

Mu Alpha Theta Newsletter

Spring 2006

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www.mualphatheta.org

News from the President

Greetings from Mary Emma Bunch, President:

I'm excited about the opportunities for you as members of Mu Alpha Theta. Look carefully at the website: www.mualphatheta.org and take advantage of the grants, scholarships, awards, and competitions that are available. If you have suggestions about other ways the national organization can help you and your chapter, send them to me at bunchmao@gmail.com or Kay Weiss, Executive Director of Mu Alpha Theta at matheta@ou.edu.

The National Convention this summer is in Fort Collins, Colorado. **Start planning now to be a part of this great experience.** If your chapter has not attended a national convention within the last three years or ever, you should apply for a **Convention Grant**. The grant will pay registration for a sponsor and non-senior member of your chapter to attend and up to \$250 each for their transportation. Twelve grants will be awarded this year.

As a result of hurricanes and other natural disasters, this past school year has been a difficult one for many of our Mu Alpha Theta chapters. I'm pleased to know that most of our schools in those areas have now reopened. It was wonderful to see how other Mu Alpha Theta Chapters joined hands with some of the affected chapters to help with their needs.

This time last year I was on a voyage around the world with a university program called Semester at Sea. In 125 days, I had the opportunity to study about and visit fifteen countries on four continents. Although I saw many wonderful places and met delightful people, it just reminded me of what freedoms and opportunities we have here in the United States. You, members of Mu Alpha Theta, are the future of our country and the world. Make the most of your opportunities to prepare yourself for the decisions that will be on your shoulders in the future.

National Convention MAΘ 2006.

This year's National Convention will be held in Ft. Collins, Colorado, July 16 – 21, 2006. Ft. Collins is the home of the scenic campus of Colorado State University (CSU) and is located against the magnificent backdrop of the Rocky Mountains. The Hilton Hotel will be the site of all convention events. In addition to the competitions, speaker sessions, excursions, and social activities that are perennial favorites of students and sponsors, this year the convention will include a few surprises. The convention hosts are Thom Morris of Berkeley Prep and Sue Doker of Lincoln High School; they promise that this will be a convention you won't want to miss.

The convention registration fee is \$485 or \$535, depending on when you send in your initial deposit. This covers your lodging, meals, and all convention activities. The due date for the first deposit is April 1, and the final deadline for all registration fees is May 15. All the specific details about the convention can be found at www.mualphatheta.org. Don't miss out on this great convention! Check out the website! It is time to plan your school's trip to MAΘ 2006.

National Office News from Kay:

March through June 15 is the busiest time of the year at the National Office. We will enroll over 20,000 new members during that time; send out over 8000 honor cords and many t-shirts, pins, buttons, and other items. It is also a time when teachers are stressed and very busy. (As if there is a time when this is not true!) When possible, please try to give us a couple of weeks to fill your order, if you are sending it out by snail mail with a check. However, we encourage all sponsors to use our Online System for ordering instead. Orders go from your computer to ours and your certificates are printed and all materials ordered can be sent out that day. You may use the check number as a purchase order number, if the amount of the check matches your order amount. That way, your materials are out the door while the check is on its way to us instead of you having to wait. You may also use a purchase order number or a credit card. If you don't know your chapter ID number or password, just email Kay at the office or give a call. matheata@ou.edu or 405-325-4489. Instructions are available online, or I can email them to you.

Remember to look over all our merchandise for your members. One popular item is our small seal of the Mu Alpha Theta symbol to put on your student's diploma. These sell for 6 cents each.

Remember, honor cords are no longer sold at the bundle price. All cords are \$5 each and the money goes into the Educational Foundation to support scholarships, grants, prizes, and our National Convention. If you order a bundle by mistake, we will send 20 cords for your \$100.

We have added a new member to our staff. Tara Nixon has joined us as our Administrative Assistant. While it will take a bit of time for her to learn all the ins and outs of Mu Alpha Theta, I have great confidence that she can help with any of your needs. Shayna Grove and Rachel Conlon continue as our student helpers. Rachel has been accepted to graduate school in Canada next fall, and we will miss her. Both of our student helpers were former Mu Alpha Theta members. Shay will be completing her degree in Mathematics in May, 2007. Gavin Nipper is rejoining the staff as our "IT Guy".

