

Attend the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention in Alabama

# Mu Alpha Theta Fall Newsletter

FALL 2003

(405) 325-4489

Fax: (405) 325-7184

[matheta@ou.edu](mailto:matheta@ou.edu)

[www.mualphatheta.org](http://www.mualphatheta.org)

## Letter from the Mu Alpha Theta President:

Welcome to a great new year for Mu Alpha Theta. I am excited to announce that there are new competitions sponsored by Mu Alpha Theta in which all chapters will be able to participate. You will find information in this newsletter concerning these competitions. Mu Alpha Theta will also be sponsoring awards for the International Science and Engineering Fair, and certificates for regional science fairs associated with ISEF. In addition, the National Convention 2004 will be held in Huntsville, Alabama, and grants will be offered to chapters to attend the convention.

Kay Weiss, our new executive director, has begun her first full year with Mu Alpha Theta. She is doing an outstanding job at the national office and is eager to know all the sponsors. Please contact her there, if you have any questions.

This year is an election year for Mu Alpha Theta. Offices to be filled are President-Elect and Governors from regions I and II. If you are interested in running for office or know of anyone who has expressed an interest in running, please contact the nominating committee, Mattie White at [mattiewmath@aol.com](mailto:mattiewmath@aol.com) or Frank Caballero [cabellef@sunseths.dade.k12.fl.us](mailto:cabellef@sunseths.dade.k12.fl.us).

As we grow, we are always looking for ways to serve all members of Mu Alpha Theta. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please be sure to contact any officer or the national office. Whether your chapter's main focus is tutoring other students, exploring mathematics beyond the regular curriculum, or competing in mathematics, Mu Alpha Theta is always looking for ways to share information with all chapters about how other chapters accomplish their goals.

Again, welcome to an exciting year where we all can share many experiences in mathematics.

*Susan Hiller*  
MAΘ President

---

## Members and sponsors:

I hope you are all rested and ready for another year of Mu Alpha Theta! The other student officers (VP - Nick Vanmeter, Secretary/Treasurer - Jing-Jing Mao, Parliamentarian - Miguel Morcuende) and I have been working with the national delegates to elect new committee heads and start materializing our plans for next year's convention in Huntsville. I'm sure all of you are curious as to what we are planning on accomplishing, so I'll attempt to address some of these issues!

It's been brought up that our convention donors need to be more consistent. To accomplish this, we will be working with our Sponsorship Committee to send personal letters of gratitude to all of our 2003 national convention donors. In addition, our Sponsorship Committee will seek out potential sponsors for the Huntsville convention.

Another issue that was brought up by our national Parliamentarian, Miguel Morcuende at the Atlanta convention, was recruitment. We've recently announced Ashish Kundra of Lincoln High School as the 2003-2004 Recruitment Committee Head. I'm confident that the Recruitment committee will be

---

effective in creating an interest among schools that have had no previous knowledge of Mu Alpha Theta.

Moving onto Spirit Committee, Kristina Haller of Mt. Rainier High School has been elected Spirit Committee Head for 2003-2004. We've already discussed plans for an "Ultimate Frisbee Tournament," among other events, that I'm sure will contribute to the overall atmosphere of next year's national convention.

Lastly, our Secretary/Treasurer, Jing-Jing Mao, doubles as Mu Alpha Theta webmaster. She's working on a wonderful page that I'm sure will make even the most jaded math students smile!

With the help of my wonderful national officers, committee heads and delegates, I'm sure that we'll be able to accomplish all of our goals, and then some! Please feel free to contact me at [JB1570@aol.com](mailto:JB1570@aol.com), or any of the other national officers (whose emails you can find at [www.mualphatheta.org](http://www.mualphatheta.org)). I look forward to a productive year and wildly successful convention in Huntsville!

Paul Baek  
National MAΘ President

## Notes from the Governing Council Meetings

The Mu Alpha Theta Governing Council met in mid-February in Norman, Oklahoma and at the National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia in July. Our newest Council members, Dr. Julie Clark representing the MAA and Dr. Irina Lyublinskaya representing the NCTM, were present.

