

Secretary's Report

Martha J. Siegel, Secretary of the MAA

I am pleased to report that in general the MAA is doing well. Although membership is down slightly, retention is fairly high and the activity level of our core members has been outstanding. The programs and activities at the Carriage House continue to be of the highest quality and many are available to all via the internet.

The MAA Board of Governors met on January 4th and spent quite a bit of time discussing budgetary issues. The economic situation in the country has affected the MAA. Our investments lost money but less than many others did. We are strong, but in this environment we need to consider carefully what our priorities are. The 2008 budget shows a deficit, but the deficit will be about \$100,000 less than we had budgeted. The staff worked with the Budget Committee, chaired by Richard Cleary, to find ways to reduce the deficit that had been anticipated when the 2009 budget was presented to the Executive Committee in May 2008. Cleary and MAA Treasurer, John Kenelly, gave reports to the Board. The Treasurer's report is available on the MAA website at <http://www.maa.org/treasurer/>.

The Board approved a modest increase in dues for 2010, while keeping student dues at the same level as 2009. Members may recall that there was no increase in dues from 2008 to 2009. In a recent change announced by the staff, *gratis* memberships to students who have

presented their research at section meetings will no longer be offered. Sections are urged to offer their own incentives to students who give talks at meetings.

As we speak of priorities, it is important to note that we are still engaged in what we hope will be a continuous strategic planning process. New groups now are actively working on Cycle III in the areas of STEM issues, periodicals and communications, meetings, and sections. In every case, we have kept the working groups small but we have tried to involve the membership and the leadership in focus groups to help in charting the course for the Association. Now more than ever, we are using these reports to help us set priorities for the Association.

Those recommendations of the Working Group on Governance that were approved by the Board and that did not require Bylaws changes have now been implemented. The council and committee structure have changed somewhat. Members should consult the MAA web site (under Organization) for the specifics. The *ad hoc* Committee on the MAA Bylaws, chaired by Wayne Roberts, is working on revising the Bylaws to reflect changes in governance as well as to simplify and streamline the document. The membership will be advised and consulted regularly on the recommended changes.

One motion approved by the Board was somewhat bit-sweet. Chris Stevens asked that she be allowed to step



Leaders of the BOG: Martha J. Siegel, Secretary, Joe Gallian, President, Tina Straley, Executive Director, and Wayne Roberts, Parliamentarian. Photograph by Fernando Gouvêa.

down as Director of Project NExT in August 2009, after 15 years on the job. The Board acknowledged Stevens' accomplishments and enthusiastically supported the appointment of Aparna Higgins to a five-year term as Director beginning August 16, 2009. Many thanks were expressed for Stevens' work over these last 15 years. It was noted that we now have about 1085 NExT Fellows and are accepting almost 80 new Fellows a year. Stevens, Higgins, Joseph Gallian, Gavin Larose, and Judith Covington all merit our collective and individual thanks. Gallian, Larose, and Covington are expected to continue with Higgins in NExT leadership roles.



Jim Tattersall. Photograph by Fernando Gouvêa.

The MAA Board also voted approval of the 2009 Henry L. Alder Awards recognizing exceptional teachers in the first years of their professional careers. The three winners will be delivering talks at MathFest in Portland, OR. To be congratulated are: Jennifer McLoud-Mann of the University of Texas at Tyler, Scott Annin of California State University at Fullerton, and Sommer Gentry of the United States Naval Academy. See <http://www.maa.org/awards/alder.html> for information on the Alder Awards. Members are encouraged to nominate exceptional young teachers for this award.

After these meetings, David Bressoud assumes the position of President. Joe Gallian will be Past-President. It is hard to believe that Joe's two-year term as President is drawing to a close. Even in such a short time, his leadership and energy have left a very positive mark on the MAA. Gallian continues on the Executive Committee for another year, and on the Board of Governors for six more years.

Our Associate Secretary for the past 11 years, Jim Tattersall, stepped down at the end of these meetings. Gerard Venema of Calvin College has had a year of serving as Associate Secretary-Elect, and we welcome him to the Board of Governors and to his new position. I want to thank Jim for everything he has done as Associate Secretary. The past years of MathFest and the Joint Meetings have been ones of growth in attendance as well as in the vitality and breadth of programming. Always willing to work

with members to provide the best programs and the best facilities, Tattersall, in his characteristic bow tie, smiled through it all and managed to make it all run smoothly. We are truly grateful for having had the opportunity to work with him and we expect to take advantage of his expertise and good humor for a long time.

