FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is now February 2008. I hope everyone enjoyed all their holidays and seasonal activities of November through mid-January. I will not ask if anyone is enjoying the cold winter temperature and the snow.

Dr. Russ Vane, Dr. Doug Samuelson and I meet recently to discuss our plans to reinvigorate the Institutional Member process within WINFORMS. As you all know, Institutional Member play a very important part of our success. You will hear more on this shortly.

There are four key INFORMS events occurring this year in our area:

- **Conference on OR Practice.** This conference on “Applying Science to the Art of Business” features presentations on real-world applications of analytic solutions, presented by industry and university leaders. Highlights include the Franz Edelman Competition for excellence in applied OR, methodology and software tutorials, and facilitated networking. April 13-15, 2008, Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore, MD, http://meetings.informs.org/Practice08/

- **2008 Edelman Competition (part of the Conference on OR Practice).** Six finalists will compete for the top prize in this “super bowl” of OR practice, showcasing analytics projects that had major impacts on their client organizations. The competition takes place on Monday and is open to all conference registrants. That evening, we honor the finalists and announce the 2008 winner at the gala awards ceremony and banquet. Admission to the ceremony and banquet is included in your registration fee. On Tuesday, the 2008 winning presentation will be reprised as a plenary session. April 14, 2008, Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore, MD, http://meetings.informs.org/Practice08/edelman.html
• **INFORMS Annual Meeting.** The INFORMS Annual Meeting, with more than 800 sessions and 3,000 papers, covers the broad landscape of OR research and practice. Many events organized by INFORMS communities and committees are held during the meeting. October 12-15, 2008, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel & Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC, http://meetings.informs.org/DC08/

• **Summer Workshop on Teaching Management Science.** This workshop brings together a focused group of participants and a faculty of experts, with the goal of improving teaching effectiveness. The workshop provides a practical background in learning theory, communicates effective strategies for teaching management science, and creates an ongoing learning community for monitoring and sharing pedagogical experiments. October 12-15, 2008. Washington, DC

Work has been very interesting. Recently, I attending a meeting in which the main subject was “Linear Adjacencies Theory” and the “Concept of Concurrent Linear Adjacent Systems.” Please if you have any experience in this drop me a line!

More importantly, please send me an email if you have any ideas on how to improve WINFORMS, on what you require as a member, or if you are interested in volunteering your time and skills to better WINFORMS. With everyone’s help, I hope to reinvigorate WINFORMS.

— RW

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**WINFORMS MEETING REPORTS**

**JANUARY 29, 2008 MEETING: TED ALLEN**

(Report by Meghan Wool)

Dr. Theodore (Ted) Allen, Ph.D., an associate professor of industrial and systems engineering at The Ohio State University, presented at the Joint WINFORMS/IIE (Institute of Industrial Engineers) presentation at the National Capital Chapter Headquarters in Tyson’s Corner on Tuesday evening, January 29th. The title of the presentation was “Process Control Using Free-Style Text.”

The presentation focused on Dr. Allen’s research on topic model process control (TMPC) approach for control charting systems characterized by free-style text. This topic is particularly salient for organizations using massive databases with many free-style text fields. Dr. Allen put forward “topic models” as the most promising approach for automated free-text analysis. This approach identifies new trends and assignable cause. It is based on the recently introduced topic supervision using “anti-words” and chi-squared tests on the empirical topic percentages from Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC). This model is particularly useful for uncovering rare, unusual, and unexpected topics from the responses in free-text fields.

The presentation was well attended with a full room of approximately twenty participants. Questions focused on the applicability of Dr. Allen’s approach in practice for the participants in the room.

About the presenter: Dr. Allen has over 40 refereed publications in applied statistics and operations research including a Springer textbook on engineering statistics. His work on text analysis was supported by grants from the U.S. Army Research Laboratory and an Ohio consulting company called Lextant. Ted has served as an officer for the quality, statistics and reliability (QSR) section of INFORMS twice and organized numerous sections at national conferences. He is also the co-founder of the statistics and optimization software and consulting company Sagata Ltd. Sagata's work on improving allocations of voting machines to precincts was featured in the December 2007 issue of *OR/MS Today.*
**Evening Program: Tuesday, March 11, 2008**

Speaker: Eva Lee, Georgia Tech. Topic: Biodefense and Preparedness. Dr. Lee won the 2007 Edelman Prize for her work on optimizing the placement of radioactive seeds in treating prostate cancer. She is well known and widely published in modeling pandemics and responses to them, as well. Venue to be announced.

