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Newsletter, Moorhead State University, Mathematics Department

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APRIL 1983
NEWSLETTER
MOORHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY
MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

Greetings, Graduates! You've once again responded enthusiastically to my request for information - I've enjoyed reading your notes and letters. I hope that you respond as wholeheartedly next year - I'd especially like to request those who've never responded to send in news.

These are both good times and bad times for mathematics. On the one hand there is increased interest in mathematics and mathematics education; on the other hand, the pool of high school graduates is shrinking so that less people are available to enter the field. As alumni of the MSU Mathematics Department I hope that each of you will, as the opportunity presents itself, encourage promising students to pursue a career in mathematics and, when appropriate, to begin their training here at Moorhead State University.

Good Luck,

Milton Legg

* * *

PUZZLE

Here's a quick challenge - don't read on until you've solved the following:

At a party the guests divide into groups of 10 and find there are 9 over. They divide into groups of 9 and find 8 over, into groups of 8 and find 7 over..., into groups of 3 and find 2 over, into groups of 2 and find 1 over. There are fewer than 3000 at the party. How many are there at the party? (*answer below*)

* * *

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

Bonita Rae Schmidt, M.S. Mathematics, Wichita State University, joined the MSU Mathematics Faculty this year. *** Marion Smith reports that she is enjoying her first year of retirement - she spent Christmas in Wyoming and is devoting a good deal of her time to a new hobby, playing the electric organ. ***

* * *

Recipients of the department's annual awards of membership in the American Mathematical Society were: Barbara J. Motzko (Sr. Browerville, MN); Elaine S. Prokott (Sr. Holdingford, MN); Kenneth J. Turnquist (Sr. Jamestown, ND); Kenneth H. Kasin, Jr. (Sr. Fargo, ND).

* * *

Kathy Koss (Sr. Dodge Center, MN) a double major in mathematics and computer science, and Kenneth Turnquist (Sr. Jamestown, ND) passed the first examination in the series of 10 examinations leading to fellowship in the Society of Actuaries.

* * *

Special thanks to Mrs. Jill Holsen who edited and wrote the alumni news.

* * *

Puzzle answer: There were 2519 guests. If there had been one more guest then the total would have been divisible by 10, 9, 8, ..., 3 and 2. Hence it would have been divisible by 2520 and so that would have been the number of guests.

* * *

Demand Increases for Mathematics Majors

It is finally time to encourage bright high school students to major in mathematics in college. Recent statistical evidence indicates that mathematicians are increasingly in demand and that the future is bright for persons who successfully complete a mathematics major. According to the NSF Science Resources Studies Highlights there was a 19% increase in employment of mathematicians over the period 1978-80. This compares with only a 7% increase in overall employment of scientists and engineers.

There are good opportunities for employment in business and industry for bachelor's graduates in mathematics. Salaries are competitive with those in other fields - even including computer science.

According to R.D. Anderson, in Focus, Vol. 2(4), there are three factors that indicate a continuing shortage of quantitatively-oriented people and which thus make the prospects for mathematically-trained individuals very bright over the next decade:

. The rapidly increasing development of computer technology requiring more technically-trained and quantitatively-oriented people.

. The demographic phenomena which, for the United States, will produce a drop of more than 26% in the 21-year-old age group population by the mid-nineties. This will create a need for a 35% increase in the number of technically-trained people in that age group just to maintain present numbers of work force entrants involved with science and technology.

. The continuing general deterioration, or at best non-improvement, of overall precollege student performance in mathematics and science.

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ACTUARIAL CAREERS

The Mathematics Department is now offering students the opportunity to prepare for careers in Actuarial Science. An actuary is a business executive who uses mathematical skills to define, analyze and solve business and social problems. Actuaries are problem solvers and, as such, they create and manage programs to reduce the financial impact of the expected and unexpected things that happen to people, like illness, accidents, unemployment or premature death.

