

Math Musings

*The Newsletter of
the Elon Math
Department
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NEW MATH CHAIRMAN NAMED SKIP ALLIS SUCCEEDS JEFF CLARK

Dr. James "Skip" Allis has been named the new Mathematics Department Chairman, succeeding Dr. Jeff Clark on June 1. Skip has been with the department for five years teaching a variety of classes. He is a native of Ithaca, New York, and received his B.A. degree in mathematics from the State University of New York College (SUNY) at Potsdam. He received his masters' degree from the University of South Carolina (USC) and then returned to New York for two years to teach at Mohawk Valley Community College. He received his Ph.D. from USC with his dissertation in functional analysis.

At USC, Skip met his wife Celeste, who was working on her master's degree in mathematics. They were married in 1995. Celeste teaches mathematics at Rockingham Community College in Wentworth NC. They have no children, but have a burgeoning family of 11 cats. Check out the family photos at www.netpath.net/~allis/cats.htm. Besides his interests in cats, Skip's hobbies include woodworking and watching sports, particularly football and stock car racing.

When asked about why he chose to work at Elon, Skip said he loved the area. He enjoys working with other members of the department and especially the Elon students. Students enjoy his classes because they do not always follow a traditional format. He keeps his classes informal and encourages his students to question the lessons presented in the classroom. He says, "Students think they are never supposed to ask why a math problem is the way it is. They think they are just supposed to accept it and memorize the formula." He is constantly trying to change that misconception.

For the past two summers, Skip has pioneered a World Wide Web class at Elon, in which students can earn credit for their general studies math requirement at Elon from the comfort of their home. He says that the classes went well, but admits that he missed the interaction with the students found in the regular classroom.

Skip welcomes your visits, phone calls or comments. Visit his Web page at <http://math.elon.edu/~clyde/> or his office which will move to Duke 209F this summer. His phone number is 336-278-6250.

J. WESLEY ALEXANDER 1931-2000

J. Wesley Alexander, retired professor of mathematics, died suddenly on May 25, 2000, at UNC Hospital in Chapel Hill from complications of a head injury. He taught at Elon College for 33 years and chaired the Math Department for 12 years. For 25 years he served as the faculty representative for Elon College on the NAIA and was the eligibility chairman for NAIA District 26. He was a member of the Elon College Sports Hall of Fame and the NAIA Hall of Fame.

The son of a tenant farmer, Wes was the first in his family to graduate from college. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Appalachian State University. He also held a master's degree from New Mexico State University. He was known for his gentle spirit and always showed courtesy to his students and peers. He was always honest and insisted on strictly following the rules of the NAIA. It was said that he was "so straight that he made a plumb line look crooked." His classes were not easy, but he was known to be fair and always expected the best from his students. He gave all that he had to help his students grow.

Wes served as a deacon and sang in the choir at the Elon College Community Church. He enjoyed mountain music and played the guitar. Gardening was his therapy. He loved all plants and even thought that weeds should be treated with respect. Survivors include his wife Jane, two daughters, three sisters, a brother and two grandchildren.

The funeral was held on May 29 at Elon Community Church with burial in Magnolia Cemetery. Condolences may be sent to his wife at PO Box 607, Elon College, NC 27244. The family has requested that memorials be sent to Elon College Community Church, 271 Williamson Avenue, Elon College, NC 27244.

MEMORIES...MEMORIES FROM OUR MATH ALUMNI

Visiting "Miquel's Universe" during Dr. Haworth's analysis class...Liese Bouknight Faircloth '93

Study abroad in England...LRC math tutor..."lost" in modern algebra...Tom Cole '86

Too long ago...Daphne C. Wagoner '67

I really loved my days at Elon in the math department because of the wonderful professors. I'll always appreciate their wisdom and encouragement...Karen Henderson Rhea '88

Dr. Haworth's s-point geometry (SURDS) and proving that the number line has holes in it... Jimmy Green '86

I particularly enjoyed the class of my advisor, Dr. Nawrocki. He was always excited and full of life...Kristin D. Roberk '97

Professor Alexander's skill in playing sharp notes....Jimmy Green '86

Dr. Haworth's taking us to visit his alma mater, Appalachian State University...Liese Bouknight Faircloth '93

