

Allegheny Mountain Section Newsletter

Volume XXIX, Issue 2

Fall 2006

Greetings from Our Chair...

Michael L. Berry, West Virginia Wesleyan College

Greetings from Buckhannon, W. Va. I hope your semester is going as well as mine is.

At the last section meeting at Juniata College, Bud Boman of Penn State DuBois was elected to the office of Chair-Elect. Shortly after, he accepted a position outside the section. According to the by-laws, he was no longer eligible to hold an office in the



Mike Berry,
Section Chair

Section. At the summer Executive Committee meeting, following the by-laws, we selected Bob Vallin of Slippery Rock University to fill the position of Chair-Elect until the upcoming section meeting. We also named Natacha Fontes-Mirz of Westminster College as "Puzzle Czar".

Elsewhere in this newsletter is information about the officer elections at the Spring

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...and Our Governor

John Bukowski, Juniata College

Hello from the mountains of central Pennsylvania, where the leaves are quite beautiful as I write this report in late October. It was very exciting for me to have many of you visit my institution, Juniata College, for the spring section meeting – my department and I were pleased to host the meeting. This summer I traveled to Knoxville, Tennessee, for another excellent MathFest, where I saw many of you. I will remember for a long time the nice dinner followed by the most violent thunderstorm I have seen (and been caught in) in quite a while!

There was much news as always at the day-long Board meeting which preceded MathFest itself. The financial state of the MAA is still very healthy. The organization now has an operating budget exceeding \$8 million. We also learned that the MAA has a new auditing firm; this new firm reported another very good audit.

The MAA continues its strategic planning process. Cycle I of the process is nearing completion – the three topics are the American Mathematics Competitions, Professional Development, and Revenue. Cycle II is now underway – these topics are Governance, Students, and Membership.

We learned from President-Elect Joe Gallian that Project NExT continues to grow and thrive. There have now been 918 Fellows over 13 years. As we know here in the Allegheny Mountain Section, the influence of NExT has also expanded to reach more people via Section NExTs. Our own Section NExT is one of the most active of the twenty such programs across the MAA.

Members of the Washington, DC, staff of the MAA are excited that the Carriage House project (funded by Paul and Virginia Halmos) has reached completion! Several meetings have taken place in

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From the Chair*(Continued from page 1)*

meeting. Nominations will be solicited for Chair-Elect who will become the Chair immediately at the conclusion of the meeting, Second Vice-Chair, Coordinator of Student Programs, Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor. The Executive Committee will also be filling the positions of Historian, Director of e-Communications and Section NExT Coordinator. If you or one of your colleagues wish to get more involved in the section, please consider making a nomination. If you want to serve in one of the three appointed positions, let a member of the Executive Committee know; the names are elsewhere in this issue, and they are listed on the section web site.

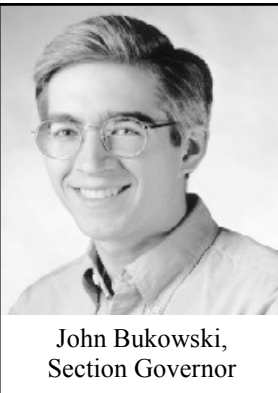
Nominations are also being solicited for the Section Teaching Award as well as the Mentoring Award and Service Awards. See the articles later in this newsletter. You can also check the web site for complete details for each award.

Plans are well underway for the upcoming Spring meeting at Mercyhurst College, April 13-14, 2007. You can check the web site for speakers, deadlines, etc. If you want to look further ahead, the 75th meeting of the section will be held at the University of Pittsburgh, April 11-12, 2008.

From the Governor*(Continued from page 1)*

October and November at this newly-renovated historic building, and the MAA looks forward to the official grand opening ceremonies to be held April 19-21, 2007 (the weekend after our section meeting). Art Benjamin is serving as the chair for the opening festivities, including what Executive Director Tina Straley refers to as “the ultimate section meeting” on the Friday of that weekend.

We are all gearing up for 2007, which



John Bukowski,
Section Governor

marks the tercentenary of the birth of Leonhard Euler. Many events are planned, beginning with sessions at the Joint Meetings. The MAA Study Tour for next year is an Euler-related trip, with visits to Basel, St. Petersburg, and Berlin.

I hope to see many of you in New Orleans at the Joint Meetings!

**Spring Meeting
April 13-14, 2007
Mercyhurst
College**

SECTION NEX

John Bukowski, Juniata College

The Allegheny Mountain Section NExT program is our local version of Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching), an MAA program for new or recent Ph.D.'s in the mathematical sciences. Fellows of Project NExT meet to discuss issues related to the profession, with an emphasis on the teaching and learning of undergraduate mathematics. We are fortunate to have one of the most active Section NExT programs in the entire MAA, as we meet for workshops and discussion two times a year, with between 20 and 25 participants at each meeting.

