

ALLEGHENY MOUNTAIN SECTION NEWSLETTER

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February, 2000

DAVE WELLS, EDITOR

Governor's Report

George Bradley, Duquesne University

Happy 2000, everyone! The winter meetings were, in a word, wintry. I was fortunate to be going to the meeting as governor. The drive down on Monday was cold but clear. Many people driving to the meeting on Tuesday were caught in bad traffic due to a small amount of snow and icy roads. The weather was very cold the rest of the week, and a good deal of snow fell on Thursday. The 4000 MAA members attending the meetings still found much of interest on the program and opportunities to sightsee with few tourists!

A number of important issues were discussed at the Board of Governors meeting. Good news was that after a steady decline, membership in the MAA rose last year by 3% and looks like it will rise again this year.

The MAA has decided to discontinue publishing placement exams. Laws in several states require validation of the exams through an extensive statistical analysis. To do this would be prohibitively expensive. When the exams were created, no others were widely available. Now many of the testing agencies offer exams. The MAA has allowed anyone using the exams to continue using them and to duplicate them without paying any additional fees to the MAA.

April is Mathematics Awareness Month. The theme this year is "Math Spans All Dimensions." The poster for the Month is very clever. We hope that student chapters or other groups at each institution can sponsor an activity honoring the Month. The website for Mathematics Awareness Month

features Flatland online, and also people like author Madeleine L'Engle and choreographer Julie Strandberg.

The MAA Mathfest, which will be held at UCLA this summer, promises to have several interesting speakers. Several side trips, such as to the fabulous Getty Museum, are also planned. It should be a great meeting. Next January the joint meeting will be in New Orleans. Mathfest 2001 is going to be held in Madison, Wisconsin. Please consult a future FOCUS for details of the meetings.

The first SIGMAA (special interest group of the MAA) has been approved. I hope that many more are in the planning stages. They will allow members in the MAA to interact with others with common concerns.

MAA Online is doing well and offering more than ever. Some new features include being able to order books, renew memberships, and change personal information. I urge everyone to take a look. Speaking of books, the MAA publishes a number of very interesting books each year. Check them out in FOCUS, Online, or catalogue.

The liveliest discussion at the Governors' meeting involved a proposed change in the bylaws, which was to eliminate the phrase that each membership in the MAA includes a journal. This change would be necessary if eventually the dues structure would be uncoupled. No one is proposing the elimination of any journals, or to have MAA members not subscribe to a journal. The proposal was eventually tabled. The revision of our section bylaws was approved.

Enrollments are up in all high school and middle school contests sponsored by the MAA. The 2001 IMO (International Mathematical Olympiad), which is being hosted by the US, is looking for volunteer assistants. The IMO will be held in Washington, DC.

The MAA is urging its college and university faculty to increase contacts with local primary and secondary schools.

The MAA would like to know how it can improve its member services. Some members who have not been targeted for their special needs are graduate students, retired faculty, and mid-career faculty.

Marcia Sward was named Emerita Executive Director. The announcement was accompanied by a standing ovation. Tina Straley, the new executive director, is keeping very busy but enjoying her new position. The MAA held an open house to show off their beautifully refurbished office space.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Section Meeting in April. I will be meeting with the institutional representatives. If you have any questions about my report or suggestions about how the MAA can better serve you, please send your suggestions to me or to your institutional representative.

Message from the Chair

Tom Keagy, Duquesne University

Plans are being finalized for the annual Spring Meeting of the Allegheny Mountain Section of the Mathematical Association of America, to be held on the South Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County on April 7-8. The meeting will have several new features that we believe will help make the first meeting of the new millennium both memorable and productive. Invited speakers will include David Stone, Professor of

Mathematics at Georgia Southern University and Chair of the MAA Committee on Sections; Jonathan Caulkins, Professor of Operations Research at Carnegie-Mellon University; and Warren Hickman, Professor of Mathematics at Westminster College and the most recent winner of our Section Teaching Award.

In addition to the traditional full schedule of student talks, a panel has been organized to discuss career options for mathematics majors. Cheryl Leech will act as moderator for the group, which will include Ed Markoff, Manager of Organizational Effectiveness and Global Information Services for ALCOA; Cheryl Giacomino, Assistant Vice President and Senior Metrics Analyst for PNC Bank; James Kessing, Senior Vice President for Medrad, Inc.; and Joseph Hohman, an actuary for Erie Insurance.

The Section has been awarded a grant that will enable us to take the initial steps toward creating a Section NExT program to support young faculty in their first three years of teaching post-secondary level mathematics. Interested faculty are encouraged to learn more about this program by contacting Tamara Hummel through the webpage <http://webpub.alleg.edu/employee/t/thummel/next>, where information about applying to the program can be found. Two events related to the new Section NExT program have been scheduled. Todd Will from Davidson College will speak to the group on Saturday morning, and David Stone will lead a discussion during the Saturday lunch period to help us determine the future direction of the program. Everyone (both junior and senior faculty) interested in the development of this program is strongly encouraged to attend the luncheon planning session.

