

NORTHEASTERN SECTION



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2015

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<http://www.maa.org/northeastern>

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UPCOMING SECTION MEETING

May 29 and May 30, 2015

Spring Section Meeting

Keene State College, Keene, NH.

Program Chair: Vince Ferlini

Local Arrangements Chair: Karen Standish

FUTURE SECTION MEETINGS

November 20 and 21 2015

Fall Section Meeting

Gordon College, Wenham, MA.

TBA (Spring 2016)

Spring Section Meeting

University of New England, Biddeford, ME.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

November 20, 2015
Meeting

Section NExT

Gordon College, Wenham, MA

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Message from the Chair.....Eric C Johnson

Greetings! It's been a busy six months since I last wrote a column for the Fall 2014 issue of the newsletter. Looking back, we enjoyed an excellent Fall Meeting at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) this past November 21-22. Once again, thank you to Braxton Carrigan from SCSU and the rest of the Program Committee for putting together a stimulating slate of speakers, and to Klay Kruczek and the entire Local Arrangements Committee at SCSU for hosting such an enjoyable meeting. San Antonio, TX then played host for the 2015 Joint Mathematics Meetings in January. As always, the JMM provides a wonderful opportunity to catch up with old friends, meet new colleagues, and plan future section activities. In March the NES/MAA sponsored or co-sponsored a speaker at Sacred Heart for the surrounding colleges and universities, and the 5th Annual North Shore Undergraduate Mathematics Conference at Merrimack College; and the 22nd Annual Sulski lecture at Holy Cross and the 13th Annual Preskenis Dinner Meeting at Framingham State in April. Then just last weekend we were treated to a truly wonderful Spring Meeting at Keene State College (KSC). Once again, thank you to Vince Ferlini and the rest of the Program Committee, and Karen Stanish and the rest of the Local Arrangements Committee, all from KSC, for a truly exciting and enriching experience.

2015 is an important year for the MAA and the NES/MAA, which are celebrating their centennial and sexagennial, respectively. We began the MAA Centennial Celebration at KSC last weekend by singing "Happy Birthday" and enjoying some birthday cake, and attendees had an opportunity to purchase a commemorative MAA Centennial / NES/MAA Sexagennial t-shirt. Pictures and/or video from our centennial kick-off celebrations at KSC will hopefully be posted on the NES/MAA website soon. If you haven't already, I encourage you to purchase one of the commemorative t-shirts to wear at MathFest this summer as well as our fall meeting in November. A big thank-you to Rob Poodiack for all his efforts in designing and making arrangements for the t-shirts to be printed.

Looking ahead, the MAA Centennial Celebration culminates at MathFest August 5-8 in Washington, D.C., then it's on to Gordon College in Wenham, MA for our Fall Meeting November 20-21, where we'll officially celebrate the NES/MAA's Sexagennial. Mike Veatch of Gordon and the rest of the Local Arrangements Committee, and Karl-Dieter Crisman of Gordon and the rest of the Program Committee have been hard at work preparing for and putting together an exciting program with the tentative theme "NES/MAA Past, Present, and Future," highlighted by former NES/MAA historian, James Tattersall, giving the Christie Lecture. I'm excited to see what other gems they come up with for our Section's 60th birthday! If you have suggestions, feel free to pass them along to Karl-Dieter at karl.crisman@gordon.edu.

At the risk of making my column even longer, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention a few other important items of note from around the NES/MAA.

- At the Fall Meeting last November, Vince Ferlini from KSC was elected Vice Chair, and Ann Kizanis and Phil Mahler were re-elected Secretary/Treasurer and Two-Year College Representative, respectively.
- This past winter Jason Moliterno from Sacred Heart University was elected NES/MAA Governor and will be replacing Tommy Ratliff as of July 1, 2015. Thank you, Tommy, for serving as our Governor these past three years.
- At the Spring Meeting at KSC, C. Edward Sandifer was named the NES/MAA 2015 Howard Eves Award winner; he'll officially be presented the award at the Fall Meeting at Gordon College.
- Klay Kruczek from SCSU volunteered to and has taken over as Section NExT Coordinator for Jason Moliterno.
- Eleanor Farrington from Mass Maritime volunteered to and has taken over as New Colleagues Papers Coordinator for Lynette Boos.

A big thank you to all the above folks for your past, present, and future efforts serving the NES/MAA. Our organization exists (and thrives!) only because of the work of volunteers like you.

Finally, the NES/MAA is always looking for volunteers to serve the Section in various capacities (serving on Program or Local Arrangements Committees, Coordinating and/or chairing paper sessions, etc.), and institutions to host future section meetings (we're still looking for a host for our Fall 2016 meeting). If you'd like to volunteer to serve the NES/MAA in any capacity, please contact me or any of the other Section officers.

In closing, I hope you all have a relaxing and productive summer...and to see you at MathFest in Washington, D.C. August 5-8, 2015 wearing your NES/MAA t-shirts!

Message from the Governor..... Tommy Ratliff

As this will be my last report as Governor of Northeastern Section, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Section for trusting me with this position for the last three years. I've really enjoyed gaining a larger perspective on the mathematics community in general and on the MAA in particular. These are challenging times for all professional associations, but I think the MAA is in very good hands with the leadership team in place. I'm optimistic that some of the recent initiatives will have long term, positive impact, especially the revised membership structures and the ongoing discussion about governance of the MAA.

