

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240



DIVISION OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Department of Computer Science

Department of Mathematics

Department of Statistics

December 18, 1968

Professor B. E. Gillam
Mathematics Department
Drake University
~~Des~~ Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Professor Gillam:

I have received your letter of December 9 concerning the Spring meeting of the Iowa Section of the MAA scheduled for April 18, 1969. However, the spring meeting of the AMS is scheduled for the same day in Chicago, Illinois. I will therefore not be able to attend the MAA meeting.

I began writing letters of this type when I came to Iowa in 1960. Since that time I have been prevented from attending the MAA's single annual meeting in Iowa by the fact that it is scheduled at the same time as the AMS regional meeting in an adjoining state. I have attended every Iowa MAA meeting when there was no conflict with the AMS and have attended none of those that did conflict. I do resent having to make this choice. Last year was my final year of the MAA board of governors as governor for the Iowa section, but due to the conflict I was not at the meeting to either report to the section or get information from the section.

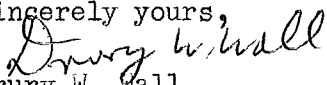
For two or three years in a row there was no conflict in the dates and I had hoped the problem had been solved. But this is now the second year in a row in which there will be the MAA-AMS conflict. I have found it difficult to get this question raised or even to know with whom it should be raised. When there is no conflict, no one wants to worry about it and when there is a conflict, those of us most interested in attending both meetings are usually not present.

I do not understand why the MAA meeting must be in conjunction with the Iowa Academy of Science meeting nor do I know how long this has been the case. But, I do feel that as long as the MAA meeting is treated merely as one of the sessions of the Iowa Academy, the MAA will not be as strong an organization as it might be. One of the goals of the MAA is to bridge the gap between the research mathematician and the junior college teacher, between the universities and the small colleges. The scheduling of the only MAA meeting in Iowa in 1969 in conflict with an AMS meeting in Chicago, goes a long way toward widening the gap.

As I say, I have been raising this issue since 1960. When I got the letter concerning the ~~1961~~ 1961 MAA meeting, I naively assumed that there must have been some error, since I had been in a MAA section that was quite strong and independent.

I raised the question with Prof. Lindsay last year and I see that the minutes in the Monthly (Vol 75 (1968) page 823) states "A partial cause of the somewhat below normal attendance was the concurrence of the AMS meeting in Chicago". What was done about it? Why is the conflict and resulting poor attendance to be repeated? Can the MAA not control the dates of its own meetings?

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Sincerely yours,

Drury W. Wall
Professor of Mathematics