Andy Magid Appointed *Notices* Editor

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Andy Magid of the University of Oklahoma will begin a three-year term as editor of the *Notices*, starting with the January 2004 issue. He succeeds Harold P. Boas of Texas A&M University, who has been editor since January 2001.

Magid did his undergraduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, and received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University in 1969 under the direction of Daniel Zelinsky. After a three-year term as a Ritt Instructor at Columbia University, he went in 1972 to the University of Oklahoma, where he has remained ever since.

Magid has a broad spectrum of research interests. The areas he has worked in include the Galois theory of commutative rings, differential Galois theory, algebraic and proalgebraic groups, and representation theory of discrete groups. The representation varieties and character varieties of discrete groups play an important role in geometry and topology. He is an author of five books: three research books reflecting his areas of interest, a textbook in linear algebra with a special emphasis on computer applications, and a book on mathematics education. In addition, he edited four volumes of conference proceedings.

Magid has had a long association with the AMS, beginning with his election in 1988 as associate secretary for the Central Section. He served in that capacity for eight years and built a strong tradition for Central Section meetings. He also helped to organize four AMS Annual Meetings. In 1997, he was elected as a member of the AMS Board of Trustees and served a five-year term.

In 1995, when the *Notices* was redesigned and Hugo Rossi of the University of Utah was appointed editor, Magid became a member of the Editorial Board and has remained on the board ever since. He and Susan Friedlander of the University of Illinois at Chicago are the two longest-serving board members. In addition, Magid served as acting editor of the *Notices* for a period in 1997, between the time when Rossi stepped down and the next editor, Anthony W. Knapp of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, took over. Magid's editing experience includes a two-year stint as book reviews editor for the *Bulletin* and service on the editorial board for the book series *Contemporary Mathematics*.

Much of Magid's work on AMS meetings and publications has dealt with making exposition about mathematics available to a wide audience. "The AMS makes mathematics accessible to mathematicians, wherever they happen to be based, and whatever their background is," Magid remarked. He intends to continue the tradition of publishing high-quality mathematics exposition in the *Notices*. "One thing that is needed are expository articles that can be consumed in a short period of time, so you can learn something about what's going on in

an area in an hour's worth of reading," he said. "Those articles are the hardest, of course, to write." He also plans to seek articles that describe interesting applications of mathematics—applications to other disciplines, or applications of one area of mathematics to another. Such articles "are fun to read and useful," he noted.

Magid pointed out that there are various occasions on which a *Notices* mathematics article might be written. "If you hear or give a good colloquium talk, write it up for the *Notices*, or ask the speaker to write it up," he suggested. "It should be shared." Magid also encourages those who have just finished writing a book to consider writing an expository article for the *Notices* on the topic of the book. "Many intellectual magazines publish such articles on topics of upcoming books," he said. "It's perfectly appropriate for mathematics to do this as well."

Magid envisions having in the *Notices* an occasional series of reminiscences by mathematicians about aspects of the mathematical life. This might be a brief description about how an important result came into being, how a well-known paper came to be written, or anecdotes about colleagues. Noting that his service on the Board of Trustees made him aware of many developments within the AMS that affect mathematics and mathematicians, Magid said he hopes to increase coverage of such developments "so that the broad spectrum of Society members is aware of the issues being brought to the leadership."

One of the distinctive features of *Notices* articles is the amount of editing and polishing they receive, which goes quite a bit beyond what one finds in an average mathematics journal. In this regard, Magid credits the work of the *Notices* Editorial Board. "The contributions of the board members in reading articles and making suggestions for changes improves the articles greatly", he said. "The Editorial Board also makes a big contribution in recruiting authors to write."

Magid said that he does not plan to introduce any major changes in the *Notices*. "It will be an evolution," he said. "I think the Society did the right thing in enhancing the *Notices*, and my predecessors have all made heroic efforts to make it a success. I want to follow in their footsteps to maintain the readability, quality, and usefulness of the *Notices*. At the same time, I hope to institutionalize some things in order to demonstrate that you don't have to be a hero to be the *Notices* editor."

—*Allyn Jackson*