



Ohio Focus

The MAA Ohio Section Newsletter

Volume 9

Spring 2009

Number 2

Spring Meeting at Bowling Green State University April 3-4, 2009



Olscamp Hall: Meeting Registration Location

The Spring Meeting of the Ohio Section MAA will be held at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, on April 3-4, 2009. The meeting will start at noon on Friday, with the first invited lecture starting at 1:45 pm in Olscamp Hall, and will conclude on Saturday at 12:50 pm. Major addresses will be given by **Fred Rickey** of The United States Military Academy, **Vickie Van Dresar** of Ashland University, **Keith Devlin** of Stanford University, and **Sarah Greenwald** of Appalachian State University. Other meeting participants are encouraged to submit talks for the contributed paper sessions on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Graduate and undergraduate students in mathematics or mathematics education are encouraged to attend. A Friday evening banquet is planned as well.

John Michel Receives Meritorious Service Award

The MAA is pleased to recognize Professor John R. Michel as a 2009 recipient of the Certificate of Meritorious Service. We gratefully acknowledge the many contributions that he has made to the Ohio Section, the MAA, and the greater mathematical community.

Professor Michel has served the Ohio Section as secretary-treasurer (1985–1991) and president (1995–1996). Also in service to the Section, he has been chair of several committees,

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Meeting Registration

Online registration is preferred. Visit the Section web site at www.maa.org/Ohio on or after Tuesday, February 17, for one-stop registration, banquet reservation, and abstract submission. The deadline for meeting preregistration and banquet reservations is **March 27**. Abstracts for contributed papers must be submitted by **March 20**.

On-site meeting registration is always available, but last-minute banquet tickets cannot be guaranteed. Early registration helps those making the meeting arrange-

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President's Message



Another semester is underway and it is especially exciting for me, having just returned to the classroom after being a full-time administrator for two and a half years. There is nothing quite like the excitement of walking into the classroom at the beginning of a semester and seeing all the students – some new, some already known from past semesters in other courses. It is something you don't get to experience much in administration. I just hope people will remind me of these feelings when I start feeling bogged down by grading.

We had a wonderful Fall Meeting at Capital University in October 2008. John Tynan of Marietta College, Susanna Epp of DePaul University, Wiebke Diestelkamp of the University of Dayton, and the MAA President-Elect David Bressoud of Macalester College gave Invited Addresses. A total of 20 talks were given during the Contributed Papers sessions with four of them given by students. Speaking of student presentations, the MAA now has so many students presenting at Section Meetings (mainly during the Spring Meetings) that the MAA is discontinuing their practice of giving a gratis mem-

bership or publication to the student presenters. This is not meant to discourage students from presenting, but recognizes that student participants now make up roughly one-third of the total attendance at Spring Section meetings.

Lew Ludwig (chair of CON-SACT) and his committee are working on this summer's short course. The topic will be Knot Theory and it will be taught by Colin Adams of Williams College. People may attend just the summer short course or they can combine it with a Knot Theory Conference that will immediately follow the short course. More details about the summer short course and conference can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The Centennial Committee (formed last year) is continuing planning for our Section's 100th Annual (Spring) Meeting Celebration in 2016. They shared "MAA Centennial M&M's" with us at the Fall Meeting banquet and I believe they will have another surprise to share with us at the Spring Meeting banquet to help us get in the "Centennial mood." Some Universities/Colleges of the Ohio Section have updated their department's histories and posted them on their departmental web pages. We are encouraging all departments of the Ohio Section to do so. If you have any suggestions for celebrating our centennial, please forward them to any of the Centennial Committee members.

Although most of our Section Committees now have full rosters, it is always nice to have members on a waiting list to step up when someone leaves a committee. Also, we could still use a few more members on CONCUR and CONSACT commit-

tees. If you wish to serve on these or any of the other committees, I am compiling a list of interested people for filling committee openings in the coming years. Committee membership is a great way to get more involved with the Section and "give back" a little for all the wonderful benefits we receive through our membership.

The Spring Meeting will be held April 3-4, 2009 at Bowling Green State University. The Program Committee (chaired by Jon Stadler) is working diligently to put the finishing touches on another excellent program for us. I hope to see you there!

*Vickie Van Dresar
Ashland University
Ohio Section President*

Coming Up in Ohio ...

Ohio Section Summer Short Course, Denison University, Granville, OH, July 13-14, 2009

UnKnot Conference, Denison University, Granville, OH, July 15-17, 2009

Miami University Annual Math & Statistics Conference: Teaching of Undergraduate Mathematics, Oxford, OH, September 25-26, 2009.

Ohio Section Fall Meeting: Kenyon College, Gambier, OH, October 30-31, 2009

Undergraduate Mathematics Day, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH, November 7, 2009.

Section Governor's Report

Three years as the MAA Ohio Governor passed by quickly. My term lasts until June, but I attended my final Board of Governors meeting in Washington in January. I always find Washington to be an exciting city, and it was buzzing with activity in the weeks before the Inauguration.

The usual reports and presentations were given at the Board meeting. Some of the reports can be accessed through the MAA website, but I will highlight a few interesting points. The financial condition of the MAA is solid at present and should weather current financial crises. The MAA has experienced a deficit in operating expenses in recent years, and now no investment income will offset those deficits. So we will see some changes in the MAA services. A change that members will surely notice is a decrease in the number of issues of *FOCUS* from nine to six, but each issue will be an attractive colorful publication. Electronic memberships and overall online access to materials and publications were discussed at length. We will certainly see a trend toward digital publications. The number of views per month of the digital editions of the MAA journals has been growing steadily, with a recent, significant boost in traffic for the Monthly.

Across the Sections, students compose about fifty percent of participants at meetings. MAA, through its meetings and publications, is the primary outlet for presenting undergraduate student research. At all of its national and local meetings, many activities are offered for the benefit of students. Ohio students have the opportunity to participate in the Team Competition and to present their



urge you to continue seeking ways to participate in Section activities. The officers welcome your input and your help on various committees. Plan ahead to attend the meetings, and invite your colleagues and students to join you. I look forward to seeing you in Bowling Green.