How Mr. Barbee always called on me for the **ONE** problem that I did not do!!! The time I brought carrots and potatoes to class to "show" slices of a cylinder...Pat Everett '88

Dr. Haworth's math classes and the math club's activities....Charles Touren '94

Taking a Calculus III test/final exam in Professor Barbee's class. I remember sitting down to take the test and my heart started beating fast as I felt my mind go **completely blank**. I passed anyway...what a miracle!....Robin Garrison '87

Friendships, small classes, learning...Cindy Booth '92

Group work with Dr. Haworth...Liese Bouknight Faircloth '93

ROZ REICHARD ACCEPTS POSITION AT MEREDITH COLLEGE

Dr. Rosalind Reichard, dean of math and sciences and former chairman of the Math Department, left Elon in February to become the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Meredith College. In her letter to the division, she wrote, "This turn of events came as a surprise to me as I certainly was not seeking to leave Elon. The contact from Meredith's search firm in August convinced me to apply. But it was not a true possibility in my mind until I interviewed on Meredith's campus right after Thanksgiving. At that time, I learned more about the high quality and potential at Meredith and found that Meredith's new president is an outstanding leader and someone with whom I share many common goals and beliefs. When the position was offered just before Christmas, I had the difficult choice to make between a college and people I truly love and an outstanding opportunity for me. In the end, I decided to go with the maxim that I have generally followed – change is basically a good thing.....I will continue to support Elon and look forward to working with you in new ways."

In February, Elon College presented Dr. Reichard with the Elon Medallion in recognition of her contributions to the school. President Leo M. Lambert said, "She was the key to the growth of the Division of Sciences and Mathematics, development of the undergraduate research program and the planning for and move to the McMichael Science Center." Since coming to Elon in 1984, Dr. Reichard had moved from part-time assistant professor to full professor, to dean of science and mathematics. Even as dean she found time to teach one math course each semester. The math department, students and alumni wish her well in her new venture.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS CHANGE THIS SUMMER

On July 31, all Elon College telephone numbers will change so there will be only one exchange (278) instead of three (584, 538 and 586). The new exchange should be dialed when calling any extension on campus from off campus. All extensions will change. To reach our chair, call Skip Allis at 336-278-6250.

Elon Math Graduate

(Please Mail to Helen Walton, CB 2277, Elon College NC 27244)

Name _____ Nickname _____
Year of graduation _____
Address _____

Phone:home _____ work _____
Occupation _____
Spouse's Name _____
Spouse's occupation _____
E-mail Address _____ Internet Home Page _____

A brief summary of your memorable moments since graduation:

Children and grandchildren: (include names, ages, and anything about them)

Hobbies and activities:

Favorite memories from Elon math classes:

RICHARD HAWORTH DELIVERS SPEECH IN MEMORY OF AL CARPENTER AT THE DUKE COMPUTER LAB DEDICATION

Below is the text of the speech given by Richard Haworth at the dedication of the Duke Computer Lab on April 30, 1999:

“Let me begin by reading from the Elon College Mission Statement...

Motivated by the beliefs and spiritual values that have grown out of its founding by the historic Christian Church, Elon offers men and women a liberal arts education that enriches them as human beings, prepares them for the choice of a profession and for service to their communities. Elon College aims to provide its students the opportunity to develop:

- A personal philosophy of life which will be reflected in a sense of integrity, high ethical standards, and significant religious insights and practice;
- An understanding of their responsibilities and rights as citizens in a democratic society, and a recognition of the intrinsic worth of all individuals;
- A love of learning and sensitivity to aesthetic values sufficient to stimulate continued intellectual and cultural growth;
- An appreciation of the potential for lifelong personal growth and professional development which their own distinct abilities and aptitudes provide.

As participants in a community of learners, all members of the college are expected to enact the ideals of personal integrity and public responsibility.

Al fitted right in, didn't he?

All of us are here at this lab dedication because Al meant something special in our own individual lives. He was a son, a brother, brother-in-law, and uncle. He was a friend, colleague, mentor, and faculty member at Elon College. No one of us has experienced all of these losses collectively. But Al did and it's that that I mourn most of all. Al enjoyed all the parts of his life. He had a rich spiritual life. He simply believed that whenever you get a blessing from God, you give it back to God as a deliberate act of worship. It would be then that God could make it a blessing to others.