To attain full professional status in the United States or Canada, an individual must pass ten examinations. The first exam is a comprehensive survey of calculus, linear algebra and differential equations. Examination II draws from the areas of probability and statistics. This spring, the MSU Mathematics Department has approximately 25 students enrolled in two courses designed to enable those participating to prepare themselves for Examinations I and II.

* * *

MISCELLANEA

Mnemonics for π . Various memory devices have been devised in order to recall the digits of π to a large number of places. In each of the following popular mnemonics simply replace each word by the number of letters it contains in order to obtain π correct to several decimals.

May I have a large container of coffee?

How I want a drink, alcoholic of course, after the heavy lectures involving quantum mechanics.

A lumpy problem: "How," the wise teacher asked her class, "Can you distribute 16 lumps of sugar in three cups of coffee so that each cup contains an odd number of lumps?" Her answer: "One lump in the first cup, one lump in the second cup, and 14 lumps in the third cup - 14 is certainly an odd number of lumps of sugar to put in a cup of coffee!"

G.H. Hardy: A mathematician, like a painter or poet, is a maker of patterns. If these patterns are more permanent than theirs, it is because they are made with ideas... The mathematician's patterns, like the painter's or the poet's, must be beautiful; the ideas, like the colours or the words, must fit together in a harmonious way. Beauty is the first test: there is no permanent place in the world for ugly mathematics.

ALUMNI NEWS

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JON JELLISON (B.A. 1981) is a Programmer/Analyst I in the Administrative Systems Department at North Dakota State University. This department deals with accounting and student records. Previously, Jon worked for two years at Blue Cross-Blue Shield in Fargo.

JOHN LINDSTROM (B.A. 1973) works as a Data Analyst II at North Dakota State University. Presently he is working with the Higher Education Computer Network on a uniform accounting system for the State of North Dakota. John was married in April of 1981.

ROSANNE MCFADDEN (B.S. 1979) manages a postal contract station at the Tobak and News Shop in St. Paul, Minnesota. She is working part-time on a master's degree.

GENE T. WARD (B.S. 1974) is an Independent Multilines Insurance Adjuster for Viking Adjusting Service, Inc. of Minnesota.

DAVID THORDAL (B.S. 1972) teaches mathematics at the Moorhead Area Vocational Technical Institute. He remarks that "Keeping up with the technological changes of the trades industry has kept all of us very busy!"

SANDY GUTZWILLER (B.S. 1972) is a seventh grade mathematics teacher at Northdale Junior High School in the Anoka-Hennepin School District. Sandy is also a tennis coach.

JERRY K. JENSEN (B.S. 1972) serves as principal at Goodhue High School, Goodhue, Minnesota. He has both an M.A. degree in Educational Administration and a sixth year certificate - both from Winona State University. Jerry and his wife Susan have a daughter, Jaimie, who was one year old on March 1.

JOANNE GERDES (B.A. 1979) is an Assistant Staff Analyst in the Pension Actuarial Department of the Banker's Life and Casualty, Co., Des Moines, Iowa. Her husband Brad (an M.S.U. Psychology major) works at the A.E. Staley Oil Refinery Plant in Des Moines.

MARY RENKEN BORMAN (B.S. 1972) teaches mathematics and is a computer instructor at Thompson Valley High School in Loveland, Colorado, where she teaches courses at all levels from basic arithmetic to calculus. Mary's husband Michael is a graduate teaching assistant at Colorado State University.

ROGER DOROW (B.S. 1971) is president of Dorow's Pelting Service, Inc., a business he started 5 years ago.

JERRY CULLEN (B.S. 1971) works for Edu Systems, Inc. of Minneapolis, Minn. as a Systems Specialist. He and his wife are expecting their fourth child in April.

CLAUDIA BRAINARD WIEBOLD (B.A. 1981) is an Actuarial Trainee in the Individual Actuarial Department of Minnesota Mutual Life Insurance Company, St. Paul, Minn. Claudia has passed Part I of the series of examinations given by the Society of Actuaries. Her husband Don, a 1980 M.S.U. graduate, is a computer programmer for Sperry-Univac of Roseville.

