



Mathematical Association of America Southwestern Section

# Newsletter

Volume 23 Issue 1 | Fall 2009

## Section News

### Spring Meeting is April 9–10, 2010

The MAA Southwestern Section spring meeting will be held at Scottsdale Community College (SCC) on April 9 & 10, 2010. It will be a joint meeting with ArizMATYC. For information, email [Jenifer.Bohart@sccmail.maricopa.edu](mailto:Jenifer.Bohart@sccmail.maricopa.edu). We have also set up a conference web page, <http://www.scottsdalecc.edu/MAASouthwesternSection>.

—Jenifer Bohart

### Nominations Sought: Distinguished Teaching Award

At our banquet last April at Western New Mexico University in Silver City, the 2009 Distinguished Teaching Award for the Southwestern Section was given to Joanne Peeples, El Paso Community College.



Joanne Peeples (left) received the Section's Distinguished Teaching Award at the April 2009 section meeting from outgoing Section Governor Janet McShane (right). (Photo by Fariba Ansari)

Joanne was the official SW Section nominee for the MAA Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Award for distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics.

Nominations are needed for the Southwestern Section's award next April—there are excellent teachers in our section that should be recognized for their work! The SW section asks that you complete the same nomination form that is used for the national Haimo award. A committee from the section will look at all nominations submitted for the SW Section award, and pick our section's nominee for the Haimo Award. With the permission of the person making the nomination, the nominated people who were not selected will again be considered for this honor next year (with the opportunity to update their nomination, if so desired).

Our section has had two of our nominees for the Haimo Award win the award: Deborah Hughes-Hallett, University of Arizona, won in 2004 and David Pengelley, New Mexico State University, won in 2008. It's time for another winner!!!

### We're going electronic!

This will be the last issue of the section newsletter distributed on paper; future issues of the newsletter will be published only electronically. Watch the section web site for more information:

<http://oak.ucc.nau.edu/hagood/MAASW/SWSection.htm>

You can go to <http://www.maa.org/Awards/haimo.html> to find out more about the award, the eligibility requirements, and the materials that need to be submitted with the nomination. Any member of the SW Section may nominate any other member (self-nomination is not permitted). The completed nomination packet must be received by Joanne Peeples **no later than January 31, 2010**. She would appreciate it if you would let her know in December (or earlier) if you plan to nominate someone. The completed nomination packet should be mailed to Joanne at 6917 Orizaba, El Paso, TX 79912. If you have questions you can email her at: [joanep@epcc.edu](mailto:joanep@epcc.edu) or call 915.831.5047.

—Joanne Peeples

### Section Bylaws are Being Revised

Janet McShane, John Hagood, David Dudley, Anne Dudley and Jenifer Bohart met over the summer, and rewrote the existing MAA Southwestern Section bylaws (which had not been revised since 1972!). Our goal was to align the old bylaws with current MAA standards. Changes to look for include:

- The addition of 3 new officers (past-chair, webmaster, and newsletter editor)
- Staggered 3-year terms for officers
- Description of duties for Section officers

#### MAA Southwestern Section Newsletter Volume 23 Issue 1 | Fall 2009

This newsletter is published twice annually, usually in October and March. Please send news items about your department and announcements to the editor:

Allen Stenger  
29 Cielo Montana  
Alamogordo, NM 88310

[StenBiz@gmail.com](mailto:StenBiz@gmail.com)

Section web site: <http://oak.ucc.nau.edu/hagood/MAASW/SWSection.htm>

- Definition of a quorum
- A new article on committees
- A recommended co-signer on the Section accounts

We are planning to have a special session at the Spring meeting to discuss these new bylaws prior to the business meeting when, hopefully, they will be adopted. The existing and proposed bylaws are here:

<http://plone.scottsdalecc.edu/MAASouthwesternSection/oldbylaws-swsectionmaa.pdf>

<http://plone.scottsdalecc.edu/MAASouthwesternSection/proposedbylaws-swsectionmaa.pdf>

—Jenifer Bohart

## Department News

### University of Texas at El Paso

Led by new chair Dr. Christina Mariani, the University of Texas at El Paso Department of Mathematical Sciences is poised to help support UTEP's recent designation as a Tier One emerging institution as well as UTEP's vision as a center of Access and Excellence in Teaching and Research. The Computational Science PhD program is now in its second year and has a



Section meeting keynoter Dan Teague explained to the banquet audience how the 21st century math classroom moves students from 2009 to 1880 in 5 minutes or less. (Photo by Fariba Ansari)

considerable number of students. Encourage your students to look into the program by visiting <http://academics.utep.edu/compsci>.

