

# Sinclair Mathnet

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## FROM THE CHAIR



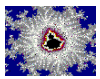
Another academic year is almost completed and it is time to review the accomplishments of the department. I would like to begin by thanking and congratulating our two new full-time faculty members Karl Hess and Jim Willis for the very successful completion of their first year with us. Both have blended rapidly into the life of the department and have made welcomed contributions. Additionally our students have enjoyed the capable services of six new part-time faculty members: Mike Adams, Kathleen Beal, Martha Ferri, Chris Fisher, Jeannette Jones, and Dick Peterson. Welcome to all of you and thanks to you and all department faculty members for teaching a record number of 3,414 FTEs, a 5.8% increase over last year and 8.76% of the college total. Math Lab and Math Help Room visits are also up for the Summer, Fall, and Winter Quarter totals from 17,269 in 2002-03 to 17,458 in 2003-04, which is a 1.1 % increase. The fact that this increase is substantially smaller than the FTE increase may signal the fact that we have reached the limit of possible growth in Lab and Help Room usage given our current facilities.

Other accomplishments this year include finalization of the refinement process for our Math 101 first-day in-class diagnostic test and the prescriptions for using it in advising students, as well as substantial progress toward the same end for our Math 102 diagnostic. The computerized Math 116 practice chapter exams for both traditional and graphing calculator required sections are also up and running in the Math Lab. Special thanks go to Len Ruth for his work on each of the preceding initiatives. We have also doubled the reach of our Retention Program this year by adding Jim Hardman as a second Retention Specialist to assist Moez Ben-Azzouz. And David Stott has joined Earl King in offering test review sessions for all of the chapter tests in Math 101 and Math 102.

We are proud to have awarded our seventh annual Part-time Faculty Member of the Year Award, this year's recipient being Larry Schmitt. We are also very proud to have the recipient of this year's Adjunct Faculty Member of the Year Award from the Ohio Association of Two Year Colleges (OATYC) as a long time member of our part time staff. John Sparks, who has been with us since 1984 and who was also our first Departmental Part-time Faculty Member of the Year Award winner in 1998, was this year's winner of the OATYC award. Congratulations to both Larry and John.

We are also very pleased to have been able to recognize a number of students for their achievements. Thirteen students were selected as Maurice Jacobs Scholarship award recipients this year. Exactly 100 students participated in our American Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges Student Mathematics League competition and \$245 in prizes were awarded to five different student winners. The Problem of the Week competition was held during Fall and Spring Quarters this year and, when completed, four student winners will have been awarded \$150 in prizes. Also, two math students received awards from a National Science Foundation funded scholarship administered by Vickie Lair. Thanks to her as well as Marie Stroh, Jim Willis, David Stott, Earl King, Ed Gallo, and Susan Harris for their work in helping to make all of these things happen for students.

I would like to end the year by reminding you that what we do counts! (Sorry for the pun.) Karen Holbrook, President of The Ohio State University has written, "Science and math literacy is a prerequisite today simply to be an informed consumer, a capable employee, a successful entrepreneur, a knowledgeable voter, or even someone who understands the everyday news. A basic knowledge of science and math is needed to make informed decisions about environmental risks, health and lifestyle (Continued on page 4)



## Faculty Feature- Larry Schmitt



This year's recipient of the Part-time Faculty Member of the Year Award for the Sinclair Community College Mathematics Department is **Larry Schmitt**, who was recognized at the Department Colloquium on May 7.

Larry has quite a history with Sinclair, and it starts back in the early 1980s. As a 1977 high school graduate, Larry never thought that he would attend college so he joined the Air Force. His first duty assignment was at Wright Patterson Air Force Base here in Dayton. He says, "I started attending Sinclair in 1982, mainly to help my wife-to-be get through Math 101. My fondest memories of teachers from my undergraduate years are memories of the math teachers that I met here at Sinclair."

Larry began teaching for Sinclair in the fall of 1995, while he was working on his Ph.D. at the Air Force institute of Technology. He adds, "It was great to come here and be part of the college and also find my favorite teachers still here: John Pfetzing, Byung Hahn and Adolph Harris." Larry has taught a wide variety of courses, including teaching Math 101 "many, many times." He says his favorite class to teach is Math 204, mainly because of the students' abilities and their attitudes toward learning mathematics.

In December of 2002, Larry retired as a major after 24 years of active duty in the U.S. Air Force. He

currently works as a civilian as a senior plans and programs engineer at the headquarters of the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Larry taught for two years at the Air Force Academy, where he was recognized as the 1993-1994 winner of the "Tony M. Johnson Award for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics." This was quite an honor, as he was chosen above 35 fellow officers who were selectively chosen to teach in the Math Department at the Academy. It was here that his love of teaching began that ultimately lead him to pursue teaching here at Sinclair College.

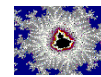
Larry has several college degrees, his first a BS in Electrical Engineering from Wright State University in 1987. His other two degrees are in Applied Mathematics, with a MS from the Florida Institute of Technology in 1992, and a Ph.D. from the Air Force institute of Technology, which he earned in 1997.