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**We are WINFORMS, As Are You!**

**RICHARD M. SOLAND**

Dr. Richard M. Soland (Rich) got his first O.R. experience in 1959-61 as an undergraduate coop student at IBM, where he analyzed lifetime distribution data from failed computer components (such as vacuum tubes and relays!) and experimented with a very early Monte Carlo simulation package.

Rich completed his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1961 and his PhD in mathematics (an O.R. program actually) at M.I.T. in 1964.

His first full-time job was in the Advanced Research Department of the nonprofit Research Analysis Corporation (1964-71), where he was able to concentrate on research toward improving O.R. methodologies in such areas as discrete and global optimization, and Bayesian statistical analysis. He started teaching part-time at The George Washington University (GW) in 1965, and moved to full-time teaching at the School of Business of The University of Texas at Austin in 1971. In 1976 he moved to the Industrial Engineering Department of Cole Polytechnique de Montréal for two years, and then moved back to the Washington area as Professor of Operations Research at GW’s School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), where he has been since 1978.

In 1979 Rich received responsibility for the just-created undergraduate O.R. program, called at that time Operations Research & Computational Science (and subsequently Systems Analysis & Engineering, and presently Systems Engineering). He’s been the curriculum chair and academic advisor for the program since then, except for periods when he was department chair or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (1989-95 and 1997-99). He has held visiting academic positions in Denmark, Finland, France, and Venezuela. At various time he has been a consultant to IDA, CNA and ANSER.

Rich became active in the O.R. collegiate honor society Omega Rho in 1979 and served as Executive Director during the period 1984-98. He served as President 2000-2002. He has served two terms as a trustee of WINFORMS.

Rich’s fifty open literature publications deal mainly with O.R. methodologies, and fall into several overlapping categories: discrete and global optimization; multiple criteria decision making; missile exchange modeling; Bayesian statistical analysis; and optimal location modeling.
Capital Sciences 2008

The Washington Academy of Sciences and its Affiliates present Capital Science 2008, to be held Saturday-Sunday, March 29 – 30. It is among this area’s premier events. As a member of WINFORMS, the price ($50), time (a weekend), and location (National Science Foundation at Ballston in Arlington) are most appealing. Student may attend for free if they register prior to March 1, $25 thereafter. The Saturday and Sunday lunches ($20) promise interesting speakers. The Saturday evening dinner meeting ($45) features a keynote address by NSF Director Arden Bement. The conference closes Sunday with a reception hosted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a special session, Science in the Courtroom.

While there will be a full track for WINFORMS/IIE through the conference, this is opportunity to sample other science and engineering disciplines. Affiliate members include the American Meteorological Society - DC Chapter, the American Society of Plant Biologists - Washington Section, American Society for Technical Innovation, the Anthropological Society of Washington, the Association for Women in Science - DC Metropolitan Chapter, the Association for Computing Machinery - DC Chapter, the Biological Society of Washington, the Botanical Society of Washington, the Chemical Society of Washington, the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. - DC and Northern Virginia Chapters, the Institute of Industrial Engineers, National Capital Chapter, the Marian Koshland Science Museum of the National Academy of Sciences, the Maryland Native Plant Society, National Capital Section/Optical Society of America, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Physics Department, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority - Meadowlark Botanical Gardens and Potomac Overlook Regional Park, the Potomac Chapter of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, the Philosophical Society of Washington, the Society of American Foresters Washington Section, the Virginia Native Plant Society, the Washington Chapter of the Institute for Operations Research and Management Sciences, and the Washington Society for the History of Medicine.

For full information and to register go to http://www.washacadsci.org/capsci08/Index.htm.

Frank Trippi Returns to the Teachers Workshop Program

Dave Goldsman, Chair, INFORMS Public Awareness Committee, has appointed Frank Trippi as the Technical Coordinator for the Teachers Workshop, to be held during the INFORMS Meeting Washington DC 2008. Frank promises this TW will be the biggest and best ever! This can happen, however, only with local metro DC WINFORMS member assistance! Frank – a devoted WINFORMS member – can be reached at ftrippi1@verizon.net.

