FROM THE PRESIDENT

I’m pleased to report that all is going well thus far this year. The monthly meeting program is off to a great start with meetings held in August, September, and October and meetings scheduled in November and all of next year. We’re working hard to line up interesting speakers and topics from both the public and private sectors. Our annual symposium will be held in conjunction with the Winter Simulation Conference (see write-up on page 2).

I am in my second term as your chapter president. As you know, chapter president is normally a one-term position and an explanation is in order. In May, Dan Nussbaum, last year’s president elect, accepted a professorship at the Naval Postgraduate School in beautiful Monterey, CA. This left the chapter without a president for the 2004 – 2005 time period. The WINFORMS Board of Directors wrestled with this problem at its June meeting. As a solution to the problem, the board asked me to stay on as president for a second year and I graciously accepted. While the by-laws have a clause for this kind of thing, it seemed that the purpose of spending a year as vice-President (President-elect) is to gain familiarity with the WINFORMS Board and decision-making process - before taking the reins as president. VP Russell Wooten agreed with the board’s decision and will perform as Vice-President this year as well as substitute as chapter secretary while Nastaran is on maternity leave.

In any event, I’m very pleased with this opportunity and will endeavor to make this a highly exciting year for the Chapter’s membership. We’ve aggressively sought speakers for the monthly meetings program and are always interested in your feedback on making this program better. Let us know if there are topics or speakers that you’d like us to schedule.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who keep WINFORMS going. We are consistently one of the most active INFORMS chapters in the country, and this is a tribute to the chapters membership. My hat’s off to all of you!
WINFORMS’ PRESIDENT MOVES TO CA

Dr. Daniel Nussbaum received an outstanding opportunity to live in Monterey, California and to teach at Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in May of 2004. Dan announced his decision to leave the Washington area and resigned as chapter president at the June meeting of the WINFORMS board of directors.

Dan has been a great friend to WINFORMS, hosting it for several years since we moved from the ANSER Crystal City office. He will be missed this year, but those of us with email and who regularly go to the nationals will see him again, and often. So we wish Dan the best of luck and students of the continued high caliber as NPS graduates of the past. What a joy it is to teach those who are motivated and capable. We wish Dan the very best.

INFORMS Annual Members Meeting – Back to OR Roots

Russ Vane will be representing WINFORMS at the annual members meeting in Denver. This conference is always interesting and fun and this year should be no exception. The entire program will be hosted at Adam’s Mark Denver. There will be over 35 Exhibitors and 2700 presentations in 47 tracks. It sounds great. Russ will put together a short summary of the meeting in the next issue of Feedback. For more details about the meeting, go to: www.informs.org/Conf/Denver2004.

Winter Simulations Conference Designated WINFORMS Annual Symposium

WSC ’04 will be held December 5-8, 2004 at the Washington Hilton and Towers in Washington, D.C. This hotel is conveniently located on upper Connecticut Avenue and is minutes away from Georgetown, Adams-Morgan, Embassy Row, and the Washington business district. In addition, the hotel is within easy walking distance from the Dupont Circle Metro stop, providing access to the entire metropolitan Washington DC area.

WSC ’04 will include 22 tracks and 140 sessions with something of interest for everyone with its blend of cutting-edge research, innovative applications, exhibits from top companies in the simulation industry and international speakers. Michael Zyda is this year’s keynote speaker. Professor Zyda is the director of the MOVES Institute and is a pioneer in the fields of computer graphics, networked virtual environments, modeling and simulation, and entertainment/defense collaboration. Mark your calendar now for WSC ’04 and join us in Washington for an exceptional conference! (http://www.wintersim.org/)
SIGSTAT is the Special Interest Group in Statistics for the CPCUG, the Capital PC User Group, and WINFORMS, the Washington Institute for Operations Research Service and Management Science. All meetings are in Room S3031, 1800 M St, NW from 12:30 to 1:30. Enter the South Tower & take the elevator to the 3rd floor to check in at the guard’s desk. First-time attendees should contact Charlie Hallahan, 202-694-5051, hallahan@ers.usda.gov, and leave their name. Directions to the building & many links of statistical interest can be found at the SIGSTAT website, http://www.cpcug.org/user/sigstat/.

