

FALL 2011

CHI ALPHA MU NEWSLETTER

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NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

First, let me say thank you for donating your time as a Chi Alpha Mu sponsor. Your efforts are instrumental in providing the opportunity for your students to develop interest in and enthusiasm for mathematics, which is so crucial in middle and junior high school.

As you plan for your club activities, may I suggest including some contests. I have found that a little competition can inspire math students to greater achievement and there are lots of great contests available.

A few you might want to consider are:

- MathCounts - an annual math competition for students in grades 7 and 8 with more than 350,000 students participating. Website: <https://mathcounts.org/>
- Math Olympiads for Elementary and Middle School students held each November to March and open to students in grades 4 through 8. Website: <http://moems.org/>
- Math League, for students in grades 4, 5 and 6-8, and Algebra 1, challenging students to show their understanding of basic principles through problem solving. Website: <http://www.mathleague.com/contests.htm>
- Rocket City Math League, a contest written and run by high school students as a service to the mathematics community and is sponsored by Mu Alpha Theta. Website: <http://www.rocketcitymath.org/>

Many Mu Alpha Theta chapters offer middle school competitions and/or Math Fun Days for schools in their area. If you want to find a chapter near you, check out the "Find a Chapter" link on the left-hand side at <http://www.mualphatheta.org/>.

You might also consider challenging your students to use their math skills in new and creative ways by getting together with your local high school and planning an event.

As the new school year begins the possibilities for growth are limitless. Let your imagination be your guide and have a great year.


Chi Alpha Mu President

NATIONAL OFFICE NEWS *from Kay Weiss*

The National Office is usually staffed from 10:00 am – 6:00 pm central time, Monday through Friday. The office will be closed on most major National holidays and during the winter break from Dec 22 – Jan 2. We do not take a spring break, since this is usually our busiest time of the year. If you have orders needed before January 2, please make sure to get them to the office before December 22, so we can mail them before we close for the holidays.

We continue to add Chi Alpha Mu chapters around the country. We are still looking for chapters to share ideas with us. Tell us what your chapter has been up to, include some pictures we can add to our next newsletter, and we will send your chapter some gifts. I still have some copies of Key Curriculum's Tinker-Plots program and workbooks to give away.

Are any of your members interested in trying the AMC8? The American Mathematics Contests have provided Chi Alpha Mu with a limited number of free practice CD's, a \$20 value. Would you like a copy to help your members prepare for next year's contest? Just email Kay Weiss at matheat@ou.edu and we will send one out.

Last, but not least, remember that we have Chi Alpha Mu banners, Achievement Certificates to recognize your members, and wristlets. See pictures of our merchandise online at <http://www.chialphamu.org/Merchandise>. We hope to have a newly designed t-shirt available soon.

FREE AMC 8 PRACTICE CDS!

MAA has donated copies of their AMC 8 Contest Practice CD. These include the American Junior High Mathematics Exams from 1985-1999 and the American Mathematics Contest 8 from 2000-2007. Email matheta@ou.edu and request your FREE copy today.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Natasha Bell, the sponsor of the Chi Alpha Mu Chapter at Parkway Middle School of the Arts in FL, reports on their partnership with Cypress Bay High School's Mu Alpha Theta Chapter. She says: "We partner with our local high school to train our members for math competitions. Our students are bused to the high school weekly and practice with a teacher there. We even travel together with their students to some regional Mu Alpha Theta competitions. Our students get to see what life is like on a high school campus and the exposure they get at these competitions is great. At the last competition, we had a student place 14th in Algebra 1 and two students placed 12th and 13th in Geometry."

The Florida Association of Mu Alpha Theta, FAMAT, is one of the most active state organizations for Mu Alpha Theta. By providing regional and state math competitions for middle school and high school students, they are fostering excitement, camaraderie, and a love for math in their students.

