

NORTHEASTERN SECTION



NEWSLETTER

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NEXT SECTION MEETING

May 29-30, 2009 Spring Section Meeting

Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT

Committee

Program Committee Chair, Vincent Ferlini, Keene State College

Local Arrangements Chair, Matthew Coleman, Fairfield University

Jason Molitierno, Sacred Heart University

Joseph Dennin, Fairfield University

Laura McSweeney, Fairfield University

Shawn Rafalski, Fairfield University

Janet Striuli, Fairfield University

Joan Weiss, Fairfield University

FUTURE SECTION MEETINGS

November, 2009 Fall Section Meeting

Western New England College, Springfield, MA

May, 2009 Spring Section Meeting

Salve Regina University, Newport, RI

November, 2010 Fall Section Meeting

Providence College, Providence, RI

OTHER ACTIVITIES

May 29, 2009 Section NExT Meeting

Fairfield University

COORDINATORS

Dinner Meetings:

Lucy Kimball

lkimball@LNMTA.bentley.edu

NES/MAA Distinguished Teaching Award: Tommy Ratliff, Wheaton

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Section Project NExT:

Karen Stanish, Keene State College

kstanish@keene.edu

New Colleagues Talks:

Chris Aubuchon, Johnson State College

aubuchoc @ badger.jsc.vsc.edu

Phil Hotchkiss, Western New England College

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Undergraduate Papers:

Raimundo Kovac, Rhode Island College

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Problem Competition:

Jason Molitierno, Sacred Heart University

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Rob Poodiac, Norwich University

rpoodiac@norwich.edu

Message from the Chair.....Jason Moliterno

Greetings! I hope that everyone is having a good semester so far. It's hard to believe that the summer will soon be upon us.

Before beginning, I would like to say how thankful I am that Frank Ford has made a sound recovery from his medical issues. In fact, he is compiling this newsletter! Many thanks to the many of you who wished Frank well throughout his recovery.

It was great seeing so many of you at the Fall Meeting at Bentley University this past November. It was a fantastic meeting with many wonderful invited speakers, student papers, and contributed papers. I would like to take the time to thank the Local Arrangements Committee: Rick Cleary (chair), Lucy Kimball, and Nathan Carter; and the Program Committee: Ann Trenk (chair), Steve Abbott, Ismar Volic, and Meredith Watts. Many thanks to the people who diligently served on these committees.

At the Fall meeting, we held the election for new officers. Congratulations to Ann Kizanis (Western New England College) for winning another term as Secretary-Treasurer, Phil Mahler (Middlesex Community College) for being elected Two-Year College Representative, and Rob Poodiack (Norwich University) begin elected Vice Chair. Rob will take over for me as chair when my term expires at the end of the Fall 2009 meeting. I would also like to thank Lois Martin (Massasoit Community College) for doing a wonderful job as Two-Year College Representative. Her term expired at the end of the Fall Meeting.

I would also like to thank Rob Poodiack for organizing the third annual Northeastern Section Collegiate Mathematics Competition at this past November's Fall Meeting. The competition was a huge success with undergraduates from schools all over the Section competing.

I was excited to see many new faculty and first-time participants at this past Fall Meeting! As a way of reaching out to new members, we conducted a drawing. The ten first-time participants whose names were drawn will receive free registration and meals for the upcoming Spring meeting at Fairfield University. We hope to see as many new faculty as possible at our upcoming meetings. Additionally, I would like to thank Karen Stanish for organizing the Section NExT workshop. She will be organizing another workshop for the upcoming Spring meeting. These workshops are a great way for newer and untenured faculty to get involved in our section.

In other news, congratulations to Solomon Friedberg of Boston College for winning the 2009 NES/MAA Award for Distinguished College/University Teaching. Solomon will be receiving his award at the Spring Meeting and will be invited to give a talk at the Fall Meeting.

We are eagerly anticipating the upcoming Spring Meeting which will be held at Fairfield University on May 29-30. Matt Coleman (Fairfield University) is chairing the Local Arrangements Committee and Karen Stanish (Keene State College) is chairing the Program Committee. It is shaping up to be an exciting meeting with many wonderful

speakers lined up.