The office is usually open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm Central time, Monday through Friday. We will be closed from July 14 – July 24 for the National Convention in Ft. Collins, CO.

National Officers:

President:	Mary Emma Bunch 713 Hardwicke Drive Knoxville, TN 37923 bunchmao@gmail.com
Past-President	Susan Hiller Vero Beach HS Vero Beach, FL 32960 susiehillier@bellsouth.net
Secretary-Treasurer:	Paul Goodey University of Oklahoma Norman, OK 73019 pgoodey@mathou.edu
Governor Region I:	Tom Tosch Mount Rainer High School Des Moines, WA 98198 tomtosh@wamath.net
Governor Region II:	Mattie White 6943 Colquitt Road Keithville, LA 71047 white_math@bellsouth.net
Governor Region III:	Susan Doker Lincoln High School Tallahassee, FL 32311 DokerS@mail.leon.k12.fl.us
Governor Region: IV:	Carol Botzner Lakota West HS West Chester, OH 45069 elizabeth.botzner@lakotaonline.com
MAA Representative:	Steve Dunbar University of Nebraska Lincoln, NE 68588 sdunbar1@unl.edu
NCTM Representative:	Dr. Irina E. Lyublinskaya College of Staten Island Staten Island, NY 31014 http://discovery.csi.cunny.edu
SIAM Representative:	Terry Herdman ICAM 0531 Blacksburg, VA 24061 herd88@vt.edu
AMATYC Representative:	Rob Farinelli College of Southern Maryland 8730 Mitchell Road La Plata, MD 20646 rfarinelli@csmd.edu
Executive Director:	Kay Weiss University of Oklahoma Norman, OK 73019 matheta@ou.edu

National Student Officers:

President:	Cristina Munoz Fort Myers High Fort Myers, FL JTCMunoz@aol.com
Vice-President:	Tyler McKay Thomas Jefferson High Auburn, WA tmckay8@comcast.net
Secretary/Treasurer:	Stephen Repar Lafayette High School Lafayette, LA thegrimrepar@gmail.com
Parliamentarian:	Matt Sunderland Hunter College HS New York, NY gatewaycat@gmail.com

GOODBYE, IRINA. WE WILL MISS YOU!

In April, Dr. Irina Lyublinskaya will end her term as our NCTM Representative. Irina has been a huge asset to Mu Alpha Theta during her three year term on our Governing Council. As a sponsor of the Mu Alpha Theta chapter at the Peddie School, she shared some great ideas for chapter activities. She was a Keynote Speaker to the Atlanta National Convention, gave a number of very popular Speaker Session talks at other conventions, was the motivation behind our sponsorship of the Mu Alpha Theta Award at Science Fairs around the world, served as a judge at last year's International Science Fair, provided feedback to NCTM and always had another great idea for the Governing Council on how to better serve our student members and sponsoring teachers. Her enthusiasm for mathematics, everything to do with Mu Alpha Theta, her amazing energy level, and her wonderful sense of humor will be sorely missed. Irina has recently been promoted to head the Discovery Institute at the College of Staten Island, part of The City University of New York. The Discovery Institute offers several pre-college programs that strengthen the academic preparation of students while they are still in high school and others that encourage college students to consider teaching careers. The Institute also provides opportunities for teachers to develop new teaching strategies. Their programs, including the **Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP)**, and the **Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)**, are supported by the resources of the College and by grants from a variety of state, federal, and private institutions. We wish all the best to Irina and hope she will come back and see us again soon!

Mary Rhein Scholarship Fund

Mary Rhein, former governor of Region IV and mathematics teacher for Lakota Schools in West Chester, Ohio for 26 years passed away on July 16, 2005 from Ovarian Cancer.

Mary felt so strongly about supporting the math program at Lakota West and especially Mu Alpha Theta that she donated \$41,194 of her own money to set up the Mary Rhein Scholarship Fund. Her husband Steve Bradley added another \$9,000, so the fund could start with \$50,000. Another \$9,661 has been donated to the fund since July, 2005.

From this fund, \$5000 donated to the Mu Alpha Theta Educational Foundation to help with expenses for the National Convention.

The Mary Rhein Scholarship fund will also help with registration costs for Lakota West students and teachers to attend the National Convention and will provide two \$1,000. scholarships for a male and female, who have donated their time and energies to service in the area of mathematics.

