



Louisiana/Mississippi Section of the Mathematical Association of America

NEWSLETTER—SPRING 2008
Volume 30. No. 3

Contents

Governor's Report..... 2

Student Team
Competition..... 2

Student Paper
Competition..... 3

Integration Bee..... 3

Section NExT 3

Outstanding Teacher
Award 4

Locations and
Nominations Committee
..... 4

Resolutions
Committee 4

Treasurer's Report 5

The Proceedings..... 5

In Memoriam 5



Bobbie Swan, alumna of McNeese State University and Manager, Portable Equipment and Pyrotechnics Office in the Constellation Program at NASA, gave an informative and inspirational talk at the student luncheon on Friday, February 29, 2008.



Martha Siegel, MAA Secretary, gave the Invited Address on Saturday morning. Her talk, Industrial Mathematics for Fun and Profit, included examples of research problems that have been addressed by teams of students and faculty at Towson University.

Governor's Report

Colleagues,

I am nearing the end of my first year of service as your representative on the Board of Governors and have enjoyed myself quite a bit thus far. The Board meets at the Joint Meetings and at Mathfest for the entire day beforehand to discuss issues ranging from the budget to strategic planning. I am happy to report that there are no serious issues and that membership dues will remain the same for 2009. I do have to admit that the Governor's lunch was very good in San Diego, and I especially enjoyed the chocolate mousse—although I did not eat the raspberries and am told that I really missed out by not doing so. As part of this meeting, the Strategic Planning Working Group on Governance gave their report, and I am happy to report that Connie Campbell did an outstanding job presenting her part of this committee's work. Significant reorganization may be underway as the Governors consider the group's conclusions.

The national office has been updating the MAA's website in significant ways in order to encourage members to visit the site more regularly. Several lectures and podcasts are available. The Math Photo of the Week (sorry about the tattooed arm) and Math in the News are updated regularly. Journals to which you subscribe can also be viewed online. New this month is the Math Classifieds where academic and non-academic openings will be posted for persons with bachelors, masters and doctorate credentials. Soon, you will also be able to log in using your email address (instead of having to use your membership number), and that should assist you in accessing blocked content. Currently under consideration is the addition of membership blogs.

As I reported at our section meeting, several of our members continue to be involved nationally as part of the MAA's committee structure. Charles Alexander (Coordinating Council on Human Resources), Connie Campbell (Committee on Sections, Committee on Minicourses, Working Group on Governance), Jenna Carpenter (CRAFTY, Committee on Consultants), Judith Covington (NExT), Frank Serio (Committee on MAA/Department Liaisons) and Roger Waggoner (Committee on SIGMAAS). I serve on the Committee on Website Policy and Procedure, Committee on Technologies in Mathematics Education and the Working Group on Communications and Publications. Very soon, Judith and I will submit nominations for new committee assignments and would be delighted to send in your name. If you are interested, please look over the

committee structure found on the MAA website (under "Organization") and find a specific committee that you like. Committee charges are listed for most of the committees so you can be aware of what you are getting yourself in for.

About fifteen section members participated in our first (annual?) section dinner at the Joint Meeting in San Diego. There are unfortunately no "before" pictures of my meal but the daily special at McCormick & Schmick's was awesome. Once again, the chocolate dessert was a high point. I hope to continue to host this informal meal where members of our section can find each other and encourage others from our section who currently do not attend our regular section meetings. It is a fact that no one fell asleep at their plate despite the Pacific Time zone and having started a bit late anyway. If any of you want to meet at the upcoming Mathfest in Madison, please let me know and I'll arrange something for there as well.

Speaking of meetings, I would encourage you to attend Mathfest in Madison, WI, from July 31 to August 2 and the Joint Meetings in Washington DC from January 5, 2009, to January 9, 2009. Attendance at the past Mathfest and Joint Meetings set records, so you will want to book your travel as soon as possible. There is also an early-bird registration starting on April 1 where you can register for the same price as last year. Look me up if you are coming.

JT
LA/MS MAA Section Governor

Student Team Competition

Twenty-six teams competed in this year's event. The results are as follows.

1st Place -- Mississippi State University (133 points)
Team Members: Adam Wilkerson, Brian Schilling, Kenny Brown, Ryan Causey
Team Sponsor: Paul Fabel

2nd Place-- Louisiana State University (131 points)
Team Members: Rodrigo Farnham, Nick Vanmeter, Tyler Barker, Paul Faciane
Team Sponsor: George Cochran

3rd Place -- University of Mississippi (114 points)
Team Members: Sam Watson, Cameron Byrum, George Ricardson, Matt Stephenson
Team Sponsor: James Reid

4th Place -- Tulane University (113 points)

Team Members: Henry Weber, Travis Mandel,
Mike Nunez, Chen Sun
Team Sponsor: Steven Sinnott

Cash awards were given to these winning teams in the amounts of \$100, \$75, \$50, and \$50 respectively.

Submitted by Robert Doucette

Student Paper Competition

There were five undergraduate papers and three graduate papers presented on Friday afternoon. The winners of the undergraduate paper session are as follows: First Place – **Veronica Wills** of Southeastern Louisiana University – *A study of the solutions to the family of differential equations $f'(x) = 1/(f \circ f \circ \dots \circ f)$* , Second Place – **Thimal de Alwis** of Southeastern Louisiana University – *Using triangulation methods to obtain areas of certain figures*, and Third Place – **Bjorn Carlsson** of Millsaps College – *Outwitting the half-lying oracle*. The winners of the graduate paper session are: First Place – **Tina Smith** of McNeese State University – *Characteristics of groups with perfect order subsets*, Second Place – **Stanley Parkerson** of McNeese State University – *Concerning sufficient conditions for $1, M, N$ -antiautomorphisms of directed triple systems*, and Third Place – **Kristen Stewart** of McNeese State University – *Concerning bicyclic antiautomorphisms of Mendelsohn triple systems*.

Integration Bee

The integration bee took place on Thursday evening, February 28, 2008. A total of 39 students participated in the competition. They represented 12 universities or colleges across Louisiana and Mississippi. The winners are:

1st Place: **Matt Stephenson**, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

2nd Place: **Sam Watson**, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

3rd Place: **Paul Faciane**, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA.

Submitted by Tilak de Alwis.

Section NExT

We had a very successful Section NExT Program at the recent LA/MS MAA Section Meeting at McNeese State University. We had a great kick-off dinner with our six new 2008-2009 Section NExT Fellows: **Dhruba Adhikari** of Mississippi University for Women, **Tiffany Andrus** of McNeese State University, **Christine Gorton** of McNeese State University, **Leslie Horton** of Delta State University, **Michael Muffaletto** of McNeese State University, and **Mark Thompson** of Northwestern State University. They were joined by **John Perry** of the University of Southern Mississippi, a 2007-2008 Section NExT Fellow, and their mentors on Thursday evening at Steamboat Bill's where we had some awesome Cajun food! On Friday, the Section NExT Program featured three informative sessions: the first by **Michael Pearson** of the MAA, Section Governor **John Travis** from Mississippi College, **Connie Campbell** from Millsaps and **Judith Covington** from LSUS who urged the fellows to "Get Involved in the MAA!" **Johnny Lott** from Ole Miss was our featured speaker, and he discussed "Who are the Best Mathematics Teachers?" Lastly, **Brian Camp** from Louisiana Tech University talked about "Using Technology to Reach Your Students!" Our group attended the Distinguished Teaching Talk by **Galen Turner** on Friday afternoon, as well.

We have a strong class of Section NExT Fellows this year thanks to your encouragement and support. Please help us continue to grow this program by urging your new faculty next year to apply for the program. It is an excellent way for new faculty to get acclimated to the Section, learn how they can become involved, and gain excellent professional development. Since it is far more expensive to attend national meetings, it is a great bargain, as well.

Thanks to our Section NExT Committee, Clifton Wingard from Delta State University and John Osoinach from Millsaps for their enthusiastic service.

Jenna Carpenter, Chair
LA/MS MAA Section NExT Committee



Section NExT Fellows include (l to r) **Dhruba Adhikari, Leslie Horton, Tiffany Andrus, Michael Muffaletto, Christine Gorton, and Mark Thompson** (not pictured).

Outstanding Teaching Award

Dr. George Cochran has been teaching mathematics and statistics for 26 years and is described as a dedicated teacher who popularizes and encourages mathematical growth on all levels through innovative courses, enthusiasm, and humor. In addition to being able to field a wide range of questions from a diverse student body, he is able to help students engage difficult material through innovative uses of the world they experience. Finally, he has been very active in the MAA through his leadership in the student team competitions and is one of the key leaders in helping the LSU mathematics department provide a richer variety of activities and options for students studying mathematics.

Submitted by Galen Turner, Committee Chair

Locations and Nominations Committee Report

The following location and nominations were proposed by the committee:

- Location for the 2010 Meeting – Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA
- LA/MS Section Chair – Tommy Leavelle, Mississippi College
- MS Vice-Chair – Melinda Gann, Mississippi College
- LA Vice-Chair – Randy Wills, Southeastern Louisiana University

There were no nominations from the floor. All the above were approved by acclamation.

Submitted by Frank Serio, Committee Chair

Resolutions Committee Report

Be it resolved that we express our appreciation to Dean George Mead of the College of Sciences at McNeese State University and to Sid Bradley, Head of the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics, for their warm welcome and hospitality and to Section Chair Lenny Ornas, and meeting Co-Chair Christine Gorton, for this well-planned meeting.