Calls for Papers

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT. Special Issue on Artificial Intelligence and Data Mining. Guest Editors, Anurag Agarwal, University of Florida, anurag.agarwal@cba.ufl.edu, Wei Jiang, Stevens Institute of Technology, wei.jiang@stevens.edu. The field of data mining has seen an explosion of interest from both academia and industry and this interest continues to grow at a rapid rate. As a follow-up to a
highly successful Second INFORMS Workshop on Artificial Intelligence and Data Mining (WAID) held at the 2007 INFORMS Annual conference, the *Journal of Information Technology and Management (ITM)* will devote a special issue to topics at the intersection of information technology management and data mining. Data mining serves as a powerful tool for information technology and management and leads to profound changes in information systems to support many business decisions and system operations. These changes will affect the way our organizations function, will lead to new business opportunities and will create a need for new non-profit organizations. New technologies emerge quickly to solve complex business problems by integrating advanced analytic solutions with existing technologies. In order to address the advances of information technology and management solutions, this focused issue aims to broadly explore the synergy between the fields of ITM and data mining. We are therefore interested in receiving papers focusing on either applications or methodology and dealing with any aspect of managing information technology including but not limited to artificial intelligence, data modeling, data mining, knowledge representation and discovery, etc. The deadline for submission is April 15, 2008 but early submissions are encouraged. When submitting articles, choose article type as "Special Issue -WAID-07." Papers will be peer reviewed according to the usual standards of a leading international journal. Authors should submit their paper online through Springer’s ITM journal website (http://www.springer.com/east/home/business/journals?SGWID=5-40528-70-35612778-0).


**Obituary – Richard E. Rosenthal**

Distinguished Professor Richard E. Rosenthal died on Thursday, 3 January 2008 at the Hospice of the Central Coast, Monterey, CA, after a courageous bout with cancer. Prof. Rosenthal graduated from John Hopkins University in Mathematics in 1972 and from Georgia Institute of Technology in Operations Research (OR) in 1975. From 1975 to 1983 he was an assistant and associate professor of Management Science at the University of Tennessee. In 1984 he came to the OR Department at NPS as a National Academy of Sciences Senior Research Fellow. He was Operations Research department chairman from 1997-2000. He authored or co-authored over 20 professional papers in the OR literature. His numerous awards include the International Federation of Operations Research Societies Distinguished Lectureship, the Department of the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award, and the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences Prize for Teaching OR/MS Practice. The Military Operations Research Society has recently established the Rosenthal Student Military Modeling Award to recognize outstanding student military operations research. A public memorial service will be scheduled at the Naval Postgraduate School. Rick has requested the following: (1) Take time off from your responsibilities to enjoy a great meal with good friends and family, who you do not see often enough; (2) Give some time or money to a charity that brings some joy to those who need it or contributes to advances in education, science, the arts or the environment."

**... and Cluster for INFORMS National Meeting**

Doug Samuelson is organizing a cluster of sessions in honor of the late Professor Rick Rosenthal for the 2008 national INFORMS meetings. His primary interest was defense applications, but he was also well known for contributions to optimization and forecasting, among other areas. Anyone interested in participating in one of
these sessions, or in having this cluster’s co-sponsorship of a session organized under another cluster, please contact Doug ASAP.

WINFORMS Leadership Openings

INSTITUTIONAL SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

WINFORMS is sponsored by you, our members, as well as our institutional sponsors, whom we gratefully acknowledge. The sponsorship chair is now vacant. Please consider taking on this role. It will be a great service to WINFORMS and rewarding for you. For more information please contact Russell Wooten, WINFORMS President.

Contributions from You?

Do you have Feedback tidbit to offer, whether kudos info for yourself, organization or colleagues, or other miscellany? If so, we'll try to include it here, space permitting. Feedback also solicits small filler items here to be used as needed. Send contribution to Ric Blacksten at hricblacksten@sigmaxi.net.

Job Postings

This section is available for posting of ORMS job opportunities in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area. Send postings to Ric Blacksten at hricblacksten@sigmaxi.net.

