

MU ALPHA THETA NEWSLETTER

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NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I'm tired of the rain and cold. I know it's Seattle, but it has been rainy even for a Seattle winter. We did have a good weekend for the **Washington State Mu Alpha Theta Contest** though. I hope that everyone's tournament goes as well. These district and statewide contests are great fun, giving teachers the opportunity to meet with colleagues and students the chance to compete and share knowledge with each other. Remember that every one of your competitors at these contests enjoys math and its challenges.

In addition to rewarding excellence in mathematics, Mu Alpha Theta strives to foster interest and enjoyment in the pursuit of mathematics. As members of Mu Alpha Theta, that should be your goal too, in your own chapters and in the community. Consider inviting new students in your school to attend and become members; in addition to competing with local schools, organize joint practice sessions. If you are not already working with the junior high or middle school in your area, volunteer to help out and get them to start a **Chi Alpha Mu** chapter.

Mu Alpha Theta sponsored three, free contests again this year. Your chapter may have participated in our write-in contests, The **Rocket City Math League** and the **Log 1 Contest**. Both are wrapping up and will distribute awards and prizes in April. If you did not participate this year, please give serious consideration to trying them next year. If you did participate, you will be sent a survey that will help us to improve the contests in the future. Please respond to let us know what you liked and didn't like about your experiences.

We had a limited number of entries to our **Math Presentation Contest**. Monetary awards are made to students submitting an electronic math presentation that would be of interest to other Mu Alpha Theta members. You can view some of the winning entries by clicking on the **Contests link** at the left of our website and the top tab to **Math Presentation**. We would love to see more students participating in this contest.

In addition to the **Rubin and Andree Awards** already decided, other annual awards are available. Under the Awards section of the website, you will find information on the **Kalin Award** for an outstanding student attending the national convention; the **Sister Scholastica Award** for a dedicated sponsor attending the convention; and the **Huneke Award** for an outstanding sponsor who serves Mu Alpha Theta. Applications for these awards are due **June 15th**.

Students should also look under the scholarship area on the website for information on our **Summer Grants**.

New for Chapters: The Mu Alpha Theta Governing Council has set aside funds to provide **Chapter Grants** of up to \$1000. These can be used to offset

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT continued...

the cost of your community activities. Whether it is copying costs for tutor/study sessions or awards for a contest; Mu Alpha Theta may have financial help available. See details later in the newsletter.

Our National Convention this year is from July 17 until July 22 in Dallas-Frisco, Texas. Early registration, which will save you \$50 per person, must be postmarked by April 1st. Even if you miss this date, regular registration may be postmarked by May 15th. Please try to register early, as that will make sure we have enough space and test copies available. These conventions are a lot of fun and I have never had a student who had a bad time. If your school has never been to the National Convention, I urge you to think about attending especially if you are in the Dallas area. Mu Alpha Theta still has **Convention Grants** available for new schools to bring a sponsor and three students for free.

Also, Texas Instruments will provide a new TI-Nspire CX CAS handheld calculator with student software to each student on the winning Sweepstakes team and a TI-Nspire CX CAS Teacher Bundle for the coaches of the winning team. We are all excited by this added benefit for the top scoring Mu Alpha Theta team attending this summer.

Next year, we will be electing new members of the Governing Council, specifically Governors from Region 1 and 2 and a President-Elect. We will be looking for nominations in early Fall. The Council determines a variety of policy issues and ways that the chapters and students can be supported. The summer break is a great time to learn about these national positions and to evaluate if you are available to serve. We would like to get a good cross-section of candidates for these positions. If you are interested in serving or need more information, feel free to contact me or your Regional Governor.

Tom Tosch

Mu Alpha Theta President

Thanks to those who have served Mu Alpha Theta:

Retired Sponsors:

- East Lawrence High School, Trinity, AL: Karen Posey
- Jesuit High School, Tampa, FL: Joe Blanco after 42 years
- Desoto Central High School, Southaven, MS: Vaughan Nichols
- Parkside High School, Salisbury, MD: Erin Legg
- Belleville Township East High School, Belleville, IL: Monica Evans, 6 years
- First Colonial High School, Virginia Beach, VA: Chris Hebert
- J. P. Taravella High School, Coral Springs, FL: Mike Gordon
- Laurel High School, Laurel, MS: Linda Ducker
- MS School for Math & Science, Columbus, MS: Bobby Jarrell
- Cape Coral High School, Cape Coral, FL: James Propert and Charlie Pense
- Stone Bridge High School, Ashburn, VA: Kelly Gresh, 5 years
- Little Rock Central High School, Little Rock, AR: Lenora Murray
- Korea International School, Seongnam-si, Gyeonggi-do, Korea: Andrea Osborne
- Dumont High School, Dumont, NJ: Scott Wisniewski
- Bolton High School, Alexandria, LA: Lillian Cutshall
- Parkway Central High School, Chesterfield, MO: Kathy Barohn
- Claremore High School, Claremore, OK: Lynn Steidley

