

# Notices

of the American Mathematical Society

**EDITOR:** Anthony W. Knap

**ASSOCIATE EDITORS:**

Robert M. Fossum, Susan Friedlander (*Forum Editor*), Martin Golubitsky, Victor Guillemin, David Jerison, Susan Landau, Andy Magid (*Opinion Column Editor*), Mary Beth Ruskai, Mark Saul

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:** Hyman Bass, Steven Krantz, Hugo Rossi

**SENIOR WRITER and DEPUTY EDITOR:** Allyn Jackson

**MANAGING EDITOR:** Sandra Frost

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS:**

Muriel Toupin, Anne-Marie Epp

**PRODUCTION:**

Leda Black, Lori Nero, Donna Salter, Deborah Smith, Peter Sykes, Maxine Wolfson

**ADVERTISING SALES:** Anne Newcomb

**SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Subscription prices for Volume 45 (1998) are \$300 list; \$240 institutional member; \$180 individual member. (The subscription price for members is included in the annual dues.) A late charge of 10% of the subscription price will be imposed upon orders received from nonmembers after January 1 of the subscription year. Add for postage: Surface delivery outside the United States and India—\$15; in India—\$36; expedited delivery to destinations in North America—\$35; elsewhere—\$70. Subscriptions and orders for AMS publications should be addressed to the American Mathematical Society, P.O. Box 5904, Boston, MA 02206-5904. All orders must be prepaid.

**ADVERTISING:** *Notices* publishes situations wanted and classified advertising, and display advertising for publishers and academic or scientific organizations.

**SUBMISSIONS:** Letters to the Editor, Forum pieces, articles, and reviews may be sent to the editor by e-mail at [notices@math.sunysb.edu](mailto:notices@math.sunysb.edu), by fax at 516-751-5730, or by postal mail at P.O. Box 333, East Setauket, NY 11733. Electronic submissions are preferred. Correspondence with the managing editor may be sent to [notices@ams.org](mailto:notices@ams.org).

**NOTICES ON e-MATH:** Most of this publication is available electronically through e-MATH, the Society's resource for delivering electronic products and services. To access the *Notices* on e-MATH, use the URL:

<http://www.ams.org/notices/>

Those with VT100-type terminals or without WWW browsing software can connect to e-MATH via Telnet (telnet [e-math.ams.org](http://e-math.ams.org); login and password are "e-math") and use the Lynx option from the main menu.

[*Notices of the American Mathematical Society* is published monthly except bimonthly in June/July by the American Mathematical Society at 201 Charles Street, Providence, RI 02904-2213. Periodicals postage paid at Providence, RI, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address change notices to *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*, P.O. Box 6248, Providence, RI 02940-6248.] Publication here of the Society's street address, and the other information in brackets above, is a technical requirement of the U.S. Postal Service. All correspondence should be mailed to the post office box, not the street address. Tel: 401-455-4000; e-mail: [notices@ams.org](mailto:notices@ams.org).

© Copyright 1998 by the  
American Mathematical Society.  
All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.  
The paper used in this journal is acid-free and falls within the guidelines established to ensure permanence and durability.

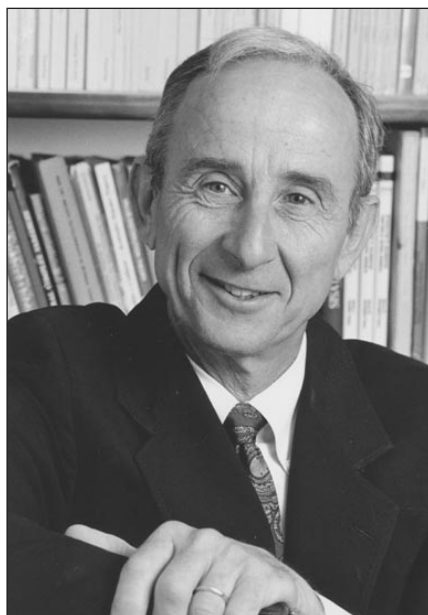
## Editorial

### A Look Back

Five years ago, out of the long, hard work of an AMS committee chaired by Hugo Rossi came a proposed transformation of the *Notices*. The creation of the new *Notices* was approved by the requisite AMS groups, Hugo reluctantly agreed to be the founding editor, and the first issue appeared in January 1995.

The *Notices* serves many purposes. It is the journal of record of the AMS, it alerts members to events and trends that seem important, and

it is the only vehicle for members to express their opinions to the whole AMS membership. But Hugo saw an additional possibility—that the *Notices* could be a showplace for high-quality exposition in mathematics. This vision stemmed from his conviction that good exposition is far more important to the progress of research in mathematics than many mathematicians are ready to believe. In his October 1997 editorial he said, "The techniques and ideas of mathematical research have become so interrelated that to succeed in research it is now necessary to understand the themes and methods in many areas of mathematics.... Breakthroughs in one's problems—often even the understanding of the problem—require the versatility that one acquires only by grasping and using techniques and programs in a wide range of subjects." He saw expository mathematics articles in the *Notices*



Photograph courtesy of the University of Utah.

#### Hugo Rossi

as a kind of "written colloquia" that would help in this process.

At this time of the changing of the guard, we salute Hugo Rossi for his vision and for his success at developing the *Notices* in this direction. He has been ably assisted by talented associate editors who have not been shy in helping him shape his vision. They all deserve our thanks.

Hugo ended his term as editor a few months early in order to become deputy director of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI). Happily, he has agreed to continue as a contributing editor. In this capacity he will still be able to solicit mathematics articles and to work his magic on the writing in them.

Andy Magid has graciously served as acting editor for a few months, assisted by Allyn Jackson. No doubt Andy often received too much or too little advice from past and future editors. We are grateful for his bringing about a smooth transition.

—Anthony W. Knap