Al loved his family. He was never more excited then when he recounted his family trips to Florida or Williamsburg or just a going home vacation. He especially loved his time with the young ones. I think he knew that they were in the early stages of deciding what was important and what they would stand for and he wanted to be a part of that.

Al loved his work. He saw his work as an opportunity to serve others. He was so intense, so conscientious, thoughtful, unselfish, committed, devoted. He had such integrity. I'm not sure if it works better for these words to help describe the man or to use the man to help in more clearly defining the words. But these qualities were not an accident nor some ordained gift. They were a result of a lifetime of careful deliberate efforts on his part. He didn't take from life or make demands on it. Instead he gave where he could as best as he could. He taught us that it's not the image we create that proves who we are. Rather, it's the effort we make to create the image that proves who we are. Al loved working with those students. He didn't expect perfection but boy did he demand a responsible commitment to their personal learning and growth. If a student didn't show respect for themselves as learners or an interest in developing their potential to its fullest, they found themselves up against a tireless force that, if given the chance would walk the journey with them, supporting and encouraging their growth and self confidence until they discovered what they could do without him.

Was Al Carpenter driven or was he called?

Did Al Carpenter overwork or did he overflow?

What we are doing here today is a right and proper thing to do. It is one way we can extend into the future our memories of what this man stood for. It will honor him and more clearly define who we are.”

VISIT OUR WEB PAGE

Visit your alma mater in cyberspace. Elon has a newly designed Web page with information about every facet of campus life. The Math Department's page includes a description of classes, biographies of each professor and even photos of our smiling faces. Visit our page at <http://math.elon.edu/> and send us some e-mail. We love to hear from you!!!

BABIES AND WEDDINGS

Richard Haworth is getting married!!!! After 12 years of dating, Richard and Judy Self have announced their engagement to be married on June 10 in the North Carolina mountains. They plan to honeymoon in Switzerland. If you would like to congratulate the happy couple, Richard's email is haworthr@elon.edu and his office phone is 336-278-6254.

Jeff and Laura Clark welcomed their second child, Elizabeth Marie Theresa, on November 30, 1999. She weighed 5 pounds and 9 ounces. Mother and baby are doing fine. The proud father has posted some wonderful family photos on his personal Web page at <http://frodo.elon.edu/cgi-bin/parser.cgi/personal.dat>.

Michele Johnson and her husband Jeff welcomed Carlton Alexander Johnson on April 12. Carlton weighed 7 pounds and 13 ounces. Michele will be taking a year off from teaching to be with the new baby.

Bill Barbee is a proud new grandfather. Rebecca Jane Camacho was born on January 24 to Bill's daughter Beth and her husband, Tom. Rebecca is their fourth child and weighed 9 pounds and 3 ounces. The family lives in Boone.

FACULTY AND STAFF CHANGES

In August 1999, **Bernice Foust** became the second secretary for the Math and Science Division. Her office is located in the Duke Building in the suite of Math Department offices. Bernice has been a real asset to the Math Department, assisting in the mountains of paperwork, planning events, arranging for interviews, and relieving the faculty of many clerical duties. She worked for Kayser Roth for 17 years and went back to school after this work ended to begin a new career. She graduated with an associate degree in administrative office and business administration from Alamance Community College and worked there for three years. A native of Caswell County, she now lives in Gibsonville with her husband, Tony, and daughter, Jessica.

Dave Nawrocki, who left Elon in May 1999 to return to a teaching position at his alma mater Albright College in Pennsylvania, writes that he and his family have settled into their new location. He is teaching calculus and linear algebra classes there. His wife has started a new job and his two children are attending their new daycare. He can be reached at 32 Ridge Crest Drive, Fleetwood PA, 19522, and his phone number is 610-944-1647. His e-mail at Albright is davidn@alb.edu.

Terri Johnson took a one-year position at her alma mater Clemson University for the 1999-2000 year. She was recently offered a full-time position there and will not be returning to Elon. She is teaching Calculus I and II classes there. She writes that all of the sections of Calculus I have common tests and finals. Clemson uses the TI-89 calculator in these classes and is using laptops with Maple in some of the sections. In her free time, Terri is a horse enthusiast and spends her free time riding and giving lessons. Terri can be reached at terrij@clemson.edu.

