

Message from the Chair.....Sarah Mabrouk

Greeting! I want to begin by thanking you all for your kind encouragements as I begin my term as Section Chair. Many of you have expressed interest in participating in Program Committees or in hosting a meeting at your college/university – I have enjoyed our telephone conversations and emails and I hope that our discussions will come to fruition. Anyone who is interested in participating in a Program Committee or in hosting a meeting is always welcome to call or to email – it is great fun and a wonderful way in which to meet others in the Section or to show off your college/university!

I would like to thank Laura Kelleher, Ann Kizanis, and Frank Battles for their encouragement and helpful information about the Section and the responsibilities of the Section Chair. It is nice to know that my organizing meeting programs, coordinating local arrangements, and organizing sessions for National were good training for the job. I promise to do my best for the Section!

I want to thank Ockle Johnson, my predecessor, for the great job that he did as Section Chair! I have appreciated his encouragement and counsel as I organized meeting programs and as I made the local arrangements for the Framingham meeting. Ockle has continued to be my wise counsel and great encourager, and it is nice to know that he is only an email or a phone call away.

I am glad that Ockle shared my vision for creating guidelines for program committees and for local arrangements, and I enjoyed writing the guidelines with him. These guidelines will be helpful for organizers of future meetings. Since Ross has posted the local arrangements and program guidelines on the Section website in MS Word and pdf formats, I hope that anyone who is interested in hosting a meeting or in participating in organizing a program will feel free to read the guidelines and to contact me to ask any questions that may come to mind.

This fall's meeting at Wellesley College was filled with diverse and informative talks – from baseball statistics to change ringing, how's that for variety! Frank Ford and his committee, Kathy Bavelas, Mary Sullivan, and Rebecca Sparks, organized this enjoyable program. Ann Trenk and her committee, Stanley Chang and Megan Kerr, did a great job with the local arrangements. Ann's efforts greatly increased the number of student papers presented during the meeting as well – five concurrent student paper sessions with twenty-five student papers!

If you are doing some interesting research with students or if you have given assignment/projects that have produced interesting results, why not suggest to your students that they give a presentation during the student paper session during the spring meeting at Roger Williams University? This would be a great experience for them and a great opportunity for students interested in graduate study in the future. You will enjoy watching your students give presentations as well! Please contact Mike Cullinane or Lisa Humphreys for more information.

Preparations for this spring's meeting at Roger Williams University are going well. Program Co-Chairs Julie Levandosky and Jason Moliterno and their committee, Hema Gopalakrishnan and Ed Sandifer, have put together a program that includes presentations by David Abrahamson and Rebecca Sparks, William Barker, Donna Beers, Robert Benedetto, Robert Bradley, and Rick Cleary, and this year's Battles Lecture will be given by Frank Farris. With this selection of speakers, I am looking forward to the meeting already! Bruce Burdick, the Local Arrangements Coordinator, and his committee, Joel Silverberg and Frank Ford, are doing a great job with the local arrangements for the meeting. Bruce has been working hard to manage the costs and to work with the Roger Williams University staff to arrange the housing and rooms for the meeting, the Section NeXT activities, and the minicourse prior to the meeting.

This spring's Section NeXT activities organized by Lisa Humphreys include Donna Christy's presentation that will appeal to all of us since it addresses the needs of general education students and pre-service elementary school teachers and a discussion of tools, problems, activities, projects, and technology for first and second semester calculus courses. Very nice, Lisa, and well timed for course preparations for the fall semester!

The Section will offer a minicourse prior to the spring meeting. This course on creative problem solving will be conducted by Mikhail Chkhenkeli of Western New England College. Dennis Luciano and his committee, Will Stout, Ross Gingrich, and Frank Ford, have made an excellent choice since this course will include activities that will appeal to most everyone: hands-on problem solving activities in geometry, algebra and number theory, combinatorics and probability theory, graph theory, and topology as well as mathematical brain teasers. Gentlemen, there better be room for me in the minicourse! If you have ideas for future minicourses, please feel free to contact Dennis or me.

Arrangements for the Fall 2004 meeting at Worcester Polytechnic Institute are underway. Brigitte

Servatius, the Local Arrangements Coordinator, is working hard making preparations for the meeting. Program Chair Suzanne Weekes and her committee, Peter Christopher and Brogdan Vernescu, will organize the program. I am delighted to announce that the Section's application for a Polya Lecturer was approved and that David Bressoud, Macalester College, accepted our invitation to give a presentation during the WPI meeting. He will give both a mathematics talk and a discussion of the new CUPM Curriculum Guide. In addition, Art Benjamin, Harvey Mudd College, who will be on sabbatical leave at Brandeis University in the fall will give a presentation during the meeting, and Ezra Brown, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, will give the Christie Lecture

The Distinguished Teaching Award Committee was extremely impressed with the qualifications and accomplishments of the nominees. Our Section is truly blessed to have such incredible teachers! As Chair of this year's Distinguished Teaching Award Committee, it is my honor and pleasure to announce that this year's distinguished teacher is P. Joseph McKenna! Joe is an all-around great teacher, inspiring students in high school, college and graduate school as well as colleagues through his research, articles, and teaching. You can read more about Joe's teaching accomplishments later in the Newsletter. I want to thank my committee, Kathy Bavelas, Laura Kelleher, Lois Martin, Jason Moliterno, and Emma Previato, for all their hard work. This was not an easy task since we had such fantastic and strong nominees.

