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Michigan Section–MAA Newsletter

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Norman Richert, Editor

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Michigan Section – MAA

NEWSLETTER

Volume 35, Number 2

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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: 52nd Annual Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition

Mathematical Association of America Michigan Section Newsletter Volume 35, Number 2

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Abbreviations

C = College CC = Community College CMU = Central Michigan U EMU = Eastern Michigan U FSU = Ferris State U GVSU = Grand Valley State U KU = Kettering U LSSU = Lake Superior State U LTU = Lawrence Technological U MSU = Michigan State U MTU = Michigan Technological U NMU = Northern Michigan U OU = Oakland U SHU = Siena Heights U SVSU = Saginaw Valley State U U = University UDM = U of Detroit Mercy UM = U of Michigan WMU = Western Michigan U WSU = Wayne State U

Calendar of Events May 8–9, 2009 Michigan Section Meeting, CMU April 22–25, 2009 NCTM Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. August 6–8, 2009 MAA MathFest, Portland, OR October 17, 2009 MUMC, WSU November 12–15, 2009 AMATYC Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV January 13–16, 2010 MAA/AMS Annual Meeting, San Francisco April 21–24, 2010 NCTM Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA May 7–8, 2010 Michigan Section Meeting, EMU August 5–7, 2010 MAA MathFest, Pittsburgh, PA November 11–14, 2010 AMATYC Annual Meeting, Boston, MA January 5–8, 2011 MAA/AMS Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA April 13–16, 2011 NCTM Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN August 4-6, 2011 MAA MathFest, Lexington, KY November 10–13, 2011 AMATYC Annual Meeting, Austin, TX January 4–7, 2012 MAA/AMS Annual Meeting, Boston, MA January 9–12, 2013 MAA/AMS Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA

Organizational Web sites

Michigan Section–MAA MAA NCTM MCTM AMATYC MichMATYC MMPC MiNExT www.michmaa.org www.maa.org www.nctm.org www.mictm.org www.amatyc.org www.michmatyc.org www.svsu.edu/mmpc www.math.hope.edu/pearson/minext.html

Annual Meeting, May 8–9

The annual meeting of the Michigan Section of the MAA and MichMATYC (Michigan Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges) will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 8–9, 2009 at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. The Program Committee is delighted to announce an exciting collection of plenary, local-invited, and contributed talks collectively devoted to interesting mathematics and the teaching and learning of the subject.

In order to save on printing expenses, an advance copy of the meeting program is not included in this issue of the *Newsletter*. Details about the schedule,



program, and abstracts are available on the meeting Web site, accessible via the Section Web site, www.michmaa.org. As usual, a printed version of the program and abstracts will be available at the meeting.

At the Friday luncheon, **Jennifer Szydlik** of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh will speak on "Teaching to Inspire Mathematical Thinking". In this talk, she will give examples of problems and activities that we, as mathematics educators, might use to inspire students to better understand the culture and habits of mind that lie at the heart of mathematical thinking. Jennifer won the Wisconsin MAA Distinguished Teaching Award in 2009.

Gerard Venema of Calvin College will deliver the Friday afternoon plenary address. The author of over 40 research articles in topology and the recent undergraduate geometry textbook *The Foundations of Geometry* (Prentice Hall), Gerard will speak on "Dimension, Fractals, and Wild Cantor Sets". Gerard is also the new Associate Secretary of the MAA and a former Chair of the Michigan Section.

Following the Friday evening awards banquet, **Sarah Greenwald** of Appalachian State University will present the banquet address. Her talk, "Good News Everyone! Mathematical Morsels from *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*", will provide a look into how popular culture can reveal, reflect, and even shape how society views mathematics, with careful consideration of the benefits and challenges this presents. Sarah is a 2005 MAA Alder Award winner.

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The Saturday morning program will begin with a plenary address, "Mathematics to DIE For: The Battle Between Counting and Matching" by **Jennifer Quinn** of the University of Washington-Tacoma. Jennifer just completed a 5-years term as co-editor of *Math Horizons* and, along with **Art Benjamin**, is co-author of the award-winning book *Proofs that Really Count: The Art of Combinatorial Proof.* She is also a 2007 recipient of the MAA's Haimo Award for Distinguished Teaching of Mathematics.

The meeting will conclude with the talk "An Introduction to Constructive Mathematics" by **Daniel Velleman** of Amherst College. Daniel has written three books and numerous research and expository articles and has been a recipient of the MAA's Ford (1994) and Allendoerfer (1996) awards for his writing. He is also Editor of the *American Mathematical Monthly*.

In addition to the plenary talks, we are pleased to have 30-minute local-invited addresses by **Ryan Hutchinson** (Hillsdale C, "Determinantal Conditions in Coding Theory"), **Christopher Moseley** (Calvin C, "Sub-Finsler Geometry in Dimensions Three and Four"), **Mark Pearson** (Hope C, "Necklaces, Symmetry, and Irreducible Representations of Wreath Products"), **Katrina Piatek-Jimenez** (CMU, "Factors that Influence Career Aspirations of Women Mathematics Majors"), and **Shelly Smith** (GVSU, "The Puzzling Mathematics of Sudoku").

There will also be many 20-minute contributed talks that cover a variety of topics in mathematics and pedagogical issues, sessions devoted to talks by undergraduate and graduate students, and book exhibits from the MAA and other publishers. There remains space in the program for some additional contributed talks; the deadline for contributed abstracts has been extended to March 2; undergraduate student talks may be submitted until March 27. Talks received after the deadlines will be considered as space permits.

This year the Executive Committee of the Michigan Section decided to implement a \$25 meeting registration fee for all faculty attending the meeting in order to offset rising costs. (This meeting registration fee is in addition to the regular \$15 annual Section dues.) Please note that advance reservations for all meals must be received by April 26 and hotel reservations must be made by April 8 in order to receive conference rates.

Special thanks are due to the local arrangements committee from CMU consisting of Sid Graham (chair), En-Bing Lin, Jean Chan, and Lisa DeMeyer; they have done a great job getting many important conference details in order. The program committee for this year consists of co-chairs Darin Stephenson (Hope C) and Tom Kelley (Henry Ford CC), together with Lisa DeMeyer (CMU), Stephanie Edwards (Hope C).

We look forward to seeing you at CMU on May 8 and 9!

Darin Stephenson, Four-Year College Vice Chair

Chairperson's Report

As I write this, it is February: the snow continues to fall and the cold continues to chill. I imagine we all are looking forward with anticipation to the arrival of spring itself and with it the Section's Annual Meeting. This year our conference will be held at Central Michigan University on Friday and Saturday May 8-9. Co-chairs Darin Stephenson (Hope C) and Tom Kelley (Henry Ford CC), together with the rest of the program committee, have put together a wonderful collection of invited speakers and are facilitating an array of interesting contributed talks as well. In addition to our gratitude



for the work of the program committee, we are thankful for the efforts of **Sid Graham** (CMU) and the rest of the local arrangements committee as they prepare for the spring meeting at CMU. Full details for the meeting, including how to register, are available at www.math.hope.edu/maa/2009-section-meeting.html. There is also a paper registration form inserted in this *Newsletter*.

In an effort to save costs, the Executive Committee elected not to mail a printed advance program for the Annual Meeting this year, but rather have all information posted online. There will be printed copies of both the schedule itself and the booklet of abstracts available at the Annual Meeting; while all of this information will be available online, you need not print your own copies prior to the conference.

As we announced in the Fall *Newsletter*, the past several years have seen the costs for hosting the Annual Meeting rise substantially, and this has been coupled with a drop in advertising and other non-dues-related revenue to the section. Therefore, the Executive Committee voted to institute a \$25 conference registration fee to help the host institution cover the many costs it incurs. This \$25 fee is distinct from voluntary dues, which remain unchanged at an annual rate of \$15. While dues are voluntary, we thank you in advance for your willingness to contribute this \$15, as it helps us fund a variety of important events, including other conferences in the state.

Chair's Report continued on page 6

Two-Year College Vice Chair's Report

As mathematics faculty members we know that "mathematics happens" all around us everyday. This might not be so apparent to students in mathematics courses. Just think of how hard it is for them to see where the math they're learning is applicable, even in their other coursework, like physics or chemistry. Thus we are always looking for opportunities to expose students to mathematical activities and events that happen outside the classroom. Here, in no particular order, are some activities to do with your students outside of math courses.



For groups of students

- Start or continue a Math Club and/or an MAA Student Chapter (www. maa.org/students). Finding one or two students who are interested is usually what it takes. I'm usually envious of faculty at four-year residential colleges because their students are a bit more readily available for such activities. Community college students don't seem to have as much time available for extracurricular activities, but we still try.
- Participate in Math Awareness Month Activities in April; this year's theme is Mathematics and Climate. Many colleges and universities are being prodded by students to take serious looks at sustainability issues—mathematical expertise is needed for determination of the "true cost" of even everyday activities. (www.mathaware.org/about.mam. html)
- Field a team or two in the Math Modeling competition held in early February each year. Students will pleasantly surprise you with how they do. (www.comap.com/undergraduate/contests/mcm/contests/2009/ problems)
- Convincing students to take the Putnam Exam is a long-standing tradition in some colleges and universities. Some have problem-solving seminars for participating students. (math.scu.edu/putnam)
- AMATYC sponsors the Student Mathematics League. (www.amatyc. org/SML)
- The American Society for the Communication of Mathematics has a

Problem Solving Competition that comes with ready-made problems (and solutions). All that's needed is a bulletin board and someone to post the problems. They hold their National Finals at MathFest each year. (www.ascm.org)

- Form a Problem Solving Group using problems from the *College Mathematics Journal, Mathematics Magazine, American Mathematical Monthly* and *Math Horizons*—these journals are great sources for problems to work on and eventually solve.
- Students who ask about what they can do with a math major can be directed to the books *101 Careers in Mathematics* and *She Does Math* for short descriptions of people and their career choices involving math. The MAA also has a Web site at www.maa.org/students/#careers with very good career information.