During the February meeting, the Convention Committee presented suggestions to help standardize the summer conventions. The committee is developing Convention Guidelines to help convention hosts to run a smooth convention each year, in the hopes that sponsors from around the country will consider hosting a future National Convention.

The Governing Council approved the purchase of calculators from Texas Instruments to give as prizes at various competitions around the country and at the National Convention in Atlanta during the summer.

During the summer meeting, the Council spent time updating the National Constitution. Those changes are being submitted to chapters for a vote in this mailing. The Council also voted to offer a free Write-In Contest to active chapters through National Assessment and Testing. The Vector Scholarship and Outreach programs, begun last year, were discussed and cancelled, due to lack of enough applicants.

The Council also voted to participate in the Intel International Science and Engineering Competition, giving a national award and regional awards at science fairs around the country and the world. The Mu Alpha Theta Award will be presented to the individual or group project demonstrating the most challenging, thorough, and creative investigation of a problem involving modern mathematics.

The Student Delegate President and Vice-President presented the Council with updates and changes to the Student By-Laws. These were discussed and accepted.

The new On-line Order System was discussed. This fall, Mu Alpha Theta chapters will be able to access information about their chapter online and will be able to order new member certificates and merchandise online.

### National Officers:

President:	<b>Susan Hiller</b> Vero Beach HS, Vero Beach, FL susiehillier@bellsouth.net
Past-President:	<b>Harold Reiter</b> University of North Carolina, Charlotte, NC hbreiter@email.uncc.edu
Secretary-Treasurer:	<b>Paul Goodey</b> University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK pgoodey@math.ou.edu
Governor Region I:	<b>Tom Norris</b> Thomas Jefferson HS, Auburn, WA tnorris@fwsd.wednet.edu
Governor Region II:	<b>Mattie White</b> Benjamin Franklin HS, New Orleans, LA mattiewhitell@aol.com
Governor Region III:	<b>Thomas Morris</b> Berkeley Preparatory School, Tampa, FL thom10@tampabay.rr.com
Governor Region IV:	<b>Mary Rhein</b> Lakota West HS, West Chester, Ohio mary.rhein@lakotaonline.com
MAA Representative:	<b>Julie Clark</b> Hollins University, Roanoke, VA jclark@hollins.edu
NCTM Representative:	<b>Irina E. Lyublinskaya</b> The Peddie School, Hightstown, NJ Ilyublinskaya@peddie.org
SIAM Representative:	<b>Terry Herdman</b> Virginia Tech Interdisciplinary Center for Applied Mathematics, Blacksburg, VA herdman@origin2.icam.vt.edu
AMATYC Representative:	<b>Rob Farinelli</b> Boyce Campus, Monroeville, PA rfarinelli@ccac.edu
Executive Director:	<b>Kay Weiss</b> University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

### National Student Officers:

President:	<b>Paul Baek</b> Lawton Chiles HS Tallahassee, FL JB 1570@aol.com
Vice-President:	<b>Nick NanMeter</b> Archbishop Rummel HS Metairie, LA nvan629@hotmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer:	<b>Jing-Jing Mao</b> Lakota West HS West Chester, Ohio jjilb@msn.com
Parliamentarian:	<b>Miguel Morcuende</b> Iowa West City HS Iowa City, IA miguel@morcuende.com

## Mu Alpha Theta Scholarships

During 2002-2003, Mu Alpha Theta ran the Vector Scholars and the Outreach Programs. Students submitted projects in a number of categories. The following awards were made:

### ***In Proponents of Mathematics –***

First place went to Eve Drucker from Bergen Country Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology in Hackensack, NJ. Eve is attending Harvard University this fall. Second place was awarded to Mila Singh, Andrea Vidler and Valerie Zhavoronkina from Clarkstown High School in West Nyack, NY. Mila and Andrea will graduate in 2004 and Valerie will graduate in 2005.

