



Mathematics Council NEWSLETTER

The Alberta Teachers' Association

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Providing leadership to encourage the continuing enhancement of teaching, learning and understanding mathematics.

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From the Editor

It's going to be a great time! What is? The 1999 MCATA Conference. Plans are already underway for the MCATA conference of the century. The conference will be held Friday and Saturday, October 22-23, 1999, at the beautiful Jasper Park Lodge. Not only will the conference be a professional inspiration, it will also provide the opportunity for a super family weekend.

Special room rates will be in place from Wednesday until Saturday night in order to make the occasion more affordable.

We encourage all MCATA members and their professional colleagues to get behind this conference, to promote and attend it, in order to make it an outstanding success. If you have ideas for the professional program or for activities, please let any of the members of the executive know. If you would like to become directly involved in some way, that would be better yet. For more information, contact Klaus Puhlmann by phone at 723-4471, fax 723-2412 or e-mail at klpuhl@gyrd.ab.ca.

—Art Jorgenson

Mathematics Educator Awards 1997

The executive of the Mathematics Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association (MCATA) is pleased to present a maximum of three mathematics educator awards annually in recognition of demonstrated leadership in mathematics education in Alberta. The awards were presented to the recipients at the MCATA Annual Conference in Edmonton on November 1, 1997. The award winners were Lynwen Hart, Grade 6 teacher at Capitol Hill School in Calgary, for the K-Grade 6 category; Donna Chanasyk, mathematics department head, Paul Kane High School in St. Albert, for the Grades 7-12 category; and Dr. Klaus Puhlmann, superintendent, Grande Yellowhead School Division #35, Edson, for the nonclassroom category.

MCATA is extremely proud to announce the winners and to offer appropriate recognition for the work of these three committed individuals who demonstrate exemplary mathematics education in their respective careers.

—George Ditto

Resource Kit Available

“Attaining Excellence: A TIMSS Resource Kit” contains reports on Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) findings, videotapes of classroom teaching, guides for using TIMSS information in discussions and more. Printed materials from the kit are available on the Net at <http://www.ed.gov/NCES/timss>. The complete kit (\$94 each, stock #668NB3) can be purchased through NCTM. Call 1-800-235-7566 or e-mail orders@nctm.org. NCTM individual members receive a 20 percent discount.

Professional Development

On September 22, 1997, the Edmonton Regional Professional Development Consortium (ERC) announced a plan to provide credit courses for teachers in the area of technology integration. The plan consists of three phases based upon the concept document, “Educational Technology in Alberta,” which is available from the ERC.

For more information, contact Pat Redhead, project manager, Edmonton Regional Consortium, 748 Education South, U of A, Edmonton, T6G 2G5; phone 429-8313, fax 425-0625 or e-mail predhead@cpsb.edmonton.ab.ca.

U of A Virtual Resource Centre for Mathematics

The University of Alberta Mathematics Department is in the process of setting up a virtual resource centre for mathematics (VRCM) on the Internet to be used by both teachers and students of mathematics (www.ualberta.ca/dept/math/gauss/vrcm).

We would appreciate MCATA members looking over this site and sending us their comments. Please include any input as to what you, or others, think should be included on a site of this nature.

—July Peschke
VRCM Site Coordinator
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A New Teacher Reflects on Teaching Math

I graduated from the University of Lethbridge in December 1996 with the combined degrees of dramatic arts and education. The time after graduation is one of anxiety and fear. It was time to put those five years of postsecondary education to work. It was time to engage in the hunt. I was a very lucky graduate. It was only a few weeks before I was substitute teaching, and by June I had signed a contract to teach drama at Innisfail Junior-Senior High School. The chances of graduating and teaching in one's field are so rare that I was extremely thankful.

Of course, it wouldn't be that easy; I would also be teaching Math 8. I was really looking forward to the challenge of a math classroom. However, as exciting as it was, I was also very nervous. This would be a whole new curriculum, new instructional strategies and new routines. I didn't even know where to start.

The most important thing that I have learned so far is that when you have questions, go to those who know. It is so much easier to just ask for advice than worry yourself sick. The other math teachers at my school have offered not only their advice but also their resources. They have each reminded me that no question is a stupid question, even if you are the teacher.

It has now been two weeks since school began and so far so good. I still have many questions and as I reflect on each lesson, I know how I would do it differently the next time. The beauty of teaching something new is that you constantly question yourself and you get to learn something new about teaching everyday. I look forward to seeing how the rest of the year progresses.

—Jacqui Swain

10th Semi-Annual Math Leadership Symposium

The 10th Semi-Annual Math Leadership Symposium was held on October 31 at the Edmonton Inn. Over 100 superintendents, curriculum supervisors, consultants, school administrators,

publishers and teachers attended informational sessions and workshops throughout the day. Consultants from Alberta Education shared information regarding new program implementation, Alberta Education initiatives and evaluations. Florence Glanfield, MCATA president, opened the day with words of welcome and encouragement to learn and share. Dennis Belyk from Alberta Education, Curriculum Standards Branch, spoke on the upcoming implementation of senior high mathematics, specifically the Applied Program. Kay Melville, from the Student Evaluation Branch, provided good information about the Achievement Exams for Grades 3, 6 and 9. Doug Nichols, Assistant Superintendent of Black Gold Regional Division #18, gave participants an overview of how his district is implementing a plan for professional development to help teachers understand and work with the new Program of Studies and supporting resources. Following these plenary sessions, participants spent the day attending various workshops on technology, combined grades, differentiating instruction, the ESL learner and the implications for teaching and learning mathematics.

