

SOUTHWESTERN SECTION NEWSLETTER

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1. **SPRING MEETING, April 1-2, 2005, University of Texas at El Paso**

The UTEP Mathematical Sciences Department is pleased to host the MAA Southwestern Section Conference, April 1-2, 2005, at the Union-East Building, 3rd floor at the University of Texas at El Paso. The conference will be running sessions on a wide range of topics: content mathematics, undergraduate mathematics education, and preK-12 mathematics education of pre-service teachers, as well as technology use in mathematics classrooms. You will have the wonderful opportunity to network with mathematicians and mathematics educators from Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, along with high school teachers from the El Paso area.

Conference highlights include the following invited speakers:

- Bruce Palka, University of Texas at Austin, and editor of the *American Mathematical Monthly*, will give a talk titled *Why Things Go Quasi in Higher Dimensions*;
- and
- Annie and John Selden, New Mexico State University, will present a talk titled *Two Research Traditions Separated by a Common Subject: Mathematics and Mathematics Education*. Annie is a recipient of the Association for Women in Mathematics Louise Hay Award for Contributions to Mathematics Education, and is an elected fellow of the AAAS. John has directed more than nine Ph.D.s in Mathematics.

The banquet on Friday, April 1, will include the following entertainments:

- *Mathematical Songwriter*, by Dr. Larry Lesser. You'll have the chance to join the choir in a math song sing-along. See for more information <http://www.math.utep.edu/Faculty/lesser/Mathemusician.html>; and
- A play on female mathematicians' lives titled, *Count Her In!*, directed by Sherry Lowell-Lewis.

Sessions and talks will include topics in both mathematics and mathematics education. Proposed special sessions are as follows:

- *Mathematics Motivated by Computations: Case Studies*, led by Dr. Vladik Kreinovich.
- *Bioinformatics*, led by Dr. Ming-Ying Leung.
- *How to Engage Students in Mathematics*, led by Deborah Hughes-Hallett, University of Arizona, and recipient of the last year's MAA section distinguished college or university teaching mathematics award. The MAA section Teaching award winners will be presenting at this session.
- *Statistics Education*, led by Dr. Larry Lesser.
- *Graduate and Undergraduate Talks on Mathematics and Mathematics education*. A copy of the latest version of Mathematica, provided by Wolfram Inc., will be given out to the best graduate and undergraduate presentations.

Call for Papers:

We invite proposals for 20-25 minute talks, mini-courses, workshops, and special sessions. Please e-mail titles and abstracts or other proposals to: Drs. Hamide Dogan-Dunlap, hdogan@utep.edu; Art Duval, artduval@math.utep.edu; and Larry Lesser, lesser@utep.edu. If you are submitting abstracts for the special sessions already in the program, please specify the session you are submitting and send your abstract to hdogan@utep.edu.

Deadlines:

Proposals for mini-courses, workshops, sessions, and contributed Papers (20-25 minutes) is **March 14, 2005**.

Banquet reservations and fees need to be submitted by **March 25, 2005**.

The registration form is included in this newsletter. For more information, such as, directions and lodging refer to website <http://ia.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=5515>, click on the MAA Southwest Section Link in the Upcoming Events menu.

2. Reflections on the Joint Math Meeting in Atlanta, by Joanne Peeples <JoanneP@epcc.edu>

As usual, there were many good sessions and invited lectures to attend. I did not see the final conference attendance figures but heard that well over 4,000 mathematicians attended. Since I am a member of the Committee on Sections, I would like to mention that the revised *Guidelines for Section Officers* is now posted on the web: www.maa.org/Sections/handbook.htm. This document has a lot of interesting information for sections, and will be updated as changes need to be made. If you have any suggestions for changes, let me know and I'll pass them on to the committee chair.

A new prize was announced: the Annie and John Selden Prize for Research in Undergraduate Mathematics Education. Annie and John are currently Adjunct Professors of Mathematics at NMSU. For more information about the prize go to: www.maa.org/awards/selden.htm/

Just a reminder, MathFest for Summer 2005 will be held August 4 –6, in Albuquerque (we are the host section), and the Joint Math Meetings for 2006 will be January 12 –15, in San Antonio. Both meetings are 'close'; perhaps more SW Section members will be able to participate.

3. The Play, *Count Her In!*

Thanks to a MAA Tensor Grant given to Joanne Peeples (EPCC) and Hamide Dogan (UTEP) there will be a treat at the SW Section Conference this year. Along with dinner, there will be a play about women in mathematics. There are six women from high school, three women from college, and three women from graduate school who will perform the play, which highlights the lives of six women mathematicians. Also, the (great)¹⁰ – granddaughter of Emilie du Chatelet (played by a muppet) will make an appearance.

4. SECTIONAL NEWS

Arizona Western College (by Dan Russow <daniel.russow@azwestern.edu>)

Roy Cavanaugh retired last year and we have since hired Tony Bottone as his replacement. The college is advertising two new positions for fall, 2005.

One is a full-time mathematics instructor and the other is a full-time math/biology instructor.

Assessment is a prime objective of the college and in the mathematics department, Brian Karasek and Dan Russow took part in the MAA's SAUM program. Their case study on assessment of developmental mathematics has been published on the MAA website.

Members of the department are currently involved in the Algebra Project, a project aimed at increasing math literacy amongst minority students. Our role mainly revolves around teacher training.

For the good of the order, Michelle Montopoli, daughter of department coordinator Dr. George Montopoli, graduated from Northern Arizona University after only one and a half years of attendance there. Michelle earned her Associate Degree from Arizona Western College at the same time that she received her high school diploma. At NAU, she majored in psychology and minored in mathematics. Just an example of how students can benefit from the partnerships between the high schools and community colleges.

Northern Arizona University (by John Hagood <John.Hagood@NAU.EDU>)

Janet McShane has received funding from the Association for Women in Mathematics and the Hewlett Foundation to conduct a Sonya Kovaleski day on April 30, 2005. About 50-75 high school girls will be invited to campus for the program.

Dr. Kurt Herzinger of the Air Force Academy is visiting NAU and collaborating with department faculty while on sabbatical.

NAU will host the Arizona Mathematics Undergraduate Conference October 28-29, 2005, with funding from the national MAA office and a multitude of other sources. Students are encouraged to be working on projects now that will lead to a talk or poster presentation. The department has applied for continued funding for our summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates program, under the coordination of Terry Blows.

Nandor Sieben and a large group of followers have received an internal grant to expand use of WeBWorK to our quantitative reasoning course and other courses and to write and edit problems to tailor the system to our courses. Our current use, mainly in precalculus, calculus, and linear algebra, has been met with enthusiasm by most students. Our new online M.A.T. program continues to grow. The last group of courses for the program will be developed this year.

University of Arizona (by Richard Thompson <rht@math.arizona.edu>)

There will be two retirements from the Mathematics Department at the University of Arizona: David Gay and Richard Thompson.

Western New Mexico University (by Tom Gruszka <tpeter@cs.wnmu.edu>)

Current chair, Lloyd Cowling, is retiring. Rick Johnson will be the new chair.

5. THE 2005 SPRING MEETING – REGISTRATION FORM

See attached pdf file.