

Bob has taught science to North Bend Central Junior-Senior High School students for 32 years and, over the years, has become known as the 'tree guy' for his 20-year role as curator of a 22-acre arboretum and outdoor classroom on the school's property. He attributes the plantings in the Franklin-Cotterell Greens Arboretum to student labor and enjoys hearing his students declare: "That's 'our' tree!" Bob has taught general science, earth science, anatomy/physiology, science research, biology I and II as well as global science to the school's students in grades 7-12 for during those 32 years. He is now teaching the children of former students, many of whom have gone on to become doctors, physician assistants, nurses, physical therapists, pharmacists, radiologists and researchers.

Throughout his teaching career, he has been active in professional associations, including the Nebraska Earth Science Education Network, the National Education Association, the Nebraska State Education Association, the North Bend Central Education Association, the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Science and the Nebraska Academy of Science.

For the first 10 years at North Bend, he worked as both a teacher and a wrestling coach, serving as president of the Nebraska Scholastic Wrestling Coaches' Association and a member of the Nebraska Coaches Association.

Among his awards are the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math/Science Teaching; the Significant Impact Teacher by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Honors Program; Outstanding High School Teacher Award from Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society, University of Nebraska at Kearney; and the SciMat Fellowship from the Council for Basic Education.

Bob received a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in science education. While continuing to teach at North Bend, he also has served as an adjunct faculty member over the years at Metropolitan Community College, Midland Lutheran College, Doane College and Peru State College.

## QUOTES FROM BOB:

"I do not want my junior students to study biology. I want them to become biologists. I want to change their dispositions. I want them to develop 'seeing' eyes, not just vision. I have them collect and prepare both insects and plants as the introductory unit for Biology II. They learn so many lessons merely by accident during that experience that I could not teach them by standing in the front of the room. They begin to 'see' things they had never seen before but that have been there all along."

"I try to make my students scientists, not teach them science!"

"Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, 'The only source of knowledge is experience.' I try to provide those experiences for my students as often as I can."

"I love planning those learning experiences for my kids."



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**2011**  
**NEBRASKA**  
**Teacher of the Year**

**BOB FEURER**  
 Science Teacher

North Bend Central Senior High School  
 North Bend, Nebraska

# WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

## Passion for Teaching, Philosophy Key

Teachers must be the best they can be every day for the most important profession in the world. As a teacher, you must be certain your students leave your classroom every day with more than they entered. How can you do that when you may not have all the resources you need? Actually, you do have the personal resources you need. Your classroom passion and philosophy determine how successful you are day-to-day. For support, reach out to your colleagues, education organizations and the other opportunities that readily exist and don't require much in the way of financial investment.

## Teaching Thinking

Has anyone ever taught you how to be smart? I missed that class in college! As teachers, we assume our students know what it takes to be intelligent. Do they? Habits of Mind (Habits of Mind are dispositions that are skillfully and mindfully employed by characteristically intelligent, successful people of all walks of life when they are confronted with problems, the solution to which are not immediately apparent. The HOMs were identified by Art Costa.) are a framework for teaching kids and adults how to get the most out of whatever endeavor they undertake. Give your students a jump start on intelligent behaviors. Allow yourself the luxury of developing the skills needed to coach them to improved intelligence. Teach your students how to be thoughtful not just as a once-in-a-while behavior but as a habit!

## Nebraska Land

Anyone who has researched Nebraska's geologic past will testify that it is not simple story. Changes over millions of years has made our state unique and allowed it to be a keystone in the development of the nation. I have come to appreciate the role that geology, meteorology and politics played in shaping our state's history. This presentation focuses on those changes as well as my own discoveries during a summer research project that has shaped many of the lessons I share with my students.

## Creating a School Culture of High Expectations

In 2003, the Omaha World-Herald newspaper published a story about the success of students in their first year at the University of Nebraska. The reporter learned that, in that year, North Bend Central graduates were the most academically successful, topping all freshmen from any school with at least 50 students enrolled. The culture at North Bend Central — and the culture of any other school — greatly influences the success of its students. Your school can benefit your students and build a culture of success by focusing on what your school represents. In this session, we will talk about building a school culture of high expectations.



Photos courtesy of Al Koontz