INFORMS Members Seek to Form CORPS: Community of Operations Research for Public Service

In response to what they perceive to be a growing desire by INFORMS members to organize and exchange ideas on our public service efforts, several INFORMS members have initiated the organization of a new INFORMS forum - the Community of Operations Research for Public Service Efforts (CORPS). The mission of the CORPS forum is to promote and disseminate research and applications among professionals interested in theory, methodologies, and applications of operations research and management science to public service problems and issues. This forum will focus on human-driven systems in traditionally under-served and/or under-represented populations, regions, and application areas. The forum will appeal to professionals in operations research who are interested in the intersection of scholarship, teaching, practice, and service (inside and outside of academia). If you are an INFORMS member and would like to support this effort and join this proposed community/forum, please complete the following sentence and submit it to Eva Regnier, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Decision Science, Defense Resources Management Institute, Naval Postgraduate School, eregnier@nps.edu: "I am an INFORMS member, my name is ____________________, my INFORMS member number is ______, and I support the petition for creation of a Community of Operations Researchers for Public Service Efforts (CORPS) INFORMS Forum."
INFORMS Society and Section Spotlight

INFORMS Societies are large groups of 400-1000 INFORMS members with common interests that have conferences, websites, and networking such as job posting email newsletters. Currently, there are ten societies: Applied Probability; Computing; Decision Analysis; Information Systems; Manufacturing and Service Operations Management; Marketing Science; Military Applications (relevant to many WINFORMS members); Optimization; Simulation; and Transportation Science and Logistics. In an INFORMS Society, you can connect with other OR/MS professionals across the country and the world working on solving similar problems.

INFORMS Sections are smaller groups that have a more specialized focus. Sections usually have sessions at conferences and websites with lots of technical information and resources. You can network with professionals in your specific field and seek expertise for how to increase your productivity. There are currently 22 sections: Accounting, Auditing and Tax; Artificial Intelligence; Aviation Applications; CPMS: The Practice Section; Data Mining; eBusiness; Energy, Natural Resources, and the Environment; Financial Services; Group Decision and Negotiation; Health Applications; Location Analysis; Management Control Systems; Organization Science; Public Programs and Processes; Quality Statistics, and Reliability; Railroad Applications; Revenue Management and Pricing; Social Science Applications; SpORts; SPRIG: Spreadsheet Productivity Research Interest Group; Technology Management; and Telecommunications.

Membership fees for joining a Society or Section range from $0-30 with most costing $5-10 per year. See more details at www.informs.org and click on Communities. If you can contribute a brief Spotlight article about your Society or Section, please email Kevin Gormley at kgormley@mitre.org.

Fermat’s Last Theorem, Blacksten’s First Conjecture

Recall that Fermat’s Last Theorem states that there are no solutions to the equation $a^n + b^n = c^n$ for positive integers $a, b, c$ and $n$ with $n > 2$. I have a converse conjecture: For any positive integer $n$ there exist positive integers $a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_n, b$ such that $a_1^n + a_2^n + \ldots + a_n^n = b^n$, e.g., $3^3 + 4^3 + 5^3 = 6^3$. (You might recall that $3^2 + 4^2 = 5^2$, but you will be disappointed if you guess that $3^4 + 4^4 + 5^4 + 6^4 = 7^4$.)

Several years ago I wrote an Excel/Visual Basic for Applications program to randomly look for other solutions, and eventually found some solutions for $n = 4$ and, as I recall, $n = 5$. Honest. But I ran into problems with $n = 6$ since the numbers got too large for even LONG integers. I have been meaning to tackle that generation problem again with Python or some other programming language allowing integers of arbitrary length, but have not gotten around to it. Nor can I find my folder with those $n = 4$ and $n = 5$ solutions. So, I am offering a reward of $10 for the first $n = 4$ solution emailed me, $20 for the first $n = 5$ solution, and $30 for the first $n = 6$ solution. Sorry, that is end of my budget, except I will pay $50 to the first person to prove the conjecture and publish the proof in a reputable refereed math journal, otherwise persuade me of the proof’s correctness, or discover an extant proof in the literature. Just something to do instead of sudoku.

— Ric Blacksten (hricblacksten@sigmaxi.net)
WINFORMS
P.O. Box 23257
Washington, D.C. 20026-3257

We’re on the WEB!!
http://winforms.chapter.informs.org

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