### ***In Students Teaching –***

There was no first place winner. Eve Drucker won second place and Jack Guidarelli of New Trier High School in Winnetka, IL won third place. Jack is attending Iowa State University this fall.

*Continued on Page 3*

## Relay For Life

An idea was presented to me early this year by my math coach (Mary Rhein of Lakota West HS, Region 4 Governor) that I think is a wonderful idea. One purpose of the Mu Alpha Theta National convention is to unite Mu chapters across the United States. It allows members to find common ground and join a community that will help make friends all the while doing something that is meaningful and worthwhile. As we have all seen, this is not an easy task. Nationals, however amazing, only attracts a small fraction of schools. As Miguel Morcuende (Parliamentarian, Iowa City West) stated, 35 states were not even represented this past nationals in Atlanta. Along with that, there were several states that had but one school (Ohio, Iowa, Hawaii).

Mrs. Rhein's suggestion is for each school across the nation to participate in a local community event. An event that likely affects each and every one of us and is widespread enough for every community to be able to participate in. *Relay for Life*.

A very scary but true fact is that one person in every three is diagnosed with cancer sometime in his/her life. Almost everyone is affected by cancer, whether it is through a family member, friend, mentor or even themselves. By participating in *Relay for Life*, not only will we be joining together uniting Mu Alpha Theta, but we will also be supporting a worthy cause, cancer research and prevention.

*Relay for Life* is an 18-hour walk-a-thon sponsored by the American Cancer Society (ACS). I have been involved with the event for the past two years so I am able to share a bit about the event but as for specifics, you each--if interested--will have to contact your respective local American Cancer Society chapters. For the relay, interested participants gather a team of 8-14 members. The team then works to raise money. The minimum amount a team must raise is \$1000. It seems like a large sum, but I have found that when you explain to people it is for the ACS, they are more than willing to give. Unlike most relays, these donations are of definite amounts, not by the mile so every cent counts!

This relay requires its participating teams to have at least one member of each team on the track walking/running/skipping/whatever at all times. It is not a race, just an event to honor those who battle cancer and commemorate those who have battled cancer. Through the 18-hours, ACS provides many forms of entertainment to keep everyone interested. Every year, we have a Luminary Service where anyone can purchase a luminary for someone who has or is battling cancer. These luminaries are placed around the track and lit at dusk as we walk in tribute to roll call of all those who are honored by a luminary. It is a very emotional and special event that even persons not participating in the relay will come and see (and some to purchase a luminary).

More light-hearted forms of entertainment are also available. At midnight this year, we had a pizza party. Free pizza donated by a local pizzeria to all teams.

At 2am, we held the Ms. Relay contest. For this, a male member of each team dressed up as a woman and struts *her* stuff while audience members donate money to their favorite Ms. Relay. After the evening gown and interview portions of the pageant, the audience then chooses the Ms. Relay and he wins all the money collected by the audience for his team. There are also more conventional remedies for boredom such as dances and karaoke. My hope is that we can involve many chapters across the nation by forming Mu Alpha Theta teams and raising money for the ACS in Mu Alpha Theta's name. I don't know how involved with the community each individual chapter is, but here is an opportunity to extend Mu Alpha Theta past the school and into the community. *Relay for Life* is a worthy cause that I know for a fact is held in many cities across the United States and I hope that you will investigate this idea and spread the word.

Another suggestion my sponsor made is to display the total sum raised by all Mu Alpha Theta chapters on the website, as a form of showing how together, Mu Alpha Theta can be a mighty club that can accomplish incredible feats. I hope I haven't bored you with my long-winded plea but I truly hope you will consider this a possibility and introduce the idea to your own chapters. I think that this is a challenge that most Mu chapters can participate in due to the widespread presence of the American Cancer Society and together, we can really raise a lot of money for them.