The Math Department welcomes **Dr. Crista Coles**, who will start her teaching position in the 2000 fall semester. Crista earned her bachelor of science degree from Allegheny College in 1993, where she received the outstanding junior and senior awards in mathematics. At the University of Cincinnati, she earned her master's and doctorate degrees with her dissertation in numerical analysis – "Identification of Coefficients in the 2-D Inverse Heat Conduction Problem." Her teaching experience includes classes at the University of Cincinnati and Wittenberg University.

Dr. James Beuerle, an assistant professor at Ursinus College in Collegenown PA, has accepted a one-year position at Elon beginning in the fall. He received his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from the State University of New York at Binghamton. His dissertation was entitled "Metacyclic Groups and their Nonabelian Tensor Squares."

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Jeff Clark

This has been an eventful year for the department. With the departure of Terri Johnson and David Nawrocki to teach at their respective alma maters, we have been working overtime to provide our students with the best in teaching and opportunities for scholarship. Our major continues to grow, with 10 seniors graduating this year. Half of last year's graduating class went on to graduate school.

We have been helped in our endeavors by our new divisional secretary, Bernice Foust, who is located in the Mathematics Department offices.

We have had active Elon participation in conferences for the North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Mathematical Association of America.

We have been in our new building, Duke, for a year now, and the change has been great. We have a good deal more space for working with students and each other than we had in Whitley.

DEPARTMENT HAPPENINGS

Dr. Alan Russell worked with Kate Mansi in mathematics education research. They presented at the North Carolina Council of the Teachers of Mathematics (NCCTM) in October last year.

Dr. Richard Haworth is the conventions coordinator for the NCCTM. He also successfully organized the 22nd Math Contest, which is held each spring for area high school mathematics students.

Dr. Skip Allis gave a presentation last fall at the NCCTM conference entitled "Excursions in an Off-campus Learning Environment." He described his experiences in conducting a general studies math course at Elon via the Internet.

Drs. Todd Lee and Jeff Clark attended the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) conference in Charlotte. Jeff Clark gave a talk entitled "An Introduction to Large Permutation Groups." He will step down this year as the state director for the Southeastern section of the Mathematics Association of America. Todd Lee gave two presentations at this meeting, one on the Math Heritage class that he taught during Elon's Winter Term this year and the other on Elon's mathematics research program.

Dr. Todd Lee also gave a talk in Anaheim CA for the American Association of Higher Education on using undergraduate research as a tool for faculty development.

Helen Walton was recently elected to the Board of Trustees of Preservation North Carolina, a statewide organization which focuses on preserving North Carolina's historic architecture. She also serves as chairman of the Burlington Historic Preservation Commission and is treasurer of the Chinqua-Penn Foundation, which oversees a house museum in Reidsville.

Drs. Skip Allis, Roz Reichard and Todd Lee attended the American Mathematics Society/ MAA joint meeting in Washington, D.C. in January. They interviewed potential candidates for the vacancies in the math department.

Dr. Todd Lee has been named the director of Elon's Science Fellows Program. He will also be the lead instructor in mathematics at the Governor's School West for the coming summer.

Todd Lee and Janice Richardson attended the International conference for Technology in College Mathematics in November last year in San Francisco. They went for information on the latest advances in technology

such as the use of the TI-89 calculator, Excel and Mathematica. When they returned, they gave a workshop on the TI-89 calculator to the other members of the department.

Janice Richardson attended the National Council of the Supervisors of Mathematics and the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics meetings in Chicago in April. At the NCTM meeting, the new standards document was released.

Dr. Richard Haworth has been selected to participate in the Elon FANS program for new student orientation in the fall.

NEWS FROM OUR STUDENTS

This year 10 seniors graduated with a degree in mathematics. Each year the graduating seniors are required to take the ETS exam, which is a field test in their major. We are extremely pleased to announce that 5 out of 10 of these graduates scored above the national average. The highest Elon scores were 85 and 93 percentiles!!!!!!

Four of these graduates planned to become high school math teachers upon graduation. To become licensed, they are required to take PRAXIS, a test on content knowledge and pedagogy in their field of study. Many students fail this test when taking it for the first time. All of our graduates passed on their first attempt...quite a record!!! Two others passed the new middle grades test.

A team of math students, **Brooke Tester '00, Ashley Trent '01, and Brian Baker '00** entered the COMAP International Mathematics Modeling Competition. Dr. Todd Lee served as the advisor. They were listed as successful participants.

Cindy Enloe '99, Lyndsey Jessup '99 and Amanda Sherman '98 are enrolled in graduate school at Wake Forest. **Lisa Grignon '99 and Holly Weeks '99** are at the University of North Carolina-CH. **Lisa Helms '95** taught in Charlotte for four years and is now in graduate school at Wake Forest.

Kate Mansi '00 did a presentation at the NCCTM meeting last fall in Greensboro on using intelligence and personality tests to determine how a person learns in mathematics. She presented at the Student Undergraduate Research Forum at Elon College in April.

Shon Gilliam '00 presented at the MAA conference in Charlotte on Benford's Law. He also received the Elon Math Department's Academic Achievement Award this spring. **Ashley Trent '01** won the Math Department's Service Award.

FROM OUR ALUMNI JOBS, CAREERS AND MORE

Pat Everett '88.....retired high school teacher
 Robin Gobbel Garrison '87.....customer service representative at Lexington State Bank
 Jimmy Green '86.....seminary student
 Susan Conner Moss '83.....retired computer programmer for AT&T, now a homemaker
 Dana Redmon Watson '96.....high school teacher and cheerleading coach
 Donna Phillips Shore '84.....homemaker and church choir director/organist
 Kristina Roberts '97.....engineering technician at Walter Reed Army Medical Center
 Angela D. Smith '93.....math teacher and seminary student
 Daphne Council Wagoner '67.....certified public accountant in private practice

DUKE ENERGY GRANT

Elon College was the recipient of special funding this year from the Duke Energy Foundation. This money was earmarked for programs to improve math education in the middle grades and at the secondary level. Janice Richardson led the department's efforts to meet the goals of the grant. Part of the money allowed 24 teachers in the Alamance Burlington School System (ABSS) to attend the NCCTM meeting. A stipend was also given to middle grades and secondary mathematics majors at Elon so they could also attend the conference and join the North Carolina Council of the Teachers of Mathematics.

Janice Richardson, Alan Russell and Michelle Johnson worked with ABSS to improve students' understanding of geometry. Site licenses for Geometer's Sketchpad were purchased for one high school and one middle school. ABSS purchased the additional site licenses for the remaining middle and high school. Alan Russell led the workshop on Geometer's sketchpad to all high school math teachers in the system and Michele Johnson assisted in the workshop for middle grades math teachers in October 1999.

The grant also provided money to purchase TI 83 calculators for the Elon Curriculum Resource Center so Elon's math education majors could learn to use the type of calculator most frequently used in the public schools. TI 73 calculators were purchased for the middle grades curriculum. The remaining money bought math manipulative kits and PRAXIS study kits for the math education program. Elon is appreciative to the Duke Energy Foundation for the money to enrich its education curriculum and the broader community.

JANICE RICHARDSON ON SPRING SABATTICAL

Janice Richardson spent the spring semester on sabbatical leave doing research on the Third International Math Science Study (TIMSS). This research involved the study of student achievement, curriculum analysis and student/faculty questionnaires involving 41 countries and students from the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades. Janice focused her studies on the eighth grade involving video tapes of teaching methods. The goal was to look at what other countries are doing to improve classroom instruction.

MATH AND COMPUTING SCIENCES REUNION

Make plans now to attend the reunion of the Math and Computing Sciences Departments on Friday night, November 3 from 7:30 to 9:00 PM on the second and third floors of the Duke Building. This event is being planned as part of the fall Homecoming Weekend. We would love to give you a tour of our new facilities.

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INTERESTING MATH SITE

For a great site listing the latest resources for math education, discussion groups, key issues in math, problems of the week and other interesting math topics, visit the Math Forum on the Internet at:
<http://www.forum.swarthmore.edu/>

This year we are including the computing science majors in our mailing, since our departments are so closely linked. We hope that you have enjoyed hearing from us.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR RESPONSES. Please continue to correspond with us by using the enclosed form. This newsletter is not possible without news from you. Even if you have replied previously, write again or send us e-mail to the addresses listed below. We love hearing from you. We continue to circulate your responses to the math faculty and our retired faculty.

This newsletter was a joint production of the Mathematics Department and the Office of Alumni Relations.

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