Other states that offer state Mu Alpha Theta competitions are Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Washington. Many chapters of Mu Alpha Theta now offer Mighty Mu competitions for middle schools or elementary school math students in their area.



Chi Alpha Mu is on Facebook! Be sure to add our page to your favorites and please remember that permission is required from the National Office before using Chi Alpha Mu's name on your chapter's Facebook page or on other social networking sites.

NEWS FROM A CHAPTER

Ron McAdams, math club coach at William Henry Harrison Jr. School in Harrison, OH, reports:

I have served as the school's math club coach for the past 5 years, along with Mrs. Cindy Benson, School Librarian. While I am an engineer by profession, I got involved with the students by volunteering to coach a MATHCOUNTS team at school in 2006.

The attached photos [below] are from our team participating in the "American Math Challenge" last week. One of our students ranked 35th in the nation for MATHCOUNTS teams participating - so we were very proud of all the work he put into this! We currently have 24 students participating in the math club, and meet once/week on Thursday evenings, 6:00 - 7:30 P.M. So far we have been averaging 12 students/meeting.

Our team participates in several math competitions in the Cincinnati area, including the MATHCOUNTS program competitions (school and chapter), Greater Cincinnati Council of Teachers of Mathematics (GCCTM) Math Contest, Mighty Mu Math Competition at Lakota West High School (which Carol Botzner used to run), Mini-Mathcounts competition at St. Margaret of York School, and the University of Cincinnati annual Math Bowl competition.

Our students have a T-Shirt design contest every year, and design their own competition T-Shirts. We also participate in the MATHCOUNTS Club Program activities, and have participated in the American Math Challenge the past 2 years.

Carol Botzner introduced us to the Chi Alpha Mu organization last year, and we started a Chapter.

Our school district and administrators have been very supportive of the math club over the past 5 years. They pay for our registration fees to competitions, provide bus transportation to the competitions, pay for our competition T-Shirts, and provide a pizza dinner prior to our MATHCOUNTS School Competition each year.

We are always open to suggestions and ways to improve our math club and make the activities enjoyable for the students!

Ron McAdams



NEWS FROM A CHAPTER *continued*

Sandra A. Daire, math club coach at Ada Merritt K-8 Center in Miami, FL, reports:

We started small but currently have 18 VERY ACTIVE members!!!!!!

At the beginning of the year we sent teams to a competition hosted by one of the High Schools in our District (Miami Springs Senior High). We had kids place in 4th – 6th grades!

We also participated in Math Counts and although we did not qualify to state, we did achieve Silver and Gold level status – we are VERY PROUD.

The 6th – 8th grade members, as well as other Middle School students also participated in the AMC 8, the Florida Mathematics League, and will be competing in an in-house Math Bowl competition at the end of April.

Attached, I have included some of the pictures [below] I took during our events (prior to Winter Break, pi-week, and Math Counts) – I hope you enjoy them!

Sandra A. Daire





"We celebrate 'Pi Day' for a week by making hot dessert pies during lunch with a 'Hot & Toasty Sandwich maker.' Buttered slices of bread are filled with chocolate, marshmallow, or fruit fillings, toasted then dusted with powdered or cinnamon sugar. Triangle shape allows for other math symbolism, so you could do this on other dates. Pies sold for \$.50 each and we had a net profit of about \$100 a day...the smell alone tempts many repeat customers!

- From Cheryl Star, Gilmer High School, Ellijay, GA

Sudoku, anyone?...

This puzzle was sent to us by Don Allen, a former Mu Alpha Theta sponsor in the 1960's and convention regular in the 1980's. Thank you, Don, for the submission!

Rules: Use the letters A, C, E, H, I, L, P, R, S to complete the puzzle. No column, row, or 3x3 square may repeat a letter. As an added bonus, see if you can figure out what familiar math word the nine letters spell out. Hint: The word will appear in one of the columns, rows, or boxes.

Find the answers on the last page.