Chapters Adopt Chapters Affected by Hurricanes

In the Fall Newsletter, we put out a call for chapters willing to "adopt" other chapters affected by hurricanes. A number of schools paired up.

Vero Beach High School in Vero Beach, FL contacted Archbishop Blenk High School in Gretna, LA. Vero Beach has been affected by hurricanes over the last two years, but stepped up to help. The chapter sent a big box of notebooks, notebook paper, pens, and pencils. Some students continue to correspond by email.

Thomas Jefferson High School in Auburn, WA sent \$250 worth of AMC Theater gift cards to Archbishop Chapelle High School, in Metairie, LA when the movie theater reopened. This was the only entertainment in town after the hurricanes, and they wanted to treat students to a show. Hickman High School from Columbia, MO also sent \$100 to the same school.

Fort Myers Senior High School in Fort Myers, FL sent a TI 84 to Fontainebleau High School in Mandeville, LA for a student who had lost everything and couldn't afford to replace their calculator.

Roanoke Valley Governor's School in Roanoke, VA is raising money to pay the registration fees for students at Immaculata High School's Mu Alpha Theta in Marrero, LA. Due to lack of funds, Immaculata felt their students couldn't afford to pay fees to clubs or organizations this year. The students of Roanoke will be taking care of the cost of membership in Mu Alpha Theta for them.

We want to thank everyone who offered to help and hope any schools still needing some assistance will contact the Kay in the National Office, matheta@ou.edu.

SPONSORS

Thank YOU to Retiring Sponsors:

The following teachers have retired as Mu Alpha Theta Sponsors during the past school year. Our thanks to these dedicated teachers. Fairfax High School, Fairfax, VA: Mary Dalton 5/05; Delaware Technical Community College, Newark, DE: Sue Fader 6/05; Paxon School for Advanced Studies, Jacksonville, FL: Dr. Dalton Epting 5/05; Edmonson County High School, Brownsville, KY: Sandra Alford 5/05; Westside High School, Macon, GA: Nancy Jordan 5/05; St. Agnes Academy, Memphis, TN: Jane Hampshire 5/05; Gibbs High School, Corryton, TN: Laura DeMarotta 5/05; Benjamin Franklin High School, New Orleans, LA: Mattie White 10/05.

Huneke Award

Mu Alpha Theta established this Award in 1986 in honor of Harold Huneke, a former Secretary/Treasurer of National Mu Alpha Theta. Each year the Huneke Award honors a Sponsor who has made significant contributions to Mu Alpha Theta with a \$500 cash award and a plaque.

How to Apply: If your current Sponsor has served as Sponsor for at least five years, has attended at least two National Conventions (or will this year attend a second convention), and is not currently a member of the [Mu Alpha Theta Governing Council](#), then you can nominate your Sponsor by completing the [Nomination Form](#) and submitting **exactly** three letters of recommendation (including your own). Recommendation letters may come from the nominee's current or past students, co-workers, or Mu Alpha Theta colleagues. All nomination materials must be postmarked no later than **June 15** and mailed to: Mu Alpha Theta, 601 Elm Ave., Rm. 423, Norman, OK 73019-0315.

The Governing Council will choose the winner of the Huneke Award and the winner will be announced at the National Convention. Sponsors may be nominated for both the Sister Scholastica Award and Huneke Award in the same year. Sponsors may also enter their own name for the award.

TWELVE CONVENTION GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Governing Council of Mu Alpha Theta has approved twelve Convention Grants this year. Grants are available to any active, reactivating, or new chapter that has not attended a National summer convention in the past three years. The grant will pay registration fees and up to \$250 in transportation costs per person for two people attending from a chosen school. The application process is simple and the form is available online at www.mualphatheta.org > National Convention > Convention Grants. Give your students the opportunity to share five days with 700 other math students from around the country. Students compete in math competitions, speaker sessions, social events and outings together. There is no substitute for the excitement a Mu Alpha Theta National Convention. Where else can your students go and everyone they meet loves math? Grant deadline has been extended to April 15. Don't miss your chance to attend free!

