

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS  
IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, AN AFFILIATED  
GROUP OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS

# MATHWEST NEWS

February 2005 Volume 18, Issue 1

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*MATHWEST is moving!!  
Into cyberspace, that is!*

This will be the last paper version on the newsletter. All newsletters will be posted on our new, amazing website:

**[www.MATHWEST.org](http://www.MATHWEST.org)**

On this website, you can find anything do to with MATHWEST. If you would like to continue to receive a paper copy of the newsletter, you will need to contact MATHWEST at the address on the back of this newsletter and let us know.

Our Webmaster, Randy Carlton, has done an awesome job in putting together a website that will launch us into our next twenty years of professional service. Containing all the current information on the association, the website will be a one stop source for all your MATHWEST needs. Members can contact members of the board, download information on conferences and events, as well as the applications for grants and awards. There are also links to an archive of newsletters and minutes from previous board meetings. Future plans include even more links to various mathematics and educational websites, a lending library of resource materials, and bulletin board for teachers to swap materials and information.

Please take a moment to see what it has to offer!!

VISIT OUR NEW WEB SITE:  
*[www.MATHWEST.org](http://www.MATHWEST.org)*

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# A Message from Our President

## The Value and Sacrifice of *True* Professional Development

Ok, so we have all been there - stuck in an all-day meeting that seems pointless. In previous districts where I have taught, they usually bring all teachers together to have some individual pontificate about education reform, MCAS testing, or some new legal issue. Most of the time, the teachers are inattentive, some even whispering to each other. Others take catnaps with their eyes wide open so as not to alert anyone. If you are a mathematics teacher, you may have even brought your graphing calculator along to play a game of Tetris or Snake. It's truly disappointing that this is how many teachers spend professional days.

As an educator, one has to consider and have input into what he/she truly wants in a professional development program. In most cases, it is discipline-centered activities that directly reflect on issues related to the classroom. It is time to work collaboratively with other educators in similar disciplines to share ideas, learn new techniques, and make connections for future endeavors. As a mathematics teacher, maybe you would like a workshop on readymade hands-on activities that you can bring to your classroom, learn about emerging technologies such as the graphing calculator, or an interesting mathematics application, such as how to use trigonometry to navigate by the stars. Doesn't this seem more interesting!

Here's the glitch. You'll need to take time out of your busy day to participate. In most districts, the professional development plan doesn't allow you to attend such specialized workshops. You need to take the initiative to participate in sessions like after school programs, special one or two-day conferences, or take a mini-course over the summer. Re-certification in Massachusetts actually requires us to do this, usually on our own time and expense. The challenge is to become motivated enough to seek out and take advantage of these events and opportunities as they reveal themselves to us.

Every year, I plan to attend at least one or two conferences to learn about new and innovative techniques that I can bring to my classroom. As I write this for the newsletter, I am sitting at the airport gate waiting to leave for a four-day trip to Dallas. I am attending a special conference at Texas Instruments. Yes, I am going to miss a couple days of school. And yes, I am going to give up my weekend. Also, the conference does not come at the most convenient time. Midterm exams are taking place during my absence. I will have to get term grades completed for the following week. So why do I choose to do it?

It's an opportunity that lasts a lifetime. Such opportunities forever change the way I teach, and view my profession. The information I have received during such workshops has trained me to use a graphing calculator in all my mathematics classes. It has introduced me to new software applications to assist me in helping my students learn. It has also allowed me to develop new and exciting curricula to be implemented. I have been able to network on the regional and national levels with individuals who can answer the most difficult of my questions. Many personal achievements are directly related to this work as well. As part of my activities, I have written and received grants from the MA Department of Education for teacher development, I have been able to present in various areas of the country sharing my knowledge, and was asked to participate in this TI workshop in Dallas, as one of twenty-four teachers chosen nationwide.

So let's get to the point. As educators, we have a moral obligation to stay knowledgeable in our field. We should know what new and exciting ideas are emerging in our chosen profession. We should share our knowledge with others that have common interests. We should be the best teachers we can be!

