



Newsletter of
the Virginia
Mathematical
Association
of Two Year
Colleges

VMATYC Visions

February 2007

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

We are already one twelfth of the way through 2007, but I still want to wish you a happy year-it just may not be as new as it was 31 days ago!!! We had some wonderful opportunities this fall with the regional meetings offering some very interesting and helpful programs. And as always, offering the chance to interact with colleagues, one of the most valuable outcomes often mentioned on conference evaluations. Many thanks to the regional VP's for arranging these and to members who volunteered to be on the programs. There are a number of interesting things on the agenda for VMATYC this spring and I hope you will be a part of it all.

How high has your hand been raised recently for volunteering?? I hope very high as this organization is ALL volunteer!!! The call for presenters for the annual VMATYC conference and VCCS peer group meeting for math and computer science has been out for a couple of months, with a new reminder even in this newsletter. Have you volunteered to share your ideas yet? You definitely want to get your registration in early to reserve a place at the conference. The nominations committee has been seeking names for the upcoming VMATYC Executive board elections. I hope to see your name on the ballot. Information about the Glenn Fox Scholarship will be shared later this spring. I certainly hope you will encourage all of your students who meet the criteria to apply-and you will volunteer to be their VMATYC sponsor.

For myself, one of my several New Year's resolutions (besides trying to make less of myself!) is to look for the positive. I often tell my students that a positive number means you are moving to the right-and if you are moving in the right direction, you must be positive!! If you have a small classroom and wish for larger-be glad for the opportunity for more individual attention to each student's need as you have fewer of them. If you have large classes and a lot of students, be glad there are so many who are interested in furthering their education. If you desire to have newer technology, be glad we are in a country that even has technology available in the classroom. Many countries are desperately needing our old textbooks just to

offer some type of education. But one of the greatest positives to me occurs on the day when everything seem to be going wrong and I see the smile on a student's face when they say or think, "Now I understand!" Then I know it is all worth it.

I hope you are having a lot of positives, and if you are having negatives, then just multiply them by a lot more negatives and you will have positives after all. :

--Linda Taylor, President

Welcome to VMATYC

I would like to extend a sincere welcome to all the new members who have recently joined VMATYC and welcome back to all who have recently renewed memberships. VMATYC memberships run from September through August. Those who joined or renewed this fall should have received a membership card from me with your membership expiration date. If you have not received your card or are not sure when your membership expires, you can e-mail me at wcflems@wcc.vccs.edu.

One of the great benefits of membership in VMATYC is the collegial relationships one develops over the years. We currently have 152 members. I look forward to seeing each of you at TNCC for our spring conference in April. Please encourage your colleagues who have not joined to do so and to also join us at the spring conference.

Susan Fleming, membership secretary

**The VMATYC Conference is in April.
Detailed Conference information is on page 2.
Registration forms available on the web site.**

The upcoming Spring VMATYC Conference

What Begins on Friday, the Thirteenth? "Math: What's the Problem?"

On April 13 - 14, our annual spring conference will be held at Thomas Nelson Community College, with a Friday night banquet and speaker at the Omni Newport News Hotel. The conference theme is Math: What's the Problem? We are still receiving applications for presentations, and registration materials are posted on the VMATYC web site, www.virginia.matyc.org. Regular registration (\$30 for members) must be postmarked by March 4th. Late registration and on-site registration is \$40 (for members).

Registration and social time (with refreshments) will begin at noon on Friday, April 13, adjacent to TNCC at the Peninsula Workforce Development Center (PWDC), 600 Butler Farm Road, Hampton, VA 23666. Concurrent sessions will be held from 2:00 p.m. until 5:10 p.m., followed by the banquet at the Omni Newport News Hotel at 6:30 p.m. Dr. John Adam, Professor of Mathematics at Old Dominion University, will speak on the topic, "Mathematical Patterns in Nature." He describes his talk as "informal, pictorial and hopefully informative and entertaining." Dr. Adam received his Ph.D. from University College, London, and is the author of A Survey of Models for Tumor/Immune System Dynamics and Mathematics in Nature: Modeling Patterns in the Natural World.