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Spring Meeting

Friday, April 7, 2000

<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Event</u>
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1:00 - 5:00	5 th floor lobby, G Bldg.	Registration
2:00 - 3:30	Room G404	Section Officers Meeting
2:00 - 6:00	Mezzanine	Book and Technology Exhibit
4:30 - 5:30	Theater	Invited Address*
5:30 - 6:00	Room G509	Department Liaisons Meeting
5:30 - 6:30	Cafeteria	Social Hour
6:30 - 7:30	Cafeteria	Dinner
7:45 - 9:40		Student and Faculty Talks
9:45 - ???		Pizza Party and Math Puzzle Contest

Saturday, April 8, 2000

7:30 - 8:45	Cafeteria	Buffet Breakfast
8:00 - 8:45	Cafeteria	Business Meeting
8:00 - 9:00	5 th floor lobby	Registration
9:00 - 12:00	Mezzanine	Book and Technology Exhibit
9:00 - 10:00	Theater	Invited Address*
10:15 - 11:15		Panel: Career Opportunities in Math Sciences*
10:15 - 11:15		Section NExT Session: Todd Will, Davidson College
10:15 - 11:15		Panel: Thinking About Retirement*
11:30 - 12:30	Theater	Invited Address*
12:30 - ???	Cafeteria	Lunch

Part of the cafeteria will be reserved for those interested in planning the Section NExT project.

* - Invited speakers and panelists are listed in "Message from the Chair" on page 2.

Directions to CCAC South Campus

From the North:

Go south on I-79 to I-279 to Pittsburgh. Take I-579 across the Veteran's Bridge. Follow the signs for the Liberty Bridge.

Cross the Liberty Bridge and go through the Liberty Tunnel. Stay in the right lane and follow the signs for Route 51 South.

Continue about 10 miles on Route 51, past the entrance to Century III Mall.

At Century III Dodge and Bowser Pontiac there is a traffic signal. Turn left at the signal onto Lewis Run Road. At the next traffic signal, turn right and you will see the entrance to South Campus.

Follow the campus map in this newsletter to Parking Area G.

From the Northeast:

Go to the eastern end of I-376 on Route 22 (in Monroeville, near Turnpike Exit 6).

Take I-376 West to the Swissvale Exit.

Turn left onto Braddock Avenue and go past Edgewood Town Center. Continue on Braddock Avenue across the Rankin Bridge.

Turn left onto Route 837. Go past Kennywood Park and through Duquesne and Dravosburg.

At a traffic signal with an Amoco station on your left, turn up Coal Valley Road.

At the top of Coal Valley Road, turn right onto Route 885. South Campus is about a mile ahead on your right.

From the Southeast:

Take I-76 (Turnpike) to I-70 West.

Take I-70 West to Route 51 North exit.

Take Route 51 North to the traffic signal at Century III Dodge and Bowser Pontiac.

Turn right, then follow the directions to the campus as from the North above.

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Directions to CCAC South Campus
(continued)

From the West:

Take Route 22/30 to Route 51 South exit.
Take Route 51 South past Century III Mall.
Follow the directions to the campus as from the North above.

From the South:

Take I-79 North to I-279 North.
Take I-279 North to Route 51 South exit.
Take Route 51 South past Century III Mall.
Follow the directions to the campus as from the North above.

Lodging at the Spring Meeting

Comfort Inn (412-653-6600)
1340 Lebanon Church Road
West Mifflin, PA 15122
\$67.00 + tax if reserved by March 18

Hampton Inn (412-650-1000)
1550 Lebanon Church Road
West Mifflin, PA 15122
\$89.00 + tax if reserved by March 20

Mention MAA to get the reduced rate.

Summer Short Course

The Sixteenth Annual Summer Short Course of the Allegheny Mountain Section will be offered at Allegheny College on June 19-23, 2000. The course, entitled "Teaching Statistics: Data, Concepts, Activities", will be presented by Allan Rossman (Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA 17013, phone 717-245-1668, email rossman@dickinson.edu).