I encourage you to take the first step. The main mission of MATHWEST is to promote professional development activities for teachers in Western Massachusetts. As such, we have developed a program for an all-day conference in Springfield. Taking place on March 24<sup>th</sup>, the conference will allow mathematics educators at all grade levels an opportunity to work together, share ideas, and learn something new. It is my hope that you will make the "somewhat" inconvenient choice to join us. I promise you'll have a fun and informative day!

I look forward to meeting you at the conference. Don't hesitate to contact me or another member of the board, if there is anything we can do for you. We are here to help!

Mathematically yours,

*Scott L. Trahan*

PS: Conference programs were recently mailed. If you did not receive one, you can download a copy at our new website, [www.mathwest.org](http://www.mathwest.org). Check it out!

# AP CALCULUS & AP STATISTICS PRACTICE EXAM

8:30 AM – 1:30 PM

First Baptist Church of Agawam  
Saturday, April 2, 2005

Mark your calendars! MATHWEST is again pleased to announce that it will help sponsor practice AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, and AP Statistics exams for students in Western Massachusetts on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. In case of inclement weather, the snow date is April 9<sup>th</sup>.

The session will allow students to take either the 2003 AP Calculus or 2002 AP Statistics exam in an appropriate and timed atmosphere. Following the exam, lunch will be served. Before students leave, they will receive their graded test, a score, and a complete answer key.

All AP mathematics students and their teachers in Western Massachusetts are invited to attend. It will take place in Agawam at the First Baptist Church on Main Street. The registration cost of \$5 per student will help to defray the expenses of the event, which includes materials and lunch for all participants.

Again this year, we are not requiring students to be accompanied by their teachers. However, we are hoping teachers of participating students will volunteer to help with grading. All teachers that attend will receive a package of support materials complements of MATHWEST.

Students will start the exam with the open response problems, followed by the multiple-choice sections. This is done to allow time for the instructors to grade the open response problems while the multiple-choice sections are administered.

The registration deadline for participating is Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. At that time, a completed registration form for each student indicating the exam they will take, and including the \$5 registration fee, must be sent in.

## Schedule of Events

8:30	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00	2003 Calculus AB/BC and Statistics open-response sections administered.
10:30	Break
10:40	Part A of the 2003 Calculus AB/BC & 2002 Statistics multiple-choice
11:35	Break for AP Calculus Exam
11:40	Part B of the 2003 Calculus AB/BC multiple choice
12:30	Lunch
1:00	Solutions and Scores Distributed

## Registration Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

AP Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

School Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Exam You Wish to Take:

\_\_\_\_\_ 2003 AP Calculus AB Exam

\_\_\_\_\_ 2003 AP Calculus BC Exam

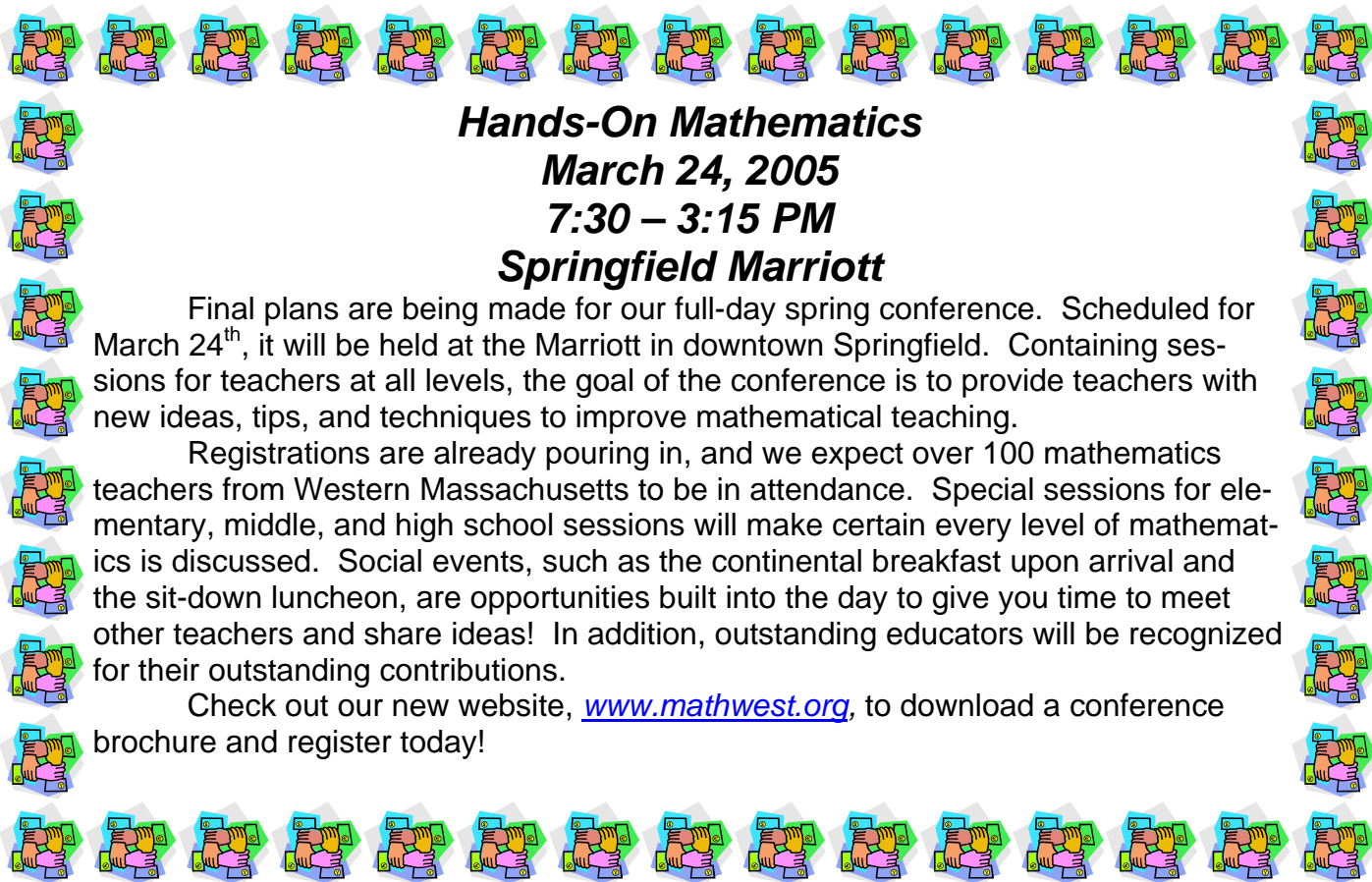
\_\_\_\_\_ 2002 AP Statistics Exam

Each student should fill out this form and send it along with the \$5 registration fee per student to:

**Practice Exam  
C/O MATHWEST  
PO Box 139  
Feeding Hills, MA 01030-0139**

Checks should be made payable to MATHWEST. Purchase orders from school systems are also accepted from schools that attend as a group.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Scott Trahan of Agawam High School at (413) 821-0530 or email him at [SLTrahan@aol.com](mailto:SLTrahan@aol.com).



**Hands-On Mathematics**  
**March 24, 2005**  
**7:30 – 3:15 PM**  
**Springfield Marriott**

Final plans are being made for our full-day spring conference. Scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>, it will be held at the Marriott in downtown Springfield. Containing sessions for teachers at all levels, the goal of the conference is to provide teachers with new ideas, tips, and techniques to improve mathematical teaching.

Registrations are already pouring in, and we expect over 100 mathematics teachers from Western Massachusetts to be in attendance. Special sessions for elementary, middle, and high school sessions will make certain every level of mathematics is discussed. Social events, such as the continental breakfast upon arrival and the sit-down luncheon, are opportunities built into the day to give you time to meet other teachers and share ideas! In addition, outstanding educators will be recognized for their outstanding contributions.

Check out our new website, [www.mathwest.org](http://www.mathwest.org), to download a conference brochure and register today!



**Your Own TI-83+/TI-84+  
Calculator Workshop**

As part of an agreement with Texas Instruments for *Tfas* instructor certification, some select teachers in the state are required to make presentations to teachers on the use of the graphing calculators in high school mathematics. These teachers are willing to come to your school to meet with your teachers after school or at a department meeting to work on implementation of technology into the mathematics curriculum. There is no fee for this service, and arrangements can be individualized to the needs of the school. If interested, contact Scott at [SLTrahan@aol.com](mailto:SLTrahan@aol.com) for more information or to make arrangements. This is an opportunity that shouldn't be missed!

**Did you miss the Mohegan  
Sun trip???**

Despite the hundreds of dollars donated to Mohegan Sun Casino, there is still no MATHWEST wing!! We will have to work on that next year!

It was another great year of food, fun, and gaming. Although we had no big winners (and no heat in the bus), we had a great time and missed those of you who did not come.

Please mark your calendars for next January so you can come and enjoy the fun!!

**See you again next year!!**

# *MATHWEST* *DATES TO REMEMBER*

## March

**1st ~ AP Calculus Support Group**  
3 to 4:30 PM at Ludlow High School

**3rd~ MATHWEST Board Meeting**  
4 PM at Friendly's, W. Springfield

**14th ~ Pi Day**

**18th ~ Spring Conference Registration  
Deadline**

**24th ~ MATHWEST Spring Conference**  
"Hands on Mathematics"  
7:30 AM—3:15 PM  
Springfield Marriott

## April ~ Math Education Month

**2nd ~ Practice AP Exams**  
8AM-1PM, First Baptist Church, Agawam

**6th-9th ~ 83rd Annual NCTM Conference**  
Anaheim, CA

**26th ~ AP Calculus Support Group**  
3 to 4:30 PM at Ludlow High School

## May

**5th ~ MATHWEST Board Meeting**  
4 PM , Friendly's, W. Springfield

## September

**8th ~ MATHWEST Board Meeting**  
4 PM, Friendly's, W. Springfield

## October

**6th-8th ~ NCTM Regional Conference**  
Hartford, CT

**27th ~ MATHWEST Board Meeting**  
4 PM, Friendly's, W. Springfield



*Ride the CREST: Connect, Reach, Enjoy, Succeed, Think*

## *Math Month Poster Contest*

- DEADLINE:** Tuesday, April 12, 2005
- SIZE:** half of a normal poster board (22 inches by 14 inches)
- DIVISIONS:** K—4, 5—8, and 9—12

*Educational Prizes will be awarded to the top three entrants in each division.*

*Please, no more than 3 entries from each division from each school.*

- DETAILS:** Students should print their name, school, and grade on the back of their poster.
- SEND TO:** Dr. Louise Lataille  
c/o Cathedral High School  
260 Surrey Road  
Springfield, MA 01118



## Who Will Be Tomorrow's Math Teachers?

TeachMath.org, a new NCTM Web site, provides information on how to become a math teacher

*Reston, VA, February 10, 2005*—The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) launched a new site today, TeachMath.org, where those considering a career as a math teacher can go for information.

TeachMath.org targets young people thinking of teaching math as a career, those considering a second career as a math teacher, and teachers seeking information on certification requirements and resources they can use in their classrooms.

At TeachMath.org they will find answers to such questions as why they should consider becoming a math teacher and information on traditional and alternate certification paths. There are also links to each state's or Canadian province's department of education for further information on certification needs.

TeachMath.org provides a list of resources for anyone who is already a math teacher or is studying to be one. Students will find information on loan forgiveness programs, and teachers will find a list of ideas they can use to encourage young students to stay interested in math and continue their mathematics studies.

"Selecting a career as a math teacher is choosing a career with a future for yourself and your students. It can be one of the most significant and rewarding careers as it opens doors to a wide range of options," says NCTM President Cathy Seeley.

As the economies of the United States and the world continue to rely on technological advances, the need for math teachers will continue to grow. Presently 1.8 million elementary school and 225,000 secondary school math teachers are needed in the United States. As the country's population grows and becomes more diverse, there will also be a need for math teachers who reflect the diversity of the student population. The need is worldwide, making math teaching a mobile career.

Those thinking about a career in teaching can learn about their state's or province's requirements under "How to Become a Math Teacher." The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires every classroom to be staffed by a "highly qualified" teacher, a designation that translates to a bachelor's degree, state certification, and different levels of mathematical content knowledge depending on the grade.

A 1999 study conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers revealed that nearly 30 percent of the 300,000 middle school and high school math teachers in the United States neither majored nor minored in the subject they teach. In low-income schools, students have less than a 50 percent chance of having a math or science teacher who holds both a license and a degree in the subject.

TeachMath.org, is organized under six headings to provide information and resources for those thinking of becoming a math teacher.

### [Why Consider a Career as a Math Teacher?](#)

You are needed! Educate tomorrow's citizens and teach valuable real-world skills.

### [How to Become a Math Teacher](#)

Complete a teacher education program and gain a state license.

### [Why Certified Math Teachers Are in Demand](#)

Schools need experienced, licensed teachers with math degrees.

### [Resources for Math Teachers](#)

There are many new resources you can use to help students learn math.

### [Steps Students Can Take Right Now](#)

If you are a middle school or high school student, find out if a math teaching career is right for you.

### [NCTM Student Membership](#)

College students enjoy NCTM benefits at half the cost of regular membership.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is a public voice of mathematics education, providing vision, leadership, and professional development to support teachers in ensuring mathematics learning of the highest quality for all students. With 100,000 members and 250 Affiliates, NCTM is the world's largest organization dedicated to improving mathematics education in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The Council's Principles and Standards for School Mathematics includes guidelines for excellence in mathematics education and issues a call for all students to engage in more challenging mathematics

Contact: Gay Dillin, Media Relations Manager, (703) 620-9840 ext. 2189, [gdillin@nctm.org](mailto:gdillin@nctm.org).



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**Mary Alice Wilson Grant**  
**Nancy Strouse**

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**Barbara Martowski**

### ATMNE Representative

**Cindy Tuthill**

### Ruth O'Malley Presenter's Award

**Barbara Martowski**

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## Editor's Corner

Every newsletter, we will be introducing you to the MATHWEST Board. If you see them, say hello.

This month.... Meet our new treasurer, Patricia Bertone-Gross. Pat is a mathematics teacher at Agawam High School. She is the co-advisor of the Class of 2005 and prom committees, as well as advisor to S.A.V.E, a student group concerned with the environmental issues. A resident of Agawam for many years, Pat with her husband Jim have raised three grown children. She enjoys going to art museums with her husband who is a local artist, and is especially interested in art that contains mathematical concepts. Her hobbies include aerobics, gardening and basket weaving. In her spare time, she assists with fundraising projects for the Friends of the Agawam Library, and reminds people to recycle when they can!



P.O. Box 784  
Easthampton, MA 01027

# MATHWEST NEWS

*Spring is in the air!*



*Please: If paying by PO, please include the names and addresses of members to be renewed.*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of NCTM? YES  NO

A member of another NCTM affiliate? YES  NO  If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category: \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Year Regular (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Year Full-Time Student (\$5) \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Year Full-Time Retired (\$10) \_\_\_\_\_  
3 Year Regular (\$40) \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Professional Interest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elementary \_\_\_\_\_  
Middle School \_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary \_\_\_\_\_  
College \_\_\_\_\_

Application Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
New Membership \_\_\_\_\_  
Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail to: MATHWEST, P.O. Box 139, Feeding Hills, MA 01030-0139*

## MATHWEST MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM