

News Briefs

Bouquets

Mathematics prize exams are a "rewarding" means of measuring student achievement in mathematics. The exams measure the students' mastery of various mathematical concepts, and results are compared nationally. In three such contests this school year, the following results were recorded:

1. **Pascal Contest (Grade 9).** Only three Alberta junior high schools, all from the Calgary Board of Education, reached the Canadian Team Honour Roll, a roll that includes the top fifty schools in Canada: Simon Fraser Junior High, Branton Junior High, and Sir John A. Macdonald Junior High. In Alberta, seven of the top 12 schools, out of a total of 21 Alberta schools, were from the Calgary Board of Education.
2. **Cayley Contest (Grade 10).** Western Canada High School was the top Alberta school and also reached the Canadian Team Honour Roll. Three of the top 15 schools on the Team Honour Roll for Alberta were Western Canada High School, Sir Winston Churchill High School, and Lord Beaverbrook High School.
3. **Fermat Contest (Grade 11).** Lord Beaverbrook High School was the top Alberta school on the Canadian Team Honour Roll. Two additional Calgary Board of Education schools, Sir Winston Churchill High School and Western Canada High School, also reached the Canadian Team Honour Roll of 50 schools. These three schools were in the top four schools on the Alberta Team Honour Roll.

--George Ditto,
Mathematics Supervisor, Calgary Board of Education

Computer Tech Clearinghouse

- The MECC licence is being continued, and new MECC catalogs are available from superintendents and principals. Additional copies are available from ACCESS for \$5.
- Dubs of new authorized mathematics courseware videotape demos are available from ACCESS Alberta, Media Resource Centre, 295 Midpark Way SE, Calgary T2X 2A8 (phone 256-1100). This series of demos is intended to supplement the formal Clearinghouse evaluations. Each tape explains its purpose and organization, summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the materials, and provides a "walk through" and excerpts, and purchase and warranty information. Call for information.
- If you wish to be on the Clearinghouse mailing list to receive reports, evaluations, and information, contact David Wighton, Clearinghouse Manager, Computer Tech Project, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton T5K 0L2. The next report will be available in the fall of 1984 and will include results of the assessments of software in math, science, business education, special education, word processing, accounting, computer literacy, and library skills. More than 60 titles are to be listed.

Teacher Inservice Grants

The Government of Alberta has announced it will allocate funds to augment teacher inservice effective 1984 09 01. Upon application, local school boards will receive grants of \$9 per pupil in Grades 1 to 12 and \$5.40 per ECS pupil. Its policy is to "provide support for teacher inservice which contributes to higher quality education for students by improving teacher performance."

According to the plan, "teacher inservice is intended to raise the level of professional performance." The responsibility for implementation will be shared by schools, school boards, the teaching profession (ATA), including individual members, and Alberta Education. Funds to carry out the current level of teacher inservice provided by school jurisdictions are expected to remain constant. The additional funds are to be used to implement new inservice programs.

Government guidelines for implementation of teacher inservice under the plan include the following:

1. From time to time, Alberta Education may suggest teacher inservice needs which should be addressed by local school jurisdictions.
2. Inservice activities associated with locally developed programs (except for ECS) are not eligible for provincial support and shall remain the responsibility of the local school jurisdiction.
3. The activities and expenditures that do not qualify for provincial support are:
 - a) sabbaticals;
 - b) attendance by individual teachers at conferences;
 - c) university credit courses; and
 - d) administrative salaries.
4. Alberta Education will provide a grant on the basis of pupils eligible for SFPP support.
5. In planning an inservice program/activity, local authorities should:
 - a) involve teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating;
 - b) focus on competencies that go beyond preservice;
 - c) emphasize classroom practice and solutions for teacher-identified problems; and
 - d) consider consortium-type project organization.

The Association heartily approves of the Government's inclusion of teachers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation process. This is a golden opportunity for local teachers to identify and assess their own needs and to work with local jurisdictions in achieving improved teaching performance.

Included in the Government's procedures are suggested priorities for 1984/85: computer literacy, gifted and talented, and evaluation. Prior to January 1 each year, Alberta Education is expected to identify its teacher inservice priorities for the coming year.

School boards will be required to develop and maintain on file their education plans. These plans should outline their policies, guidelines, procedures, and intended results, and the way these results will be achieved. The Association hopes that teachers are involved in this process and urges them to provide input into the design of local plans. The Association recognizes that inservice needs are best assessed by the teachers involved in the inservice activity.

Influential Mathematician Honored

Professor John G. Kemeny, Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and President Emeritus at Dartmouth College, received the honorary Doctor of Laws degree and addressed the Convocation of Founders College, York University, on June 21, 1984.

Professor Kemeny was born in Hungary and received his doctorate from Princeton University where he worked as research assistant to Albert Einstein. He was Professor of Mathematics at Dartmouth College from 1953 to 1970 and also served as Coordinator of Educational Plans and Development and as Chairman of Mathematics. He was President of Dartmouth from 1970 to 1981.

Professor Kemeny has served on a number of committees and boards including the National Committee on Libraries and Information Science, the President's Committee on the Accident at Three Mile Island, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

He has lectured throughout the world and has written books on topics ranging from computer programming to business applications of finite mathematics to the philosophy of science. Titles include *Man and the Computer*, *Introduction to Finite Mathematics*, and *Random Essays on Mathematics, Education, and Computers*.

Math Groaner

by Mary-Jo Maas

How many sugar cubes must be placed into each of three teacups so that each cup has an odd number in it? There are 100 sugar cubes, and you must use all the cubes. Teacups cannot be stacked one inside another. Answer: Place one cube in the first, one in the second, and all the rest in the third. Ninety-eight is definitely an **odd** number of sugar cubes to put into a teacup!