
PCSM NEWSLETTER

Leaders in Mathematics Education

January 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From the President

- Bernie Schroeder

Today I pen this column with a heavy heart. Since our last newsletter, the events of 9/11 and after have placed our lives, our relationships, and our everyday trials and tribulations in a different perspective. I am sure many of us now treasure the little moments and things in our lives differently than we did before. Little slights and irritations bother us a lot less. Have you noticed that people are a lot friendlier? We certainly cherish our relationships with spouses, children, parents, siblings, colleagues, students, and others much more than we may have in the past.

One of the personal and professional relationships that was snuffed out too early for many of us was our friendship with Frank Reardon. Though he did not die in the twin towers of the World Trade Center, his death was just as traumatic and meaningful for us as those deaths were for their families and friends.

Please check the date on the mailing label on the last page of the newsletter. If the date is Mar 02 or earlier, it is time to renew your membership. Save money by renewing for three years. If each of us signs up a new member, our membership will double!

However, rather than spend time dwelling on the tragedy of Frank's death, let us celebrate his life.

Frank Reardon was a force in mathematics education in Pennsylvania. Since my arrival in the state in 1989, I witnessed Frank in numerous leadership roles - from heading up the NCTM Standards Dissemination project, through writing the Pennsylvania Curriculum Framework for Mathematics, to developing the Pennsylvania Standards for Mathematics. Though many times frustrated by the PDE bureaucracy, Frank Reardon was always the diplomat and the professional. He led with inspiration and by example. To paraphrase the Catholic priest who gave the eulogy at Frank's funeral: One of Frank's greatest attributes was his encouraging nature. He constantly encouraged and inspired others to try their hardest to do their best, just as he tried his hardest to do his best in all facets of his life. What better thing can we say about a person?

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In closing, let us not forget Frank's dry sense of humor. All of us witnessed this dry sense of humor many times, but some of us (his golfing buddies) witnessed it at its finest. All of us will miss Frank Reardon and all of us are better off for having known him in life. His legacy will live on.

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From the President-Elect
- Carolyn Marchand

Help us celebrate the 25th annual PCSM meeting in a special way.

WANTED special moments and memories relating speakers, curriculum changes, technology, etc. from the past 25 years of the Pennsylvania Council of Supervisors of Mathematics. This might be an interesting way to add to the history of PCSM and provide an opportunity to reflect on meaningful changes in mathematics education.

I remember the first time I allowed students to use a scientific calculator on a test. One of my better students only finished three problems. When I asked him why, he stated he was so interested in what the keys did that he just did not finish the test. He was certainly "lost in space."

Captured moments will be listed in a program booklet or read during the luncheon in March. If you prefer to recite your own thoughts from the last 25 years, we will give you the microphone to do so during lunch. Please send any thoughts you wish printed or read to marchand@pennswoods.net before March 1.

From the Editor
- Arlene Dowshen

I wish all of you a happy and healthy New Year and look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia in March. Remember that you need to pre-register for the conference and have your membership be current. Kathy Hebert, our treasurer and membership chair, requests that the enclosed membership and conference registration form be sent to her by February 25, 2002.

Arlene L. Dowshen
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IMAGES

The Pennsylvania State Team for Mathematics and Science Education is designing a new statewide project to tackle the challenges of teaching measurement and geometry in the elementary school. **IMAGES (Improving Measurement and Geometry in Elementary Schools)** will encompass components of content for teachers and students, cognition issues, links to state and national standards, assessment, and pedagogy. The project will also point teachers to resources of references, manipulatives, children's literature, and weblinks; and it will have its own website. During the summer, intensive two-day Summer Institutes will be held in three locations in order to spread the benefits of this comprehensive mathematics initiative. These Institutes are: June 27-28, 2002 in Grove City (Western Region); July 2-3, 2002 at Muhlenberg College (Eastern Region); and July 8-9, 2002 at State College (Central Region). See enclosed application; for more information visit <<http://www.rbs.org/mathsci/states/pa/index.shtml>> or contact zimmer@rbs.org.

FRANK REARDON**The Quiet Hero of Our Math Community**

Frank Reardon one of our well-known colleagues and friends died on November 10, 2001 at 10:30 on Saturday morning after a very short but devastating illness.

There are not many people in the Pennsylvania math community who did not know Frank. He was the most reliable source of information from the PA Dept of Education for most of the education entities in the field whether a school district, an Intermediate Unit, an individual or a mathematics professional organization such as PCTM, PCSM, NCTM, NCSM or others.

Because of his personality, character and professional knowledge, Frank, was able to survive programs and initiatives that most of us are very familiar with such as the TELLS, the Outcome Base Education (OBE) the Frameworks and the PA Academic Standards for Mathematics. He was instrumental in the design and implementation of those programs not to mention the Governor's Institutes and many others. He also survived, along with his wife Cathy and daughter Deirdre, the death of his 24-year-old son David who had just graduated from the Military Academy in 1993. Frank and Cathy never completely recovered from the premature death of their son. His death had left an indelible scar in their lives.

On a personal note I must say that I had known Frank Reardon for the past 20 years as a colleague and a good friend. However, from 1993 to 1999 Frank and I worked side by side (physically and professionally) at the Department of Education as Mathematics Advisers providing technical assistance to the State's educational agencies. We did presentations together at the district, state and national level, answered dozens of questions each day and we designed, revised and

implemented programs such as the Mathematics Frameworks, the PA Academic Standards for Mathematics and the Evaluation Instrument for the Selection of Textbooks and Materials and assisted many other bureaus and divisions in the Department. We often worked over lunch, something that Frank valued a great deal and never missed, yet never violated the scheduled time of one hour for lunch. He always reminded me that we had to return to our desks promptly...

Frank and I, as most of you may recall, faithfully attended the PCTM Board meetings held monthly on Saturdays at the Department's premises. Frank always brought to the meeting the doughnuts, the coffeepot (which he kept under lock and key because it was PCTM's property) and took lunch orders from the menu for all those attending the meeting.

Frank Reardon was a man of conviction, honesty, integrity and professionalism. He was extremely knowledgeable of the government's bureaucracy to the point that Department employees and math people in the field alike sought his advice. He was also a "straight shooter" and was not afraid to stand up to his superiors. In this area Frank and I were in absolute agreement... He was well known in the Department and in the field; I considered myself privileged to have been one of his closest friends and I miss him. I have no doubt that many of you feel the same way.

May God bless his soul and give courage and patience to his surviving family.

We, in the mathematics education community, will always remember with respect and affection **Francis (Frank) J. Reardon.**

Harry D. Stratigos
11/16/2001

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