December 9, 1968

Chairman
Department of Mathematics

Dear Colleague:

When I was a sophomore at Illinois Tech, the Math. Dept. Chairman, Lester Ford, Sr., then editor of the AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL MONTHLY, persuaded me to join the Mathematical Association of America. As I gradually became a professional mathematician, my obligation to support the MAA and work within it became apparent. The MAA is the professional organization for teachers of college mathematics; for many years I have believed that each of us owes the profession his active participation.

I am writing to ask you personally to approach each member of your department who is not a member of the Association and urge him to become one. Perhaps you can circulate this letter at the same time or at least post it for your staff to read.

I am not qualified to tell you all of the many activities of the MAA aimed at improved college mathematics. However I am in a position to tell you what is happening with its official journal, the AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL MONTHLY, since copies will appear under my editorship starting January 1969. I am working on improvements in a number of areas and I sincerely believe the MONTHLY can and will be a much better publication, better serving the needs of college mathematics teachers.

My principal responsibility is the selection of Main Articles. I am assisted by several excellent Associate Editors: Arthur Mattuck (MIT, algebra), Gian-Carlo Rota (MIT, analysis, combinatorics), James Wendel (Univ. of Mich., prob. and stat.), Peter Lax (NYU, applied math.).

My main goal is the publication of outstanding expository and survey articles covering all important aspects of current mathematics. Many superb articles have been submitted and others solicited. In the January issue there will be articles by S. Smale, R. Brauer, and G. C. Evans. In subsequent issues there will be articles by I. Niven, N. Levinson, H. Alder, R. Redheffer, R. Bing, B. Mitchell, J. C. Shepherdson, S. Lefshetz, J. Milnor, and other leading mathematicians. Each article by a major mathematician will be prefaced by a brief biographical sketch.

Technical research of interest only to specialists will be phased out completely as the present backlog is exhausted, hopefully in six months.

Mathematical Notes and Classroom Notes are edited by a brilliant young complex variables man, David Drasin (Purdue Univ.). The Math. Notes department will concentrate on brief papers containing new insights and mathematical pearls, while Classroom Notes will publish material suitable for presentation in real classrooms. Much excellent material is presently in the works.

Mathematical Education is edited by two exceptionally well qualified men, John Harvey (Univ. of Wis., formerly with Max Beberman at the Univ. of Ill.) and Malcolm Pownall (Colgate Univ., formerly Executive Director of CUPM).

The Problem sections are edited by Emory Starke (Rutgers Univ., emeritus). Solutions to Advanced Problems are edited by J. Barlaz (Rutgers Univ.) and new proposals are judged by A. Wilansky (Lehigh Univ.), H. Cohen (Univ. of Mass.), M. Marcus (Univ. of Calif., Santa Barbara), I. N. Herstein (Univ. of Chicago), R. Lyndon (Univ. of Mich.), and L. Carlitz (Duke Univ.). The number of new proposals per issue will be cut back to improve quality and the time between publication of a problem and its solution will be greatly reduced.
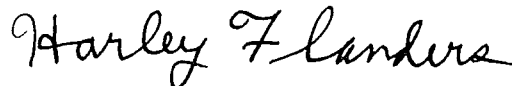
Elementary Problems are processed by M. S. Klamkin (Ford Motor Co.) and by Howard Eves and a group of his colleagues, the Univ. of Maine Problems Group. I expect that the efforts of Eves and his colleagues will produce a noticeable improvement in the Elementary Problems Section.

Book Reviews are edited by K. May (Univ. of Toronto) and films are reviewed by S. Schuster (Carleton College). They are striving to speed up publication of reviews and obtain more critical reviews.

R. Hailpern (SUNY at Buffalo) edits News and Association business and handles the Index, which will be completely revised starting with December 1968 to be a more useful reference tool.

This summarizes the present position of the MONTHLY and the changes in process. Others are forthcoming and I am encouraged by the splendid cooperation of numerous mathematicians. I am prejudiced, of course, but I think the MONTHLY alone is more than worth the small cost of Association membership and indeed that no one working in college mathematics can afford to miss the forthcoming issues.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Harley Flanders

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