In past newsletters, I discussed the possibility of implementing on-line registration and payment for our section meetings. We are currently working with the national MAA regarding this. While on-line registration will not be available for the upcoming Spring meeting, we are confident that on-line registration and payment will be available within the next year.

There are many other events that are being planned for the near future. They include:

- Two dinner meetings: one at College at the Holy Cross on March 24, the other at Framingham State College on April 6. Visit the [Dinner Meetings web page](#) for details.

- MathFest will be held in Portland, Oregon on August 6-8, 2009. See the MAA website for more details.

- The Fall section meeting will be held at Western New England College on November 20-21. More details will follow.

The Executive Committee has also been busy planning the location of future section meetings. The Spring 2010 meeting will be held at Salve Regina University and the Fall 2010 meeting will be held at Providence College. More details will follow as time gets closer.

Finally, if anyone has any ideas for what you like to see the Section offer, I would be happy to hear them. I hope to see many of you at Fairfield University on May 29-30!

Message from the Governor..... Ockle Johnson

Three years have gone by quickly. This is my last governor's message as I complete my term this spring. I have enjoyed this opportunity to represent the section and to gain a better appreciation of the national MAA. Thank you.

This January we met in Washington DC. It was a very successful meeting with over 6000 participants. In addition to interesting talks, good conversations and productive meetings, I had a chance to visit MAA headquarters for the first time. It's a beautiful old building with many nice mathematical touches and the carriage house is an attractive venue for programs. It took me a few minutes, but I eventually found our section brick on the river of bricks commemorating Paul Halmos.

At the governor's meeting we were updated on our financial situation. We of course are not immune to the general downturn of the stock market, but with our conservative investment philosophy we have not suffered as badly as many others. More information can be found on the treasurer's page in the members' only portion of the website: <http://www.maa.org/treasurer/>. In general our financial condition remains solid.

However, after two years of operating budget deficits and another deficit projected for this year, Tina Straley outlined ways to modify an already tight budget and possible choices for future action, if necessary. If you want more information about the MAA budget, I'm sure Rick Cleary would be happy to fill you in.

MAA elections are coming up and this year they will be electronic, unless you specifically request a paper ballot.

As always, members of the section are encouraged to serve on national committees. You can take a look at the opportunities at <http://www.maa.org/committees/>. If you would like to be on a committee, just let me or another officer know.

An early reminder if you have an exemplary new faculty member: the Adler Award is a distinguished teaching award for mathematics faculty two to seven years after their Ph.D. Nominations aren't due until October 1, but this could be a great summer project to support a worthy young colleague. More information can be found at: http://www.maa.org/awards/alder_award.html.

At the governors' meeting we were updated on the MAA strategic planning process. This time our breakout sessions focused on publications. One major idea under consideration is delivering MAA journals electronically. We also received the final report on membership. There are many membership issues currently under review: consolidation of membership categories, electronic memberships, student memberships, institutional memberships, international memberships, etc. (I am the chair of the membership committee and would welcome any ideas or feedback you have on membership issues.) Implementation of governance changes continues with a committee formed to revise the MAA bylaws.

One change that elicited a fair amount of comment was that student speakers at Section meeting will no longer receive a free MAA membership. The cost of servicing a large number of free memberships and the extremely low rate of renewal led to the decision. But a student rate of \$30 with Math Horizons is still an incredible deal. The MAA continues to support students in a variety of ways including career information on the MAA website and grants to support travel to Mathfest and the Joint meetings and to support undergraduate mathematics conferences.

I encourage you to check out the MAA website frequently. News items, a daily problem, pictures of "found" math and contributed columns are constantly changing.

Finally, I hope to see you at the spring meeting at Fairfield. This summer you might plan a west coast vacation around Mathfest in Portland. Our family had a wonderful time exploring Washington and Oregon before Mathfest in San Jose two years ago and I am looking forward to getting back to the area.