Ohio has been Larry's home for most of his life. He grew up in Hamilton, and spent the first nine years of his Air Force career at Wright-Patt. After seven years in Florida and Colorado, he returned to complete his Air Force career with another eight years at the base here in Dayton.

Larry has four children, who vary in age from 12 years to 18 years old. His oldest child will graduate from Carroll High School this year, and attend Wright State University in the fall. He has two other children at Carroll, and a son who will be in the seventh grade at New Carlisle Middle School next year. He says, "They are terrific children and mean the world to me, but I am looking forward to the empty nest years. And, I do wish they liked math as much as I do."

When asked what he would like his colleagues to know about him, Larry says, "I love baseball. All other sports are only there to take up the time as you wait for spring training to begin." He also adds, "Teaching at Sinclair has been a great experience. I look forward to another ten years of doing my part there. (Yes AI, I guess I'm staying here in Dayton awhile longer....)"

Susan Harris ■



## Dayton Revisited

As many of you know Peter and Janet Gill came to Sinclair on a teaching exchange with Tom Wilson in the '01 - '02 academic year. While they were living in the U.S. they traveled to Washington D.C., Florida, Lake Erie, Niagara Falls, Toronto, Detroit, and Chicago, and spent three weeks in Colorado before returning home in August of '02.

Now in April of this year they returned for a Spring break visit to the States. They flew into Washington D.C., rented a car and drove to Dayton to spend four days with their old friends. While in Dayton each day I would go with them on a morning hike in one of the Metro Parks, and then in the afternoon they would visit either Sinclair or former neighbors. Tom Wilson had a wonderful dinner for Pete and Janet one evening with a collection of neighbors, friends and colleagues there. Might mention that Tom fixes a mean salmon steak. From here they drove to the Smoky Mountain National Park for some hiking and relaxation. Then it was on to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Charlottesville to see Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson. After two weeks of visiting and seeing some of the country, they flew back to England from Washington D.C.

While here in Dayton Peter talked about some of his experiences both here and back in Manchester. His favorite course to teach at Sinclair was statistics, and what he liked most about Sinclair were the "brilliant facilities" and the "excellent organization." What they liked most about living in Dayton was the sunshine and good weather. He never had any trouble driving while here, nor did he have any problems after going back home. For those who might not know, a person has a higher risk of an accident upon returning home after living in a "drive on the other side of the road" country than while they are in the country they are visiting. What Peter missed the most while living here was *The Guardian* newspaper, and field hockey, which he plays on a regular basis.

Since returning to England the Gill's have been visited by both Tom Wilson and myself. He is currently teaching calculus, applied physics, and statistics. This is Peter's last year teaching, so he will become a pensioner this summer after 38 years of putting chalk to the blackboard. He has no special plans and Janet plans to continue working at John Lewis, a department store. She was lucky enough that they held open her position for the year they were over here.

Last summer Peter and Janet took a major vacation to France, which was nice, but the best thing new in their lives is an 8-month-old granddaughter named Emma. Emma and her parents live 180 miles away from Manchester, but that won't stop these grandparents from visiting often. The Gills send all the best to their friends at Sinclair.

John Pfetzing ■

## Reminders

- Students may be assigned an Incomplete "I" grade in special circumstances such as a medical emergency. Students should be doing passing work to receive an I and according to our handbook "normally this work should not amount to more than one or two tests or assignments."
- Please do not forget to return your text to the Office if you will not be using it next quarter.
- Students taking a test late or early should be given a test different from the one given to the rest of the class.



(continued from page 1) choices including consumption of genetically engineered foods and to be aware of how to protect your identity and engage in financial planning." Roderick Chu, Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, points out that, "If Ohioans are to compete successfully in today's technology-based knowledge economy, we need many more of our high school graduates to be mathematically and scientifically literate." We know all too well that it often falls to us to make sure these high school graduates satisfy that requirement.

But improving the economy and helping people function better in society is not our only purpose. We also have the opportunity, and I think the responsibility, to instill in our students the traditional virtues that the study of mathematics engenders - such as the ability to be thorough, orderly, careful, alert, persistent, cooperative and honest. As well, we have the opportunity, as stated in our Department Philosophy, "...to inspire them with the glory of human intellectual achievement in the development of mathematics and to intrigue and delight them with the classic beauty and elegance of mathematical thought." Being a math teacher is not a bad job when you think about it. I hope you are enjoying it!

Al Giambrone ■



Three students were recognized for receiving Maurice Jacobs Memorial Book Fund Scholarships. Pictured are (left to right) faculty members Jim Willis and Marie Stroh, and students Frank Dutmers, Chris Hocker, and Jolene O'Hair.

## Harvey's Joke Corner

Sign on a retirement home for school administrators: "We've lost our faculties."

Student: "What is the point of all this arithmetic?"

Teacher: "A decimal."

Q. What is a calculus teacher's favorite drink?

A. A cup of "instant."

Q. What sticks out just a little over a foot?

A. An ankle.



Pictured with faculty member David Stott are the top two winners for Round II of the AMATYC Student Competition. Dilini Ranatunga (right) received the first place prize of \$50, and Emily Enright (center) won the second place prize of \$25.



Congratulations to our gentle friend Harvey Chew for twenty years of gracious service to Sinclair!