The short course will aim to help instructors to teach introductory statistics in accordance with the recommendations of a joint ASA/MAA committee: emphasizing statistical thinking with more data and concepts, less theory, and fewer recipes. Participants will engage in hands-on investigations of statistical concepts and methods that can be adopted for immediate use with students. Many of these activities will make use of Minitab statistical software. These activities concern such topics as data collection, exploratory data analysis,

randomness, and statistical inference. Sessions will also be devoted to discussing resources for teaching statistics and to issues of assessing students' learning of statistics. A tentative agenda for the course is:

Monday

AM Exploring Data: Distributions
Exploring Data: Comparisons
PM Exploring Data: Relationships

Tuesday

AM Collecting Data
Randomness
PM Sampling Distributions

Wednesday

AM Statistical Inference: Confidence
Statistical Inference: Significance
PM Statistical Inference: Cautions and
Limitations

Thursday

AM Statistical Inference: Comparisons
and Relationships
Resources for Teaching Statistics
PM Participant Presentations

Friday

AM Statistical Inference: Further
Considerations
Assessment

The registration fee for the course is \$170 and includes a banquet, picnic, and daily refreshments. Room and board is \$140 for a single dormitory room and meals other than above. An application form can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. To hold a place in the course, a \$25 deposit payable to Allegheny Mountain Section of MAA should accompany the application. The deposit is refundable if you withdraw from the course at least one week prior to the course. For additional information, contact Steve Bowser at Allegheny College (sbowser@alleg.edu, 814-332-5348).

Message from the Chair (continued)

In light of the demographics for this region of the country, it may not be surprising to learn that the Allegheny Mountain Section has one of the highest percentages of retired faculty of any MAA Section in the country. A panel to discuss retirement has been organized by Dick McDermot (Professor Emeritus, Allegheny College). Also serving on the panel will be Professors Emeritus Charles Cable (Allegheny College), Albert Rabenstein (Washington & Jefferson), and Melvin Woodard (IUP).

In addition to these highlights we can expect a full schedule of faculty-contributed talks, a book and technology exhibit, a new puzzle-solving activity at the pizza party led by Bob Vallin of Slippery Rock, and plenty of opportunities to interact informally with colleagues from other institutions. Please make plans to attend the meeting and invite students and colleagues to join you.

Nominating Committee Report

The members of the nominating committee are Antonella Cupillari, Penn State - Erie (Chair); Francisco Alarcon, IUP; and John Nichols, Thiel College. The slate of nominees for the elections at the Spring Meeting is as follows.

Secretary/Treasurer:

Connie Yu, Penn State - Altoona

Second Vice Chair:

Kaddour Boukabaar, California U. of Pa.

Carolyn Cuff, Westminster College

Tamara Hummel, Allegheny College

Chair Elect:

Karen Bolinger, Clarion University

Joe Previte, Penn State - Erie

John Zhang, Indiana U. of Pa.

Registration for the 2000 Spring Meeting, Allegheny Mountain Section, MAA

- \$25.00 Registration (no registration fee for students)
Note that availability of meals is not guaranteed without preregistration.
- \$14.00 Friday dinner: chicken marsala, rice, green beans, rolls, cheesecake, beverage
- \$6.25 Saturday breakfast buffet: chilled juice, fruit, scrambled eggs, hash browns, bacon, sausage, danish, bagels, croissants, coffee
- \$7.60 Saturday lunch: soup, salad, baked potato bar (7 toppings), cookies, beverage
- \$ _____ total

Name: _____ College/Univ./Employer _____

Address: _____

Checks should be made payable to Allegheny Mountain Section, MAA. For refunds, contact Connie Yu (814-949-5275, xky@psu.edu) **before noon, March 24, 2000**. Please send this form and your payment to arrive by March 24, 2000. Send to:
Connie Yu, Department of Mathematics, Penn State - Altoona, Altoona, PA 16601

Registration Form for Faculty and Student Talks

Name: _____ College/Univ./Employer _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Title of talk: _____

Special equipment needed: _____

(Each room is equipped with chalkboard, overhead projector, and screen. Computers, VCRs, etc., are available with advance notification.)

Please send this form to arrive by March 24, 2000. Send to:

Barbara Power (faculty talks), School of Science, Penn State - Erie, Station Road,
Erie, PA 16563 (blp4@psu.edu)

Cheryl Leech (student talks), 19679 Chad Lane, Meadville, PA 16335 (cal3@psu.edu)

Proceedings of this year's meeting will be published electronically. Submissions can be made to Francisco Alarcon at IUP (falarcon@grove.iup.edu, 724-357-2206). Send both a printed copy and a diskette. Submissions as email attachments are also acceptable.

Application Form

Short Course on Teaching Statistics: Data, Concepts, Activities Sixteenth Annual Summer Short Course of the Allegheny Mountain Section of MAA

June 19-23, 2000

Presenter: Allan Rossman, Dickinson College

Sponsored by the Allegheny Mountain Section of MAA and Allegheny College

Name: _____

Department: _____ Institution: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Office _____ Home _____

email address _____

Will you require on-campus housing? _____

Reason for interest in the course:

Would you be interested in presenting a paper during an afternoon session? _____

(The content does not have to relate to the topic of the short course. Answering yes does not commit you to give a paper.) If yes, please give a brief description of the content:

Please mail in time to be received by May 15, 2000. Send to:

Steve Bowser

Department of Mathematics

Allegheny College

Meadville, PA 16335

Phone: 814-332-5348

email: sbowser@alleg.edu