Message from the Secretary-Treasurer Ann Kizanis

In the Fall newsletter, I reported a balance of \$22,494.28. Since that time, the expenses from the successful Fall meeting at Bentley University were \$5,905.73. We also spent \$225.00 for Student Awards at that meeting. The total expenses for the Fall meeting were \$6,130.73, while the revenue from meeting registrations was \$5,724.00. The expenses for the printing and postage of the Fall newsletter totaled \$1,279.72. Moreover, we earned \$186.32 in interest since the last newsletter and received \$87.43 from book sales. I opened a new 12-month CD in the amount of \$14,000 with APY 3.25% that will mature on October, 4, 2009. Our present balance is \$21,081.58.

The total expenses for our Fall meeting were \$2,571.38 more than our Spring meeting expenses, while the revenue from Fall meeting registrations was \$1,271.00 more than the revenue from Spring meeting registrations. The expenses for the postage and printing of our newsletter last fall have decreased from last spring. We spent \$1,624.38 for the printing and postage of the Spring 2008 newsletter and \$1,279.72 for the printing and postage of the Fall 2008 newsletter.

In January, I wrote and submitted our Section’s 2008 end of year Financial Report, 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 Fairfield University on May 29-30, where I will update you further on our finances.
I wish you all a very enjoyable spring semester!

Two-year College Representative’s ReportLois Martin

Greetings.
A quick note on goings-on at the two-year colleges. This spring NEMATYC (www.nematyc.org) holds its annual conference on Friday April 24 and Saturday April 25 at Southern New Hampshire University. The Friday night event will include a show at the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium in Manchester, and the Saturday luncheon speaker is Kevin Short, UNH, who won a Grammy award for his role in restoring an antique recording of a Woody Guthrie concert. MATYCONN (CT) (www.matyconn.org) hosts its spring meeting at Housatonic Community College on April 17, featuring chaos theory with BU’s Bob

Devaney. AMATYC (www.amatyc.org) hosts its fall national conference Nov 12-15 in Las Vegas. A personal thought: at least in Massachusetts, we are creating and talking about course and curriculum outcomes, intensive values and whatnot that take up all of our out-of-class energies, for accreditors. This leaves little time to improve our courses and curricula per the suggestions of AMATYC's Standards, and MAA's CUPM Curriculum Guide 2004, which I believe had a lot to say about our non-STEM curriculum.

From the Newsletter Editor Frank Ford

Hello, everybody.

I am back and in fact I am teaching. I thank all of you who cared so much for my welfare during my time in the hospital and in recovery. All your cards and calls were very welcome. Thanks again.

It will not be long until we gather again for our Spring fling at Mathematics.

We may be a smallish group but we are enthusiastic and welcoming. I hope we see many of you at Fairfield. Vince Ferlini has prepared the lineup for the meeting and he did a great job the last time he got our speakers. Matt Coleman worked out the details for local arrangements and we should enjoy ourselves.

SO, remember to come to Fairfield in late May.

And for more Mathematics, come to Portland, the one in Oregon, for Mathfest. I've been researching things to do in Portland and in other parts of Oregon and there is an embarrassment of riches out there.

Finally, I want to congratulate Ed Sandifer on being elected Governor of the Section and thank all of you for nominating me. I consider it a great honor to be nominated.

Presentations at the Fall 2008 Section Meeting

Undergraduate Student Talks

Googling in High Dimensions

Rebecca Graber, Wellesley College

Burnside's Lemma and Some Applications

Sue He, Wellesley College

The technique of integer programming (IP) has many practical applications

Andrea Johnston, Wellesley College

The Josephus Problem: Please Choose Me Last

Natalia Kopyra, Wellesley College

Regular Tessellations of the Poincare Disk

Amanda Curtis, Wellesley College

Subgroup Lattices as Graph Theoretic Objects: A Study of the Chromatic Number

Voula Collins, Wellesley College

The Total Discrepancy of S_n

Alicia Claire West, Wellesley College

Distance constraint labelings of 2-paths and 3-paths

Kalin Gochev, Trinity College

Using Nonparametric Statistics to Determine Component Relationships in Stacking Matrices of Ranks