Judy Palagallo
University of Akron
Section Governor

mathematical projects at this spring meeting. We welcome increased student participation in our meetings.

Each Section is entitled to nominate one person for the national service award every five years, and this year was our opportunity to honor one of our Section members. John Michel of Marietta College was selected by our executive committee to receive the award for his service to our Section. His commendation is given in another section of this newsletter. I congratulate John for this well-deserved award.

Our own Aparna Higgins has been invited to serve as Director of Project NExT for a term of five years. I congratulate Aparna on her appointment, and know that she will add excellent guidance and enthusiasm to the program.

MAA National Elections will be held in April and May 2009. All members for whom the MAA has an email address will receive an email ballot only. This is your opportunity to influence the future of the MAA.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent the Ohio Section. Our Section is a leader in many activities that encourage mathematics education in Ohio. I

OHIO FOCUS

The newsletter of the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America, which first appeared in 1973, is published twice yearly in time to reach members before the fall and spring meetings. Newsletters are published online at www.maa.org/ohio. Notification postcards are sent using labels provided by the MAA.

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The deadline for the next newsletter is **August 31, 2009**. E-mail copy is preferred. Early submission is appreciated.

Please send copy to the editor (see above), and also to the Section Webmaster, Darren Wick, for posting on the web (dwick@ashland.edu).

John Michel

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including the Program Committee, Nominating Committee, and Local Arrangements Committee. He was an originator of the Ohio Project NExT. In this capacity he mentored dozens of Ohio new faculty members, sharing his experience and wisdom. Many of these are current officers of the Section.

Michel did his undergraduate work at the University of Missouri and received his Ph.D. in functional analysis from the University of Wisconsin. He joined the faculty at Marietta College in 1970. He was chair of the department of mathematics for nine years. He wrote the National Science Foundation grant that helped fund computers and software for the department's first calculus computer labs. He was twice selected as a Harness Fellow, awarded on the basis of excellence in teaching. His many and diverse contributions to the college were formally recognized when he received the Marietta College Service Award in 2002. Professor Michel retired from the college in 2004.

For 30 years Michel worked summers as a consultant for Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He has developed novel algorithms and computer programs used for navigation of some of NASA's robotic space missions to Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. His continued interest in space exploration led to his involvement in founding Space Adventure Camp at Marietta College, an educational outreach for Ohio youth.

During a sabbatical at Duke University in 2000, Professor Michel wrote Matlab supplements to most of the modules of the online Connected Curriculum Project and also originated several new modules for use in calculus and linear algebra.

For his many years of dedicated service and outstanding leadership, the MAA is proud to honor Professor John R. Michel.

Response from John R. Michel

It is a great honor to be recognized by my friends and colleagues in the Ohio Section. In particular, I am pleased that the citation recognizes my role in the founding of Ohio NExT in 1997 and as one of the coordinators in its early years. My colleagues Barbara Ashton and Tom LaFromboise should also be recognized as partners in this enterprise. As we veterans moved on, others laudably took on the responsibilities of running the program. Ohio NExT has been a great boon to the Ohio Section, helping provide a new generation of Section members and a generous supply of new leaders.

[From the Joint Prize booklet at www.ams.org/ams/prizebooklet-2009.pdf]



Call for Contributed Papers

Fifteen-minute presentations on any topic of general interest in mathematics or related areas are encouraged for the Contributed Paper Sessions on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning at the spring Ohio Section meeting. Reports on projects, research announcements, or anything you believe would be of interest to those in attendance are welcome. Graduate students in mathematics or mathematics education are strongly encouraged to submit talks. Contributors should send a title and brief abstract by **Friday March 20, 2009.**

Although online submission with your meeting registration is preferred, you may also submit your title and abstract to the chair of the Program Committee, Jon Stadler, by e-mail at jstadler@capital.edu, or by U.S. mail at Department of Mathematics, Computer Science and Physics, Capital University, 1 College and Main, Columbus, OH 43209. Please use only plain text in your title and abstract as the abstract submittal system cannot process TeX or other graphics code.

Each presentation room will have a whiteboard or chalkboard, overhead projector, computer projector, and laptop connections. Presenters can either plug their laptops into the overhead projection system or plug a flash drive into the resident computer. If internet access is needed, please mark the appropriate box when submitting your abstract online. Speakers with specific questions about technology availability should contact David Meel, at meel@bgsu.edu.

Submit abstracts online at the Section web page:

www.maa.org/ohio

About Bowling Green State University

Established in 1910 as a teacher-training institution, Bowling Green State University is currently the 14th largest producer of teachers in the country. It is dedicated to providing quality academic programs in a learning environment that promotes academic and personal excellence in students, as well as an appreciation of intellectual, ethical and aesthetic values. As a state-assisted mid-size residential university, BGSU has an enrollment of more than 20,000 students including over 3,000 graduate students and nearly 18,000 students on the main campus spread among more than 200 undergraduate majors and programs, 68 master's degree programs, 2 specialist degree programs and 16 doctoral degree programs.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics, housed on the fourth floor of the Mathematical Sciences Building, offers three Master and two Ph.D. degrees. The Master degrees are the Master of Arts degree with three tracks (Applied Math, Pure Math, and Statistics), the Master of Arts in Teaching degree with specialization in Mathematics, and the Master of Science in Applied Statistics degree (jointly with the Department of Applied Statistics and Operation Research). The Ph.D. degrees are the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Mathematics and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Statistics. The current 23 person graduate faculty in the Department consists of accomplished scholars and productive investigators with research strengths in the areas of algebra, analysis, applied mathematics, mathematics education, probability and statistics. These research strengths initiate an academic environment to nurture and facilitate Master and Ph.D. candidates in the program for their career development.

Meeting Registration

(Continued from page 1)

ments and is always appreciated. Registration will be held beginning at 12:00 pm on Friday in Olscamp Hall 101A and will continue Saturday morning at 8:00 am.