Deceased Sponsors:

- Newman Smith High School, Carrollton, TX: Karen Stone and Eileen Jacobi

2011 Dallas National Convention

We are extremely excited to be the hosts of the 41st annual Mu Alpha Theta National Convention, to be held July 17-22 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Convention Center, and Spa in Frisco, Texas, just outside of Dallas. We invite you to join us!

We will have interesting Chalk Talk topics with a historical connection to Texas. At least one Topic Test is new and the Relay Test shows up again, but with a twist.

There will be a room in the convention center reserved so you can meet and mingle with your friends. Board games, puzzles, scavenger hunts, and other diversions will also be available there to use, if you wish.

In addition, one of Sunday's mixer activities will be offered during free time on some of the following days.

We look forward to seeing y'all in Texas!

Todd Taylor and Bonnie Campbell

If a chapter would like a free copy of the DVD "Hard Problems," please email Kay Weiss and ask.

NATIONAL OFFICE NEWS from Kay Weiss

Welcome to Spring. The National Office is getting busier by the minute. Due to staffing problems this winter, this newsletter is going out very late this year. My apologies. Hopefully sponsors and members have been keeping up with things by reading the homepage on our website.

We have new staff this spring to help meet your needs. Angela Steinle, my new Administrative Assistant, may be answering your emails or calls to the office. She has worked for other non-profit organizations. Angela's undergraduate degree was in Political Science and she is a fluent Spanish speaker. She has technical and design skills and is a trained photographer. Cooper Jones is helping out as a student assistant. Cooper has an undergraduate degree in Business Management and is back studying Petroleum Engineering.

Remember you may enter orders 24/7 using the online order system. The office is usually manned from 10:00 am – 6:30 pm Central time, Monday through Friday, but emails are answered on the weekends, when possible.

A note on postage charges: Mu Alpha Theta keeps a line item in its budget to pay for shipping. You may note that most orders go out without a postage charge to you. Whether you are asking us to ship 1 lb or 50 lbs, we will pay the shipping, having built in a bit to cover our costs. If you need your order tomorrow, we offer overnight shipping for a set rate of \$25 and two-day Fed Ex for \$15. These are set rates to make things easier; they do not necessarily reflect what we pay. Needless to say, at the end of the year, we hope to cover most of our postage and shipping with our budgeted amount and any extra we might pull in from express shipping – if any extra exists. With postage rates always increasing, we just ask that chapters try to reduce making too many small orders. **If you make three orders for \$25 or under in the same year, we are going to ask for a \$15 Service Fee on your next order.** This goes into the postage budget to help defray the added costs for servicing your school. We accept that one or two students ALWAYS walk into your office a week after you placed your membership order for the semester, and we also hate to see them turned away. The Service Fee will just help us to keep our prices down. I would much rather spend our non-profit money on another scholarship or grant than on postage.

Please read about our new Chapter Grants now available! We are hoping to help support chapters so they can provide interesting mathematical experiences for their members and others at their school and in their local community. I hope to have the application up online soon. **The grant is up to a \$1000 per school.** You don't have to request \$1000 to ask for funding. You can reapply in future years for the balance of funds, if the grants are renewed after 2011. The grant will reimburse expenses not covered by other funding. If you charge for an event and ask us for funds for that event, our funding must be for expenses not covered by the money you collected. If you are running a new event, we can help pay for it! If you have run an event for years and reduce the price to participants, we will cover the extra costs you incur. This allows you to offer the event for a lower charge.

Want to do something special with your members? Want that well-known speaker to come to present a talk for your Initiation Ceremony? We will provide funds for this also. Have an idea you want us to help fund? Ask and we can see if we can provide funding!

Remember we have \$20,000 this year budgeted for the grants so you might want to email the National Office to make sure funding is still available before submitting a grant application.

New One-Day National Convention Opportunity – Ever wondered what it is like to attend the National Convention in July? For the first time, we will allow schools to attend for one day, so they can see what the convention is all about. This year the **one-day rate is \$90 per person to attend on Monday, July 18, 2011.** This rate is intended for local schools that do not need to stay at the hotel overnight and will include breakfast, lunch and dinner buffets. You will need to arrive on Monday at the hotel for breakfast between 6:30 – 8 am and plan to stay through 10:30 pm.