There were several major topics of discussion at the Board of Governors meeting in San Antonio in January that I know are of interest to the Section:

- The Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics (CUPM) presented the final version of the 2015 Curriculum Guide to Majors in the Mathematical Sciences. This is an incredibly valuable resource for every mathematics department that includes recommendations for the overall structure of a major, for individual courses, and for areas of study such as actuarial mathematics, engineering, and the social and behavioral sciences, among others. I strongly encourage you to spend some time with the entire guide, which is linked from the MAA's website.
- The Board approved a new Departmental Membership structure effective for the academic year beginning this fall. The primary focus of this membership is to engage students, both undergraduate and graduate, with the MAA. The main benefit of the new structure is that it includes a student membership for every student enrolled at a member institution. There are currently about 250 institutions with Departmental

Memberships, and the expectation is that the new structure will be attractive to more institutions.

- The Board continued its discussion of the MAA governance structure, and particularly whether the current Board practices make the most effective use of the skills that the individual Governors bring to the association. This will be an ongoing discussion, and I look forward to hearing updates from future Board meetings on the final decisions.

Finally, I want to send my best wishes to Jason Molitierno, who begins his term as Section Governor on July 1. I know Jason will do a fantastic job stepping into this role.

I hope to see many of you at the MAA's Centennial Celebration at MathFest in August

Message from the Secretary-TreasurerAnn Kizanis

In the fall newsletter, I reported a balance of \$17,497.69. Since that time, the expenses from the successful and highly attended fall meeting at Southern Connecticut State University were \$5,248.11. We spent \$187.50 on student awards for the Student Problem Solving Competition. The reimbursement for travel was \$920.70. The total expenses for the fall meeting were \$6,356.31, while the revenue from meeting registrations was \$6,694.29. We contributed \$300.00 to the North Shore Math Conference held this spring. The expenses for the printing and postage of the fall newsletter totaled \$608.54. We received \$115.49 from the MAA book sale. Since the fall newsletter, we earned \$1.85 in interest from money placed into a Money Market account and had a \$3.98 deluxe business system banking fee. Our present balance is \$17,040.49.

The total expenses for our fall meeting were \$4,163.81 more than our spring meeting expenses, while the revenue from fall meeting registrations was \$4,276.60 more than the revenue from spring meeting registrations. The expenses for the postage and printing of our newsletter last fall increased somewhat from last spring. We spent \$535.05 for the printing and postage of the spring 2014 newsletter and \$608.54 for the printing and postage of the fall 2014 newsletter.

I wrote our Section's 2014 end of year Financial Report, Fall Meeting Report, and

Dinner Meeting Reports, and at the beginning of the summer, I shall be writing our Section’s Annual Report and Spring Meeting Report.

That is my update for now! We are all looking forward to the Spring MAA meeting at Keene State College on May 29 – 30, where I will update you further on our finances.

I wish you all a very enjoyable summer!

Two-year College Representative’s Report Phil Mahler

There continue to be two trends in two-year college mathematics curricula. One is that a college course sequence should be appropriate to a student’s professional goals. The term meta-major is being bandied about. If a student is going into the soft sciences that student may not need calculus but probably needs statistics. (Of course everyone needs statistics today.) And statistics does not require the algebraic skills that we deem necessary to learn or use calculus. Thus tracks are being created that emphasize the skills needed to learn and use statistics, which emphatically does not need factoring, sophistication with radicals, rational expression manipulation etc. The second trend is to eliminate sequential remediation. Of all students placed into an arithmetic course in a community college nationally, 10% ever take a college level mathematics course. Which translates into an extremely poor success rate for these students. Part of the reason is that student faces three or four semesters of the stuff they already hate before they can start college level mathematics. The trend is to push aside a sequence of three or four remedial courses in favor of putting most of “remedial” students into a college level course along with a support course which will buttress the skills needed to complete that course. This is being pushed legislatively in many places—Florida law now says that a student who has earned Florida’s standard high school diploma can opt out of remedial classes. Connecticut has passed legislation in the same theme, and Massachusetts is experimenting along these lines as well.

Needless to say both trends lead to discussion among math educators. I will go on record as supporting both.

From the Newsletter Editor.....Frank Ford

Since the last newsletter, we have had two excellent section meetings. We had the Fall meeting at Southern Connecticut State and the Spring meeting at Keene State. The Fall meeting was notable for the election of Vince Ferlini as our next chair. He will assume his responsibilities as chair at the end of the

Fall meeting at Gordon College. The Spring meeting was our official celebration of the 100th anniversary of the MAA. We had the New England premiere of the MAA's happy birthday video and a birthday cake at the Friday banquet. We also received the t-shirts that celebrate both the 100th year of the MAA and the 60th anniversary of our Section. They were designed by Rob Poodiack who shows us yet another facet of his many talents. They are to be worn at the MAA Centennial Celebration in Washington this August to wave the flag of the Northeastern Section, the largest in the MAA.

Our next meeting is at Gordon College and Karl-Dieter Crisman is planning an excellent program for us. The Fall meeting will be the celebration of the Section's 60th anniversary. We do not need a new t-shirt since the back of Rob's design celebrates our 60th.

If you look in the list of coordinators on the web or in this newsletter, you will see some new names- Klay Kruczek of Southern Connecticut State, Eleanor Farrington of Mass Maritime and Eric Ruggieri of Holy Cross. Welcome to them and to all others who have become active in the last few years. You are the proof that the Section will keep moving toward its own 100th anniversary.

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