Meeting participants who are unable to register online at www.maa.org/Ohio may register by mail by sending the following information: name, affiliation, address, phone, e-mail address (if any), type of position, and banquet buffet reservation. Send with check, payable to Ohio Section MAA, for applicable fees [registration fee (\$25 ordinary registration, \$10 retired or part-time, no fee for students or first-time attendees), banquet buffet fee (\$25 per person)] to: Ohio Section MAA Fall Meeting, c/o Dr. David Meel, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403. Phone (419-372-2636), FAX (419-372-6092). Registration by FAX or e-mail will be pending upon receipt of registration fees.

Ohio NExT Workshop

Ohio Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching) is a program for young faculty members. Its goal is to help newer faculty to network with colleagues, to share ideas and experiences that promote professional growth, and to encourage faculty to become involved in the Ohio Section.

On Thursday evening, April 2, the night preceding the Ohio Section Spring Meeting, members of Ohio Project NExT will gather for a banquet beginning at 7:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones. After the banquet, the NExTers will spend an hour or so discussing a topic related to the profession.

Then, on Friday morning, April 3, the Ohio NExT program will continue on the BGSU campus. The program will feature two workshops, as well as contributed talks by Ohio NExTers. We are happy to announce that one of the workshops will be presented by Fred Rickey of the United States Military Academy. More information regarding the program will be available soon. At last fall's meeting, the NExT workshop at Capital University featured David Bressoud of Macalester College and Susanna Epp of DePaul University for the fifty-minute workshops. Mahmoud Rawashdeh (Findlay) and Muhammad Usman (Dayton) gave 20-minute talks.

Ohio Project NExT is open to anyone in the Ohio Section who is in his/her first five years of teaching in Ohio. If this applies to you, please consider joining us this spring for our NExT Banquet and Workshop, as well as the Ohio Section Meeting that follows. Contact Chris Swanson (cswanson@ashland.edu) for membership information and details.

Ohio Project NExT is coordinated by Wiebke Diestelkamp, University of Dayton (wiebke@udayton.edu); John Prather, Ohio University Eastern Campus (john_prather@skynet.eastern.ohiou.edu); and Chris Swanson, Ashland University (cswanson@ashland.edu).

Student Activities at the Spring Meeting

Student Pizza Party

A student pizza party will be held Friday evening at 6:30 in Room 308 of the Bowen-Thompson Student Union. There is no charge for attending the party, but meeting registration is required. (Register online at www.maa.org/Ohio.) Concurrent with the pizza party there will be a panel discussion on graduate school and/or a presentation on preparing for the math GRE. Although panelists are still being assembled, we expect to have about four graduate students, each from different schools. The panel members will address graduate school issues including the application process, first year courses, preparatory background, funding, and teaching assignments. They will also be available to answer questions from the audience. The presentation on preparing for the math GRE will give some basic background about the test, available study materials, and include a few solutions to some practice problems.

Call for Student Abstracts

Undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to submit abstracts for 15 minute talks at the Spring Meeting. Topics may be drawn from any area of mathematics or a related discipline. The presentation may be an expository talk, a recounting of a mathematical internship or a co-op experience, or the results of a research project. It is expected that each talk will be delivered by a single speaker, but group presentations will be accommodated. Unfortunately, the policy of awarding each student speaker a free one-year MAA membership has ended. However, each student speaker will receive a certificate acknowledging their contribution to the meeting.

Contributed talks by students, faculty, and others will be given on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Talks will be scheduled primarily according to topic and audience level. Student talks are an integral part of the meeting and

should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all who participate. Those preparing talks are encouraged to read Joseph Gallian's article "How to Give a Good Talk" in the April 1998 *Math Horizons*. This article is available at <http://www.jcu.edu/math/constum/gallian.pdf>.

Each presentation room will have either a whiteboard or a chalkboard, overhead projector, computer projector, laptop connections and internet access. Presenters can either plug their laptops into the overhead projection system or plug a flash drive into the resident computer. All speakers planning to use technology should contact David Meel, at meel@bgsu.edu, in order to assure compatibility of their technology with the systems at Bowling Green State University.

Abstracts should be between 25 and 75 words in length and should employ proper English grammar and spelling. Students are strongly encouraged to use the abstract submission form on the MAA Ohio

Student Team Competition

Undergraduate students from institutions of the Ohio section are invited to participate in the sixth annual Student Team Competition. The competition will take place on Friday from Noon to 1:20 in Room 308 of the Bowen-Thompson Student Union. Cash prizes will be awarded on Saturday to the top three teams. Rules and registration information, as well as copies of the problems from previous years with their solutions, can be found on the Ohio Section website, www.maa.org/Ohio, under "Student Activities." Any questions about the competition or other student activities can be addressed to John Whitaker at jwhitaker@shawnee.edu.

Section webpage, www.maa.org/Ohio. Otherwise a title and abstract may be submitted by U.S. mail or email to the chair of the Program Committee: Jon Stadler (jstadler@capital.edu), Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Physics, Capital University, 1 College and Main, Columbus, Ohio, 43209-2394. Use only plain text in your title and abstract as the abstract submittal system cannot process TeX or other graphics code. If submitting an abstract by mail or e-mail, please include your name, institution, e-mail address, student status (junior, senior, etc.), name of faculty mentor for the talk, your intended audience (upper level undergraduate, etc.), the title of the talk, and a brief description of the presentation.

Abstracts must be received by **March 20, 2009**. Due to time and space restrictions, we may not be able to accommodate all talks. Please submit your abstracts early. Students submitting abstracts should also register for the meeting.

Spring Meeting Program

Events will take place in Olscamp Hall and the Bowen Thompson Student Union (BTSU). The locations of these buildings can be found on the campus map on page 11.