Back in April, we met on the first afternoon of the section meeting at Juniata, when James Sellers (Penn State) enthusiastically shared his experiences leading undergraduate research. We followed up this successful event with a workshop on teaching a course in the history of mathematics at

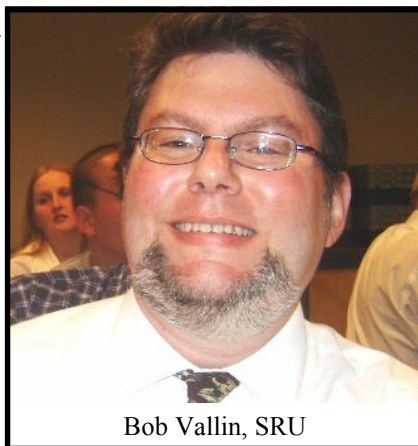
our annual Fall meeting at the University of Pittsburgh on September 23. In the morning, Doug Faires gave a presentation on a course he has taught at Youngstown State. After lunch, we had a panel discussion where presenters John Thompson (Pitt-Johnstown), Paul Gartside (Pittsburgh), and Antonella Cupillari (Penn State-Erie) talked about their approaches to teaching such a course. At the Pittsburgh meeting, we were pleased to welcome our two new national Project NExT Fellows, Geoffrey Dietz (Gannon) and David Miller (West Virginia University).

We look forward to another exciting workshop at the 2007 spring meeting at Mercyhurst College in Erie. Plans for this workshop as well as other information about Section NExT can always be found via a link at the Section's web site, <http://www.math.psu.edu/sellersj/alleghenymtn>. As always, Section NExT thanks members of the Section for their voluntary contributions on last spring's meeting registration form. We appreciate your support!

Vallin to Join MAA Headquarters

The Section's own Bob Vallin of Slippery Rock University has been selected to serve as the first ever MAA Associate Director of Student Activities.

The MAA recently created this position to oversee and expand student programs. Bob's charge is to help expand activities, services, and resources for students, including graduate students. One of his first steps in this direction will be to redesign aspects of the MAA website to make it the major



Bob Vallin, SRU

informational destination for students of all ages and educational levels. Those who've appreciated his contributions to the Section as Coordinator of Student Programs for the past six years will have no doubt that the MAA has made an excellent choice to lead efforts in this vitally important area.

Although Bob will be taking a two-year leave of absence from SRU and the Section, you'll still see him around a LOT at the national meetings!

Section web site: <http://www.math.psu.edu/sellersj/alleghenymtn>

Chris Morgan — Obituary

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Section member Chris Morgan, a faculty member at Pitt-Johnstown, on August 7. Chris was a valued member of the Section (he had been chosen as a 2004-2006 Section Next member and was a frequent speaker at meetings) whose presence will be greatly missed. Below is the obituary printed in the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*:

“ Dr. Christopher J. Morgan, age 33, of Johnstown, died Monday, Aug. 7, 2006, at Cone-maugh Valley Memorial Hospital, Johnstown. He was born May 30, 1973, the son of James C. Morgan and Dolores J. Nibert Morgan of Indiana. Dr. Morgan was a graduate of Apollo-Ridge High School, received his bachelor's degree from St. Vincent College, his master's and doctorate from the University of Kentucky. He was a member of C-Y Sportsmans Club, nu-

merous math associations and the Windber County Club. An avid Steelers and Kentucky Wildcats fan, he also enjoyed fishing and golfing. He was employed as a mathematics professor at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown campus. Surviving are his parents, James C. Morgan, McIntyre, and Dolores J. Morgan, Indiana; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, several aunts, uncles and cousins.



Chris Morgan (1973-2006)

Memorial contributions can be made to the charity of the donor's choice.”

The Undergraduate Student Poster Session at the Joint Meetings

From MAA's Committee on Undergraduate Student Activities and Chapters:

This year's Joint Meetings Undergraduate Poster Session will be held on Saturday January 6, 2007, from 3:00-5:30 pm. The first hour of the session will be reserved for judging only, following which it will be opened to the public from 4-5:30.

Last year there were over 120 poster presentations and we expect similar numbers this year.

Posters are judged by 3 mathematicians for content, style, and answers to questions. We are always in need of judges for the competition. Interested faculty can register their information at

<http://www.maa.org/students/undergrad/judges.html>

We are looking forward to a wonderful session again this year. Hope to see everyone in New Orleans!

Section Teaching Award: Call for Nominations

Nominations for the 2007 Allegheny Mountain Section Award for Distinguished Teaching of College or University Mathematics are now open. The winner will be honored during the dinner at the Annual Meeting of the section on April 13, 2007. The winner then also becomes eligible for the national MAA Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Awards for College or University Teaching of Mathematics. Three of

the latter are awarded each year and recipients will be honored at the 2008 Joint Mathematics Meetings in San Francisco.

If you have a colleague whom you believe is an excellent teacher of mathematics, then we encourage you to nominate that person. See the section web-pages for more information and nomination forms, or go directly to the site.