Handbook for Sponsors Reprinted for You

All sponsors were mailed a new [Handbook for Sponsors](#) free of charge this Spring. The Handbook offers much helpful information for running your chapter of Mu Alpha Theta. You will find updated chapters and new additions, information about activities, instructions about our Online Order System, the history of Mu Alpha Theta, and much more. Please take the time to read the book and use it as a resource. If your copy didn't get to you, check with the former sponsor. If our records weren't updated, it may have gone to the wrong person. We also hope to post the complete book online at our website, so it is available for download. Additional copies of the book can be purchased from the National Office for \$4.00 each.

Visit the Mu Alpha Theta Booth at the NCTM Convention in St. Louis!

Drop by our booth in the Exhibit area of the NCTM Convention in St. Louis, anytime April 27 -29, 2006. Identify yourself as a sponsor of a chapter and receive a free gift.

Kay Weiss, Executive Director, will be manning the booth and is looking for sponsors that might be willing to join her for an hour. Tell other teachers about Mu Alpha Theta and your chapter activities. Anyone volunteering will receive a free Mu Alpha Theta t-shirt. **Email Kay by April 20th to let her know you are willing to help out and when you can stay at the booth, matheta@ou.edu.**

Governing Council Meets in Norman, OK

The Governing Council met on February 11, 2006. Among issues of interest to chapters, the following decisions were made:

- \$500 will be awarded to the chapter of the Kalin Award winner,
- Mu Alpha Theta will continue to provide staff for the Scoring Room at National Conventions and will provide a Convention Planner to help hosts run their convention, if desired.
- Will establish a new student award in memory of Mary Rhein.
- The Rubin and Andree Award recipients for 2006 were selected.
- Will seek historical information about the founders of Mu Alpha Theta from former sponsors, staff and Governing Council members, so as to compile an even better history of the organization.
- Will look into the possibility of reprinting an updated copy of Math and Music.
- Will seek a Two-Year College to host the first annual Mu Alpha Theta Competition for our Two-Year members.

Region IV

The Region IV Convention held on December 9– 10, 2005 was a great success. Schools attending were Beaver creek, Lakota East, Lakota West and St. Joseph. Friday night students competed in a team contest, played basketball, volleyball and cornhole, ate pizza and played cards.

Saturday there were individual contests, team ciphering and a Gemini competition.

The top scoring Alpha competitor was Jason Syu from Lakota West. The top scoring Theta competitor was Eric Maysheew from Beaver creek. They both will receive free registration to the national convention in Ft. Collins Colorado in July. Other top scorers receiving TI calculators donated by Mu Alpha Theta Headquarters were Sheng Fu from Lakota West and Joel Jean and Ronald Buch from Beaver creek.

Mu Alpha Theta Election Materials

Recently you have received election materials from Mu Alpha Theta. Every two years, our organization elects officers to its Governing Council. This year we elect a President-Elect, a Secretary-Treasurer, and Governors for Regions III and IV.

Please read information about each candidate carefully before voting. We have printed materials front and back to save paper; don't miss information on a candidate that may be printed on the back of a page.

Each active chapter has a single vote. Votes may be sent in by snail mail, email or registered online. There will be a button on the lower left of our website from about March 15 through April 25, 2006 that says "Vote Here". Candidates for President-Elect are Grace Mutz from TN and Carol Collins Selph from FL. Paul R. Goodey is again running for Secretary-Treasurer. Region III Governor Candidates are Rob Snow from FL and Todd Taylor from AL. Carol Botzner from OH and Mary Ann Gavioli from NY are running for the Governor of Region IV. There is also a change in the minimum eligibility requirement for new Two-Year college members.

Remember, your vote is important! The Governing Council is our board of directors and helps run both Mu Alpha Theta and the Educational Foundation. It is the duty of the members of the Governing Council to guide both organizations. They are responsible for setting policy and making decisions about how funds are spent. They provide oversight to the National Office. Please take the time to vote.

STUDENTS

Angela Giffin Selected as 2006 Andree Award Winner

Angela Giffin of Mount Carmel Academy in New Orleans, LA has been chosen as the 2006 winner of the Andree Award. Angela has a wide array of interests besides mathematics, including art, piano, flute, cheerleading, National Honor Society, writer for the school newspaper, and much more. She says she loves math and loves working with people and is looking forward to teaching math as her career. Angela wins \$1000 to help her with her educational goals and a free registration to the National Convention in Ft. Collins, CO this summer.