On Saturday morning, breakfast will be provided at the Peninsula Workforce Development Center beginning at 7:30, followed by the VMATYC business meeting at 8:00 a.m. After concurrent sessions from 9:50 until 1:00 p.m., the conference will conclude with an optional boxed lunch (\$8) and special door prizes. On the registration form you will be offered several lunch choices: "the Gauss" (roast beef), "the Fermat" (ham), "the Pascal" (turkey), and "the Euclid" (veggie). You may choose to eat lunch with colleagues at the college or take it with you to enjoy on your trip home. For those who would like to extend their stay in the Hampton area, a list of attractions and current events will be provided.

The conference hotel is the Omni Newport News Hotel, which is a beautiful facility located near Interstate 64. When calling the hotel to make your reservation (757-591-3515 or 757-873-6664), state that you are with the VMATYC Conference and also state the name of your college. The conference rate of \$88 (excluding tax) is guaranteed only through Tuesday, March 13. Since this date falls during or shortly after many of your spring breaks, be sure to make your reservation before spring break!

The VMATYC Conference will again serve as the Mathematics and Computer Science Peer Group Meeting, which is a professional development initiative of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). The VCCS reimburses VMATYC for a portion of the conference expenses for VCCS faculty only. (If you are not sure whether your college is one of the twenty-three colleges in the system, please see the list of VCCS Colleges at <http://www.vccs.edu/colleges/vccswebs.htm>.) For example, the VCCS pays half of the room cost, plus tax, for Friday night for VCCS faculty, full-time and adjunct. If you are a VCCS faculty member rooming with another VCCS faculty member, the whole cost of the room will be paid, provided you BOTH complete the paperwork to formally check into the room. If you are traveling at least 200 miles to the conference and wish to arrive on Thursday evening, half of your room on Thursday night will also be covered. Unfortunately, VMATYC does not have funds to offer this benefit to our members who are not VCCS faculty. This doesn't mean we love you any less; we just don't get reimbursed for you. And being the meticulous mathematical types that we are, we check our lists very carefully before submitting our paperwork for reimbursement. When you arrive at the registration table, you will be asked to sign in on either the "VCCS sheet" or the "non-VCCS sheet." We apologize for any confusion this may cause, but the benefits of our partnership with the VCCS are very valuable to all conference participants.

Many thanks to the wonderful planning committee at Thomas Nelson headed by Cathy Hoffmaster.

I look forward to seeing you in April!

Sarah Martin
President-Elect



bibs for ribs - and were they good
AMATYC 2006

AMATYC Conferences - Past and Future

AMATYC 2006 CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

-----Linda Taylor, VMATYC President

I attended the AMATYC Conference in Cincinnati, OH in November wearing three hats-representing VMATYC as the affiliate president, representing VMATYC as a voting delegate, and as a mathematics instructor interested in professional development. Let me share with you some of the highlights for me in each of these areas.

Affiliate president: It is the pleasure of the affiliate president to attend a luncheon hosted by AMATYC just for affiliate presidents. It is a wonderful opportunity to share/obtain ideas of what works or doesn't work with other affiliates and to meet some of those from our neighboring states. I felt like I gained much from the experience and expertise of others who are serving in the same current capacity as I. One idea was to share information and extend invitations to affiliate conferences with the neighboring affiliates. I think this would be an excellent opportunity to meet new people and hear ideas from other areas without the extended travel and expense that often is involved with attending a national conference. It was also suggested that every five years neighboring affiliates combine the efforts for one conference in order for others to share in this experience and to have a larger, more diverse, conference and presentations. Some of the smaller affiliates were interested in ideas in how to increase their membership and perhaps partner with neighboring affiliates on conferences. AMATYC also informed us of the assistance we can receive from AMATYC, such as the tote bags and pens we receive at the VMATYC conference. We also received information concerning the possibilities of having an AMATYC representative give a presentation at the annual affiliate conferences on the MAC³ program, the summer institutes, and certainly Beyond Crossroads. All of these ideas are being considered in developing the program for this spring's state conference.

Voting delegate: There were 3 forums held one evening concerning position statements and items that were to be on the agenda during the upcoming business meeting. These forums are open to the public, but voting delegates are especially encouraged to attend. It is enlightening to see and hear the different viewpoints expressed from affiliates across the nation concerning such things as dues increase, position papers, and use of technology in the classrooms. Although the business meeting on Saturday afternoon is again open to all members, only the voting delegates from each affiliate are allowed to officially

accept such items as the minutes review from last year's business meeting, the treasurer's report, and other items placed before the assembly. Only delegates were allowed to vote on the constitutional amendment concerning the AMATYC dues increase (which was approved) as well as approach the microphone for any official discussion and/or information to be shared with the delegate assembly.

Professional development (as a faculty member): I gained so many wonderful ideas from the various sessions. Examples: I was able to return to my MTH 151 class and share with a student who had recently expressed "Nothing I am learning in here will apply to my major of music." I attended a session where it was explained how each note on the chromatic scale is determined by the use of a geometric sequence and how the valves on a brass instrument is based on fractional steps. I attended another session where I received some very helpful ideas/projects/games to help make MTH 2 more interesting for the students. Hopefully my students this semester won't get too tired of all my "neat ideas." I attended a most helpful workshop on working matrices using Excel and came back with some interesting matrix projects for MTH 152 and MTH 181. A project development workshop helped me to brainstorm with other members for a very practical, real life project for MTH 151 logic students in purchasing a home (some consumer math will definitely get worked in with it.) The list goes on.....

I hope you can understand and feel the excitement that I received from the wonderful experience of attending the conference. Wearing three hats certainly enhanced that experience and I am ever grateful for the opportunity not only to serve VMATYC but for the enrichment as a teacher/team player that is mine.



VMATYC members gather for an evening together.
AMATYC Conference, Cincinnati, OH

AMATYC Conferences - Past and Future

AMATYC Affiliate Delegate Report

Chris Allgyer, MECC

During the AMATYC Annual Conference held in Cincinnati last November, I had the privilege of attending a special workshop on Beyond Crossroads: Implementing Mathematics Standards in the First Two Years of College. The workshop stressed how faculty and departments need to revisit the standards of the 1995 Crossroads in Mathematics. A guiding principle is a commitment to a continuous cycle of improvement and professional development.

You all know the challenges we face every day in our classrooms. Beyond Crossroads gives faculty and departments implementation standards to guide us as we try to improve mathematics education. At our VMATYC Spring Conference, I hope to present a session on "Implementing the Standards." I will share some of the ideas from the workshop in Cincinnati and will also ask you for help in defining the role that VMATYC should take to use the recommendations and action plans of Beyond Crossroads in the VCCS.

In other AMATYC news, I encourage you to consider attending an AMATYC Summer Institute. There are three excellent opportunities this year for professional growth: "Developmental Algebra Using a Function Approach" in Duck, North Carolina (Outer Banks); "Mathematical Preparation for Teachers of Future Elementary Teachers" in Grand Rapids, Michigan; and "Mathematics Across the Community College Curriculum" in Leavenworth, Washington. You can get information on these and learn more about Beyond Crossroads at the AMATYC web site: www.amatyc.org.

AMATYC 2007 Registration

VMATYC will again pay the registration fee for up to two members to attend the annual conference November 1-4, 2007, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Based on the mini-program sent in August, you will be asked to submit a proposal citing the sessions you would attend, explaining how these sessions would benefit you and your colleagues, and agreeing to make your own presentation at the VMATYC conference in April, 2008. Keep this opportunity in mind as you plan your professional development activities and budget for next year.

The question has been asked about why the registration fee for AMATYC conferences seems higher than other organizations we may belong to. The reason for the size of the fee is related to the size of our organization.