Rotating off the Executive Committee, Nancy Hagelgans steps down after six years (two terms) as a most meticulous and dedicated chair of the Committee on Sections. We welcome Rick Gillman in that position. We welcome Paul Zorn, chair of the Council on Publications, to the Executive Committee and the Board as a representative of publications. At these meetings, Michael Henle, the new editor of the *College Math Journal* joined the Board. Lowell Beineke left the *Journal* in excellent shape and we thank him for his additional service as publications representative to the Executive Committee for several years. To Art Benjamin and Jenny Quinn, we extend our thanks for all they have contributed as editors of *Math Horizons*. And we welcome new editors Bruce Torrence and Stephen Abbott. We also welcome Walter Stromquist, who begins a one-year term as the Editor-elect of *Mathematics Magazine*.

After these meetings, new Governors-at Large join the Board: Judith Covington will serve as Governor-at-Large for Teacher Education, replacing Jeremy Kilpatrick, and Gregory Coxson will serve as Governor-at Large for Mathematicians in Business, Industry, and Government replacing Peter Stanek.

Since some section governors cycle off the Board at the end of June, this has been their last Board meeting. We are truly grateful for the service of the past governors-at-large and those who have served as section governors and look forward to having them continue to serve on committees of the MAA. Section Governors with terms expiring June 30, 2009: Andrew Bennett (Kansas Section), Yungchen Cheng (Missouri Section), Patricia Kenschaft (New Jersey Section), Ockle Johnson (North-eastern Section), Judy Palagallo (Ohio Section), Nancy Neudauer (Pacific Northwest Section), Robert Rogers (Seaway Section), Ellen Kirkman (Southeastern Section), and Janet McShane (Southwestern Section).

We are preparing for national elections this spring. I know that seems crazy... our new President has been in the position for only a week as I write this! The Board of Governors voted several years ago that the Association



At the Board of Governors meeting: Gerard Venema, incoming MAA Associate Secretary, Robert Vallin, Associate Director for Student Programs, and Steven Dunbar, Director of Competitions. Photograph by Fernando Q. Gouvêa.

should progress to electronic elections. The 2009 ballots will be sent by email. If MAA does not have an email address for you, be sure to inform us. Directions are posted at maa.org. Members who cannot vote by email can request a paper ballot. Many thanks go to the Nominating Committee: Jean Bee Chan, Carl C. Cowen, Chair Barbara Faires, Ronald Graham, and Deanna Haunspenger for selecting very strong candidates.

The first MAA-AMS-SIAM Judith and Gerald Porter Public Lecture was scheduled for January 8. Unfortunately, speaker Steven Strogatz took ill and the lecture was cancelled. We are grateful to the Porters for providing the support for this outreach effort and we look forward to hearing Steve Strogatz at the rescheduled lecture at next year's Joint Meetings in San Francisco.

We urge members to consult the MAA website for a schedule of future meetings. Some dates have been changed since originally announced, so it is a good idea to look to the web. We also encourage members to look for the various web-based sources of meeting information, which are always up-to-date and contain lots of useful information. Start at <http://www.maa.org/mathfest>.

Another innovation at these meetings were the AMS-MAA Awards for Mathematical Art, given for the first time in Washington. Thanks to an anonymous donor, there will be annual prizes (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) for art work shown in the Joint Meetings Art Exhibit. The winning works will be highlighted on our website. This

year, the MAA judges were Tom Banchoff and Annalisa Crannell. See the article on page 26 for more information on this year's winners.

These meetings cannot take place without the dedicated work of volunteers and MAA staff. Since the meetings were in DC, there was more interaction with MAA staff at the hotel and at headquarters facilities. We thank Tina Straley, Michael Pearson, Bryan Lane, the Directors, and all the MAA staff for their support and hospitality. As always, thanks to Jim Tattersall and Gerard Venema, the chairs of the many meetings committees for providing the scientific program.

The MAA Program Committee for these Joint Math Meetings was: Art Benjamin, Manjul Bhargava, Carl Cowen, Joseph Gallian, Jeffrey Lagarias, Jennifer Quinn, Carol Schumacher, John Stillwell, Jim Tattersall (*ex off.*), (Chair) Daniel Ullman, and Gerard Venema (*ex off.*). Those MAA representatives to the AMS-MAA Joint Program Committee for JMM 2009 in Washington, DC were Joseph Gallian and Daniel Ullman.

The MAA Business Meeting was typically brief. Of particular note is that the MAA Board of Governors signed a letter of thanks to John Ewing as he leaves the position of Executive Director of the American Mathematical Society. Ewing is the new Director of Math for America.

My term as Secretary expires next January and I hope to welcome a Secretary-Elect within a few months. Any successes I have had in this position are due primarily to the spirit and dedication of the many MAA volunteers who are willing to do so much to advance the profession. We have an Association of talented, generous, and scholarly colleagues. Many are among my most treasured friends. I owe a tremendous debt to the outstanding staff in Washington, DC and Lincoln Nebraska, and to my assistant, Denise Raspa. Without the continued support of Towson University and the Mathematics Department, none of this could have been possible. Many thanks to all as we begin the transition to a new Secretary! 🍷