For individual students

- For selected students, tell them about Summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU's). Most have deadlines at the end of February, so start talking to students in the preceding Fall term. (www.ams. org/employment/reu.html)
- The MAA MathFest in the summer, usually in early August, is a great place to bring students to experience a professional meeting, as well as to give many students a chance to present their work to their peers. Many of the aforementioned REU's make presenting at MathFest a part of their program. There is also money available for travel grants to help defray some of the cost of attending. (www.maa.org/students/ undergrad)

For students outside your school

- Use your Math Club students to help disseminate information about the math department during College Open House for prospective students. Have them run "puzzle sessions" or have a drawing for a TI calculator that you can obtain for free through the TI-Technology Rewards program. (education.ti.com/educationportal/sites/US/nonProductMulti/support_VPP.html)
- Some schools put on "Math Days" for local high schools in the spring consisting of both written and oral competitions.
- Organize Sonya Kovalevsky Days to encourage high school girls to pursue careers in math and science. The AWM has funding available for such activities. (www.awm-math.org/kovalevsky.html)

Thomas Kelley, Two-Year College Vice Chair

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Chair's Report continued from page 3

For the eleventh consecutive year, the Section was pleased to help sponsor the Michigan Undergraduate Mathematics Conference (MUMC) as well. This annual conference was held October 18, 2008 at UM-Dearborn; we are delighted with the continued success of this event, and the over 100 participants who were present. The organizing committee was chaired by **John Clifford** (UM-Dearborn), who also serves as the Section Student Activities Coordinator. Please encourage undergraduates at your institution to participate in the twelfth annual MUMC meeting, which will take place October 17, 2009 at Wayne State University.

In addition to MUMC, this year the Section also provided funding support for the fifth annual Conversations Among Colleagues Conference on March 21, 2009, also at UM-Dearborn. The theme this year was "What Does it Mean to Do Mathematics?" More information on this event can be found at www-personal.umd.umich.edu/~askrebs/CAC.

This past September 12–13, the annual Upper Peninsula Regional Meeting was held at Lake Superior State University. Thanks to **Brian Snyder** (LSSU) and his colleagues for planning and hosting this event and for extending the annual invitation to the Section chair to make the trip as one of the invited speakers. Please consider joining our UP colleagues for the next annual meeting in 2009, which will be held at Michigan Technological University and is tentatively scheduled for October 9–10. The fall is a great time to head north to one of the most beautiful parts of our fine state.

For your calendars, Eastern Michigan University will be the site of the 2010 Annual Meeting; we are seeking a location for the 2011 meeting at an institution located in the western half of the state in order to stay with our desired cycle of west-central-east every three years. Recent western hosts include GVSU (2008) and Calvin C (2006). Please consider volunteering your institution for 2011.

I continue to be grateful for all of you who volunteer time and energy to the activities of the Section and to everyone who participates in a wide range of endeavors and events. Together we are working for the betterment of the mathematics community in Michigan.

Matt Boelkins, Chair

CMU in May

Governor's Report

Project NExT is an MAA mentoring and professional development program designed to launch new Ph.D.'s in their faculty careers. The Michigan Section will sponsor a NExT Fellow in 2009-2010. As of January 15 the Section had raised \$4,560 for the project through its Governors'Challenge campaign-providing \$2,500 to sponsor the 2009-2010 Fellow, and leaving us just \$440 shy of being able to sponsor another Fellow in 2010–11. Please consider contributing to this campaign—the size of the contributions doesn't matter. You will find information about the campaign as well as a form for contributions on the



Michigan Section Web site at www.michmaa.org/nextfellow.htm.

There are a number of new or updated resources on the MAA Web site that are worth a look:

- MinuteMath Blog: maaminutemath.blogspot.com
- NumberADay Blog: maanumberaday.blogspot.com
- MAA Video Channel on YouTube: www.youtube.com/maavideo
- Loci: mathdl.maa.org/mathDL/23 (combining the Journal of Online Mathematics, Convergence, and Digital Classroom Resources)
- Math Awareness Month resources: mathaware.org/mam/09
- Resources in the Members Only Section include: MAAReviews: mathdl. maa.org/mathDL/19; Classroom Capsules and Notes.

There is a wealth of material here as well as information about how you can contribute your own work.

The MAA has also posted several Association reports in its Members Only section, including financial reports at www.maa.org/treasurer, and final strategic planning reports for Professional Development, Revenue, and American Mathematics Competition (AMC) (Cycle I) and Students, Membership and Governance (Cycle II) at www.maa.org (Organization).

The 2009 Joint Mathematics Meetings in Washington, DC in January set a record, with over 6,000 attendees. Exciting programs are planned for MathFest in Portland, OR, August 6–8, 2009, and at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in San Francisco, CA, January 13–16, 2010. See you there!

Bette Warren, Governor

8 Secretary/Treasurer's Report

I would like to thank everyone who has sent in a voluntary Section dues payment for 2009. At this time there are 134 dues-paying members. Forty-four of these are sustaining members, who have paid dues of \$30 or more. The list of sustaining members can be found on page 28. In these challenging financial times, your willingness to support the activities of the Section is especially appreciated.

In addition, we now have 24 institutional members. This list can be found on page 29. If your school is not listed, you might want to remind your department chair to attend to this matter. Last



year at this time there were 140 dues-paying individual members, including 50 sustaining members, and 28 institutional members.

3/	/'04	3/'05	3/'06	3/'07	3/'08	3/'09
dues-paying members	96	90	93	92	90	90
sustaining members	58	51	52	50	50	44
institutional members	26	25	18	26	28	24

If you have not yet sent in a dues payment and wish to do so, the membership form can be found on page 29. The Michigan Section's current bank balance is \$3828.25. This year's balance is down somewhat from last year's balance at this time, which was \$4986.76, due to slightly larger expenses associated with the 2008 Annual Meeting. With that noted, we have a good balance of income and expenses, and the Section is in good shape financially.

Mark Bollman, Secretary/Treasurer

CMU in May

Michigan NExT

The Tenth Annual Michigan NExT symposium will be held on the afternoon and evening of Thursday, May 7 on the campus of Central Michigan University. This year's symposium will address the issues of using technology for advancing learning goals in the mathematics classroom. While we extend a special invitation to pre-tenure faculty members at Michigan colleges and universities to participate, we encourage broad participation from any faculty members who are interested in sharing creative or innovative uses of technology in the mathematics classroom. Some possible topics are: graphing calculators in the classroom, computer algebra systems in calculus, dynamic geometry software to teach geometry, internet resources, and online learning. To register for the symposium, or to volunteer to give a short (15 to 30 minutes) talk about using technology in the instruction of mathematics, please email **Mark Pearson** (pearson@hope.edu) and **Paul Yu** (yupaul@gvsu.edu) by Thursday April 30.

Mark Pearson, Hope C, and Paul Yu, GVSU



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PEARSON

Thank you from your Pearson Michigan friends

Tom Shaffer Christine Ngau Tibbits Kristen Ulin Karryn Vogt Nicole VanWasshnova

Webmaster's Report

During 2008 Michigan Section members paid \$365 in voluntary dues to the Section via the Google Checkout implementation on the Section Web site. Google has provided this secure service free to nonprofit organizations through February 2009, and the Section will continue using the service for very low transaction fees as of March 2009. Please consider paying your voluntary dues online. A donation receipt will be generated automatically when you do.

The Section site's top five traffic sources for a roughly five-month period ending February 19 were as follows:

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Google – Main Search Page	723 hits	(39.36% of all visits)
Direct Traffic	317 hits	(17.26% of all visits)
Google – Image Search Page	170 hits	(9.25% of all visits)
Yahoo Search	76 hits	(4.14% of all visits)
Link from www.maa.org	62 hits	(3.38% of all visits)

There are increasing numbers of Web site tools/gadgets available to Web site coordinators. If any Section member is interested in becoming Webmaster for the Section—a volunteer position that gives considerable freedom to implement some of these new Web tools to promote Section interests—please contact me (sebarnett@hfcc.edu) or **Tom Zerger** (zerger@ svsu.edu) of the Nominations Committee. Duties during the three-year term include the updating of site content and regular communication with other members of the Section's Executive Committee through e-mail and four or five in-person or phone meetings per year.

Scott Barnett, Henry Ford CC

MAA Campus Liaisons

With so many things happening in the MAA and the Michigan Section, it's important to keep our members informed of news and opportunities. This is the job of the MAA Liaisons.

We hope that you are receiving news through a liaison at your institution. If you are, give your liaison a pat on the back for helping keep you informed. If not, please help us make sure that our list of liaisons is current by visiting www.michmaa.org/liaisons.html and sending any corrections to the Section's Liaison Coordinator **David Austin** (austind@gvsu.edu).

If your institution does not have a liaison, please consider volunteering. The work is as easy as clicking "Forward" periodically in your e-mail program. And you'll earn the appreciation of your well-informed colleagues!

12 Teaching Award Nominations Sought

This was the first year that a new process was used for selecting the person for the Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics from the Michigan Section of the Mathematical Association of America. The Distinguished Teaching Award Committee – **Ted Sundstrom** (GVSU), **Tim Carroll** (EMU), and **Eddie Cheng** (OU) – is pleased to announce that the 2009 recipient of this award is **Lisa DeMeyer** from CMU.

Lisa will join the continuing members of the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee (Tim and Eddie) to select next year's recipient of the award. Nominations for the 2010 award will be accepted beginning in the Fall. Please be aware that the nomination process has changed significantly from that of previous years. Completed nominations must be received by November 1, 2009 to be considered for the 2010 Award. A complete description of the process can be found at the Michigan Section Web site at www.michmaa.org/awards.html. The person that the committee selects will receive the Michigan Section Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics at the Annual Spring Meeting of the Michigan Section, and will also, upon receipt of additional supporting material, become the Michigan Section nominee for the national MAA Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics. Information about the additional supporting material that is required can be found at www.maa.org/awards/Haimo_NF.pdf.

Student Chapter News

Alma College

Students are editing the new bi-weekly department newsletter, *The Almagest*. The newsletter includes important dates for departmental activities, suggestions about requesting letters of recommendation, a bi-weekly puzzle, recruitment for LMMC team members, and news about the Pi Mu Epsilon chapter.