October 13, 2004: R for the non-S Experts (http://www.r-project.org/)
With the rise in popularity of Linux, there has occurred a concurrent rise in popularity of free software. This popularity arises not necessarily because the software is free, but because of the free software’s usually unsurpassed reliability and utility. R is recognized for the same reasons. Its popularity comes from the highly successful S language which it emulates and from a very active international community of accomplished statisticians who develop R for the statistical analyst, in fact, the developer of S, John Chambers a fellow at Bell Labs, is a core developer of R. This presentation will explain how R can be installed and will offer a brief tutorial on getting started with emphasis on demonstrating the ease of making graphs of data. Mike Fleming will be the speaker.

On an experimental basis in SAS 9.1, a number of SAS/STAT procedures support an extension to the Output Delivery System (ODS) to create statistical graphics as automatically as tables. This facility is referred to as ODS Statistical Graphics (or ODS Graphics for short). With ODS Graphics, a procedure creates the graphs that are most commonly needed for a particular analysis. Using ODS Graphics eliminates the need to save numerical results in an output data set, manipulate them with a DATA step program, and display them with a graphics procedure. Linda Atkinson will be the speaker.

We continue with the topic begun in October 2003. In the June 2004 meeting, the difference between general linear models and models using generalized estimating equations (GEE’s) was covered. The available correlation structures in PROC GENMOD were discussed and GENMOD was used to fit a longitudinal data model. To wrap up this topic, the concepts behind generalized linear mixed models are discussed and a longitudinal data model is fit using the GLIMMIX macro.

Change in Location for Monthly Meeting
General Dynamics has graciously volunteered to host WINFORMS monthly meeting. We will now be meeting two blocks from the Crystal City Metro in a building called Jefferson Plaza 2. On the sixth floor General Dynamics has a great multimedia room, called the Lincoln Room. That’s where we will meet for the next eleven months. Here’s when we’ll meet during 2004-2005:

2004: September 28, October 19, November 30.
Food is served at 6 PM each meeting.

Protocol: The building is locked at 6 PM, so try to arrive early for the standard snacks. We will be posting a door-person to let people in, until 6:30. Please take the elevator to the sixth floor. Please sign in when
you enter through the glass doors at the receptionist station. Go through the doors to the left of the receptionist. Turn left towards the Lincoln Room and the Galley (Kitchen). Fix a plate of snacks and help yourself to a beverage.

The President’s WINFORMS Goal is to have 50+ members at each meeting this year. We’re already off to a great start. Please participate as often as possible and bring a friend!

Monthly Meeting Summaries

AUGUST 2004
NARRATIVE CONTRIBUTED BY RUSS WOOTEN, PICTURES CONTRIBUTED BY FRANK TRIPPI

The 2004 – 2005 edition of the WINFORMS Evening Programs started this August with a lively and pertinent discussion by Dr. Randy Robinson. Randy as an INFORMS Board of Director member is more than qualified to speak about the new marketing effort at INFORMS.

The INFORMS Board has started a three year effort to better market ourselves. The marketing communication firm of Philip Johnson Associates and public relations firm of Schwartz Communications have provide both insights and a plan.

Who are we? We are Operations Research. What is Operations Research? Operations Research is the discipline of applying advanced analytical methods to help make better decisions. Ok, but what is the short version? O.R. is the Science of Better.

The goals of INFORMS include improving our organizational image, enabling us as members to benefit from these improvements and to leverage the marketing-the-profession initiative globally by encouraging and helping other societies to conduct similar programs. The Board of INFORMS believes that these improvements will be appreciated by almost everybody, our organization, us as practitioners and our customers. The Board judged that an affordable program could make a difference, i.e., it could “move the dial”


In addition to these new efforts we also have our magazines (including our flagship “OR/MS Today” http://lionhrtpub.com/orms/) and the “The Franz Edelman Award” All this information and more can be found at our INFORMS On-line website http://www.informs.org/.
SEPTEMBER 2004