Friday, April 3

12:00-4:30	Registration	Olscamp 101A
12:00-1:20	Student Team Competition	BTSU 308
12:15-1:15	Committee Meetings:	
	CONCUR	BTSU 306
	CONSACT	BTSU 307
	CONTEAL	BTSU 309
1:00-4:30	Vendor and Book Exhibits	Olscamp 101A
1:30-1:45	Welcome & Announcements	Olscamp 101B
1:45-2:45	Invited Address: "Jared Mansfield: Ohio's First Mathematician" Fred Rickey, U.S. Military Academy.	Olscamp 101B
2:45-3:15	Break	Olscamp 101A
3:25-5:20	Contributed Paper Sessions	BTSU 208, 307, 309, 314, 315, 316, 318
3:25-5:20	Executive Committee meeting	BTSU 306
5:30-6:30	Invited Address: "Canoe Do Math?" Vickie Van Dresar, Ashland University	Olscamp 111
6:30-8:00	Student Pizza Party and Graduate School Panel Discussion	BTSU 308
6:20-6:45	Social time	Olscamp 101A
6:45-8:00	Banquet	Olscamp 101A
8:10-9:00	After-Dinner Talk: "Street Mathematics: And What We Can Learn From It" Keith Devlin, Stanford University	Olscamp 111
9:00	Business Meeting and Presentation of Teaching Award	Olscamp 111

Saturday, April 4

8:00-10:15	Registration	Olscamp 101A
8:00-10:15	Vendor and Book Exhibits	Olscamp 101A
8:00-8:50	Coffee and pastries	Olscamp 101A
8:05-8:40	Executive Committee meeting (if necessary)	Olscamp 120
8:05-8:40	Liaisons' and Department Chairs' Meeting	Olscamp 119
8:50-8:55	Announcements	Olscamp 101B
8:55-9:55	Invited Address: "Good News Everyone! Mathematical Morsels from The Simpsons and Futurama" Sarah Greenwald, Appalachian State University	Olscamp 101B
9:55	Announcement of Student Competition Winners	Olscamp 101B
9:55-10:15	Break	Olscamp 101A
10:25-11:40	Contributed Paper Sessions	Olscamp 119, 120, 121, 203, 205, 206, 209
11:50-12:50	Invited Address: "When Mathematics Changed Us" Keith Devlin, Stanford University	Olscamp 101B
12:50	Closing Remarks	Olscamp 101B

Event locations are subject to change. Check the official program you receive when you register for the meeting in Olscamp 101A. Also, check the Section web page, www.maa.org/ohio, for updates and online registration and paper submissions.

Fred Rickey

“Jared Mansfield: Ohio's First Mathematician”

Jared Mansfield (1759-1830) was educated at Yale, taught school in New Haven and Philadelphia, and wrote *Essays, Mathematical and Physical* (1801). These came to the attention of President Thomas Jefferson who appointed him the first faculty member at the military academy at West Point. He stayed but 18 months till Jefferson appointed him Surveyor General of the United States. Thus began his career in Ohio. He was responsible for setting up the survey in Ohio and the Northwest Territory. In 1812 he returned East and became Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy at West Point. We will reveal Mansfield's colorful personality and his contributions to Ohio.



V. Frederick Rickey, a logician turned historian, became Professor of Mathematics at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY in the summer of 1998. After earning three degrees from the University of Notre Dame (Ph.D. 1968) he went to Bowling Green State University

where he rose through the professorial ranks to the rank of Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus. He has broad interests in the history of mathematics and is especially interested in the development of the calculus. Currently he is working on a history of the mathematics department at West Point, a department that traces its history to 1801. Fred loves teaching and enjoys giving lectures to mathematicians about the history of their field. He received the first award from the Ohio Section for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics, and was in the first group to receive MAA National Awards for teaching.

Vickie Van Dresar

“Canoe Do Math?”

My husband and I have taken many canoe trips in Alaska and in various areas of the North East (including Algonquin Park in Canada). This talk will look at several areas of mathematics that can be useful for planning and participating in a canoe trip. We will look at problems ranging from how much weight can safely be carried in a canoe (volume and displacement) to how to paddle safely (if not foolishly) across a lake in the middle of a storm (vector analysis).

Vickie Van Dresar joined the Ashland University faculty in 1996. She was the faculty advisor of Ashland University's student chapter of the MAA from 1998 through 2006. She has served the Ohio Section as

a member and chair of CONSACT and as a member of the Program Committee. She was chair of the Program Committee in 2004 – 2005 and is President of the Ohio Section for the current year (2008-2009).



Vickie earned a BS in Mathematics from Shenandoah University (1981), a MS in Mathematics from the University of Akron (1993), and a Ph.D. in Educational Mathematics from the University of Northern Colorado (1996). She has taught a wide range of classes from Math content courses for early childhood and middle grades majors to Calculus and Numerical Analysis. She is an Associate Professor of Mathematics and just recently returned fulltime to the classroom after serving as the Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs at Ashland University from 2006 - 2008. Vickie resides in Litchfield, OH with her husband, Neil, the “Rocket Scientist.”

Keith Devlin

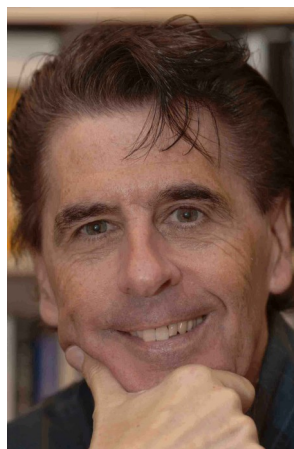
“Street Mathematics: And What We Can Learn From It”

Many studies have found that when ordinary people need basic mathematics in a real-world context, they pick it up easily and become skilled at its use. They do not in general use the methods they were taught in school, nor does their real-world use of math show any signs of influencing their performance in the math class. What is going on here, and what could we learn from it when it comes to teaching math?

“When Mathematics Changed Us”

At three distinct stages in the development of modern society, a mathematical development changed — in a fundamental, dramatic, and revolutionary way — how people understand the world and live their lives. (A fourth such change may be taking place during our lifetime, but only history will say if this is really the case.) Those advances occurred around 5,000 B.C., in the 16th century, and in the 17th century. Devlin will look at how human life and cognition changed on each of those three occasions, with the main focus being risk management and the view of the future that effective risk-management techniques enable.

This talk is based on Devlin's latest book *The Unfinished Game: Pascal, Fermat and the Seventeenth Century Letter that Made the World Modern*, Basic Books 2008.



