



Students in the field at Emigrant Pass, east of Death Valley near Shoshone, CA (*photo courtesy Eric Riggs*).

Hot Topics

President's Corner

On behalf of the Executive Committee I am pleased to welcome you to the 1st quarterly NAGT e-News magazine. Your national officers plan to use this forum as a way to provide you notice of important education-related events, to assist you in planning and to foster a greater sense of community within NAGT. The format and delivery of the e-newsletter will evolve as we add more content. However, in general the pages and text will typically include a President's message, ideas for collaborations and venues where you can network, calendar items, deadlines, and highlighted teaching resources. We also plan to include short summary on "hot topics." We also hope to include section news of broad interest to our community, commentaries and reviews. We plan to add content as needed and look forward to responding to your needs. This letter is intended to augment NAGTnews that often includes time sensitive items. Let us know what you think, what you would like to see included in this e-magazine and how we can make it better!

Dave Steer; President
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Webinar Opportunity for Higher Ed. Faculty

In order to learn more about NSF's Course, Curriculum, and Laboratory Improvement (CCLI) program, two webinars especially for geoscience/physical geography faculty are being offered. If you are unfamiliar with the CCLI program, or you would like to know more about the current solicitation, register for a webinar on Friday, April 17, 2009; 3:00 to 4:30 PM/EST.

Geosciences CCLI program director, Jill Singer, will spend the first 30 or 40 minutes of the webinar highlighting the program components and spend the last 45 minutes responding to your questions and comments. In preparation for the webinar, you might want to read the CCLI solicitation and become familiar with the three 'types' of proposals that can be submitted (<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2009/nsf09529/nsf09529.pdf>). The upcoming May deadline is for Type 1 proposals only, with budget limits of \$200,000 for projects lasting 1-3 years.

To register go to <https://nsf50.webex.com/>

- Click on "Upcoming"
- Choose **CCLIGEOREV** on either **April 8th** or **April 17th** and click on "Register"
- Enter your name and email and submit your registration
- You will receive a confirmation via email that you are registered

Note: This Web Seminar is only for College faculty as it falls under the Division of Undergraduate Education.

Help Approve the New NAGT Constitution

The Draft Constitution has been revised in order to improve efficiency by streamlining the document. You can review the new NAGT Constitution and Bylaws here: <http://nagt.org/nagt/organization/constitution.html>.

Some necessary legal language was inserted in Article III Section 1. Several non-essential elements were moved from the Constitution to the Bylaws and the procedures for amending the Bylaws were significantly changed.

The new Constitution Article VI, Sections 1 and 2 allow Bylaws to be modified by Executive Committee action. Due process described there allows multiple avenues for Sections to participate in such actions.

Members will be asked to approve the new Constitution during the 2009 election of new officers in May. We need all possible votes to approve the new Constitution. Please vote!

Meetings and Collaborations

GSA Annual Meeting Abstract Deadline (August 11th): NAGT is sponsoring 29 education-related sessions at the annual meeting held in Portland OR from 18-21 October. Submit your abstract here:

<http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/2009/abstracts.htm>.

American Geologic Institute Congressional Visits Day (May 28-29; Washington DC): This is an opportunity to explain the value of science and to request needed investments in research and education. Follow this link for more information:

<http://www.setcvd.org/cvd2009/index.html>.

Science Standards Under Attack in Texas

NAGT recently asked its Texas members to contact their State Board of Education member and object to proposed changes to state science standards. Some proposed amendments to those standards created inaccuracies and confusion by suggesting differing theories for the origin of the Universe and by questioning planetary differentiation, plate tectonics and transitional fossils. It also came to NAGT's attention that similar, non-scientific amendments to biology standards were being proposed. We also encouraged our Texas members to act on these issues before the approval meeting held in late March.

Despite the efforts of NAGT and many organizations around the country, creationist members of the State Board of Education voted together to impose a critical thinking standard. That standard calls for teaching "strengths and weaknesses" of theories in biology, chemistry, physics and Earth and Space Science. They also modified language in the standards that may allow teachers to question evolution of cells, gaps in the fossil record and the age of the Universe. More information is available at

<http://ncseweb.org/news/2009/03/science-setback-texas-schools-004708>.

Section News

As of the SE-GSA meeting this month, March 2009, SE Section has a new President:

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Editorial

by Dave Steer, NAGT President

As geoscience educators, we embrace the fundamental nature of change because it is so embedded in understanding our discipline. So it comes as no surprise that NAGT is an organization that embraces change. National and section officers rotate in and out, public perceptions of our discipline and the overall state of education ebb and wane and our interests evolves as we reach different stages of our careers. Additionally, NAGT serves a diverse audience of professionals that include informal educators, K-12 teachers, and faculty from 2- and 4-year colleges and universities. Meeting the needs of that population requires change, albeit change that is sensitive to your needs. For example, NAGT's growth necessitated a transition to a compensated part-time Executive Director. That transition required policy and legal reviews, audits, property transfers and extensive institutional knowledge provided by many individuals throughout NAGT. We thank you for your assistance and support during that transition that is now firmly in place. More recently, we moved to a new editorial team for the Journal of Geoscience Education as Carl Drummond elected to move on to other interests. He played a pivotal role in shaping the present content and focus of the Journal and we thank him for his many years of dedicated service. Our new co-editors, Julie Libarkin and Joe Elkins, seek to further evolve the Journal by soliciting submissions in research, curriculum and commentary tracks and eventually adding real-time publication with on-line access and functionality. Such changes are necessary to maintain and grow our library subscriptions, to meet the needs of our international colleagues and to better serve our K-12 members. We certainly intend to continue physical printing of the Journal, but also look forward to enhancing the services we provide to the entire organization. Part of that transition includes publication of this more informal e-newsletter. We also intend to keep the more brief email notifications active as needed. The Executive Committee asks for your patience as we move through these changes and look forward to your feedback as new services become available and new opportunities present themselves. We look forward to continued service to you, the NAGT community.

Refer a Colleague

Invite a colleague you know to become an NAGT member. Send them this e-news magazine with the link to our membership form <http://nagt.org/nagt/membership.html> .