Numerous faculty have received major recognition in recent months, such as Dr. Art Duval (the 2005 winner of the Southwestern MAA teaching excellence award) being named an inaugural winner of the UT System Board of Regents' Outstanding Teaching Awards. For details on this and other news, see the revamped departmental homepage (where the 2009 issue of MAXIMA is now posted): <http://www.math.utep.edu/>

UTEP will be hosting the 2010 SUnMaRC (Southwestern Undergraduate Mathematics Research Conference) on March 5–7. All students are welcome! If you would like to bring your students, or if you have any questions, email [artduval@math.utep.edu](mailto:artduval@math.utep.edu) or visit <http://sunmarc.org>.

—Dr. Larry Lesser

### Arizona Western College

Our newly renovated building will open in January with a state-of-the-art math learning center and four Smart classrooms. Recently hired under our



Vendor area and registration at the April 2009 section meeting. (Photo by Fariba Ansari)

Department of Education grant are Nene Coulibaly, Math Instructor, Anne Gallagher, Instructional Designer and Cheryl Johnston, Math Learning Center Coordinator. Two other mathematics classrooms were also converted to Smart classrooms and are equipped with Smartboards, clickers and InterwriteMobis. —Dan Russo

## MAA National News

### Board of Governors report

The Board of Governors of the MAA met for its usual daylong meeting on 5 August 2009 in Portland, OR, prior to MathFest. One of the action items at this meeting was to approve the 2010 operating budget. A deficit budget of about \$37,500 was approved by the Board. This compares with a projected 2009 deficit of about \$225,800 and an actual 2008 deficit of \$248,700. Investments still remain strong (compared to the market as a whole) with a total market value of over \$7M.

The other action items of note concerned electronic memberships. The Board approved a number of motions allowing electronic memberships in various categories. Members choosing to receive journals electronically will receive access to all three MAA journals for the past three years for the same price as membership with the print American Mathematical Monthly. All members can get electronic access to the three journals (issues older than three years) through JSTOR for \$25 per year. More information is available at [http://www.maa.org/EbusPPRO/pdf/Emembership\\_intro.pdf](http://www.maa.org/EbusPPRO/pdf/Emembership_intro.pdf)

In addition, the institutional and student membership categories are being renamed and reorganized.

The next Board meeting will be on 12 January 2010 in San Francisco, CA prior to

the Joint Mathematics Meetings. If you are planning to be at the conference in January please let me know. I'll try to organize an informal gathering of section members.

—Tom Gruszka

### Joint Membership Option Contemplated

Three associations—The American Mathematical Society (AMS), The Mathematical Association of America (MAA), and The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)—are investigating the possibility of offering a joint membership category at a discounted price for membership in all three organizations.

The discounted membership would provide the benefits of Regular Membership in all three organizations. The benefits include discounted prices for publications and meetings and the primary member publications of all three societies: *SIAM News and Review*, *MAA Focus* and *The American Mathematical Monthly*, and *AMS Notices* and *The Bulletin*.

A discounted membership rate for those who join AMS, SIAM, and MAA is a way to recognize and reward those members who, by supporting all three societies, support the full range of issues and programs affecting mathematics and the education of individuals in mathematics and mathematically intensive fields.

We hope to encourage this practice more effectively by providing you with a real incentive—a joint membership available through any of the three associations at a discounted dues level. —Tina Straley

(The above message was sent to selected MAA members asking them to participate in a survey on this idea.)

## Math News

### The Riemann Hypothesis is 150!

The 150th birthday of the Riemann Hypothesis will be celebrated with lectures

and other events all over the world on November 18, 2009. The RH, which asserts that all the “non-trivial” zeroes of the Riemann zeta function have real part  $1/2$ , is considered by many mathematicians to be the most important unsolved problem in mathematics. (David Hilbert said it was the most important problem, “not only in mathematics, but absolutely most important!”) The RH is one of the seven Millennium Problems identified by the Clay Mathematics Institute, which is offering a \$1 million prize for its resolution. More information on the celebration is available from the American Institute of Mathematics at <http://aimath.org/RH150/>



Pólya Lecturer Lou Kauffman gets into a knotty problem at the April 2009 section meeting. (Photo by Allen Stenger)