Dr. Keith Devlin is a co-founder and Executive Director of Stanford University's H-STAR institute, a Consulting Professor in the Department of Mathematics, a co-founder of the Stanford Media X research network, and a Senior Researcher at CSLI. He is a World Economic Forum Fellow and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

His current research is focused on the use of different media to teach and communicate mathematics to diverse audiences. He also works on the design of information/reasoning systems for intelligence analysis. Other research interests include: theory of information, models of reasoning, applications of mathematical techniques in the study of communication, and mathematical cognition. He has written 28 books and over 80 published research articles. He is the recipient of the Pythagoras Prize, the Peano Prize, the Carl Sagan Award, and the Joint Policy Board for Mathematics Communications Award. He is "the Math Guy" on National Public Radio.

Sarah Greenwald

“Good News Everyone! Mathematical Morsels from The Simpsons and Futurama”

Did you know that *The Simpsons* and *Futurama* contain hundreds of humorous mathematical and scientific references? What curious mathematical object is used as a bottle for beer in the 31st century? What happens when Homer tries to emulate Thomas Edison? What is the significance of the number 1729? The only prerequisite for this talk is an open mind, so come find out!

We'll explore the mathematical content and educational value of some favorite moments along with the motivations

and backgrounds of the writers during an interactive talk. Popular culture can reveal, reflect, and even shape how society views mathematics, and with careful consideration of the benefits and challenges, these programs can be an ideal source of fun ways to introduce important concepts and to reduce math anxiety. In the process we'll look at related, recent work in geometry and computational number theory, so a calculator and writing utensil will be useful. For more information, check out SimpsonsMath.com and FuturamaMath.com.



Sarah J. Greenwald is an Associate Professor of Mathematics and a Women's Studies core faculty member at Appalachian State University. She

(Continued on page 14)

Where to Stay

The location of the hotels are marked as brown rectangles on the campus map on page 11.

(1) Holiday Inn Express

Group Code: MAA
Group Rates:
\$74.00 + tax for room with a King or 2 Queen Beds
\$94.00+tax for Suites
Rooms held until 3/3
419-353-5500
2150 East Wooster St., Bowling Green (east side of I-75 across from Meijer)
Distance to Campus: 1.5 miles

(2) Hampton Inn

Group Code: MAA
Group Rates:
\$85.00+tax for room with a King or 2 Queen Beds
Rooms held until 3/27
419-353-3464
142 Campbell Hill Rd., Bowling Green (Campbell Hill Rd is directly across the from Alumni Drive)

(3) Best Western Falcon Plaza

Group Code: MAA
Group Rates:
\$74.95+tax for room with a King or two Double beds and Exterior Entrance
\$84.95+tax for room with a King or two Double beds and Interior Entrance
Rooms held until 3/27
1-877-352-4671
1450 East Wooster St., Bowling Green (Right next to McDonalds)

(4) Knights Inn (Formerly Days Inn)

Group Code: MAA
Group Rates:
\$49.95+tax for room with a King or two Double beds
Rooms held until 3/27
1-888-791-5911
1550 East Wooster St., Bowling Green (Behind Waffle House Restaurant)

(5) Victory Inn & Suites

Group Code: MAA
Group Rates:
\$55.00+tax for room with a Queen or King bed or two Double beds
Rooms held until 3/27
(419) 352-2521
1630 East Wooster St., Bowling Green (across from the Doyt Perry Stadium)

Driving Directions

From the east or west via Ohio Turnpike

Use Exit 64 (Perrysburg). Follow I-75 South to Exit 181.

From the north or south via Interstate 75

Use Exit 181.

From the east or west via U.S. Route 6

Stay on U.S. 6. At the I-75 Interchange, follow I-75 north to the next exit (Exit 181).

Once you have exited I-75 (Exit 181), take Wooster St. west to the first right (Alumni Drive) by the Doyt Perry Stadium. Stop at the visitor center to pick up a **parking tag**, make sure to say that you are coming to the MAA meeting, and then exit the visitor center (heading west on Alumni Drive). Turn right onto Mercer Rd and take the first left onto Ridge Street (again heading west). **Park in Lot N** and if lot N is full, you can use Lot 1.

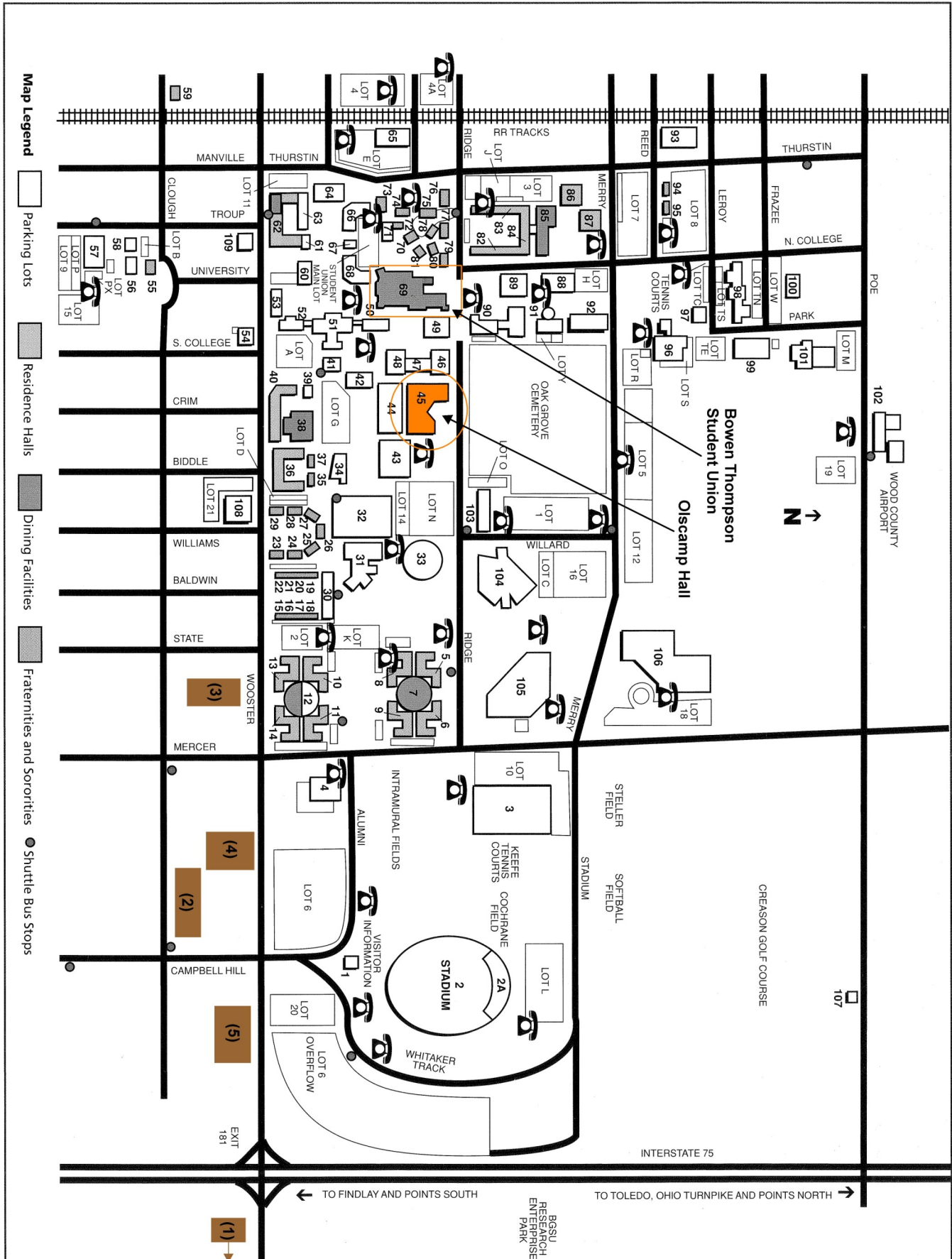
For customized directions, see www.bgsu.edu/map/page23944.html.

