

Minutes
MAA Section Officers Meeting
2:30 – 5:00 P.M., Thursday, January 12, 2006
Room 217 C, Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas

Welcome and Introductions, Participants' Roster:

Refreshments were available, and the first few minutes of this meeting were spent talking among the participants and enjoying the food. At 2:45 P.M. Nancy Hagelgans, chairperson of the Committee on Sections, welcomed the section officers and visitors to the meeting. All present introduced themselves, and they signed a roster to signify attendance.

During the introductions Jim Fink read the following statement and asked that it be included in the minutes of this meeting.

In Memory of our friend and colleague Janet L. Andersen, Professor of Mathematics, Hope College and Vice Chair of the Michigan Section, who lost her life in an automobile accident on Thanksgiving Day, 2005:

With her sabbatical last year at the University of Utah, Janet had embarked on a new research program in the area of mathematical biology. She was planning to communicate some of her recent results at one of the Special Sessions of these meetings.

An award-winning teacher, Janet was tireless in encouraging her students to a deeper appreciation of their own capacities by helping them to overcome one of their biggest obstacles: the assumptions they held about themselves.

A consummate administrator, Janet had served as Chair of the Mathematics Department, GEMS Coordinator (General Education in Mathematics and Science), and Director of General Education at Hope College before assuming the Directorship of the Pew Midstates Science and Mathematics Consortium in 2002. She was active in the Association for Women in Mathematics and Project NExT, and when she died she was Vice Chair of the Michigan Section of the Mathematical Association of America. In this latter capacity, her characteristic cheerfulness and efficiency will have a lasting impact on the Michigan Section.

We shall miss her collaborative spirit, her creative energy, and her unflagging optimism.

Section Issues and Information:

Deanna Haunsperger and Steve Kennedy, co-chairs for the ad hoc Planning Committee for the MAA Centennial in 2015, asked for ideas for the celebration. They asked about the availability of section flags for a parade of section flags planned for MathFest 2015,

and they requested an electronic version of the history of each section. Also, they would like each section to designate a Centennial Section Planner (possibly the secretary).

Doris Schattschneider, Chair of the Committee on Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics, reminded us that to be eligible for this award the person nominated must have more than seven years teaching experience. Since there are many worthy people nominated each year for only three awards, the Haimo Awards committee, when choosing the winners for the current year's awards, considers past section winners as well as the current section winners. At most two past section winners may be chosen for these awards. The deadline for submitting nominations is March 1, and the each section should notify Martha Siegel whether the section has a nominee or not.

Gavin Larose, Associate Director of NExT, reported on both NExT and Project ACCESS. He told us that there are 18 – 20 sections that have Section NExTs. Sections may apply for funds to support new and continuing Section NExT and Project ACCESS activities. Project NExT information as posted at: <http://www.math.lsa.umich.edu/~glarose/pnext/sections/> and information about Project ACCESS is posted at: <http://www.maa.org/ProjectACCESS/>

Carl Cowen, MAA President, stopped by to welcome all the section officers to this meeting.

Updates and Comments:

The section annual financial reports are due on January 30. The necessary forms can be downloaded from: <http://www.maa.org/Sections/officer-infor.html> Last year there were three sections that did not submit the required forms.

The section annual reports are due on June 30, or within three weeks of the section's spring meeting – whichever comes first. The registration forms for section meetings should have check-off boxes so that the sections' annual reports can include the numbers of MAA members, two-year college faculty, 4-year college/university faculty, high school teachers, business/industry/government people, undergraduate students, and graduate students that attend the meetings.

The chair of the Committee on Sections will generate three reports based on the sections' annual reports: a spread sheet with data from the annual reports, a narrative with section highlights, and a spread sheet listing section invited speakers, with contact information. These three reports will be posted on MAA Online.

When sections have confirmed national MAA speakers, the dates of the conference and the names of the invited speaker should be sent to Hal Nesbitt (Hnesbitt@MAA.org). Hal will send the list of previously engaged speakers for any specific date at the request of a section that wants to invite a national speaker.

The Committee on Sections would like input from the membership on the *Guidelines for Section Officers*, which is posted online (<http://www.maa.org/sections/guidelines/toc.html>). Is it helpful? Do changes need to be made?

When sections want to update their bylaws, the first step in the formal process is the section vote on the proposed changes. The Committee on Sections recommends that the section consult with the Committee before voting. The section is encouraged to consult with this Committee early, and the section chair should send a copy of the current bylaws, the proposed by laws and a list of major changes to the chair of the Committee on Sections. Early consultation will actually speed up the process, avoid a second section vote at a later date, and result in approval by the Board of Governors the first time the bylaws are presented to the Board.

MAA Directors and Officers:

Elgin Johnston, Chair of the Committee on The American Mathematics Competitions, talked about the various AMC competitions and the levels through which a student must progress in order to reach the U. S. Mathematics Olympiad team. He also said that the Committee could always use help writing problems for the competitions, critiquing the problems, and reading the galley proofs.

Tina Straley, Executive Director of MAA, talked to us about the continuous strategic planning that is currently underway at the MAA. Various areas of the MAA will be closely studied, and plans will be made for the future. The first three working groups have concentrated on professional development, AMC, and revenue. This spring working groups looking at governance, students, and membership will be formed. The groups work for 18 months, with a preliminary report issued at the end of the first six months, and a final report issued at the end of the 18 months. There will be a five-year rotation for these areas of study. The goal of these groups is to see what issues should be addressed – and these issues will involve the sections.

John Kenelly, MAA Treasurer, said that the MAA is doing fine financially. He urged the sections to get their financial reports in on time. He also noted that there was no problem with the audit last year, but sections must be careful not to have too much money in savings. Any section that has more than \$10,000 should consider letting the MAA invest that money. Too much money at the section level will raise questions from the auditors.

Open Discussion:

The first part of our discussion was about section newsletters. Most sections seemed to have their newsletter online (some only online, others also had hard copies). The question was raised (but not answered) whether or not the section members should receive something on paper at least once a year from the section.

The next question asked was “do webmasters need help?” Roseann Brown, the MAA Director of Information Services, said that there was a session for webmasters at MathFest that was attended by only five people. She questioned if another session would be more successful. Another person asked about the possibility of an MAA template for a section web site – just to help a section get started.

Nancy Hagelgans commented about the percent of MAA members that attend the spring section meetings. Looking at the section annual reports from the 24 sections (of a total of 29 sections) that submitted data on attendance in their annual reports, she found that 4 sections had 1 –5% of their members at the section meeting, 10 sections had 6 – 10% of their members, 5 sections had 11 – 15 %, 3 sections had 16 – 20%, 1 section had 21-25%, and 1 section had 26 – 30%. Nancy asked what could be done to increase participation.

A suggestion was made that there should be more recognition of student speakers. The MAA will award student speakers an MAA book or a one-year membership in the MAA. Some sections give prizes for student papers, some have student competitions, and some let the students attend the banquet free.

Sections were reminded that they cannot charge dues but that voluntary dues or donations can be suggested. Every MAA member is automatically a member of one section, usually depending on where that member lives. Sections can raise some money by charging exhibitor fees. These fees seem to run between \$25 and \$100 for each exhibitor.

As usual we ran out of time for more discussion, and Nancy Hagelgans thanked the officers for coming to the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Peeples,
Secretary, MAA Committee on Sections