These symposia, held in partnership with MCATA and Alberta Education, have been an important adjunct of MCATA's annual fall math conference. A second symposium is held in late spring as well. Those who are able to attend the Math Leadership Symposium will not only take back information, ideas and suggestions regarding the teaching and learning of mathematics, but they will also have an opportunity to share ideas and successful practices for their own district.

Please join us at the spring symposium in Red Deer. Watch for information regarding the spring '98 symposium in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

—Betty Morris

Education Week— Math at the Mall!

Our Lady of Victories School in Edmonton decided to go one step further than the school door and took its education week project to the mall.

Students at the school spent weeks preparing "what they know in math," by exploring, investigating, creating and extending various aspects

of the Math Program of Studies. All classes planned and created activities and problems that reflected their learning. The teachers and students worked hard and had fun creating these activities. Andy Liu, a professor of mathematics from the University of Alberta, was on hand to help out.

On November 12, students participated in the activities throughout the day then took these activities to the neighborhood mall, Meadowlark Shopping Centre. For two hours in the evening, parents and shoppers went from table to table trying out probability experiments, estimation activities, measurement activities, logic problems and number patterns. Students from ECS–Grade 6 were on hand to assist those who needed some mathematical support and encouragement. Parents and shoppers were astounded at the knowledge and expertise these students showed, as well as their friendly and enthusiastic manner. (Students were so excited when they could stump an adult!)

The events leading up to the Math at the Mall and the evening itself were a great success. Congratulations to the students and teachers of Our Lady of Victories School for a job well done.

Why don't you try this idea in your community?

—Betty Morris

MCATA Profiled

The Edmonton Public Teachers Local hosted a "Specialist Council Market Place" during the later part of September. All new Edmonton Public teachers receive a complimentary one-year membership in the specialist council of their choice. Rick Johnson, Sandra Carl Townsend and Marge Marika represented MCATA at the Specialist Council Market Place. How about trying this idea in other areas?

Alberta Education Technology Outcomes Framework

Teachers involved with teaching students mathematics are encouraged to check for documents related to this topic in their school. They should become familiar with this document. Check the MCATA Web site for items of particular interest: <http://www.edu.uleth.ca./mcata/mcata.html>.

Friends of MCATA

During the 1996–97 school year, the MCATA executive wanted, in some way, to recognize those individuals who have given MCATA faithful and dedicated service in a variety of ways throughout many years and to say “thank you.” We know that there are many different ways that an individual contributes to the success of an organization—through their kind and generous sharing of time, efforts and expertise.

A Friend of MCATA receives a certificate, a “Friend of MCATA” pin and acknowledgment of their involvement with the Council in the program of the annual conference, the newsletter and on the MCATA Web site.

1997 Friends of MCATA—Congratulations to the following members:

Linda Brost, Calgary	Pat Cavanaugh, Red Deer	Leo Chauvet, Red Deer
Archie Coderre, Red Deer	Carol Davis, Red Deer	Judy Dobson, Red Deer
Doug Girvan, Red Deer	Monique Gratix, Ponoka	Ellen Hilton, Red Deer
Bill Hoppins, Edmonton	Karen Kenny, Red Deer	Graham Keogh, Red Deer
Pat Maschio, Red Deer	Bruce Kabaroff, Edmonton	Allan Quinn, Red Deer
Jim Schlachter, Red Deer	Henry Taschuk, Edmonton	Colleen Williamson, Red Deer
Bob Mitchell, Edmonton	James Versteegden, Red Deer	Cindy Meagher, Grande Prairie
Wendy Richards, Edmonton		

If you know of colleagues who should be considered for this award in 1998, please let Florence Glanfield know!

Upcoming Conferences



Plan to attend the NCTM 1998 annual conference to be held in Washington, D.C., April 2–4. (Washington is a beautiful city in April!)



The Canadian Regional MCATA/NCTM Conference will be held in Calgary, October 23–24, 1998. The theme is “Mathematics Education: Living the Challenge” and the keynote speaker is Sue Ditchburn.

Conference Cochairs:

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1997 Annual Conference

First of all, congratulations to the organizers of the annual conference which attracted about 300 mathematics educators from around Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan. The conference was abuzz with talk about Teaching, Learning and Doing Mathematics. Thanks again to all of the hard work of the organizers: Marge Marika (conference chair), Rick Johnson and Sandra Carl Townsend (program cochairs), and Daryl and Pat Chichak (registration cochairs). I also know that Ed Rossol helped during the conference time, but I’m not sure what his “job title” was. As for the conference speakers—did you know that conference speakers volunteer their time to speak at our conference? It really is exciting to know that so many talented individuals are willing to share their expertise and what they have come to know about teaching and learning mathematics.

We would like to thank all those teachers who looked over the books, picked up a catalogue or made a purchase. The winner of our draw, Lissa Howes, will enjoy a free NCTM membership for one year.