Andrews University

The Michigan Gamma Chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon (established 1970) initiated 12 new members on April 16, 2008 and elected officers as follows: **Eric Shull**, president; **Daniel Moskala**, vice president; **Kiana Binford**, secretary-treasurer. Department Chair **Robert Moore** is relinquishing his duties as faculty sponsor to **Joon Hyuk Kang**.

Lawrence Technological University

The LTU Math Club held an intramural Math Challenge in November. Four teams competed in the 3-hour, 10-question contest. Plans are afoot for a Pi+3 Day celebration (the "holiday" falls during Spring break). Officers are **Richard Geyer**, **Alex Lane**, **Weiyi Jiao**, **Ze Cheng**, and **Matt Lanting**.



Michigan Technological University Department of Mathematical Sciences M.S. and Ph.D. Degrees

Michigan Tech faculty conduct cutting-edge research in statistical genetics, combinatorial designs and algorithms, combustion, computational fluid dynamics, error-correcting codes, materials science, wildlife statistics, and many other areas. We have a comprehensive training program for teaching assistants, and Ph.D. students are encouraged to complete an internship at a government agency or private company. These features of our program, along with the coursework in mathematics, statistics, and numerical methods, provide an exceptional preparation for both academic and nonacademic careers.

The M.S. degree in the Mathematical Sciences is offered in

- Applied Mathematics
- Discrete Mathematics
- Pure Mathematics
- Statistics

The Doctoral degree is offered in three areas of concentration

- Applied Mathematics
- Discrete Mathematics
- Statistics

Full financial support, including stipend, tuition and fees waiver, and health insurance, is available for qualified students. Summer support is also available for many of our qualified students.

Detailed information is available on our Web site: www.math.mtu.edu/graduate

For more information contact:

Dr. Jianping Dong Director of Graduate Studies Department of Mathematical Sciences Michigan Technological University 1400 Townsend Drive Houghton, MI 49931 906-487-2928, jdong@mtu.edu www.math.mtu.edu

Michigan Technological University is an equal opportunity educational institution/equal opportunity employer.

14 MMPC Honors Top High School Students

The top 100 high school students in mathematics, from 39 different schools, were honored for their achievement in the 52nd Annual Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition in the MMPC Awards Day, held on Saturday, March 7, 2009 at Saginaw Valley State University. This is the first year of the three-year term of the MMPC Director, **Hasan Al-Halees** (SVSU).

Stephen DeBacker (UM-Ann Arbor) spoke on "The Seven Color Theorem", and **Lisa DeMeyer** (CMU) spoke on "Geometry, Fractals, and Dimension".

The first-place Gold Award winner was **Allen Yuan** (Detroit Country Day). The second-place Gold Award winner was **Neil Gurram** (Detroit Country Day). The third-place Gold Award winner was **Nicholas Triantafillou** (Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy). The first-level Silver Award went to **Alan Huang** (Detroit Country Day), the second-level Silver Award went to **Sudharshan Mohanram** (Novi High School), and the third-level Silver Award winners, and 49 students received Honorable Mention. The top female, a Bronze Award winner, was **Willa Chen** (Canton High School).

The top 51 students received scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$2600. The honorable mention winners this year have been given a Barnes and Noble gift card.

Part I of the competition, administered on October 8, 2008, consisted of 40 multiple-choice questions. About 1000 participants in Part I were invited to participate in Part II, administered on December 3, 2008. Grading Day was on January 17, 2009. The official Web site of the MMPC, www.svsu. edu/mmpc, contains much additional information about the competition. Part I and Part II of the competition are given in October and December, respectively, of each year.

CMU in May

MMPC Top 100 Statistics

- The top Gold Award winner, **Allen Yuan**, is a sophomore. The second-place Gold Award Winner, **NeilK. Gurram**, is a junior. The third-place Gold Winner, **Nicholas Triantafillou**, is a senior.
- The first-place Silver Award winner, Alan G. Huang, is a senior. The second-place Silver Award winner, Sudharshan Mohanram, is a senior. The third-place Silver Award winner, Robin He, is a junior.

Top MMPC Results for Each Grade

Grade	Place	Score	Grade	Place	Score
12	3	92.8	9	15	66.0
11	2	98.8	8	32	46.8
10	1	99.0	7	NA	NA

Top 100 Results by Grade

Grade	Total	12	11	10	9	8
# in Top 100	100	39	28	20	9	4

Top 100 Results by Gender

Grade	Total	Μ	F
Scholarships	51	44	7
Honorable Mention	49	44	5
Total	100	88	12

- A student's score is the sum of the Part I score (out of 40) plus 1.2 times the Part II score (out of 50).
- The cutoff score to qualify for Part II this year was 18 (out of 40).
- The cutoff score to make the top 100 of the competition this year was 35.

MMPC Awards Day, Saginaw Valley State University, March 7, 2009



Gold and Silver Award Winners (l to r): Nicholas Triantafillou, Alan Huang, Robin He, Sudharsham Mohanram.