It is not too early to begin thinking about nominations for next year's Distinguished Teaching Award. If you have made a nomination in the past, this is a good time to update or add to the nomination if you would like to renew the nomination for next year. If you would like to initiate a nomination, this is a good time to begin to create the nomination packet. Information about the NES/MAA Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics and about making a nomination can be found in the Archives section of the Section website.

A brief history of the Northeastern Section of the Mathematical Association of America is now available on the Section website, <http://www.southernct.edu/organizations/nesmaa/history.html>. It is great to read about the Section from its inauguration on November 26, 1955 to the present through contributions written by Donald and Shirley Blackett, James E. Ward, Clayton Dodge, and James J. Tattersall. I especially appreciate Jim's thank you to Section Newsletter editors Dot Meserve, Eric Nummella, Ken Lane, Phil Mahler, and Frank Battles for providing "a wonderful paper trail". James Tattersall, our Section's historian-archivist, is the Program Chair for the Section's fiftieth anniversary meeting to be held at University of New Hampshire, the location of the first NES/MAA meeting, in November 2005.

Ross Gingrich continues to do a great job maintaining the Section website. He posts information about Section meetings, National meetings, information of interest to students, Section NeXT information, relevant hyperlinks, and maintains the Section Archive. Be sure to check out the website and if you have any suggestions for additional information that you would like to access from our site, please let Ross or me know. We would like our site to be a useful resource for all who access it.

National has some great workshops that will be offered this summer. The Professional Enhancement Programs of the MAA, PREP, includes workshop topics such as mathematical biology, discrete mathematics, statistical ratemaking, and quantitative literacy across the curriculum. Workshop information and application deadlines can be found at <http://www.maa.org/prep>. Having participated in a PREP workshop last year, I can tell you that they are a great opportunity. In addition, there are the PMET (Preparing Mathematicians to Educate Teachers) workshops. If you teach prospective teachers at the elementary, middle school, or secondary level then these workshops will provide you with opportunities to share ideas and to discuss and to learn more about appropriate content and ways in which to teach future teachers. My colleague Joyce Cutler participated in a PMET workshop last year, and she said that it was a great experience. To find out more about the PMET workshops, visit <http://www.maa.org/pmet>. There is a nice selection of PREP and PMET workshops available, and I must admit that I would love to participate in all of them – if only there were enough time!

Mathfest 2004 will be held in Providence, Rhode Island August 12 – 14! How nice to have Mathfest in our area! If you are considering submitting a contributed paper for the meeting, the call for papers for contributed paper sessions is posted at <http://www.maa.org/news/012304cps04.html> and this page lists the submission deadline as Tuesday, May 4, 2004. I always enjoy Mathfest and it is a great treat for the end of the summer! I hope to see you there!

Message from the Governor..... Laura Kelleher

If you are looking for some interesting mathematical reading, you might consider some of the MAA's new publications. Among these are *Math Through the Ages – Expanded Edition* by William P. Berlinghoff and Fernando Gouvêa of Colby College and *Writing Projects for Mathematics Courses* by Annalisa Crannell, Gavin LaRose, Thomas Ratliff of Wheaton College, and Elyn Rykken. In addition, MAA online includes several interesting ongoing columns, including *How Euler Did It* by Ed Sandifer of Western Connecticut State University.

At the Board of Governors Meeting in Phoenix, it was announced that the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC) and the MAA have jointly received funding from the ExxonMobil Foundation for Project ACCESS (Advancing Community College Careers: Education, Scholarship and Service). The goal of Project ACCESS is to develop a cadre of new two-year college mathematics faculty who are effective members of their profession. The objectives of this program are for participants to gain knowledge of the culture and mission of the two-year college and its students, acquire familiarity with the scholarship of teaching, commit to continued growth in mathematics, and participate in professional communities. Open to new mathematics faculty from two-year colleges, fellows in this project will attend two consecutive AMATYC conferences, where they will participate in pre-conference workshops as well as regular conference activities. In the intervening year, they will attend an MAA Section Meeting near their home institution. Be sure to encourage eligible colleagues to apply for this program. Additional information about this program can be found at <http://www.maa.org/ProjectACCESS>.

