

FALL 2010 MATYCONN MEETING

October 22nd, 2010

Middlesex Community College

This meeting is dedicated to Dr. Benoit Mandelbrot.

"Clouds are not spheres, mountains are not cones, coastlines are not circles, and bark is not smooth, nor does lightning travel in a straight line"
—Mandelbrot, in his introduction to *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*

The meeting was called to order at 2:20 pm by President Andre Freeman. Andre welcomed the attendees and thanked Steve Krevisky for hosting the meeting.

The minutes from the Spring 2010 meeting were reviewed. Elaine requested a change. The minutes reflected the approval that MATYCONN would reimburse Elaine Dinto for the cost of the website. Elaine announced that she is donating the money to the scholarship fund for this year. Steve Krevisky motioned to approve the minutes as corrected. Betsy Doane seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Andre Freeman asked new members in the room to introduce themselves.

New Members Present**:

- 1) Sarah Leone - Middlesex CC
- 2) Mary Rayappan - Middlesex CC
- 3) Theodora Benezra - Housatonic CC
- 4) Sue Spencer - Gateway CC
- 5) Jane Wampler - Naugatuck Valley CC

**There were other new members that arrived later to the meeting after the introductions: Kegan Samuel and Marian Zerbi from Naugatuck Valley CC

All other members present in the meeting introduced themselves after the new members were introduced.

Treasurer Report – Debi Litwinko

Debi Litwinko stated that the money is still in a CD earning some interest. MATYCONN gets \$18.00. She welcomed any ideas as to what can be done with that money. She described the expenditures from the report. The checks in the report are basically the checks made out to the contest winners and the scholarship winners. She also confirmed that the money (\$300.00) to the hospitality suite for the AMATYC conference was indeed sent out. The check for the caterers used for this Fall's meeting will be reflected later.

AMATYC Updates

(a) Jane Tanner-

Jane announced the AMATYC conference in Boston this November. She encouraged everyone to try to attend. She suggested for members to check in their institutions to see if there are any funds to get sponsorship to attend the conference for at least one day. The cost for one day is about \$150.00

She surveyed the group to know how many colleges are involved with STATWAY. Her college is involved with MATHWAY. A year ago during the summer, they started the seeds for both of these programs. Jane described the MATHWAY program. Their goal is to get students that have placed into beginning algebra to take a college level math course that will transfer. The program is not heavy in algebra but concentrates on the main skills that are necessary.

Jane announced AMATYC positions that are still open. Two of these positions are (1)Professional Development Chair and (2)a new position titled Executive Director. The Amatyc website has the descriptions of these positions. Jane also announced that at the end of the conference, there will be a new committee initiated on Statistics.

On August 1st 2010 they began a campaign for the AMATYC foundation. Project Access is one of the programs funded by the foundation. They want to make it an ongoing fundraising activity.

(b) Steve Kravisky-

Steve announced that he will be standing in the president's meeting for Andre Freeman. He is asking everyone to forward any concerns so that he can bring them up on our behalf at this meeting. He is chairing an international subcommittee. They are hosting a pre-conference workshop on developmental math. He will forward Andre any information so that it can be included in the website.

MATH CONTEST REPORT- Steve Krevisky

The contest was offered in past years on a Saturday. It is now offered over a period of days to encourage more student participation. Steve announced that they need to pick an interval of days in April that does not conflict with any of the holidays. The calendar was reviewed to avoid Good Friday. The membership approved the following date period to hold the contest: Wednesday, April 13th 2011 to Saturday, April 16th 2011.

Steve mentioned that there was a problem this year with the plaques' order. He said that the company used was problematic and asked if there was an alternative where

the plaques could be ordered next year. Andre Freeman suggested a place in Hartford called Mr. Trophy.

Steve described the contest. It has twenty questions to be completed in two hours. The level goes to intermediate algebra but the questions are non-routine. Students have to think outside of the box.

Steve also wants to know the contacts from each college so that he can follow up with them.

Ruth Urbina-Lilback asked Steve if there are any set procedures to ensure that results are received in a timely manner. Steve acknowledged the concern and stated that from the time that the contest is given, he needs to get the three top scores a week later. The contact person should grade it quickly. That will facilitate voting decisions on how to allocate the funds during the MATYCONN Spring meeting.

Debi Litwinko was concerned about the students that would not get prizes if the contact person missed the deadline. Tony Pruchnicki shared his thoughts. In his opinion, the person that takes on the responsibility must be in charge. He or she should designate a colleague as a back up to cover the responsibilities if there is an unforeseen event.

