Calendar

Oct 22  EM Faculty Meeting
      10:00 254 Votey

Nov 1  Joint Colloquium
      with Delaware St. College
      4:10 002 Kalkin

Nov 2  Science Symposium
      10:00-3:00 On Campus

1991

Oct 4  Math Colloquium:
      Tuong Ton-That
      4:10 002 Kalkin

Oct 11 Math Colloquium:
      Hans-Peter Helfrich
      4:10 002 Kalkin

Oct 14-15 ABET Site visit

Oct 15 Math Colloquium:
      Rachel McAnallen
      7:00 Campus Center Theater

Oct 15 WAC Fall Welcoming
      Maura Saul, speaker
      3:30-5:30 Memorial Lounge

Oct 17 A&S Faculty Meeting
      Memorial Lounge

Message from the Chief

Congratulations to Janet Ferguson, who under
the new office reorganization will become Admin-
istrative Assistant for the Department. Janet’s
new title will become effective as soon as the De-
partment fills the staff position vacated when Amy
Driscoll resigned at the end of August to become a
full-time student. The real “Chief” is now properly
identified, and properly titled!

As of last week the Department received ap-
proval to fill its vacant staff position at the level
of Technical Secretary II. The Personnel Office
is currently posting this position, and we hope to be
interviewing applicants beginning next week.

Accompanying the arrival of the new staff
person will be an office reorganization designed to
improve the quality of the workplace and increase
effective use of time. The linchpin for the re-
structuring involves transferring responsibility for
answering the phone, distributing mail, and related
receptionist duties to work study students, whose
desk will be located at the entrance to the mailroom.
By such means, the Technical Secretary II will be
freed from many of the receptionist tasks and the
resulting interruption of work flow, to concentrate
on the higher level jobs at hand.

There being no such thing as a free lunch, or
in this case free promotion, with Janet’s new ti-
tle will come additional responsibilities, principally
budgetary. Over the past few years, the number
of budget accounts (e.g., research grants which now
total over a half million dollars with an additional
one million dollars currently pending at federal
agencies, several gift and release accounts, confer-
ence accounts, etc.) have increased dramatically,
and our operating and equipment budgets have
become more complex as well. The reorganization
plan includes gradually transferring a substantial
amount of high level secretarial work (connected,
for example, with scheduling, office hours charts,
book orders, etc.) to the new person, freeing Janet
to gradually take on the management and oversight
of more of the departmental budgets.

As we all know, ever since the opening of the
semester, a time of peak pressure on the office,
Janet has been doing a yeoperson (I still haven’t
mastered the art of gender-free expression) job of
managing the office by herself, with help from work
study students. This has created a hardship, not
only for Janet, but for everyone in the Department,
and it will still take a while to get out from under
the backlog. To close on a personal note, I want to
express my gratitude to all the faculty and graduate
students for being so patient and understanding
during a difficult period of serious understaffing in
the department office. Thank you for all of your
help and support.

General Delivery

The editors for this edition of the newsletter
were Jeff Dinits and Dan Zwick. A number of
people in the Department submitted items of news
or information.

Submit your candidate for a header slogan
to one of the editors, or write it directly into
fsnews@listserv at the directory

A recent trip and
related political views

Karin Larson

Given the challenges of motivation and com-
munication with the students whom I teach in the
math for elementary education majors, as well as as
the Math 10-15 sequence, on Sept 26-28 I returned
to the “halloved” halls in Cambridge to see what
the New Directions Through Research in Education
might tell me. Pastured at the Harvard Graduate
School of Education symposium was Carol Gilli-
gan’s presentation: “The Psychology of Women and
the Education of Girls”. The value of the content
prompted me to buy her books: In a Different Voice
and Making Connections (Harvard Univ. Press, 1982
& 1990 resp.).

Howard Gardner’s presentation, “Intelligence
in Seven Phases,” based on his research in the
schools over the past two decades, reinforced my
wish that we could offer introductory level math
courses in other modes than 3 x 50 minute x 15 week
slots. That “canned” form of time pushes students of
diverse background and abilities and we, their
teachers, into gymnastics of the mind and emotions that often results in mental cramped and blockages.