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NATIONAL OFFICE NEWS continued...

Students will be eligible to compete in all individual competitions that day and win trophies. They will not be able to compete in Chalk Talk or Quizle but will be invited to return for free on Tuesday night for the award ceremony. (Monday's itinerary is available online under the National Convention's website link and also includes our Speaker Sessions and Scrapbook viewing.) The rate does not include rooms at the hotel overnight. The offer is also contingent on space being available in the testing hall to accommodate students. If we are maxed out with regular participants, we will not be able to offer the one-day pass. Those wishing to attend for the one-day rate should register their school online by May 15. Enter adults and students who will attend and what tests the students wish to take. Email your intention to me at matheta@ou.edu.

We will know on June 7 or before how many regular participants we have and whether or not room is available for your students. At that time, we will request a check for payment to be sent and we will order your meals. **There is no cost for the teacher or chaperone attending with students, one for each 15 in attendance.** Adults, however, may be asked to proctor exams, if their help is needed. The Governing Council hopes that Texas schools near Dallas will take advantage of this opportunity to attend!

We are always open to ideas, comments, and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at any time. **We need each school to read the amended wording for our National Constitution and submit a vote by email either for or opposed to the new wording.** If you are interested in running for a National office, please contact me so I can explain your duties and the financial incentives for participating on the Governing Council. I hope to hear from many of you over the coming months!

National Convention Grants

Mu Alpha Theta will award five \$2800 Convention Grants to the 2011 Dallas Convention. Each Grant will cover free registration for a sponsor and three students, who must not have graduated before the convention. The remaining funds may be used for additional student registration costs or to reimbursed travel expenses. To be eligible for a Grant, a Mu Alpha Theta chapter cannot have attended a National Convention in the past five years. No chapter that has previously been awarded a Grant may apply. The intent of the grant is to allow the teacher and students to see what our National Convention is all about. Only schools who have a math sponsor and three eligible students should apply.

To apply for a Grant, complete the Application, which consists of the names of the applicants and two paragraphs about the activities your Chapter has participated in during the past year. We also ask how attending the National Mu Alpha Theta Convention will benefit your Chapter. Email the application to matheta@ou.edu or snail mail to:

*Mu Alpha Theta
National Convention Grant
University of Oklahoma
601 Elm Ave, Room 1102
Norman, OK 73019-3103*

Schools selected will be contacted before the end of April by phone and email. The only responsibility of the winners is to fill out a survey after the Convention regarding their experiences. Applying schools should be ready to submit enrollment information should they be selected. Winners of the grants are encouraged to bring more than three students. Additional attendees will be granted the early bird registration rate, as long as full payment for them is received by the May 15 deadline. So, get your application in soon!

Congratulations to our Award Winners!

- 2011 High School *Andree Award* presented to **Rebekah Rose**, Lake Highlands High School in Dallas, TX
- 2011 College *Andree Award* presented to **Shelby Robinson**, University of Arkansas
Former member at Cabot High School in Cabot, AR
- 2011 *Rubin Award* presented to **Thomas Jefferson High School**, Auburn, WA.

Math Presentation Contest:

- **Rio LaVigne**, Stanton College Preparatory School: "Elliptic Curve Point Addition" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmygBPb7DPM> \$1000 1st Place Prize
- **GaYoung Park**, Seoul International School: "Packaging Efficiency: Significance and Calculation of Maximum Volume of a Rectangular Box" \$600 2nd Place Prize
- **Salome Iremashvili, Archil Omanadze, and Irakli Saralidze**, Georgian-American High School: "New Solution Of Fibonacci's Problem" \$150 3rd Place Prize
- **Erik Weingarten**, University School of Nova Southeastern University: "Graphical Representation of Multinomial Expansion" \$100 4th Place Prize <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33fqENzJHKK>

Actuarial Foundation Awards 2 Scholarships in the Project Math Minds Competition:

- **Pushkar Aggarwal**, Poolesville High School, Poolesville, MD has won a \$5000 scholarship
- **Alex Sher**, John F. Kennedy High School, Bellmore, NY has won a \$4000 scholarship

EARLIER 2012 CONVENTION DATES!

National Convention 2012 will be held in Boston, MA from **JULY 8 - JULY 13**, housed at the Historic Boston Park Plaza Hotel - right off Boston Commons. Please note the earlier date of the convention. Deposits will be due by **March 15, rather than April 1**. Final payment will be due by **May 1, 2012**.