If you are interested, have any questions or simply want to discuss this idea, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks for your time,  
Jing-Jing Mao  
Lakota West HS, Ohio  
National Secretary/Treasurer  
Email: ijilb@msn.com

## Mu Alpha Theta Scholarships

*Cont'd from page 2*

### **Math on the Web –**

First place went to Ryan Lefevre and Alice Pang of Baton Rouge High School in Baton Rouge, LA. Ryan is attending the University of California in Berkeley this fall. Alice will be graduating in 2004.

### **Event Incubation Grant –**

Students from the Grissom High School Mu Alpha Theta won an Event Incubation Grant to run the Rocket City Math League for Mu Alpha Theta schools this year. See the article about their event elsewhere in the Newsletter.

## Rocket City Math League

The Rocket City Math League is a year long math league written and coordinated by students at Virgil I Grissom High School. The RCML is sponsored by an event incubation grant from Mu Alpha Theta.

- \* There are three 45-minute tests, each with 12 questions.
- \* Test dates: Dec. 9, Jan. 27, and Feb. 24.
- \* Two levels of tests are available:
  - Apollo, for Geometry and Algebra II students
  - Mercury, for Pre-Algebra and Algebra I students
- \* Tests will be either emailed or snail mailed to you, and you will send back the students' scores.
- \* Each sub category will be ranked separately for individual awards (Geometry students will be in a separate bracket from Algebra II, etc.)
- \* Individual and team awards will be mailed by the first of May.
- \* Copies of last year's tests and sample tests can be found on the RCML website also.
- \* Cost: \$25 per team for email correspondence  
\$50 per team for snail mail

Registration deadline is October 29. If for some reason you can't make this deadline but still want to participate, please let us know. You can find the registration information at [www.geocities.com/rocket\\_city\\_math\\_league](http://www.geocities.com/rocket_city_math_league). Please send a completed form and a check payable to Rocket City Math League – GHS to:

Rocket City Math League  
Attn: Cindy Rodgers  
Grissom High School  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd. SE  
Huntsville, AL 35802

If you took part in the math league last year, it should be noted that we received some remarks on the difficulty of the problems on some of the tests. We will do our best this year to make the questions as fair as possible, without letting them become too easy. If you are interested in joining or have any questions, comments, or concerns, feel free to contact one of us at [Vivpig@hotmail.com](mailto:Vivpig@hotmail.com) or [Bukwyrms@aol.com](mailto:Bukwyrms@aol.com) or visit our website.

Daniel Butler, Webmaster, RCML  
Vivian Wang, Corresponding Secretary, RCML

## Mu Alpha Theta Special Awards

Each year Mu Alpha Theta makes a number of monetary awards to outstanding members and sponsors. Choosing the winners for these distinguished awards from among numerous outstanding candidates is always a challenge.

The Kalin Award recognizes a student showing unusual capability in mathematics and who has provided unusual service to MA $\Theta$ . The student receives \$1000 and his sponsor receives \$300. This year, there were also two finalists for the award, who each won \$300. The winner of the 2003 Kalin Award was Edward B. Lee from Baton Rouge Magnet High School. The finalists were Joel D. Nishimura from Bellevue High School in Bellevue, WA and Jonathan J. Senn from Stoneman Douglas High School in Coral Springs, FL. We congratulate each of these worthy winners.

The Andree Award recognizes a graduating senior or former MA $\Theta$  member who has completed no more than two years of college work and who is interested in becoming a mathematics teacher. The recipient receives \$1000 in cash and free registration at the National Convention. This year's winner was Mathew J. Baxter from Fort Myers High School in Fort Myers, FL.

The Huneke Distinguished Sponsor Award is presented by the Governing Council and the Sister Scholastica Most Committed Sponsor Award is presented by the Student Delegate Assembly. Each award includes a \$500 cash prize. The awards each honor a sponsor who has labored tirelessly and made significant contributions to MA $\Theta$ . The winner must be present at the National Convention to receive the award. This year the winner of the Huneke Award was Donna Sowers from Fort Myers High School in Fort Myer, FL and the winner of the Sister Scholastica Award was Darryl Hill of Rickards High School in Tallahassee, FL.