Banquet

The Friday, April 3, banquet will be in Room 101A of Olscamp Hall. It will feature a choice of (1) Prime Rib with Au Jus served with Oven Roasted Rosemary Redskin Potatoes, (2) Peppercorn Grilled Salmon Filet with Wild Rice, or (3) Spinach Artichoke Portabello with Oven Roasted Rosemary Redskin Potatoes. Each of these is accompanied by Fresh Green Beans, a Tossed Garden salad, a Dinner Roll with butter and a dessert. The cost is \$25.00 per person. Please make your banquet reservations online by March 27, when you register for the meeting at www.maa.org/ohio. A limited number of banquet tickets may be available at the meeting, but last minute seats cannot be guaranteed. A social time will precede the banquet, also in Olscamp Hall.

For additional local arrangements information, see <http://personal.bgsu.edu/~meel/MAA/Spring2009.html>.
The local contact person at Bowling Green State University is David Meel, meel@bgsu.edu.

Bowling Green State University Campus Map



Nominations for Section Officers

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates. The election of officers will take place at the business meeting, Friday evening, April 3, after the banquet at Bowling Green State University. At that time, nominations for other candidates may also be made from the floor.

For President-Elect:



Don Hunt earned his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University in complex variable theory under Frank Carroll. He joined the Ohio Northern faculty in 1999, where he currently toils as an Associate Professor of Mathematics. Since 2000 Don has been the faculty advisor to the Ohio Eta chapter of Kappa Mu Epsilon, the math honorary society at Ohio Northern. He is also the current holder of the Reichelderfer Endowed Chair in Mathematics. In addition to his normal duties, Don coordinates the school's high school outreach events, The Mathematics Shootout and Math Awareness Day. Don has been active in the Ohio Section over the past 10 years, serving on and chairing CONSACT and the Program Committee, and as local arrangements coordinator for the summer short course in 2004. He enjoys his peaceful existence in the beautiful (mountainous) countryside near Ada, living in his barn and dreaming of the past glory days of the Cleveland Browns.

For a three-year term on the Program Committee:



David Singer learned mathematics and how to teach from his mother and at the University of Pennsylvania, receiving his Ph.D. under Herman Gluck in 1970. After a National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton and teaching at Cornell, he came to Case Western Reserve University in 1975, where he has pursued his research interests in differential geometry and Hamiltonian and other dynamical systems. He is also very interested in issues of mathematics education at K-12 schools; he has written a geometry text for teachers and is a member of Case's Center for Science and Mathematics Education. He was the recipient of the CWRU Undergraduate Student Government's Undergraduate Teaching Excellence award in 2001 and the MAA Ohio Section Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics in 2005.

For Secretary-Elect:



Pamela Warton earned her Ph.D. in 1997 in infinite ordered groups at BGSU working with Dr. Stephen McCleary. She spent 5 years teaching at BGSU, and then 4 years at Siena Heights University in Michigan where she was introduced to the undergraduate research experience. She came to the University of Findlay in 2006 and has taught just about every undergraduate mathematics course. While her training is in theoretical mathematics, she has become fascinated with applied mathematics, and has done research with undergraduate students in everything from kaleidoscopes and knot theory to managing perishable goods inventories at a restaurant. Pam is the faculty advisor of the University Euler Math Club, and has won several teaching awards, an advisor of the year award, and was nominated by students for *Who's Who of America's Teachers* four separate years.

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Nominations

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For Treasurer-Elect:



Brian Shelburne is Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and Chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Wittenberg University. He earned a B.S. from Davidson College, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Mathematics from Duke University, and an M.S. in Computer Science from UNC Chapel Hill. Thus he considers himself a “double threat” in both mathematics and computer science. He has been active in the Ohio Section since arriving at Wittenberg in 1987. He has been a member of CONSTUM, served with Bill Higgins as co-editor of Ohio Focus, the section newsletter, served as local arrangements liaison for the Fall section meetings in 2000 and 2007, and is currently a member of the Program Committee.

Baldwin-Wallace College: The Mathematics program has launched a new speaker series called “Careers in Mathematics”. The purpose is to expose students both at Baldwin-Wallace and at area high schools to the excellent non-academic career opportunities available to students of mathematics. The series has a web page at <http://www.bw.edu/academics/mth/speakerseries/>. Within the past year two of our Mathematics majors passed their first Actuarial Exams.

Susan Penko is on sabbatical during Spring semester 2009.