Sarah Berube, Gordon College

Performance bounds for queuing network control problems

Stephen Rizzo, Gordon College

Symmetric Magic Squares: A Linear Algebra Approach

Charles Fisher, Fitchburg State College

Prime Diamonds: A Look at Gaussian Prime Constellations

Matthew Guay, Dartmouth College

P-adic Numbers: Distance and Triangles

Tanen Clark, Wellesley College

The Axiom of Choice

Bianca Thompson, Wellesley College

Mathematics In Computer Vision

Rebecca Rothkopf, Wellesley College

A [Really] Abridged History of Codes and Ciphers

Samantha Lowe, Wellesley College

Acute Triangle Inequalities

Kenneth Sanderson, Worcester State College

Exploring Equalities of Positive Numbers Through Certain Equations

Gregory Brown, University of New Haven

Analysis on Fractals

Daniel Ford, Providence College

New Colleague Talks

In search of the perfect knot invariant

Ismar Volic, Wellesley College

On the Problem of Prescribed Gauss Curvature

Joseph Shomberg, Providence College

A Proposed Framingham State College Prisoner's Dilemma Tournament

Robert Page, Framingham State College

Scheduling as a strategy in fantasy basketball

George Recck (presenting) and Laurie Houghtalen, Babson College

A brief introduction of Time Scales

Fei Xue, University of Hartford

A Mathematician Working as a Mathematics Educator

Maria Fung, Worcester State College -

Strategies in Repeated Plays-Expert Selection Problem

Mingfei Li, Bentley University,

Diagram calculus for the Terperley-Lieb algebra

Dana Ernst, Plymouth State University,

Contributed Papers**Nim for Several Players**

Annela Kelly, Roger Williams University

Actuarial Applications in Calculus

Brian Kelly, Bryant University

Mathematics Textbooks in Russia in the 18th Century

Maryam Vulis, Norwalk Community College / University of Bridgeport

An Introduction to DNA Microarray Data Analysis

Darlene Olsen, Norwich University

Using Examples of Wordplay for a Mathematics Class

Roger Bilisoly, Central Connecticut State University

The Massachusetts K-12 Mathematics Curriculum Framework

Jennifer Beineke, Western New England College, and Maura Murray, Salem State College

The Fundamental Theorem of Credit Card Interest

Roger W. Pease, Jr., Merriam-Webster Incorporated

Call for Undergraduate Presentations

Undergraduate students from the Northeastern Section are invited to present talks at the fall meeting on topics in mathematics, statistics, or computer science. The presentations should be 10 minutes in length, on expository work, research projects, employment experiences, or problems from mathematical periodicals. The registration fee and cost of meals will be waived for one student presenter per paper. Interested students should submit:

- the title of the presentation,
- an abstract of no more than 80 words,
- full name,
- email address,
- mailing address,
- college/university affiliation,
- indication of desire to attend the Friday Banquet, the Saturday lunch, or both,
- the name and email address of a faculty sponsor,

to Raimundo Kovac, rkovac@ric.edu, or Julie Levandosky, jlevandosky@frc.mass.edu; please use “NES/MAA Undergraduate Student Paper Session - Submission” for the subject line. The deadline for abstract submissions is May 15, 2009.

Student Papers Coordinators

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 Providence RI 02908
rkovac@ric.edu

Julie Levandosky
 Department of Mathematics
 Framingham State College
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 Framingham, MA 01701-9101
jlevandosky@frc.mass.edu

Call for Contributed Papers

Participants at the Fall Meeting of the section are invited to submit contributed papers. We are particularly interested in papers which will appeal to a variety of participants. If you are planning to speak about results of your research, keep in mind that the audience most likely will not be familiar with your specialty, so you will want to give some motivation and context for your work. Your presentation should be approximately 15 minutes in length.

Please send an abstract and your mailing address together with a list of any special equipment you may need to Rob Poodiack at rpoodiac@norwich.edu.

E-mail submissions are preferred, but you may also send a typed submission to

Rob Poodiack
Department of Mathematics
Norwich University
158 Harmon Drive
Northfield, VT 05663

The deadline for submission of abstracts for the Spring 2009 Meeting at Bentley College is May 15th, 2009.

Presenters must also have their registration submitted to Fairfield University by that date.

**FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY, Fairfield, CT
SPRING MEETING OF NES/MAA**

Friday, May 29, 2009: NES/MAA Project NEXt Program (all full-time untenured faculty are welcome)

12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch and Presentation

Friday, May 29, 2009: NES/MAA Spring Meeting

11:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Registration (Dolan School of Business = DSB)

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Executive Committee Meeting (DSB 106)

3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

**Class Preserving Dissections Of Convex
Quadrilaterals**

Dan Ismailescu, Hofstra Univeristy

4:00 – 4:50 p.m.

**Polyhedral Surfaces in 4-Space: Self-intersections,
Linking and the Normal Euler Class**

Ockle Johnson, Keene State College

4:00 – 4:50 p.m.

**What's the Story?: A Workshop for
Undergraduates on Presenting Mathematics**

Aaron Luttmann, Clarkson University

Rachel Schwell, Central Connecticut State University

5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Undergraduate Student Papers

6:00 – 7:50 p.m.

Reception and Banquet

8:00 – 8:50 p.m.

Battles Lecture:

**Risk Management Lessons from the Madoff
Fraud**

Guillaume Weisang, Bentley College

Saturday, May 30, 2009: NES/MAA Spring Meeting

7:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Registration

9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

Hérigone's Triangle?

Charles Rocca, Western Connecticut University

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Break

10:30 – 11:20 a.m.

Noncommutative Algebraic Cryptography

Ben Fine, Fairfield University

11:30 – Noon

Business Meeting

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Contributed and Graduate Student Paper Sessions

Abstracts/Biographies

Speaker: Dan Ismailescu, Hofstra Univeristy

Title: Class Preserving Dissections Of Convex Quadrilaterals

Abstract: Given a convex quadrilateral Q having a certain property P , we are

interested in finding a dissection of Q into a finite number of smaller convex quadrilaterals, each of which has property P as well. In particular, we prove that every cyclic, orthodiagonal, or circumscribed quadrilateral can be dissected into cyclic, orthodiagonal, or circumscribed quadrilaterals, respectively. The problem becomes much more interesting if we restrict the study to a particular type of partition called a grid dissection.

Speaker: Ockle Johnson, Keene State College

Title: Polyhedral Surfaces in 4-Space: Self-intersections, Linking and the Normal Euler Class

Abstract: Can a surface have a nowhere zero vector field? For tangent vector fields, it depends only on the surface. The zeroes of the vector field can be indexed and the sum of the indices equals the Euler Characteristic of the surface. Whether a surface in 3-space has a nowhere zero normal vector field depends on whether the surface is orientable. In 4-space, however, the sum of the indices of the zeroes of a normal vector field depends both on the surface and the mapping. This is the Normal Euler Number.

In this talk I will present work done with Tom Banchoff to extend the theory of Normal Euler Classes to polyhedral surfaces. After reframing the problem geometrically in terms of self-intersections, some intuition will be gained from lower dimensional analogues. Then self-intersections for polyhedral surfaces will be defined in terms of linking of curves and of faces. The main ideas will be illustrated through key examples (and pretty pictures), including an example where polyhedral surfaces differ from smooth surfaces

Speaker: Guillaume Weisang, Bentley College

Title: Risk Management Lessons from the Madoff Fraud

Abstract: In December 2008, as the financial and economic crisis continued on its devastating course, a new scandal erupted. After the 1998's failure of Long-Term Capital Management, Madoff's fraud once again discredits the hedge funds industry. This scandal is however of a different kind. Indeed, Madoff's firm is not a standard hedge fund but a developed Ponzi scheme. In this talk, we'll explore Madoff's system and the reasons for its collapse. We will then look at the risk management lessons one can draw from the Madoff fraud, especially for operational risk management and asset managers' risk capital requirements. Finally, we will ask what implications the Madoff affair should have on due diligence processes, and more broadly the general regulatory framework of the hedge fund industry and its future. This talk is based on a joint work with Pierre Clauss and Thierry Roncalli.

Speaker: Charles Rocca, Western Connecticut University

Title: Hérigone's Triangle?