Section Chair Matt Boelkins recognizes Third Place Gold Winner Nicholas Triantafillou,__



Hasan Al-Halees, in his first year as MMPC Director, attending to some of the many details of this enormous undertaking.



Nikita Consul gave a pitch for the Top 100 Winners to join her at ARML.





Stephen DeBacker (UM) spoke on "The Seven Color Theorem".

The afternoon talks, banquet and awards program were in Curtiss Hall at SVSU.



Lisa DeMeyer (CMU) spoke on "Geometry, Fractals, and Dimension".

1852nd MMPC Part II Problems

The top 1000 students had 100 minutes to solve these five problems.

1. Compute

$(1/10)^{1/2}(1/10^2)^{1/4}(1/10^3)^{1/8}\cdots$

- 2. Consider the sequence 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4, ..., where the positive integer *m* appears *m* times. Let d(n) denote the *n*th element of this sequence starting with n = 1. Find a closed-form formula for d(n).
- 3. Let $0 < \theta < \pi/2$. Prove that

 $(\sin^2\theta/2 + 2/\cos^2\theta)^{1/4} + (\cos^2\theta/2 + 2/\sin^2\theta)^{1/4} \ge (68)^{1/4},$

and determine the value of θ when the inequality holds as equality.

- 4. In \triangle ABC, parallel lines to segments AB and AC are drawn from a point Q lying on side BC. If *a* is used to represent the ratio of the area of parallelogram ADQE to the area of the triangle \triangle ABC,
 - (i) find the maximum value of *a*;
 - (ii) find the ratio BQ/QC when a = 24/49.



5. Prove the following inequality

 $1/2009 < (1/2) \cdot (3/4) \cdot (5/6) \cdot (7/8) \cdot \cdot \cdot (2007/2008) < 1/40.$

Thanks from the MMPC Director

I would like to formally thank many of the people who worked behind the scenes to make this competition and awards ceremony possible.

I would like to begin by thanking the examination committee, which worked tirelessly in the composition of Part I and Part II of the MMPC. This includes Chair of the committee **Lazaros Kikas** (UDM) and fellow members **Ada Cheng** (Kettering U), **Jennifer Zhao** (UMD), and **Eddie Cheng** (OU). I would also like to extend my gratitude to the reviewers who donated time and effort to make sure this year's MMPC was a success. My sincerest thanks go to the graders, who volunteered from many universities and colleges throughout Michigan, and donated their time in spite of severe weather, to masterfully carry out the grading process. I would also like to thank the MMPC supervisors throughout Michigan high schools, who served as contacts and were invaluable participants in this process. I would like to thank the companies and foundations that donated to this event. I would like to highlight the companies that donated this year and some of them for the first time, DTE Energy, Weinlander Fitzhugh, Glass Tender, The World's Best Roof.

Hasan Al-Halees, SVSU

Distinguished Service Award

Past Chair **Tom Zerger** reports that **Richard Fleming** was selected to receive the Section's 2008–2009 Distinguished Service Award. Details will appear in the Fall 2009 *Newsletter*.



20 **News from the Campuses**

Albion College [reported by Robert Messer]

In September, geometric sculptor George Hart led over 100 participants of all ages in a campus-community "barn-raising" build of his latest sculpture entitled *Comet!* in the science complex atrium. The sculpture is comprised of 9 orbs that hang along a sweeping arc inside the atrium. The sculpture is the culmination of over two years of planning by Math/CS professors David Reimann and Darren Mason and Art and Art History professor Gary Wahl. Some links for photos and information are www.albion.edu/MathCS/WhatsNew.asp and www.georgehart. com/Albion/construction.html. • The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Albion C invites people around the world to wear plaid on April 24, the last Friday of Mathematics Awareness Month, to show their support of mathematics. [Ram@albion.edu]

Alma College [reported by Mel Nyman]

Andrew Thall is a new Assist. Prof. of Computer Science. His research interests include scientific and numerical computing, media computation, image analysis, geometric modeling, and game design. Tim Sipka has returned from his Fall term sabbatical visit at Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges with fresh ideas for our program. **Zhewei** (Zoe) Dai is on maternity leave for Winter 2009. Beginning in January 2009 Robert Molina is chairing the department. Mel Nyman is on sabbatical leave for Winter 2009. [nyman@alma.edu]

Andrews University [reported by Donald Rhoads]

Last August we welcomed Gina Creek as Instructor. She teaches general education courses and AP Calculus for the Math and Science Center operated by Andrews. • In October 2008 Shandelle Henson was honored as Alumnus of the Year by Southern Adventist U. During the past year she has given invited addresses at AMS Special Sessions on Mathematical Biology, both at the National Meeting (San Diego) and at a Sectional meeting (Huntsville), and has lectured at Furman U, the Marine Science Center, Port Townsend, WA and Walla Walla U. • Faculty members Joon Hyuk Kang and his wife Yun Myung Oh did research in Korea during the summer of 2008, obtaining results that Joon is using to advise Ben Chase, a mathematics major, for his honors project. [dhr@andrews.edu]

Central Michigan University [reported by Sid Graham]