The MAA has established the Annie and John Selden Prize for Research in Undergraduate Mathematics Education to promote and recognize this research. The prize will be given every other year to a researcher who has established a significant record of published work in research in undergraduate mathematics education and who has been in the field at most ten years. Watch the MAA website at www.maa.org for further information on a submitting a nomination for this award.

The MAA Executive Committee approved the formation of a new Special Interest Group of the MAA (SIGMAA) on Quantitative Literacy. There has also been some discussion of a SIGMAA for High School Teachers.

Michael Pearson, MAA Director of Programs and Services, has asked for assistance updating the MAA publication: *We Do Math! Careers in the Mathematical Sciences*. If you can identify a student whose career profile could be included in the next revision of this brochure, please contact him via pearson@maa.org.

I encourage you to participate in the Northeastern Section's upcoming activities: the NES/MAA Dinner Meetings, the Section Short Course, and the Section Meeting in June at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island. I hope to see you at one or more of these and, of course, at *Mathfest* in August in Providence

Message from the Secretary-Treasurer..... Ann Kizanis

I gave my last Treasurer's report at the Fall MAA meeting at Wellesley College. At this time, our balance was 11,877.84. The meeting at Wellesley College was well organized and very successful. The expenses from that meeting totaled \$5,150.65 while the income made totaled \$7,198.00. We spent a total of \$1,177.87 for the printing, postage and preparation of the Fall 2003 newsletter. We also incurred an office expense of \$17.30. As a result, our present balance is \$12,730.02.

Our section has been saving money from the postage and printing of our newsletters, since many of our members have now adopted the newsletter "lite" format. This past year, more postcards (versus complete newsletters) have been mailed to our members.

I am now in the process writing a summary of our section's 2003 financial transactions for the headquarters' finance department, and at the beginning of the summer, I shall be writing our section's annual report.

That is my update for now! We are all looking forward to the Spring MAA meeting at Roger Williams University, where I will update you further on our financial state. Have a good semester everyone!

Two-year College Representative's Report..... Kathy Bavelas

The NEMATYC 2004 meeting was hosted by Mount Wachusett CC on April 2-3.

The NYSMATIC 2004 Annual Conference "Building Bridges" is being held in Kingston NY on April 23 – 25 (<http://www.nysmatyc.org>)

The annual MATYCONN Spring Meeting is being hosted by Norwalk CC in Norwalk CT on April 30. Rona Gurkewitz from Western CT State University will do a workshop on origami polyhedra. She is a founding member of the Friends of the Origami Center of America (now called Origami U.S.A.) . She co-authored her third and most recent book, **Modular Polyhedra Origami**, with Bennett Arnstein. The dinner presentation will feature Ric Zannoni who will discuss the use of manifolds in analyzing and modeling data. He will also provide highlights and slides of his trip to the South Pole, which developed out of his work at the UMASS Terahertz Lab. He began his academic work in the CT Community College System. (<http://155.43.16.5/matyconn/Spring2004MeetingNCC.htm>)

The AMATYC Outer banks Summer Institute: "Developmental Algebra Using a Function

Approach” will be held June 13 – 18 in Duck, N.C.

(<http://www.amatyc.org/SumInst/2004/2004AMATYCreistration.pdf>)

I received The ATOMIC (Associated Teachers of Mathematics in CT) Robert A. Rosenbaum Award in March. The award is given in recognition of leadership and significant contributions to the mathematics community. Bob is a Professor Emeritus of Wesleyan held in the highest regard. He was the first recipient of the award in 1995 and the award was named after him.

From the Newsletter EditorFrank Ford

We all welcome Sarah Mabrouk as our new Chair. Anyone who has attended a recent Section Meeting knows the energy and excitement she adds to every meeting. Some might not know that she is also a regular organizer of sessions at the National MAA meetings and she will continue doing that this summer in Providence. She inherits a healthy Section from Ockle Johnson who now retires to the chore of selecting the next distinguished teacher winner in our Section. We owe him a great deal of thanks for his service.

Our Section meeting is coming soon and this year, we will try a mini-course the day before the meeting. Dennis Luciano has arranged an interesting course which is described elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope you enjoy the new format of piggy-backing the mini-course on the Section meeting. If you come for the meeting on Thursday and are not involved with Project NExT, you can spend Friday morning enjoying the town of Bristol.

The biggest event of the year is the return of MathFest to our Section. Providence will be hosting the meeting again and this time there will be a Waterfire, an event you should experience at least once. The program for the meeting is very strong and there will be special sessions for graduate students.

Congratulations to our Distinguished Teacher of the year: P. Joseph McKenna, University of Connecticut. This is the second winner from the University of Connecticut which ties them for second place with Boston University for most winners behind Williams College. It is time to plan for the next cycle. Prepare your nominations now. It is not that hard a task. We get more nominations than most other sections of the MAA and we want to continue that strength.