MERILEE SUSTAD POTUCEK (B.A. 1982) is a Secretary/Receptionist/Bookkeeper for Charlson and Marben Attorneys of Thief River Falls, Minn. Merilee and her husband Mark were married in Nov. 1982. He is also a 1982 M.S.U. graduate and farms near Thief River Falls.

LESTER OLSON (B.A. 1977) attends the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is a teaching assistant and recently passed the comprehensive examinations for the Ph.D. degree in speech communications. Lester's paper "The Road and Fountains: The Essence of Cicero's Deoratore" was selected by the International Society for History of Rhetoric for presentation at a national conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

JON F. NOAH (B.A. 1972) owns an independent insurance agency, Knutson-Noah Insurance, in Amery, Wisconsin. Jon and his wife Carolyn have two sons.

STEVEN GERJETS (B.A. 1974) is a Senior Programmer Scientific with Sperry Univac of St. Paul. He is presently working on the Voice Information Processing Station program. This program will enable the computer to answer telephones, store voice data, and then "playback" this data. When finished, the program will be part of the SPERRYLINK Office System.

BILL KATH (B.A. 1973) has worked for Sperry Univac of St. Paul for the past 8 years as Principal Programmer. He is presently working on the development of a new COBOL compiler to be used on future large scale computers.

GARY "RADAR" KRENZ (B.S. 1978) is completing work on the Ph.D. degree in mathematics at Iowa State University. Sally Krenz is working at the ISU library.

DEAN R. HARRIS (B.A. 1971) is a computer scientist with Computer Sciences Corporation of Arlington, Virginia. He is currently assistant project manager in charge of software testing for the firm's current contract. Dean has a daughter born February 21, 1982.

MICHAEL AHO (B.A. 1980) attends the University of Missouri-Rolla, where he is a graduate teaching assistant. He received an MS in applied mathematics in 1982 and is now working towards the Ph.D. degree. Mike's wife, Kathleen, recently received her B.A. in English from UM-R.

DELLES SOLIE (B.S. 1980) teaches mathematics at North Park High School, Walden, Colorado. He spends any spare time as assistant coach for football and wrestling.

RICK COLLISON (B.A. 1979) is Assistant Manager for OSCO Drug in Williston, North Dakota. Marlys is executive secretary to the president of the First National Bank of Williston.

JOHN BISEK (B.S. 1977) works for Sperry Univac's Major Systems Division in Roseville, Minnesota. He joined Univac in 1981 after spending 4 years as a high school teacher. John is married to Mickie Bretz, a 1980 MSU graduate. They have one daughter, Carly, born April 9, 1982.

STEPHEN CYR (B.S. 1978) is employed by International Business Machines at Rochester, Minnesota, as a senior associate programmer.

LEROY EDLUND (B.S. 1971) teaches mathematics in grades 9-11 for the Le Center, Minnesota, Public Schools. In 1970 and 1978 LeRoy was selected as a Teacher of Excellence and was one of the 24 quarter-finalists for Minnesota Teacher-of-the-Year. He and his wife Audrey have three children.

LONNI SCHULTZ (B.A. 1982) attends the University of Iowa and is working towards a master's (possibly a Ph.D.) in statistics. She is a graduate teaching assistant with responsibility for small discussion groups in business statistics.

VIANN OLSON (B.S. 1976) teaches at Cathedral High School, St. Cloud, Minn., where she is Head of the Mathematics Department. Also, she is assistant volleyball coach at Apollo High School. ViAnn is completing a master's degree in mathematics at St. Cloud State University.

GARY MELBY (B.S. 1966, M.S. 1973) continues to work at Control Data Corporation where he is a Senior Programmer Analyst working on developing operating software for the CYBER 200 computers.

STEVE HARDYMAN (B.S. 1982) lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he is a teacher at Cheyenne Mountain Junior High. Steve says that he is very happy with the climate and the outdoor activities in Colorado.

SPENCER HJELLE (B.A. 1976) was recently promoted to Tax Examiner IV by the Minnesota Department of Revenue. Spencer lives in Virginia, Minnesota.