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SPONSORS

The Mathematical Association of America, MAA, has an **introductory membership rate of only \$49** for high school and middle school mathematics teachers. With the membership come copies of MAA FOCUS and the Math Horizons magazine, automatic membership in regional sections, employment services, professional development opportunities, and discounts on books and national meetings. The annual MathFest will be in Lexington, KY from Aug. 4 – 6, 2011 and includes numerous sessions applicable to secondary school teachers. After the first year of membership, the rate for continued membership is \$69 a year.

Planning to run a middle school math competition?

The American Mathematics Competitions, AMC, has provided us 30 copies of a CD including all Junior High/Middle School contests, from the first AJHSME in 1985 through the name change in 2000 to AMC 8, up to 2007. Also included are all of the class worksheets developed for 1999-2007. The disc can be used as a source for exam and study questions. It will be provided free by request to matheta@ou.edu. This is a \$20 value.

Need activities for your meetings?

This year's Log 1 Contest, RCML, and the Math Presentation Contest are just about complete. Your school can participate in these mathematics competitions right at your school. Make sure to watch for details about next year's contests so your students can participate! All are free to Mu Alpha Theta active chapters and prizes include certificates, plaques, trophies, cash awards, copies of Mathematica and TI graphing calculators.

Thank you for all you do and for helping us to serve you better!!

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE!

Please vote on the following amendment to our National Constitution. The new wording is an attempt to clarify the term limits of those serving on our Governing Council. ***Each active chapter gets one vote. Please email your vote to Kay Weiss at matheta@ou.edu by April 30, 2011.***

New wording will be:

Nominations are subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) No one shall serve more than one term as President.
- (2) No limit shall be placed on the number of terms of the Secretary-Treasurer who resides at the institution where the National Office of Mu Alpha Theta is located.
- (3) No elected council member, other than the Secretary-Treasurer, may serve more than eight consecutive years.
- (4) A sponsoring organization shall determine the term of its representative.

Old wording was:

- (1) The President shall serve no more than one term.
- (2) A Council member shall not serve more than two consecutive terms with the following exceptions:
 - a) A Council member who has served no more than one term in a position other than the Presidency can be elected to the Presidency. In this case he/she would serve eight years on the Council.
 - b) No limit shall be placed on the number of terms of the Secretary-Treasurer residing at the institution at which the National Office of Mu Alpha Theta is located.
 - c) Sponsoring organizations shall determine the term of its representative.

New Chapter Grants

The Governing Council of Mu Alpha Theta has voted to set aside \$20,000 in the 2011 budget to provide Chapter Grants. A grant will provide up to \$1000 to reimburse expenses. No chapter will be granted more than \$1000 over time, should the grant program be continued in future years, but a chapter may apply more than once, if they have not reached their \$1000 limit. Grants will be competitive and not all grant requests may be funded.

Grant funds may be used to support events that stimulate an interest in mathematics. A chapter might use funds to pay a speaker's honorarium to bring someone special to the school. Funds may be used by a chapter hosting a competition to purchase awards, pay for testing, food, etc. If the event is put on as a fund-raiser, however, the money will only be granted to offset a loss or to reduce participant costs. (Documentation of prior and current year charges would be required to show the decrease in expense to participants.) If this is your first year to host an event, we will provide support, should you have expenses not covered by other sources.

Funds may be used to support a club activity for its members where extra funding might be needed. The chapter would submit expected costs when requesting funding and submit receipts for the reimbursement. Grant money is not intended for use to send students to State, Regional, or National math competitions. Funds will be provided for other purposes, not mentioned here, depending on the rationale for requested funds. Applications will soon be available online. See Awards > Chapter Grants on the top tab. The link will also be available from Teacher Resources.

Need a fundraising idea?

"We hold a craft bazaar every November to raise money for our chapter of Mu Alpha Theta. We ask for donations from local businesses to raffle off and make and sell food as well."

Mrs. Lindsay Kay Gryzic
Hickory Ridge High School
Harrisburg, NC

NEWS FROM A CHAPTER

Marvin Q. Jones, Jr., sponsor of the James B. Dudley High School chapter in Greensboro, NC, wrote to tell us about some of their activities. These include: Black History Month Mathematics & Science Facts, Operation Stars & Soap (sending care packages to troops in Iraq), Operation Math Literacy, and Math Awareness Month (April 2011). They even did "The Human Race" on March 26, a race to promote education awareness, to buy books, and to provide donations to charitable organizations.