The department's REU grant was recently renewed. Sivaram Narayan, Bradley Safnuk, and Yeonghang Kim will direct the program this year. We will also have the related LURE (Long-term Undergraduate Research Experience) program with faculty advisors Jim Angelos and En-Bing Lin. • The image of a "functionalized dendrimer with single wall carbon nanotubes for hydrogen storage" created by Leela Rakesh and co-authors was one of 13 images selected in a cover photo contest at the journal Materials Today. Their image will be the cover photo

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for the November 2009 issue of the journal. [sidney.w.graham@gmail.com]

Eastern Michigan University [reported by Tim Carroll]

Ovidiu Calin will be on sabbatical for 2009–2010. • The Donald Buckeye Speaker Series will begin on Friday, March 27 with **Art Benjamin** from Harvey Mudd C speaking on Combinatorial Trigonometry. • EMU has a new Master's program in Bio-Informatics. Three new courses have been approved: Cryptology, Technology for Secondary Education Majors, and Mathematical Problem Solving. [tcarroll@ emich.edu]

Hope College [reported by Todd Swanson]

Airat Bekmetjev and Mark Pearson were each granted tenure and promoted to Assoc. Prof., and Darin Stephenson was promoted to Prof. • Todd Swanson received Hope College's Janet L. Andersen Award for Excellence in Teaching.
The eighth edition of *Probability and Statistical Inference*, co-written by Prof. Emeritus Elliot Tanis, was published earlier this year by Prentice-Hall. [swansont@hope.edu]

Lawrence Technological University [reported by Michael Merscher]

Robofest finals are on May 9, which is the tenth anniversary of Robofest. C J
Chung has organized this from the beginning, and it has grown from a local to an international competition. Information is at www.robofest.net. • The annual LTU
High School Math Competition will take a sabbatical this year, and resume in 2010.
Five teams of students competed in the Mathematical Contest for Modeling in February. • Maryam Roshanaei attended the International Standards Organization conference in Geneva Switzerland. [merscher@ltu.edu]

Michigan Technological University [reported by Jeanne Meyers]

MTU Alumnus **Richard Henes** and his wife **Elizabeth** are donating \$1 million to endow the Richard and Elizabeth Henes Professorship in Mathematical Sciences at Michigan Tech. The Henes professorship is the first named faculty position in the College of Sciences and Arts. The new professorship will be awarded to **Shuanglin Zhang**. [jemeyers@mtu.edu]

Saginaw Valley State University [reported by Anthony Crachiola]

Joe Matti has retired after 39.5 years with the department. • Anthony Crachiola was granted tenure. • Robert W. Ghrist (U of Pennsylvania), Andrea Mitchell University Professor of Mathematics & Electrical and Systems Engineering, is a Dow Visiting Scholar. He will give a public lecture on geometry and topology in Dante's Divine Comedy at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, April 1 in the Rhea Miller recital hall. He will also give a colloquium talk on sensor networks entitled "Sensors & Sensibility: Will I be able to find my car keys? Or will they find me first?" on Tuesday, March 31 at 4:30 pm. • The department is in the process of filling a tenure-track position at the rank of Assist. Prof. • SVSU hosted the MMPC

Awards Day on March 7 (www.svsu.edu/mmpc). **Hasan Al-Halees** will continue as MMPC director through 2011. • The annual SVSU high school Math Olympics Competition will be held on March 20. [acrachio@svsu.edu]

University of Michigan-Ann Arbor [reported by Hugh Montgomery]

At the 2009 Joint Mathematics Meetings in Washington, DC, Thurnau Professor of Mathematics and LSA Associate Dean **Robert Megginson** received the Yueh-Gin Gung and Dr. Charles Y. Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics from the Mathematical Association of America. The award is intended to be the most prestigious for service offered by the Association, and honors distinguished contributions to mathematics and mathematical education. [hlm@umich.edu]

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Michigan Undergraduate Mathematics Conference

The Twelfth Michigan Undergraduate Mathematics Conference will take place at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan on Saturday, October 17, 2009. The conference schedule will be similar to the schedule in previous years and will include student presentations, a keynote speaker, and presentations from graduate schools and mathematics REU programs. The conference site is www.clas.wayne.edu/unit-inner.asp?WebPageID=2783.

Dan Isaksen, WSU

New Officers to be Elected at Annual Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Michigan Section–MAA will take place at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 8, 2009 at Central Michigan University during the Annual Meeting. One of the major items of business is the election of officers. The Nominating Committee, chaired by **Tom Zerger** (SVSU), will propose a slate of candidates. **Darin Stephenson** (Hope C) will be nominated for Chair and **Tom Kelley** (HFCC) will be nominated for Two-Year College Vice Chair. Nominations for Four-Year College Vice Chair will be presented at the business meeting and will also be distributed through the Liaisons e-mail list as soon as they are available. Nominations from the floor are also accepted (permission of the nominees should be secured in advance). The Annual Meeting will also have reports on Section activities during the year, as well as an opportunity for members to raise other issues. The Nominating Committee is listed on page 31.

