



# SILVER STATE-ISTICS

NEVADA Chapter of American Statistical Association



**Dear Nevada ASA Member,**  
 Summer is nearly here! Read on for information on what our Chapter has been up to and what we are planning for the future.  
 Please keep an eye on our website (<http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/>) for more details on all upcoming events.



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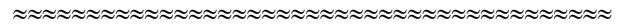
## *Mark Your Calendars*

It may be a little early, but we are already thinking about fall programs throughout the State. Look for Welcome Back Get-togethers in early September. Also, watch your email boxes for information on the chapter's Annual Meeting in October, which will be held in Las Vegas this year and will include another statistical symposium. If you are interested in helping organize or being a speaker for the symposium, or have ideas for other programs in the southern part of the state, please contact Carol Thompson at [cthompson@anteon.com](mailto:cthompson@anteon.com) this summer. If you have ideas for programs in the northern part of the state, please contact Deb Stiver at

[stiver@unr.edu](mailto:stiver@unr.edu). We look forward to receiving your input!



## *Upcoming Elections*



This fall we will be holding elections for the Chapter Officer Positions of Treasurer and Southern Nevada Vice President. If you would like to nominate someone (or yourself!) for either of these positions, please email Debra Stiver at [stiver@unr.edu](mailto:stiver@unr.edu). For more information on these positions, please see the NV-ASA Constitution on our website at

<http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/constitution.html>.



## *President's Message*



By Charles B. Davis  
 President

At five months into my term as Chapter President, I continue to be impressed by the energy and skill so willingly shared by a core group of volunteers and by the quality and diversity of the programs in which I have been privileged to participate. Others who have taken part in the same events seem just as excited, so surely this enthusiasm cannot exist only in my imagination. I challenge those who share my appreciation to help spread the news about NV-ASA to all your friends and colleagues who deal with decision-making in the presence of uncertainty. The NV-ASA is not intended to be a secret society!

This Newsletter gives some hints and “heads-ups” about some future Chapter events and activities. As always, check the website at [www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/](http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/) for updated information. The Chapter will be a bit less active over the summer, but that simply means that we are preparing for bigger and better events and activities beginning in the Fall. In particular look forward to the

annual meeting, to be held as part of a mini-symposium in Las Vegas during October. I'm also looking forward to meeting several of you at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Seattle August 6-10, 2006.

Over the summer we will send a letter and questionnaire to those on the email "members and friends" list. The goal of these will be to obtain your advice on the kinds of programs, activities, and services that you would like to participate in via the NV-ASA. Possibilities that have already proven particularly popular include dinner meetings with speakers (usually weekday evenings), career days (Fridays or Saturdays), and one-day symposia with catered lunch and speakers (Saturdays). Others that have been suggested during brain-storming sessions within your Executive Committee include hosting informal brown-bag lunches and/or pizza parties, generating a member directory to aid in networking, establishing a problem session (or perhaps a problem corner on the website) where people might post problems in want of solutions, and establishing links with local professional organizations in related fields. Suggestions are of course welcome anytime ([charles.davis@envirostat-nv.com](mailto:charles.davis@envirostat-nv.com)), but if you have a favorite idea send it in now while it's on your mind. ♥



**TA-TA-TA-TA!!!!**

By Carol Thompson  
Southern Nevada Vice President

**I**t's hard to sound a trumpet call in a newsletter, but now that we have your attention ....

NV-ASA is excited to roll out its mentoring program, *Stat Connections*, and we are looking for a few interested participants. HOW ABOUT YOU????

A chapter committee has been working over the last year to develop the process and materials for a mentoring program with a Strategic Initiatives grant from ASA. Through the mentoring program, NV-ASA offers the opportunity for a mentoring relationship to up-and-coming statisticians. *Stat Connections* provides individualized opportunities for growth and education to mentors and mentees who have varied levels of experience, interests, and needs.

A mentoring experience starts by making a match between a mentor and mentee who have applied to the program. After an orientation to the program, the mentoring pair defines a mutually agreed-upon mentoring project. The mentor and mentee work on and

complete the project, with help from the chapter as needed, and then celebrate the project's success.

Mentees can be statistics graduate students, K-12 statistics teachers or young statistics professionals. Mentors can be practicing statisticians, professionals involved with statistics, and university/community college professors.

Benefits include:

- Exchange of ideas and knowledge
- Professional development
- Developing lifelong strategy for learning
- New perspective on statistical problems
- Introduction to new statistical techniques /approaches/software
- Networking

Have we piqued your interest? Want more information? Contact: Charles Davis at [charles.davis@envirostat-nv.com](mailto:charles.davis@envirostat-nv.com) ♦



*Nevada Students Shine  
in Statistics Poster Competitions*



By David W. Thiel  
Education Committee

**R**ebecca Valle, an eighth grader at Hyde Park Academy of Science and Math in Las Vegas, tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade category at the 2006 American Statistics Poster Competition sponsored by the American Statistical Association. She will receive a certificate recognizing her achievement and the 3<sup>rd</sup> place prize of \$50. Rebecca's poster, *Are Computers Taking over our Lives?*, was the third place winner in NV-ASA's 2006 Nevada K-12 Statistics Poster Competition held in February. She earned a certificate and a cash prize of \$24. The poster displayed survey results from middle school students about their preferred activities and how much time they spend on the computer. Rebecca's advisor for the poster competitions is Denise Berkowitz.