Bowling Green State University: Bailey Endowed Professor Barbara Moses was named Director of Science and Mathematics Education in Action, a grant funded by the Ohio Board of Regents under their Choose Ohio First program. The \$3 million grant will provide unique training for future teachers of mathematics and science at the middle and high school levels. A total of 100 students will receive scholarships at BGSU or at one of the partnering institutions (University of Findlay, Owens Community College, Terra Community College and Northwest State). Students will engage in scientific research, as well as pedagogical research. The end product should be a cadre of

reflective, well-prepared math and science teachers.

Alexander Izzo was awarded a New Directions Research Professorship from the Institute for Mathematics and its Applications at the University of Minnesota to participate in a year long program on Mathematics and Chemistry. Gabor Szekely was named Program Director in Statistics & Probability at the National Science Foundation.

Capital University: Jane Baldwin will retire at the end of the year after 25 years of service to the department and to the university, serving as chair for the past two years. Throughout her years at Capital, she was active in faculty governance, including serving as the faculty athletics representative and as the Faculty Senate Chair.

Denison University: Student Sam Behrend ('09) had a productive year working with Professor Lew Ludwig. Sam conducted research on spatial graphs and their linking properties, extending the work of Flapan and Foisy. He presented his work at the 2008 MathFest in Madison, where he won one of five Pi Mu Epsilon awards, and at the Joint Meetings in DC, where he received an award at the Undergraduate Poster Session.

The UnKnot Conference will be held this summer at Denison University in Granville, OH, July 15-17, 2009. This is the first undergraduate knot theory conference aimed at undergraduate faculty and students who are interested in knot theory and research on knot theory. Keynote speakers include Colin Adams, Jason

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Election of New Section Governor

This spring, the Ohio Section will elect a new Governor. The nominees are Carl Spitznagel (John Carroll University) and Alan Stickney (Wittenberg University). This election will be conducted by the National MAA. Biographical information on the candidates will be included with your ballot.

Ohio Section 2009 Summer Short Course: Knot Theory

This workshop is aimed at undergraduate teachers who are interested in knowing more about knot theory and potential areas for research with students in knot theory. Knot theory is a wonderful topic for exciting students about mathematics. It is visual and hands on. Students can begin working on problems the first day with their shoelaces. Knot theory is also an incredibly active field. There is a tremendous amount of work going on currently, and one can easily state open problems. It also has important applications to chemistry, biochemistry and physics. In recent years, undergraduates have been doing original and interesting research in knot theory.

This short course will run from noon on July 13 until 5 pm on July 14. It is a (stand alone) workshop that precedes and can be used as preparation for the UnKnot Conference, an undergraduate knot theory conference taking place July 15-17 at Denison University. The goals of the workshop are as follows:

1. Participants will be prepared to participate in the UnKnot Conference. Background will be provided so that the talks will be understandable and approachable.
2. Participants will be able to direct student research in knot theory. The short course and the conference will provide numerous avenues for further research.
3. Participants will be able to add knot theory topics to courses they teach.
4. Participants will be able to give expository talks about this

fascinating field.

The cost of the workshop is \$150, which includes lunch and dinner on Monday, three meals on Tuesday, and registration for the UnKnot Conference. Air conditioned apartment style housing will be available for a very reasonable rate. The website www.denison.edu/unknot will contain additional information as time approaches. Contact Lew Ludwig (ludwigl@denison.edu) for more details or with any questions.

Sarah Greenwald

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received her PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Her scholarship areas include Riemannian geometry, popular culture as it pertains to mathematics, and women and minorities in mathematics, and she is a 2005 Mathematical Association of America Alder Award winner for distinguished teaching. She is a member of the executive committee of the Association for Women in Mathematics and the editorial board of PRIMUS. She co-created the educational website SimpsonsMath.com with Andrew Nestler. While it is not affiliated with the show, the site was mentioned in the audio commentary of the 7th season of *The Simpsons*. Her interactive mathematics lecture has been distributed on approximately one million DVDs worldwide as a 25-minute DVD extra for the 20th Century Fox *Futurama* movie *Bender's Big Score* and it is listed as "Mind-bending." Dr. Greenwald has spoken about the impacts of scientific popular culture representations on NPR's Science Friday and all over the country.

Campus Notes

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Cantarella, Isabel Darcy, Joel Foisy, and Eric Rawdon. We will begin accepting abstract submissions in early March. In addition to talks about current research, there will be a panel discussion on open problems that are approachable by undergraduates. Through a generous NSF grant, we have funding to help offset the cost of travel to the conference for students as well as a limited number of faculty members. Additional information is available at the conference website, www.denison.edu/unknot, or by contacting Lew Ludwig, at ludwigl@denison.edu.

John Carroll University: Leo Schneider is on leave for Spring 2009, to write a book: *New York State Mathematics League Contest Book Volume V—Contest Years 2001-2009*.

Kent State University – Stark Campus: The Kent State University – Stark Campus degree program in mathematics is steadily growing and an exciting year is planned for 2009. The Department will sponsor the 4th annual Stark County Mathematics Challenge on May 2, 2009. Details of past competitions can be found at www.stark.kent.edu/Academics/Math/club.cfm. In addition, Dr. Janice Kover has been promoted to Associate Professor and serves as the campus coordinator for a Stark County grant project to decrease developmental mathematics needs of incoming students.