<http://www.math.psu.edu/sellersj/alleghenymtn/>

Section Service Award: Nominations

The criterion for the Annual Allegheny Mountain Section Service Award is a consistent record of excellence in service to the section over a period of time. In this context "service" is interpreted in a broad sense to include holding office, coordinating contests, organizing sessions, acting as a panelist, speaking at sessions, acting as the coordinating host for a meeting, or participating in any other activity that contributes to the well being of the organization.

...and Mentoring Award: Nominations

Since the year 2000 the Allegheny Mountain Section of the MAA has awarded the Distinguished Faculty Mentor of Undergraduate Mathematics Students Award. A nominee should have made significant contributions to the development of undergraduate students in mathematics as scholars. This includes, but is not limited to, encouraging student participation in MAA activities and advising students who make presentations at the Section meetings.

Please consider nominating a deserving colleague for one of these awards. The Section thrives on the excellence of its members, and such excellence should definitely be recognized.

Details for nomination and a list of the members of each Award Committee can be found on the Section website.

Section Officers: Call for Nominations

The Section will elect members to several offices this spring, and the Nominating Committee is currently soliciting nominations for the following positions:

Chair-Elect/Chair: Typically, the Chair-Elect becomes the Chair after one year of service. However, due to former Chair-Elect Bud Boman's move out of the Section, we will this spring elect a new Chair-Elect, whose term as Chair will begin *immediately* at the end of the Spring Business Meeting. The duties of the Section Chair include conducting the business meetings of the Section and of the Executive Committee, appointing all other committees, and in general directing the affairs of the Section. After serving a 2-year term, the Chair becomes Past-Chair for an additional year.

Second Vice-Chair: The Second Vice-Chair becomes First Vice-Chair after one year of service. The Second Vice-Chair schedules contributed talks for the Section Spring Meeting and helps to coordinate with the local organizers. During his/her subsequent 1-year term as First Vice-Chair, this officer makes all arrangements for invited speakers at the Spring Meeting and also assumes all duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is unable to serve.

Treasurer: The duties of the Treasurer are to maintain the financial accounts and records of the Section and to assist in the preparation of the Annual Section Report.

Newsletter Editor: The duties of the Newsletter Editor are to solicit and create material for the semi-annual Section Newsletter, once during the fall semester, and once early in the spring. Arranging for printing and postage are also tasks of this officer, who serves for two

years.

Coordinator of Student Programs: The main task of this officer is to receive student applications to talk at the Spring Meeting, assign the rooms, assemble the abstracts, and make certificates of recognition for all student speakers. Other events, such as organizing student Breakout Sessions, are at the Coordinator's discretion.

More details can be found in the By-Laws of the Allegheny Mountain Section, at <http://www.math.psu.edu/sellersj/alleghenymtn/bylaws05.pdf>

Nominees are required to be members of the Mathematical Association of America and of the Allegheny Mountain Section. If you know someone who would be interested in serving the Section, or if you are interested yourself, please forward your nomination to any member of the Nomination Committee, listed on the Section website. Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the business meeting next spring.

*Won't you consider
serving the Section as an officer?*

*The Section belongs to all of us and will only
be as good as we choose to make it.*

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MAA books free to good home:

Westminster College is currently storing a number of MAA books that belong to the Section, in the sense that at one time, the MAA "gave" to each Section a copy of the books published (especially in the New Mathematics Library). This practice was halted and the

books that remained were left at Westminster. The collection includes works by Ivan Niven, Olds, Coxeter, Ore, as well as various problem books.

If your department is interested in housing this collection for the Section, please contact Barbara Faires at fares@westminster.edu.

Allegheny Mountain
Section, MAA

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Student Winners at Spring Section Meeting

Each year, the Spring Section Meeting features a “Prizers and Puzzlers” Contest, a problem-solving competition for fun (and profit!). Certain problems on the annual contest list are “puzzlers” — just for fun — but others are “prizers,” earning the winning solver a small prize and greater recognition, or so we hope. This spring’s results are below.

Problem #1 (Cryptogram) winner:

David Spade, West Liberty State University

(others: Curtis Yeny, Westminster College; Caleb Astey, Duquesne University; Jonathan Taccone, Gannon University; Dan D’Orazio, Juniata College)

Problem #5 (Area Problem) winner:

Jonathan Taccone, Gannon University

(others: David Spade, West Liberty State University; Eno Usoro, Chatham College)

Problem #6 (Postage Stamp Problem) winner:

Bryan Bischoff, Westminster College

(others: David Spade, West Liberty State University)

Problem #9 (Trigonometry) winner:

Eno Usoro, Chatham College

(others: Jonathan Taccone, Gannon University)

Our thanks go to **Dr. Japheth Wood**, formerly of Chatham College, for serving the Section as “Puzzle Czar” for the past two years, and best wishes in his new position at Bard College!