Steve concluded that if scores are not submitted from a college by the deadline, then their students will be able to get prizes within their college but will not be eligible for statewide prizes. This decision was considered an informational report. Voting was not required.

Steve will send Elaine Dinto a copy of this year's student winners so that the website can be updated with their names.

Newsletter Report- Andre Freeman

The last edition came out in Spring 2010. Andre will be working on the next copy.

MATH ISSUES- Pat Hirschy

Pat talked about the Math Issues Committee. It is a system-wide committee that originated after the Common Course numbering since 2004. The Committee is currently led by Miguel Garcia from Gateway Community College. Math Issues has a steering committee that is led by Elaine Dinto, Miguel Garcia and Pat Hirschy. There are point persons from each college. All Math faculty are encouraged to attend. The following are the four initiatives that the committee is currently working on:

(1) Statway, (2) Credit Status of Intermediate Algebra, (3) Updating our Progress Plan from June 2007 legislation and (4) CCP – College Career Pathways

There is a lot of discourse that takes place in these meetings. The Math Issues Committee is a diverse system and embraces new involvement.

WEBSITE - Elaine Dinto

Elaine Dinto gave a general description of what can be found on the site. She added that the Math Issues Minutes are in it. She urged anyone to go to the site and check his/her membership status. If anyone just joined today, the information has to go through Debi Litwinko, then Jana and then to her. Elaine would like to get rid of the MacAffe warning that one gets when accessing the MATYCONN site. She wrote to MacAffe to make sure that it is taken out. Andre stated that it happened because it was done on campus. Pat explained that it is an IT system-wide issue.

Elaine demonstrated various features of the site with Andre's assistance. She showed how to access one of the newsletters. The site also has the last questions from the previous year's Math Contest Questions.

Membership Update - Elaine Dinto in place of Jana Sime

The current membership per college was discussed. Elaine made special notice to the fact that there are 33 members with memberships that recently expired in September of 2010. She urged members to go through the list and ensure that they renew memberships as applicable.

A wonderful announcement was made: Patricia Hirschy was congratulated and recognized for receiving her doctorate degree.

Scholarship Update- Andre Freeman in place of Larisa Alikhanova

The scholarship application is in the website. Larisa is always looking for more campuses to submit names of students. Last year the award was increased. Elaine Dinto asked Debi Litwinko to send her the names of past scholarship awardees so that they can be reflected in the website.

Spring 2011 Meeting Discussion

Voting for new officers will be part of the Spring 2011 agenda. A nominating committee was instated to look for candidates for officers. This year's committee members will be Sue Ricciuti and Jane Wampler.

Andre inquired about the best way to announce the positions and encourage general membership to run for the positions. Sue Ricciuti described how it was done last year.

Debi Litwinko brought up the concern that there are organizational tasks required for the MATYCONN's meetings that do not seem to be described or officially assigned to a specific board position. She wanted to know if this was a matter that could be resolved

by creating a new position responsible for overseeing arrangements for each MATYCONN meeting.

Mark Leech described his experience as a past vice-president and president of MATYCONN. In his opinion, the responsibilities of organizing the meetings were challenging to meet as it was one of many other tasks that were required of a President.

Steve suggested we review the by-laws this year. Further discussion led to the finding that the responsibilities were already assigned to the board position of Vice-president. The Vice-President is not in charge of doing all of the arrangements. The by-laws only state that the Vice-President will chair the committee in charge of the meeting arrangements.

Andre asked if anyone was interested in joining the committee. Karen Rosen volunteered to be in the committee.

The Spring 2011 meeting will be hosted by Naugatuck Valley Community College Date on May 6th, 2011.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was proposed by Steve Krevisky and seconded by Betsy Doane.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm

Postscript

After the meeting adjourned, Miguel Garcia suggested that MATYCONN members dedicate the day's meeting to Dr. Mandelbrot's memory, and it was so agreed.

Benoit Mandelbrot, who developed the field of fractal geometry and applied it to many seemingly diverse areas, passed away on October 14, 2010 of pancreatic cancer. One of the leading mathematicians of the past 50 years, Dr. Mandelbrot attended a MATYCONN meeting with Dr. Michael Frame (Yale) several years ago, where many MATYCONN members had the opportunity to talk with him. Many of us also had the privilege and pleasure of meeting him at some of Dr. Frame's Fractal Geometry Summer Workshops.