STAN MYRUM (B.A. 1972) works as a Design Assurance Manager for Medtronic, Inc., the world's largest manufacturer of cardiac pacemakers. His responsibilities include overseeing the performance and efficacy of new pacemakers. Stan received the Star of Excellence award from Medtronic and is past president of the local Jaycee Chapter. Stan's wife, Pam, is also active in local affairs, being president of Jaycee Women. They have three children.

JULIE DAVIES HANSEN (B.S. 1975) and husband Jeff are partners in the Davies-Hansen Dairy Farm, a family-owned business. Julie is active in all aspects of the operation - bookkeeping, milking, driving tractor, etc. Additionally, she is a substitute teacher in Aiken, is president of the Aiken County DHIA (an organization for computerized record systems), and is secretary of the Vo-Ag Advisory board at Aiken High School.

GERALDINE RACH (B.A. 1977) was transferred by Northwestern Bell Telephone Company from Norfolk, Nebraska, to Omaha. Her job title is Supervisor, Circuit Provisioning Center.

MICHAEL L. MARKET (B.S. 1972) lives near Seattle, Washington, where he is employed as Divisional Controller by TAPCO, Inc., a division of Galton Industries, Inc. He is currently enrolled in the MBA program at City University in Seattle. Mike and his wife have two children.

CANDACE JOHNSON HARMER (B.A. 1973) works as a Scientific Programmer at Sperry Univac where, this year, she is a project leader. Candy works 3 days a week so that she has time to spend with her children; Heather, 5, and twins, Jason and Jonathan, 2.

STEPHEN VERSOI (B.S. 1973) works for the Nash Finch Company as Produce Manager at Piggly Wiggly. He has received the Master Produce Award for the entire company based on three categories: attitude and effort, profit, and department appearance. He and his wife have two boys, Daniel (2½) and Kenneth, born in November 1982.

LEE ARTHUR LEWIS (B.S. 1973) owns Rainmakers' Construction Company & Lewis Bros., Homebuilders. They have been involved in projects such as building homes, a restaurant, and a waste water treatment plant during the past year. His wife, Sharon, operates a videotaping service. They are both active in community work; Lee is president of a local Kiwanis Club, and both serve on the administrative assembly of the Baha'i Community of Round Rock, Texas. They have two children.

JOHN T. MCDONALD (B.A. 1976) teaches junior high math, driver education and SLD, and is involved in coaching football, girls basketball and track. He was named District 31 Track Coach of the Year in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, and Region 8A Coach of the Year, 1979. His wife, Kristil (Cain, 1976) directs and teaches the special ed program at Strandquist, Minn. They have a daughter, Lori Ann, 2.

KENNETH E. WELKEN, JR. (B.S. 1974) has taught math at Moorhead Junior High for 14 years and is currently chairperson of the math department. The Junior High have consistently been placed in the top places at the annual mathematics track meet, with a first the year before last. Ken's wife Jan taught at Casselton for 7 years and is now a homemaker taking care of the children, Nathan, 6, and Nicholas, 2.

ROSE HECOMOVICH VOWLES (B.S. 1972) teaches math at Central Junior High School District #2, Sheridan, Wyoming. Husband, Larry, teaches science at the Wyoming Girls School, a correctional institute for girls who are assigned to the school by the courts. Rose has two daughters, Cindy, 4½, and Lara, 1½, and a stepson, Tim, 12. The family enjoys living in this area because of the cross country skiing, camping, hiking and fishing.

DAVID BERGSTROM (B.A. 1979) is an Assistant Actuary with Western States Life Insurance Company. He passed the 7th actuarial exam in Nov. '82. He married Trish Richardson, an MSU social work graduate, in May 1982.

DON VOSIKA (B.A. 1982) worked as a programmer for Sherwood Medical Company prior to his enlistment in the Air Force. He is stationed in San Antonio, Texas but after three months OTS, he and his wife Cheryl will transfer to Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, where he will spend 18 months studying for a degree in aeronautical engineering at the Air Force Institute.