We have grown too large for modest hotels in smaller cities. We need a large hotel or a mid-size convention center to accommodate our group. But we are not large enough for all the perks and volume reductions accorded to groups such as the NCTM. We have to pay more of our own service cost per person than groups with thousands or tens of thousands of members.

Personally, I believe the price of an AMATYC conference is worth every penny to me and to my school. Ask your peers who attended their first conference this past November in Cincinnati - John Gallo, TCC; Sylvia Brown, MECC; Sarah Martin, VWCC; and Terry Clore and Faith Clough, PVCC.



Duke Energy Center, Cincinnati, OH.
Location of the 32nd AMATYC conference



In 22 months, we will host our colleagues from the United States and Canada in Washington, D.C., November 20-23, 2008. Thanks to your brain-storming session last Spring at Germanna CC, we have a theme, "Washington, D.C. - A Monumental Place for Mathematics". Thanks to Tidewater CC professor of art, Craig Nilsen, we have a logo. Red was chosen as our color, with plans to obtain white bags with blue handles for the attendees to tote all their conference treasures.

The conference will be at the Hilton Washington on Connecticut Ave, with easy access to the Metro and all of

AMATYC Conferences - Past and Future

Regional meeting reports

the capital's attractions. Keynote speaker is Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President of The University of Maryland, Baltimore County, an educator known for his interest in science and mathematics education and his support for minority participation and performance in these areas. Saturday Breakfast will be enlivened by David Wright, Professor of Physics at Tidewater CC, developer of Busch Gardens Physics Days and star of the NASA Why? Files television show. The rest of the program depends on you; with the conference in our own region, this is your chance to show off your teaching expertise. We'll keep you posted on due dates for proposal submission.

Ann Loving (JSRCC) is co-chairing the Hospitality Room and Local Scene Committee. Susan Fleming (WCC) coordinates the breakfast meal and table favors. Chris Allgyer (MECC) will work on signs to help us find our way around the building. Another way to provide help for attendees will be through Greeters, organized by Charlotte Newsom (TCC).

All these people need helping hands. Additionally, we're looking for someone to create a website to display our local information. We'll also provide an internet café; if your school has a set of computers that could attend the conference for one or more days, we could use them in the café or for onsite workshops.

If you would like to be involved or just want to know more about this conference, check your VMATYC Conference program for our planning session and join us. We'll also be in Minneapolis, November 1-4, 2007, to promote the 2008 conference, wearing our distinctive Washington shirts.

Judy Williams, TCC

News from the Regions

Northern

The Fall 2006 VMATYC Conference was held on November 11 at the Woodbridge Campus of Northern Virginia Community College from 9:30-2:00. There were 39 attendees and three great presentations. Brian Johnson gave a great talk about how to use pattern blocks in the classroom. The Golden Ratio was the topic of Jon Hexter's excellent presentation. Jon Wilkin gave us some great insights into how to use technology to deliver live online sessions with students. The weather was beautiful. Even though we spent most of our time inside, we did get to enjoy the weather and the beautiful lake views from the picnic tables at lunch.

Western

The Western region meeting was held on the campus of VHCC in the higher ed. center on Friday, October 27. Will Galliher demonstrated how Camtasia, Smart View, and Windows Journal could be used to record lectures for web classes.

Eastern

The VMATYC Eastern Regional Conference, hosted by the Virginia Beach Campus of Tidewater Community College, was held on October 14, 2006. Approximately thirty mathematics professionals attended. Our six speakers graced us with thoughtful, informative, and engaging presentations and discussions. A brief synopsis of the presentations follows.

George Derise **TNCC**
The Absolutely Most Important Application of Linear Algebra and It's Not in the Textbooks

A very simple application of linear algebra to quantum mechanics and particle physics was presented. 25 minutes to understand the essence of quantum mechanics.