**Get 'Em While They Last** – Mu Alpha Theta has purchased a limited number of TI 89 calculators to offer as prizes in competitions run by MA $\Theta$  chapters. To request a few to give away at your event, email Kay Weiss at [matheta@ou.edu](mailto:matheta@ou.edu). Tell Kay the date of your competitions and how many students will be involved. Calculators will be available on a first come/first serve basis and Kay will try to save an equal amount for each of the four MA $\Theta$  Regions.

# WIN A TRIP TO THE 2004 NATIONAL CONVENTION

**What's at stake?** Convention registration for a sponsor and a non-senior student and travel expenses up to \$500. (travel arranged by the national office) for each of you to the national Mu Alpha Theta Convention in Huntsville, Alabama, July 27-August 1, 2004. A total of twelve of these prizes will be awarded - three per region.

**Who is eligible?** Any newly chartered chapter or chapter that has not been represented at the national within the past three years.

**How to enter?** Write two paragraphs about your chapter, one describing the events your chapter has participated in this academic year, and the other describing how your chapter will benefit from representation at the convention. While you're at the convention, you will be asked to complete surveys (one for the sponsor and one for the student) describing your feelings about the convention and how your chapter will benefit from your participation in the convention.

Mail entries: Mu Alpha Theta National Office 601 Elm Ave., Rm 423 Norman, OK 73019

**ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MAY 15, 2004**

## MAΘ 2004 National Convention

*Blast off to the Rocket City-Huntsville, AL*

The 2004 National Mu Alpha Theta Convention is being hosted by Grissom High School and Lakota West High School from July 27 – August 1, 2004. A final registration packet will be available online this fall. Included in the online information will be a sweepstakes rubric as well as judging sheets for the poster, scrapbook and chalk talk competitions. Housing will be at the Hilton Hotel in Huntsville, and contest will take place in the Bon Braun Center. The Early Bird Registration Fee for 2004 convention will be \$400, a \$50 deposit per participant is due on April 1 with the balance of \$350 due on May 15. The Late Registration Fee will be \$425 per participant and will be due in full on May 15. For more information contact:

Beth Andrada, Grissom HS ([bandrada@hsv.k12.al.us](mailto:bandrada@hsv.k12.al.us))  
Mary Rhein, Lakota West HS, [mary.rhein@lakotaonline.com](mailto:mary.rhein@lakotaonline.com)

### CONVENTION HOSTS NEEDED

Think about hosting a National Convention! Host needed for 2006 and beyond. Mu Alpha Theta will help you organize, but we need sponsors to volunteer to host. For information, email Susan Hiller at [susiehillier@bellsouth.net](mailto:susiehillier@bellsouth.net)

## MAΘ Student Delegate/Chapter President Listserv

Student Delegates and Chapter Presidents are invited to join a listserv by sending a blank e-mail to <mailto:subscribe-delegate@topica.com>. Student delegates and chapter presidents can all play a large role in the success of Mu Alpha Theta this year, through this mailing list. Throughout the year the listserv will provide a chance to have an open discussion of any topics related to Mu AlphaTheta.

## MAΘ National Listserv

In an organization as large and as geographically vast as Mu Alpha Theta, a listserv can provide a convenient way for members to keep in touch and up-to-date on events and topics. Since every member sees each posted email, it provides an excellent way to distribute extended discussions. Members can read each post when convenient and, if desired, submit their comments or suggestions.

There are two ways to subscribe:

1. Send an email to [MuAlphaTheta-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:MuAlphaTheta-subscribe@topica.com)

The listserv will automatically extract your email address and add you to the list.

2. A subscription form is also available at:

<http://www.topica.com/lists/MuAlphaTheta/subscribe/?location=listinfo>

If you still can't subscribe, send an email to Sam Koski at [ASKoski@aol.com](mailto:ASKoski@aol.com) with the email addresses that you want added.