

September 2000

Colorado-Wyoming Chapter

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Volume 32, Number 2 *Newsletter* September 5, 2000

Fall Meeting - September 15, 2000

Speaker: Ray Waller,

Executive Director of the American Statistical Association

Presentation: "The ASA And the U.S. Census Bureau"

Reception: 4:00 PM

Presentation: 5:00 PM

Dinner: 6:30 PM

Where: Long's Peak Room

Lory Student Center

Colorado State University

Ft. Collins, CO

Professor Jim zumBrunnen made the following arrangements with the CSU Long's Peak Room. Please note he needs your **RSVP by September 13**. We will meet in the lounge for appetizers 4-5 PM: fruit,

cheese, and soft drinks. The presentation will be held in the dining room 5-6 PM: Dr. Ray Waller, "The ASA and the US Census Bureau." We will move back to the lounge after the presentation, perhaps to finish the appetizers, but dinner begins at 6:30 PM in the dining room and will feature a \$14.95 "pasta buffet."

Our Speaker:

On September 15, 2000, Dr. Ray Waller, Executive Director of the American Statistical Association, will speak before the local Wyoming-Colorado chapter. The event will be held in Fort Collins, at Colorado State University's Lory Student Center's Long's Peak Room. The reception begins at 4:00 PM. Dr. Waller's presentation begins at 5:00 PM, and will discuss the Association's historic role collaborating with the Census Bureau over the last one hundred sixty years. Dinner begins around 6:30 PM.

Ray Waller became the Executive Director of the American Statistical Association in November, 1995. Prior to that, as a statistical consultant in statistical analysis, reliability analysis, risk analysis, and customer directed short courses, he spent nineteen years in both technical and management capacities at Los Alamos National Laboratory. His responsibilities included roles as Group Leader of Statistics, Directorate Office Leader, Laboratory Liaison for University Research and Science Education, and as Coordinator and Facilitator of technical interactions between the Lab and the University of California campuses.

Prior to joining Los Alamos National Laboratory, Dr. Waller was Associate Professor of Statistics at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. He has been an instructor and professor for classes ranging from public school grades 7 through Ph.D., and has developed and presented numerous short courses in probability and statistics during his career as well. He is the author or coauthor of five technical books, and has written numerous articles regarding applications of Bayesian reliability analysis for "Technometrics" and "The Journal of Quality Technology." He is the past Chair for the Section on Physical and Engineering Sciences of the American Statistical Association, an ASA Fellow, and is an elected member of the International Statistical Institute.

This presentation will incorporate Dr. Waller's long insight into the relations and coordination of science, bureaus, and agencies. In particular, he has had much experience coordinating large, multidisciplinary teams throughout his career, both at Los Alamos and at KSU Manhattan. He may allude to bureaucratic and legislative processes, that have not only impacted the US Census or the ASA, but the role of science in governmental decisionmaking in general. Sampling methods are contentious, apparently, but methods are changing within social sciences and he will mostly likely briefly discuss specific technical aspects of the Census.

Dr. Waller is familiar with controversial projects, having participated in Reactor Safety and Reliability Studies during the aftermath of the Arab oil embargo, but the US Census has also become controversial. On the newsletter editor's wall is a painting that depicts a gigantic census taker walking through crowds of indifferent citizens, and the caption decries the process as a "perfect model of Washington waste." The contemporary census is used for more than taxation, military service, appropriations, or apportionment, and has become a wider resource for government, industry and the academic community. The artist summed up his painting by stating that "Headcounting may be part of our Constitution, but an invasion of privacy is not."

The Census Bureau innovated statistical sampling which has allowed an increase in the scope of census, but there are two errors in census data that have become controversial in the US Congress. An error "in coverage" regards duplicated or undercounted populations. Duplicated populations are less likely, but undercounted populations include those who deliberately avoid detection or who have no permanent address. An error "in content" could include deliberate deception by respondents or careless record keeping on the part of technicians. Since federal funds to state and local governments are distributed on the basis of decennial census, these samplings errors are controversial. Dr. Waller has provided coordination and technocratic administrative support during some politically risky periods and will no doubt make a very interesting presentation.

Registration:

You may contact Jim with questions or RSVP at <zumbrunnen@stat.colostate.edu> or phone (970) 491-7895. Two different websites with the CSU campus map, building locator, and visitor parking can be found at www.map.colostate.edu/fullmap_main.html, or www.colostate.edu/Depts/Parking/Maps/mappage.htm

Directions:

The editor recommends that from the I25 and Prospect Road Exit, attendees drive west toward the mountains. While on Prospect Road, you will soon cross the Cache La Poudre River bridge, and then three big intersections at Timberline, Lemay, and College Avenue (which is also Colorado Highway 287). After College Avenue, continue west on Prospect toward the mountains. The south edge of CSU campus is immediately past some well used railroad tracks. Turn right, north on Meridian Avenue, off Prospect Road and onto the CSU campus.

Traffic starts to be "heavy" around 3:30 PM at the College Avenue and Prospect Road intersection. Stay in the right lane as much as possible after Lemay and Prospect Road to avoid congestion. As a matter of interest, the Spring Creek Flood knocked a freight train off those rail tracks near campus, and then destroyed the old Columbine Trailer Park, where many local artists and students once lived, just southeast of the crossing and down behind the little shopping area. Cheap gasoline is about 1.70 per gallon in Fort Collins at the moment.

Teachers' Work Shop

Local member and Professor **Amy Biesterfeld** <abiester@babbage.colorado.edu> sent the following news item. "This past summer, the Department of Applied Mathematics at the University of Colorado in Boulder ran a one week work shop for high school teachers of statistics. The workshop, titled 'Beyond the Norm: Summer Statistics for High School Teachers,' ran July 10-14 and was partially funded with grants from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) and the University of Colorado Outreach Committee. The work shop was taught by Dr. Amy Biesterfeld and co-organized by Dr. Anne Dougherty, both of CU Boulder."

"The emphasis of the workshop was three-fold: 1) to review topics covered in introductory statistics courses, 2) to introduce technological tools for performing statistical analysis including software packages, SPSS and Minitab, and TI-83 graphing calculators, and 3) to provide resources for teaching statistics (i.e. handouts, newspaper articles, classroom activities and internet web sites)."

"There are plans to run this workshop again next summer." For more information, visit www.amath.colorado.edu/appm/outreach/ or call Dr. Biesterfeld at (303) 492-0694 in Boulder, Colorado.

Dues

Your mailing label tells you when your membership expires. You may send your dues payment directly to our treasurer, Bill Navidi, at the below address. Dues are \$6 for regular members and \$2 for students.

Bill Navidi

Dept. of Mathematical & Computer Sciences

Colorado School of Mines

Golden, CO 80401-1887

Dues Form

NAME (first, middle initial, last) _____

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PHONE (include area code)_____ E-MAIL_____

MAY WE POST YOUR NAME AND E-MAIL ON OUR HOMEPAGE UNDER MEMBERS?