Richard Watkins **TCC, VA Beach**
Mathematics Instruction for All Learners

An overview of a day-long workshop given by Frank Klucken, Landmark College. This presented strategies that can help all learners while taking little or no time from content instruction.

Krystyna Karminska **TNCC**
Limits without Boundaries

The presenter compared limit definitions from different textbooks and present different answers to the same problem based on the text referenced.

Mike Kirby **TCC, VA Beach**
Round Table Discussion

This session was a general discussion of best practices.

Judy Williams **TCC, VA Beach**
Student Survey Data

Judy demonstrated how a survey given during the first day of statistics class can be used as a teaching tool during the semester.

The Glenn Fox VMATYC Mathematics and Computer Science Scholarship

We will again offer this financial assistance to one of our students for the 2007-2008 academic year. Deadline for applications will be June 1, 2007, with notification of the recipient by July 15. The award was raised for the current year to \$400 per semester and will probably remain at that amount.

At the winter meeting January 16, the Executive Board discussed a possible change in criteria for the scholarship. The current requirement states that the candidate should "intend to major in (with plans to teach) computer science, mathematics, or mathematics education and demonstrate potential for success in any of these areas."

We are considering the following statement as a replacement:

Intend to major in mathematics or computer science and demonstrate potential for success in either of these areas. Preference will be given to candidates who intend to teach mathematics or computer science.

This proposed change will be an item for discussion at the General Business Meeting on April 14. It has been suggested that the scholarship committee, with the Past President as chair, prepare a rating sheet for the candidates that would list the "required criteria" as well as "preferred criteria" and provide a more objective ranking of the candidates. This would be useful whether intent to teach remains a requirement or becomes a preference; candidates could be recognized for volunteering as tutors or working in their local school systems, for example. By making the teaching intent a preference, we might also open the scholarship to more students, since our constitutional purpose is to "promote mathematics and mathematics education." Come to the annual conference prepared to share your thoughts about the criteria you want used for the selection of the recipient of the scholarship to which you have contributed through the years.

VMATYC Nominating Committee

Judy Williams, TCC

Elections

As Past President, I chair the Nominating Committee. Those of you with current VMATYC membership on February 1, 2007, should receive your ballots and candidate information packets by February 28. If you have

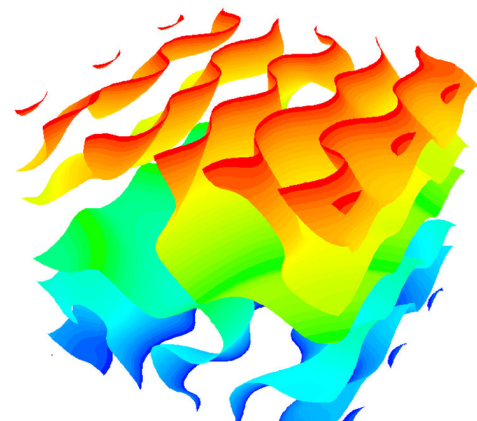
not received a ballot by that date, please notify me at jwilliams@tcc.edu.

Ballots must be postmarked by March 23. Ballots will be counted by an impartial committee and results will be announced by April 2. The new officers will be formally installed at the Spring Conference at TNCC April 14.

From the editor . . .

Did you know - that each campus can receive free TI graphing calculators from TI by participating in the TI volume purchase plan? The number of calculators a campus earns is based on the number of students enrolled in sections for which the instructor's syllabus states that TI graphing calculators are either "strongly recommended" or "required." Each syllabus and section enrollment numbers are submitted to TI, along with the volume purchase plan form. With this plan, you can earn TI84s, TI89s, Voyage 200, and/or related products, such as viewscreens and the TI Presenter. For details and the forms, the web site is quickly found with a search for [TI VPP](#). You can submit each semester or combine your enrollments for a year by submitting annually. Each TI84 or TI89 "costs" 300 enrollments. But - each syllabus must state that TI graphing calculators are either strongly recommended or are required.

Jon Wilkin, editor



curtains of fire
Jerry Thornhill
from DP Graph