
A f t e r m a t h

Hugo Rossi Retires



Professor Hugo Rossi is retiring from his position on the faculty of the University of Utah at the end of this calendar year. In appreciation of his work in our department **Joe Taylor** has written the following article.

In the early seventies, with the encouragement of then Dean of Science Pete Gardener, the Mathematics Department developed a plan to dramatically improve its quality and reputation. A substantial number of vacant positions were created through a combination of tough new tenure standards and new money from the central administration. The plan was to fill these vacancies with a combination of internationally known senior research scholars and highly promising junior scholars.

This was a bold plan. For it to be successful we needed a breakthrough appointment to create credibility for our plan within the international mathematical community. Hugo Rossi was that breakthrough appointment. We were fortunate to have him visit our department for a week in 1974 just as he was making up his mind that he wanted to move to the West. We convinced him to choose Utah and to help us succeed in our development plans. His appointment gave us instant credibility and appointments of Herb Clemens and Steve Gersten quickly followed.

When Hugo joined our department in 1975 he took over direction of the faculty development effort and quickly made it a great success. In the early eighties a prestigious national survey ranked the Department as the most improved Math Department in the nation and in the top 20 in overall ranking among state supported math departments.

Hugo's mathematical reputation before coming to Utah was based in part on his co-authorship with Robert Gunning of the book "Analytic Functions of Several Complex Variables" which has, since 1965, been the standard text in courses on several complex variables around the world. He is also the author of a number of highly regarded research papers in several complex variables and in group representations.

As his direction of our faculty development effort shows, Hugo has always been good at directing things. He was Chair of our department from 1977 to 1980

and Dean of the College of Science from 1987 to 1993. He helped organize many conferences here and elsewhere. He has been editor of several mathematical journals, including "Transactions", "Pacific Journal", and "Notices." He has served on numerous high level American Mathematical Society boards, committees and task forces, and has chaired most of them. He has twice been Deputy Director of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute and holds that position now. He is also Vice President of the American Mathematical Society.

In addition to his qualities as a professional mathematician, Hugo has always been a great friend to the faculty and students of our department. He has always been great to have around on skiing trips, backpacking trips, hikes, jeep expeditions, conferences and parties.

Hugo will be greatly missed in our department, and we hope that he will return to Salt Lake City and participate as an emeritus member in our department.

Two Years of VIGRE - and more to come?

by Klaus Schmitt

It was two years ago this past summer that the NSF sponsored VIGRE program (Vertical Integration of Graduate Research and Education) started at the University of Utah. Since then the program has had considerable impact on the life of the Department and most Department citizens have taken an active role in one or more facets of the program. Many eager youngsters come from local high or middle schools or from their home school to participate in our Math Circle or our High School summer program; undergraduate research, often not heard of in the past, is now an integral part of many an undergraduate's tenure, and many graduate students and assistant professors have gained relief from some teaching duties to more actively pursue their studies and research.

As many know, The VIGRE program is of five years' duration depending on a successful progress assessment during the third year. This assessment is presently taking place. After our submission of lengthy reports to NSF a site visit by an NSF appointed team took place on October 15, 2003. This team, (Abigail Thompson (Professor-UC Davis), Rich Millman (NSF), and Hans Kaper (NSF)), came to campus to talk to the Steering Committee of the grant,

graduate and undergraduate students, VIGRE Assistant Professors, our Chairman, and our Graduate Dean. While the visit was a short one, the turnout for the interviews was excellent and many interesting issues were addressed. NSF will decide by December 15 whether our Department's program will continue to be supported for another two years. We, of course, expect that we shall be able to then erase the question mark in the title of this article. In the meantime the Department will have to devote much thought to life after VIGRE and hopefully generate a successful proposal for participation in NSF's EMSW21 (Enhancing the Mathematical Sciences' Workforce in the 21st Century). Those acronyms--whew!

You may find out much about VIGRE at Utah by accessing <http://www.math.utah.edu/vigre/>.

Staff Awards

Three members of our staff received service awards during the last three months. Angie Gardiner received a five year award, Nancy DeMello a ten year award and Mary Levine a twenty year award. We wish to congratulate them for their years of service to the department and the university and want to thank them for all they do to help the department function properly.

We also want to recognize Paula Tooman for her excellent handling of the textbook orders. She was awarded a gift certificate from the Bookstore for getting our textbook orders submitted in a timely manner (which is always a struggle). Her pleasant, cheerful, and helpful attitude was also commented on. We all agree that Paula adds so much to the department with her attitude and commitment!

Many thanks to all of you!!!

Wedding Bells



Jenny Jacobs married Chris Fossmo on Monday, the thirteenth of October in a beautiful ceremony at Heritage Gardens. The math department wishes them a very happy life together!

Personality!



Domingo Toledo, Professor, works in Differential and Algebraic Geometry. At the moment, he is working on a joint project with Daniel Allcock and Jim Carlson that applies hyperbolic geometry to the study of cubic surfaces. It has been very exciting for him to find methods that say new things about the old subject of cubic surfaces.

Domingo's wife, Paula, is a medical technologist. They have four children: Laura, a lawyer, Robert, a graduate student in philosophy, David, who is in high school, and Ramón, who is in the sixth grade. Domingo and his family enjoy hiking and travelling together, especially to Southern Utah and to Puerto Rico, where they visit family (Domingo is from Puerto Rico) and go to the beach. In his spare time, he helps his kids with their homework and takes cello lessons (and practices, of course). Domingo is an Assistant Scoutmaster for Salt Lake's Troop 34, and survived backpacking with the scout troop this last summer. We are glad that he is part of our department!

Mathematical Morsels

What others think about us...

Nothing pertaining to humanity becomes us so well as mathematics. There, and only there, do we touch the human mind at its peak.

Isaac Asimov

A mathematician is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat which isn't there.

Charles Darwin

As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain; and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality.

Albert Einstein

Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty – a beauty cold and austere, like that of a sculpture.

Bertrand Russell

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www.math.utah.edu/newsletter

The Aftermath is edited by Peter Alfeld and Angie Gardiner. Please contact either one of us if you have an idea or article to submit.