Be it resolved that we express appreciation to the faculty of the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics for the excellent job they have done hosting this meeting. Special thanks are extended to Bill

Albrecht for the computer support and registration database, for Bill Denny for his work with the refreshments, and to Alex Scorpan for the programs, abstracts, and t-shirts.

Be it resolved that we express gratitude to Dr. Martha Siegel, Secretary of the MAA, for her informative presentation, “Industrial Mathematics for Fun and Profit,” in which she described problems tackled by faculty and undergraduate research teams.

Be it resolved that we express appreciation to Ms. Bobbie Swan of NASA’s Johnson Space Center for giving the students an inside look into the logistics of space travel and a preview of the Constellation Program and to Dr. Johnny Lott of Ole Miss for sharing his experiences with our new faculty members in the Section NExT session.

Be it resolved that we express appreciation to Galen Turner for his Excellence in Teaching presentation which included his insights into the nature of mathematics and the pitfalls of giving our students the “truth out of season.”

Be it resolved that we appreciate the faculty members and students – both undergraduate and graduate – who made presentations for our enlightenment, the students who participated in the team competition and Integration Bee, and all those individuals – session chairs, judges, and faculty coaches – who made the presentations and competitions possible, in particular Christine Gorton, Alex Scorpan, Randy Wills, Tilak deAlwis, Vic Schneider, and Robert Doucette.

Be it resolved that we express appreciation to MAA representative Michael Pearson, Associate Executive Director and Director of Programs & Service, for his participation in the New Faculty Session and for his continued involvement with this section, to panel organizers and moderators, to publishing companies and their representatives for refreshments and for their exhibits, to Jenna Carpenter and the Section NExT committee, and to all other LA/MS committees for their part in ensuring the success of this meeting and last, but not least, to all the members of the LA/MS section of the MAA for their participation in this meeting and their continued support of the section.

Therefore, be it resolved that the 85th annual meeting of the LA/MS section of the MAA held on February 28-March 1, 2008 in Lake Charles, LA, and hosted by McNeese State University was a great success.

Respectfully submitted:
Resolutions Committee
Kathleen Lopez, Chair
Clifton Wingard

Treasurer's Report

Balance February 28, 2007	\$8981.10
Receipts:	
MAA Subvention	620.00
Meeting Income	740.57
Interest (02/2006 – 02/2007)	90.51
Book Sales	68.20
 Total Receipts:	 \$1519.28
Expenses:	
Student Awards	700.00
Newsletter Printing and Postage	150.87
Travel	1005.35
2008 Meeting Start-Up	500.00
Outstanding Teacher Award	16.35
Contributions to National (NEXt and brick)	2803.00
 Total Expenses:	 \$5175.57
 Balance March 1, 2008	 \$5324.81
 Account Information	
City Bank & Trust Company	
Natchitoches, LA 17457	
Account Number 42-9489-0	
Tax ID Number: 23-7155838	

Submitted by Judith Covington, Secretary/Treasurer

Proceedings Committee

Papers presented at the 2008 meeting may be submitted for publication in the Proceedings. Submissions in the broad categories of Research, Pedagogy, and Student Papers are welcome. These should be sent to sheppard@olemiss.edu by June 30, 2008. Please indicate the appropriate category for the paper in your email. Full submission guidelines can be found on the section web site.

Submitted by Laura Sheppardson

In Memoriam

Cheryl Donaho was a long time member of the Department of Mathematics at Northwestern State University teaching developmental mathematics as well as computer applications. After many years teaching evening classes as an adjunct, she became a full-time member of our faculty in 2003. She passed

away suddenly of a heart attack while vacationing with her family in July 2007.

John Harvey died suddenly on May 3, 2007. He was a native of Waco, Texas, and he received his bachelor's degree from Baylor University, his master's degree from Florida State University, and his PhD in mathematics from Tulane University. He taught at the University of Wisconsin—Madison from 1966 to 2001. John had a combined interest in mathematics and education. Following his retirement, he resided in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Christine Stokes, retired Assistant Professor Emeritus, from the University of Mississippi, died on December 28, 2007. She taught mathematics at Ole Miss for many years. She is survived by her husband Russell Stokes, Professor Emeritus also from the University of Mississippi.

R. D. "Dick" Anderson passed away on March 4, 2008, at the age of 86. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota and his PhD from the University of Texas. He joined the faculty at LSU in 1956. Dick was president of the MAA from 1981 – 1982, and he served the MAA in other capacities such as on the Board of Governors, CUPM, and the finance committee.

Mark your calendars! The 2008
LA/MS Section Meeting will be
held at Mississippi College in
Clinton, Mississippi.
March 5 – 7, 2009