Editorial

About Covers

Mathematical images can and do play a role in advancing mathematics for specialists and in advertising mathematics to nonspecialists. Each era has produced its own images—from the Platonic solids of ancient Greece to the regular planar tilings of fourteenth-century Moorish Spain, to the intricacies of plant phyllotaxis (based on thirteenth-century Fibonacci sequences), to the nineteenth-century Bravais lattices (now the province of crystal chemistry), to the two-color tessellations popularized by M. C. Escher and the aperiodic Penrose tilings, and to the striking computer-generated twentieth-century images of the Lorenz attractor and the Mandelbrot set.

This issue of the *Notices* is the 38th in the new series, and with it we have the 38th cover image. The images have ranged from the mundane (pictures of the cities where AMS national meetings are being held) to the mathematically more interesting: geometry, DNA knots, chaos, tilings, and neural nets. The *Notices* is always on the lookout for attractive images that are about or related to mathematics—and better yet—for images that are coupled to a *Notices* article. Suggestions for cover images can be sent to Sandra Frost (smf@ams.org) at the AMS or to me (mg@uh.edu).

This month's cover is a joint effort with Robin Wilson, who writes the "Stamp Corner" for the *Mathematics Intelligencer.* Robin has collected many stamps related to mathematics and mathematicians during the twelve years he has been writing this column. We have chosen a few of these stamps from a number of countries as a small pictorial celebration of mathematics history.

—Martin Golubitsky for the Editorial Board

Not to Miss

The Demise of the Young Scholars Program

A major emphasis of today's mathematics education reform effort is encapsulated in the phrase "mathematics for all". Raising the general mathematical level of all students is an important goal. Another important goal is giving highly mathematically talented students the inspiration and challenge they need. The demise of the Young Scholars Program at the National Science Foundation, which supported efforts such as the Ross Program at Ohio State University, shows that in the competition for funding for educational programs those aimed at the mathematically talented can easily lose out. The feature article by Allyn Jackson describes how the Young Scholars Program was eliminated for reasons having little to do with the success or effectiveness of the grants it supported.

—Anthony W. Knapp

It's All Greek to Me

The following item is reprinted from The New York Times:

A television review on October 27 about that night's *Nova* program titled "The Proof", referred imprecisely to what was being proved. It was Fermat's Last Theorem, not the Pythagorean theorem. Fermat's last theorem states that the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ has no solution when x, y, and z are positive whole numbers and n is a whole number greater than 2. When n equals 2, the equation has many solutions and is known as the Pythagorean theorem: in a right-angle triangle the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides.