______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
Home telephone:________________________
Work telephone:________________________
Work place/address:__________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
Email address:______________________________________________