Mr. Jeff Horton, co-Founder and Principal of Synergy Partners, Inc., made a presentation titled “Uncertainty, Risk and the Value of Flexibility.” This discussion addressed the subject of financial valuation and its uses as a decision and strategic planning tool. It was conducted during the day that Hurricane Ivan tracked through the DC area. While greatly affecting attendance, Ivan failed to temper the enthusiasm of those who made the meeting. The presentation and ensuing discussions were spirited. Since traditional valuation techniques (DCF/NPV) are static, they may lead to less than optimal decisions. The talk showed how a more comprehensive consideration of uncertainty provides additional insight into the valuation process and provides a more explicit basis to assess risk. The identification and recognition of the value of flexibility was then introduced and the practical application of real options analysis to support the strategic, risk management and valuation aspects of consideration of flexibility was discussed. Applicability to an enterprise risk management framework was discussed.

Mr. Horton has over 20 years experience as an engineer, analyst, and manager in fuel purchasing, energy trading, corporate strategy, business planning and analysis and business development groups of a major energy company. He holds a B.S. and M.S. in engineering with a concentration in operations research from The Pennsylvania State University and an M.B.A. from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.

OCTOBER 2004

Dr. Charles A. Weber, IDA, will make a presentation titled “Optimizing Major Acquisition Programs’ Production Schedules for the U.S. DoD.” U.S. DoD major acquisition programs are typically planned and scheduled over a long planning horizon and historically account for approximately $40 billion annually. Dr. Weber will discuss the use of a mixed integer linear programming model that optimizes the annual production quantities for these programs. The objective of the model is to minimize total cost while meeting production demands for new systems by the military services and other constraints. The heart of the model is a costing methodology first proposed by Balut that considers a system's cumulative production quantity, its production rate, its cycle time costs and other business in a plant.

Dr. Weber has more than 30 years experience developing decision support systems and IT solutions for public and private industry. He has spent the past 10 years at IDA/CARD working on DoD cost analysis systems. He has a PhD from Ohio State University in Management Science, is a 1991 winner of the National Association of Purchasing Managers doctoral dissertation award, and is an adjunct professor at The Johns Hopkins University.

WINFORMS Tidbits

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Margaret Myers has copies of Interfaces Journals dating back to 1977 and would like to find them a new home. If interested, please contact Margaret at (703) 845-5575.

WINFORMS’ SECRETARY NOW MOTHER OF TWO

Dr. Nastaran Coleman is the proud mother of Reuben Aram Coleman, a 9 pound, 3 ounce boy who was 21.5 inches. He was born on 3 September. We all congratulate her on this happy occasion and wish her well during her leave of absence. Russell Wooten is therefore holding down two offices until Nastaran returns.
As a feature of FEEDBACK, sponsoring organizations are encouraged to share information with the WINFORMS membership about their business programs. This section of the newsletter is reserved for this purpose and sponsoring organizations are invited to contribute. Please contact Jim Huttinger if your organization is interested in contributing.

**Important 2004 – 2005 Calendar Dates**

Please take a moment to mark these dates on your calendars. Some are tentative, so keep in contact for updates:

- October 13, 2004 – SIGSTAT Meeting, R for the non-S Experts
- October 24-27, 2004 – INFORMS Annual Meeting in Denver, CO
- November 10, 2004 – SIGSTAT Meeting, ODS Statistical Graphics
- November 30, 2004 – WINFORMS Monthly Meeting
- December 8, 2004 – SIGSTAT Meeting, PROC MIXED - Part 7: Generalized Linear Mixed Models
- December 5-8, 2005 – Winter Simulation Conference
- May 2005 – WINFORMS General Membership Meeting
WINFORMS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Dues are $18.00 per standard membership, $9.00 for students and senior citizens, for each calendar year, payable to WINFORMS. Address to WINFORMS, P.O. Box 23257 Washington, D.C. 20026-3257. Non-students may renew for up to three years. If you have any questions about individual membership, please email winforms@mail.informs.org or contact any WINFORMS officer.

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Annual Membership Dues

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Please remember that membership is on a calendar year basis and, if you haven’t already done so, must be renewed for 2004. Your membership expiration is next to your name on the mailing label for this publication. Please contact the membership chair with any questions.
Renew Your Annual Membership!

(Memberhip expiration date is next to your name on the mailing label.)