C			E	I	R	L
H	S				I	
	R	A	L			
	I			P	R	
	E	S	P	C		
R	P			E		
		H	E	I		
	H	E		C	S	
P	C	I	S	E		

Math Word: _____

Free Resources for Chapters:

The National Office has donated items that we are giving to our Chi Alpha Mu chapters!

Free Key Curriculum Tinkerplots Program and Workbooks!

Key Curriculum Press has donated copies of their TinkerPlots Program, copies of "Digging into Data with TinkerPlots" and copies of their "Survey Toolkit Workbook". Each winning chapter of Chi Alpha Mu will receive a Single User copy of the program and four or five copies of each of the two workbooks.

Want to win? Email us with information about what your chapter has been doing during your meetings? Have a fun idea or activity to share with other chapters? We want to hear from you!! Send a picture or two that we may use in our next newsletter. The value of each prize package is about \$450. Email Kay Weiss at matheta@ou.edu with your chapter activity!

Free AMC 8 Practice CDs!

MAA has donated copies of their AMC 8 Contest Practice CD. These include the American Junior High Mathematics Exams from 1985-1999 and the American Mathematics Contest 8 from 2000-2007. Email matheta@ou.edu and request your free copy today.

Free TI-84 Plus Calculators!

The National Office has ten free TI-84 Plus calculators available to the first ten chapters to email the National Office requesting one at matheta@ou.edu.

CONTESTS & COMPETITIONS

The Rocket City Math League

The RCML is a free, year-long, international math contest open to all middle, high school, and two-year college students enrolled in Pre-Algebra through Calculus and above math courses. It is administered by the students at Grissom High School in Huntsville, AL, supported by a grant from Mu Alpha Theta. Participants are placed into one of five divisions based on the level of math courses in which they are enrolled. Each division will be given three, 12-question tests lasting 45 minutes. A two-level, Inter-School team Test is also available.

Tests are sent to registered schools via email before each round, and scores are entered into an online database. Trophies are mailed to the top-ranked students and schools at the end of the year.

Mu Alpha Theta also provides other prizes, as well, including copies of Mathematica, the DVD "Hard Problems", and TI Graphing Calculators. Testing dates for the 2011-2012 competition are:

Interschool: Oct 31 - Nov 14, 2011
 Round 1: Jan 16-27, 2012
 Round 2: Feb 13-24, 2012
 Round 3: March 12-23, 2012

Register at www.rocketcitymath.org.
 For more info, visit www.mualphatheta.org > Contests > Rocket City.

AMC 8 Contest

AMC 8 is a contest put on by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). It is for students in the sixth, seventh, or eighth grade (as well as accelerated fourth or fifth graders).

The contest is 25 question, 40 minute multiple choice exam. The dates for this year's contest are:

AMC 8: November 15, 2011
 (Standard Registration Deadline: Oct 8, Express Registration Deadline Oct 30, Expedited Registration Deadline: Nov 5)

For more information and to register, go to <http://amc.maa.org/e-exams/e4-amc08/amc8.shtml>.

MATHCOUNTS Competition

The MATHCOUNTS Competition is a national middle school coaching and competitive mathematics program that promotes mathematics achievement through a series of fun and engaging "bee" style contests. Public, private, religious and home schools alike are eligible to participate, as long as students are in the sixth, seventh and/or eighth grade.

The registration deadline for 2012 is December 16, 2011.

Go to www.mathcounts.org to register online.

Math Word: SPHERICAL

A	E	H	S	L	I	C	R	P
S	C	L	R	A	P	E	H	I
P	R	E	C	H	A	L	S	A
H	S	E	V	L	A	P	C	R
I	C	L	P	S	R	H	E	A
R	A	P	H	E	C	S	I	L
C	S	P	L	H	A	R	I	E
E	A	I	C	P	S	R	L	H
L	H	R	I	S	E	A	P	C

Answers to Sudoku: