

## Message from the Chair

Ockle Johnson

We in the Northeastern Section have been very fortunate to have a very dedicated core (or is it corps?) of active members and leaders. It is fitting as I begin as chair to acknowledge and thank my predecessor, Ed Sandifer, once again. He has kept the Section running smoothly with some excellent section meetings and programs and kept us in good spirits with his quick wit and good humor. (It's nice to know he's only an e-mail away when I have a question.)

Speaking of excellent section meetings, this fall's meeting at Bridgewater State certainly fits the bill. A very well orchestrated program focused on recreational mathematics and we were treated to enjoyable and informative talks. Well-planned local arrangements included impressive little extras like conference pens and table prizes from Binary Arts at the banquet. Karen Schroeder, Tom Moore and their committees will be a tough act to follow.

But that won't be a problem because we have Frank Morgan as our program chair and host for the spring meeting at Williams College. It looks like a very attractive blend of excellent mathematics, opportunities for camaraderie, and a chance to enjoy spring in the Berkshires. Because it is such an attractive setting, Williams has a very strong summer conference business and is more expensive. Frank has tried to keep the costs down as much as possible by offering two package rates. The most economical includes the room for Friday night at Williams. So consider staying for evening and enjoying the company of your colleagues. In the fall we will return to our usual fee structure.

Our spring meeting this year is a special meeting with our neighbors from the Seaway Section in New York joining us. This was, I believe, originally an idea of Rick Cleary back when he was chair and from St. Mike's could look across the lake to the Seaway Section (correct me if I'm wrong on that). At one point it looked like he would be joining us as a member of the Seaway Section, but we're delighted to have him back in the fold.

Because this is a special meeting with the Seaway Section, there are some variations from our normal routine. To facilitate the organization of contributions from both sections, the student speaker, future colleague and contributed paper sessions will all be coordinated by Victor Hill at Williams. Submissions should be sent directly to him. In the fall, Lisa Humphreys, Mike Cullinane, Phil Hotchkiss, and Tommy Ratliff will resume their respective duties. Also, people like me who wait until the last minute to register need to note the early registration deadline.

Returning to the theme of excellence, the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee was very impressed with the accomplishments and qualifications of all of this year's nominees. While they were all very deserving, we are delighted to announce that this year's Distinguished Teacher is someone who is very well known to us as a tireless worker for the Section, Laura Kelleher. You can read more about her teaching accomplishments later in the Newsletter.

Another treat for this spring is the Short Course. It started as a very well received workshop "Developing Mathematical Modules for the World Wide Web" at last spring's meeting at Norwich University. The participants left clamoring for more. So now fresh from a successful engagement at the Joint Meetings in San Diego, Cathy Frey, Gerard LaVarnway and Rob Poodiak will be offering a short course on "Integrating the Web Into Mathematics Instruction." Paul Estes will serve as our gracious host at Plymouth State College.

Looking ahead to next fall--yes Sarah Mabrouk and Ed Sandifer are already thinking about next fall's meeting, as is Lisa Humphreys who is planning a program for new and relatively new colleagues on Friday morning and afternoon before the section meeting. We hope that this will inaugurate a Northeastern Section Next. So if you're busy hiring now, we hope you'll encourage your new colleagues to join us in the fall.

We have a few additional sites planned, but we will be looking for more. So if you would like to host a meeting or plan a program, let me know. If you haven't done it before, but would like to give it a try, I hope to tap the wisdom and experience of our recent program and local arrangements chairs to develop a new set of guidelines and suggestions. We will also be forming a Nominations Committee for next fall's elections. If you are interested in serving, please let me know.

We do have a program chair and site set for one very special meeting further into the future. Our historian, Jim Tattersall has agreed to serve as program chair for our fiftieth anniversary celebration in November 2005 at the University of New Hampshire where our section began. More on that in coming years, but if you have ideas, pass them along to Jim.

So we have many exciting activities planned--starting with the dinner meetings coordinated by Lucy Kimball later in the semester. Not to mention that the MAA will be coming to our section once again this summer for Mathfest in Burlington, VT! I hope to see you soon