Parson my play with words as I keep humor with some serious concerns that have origins back in the public schools. We are hearing and seeing much publicity about President Bush's Vision 2000. None of the research I heard presented in the seven sessions I attended would point strongly toward the proposals (of voluntary national testing and S&G model schools) and the federal financing of those proposals. This summer I wrote a letter to Lamar Alexander, Secretary of the Dept. of Education, including a 13 page information packet about the financial structures of schools and what it's like out here. This was done as the Government Relations representative for the VT, Council of Teachers of Math. Although I did not receive a response from Alexander, I do have the satisfaction of having gone on record for VCTM at not approving of the above-mentioned features of Vision 2000. (Jeffords and Sanders did reply to the cc sent to them, concurring with our position.)

My digression to my political activism this summer ties back to the conference in that I had some views reinforced by what I heard. I also can now raise the question of whether the real ivory tower? Is it in Washington?

Some of you have heard my opinions at lunch. Given the roles each of us has as educator, parent, and/or citizen it seems appropriate to extend the invitation to anyone who would like to have more details on the above to see me at lunch (or another time, if we want to save that hour for comic/light fare relief).

### Computer Stuff

To get online help for the UNIX system from any UNIX machine type

```
man command
```
or

```
man -k keyword
```

### UNIX File System

The UNIX file system is like the DOS file system—files are arranged logically (as opposed to physically) into a huge upside-down tree, with the root at the top. The root is the "root directory," which has no label other than ./. You can move around this file tree by using the cd command (but before you do this keep in mind that you return to your original directory by typing cd with no arguments). For instance, if you type cd / the root will be made your "active directory" and you may use ls to list the files and subdirectories here. There is a long path down various paths of the tree that ends up in a subdirectory with your name on it. This is your "home directory." For instance, on newton the path is

```
tcp:net/math/mattfsa/login.name
```

A useful abbreviation for the path to your home directory is /

If you have a lot of files, it is convenient to keep them in subdirectories with appropriate labels. For example, you might have a subdirectory called tex in which you have all your TeX files. You might even want to further sort these into papers, letters, reviews, etc., by creating a number of subdirectories of tex with these names.

If you login to some machine, say newton, you can use the ls command to list your files and directories. Even if you have not created any files, you have a number of them—"hidden" system files that are used in a period. To list these use ls ./. You will notice that the first two items in the list are ./... and ../... . In UNIX, one dot always stands for the current directory and two dots always stands for the parent directory, the one directly above the one you are in. For example, if you are in your root directory, which is labeled with your login name, then you can move directly above the one you are in. Unfortunately this is the weekend before exams this year.

### Announcements

#### PUTNAM EXAM

It’s Putnam sign-up time! Please announce to your classes that the Putnam is a continent-wide exam calling for creative thinking to solve new and different mathematics problems. This is a chance for undergraduates to represent UVM, enjoy a challenge, and get a national ranking as an undergraduate mathematician. Practice sessions will include refreshments and socializing with students from St. Michael’s College. Have interested students sign up, and give me the list of names by Friday, October 11, at the latest. I will be in touch with them, through you, or tell them I'd be glad to meet them if they can come to my office. The exam is Saturday, December 7, from 10 to 3 to 6. Unfortunately this is the weekend before exams this year. Thanks for your assistance.

Jonathan Sands, Putnam Committee

#### RECYCLING NEWS

Cardboard:

In addition to newspapers, white paper, and colored paper, the department is now recycling corrugated cardboard. A sign opposite the Coke machine in 16 Colchester Ave. indicates where you can leave boxes and those mailers that textbooks
come in for the custodian to pick up for recycling daily.

Glossy Paper:

Put your magazines and catalogs, etc. in the bin under the table in the mailroom, but don't bring them in from home. This is one of the special times of year when these will be recycled. They will be picked up on October 22.

