

## Wendy Weber

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**From:** Frank Farris [FFarris@scu.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 20, 2004 5:47 PM  
**To:** Jean Bee Chan; John Kenelly; Dan Maki; Jim Daniel; Carl Cowen; Martha Siegel; Ron Graham (E-mail); Nancy Hagelgans (E-mail); Barbara Faires  
**Cc:** tina@maa.org; Frank Farris  
**Subject:** Iowa section meeting 4/16-17, 2004

Dear friends:

Pella, IA last weekend was much, much warmer than the cloudy/rainy Bay Area. The tulips were in full bloom and everyone was enjoying the height of spring.

The section meeting was held in the new Vermeer Science Center of Central College. The building is light and spacious, with an interesting fountain out front whose height is controlled by the amount of sunlight shining on the roof. The meeting began at 3 PM Friday with 3 parallel sessions for half-hour talks, followed by 2 parallel round table discussions about curriculum and careers.

After dinner, I told my story about hyperbolic wallpaper for a plenary session, followed by a reception.

Bright and early in the morning (6:45 PDT!), I spoke about 5-fold symmetry in wallpaper for a second plenary session. This timing encouraged students to attend my talk; at 10 AM they began the section's Undergraduate Mathematics Competition, with about 20 students competing.

While the students took the competition exam, the rest of us had more talks to attend: 3 concurrent sessions in the late morning and 3 more in the afternoon.

Before lunch, the section held its business meeting. I showed Tina's PowerPoint presentation and offered to email it to anyone who wanted to examine it more closely. For my taste, there is too much text on the slides. I only had time to go through it quickly, so no one had a chance to read all the slides. Still, I think I got the main points across.

Section Chair Joel Haack ran the meeting. Governor Ruth Berger brought a report from the Gov's meeting. Section Treasurer Wendy Weber reported that the fund to support the competition (now in its 10th year) was running low. Member Stephen Willson will match donations up to \$5000, given before May 2006. Presumably, this will encourage donations and the shortage will vanish. Mariah Birgen from Waldorf College was chosen as Chair-Elect.

The section teaching award was given to Murphy Waggoner of Simpson College. She organized an undergraduate research conference, which is expected to be an annual event. This year's keynote speaker was Tim Pennings with his dog Elvis.

A bylaws change is under discussion: Some language needs to be updated, mostly occurrences of "he" to be replaced by "the chair." They thought they had corrected all these back in the 70s, but the copy of the bylaws one file with the national office has the old language.

One issue came up at the business meeting that will surely reach the Executive Committee by a different route. David Manderscheid of the University of Iowa is on the committee for graduate student participation. With his help, the section applied for and received a grant to give small stipends to support graduate students attending the section meeting. It seems that no one applied. I joked that the money should be given to advisers if their students attend the meeting, a joke that was repeated in the business meeting. Of the 40 or so people present at the meeting, only 4 were faculty from research institutions.

In the afternoon, concurrent with 3 parallel paper sessions, Richard Thompson ran a workshop on the Mathematics for Business Decisions materials. I do not know how many people attended.

At the end of the meeting, one long-time member of the section thanked me for participating in so many sessions. I enjoyed the talks I attended and was glad to have visited Iowa.

Overall, this was a vigorous, well-attended meeting (for a small section), with numerous opportunities for students and faculty to present their work. I'll close with attendance data, provided by section Treasurer Wendy Weber:

Attendance at the Iowa Section Meeting (April 16-17, 2004)

77 total registrations (57 paid the \$5.00 registration fee)

9 two-year faculty  
45 four-year faculty  
18 undergraduate students  
2 graduate students  
3 non-MAA members (non counting students)  
2 retirees  
5 Female faculty presentations  
19 male faculty presentations  
5 female student presentations  
2 male student presentations

Best wishes,  
Frank

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