The Kalin Award

The Kalin Award was created by a grant from Dr. Robert Kalin of Florida State University, a former President of Mu Alpha Theta. The Mu Alpha Theta Educational Foundation continues to support the Kalin Award. This award recognizes graduating seniors attending the National Mu Alpha Theta Convention who have excelled in mathematics and performed notable service to Mu Alpha Theta communities. The winner of the Award receives a \$1500 prize and a distinguished plaque. The application form is available online at www.mualphatheta.org > Awards > Kalin Award.

Each Chapter is allowed to nominate one Mu Alpha Theta member for the Kalin Award per year. The Sponsor of the Chapter will determine how the Chapter's nominee is selected.

Guidelines to Apply: The Nominee will supply personal information including high school achievements, service to Mu Alpha Theta, and an essay. Do not send more information than is requested. Two recommendation letters are requested, one from the nominee's Mu Alpha Theta Chapter Sponsor and the other by an individual of the nominee's choice (no relatives, please). Do not send more than **two** recommendation letters. A form including the nominee's academic record is completed by the nominee's principal, counselor, or other school officer.

All three parts of the application must be postmarked by **June 15** and mailed to: Mu Alpha Theta, Kalin Award, 601 Elm Ave., Rm. 1102, Norman, OK 73019. The application items may be mailed separately.

SPONSOR AWARDS

Nominate your outstanding sponsor for either the Huneke Award or the Sister Scholastica Award. There is a description of the Huneke Award on the Sponsor's Page in this Newsletter. The Sister Scholastica Most Committed Sponsor Award was created in 1994 at the suggestion of the student delegates at the National Convention, who wanted to create another award to honor outstanding Sponsors of Mu Alpha Theta Chapters. The Award is named after Sister Scholastica, who had been a dedicated Sponsor since 1972, and is a fixture at the National Convention. The winner of the Sister Scholastica Award receives a \$500 cash prize.

Guidelines to nominate: Only Sponsors who will attend the National Convention may be nominated. To nominate your Sponsor, complete the [Nomination Form](#) and submit **exactly** three letters of recommendation (including one by the nominating student) by **June 15** to:

Mu Alpha Theta
Sister Scholastica Award
601 Elm Ave., Rm. 1102
Norman, OK 73019.

Recommendation letters may come from the nominee's current or past students, co-workers, or Mu Alpha Theta colleagues. The winner of the Sister Scholastica Award is chosen by the student delegates at the National Convention and is honored at the closing ceremony of the convention. Nominating students may be asked to make a speech to the Student Delegate Assembly on behalf of their nominees. Sponsors may be nominated for both the Sister Scholastica Award and Huneke Award in the same year.

Summer Research Grants Available

Have you ever thought about attending a summer program to study math? Mu Alpha Theta is offering up to \$2000 to help pay tuition, living expenses and travel to an accredited college or university program for high school students.

See our website at www.mualphatheta.org > Scholarships > Summer Grants for details and the application forms. **\$20,000 is available again this year.** Students need to be accepted to a program before requesting funding. Grants are usually approved within a week of receipt and most often, money is paid directly to the college on your behalf. Email Kay Weiss at matheta@ou.edu before applying to see if money is still available. The website lists numerous programs that would qualify for grant money, if approved. Last year we had members attended programs at the University of Michigan, MIT, Stanford, Johns Hopkins and Hampshire College. Students studied Number Theory, The Magic of Physics and the Physics of Magic, Abstract Algebra and Applied Mathematics for Women. **We would love to give away all of our Summer Grant money this year!** Any questions? Email Kay Weiss.

The Sudoku Epidemic

If you haven't been bitten yet by the Sudoku bug yet, let us infect you. Be warned! This latest math puzzle is spreading uncontrollably across the globe. Many newspapers have added a Sudoku puzzle to the page with their daily Crossword Puzzle. Books like "Sudoku for Dummies" abound in your local bookstore. You can "Google" the word Sudoku and come up with loads of sites to meet your need for "just one more Sudoku to do today." You can even buy a computer program which will provide you with an "almost" infinite number of puzzles to solve at different levels of difficulty.

If you want to try something even more challenging, try to make up your own Sudoku puzzle, whose solution exists and is unique. (If you have done any mathematical proofs, these words may look familiar.)

For a little history, some explanation about how to solve the puzzles in a logical fashion, and a few to try for your enjoyment, please read the following article reprinted with permission of **FOCUS**, the newsletter of the Mathematical Association of America (Incorporated).