Junk Mail:

Cut down on waste at the source by reducing the amount of junk mail you get. If you want to remove your name from the mailing list of the 1700 companies of the Direct Mail Marketing Association, just write to DMMA, Mail Preference Service, 6 East 43rd St., NY, NY 10017.

Thanks for being an environmentally-conscious department by conserving paper and recycling. —Jonathan Sands

NEWS FROM PUMP, THE PROGRESSIVE UNDERGRADUATE MATH PROGRAM COMMITTEE

THE NEXT OPEN FORUM will be on Tues. Oct. 8 at 11:00 in the Conference Room at 10 Colchester Ave. The PUMP committee hopes to get to the heart of our ambitions for our majors by describing a possible revision of the requirements for the B.S. in mathematics, and letting the reactions fly. This revision went out of the forums already held on the subjects of requirements and tracks within the major, but also includes the notion of breadth.

FUTURE FORUMS will consider the topics of Advising, Departmental Honors, and Calculus offerings. The PUMP committee will also be actively seeking input from students on these matters, especially via the Student Chapter of the MAA.

A CALCULUS COLOQUIUM SERIES is planned for the purposes of informing us as to what calculus offerings we should be considering. We expect to invite three experts on the teaching of calculus, and have them each give a talk and consult with us. Then we will hold a forum for discussion. This may help us with the selection of a calculus text, too!

The PUMP committee meets regularly at 4:10 on Wednesdays in the Conference Room, and welcomes visitors. We thank those who have already helped us with their comments, suggestions, and involvement.

Jonathan Sands, Chair

SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

The annual Science Symposium at UVM will be held this year on Saturday, November 2 from 10:00 to 3:00. This is a one-day program that features workshops, labs, demos, and a poster session focusing on current topics of research being pursued at UVM. This year, faculty and students from Delaware State College will be visiting UVM for the Symposium, and there will be a Colloquium talk on Friday, November 1 in the Department. See Janet if you would like to take part in the poster session.

MAA STUDENT CHAPTER

The student chapter of the MAA has begun the semester in a brand new setting. The first meeting was held in the new Math Study Room on the third floor of the MCHV building, 2 Colchester Ave. The Study Room was made as a place for math students to go to go and study, meet with other math students, or just to socialize. All of the MAA meetings will be held there as well.

This year MAA is planning a number of events, including speakers about careers and math topics, discussions about changes in the Math Department, and social get-togethers. The main focus of MAA is to provide a way for math students to meet other math students, as well as for faculty and students to get to know each other outside of class. The meetings will also keep students updated on the happenings in the Math Department. Everyone is welcome at the meetings—math majors or those just interested in math. We are looking forward to a great year and will see you in the new study room!

CONGRATULATIONS TO JANET FERGUSON FROM EVERYONE IN THE DEPARTMENT ON BEING PROMOTED TO ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT!

The next issue will be October 25. Keep this in mind when submitting news items for the next issue.

Seminars

The sea is calm tonight,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the strains: —on the French coast,
The light
Gleams, and is gone: the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, in the tranquil bay.
Come to the analysis seminar...

Where: the Math Conference Room.
When: 1:30-2:30, Thursdays (note time change)
Who: Mike Wilson.
What: continuing to lecture from Paul Kohn's book on the logarithmic integral. This week we started into the Mergel/Abkhezer theorem on weighted polynomial approximation.
You'll be glad you came—
—for the world, which seems
to rise before us like a land of dreams,
so various, so beautiful, so new,
with really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor solitude, nor peace, nor help for pain...

Lost & Found

Found: One banner, with the inscription Explore Mathematics.

Chronicles

How I spent my summer and winter vacations
by Roger Cooke

I've spent most of my research time during 1991 working on the history of the uniqueness theory of trigonometric series. The project began during January, a month I spent at the Institut Mittag-Leffler in Djursholm, Sweden at the invitation of the Swedish Academy of Sciences. At the time I hoped to look up everything Mittag-Leffler had by way of correspondences and publications relating to Russian mathematicians and American mathematicians. I discovered, however, that the other participants expected me to sing for my supper. In plain language they expected me to give a seminar. Since the uniqueness of trigonometric series was a familiar...