Abstract: We are all familiar with what Pascal's arithmetic triangle but is our view correct or justified? Looking at original sources from Jakob Bernoulli's "Ars Conjectandi", Pascal's "Treatise on the Arithmetical Triangle", and Pierre Hérigone's "Cours mathématique," we will get a feel for some of the history of the arithmetic triangle. Each of the authors has their own approach to and presentation of the triangle and what many may presume to be the most familiar may not be the one that is really what we teach today.

Speaker: Ben Fine, Fairfield University

Title: Noncommutative Algebraic Cryptography

Abstract: As computers get more powerful serious concerns have been raised about the security of the standard cryptographic protocols. One direction this has taken is to develop cryptosystems and cryptographic protocols based on noncommutative objects, in particular nonabelian groups. Theoretically this has been a two way street, both developing ideas in cryptography and simultaneously looking at new and important group theoretic ideas such as asymptotic density and braid group cryptography. This talk will give an introduction and survey of these ideas.

Hotel Information

The Westport Inn , Westport, CT: rate \$119 (two queens or one king)

Best Western Black Rock Inn, Fairfield, CT: rate \$109 (single queen), \$119 (double queens)

Marriott, Trumbull, CT: rate \$99 (all rooms available at this price)

To ensure these rates, you must reserve by Wednesday, 4/29 for the Westport Inn and Best Western and by May 15th at the Marriott.

Meals

On Friday evening from 6:00 to 8:00 there will be a reception . The dinner will be buffet-style, and will include a selection of beef, chicken, and vegetarian entrees. Spouses and guests are welcome. The cost is \$29 per person. Tickets can only be guaranteed to those participants who pre-register, though a limited number of tickets may be available the day of the banquet. Any special dietary needs should be mentioned on the pre-registration form.

Saturday from 12:00 to 1:00 there will be a buffet lunch. Tickets (\$15per person) can be purchased when registering. Again, pre-registration is recommended.

Campus Map

For a campus map, access http://www.fairfield.edu/about/about_map.html

Directions

For directions to the college, visit

http://www.fairfield.edu/about/about_directions.html

Pre-Registration

Spring 2009 Meeting -- Northeastern Section of the MAA May 29-30, 2009:

Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT

Please pre-register! On-line registration is NOT available. Please send this registration form so that it arrives by **Friday, May 16**. Checks should be made to: *NES/MAA*. **You must pre-register for the meeting and pay all charges by May 16 to be guaranteed a place at the meals.** If you have questions about registration, send email to Matt Coleman at mcoleman@mail.fairfield.edu, or Rose Olexovitch at rolexovitch@mail.fairfield.edu. For more information about the conference, visit the conference web site which will be reachable from the newsletter web site.. Mail this form to:

Rose Olexovitch

Department of Mathematics and Computer Science Fairfield Univ.

1073 N. Benson Rd.

Fairfield, CT 06824-5195

Last Name _____ First Name _____
_____ MI _____

If you prefer other name on badge please indicate here: _____

Institutional Affiliation _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Country _____

Daytime Phone Number _____ FAX number _____

Email Address _____

Please check all that apply to you: MAA member

Faculty member at a college or university with highest mathematics degree offered:

Associate Bachelors Masters Doctorate

Business, industry, government High school teacher

Undergraduate student Graduate student

Pre-registration fee: MAA Member \$25; Non-Member \$30 ; Student or unemployed \$10

\$ _____

Friday Banquet: \$29 per person (Buffet including beef, chicken, and vegetarian pasta) Number: _____ Please indicate special meal needs or allergies: _____ \$ _____

Saturday Lunch: \$15 per person (Deluxe Sandwich including other things) Number _____

Please indicate special meal needs or

allergies: _____ \$ _____

Total Payment (Make checks payable to **NES/MAA**)

\$ _____

Section NEXT: All full-time untenured faculty are welcome, and there is no additional fee for Section NEXT activities.

Are you attending Section NEXT on Friday? _____ Yes _____ No

Are you attending Section NEXT lunch on Friday? _____ Yes _____ No

If so, please indicate any special meal needs or allergies:

Frank Ford
Newsletter Editor
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