Positions Available

NOTE: Most positions in the mathematical sciences, including many of the ones listed here, are advertised in Employment Information in the Mathematical Sciences (www.ams.org/eims). The MAA also has a Web site for employment opportunities (www.maa.org/pubs/employ.html). All openings are for Fall 2009 unless otherwise stated, and further information is available from the department.

Eastern Michigan University hopes to have a position for Fall 2010.

Saginaw Valley State University (www.svsu.edu/hr/employment) is in the process of filling a tenure-track position at the rank of Assist. Prof.

Schoolcraft College (www.schoolcraft.edu/jobs) anticipates the hiring of one new full-time mathematics instructor.

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26 Contest News

The MAACommittee on the American Mathematics Competitions (CAMC) is dedicated to the goal of strengthening the mathematical capabilities of our nation's youth. The CAMC believes that one way to meet this goal is to identify, recognize, and reward excellence in mathematics through a series of national contests called the American Mathematics Competitions. The American Mathematics Contest 8 (AMC 8) for students in grades 8 and below is a 25-question, 40-minute multiple-choice examination in junior high school (middle school) mathematics designed to promote the development and enhancement of problem-solving skills; to demonstrate the broad range of topics available for the junior high school mathematics curriculum; and to promote excitement, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes towards mathematics. Calculators are not allowed.

The 2008 AMC 8 Exam was taken by 5492 students from 66 schools in Michigan on November 18, 2008. The overall Michigan average score was 10.19, 2 points above last year. Akhil Nistala, an 8th grader from Novi Middle School (Novi), and Hirsh Jain, an 8th grader from ICAE (Troy), got the perfect score of 25. Eleven students achieved a score of 24.

The Harvard-MIT Mathematics Tournament (HMMT) is an annual math tournament for high school students, held at MIT and at Harvard in alternate years. It is run exclusively by MIT and Harvard students. Most of these students participated in math contests in high school; they try to incorporate what they liked best about those competitions into the HMMT to make the contest both challenging and entertaining for all the participants. This year, HMMT was held at MIT on Saturday, February 21, 2009, with a total of 900 students, 95 schools, and 154 teams participating, making it the largest HMMT by over 25%.

The Michigan team, Michigan All-Stars, had a great tournament. Detroit Country Day School (DCDS, Beverly Hills) mathematics teacher and Department Head **Ross Arseneau** led the team to Boston. General Motors and a DCDS alumnus who was a former Michigan math star sponsored the Michigan All-Stars team. The team members were **Neil Gurram** (DCDS), **Robin He** (Ann Arbor Huron), **Alan Huang** (DCDS), **Andrew Jeanguenat** (DCDS), **David Lu** (DCDS), **Nicholas Triantafillou** (Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy), **Kevin Wu** (Cranbrook), and **Allen Yuan** (DCDS). Among them, Andrew Jeanguenat was ranked 10th overall for Division 1 Individuals, placing 5th in the Calculus Subject Test and 10th in the Combinatorics Subject Test; Neil Gurram was ranked 4th in the Algebra Subject Test; and Nicholas Triantafillou placed 8th in the Combinatorics Subject Test. The team finished 6th overall in the Sweepstakes Grand Total and also earned a ranking of 7th in the Team Test portion of the Tournament. Mr. Arseneau wrote after examining the final scoring totals, "The team did extremely well; one more correct answer in the Guts Round would have moved the team up to 5th place!"

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Sustaining Members Listed

The Michigan Section dues structure includes a sustaining individual member category for those who make a \$15 contribution beyond the basic dues rate of \$15. For 2008–2009, as of February 26, the 44 members of the Section listed below are sustaining members. The Section is grateful to those several individuals who generously exceeded the suggested sustaining member contribution. If you have not already sent in your dues, please do so, using the form on page 29, and please be generous!

Edward Aboufadel **Yousef Alavi Steven Althoen Mary Bragg Robert Bruner Tim Carroll** James Drosen **Paul Eenigenburg Ruth Favro Richard Fleming Daniel Frohardt Chris Gardiner Michael Gilpin Tony Gioia Sid Graham** Jerrold Grossman James Ham **Margret Höft** John Kiltinen **Harold Martin** Leon Martin **Thomas McCoy**

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Institutional Members

As of February 26, the 24 colleges and universities listed below have begun or renewed their institutional memberships in the Michigan Section for 2008–2009. Tardy institutions and others who wish to join are encouraged to send in their dues, using the form below.

Albion College	Michigan State University
Alma College	Michigan Technological University
Andrews University	Northern Michigan University
Calvin College	Oakland University
Central Michigan University	Olivet College
Grand Rapids Community College	Saginaw Valley State University
Grand Valley State University	Siena Heights University
Hillsdale College	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Hope College	University of Michigan-Dearborn
Kalamazoo College	University of Michigan-Flint
Lake Michigan College	Wayne State University
Lawrence Technological University	Western Michigan University

Section Dues: Individual • Institutional

The 2008–2009 individual and institutional membership dues for the Michigan Section are now being accepted. The \$15 individual dues payment (or \$30 contributing member payment) and the \$40 (small school) or \$70 (large school) institutional dues help support the activities of the Section such as its annual meeting and *Newsletter*. This coupon may be used to submit dues payments.

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