University of Dayton: Aparna Higgins will start a five-year term as

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2008-2009 Ohio Section Officers and Committees

ELECTED OFFICERS

President

Vickie Van Dresar, Ashland University
419-289-5265; vvandres@ashland.edu

Past-President #1

Bill Higgins, Wittenberg University
805-987-7859, whiggins@wittenberg.edu

Past President #2

Thomas Dence, Ashland University
419-289-5262; tdence@ashland.edu

President-Elect

Mark Miller, Marietta College
740-376-4811; millerr@marietta.edu

Section Governor

Judith Palagallo, University of Akron
330-688-5856 ; palagallo@uakron.edu

Secretary

Mark De Saint-Rat, Miami-Middletown
513-523-8896; desainme@muohio.edu

Treasurer

Charles Hampton, College of Wooster
hampton@wooster.edu

OTHER OFFICERS

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Webmaster

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On-line Registration

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Newsletter Editor

Barbara D'Ambrosia, John Carroll University
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OhioMATYC Liaison to OhioMAA

Jim Anderson, University of Toledo
419-530-3345; jim.anderson@utoledo.edu

OhioMAA Liaison to OhioMATYC

Robert Hovis, Ohio Northern University
419-772-2347; r-hovis@onu.edu

OMSC Liaison

Katie Cerrone, University of Akron
2011, kc24@uakron.edu

OCTM Liaison

Sandy Schroeder, Ohio Northern University
2010, s-schroeder@onu.edu

Ohio Project NExT Co-Coordinators

Wiebke Diestelkamp, University of Dayton
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Chris Swanson, Ashland University
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John Prather, Ohio University Eastern
740-699-2498; prather@ohio.edu

Archivist

Daniel Otero, Xavier University
513-745-2012; otero@xavier.edu

COMMITTEES

* Denotes committee chair. Elected Officers and Committee Chairs are voting members of the Executive Committee. Terms expire at the end of the Spring meetings of the year listed. See the Bylaws.

Program Committee

Phil Blau, Shawnee State University (2011)

CONTEAL

* John Prather, Ohio Univ Eastern (2011)
Jon Dunlap, Wright State Univ – Lake (2009)
Irina Chemikova, University of Akron (2009)
John Williams, Malone College (2011)
Sandy Schroeder, Ohio Northern Univ (2010)
Chris O'Connor, Shawnee State Univ (2011)
Susan Thompson, Otterbein College (2011)
Katie Cerrone, University of Akron (2011)

CONSTUM

* John Whitaker, Shawnee State (2010)
Christopher Swanson, Ashland Univ (2009)
Noah Aydin, Kenyon College (2009)
Sarah Crown, Denison University (2010)
Michael Ferrara, University of Akron (2010)
Mihai Caragiu, Ohio Northern Univ (2011)

CONSACT

* Lew Ludwig, Denison University (2010)
Judith Holdener, Kenyon College (2009)
Juan Bes, Bowling Green State Univ (2009)
Pamela Warton, University of Findlay (2010)
Shannon Miller, Marshall University (2011)

CONCUR

* Adam Parker, Wittenburg University (2009)
Rob-Roy Mace, Marshall University (2010)
Charles McCracken, Sinclair CC (2010)
Allan Silberger, Cleveland State Univ (2010)
William Fuller, Ohio Northern Univ (2011)
Richard Daquilla, Muskingum College (2011)

OTHER COMMITTEES

Nominating Committee

* Tom Dence, Ashland University (2011)
Mark Smith, Miami University (2009)
Harold Putt, Ohio Northern University (2009)

Committee on Contests

David Stenson, John Carroll Univ, AMC12

Teaching Award Committee

* Bill Higgins, Wittenberg Univ (Past President, Past Recipient 2007),
Mark De Saint-Rat, Miami University (Sec),
David Singer, Case-Western Reserve University (Past Recipient 2005)
Tom Price, University of Akron (Past Recipient 2006)

Centennial Committee

* David Kullman, Miami University
Tom Hern, Bowling Green State University,
Danny Otero, Xavier University
John Zimmerman, Washington and Jefferson College
Tom Dence, Ashland University
Jon Dunlap, Wright State University – Lake

Local Arrangements for Meetings

Spring 2009: Bowling Green State Univ
David Meel, meel@bgsu.edu

Fall 2009: Kenyon College
Carol Schumacher,
schumacherc@kenyon.edu

Campus Notes

(Continued from page 14)

Director of Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching) on August 16, 2009. She will succeed T. Christine Stevens, who has been the Director of the program for fifteen years.

Wiebke Diestelkamp has received the 2008 College of Arts and Science Award for Outstanding Service.

The Department of Mathematics will host Undergraduate Mathematics Day, a biennial undergraduate mathematics conference, on Saturday, November 7, 2009. More information will be available at <http://academic.udayton.edu/MathEvents/>.

April is Mathematics Awareness Month

The American Mathematical Society, the American Statistical Association, the Mathematical Association of America, and the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics announce that the theme for Mathematics Awareness Month, April 2009, is **Mathematics and Climate**.

One of the most important challenges of our time is modeling global climate. Calculus, differential equations, numerical analysis, probability, and statistics are just some of the areas of mathematics used to understand the oceans, atmosphere, and polar ice caps, and the complex interactions among these vast systems. Indeed, analyzing feedback effects is a crucial component of global climate modeling and often a significant factor in long-term predictions. For example, warmer temperatures cause ice to melt, exposing more land and water, so that more sunlight is absorbed-instead of being reflected, in turn leading to more warming.

Resources for this year's Mathematics Awareness Month program can be found at www.mathaware.org.

Calendar

Ohio Section

2009 Summer Short Course, July 13-14, 2009,
Denison University, Granville, OH

Fall 2009 Section Meeting, October 30-31, 2009,
Kenyon College, Gambier, OH

Spring 2010 Section Meeting, dates to be announced,
Kent State University, Kent, OH

Fall 2010 Section Meeting, dates to be announced,
Ursuline College, Cleveland, OH

National MAA-AMS

MathFest, August 6-8, 2009, Portland, OR

Annual Joint Meetings, January 13-16, 2010, San
Francisco, CA

MathFest, August 5-7, 2010, Pittsburgh, PA

MathFest, August 5-8, 2015, Washington, D.C.

Other

International Conference on Technology in Collegiate
Mathematics (ICTCM), March 12-15, 2009, New
Orleans, LA

Indiana Section Meeting, March 20-21, 2009, Indiana
University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN

Kentucky Section Meeting, March 27-28, 2009,
Kentucky State University, Frankfort, KY

AMS Central Section Meeting, March 27-29, 2009,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL

Allegheny Mountain Section Meeting, April 3-4, 2009,
Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, WV

NCTM National Meeting, April 22-25, 2009,
Washington, D.C.

Michigan Section Meeting, May 8-9, 2009, Central
Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI

SIAM Annual Meeting, July 6-10, 2009, Denver, CO

Joint Statistical Meetings, August 1-6, 2009,
Washington, D.C.