
▲ INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



JILL LAZARUS
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Jill Lazarus, the current President of OAME, is a high school teacher in the Renfrew County District School Board. She is also completing a PhD in Education at the University of Ottawa. Jill has a range of interests in mathematics education, including curriculum development, student communication, educational technologies, assessment, and professional learning.

When I was first approached with the idea of becoming President of the OAME, I felt honoured. Participating in OAME activities has been an important part of my own professional growth. Opportunities to connect with dedicated members of the mathematics education community, and with the wonderful ideas that are shared each year at the OAME Annual Conference, have inspired my teaching. Since attending the annual conference for my first time a decade ago, this event and the many other opportunities that arose from my involvement in the OAME have become an integral part of my professional learning.

In addition to being part of an amazing annual conference, there are many ways to get involved in the OAME. Regional events are organized by local chapters; the Ontario Mathematics Olympiad (OMO) offers a fun and challenging collaborative mathematics competition for teams of Grades 7 and 8 students; an annual Leadership Conference is held in the Fall; the OAME website and Twitter feed (@OAMECounts) include up-to-date information for the mathematics education community; the OAME awards offer opportunities to formally recognize educators who demonstrate outstanding contributions to mathematics education in Ontario; and all kinds of great ideas are published regularly in the *OAME Gazette* and *Abacus*. Special projects also continue to arise. This past year, for example, the OAME has been part of two projects that are reported on in this issue of the *Gazette*: The Grade 9 Applied Project (www.math4thenines.ca) and the Math Knowledge Network (www.mkn-rcm.ca).

It is the hard work of dedicated OAME members who volunteer their time to make these opportunities possible. Members of regional chapter councils organize local events. Conference organizers and presenters contribute to an exciting conference each year. Members of ad hoc committees

collaborate to address special situations. The OAME Board of Directors and Executive come together throughout the school year to contribute to various activities and committees. The editors, reviewers, people from across the province who submit articles to the *OAME Gazette* and *Abacus*, website team, and Mathematics Conference Information System (MCIS) coordinators are working hard to keep us connected. Members from across the province take the time to come together for our regional and provincial conferences. With a recent transition in *Gazette* editors, I would like to specifically thank Amy Lin for her contributions to the *OAME Gazette* over the last year, and I would like to welcome Tim Sibbald, who will be filling in as interim editor this year.

Over the past year as President-Elect, I have had the opportunity to work closely with members of the OAME Executive. In my transition into this new role, I have learned from my successors and mentors: Past-Presidents Judy Mendaglio (2016–2017) and Tim Sibbald (2015–2016), Vice-Presidents Bill Otto and Sandra Jean Price, and Executive Directors Lynda Ferneyhough and Fred Ferneyhough. Everyone on this committee invests their time to make significant contributions to this organization. One name that is likely familiar to many OAME members is Lynda's. She is often the person we go to when issues arise. Lynda goes above and beyond in making significant contributions to all aspects of this organization, supporting members in many ways, and handling all kinds of situations as they arise. I look forward to continuing to work with the dedicated members of the OAME Executive, and I would like to welcome David Petro, who is our new President-Elect.

In addition to feeling honoured to become President of the OAME, I was humbled. I began to consider this role more carefully and to develop my vision during my year as President-Elect. Planning for the 2017 OAME Leadership Conference involved developing a vision that would be reflected at this conference. As I thought more carefully about what "Leadership" means to me, Bruce, Jarvis, Flynn, and Brock's (2011) findings concerning "Lead Teachers" in collaborative action research came to mind. More specifically, these Ontario researchers conjectured that contradictory statements made by teachers may reflect conflicting views of leadership. The more "distributed" style that is articulated in their conjecture reflects the vision that I hope to promote this year:

We conjecture that one possible reason for these apparent contradictory statements lies within the perceived definition of what 'leadership' involves. Whereas traits-based leadership theory has typically emphasized the charismatic, authoritative (not necessarily authoritarian) leader image, more recent

leadership models such as 'distributed' (Spillane, 2005), allow for a more shared leadership style wherein truly capable leaders are those seen as possessing the ability to acknowledge and to emphasize the best and most creative contributions of those around them, rather than commanding obedience or even leading by example (Bruce et al., 2011, p. 44).

This type of leadership style is evident in various small- and large-scale mathematics education initiatives across the province. Consider, for example, the view of leadership that is reflected in the Grade 9 Applied Project and the Math Knowledge Network activities that are reported on in this issue of the *Gazette*. As current President of the OAME, my vision for this year is to support this style of leadership by supporting collaboration, and by making efforts to connect and highlight some of the amazing things that are already happening within the Ontario mathematics education community.

One responsibility of the OAME President-Elect is to design a program for the next OAME Leadership Conference that reflects his or her vision. The theme of the 2017 OAME Leadership Conference is Connecting Leading Ideas. My goal for this year is to reflect my vision by emphasizing "creative contributions" of OAME members. In particular, with a focus on *Thinking Classroom* and *Leadership*, the event will feature a keynote session by Peter Liljedahl, to offer background on the idea of a *Thinking Classroom*, a concept that has been gaining momentum in Ontario (e.g., the Grade 9 Applied Project report). *Thinking Classroom* breakout sessions will be facilitated by Ontario teachers, in both English and French. The afternoon will include a panel on Leadership followed by elementary and secondary breakout sessions. For the first time, this exciting event will be coming to Ottawa for Canada 150!

I look forward to another exciting year with the OAME, and I would encourage you to explore different ways to get involved. Consider attending and/or submitting a proposal to present at a conference, join your regional chapter council and/or participate in chapter activities, interact with us on Twitter, nominate someone for a position on the OAME Board or for an OAME award, and/or submit an article to the *OAME Gazette* or *Abacus*. Feel free to contact a member of your local chapter, or myself, if you have questions about getting involved.

References

- Bruce, C., Jarvis, D., Flynn, T., & Brock, E. (2011). Lead teachers in collaborative action research: Perceptions of role and responsibility. *Canadian Journal of Action Research*, 12(3), 29–46.
- Spillane, J.P. (2005). Distributed leadership. *The Educational Forum*, 69(2), 143–150. ▲

▲ MARILYN HURRELL TRIBUTE (1944–2017)

Marilyn Hurrell passed away May 17, 2017. She was committed to the OAME in a wide variety of ways. Marilyn was one of the longest-serving editors of the *OAME Gazette* (2003–2008). She also served as an associate editor until her death and had been a member of the OAME Board of Directors. In her chapter, Marilyn chaired the Ontario Math Olympics in 2001, when they were held in Thunder Bay, and was very active within the chapter.



Marilyn was born April 2, 1944 to Vern and Paulyne Sims. She pursued academics and cheerleading during her school years at Pine Street School and Port Arthur Collegiate Institute. This was followed with a mathematics degree from Lakehead University and further studies at York and Queen's Universities years later. That facilitated a career teaching mathematics and English, as well as occasional lecturing at Lakehead and being a ski instructor. The latter led to her involvement in the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations' Provincial Skiing Championships and Surrey Secondary Schools Athletic Association Alpine Ski League.

Marilyn made many volunteer contributions that include the Wesway Board of Directors, the Alzheimer Society, Diabetes Association, and the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. She also found time to enjoy the Thunderwolves hockey games, the golf course, gardening, bridge, and book clubs. Since retiring, she enjoyed trips to Vancouver, Alaska, the Maritimes, Ireland, and New Zealand.

Marilyn's family was particularly important to her. She enjoyed visiting family and friends on Lake Superior and special time spent with her grandkids. She had two children and three grandchildren.

Marilyn will be missed by the mathematics community.

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