The American Regions Math League (ARML) Goes Local!

ARML Local is a contest held every spring at high schools. These schools host one or more teams of six students from each participating school. The contest format is similar to the national ARML competition, with short-answer Team, Theme, Individual, and Relay Rounds. Local contests will run on the same weekend and results will be aggregated nationwide so teams can see how they compare to schools in other regions. The 2011 contest will be held on **Saturday, April 9th**. If you wish to host the contest at your school, you must contact Paul Dreyer at ARML.Local@gmail.com by **April 2nd**. The cost is \$30 per team, with the first team free if your school is hosting teams from other schools.

GOVERNING COUNCIL DECISIONS FROM THE JAN 2011 MEETING:

- Approved an increase in the number of Mu Alpha Theta Scholarships. Up to nineteen \$4000 scholarships and one \$5000 Mary Rhein Memorial Scholarship are now available.
- Approved \$20,000 for the new Chapter Grants and \$20,000 for Summer Math/Research Grants for Full members.
- Approved funds to support up to five \$2800 Convention Grants for new schools to attend the National Convention.
- Approved \$780 for a transportation supplement to bring a Study Buddy award winning school to the National Convention. Study Buddy will provide a \$2500 Convention Grant using Motorola Foundation Grant funds.
- Approved the addition of a one-day rate of \$90 per person on Monday, July 18 for local schools to attend the National Convention, on a first-come, first-serve basis if space is available.

STUDENTS

FROM YOUR STUDENT DELEGATE PRESIDENT...

Hello All,

Now that Mu Alpha Theta regular competition season is winding down, it is finally starting to dawn on me that my experience as a Mu Alpha Theta competitor is sadly coming to a close. Over the course of the past four years, I have fallen in love with the organization as a whole, as it has changed my high school experience dramatically.

Starting my Theta year, Mu Alpha Theta introduced me to the beauty of mathematics and inspired me to pursue mathematics with fervor. My experience as a competitor has ultimately kept me passionate about Mu Alpha Theta, as I have found endless joy in attending competitions and meeting wonderful people, along with the excitement that comes with competing in a highly stimulating environment.

The highlight of my summer every year is the National Convention, which provides the most memorable week of pure bliss. I have been blessed with the opportunity to unite with friends from all over the nation and around the globe. The combination of motivating tests and the chance to socialize with amazing individuals, who share my love for mathematics, is something that I would never trade for anything. With that said, I encourage you all to attend the National Convention. Whether math is your passion in life or whether math is simply your hobby, the exhilarating week-long convention is one that you do not want to miss and will most definitely shower you with many lasting memories. While I shall greatly miss my time as a competitor, I highly anticipate this year's convention in Dallas, Texas and I look forward to meeting you then.

As always, if you have any comments or questions concerning Mu Alpha Theta or the National Convention, please email me at hansol_kang@yahoo.com.

- Hansol Kang

Nominate your sponsor for the Huneke and Sister Scholastica Awards!
Applications are due June 15 and available online.

Study Buddy Convention Grant

Mu Alpha Theta, in partnership with the National Science and Technology Education Partnership, offers members the opportunity to do online, peer-to-peer tutoring through the Study Buddy program. This homework assistance program utilizes the latest interactive, collaborative technology to bring students from different locations across the country together for online tutoring sessions. This year Study Buddy is serving Teach for America schools and is still in need of tutors. You can select the time and days you wish to tutor. Study Buddy will notify your sponsor of the hours you have served so you may receive community service credit.

This year Study Buddy will provide a Convention Grant to a school that provides outstanding tutors. The winning school will be selected by April 15 based on the number of hours tutored and the quality of the tutoring sessions. The Grant will provide the winning school free registration for four people and up to \$250 each in reimbursed transportation costs. The grant can be used to bring four students with the teacher paying their own way or three students and the teacher to the Dallas Convention.

Cambridge College Programme Scholarships

Two Mu Alpha Theta Full members will be awarded a scholarship to attend the College Cambridge Programme, CCP, for the summer of 2011 to study for three weeks at Cambridge University in England, July 21st - August 10th. Students must apply by early **April 2011**. Students must submit the application and must write a one page essay explaining why you are deserving of this educational opportunity. The application fee of \$200 is waived for all Mu Alpha Theta members applying. If you do not win the scholarship, but still decide to attend, you will receive a \$500 tuition reduction, no fees for the afternoon programs, and an additional \$500 off of the Paris extension trip. The Cambridge Programme director will choose the scholarship winners at her discretion from applications and essays sent directly to her.