For the second year in a row, the first place winner in the K-3 category of NV-ASA's competition has garnered Honorable Mention at the national competition. Ryan Barquist, Kelden Engel, Quinn Lovelady, and Amie Riddle of Estes McDoniel Elementary School in Henderson were recognized for their poster, *Young or Old Lady?* It was a study of what figure students first see in the classic W.E. Hill optical illusion published in 1915<sup>1</sup>. The four students of advisor Barbara Chambers will receive certificates and ribbons to acknowledge their achievement at the national level. For their finish in

Nevada, they each received certificates and split the \$72 first prize. Estes McDoniel ES was presented with a plaque recognizing their accomplishment. This marks the third year in a row that the school has claimed the first place poster in the K–3 category.

Other first place winners in the Nevada K–12 Statistics Poster Competition were:

- *Can You Say the Alphabet Backwards?* by Deanna Hickman, Holly Nielson, Kamra Anderson, and Skylar Stevens, 5th grade, from Fay Galloway Elementary School in Henderson. Their advisor is Barbara Bashor.
- *Does a Wooden or Metal Bat Hit a Softball Farther?* by Liza Abrams, 7th grade, from Thurman White Middle School in Henderson. Her advisors are Tim Fahrner and Karen LoBello.
- *Trends in Rainfall of Northern Japan* by Chris Spiller, 12th grade, from Advanced Technologies Academy in Las Vegas. His advisor is Tia Price.

All of the posters recognized in the competition can be viewed at the NVASA website, [www.nevada.edu/~nvasa](http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa).

<sup>1</sup>It is likely that Hill adapted his drawing from German postcards of the illusion published in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



## *Recap of Spring Events*



By Charles Davis  
President

### **Spring Welcome Dinner with Jennifer Ramsey**

**D**r. Jennifer Ramsey of the UNLV Psychology Department was the featured speaker at the Spring Welcome Dinner. This event took place Monday evening February 13 at Marie Callender’s in Las Vegas. Dr. Ramsey’s title was “How Facial Attractiveness Stereotypes Develop”. She spoke about her studies into the development of facial attractiveness stereotypes and how this can relate to other forms of stereotyping. The presentation was accessible to and enjoyed by statisticians and guests alike.

Much discussion was generated. For example, Dr. Ramsey noted that the large majority of published studies involve female facial attractiveness stereotypes, but that her research suggested that the models that fit nicely for females do not hold for males, which is

leading her current research toward exploring this discrepancy. Listeners were curious about the mechanisms that might have generated this imbalance in the published literature. One conjecture was that there is a “file drawer” problem, in which studies or data that don’t support a preferred (or maybe readily publishable?) model are simply ignored.

### **April Dinner Meeting with Tom Carroll**

**D**r. Thomas Carroll, Professor of Economics at UNLV and President of Thomas Carroll and Associates, Consulting Economists, spoke about “Estimating % Defects After Some Defects Have Been Identified”. The event was held at Marie Callender’s in Las Vegas Monday, April 3. The major issue identified and discussed by Dr. Carroll was a particular abuse of statistical methodology and integrity that arises in legal proceedings involving possible class-action lawsuits regarding construction defects. This abuse arises when a legal issue is identified on the basis of a non-random sampling (in particular, self-selected sample), and the issue becomes whether these samples can legitimately be included in a scientifically sound survey designed to resolve issues involving actual defect rates.

A wide-ranging discussion followed Dr. Carroll’s informal presentation. A common theme was the practical problem of applying statistical methods designed with the old familiar “i.i.d.” (independent, identically distributed) sampling with fixed sample sizes determined *a priori* in mind in situations where sampling is not independent and/or the stopping rule is data-dependent or perhaps not even determined in advance. One example that arose was Fisher’s famous re-analysis of Gregor Mendel’s genetics experimental data, in which Fisher decided that Mendel’s data fit the theory entirely too well to be valid! A more subtle example arises when one re-uses data from a pilot study in the main study that was planned using the pilot study results. And then there is the whole field of economics, in which one routinely deals with non-experimental data.

### **May Dinner Meeting with Daniel Thompson**

**D**r. Daniel Thompson of the UNLV Department of Biological Sciences presented “Genes, Environments, Evolution, and Grasshoppers” at a dinner meeting at Ricardo’s in Las Vegas Wednesday, May 3. Dr. Thompson says “I am currently investigating the ecology and evolution of phenotypic plasticity and developmental integration in grasshoppers. There is extensive developmental plasticity and genetic divergence in body, wing, and leg size and shape among populations of the grasshopper *Melanoplus sanguinipes* sampled from montane meadows and arid grasslands. I investigate the influence of natural selection on the evolution of diet-



  
**Joint Statistical Meetings**  
**(JSM) 2006**  


By Hokwon Cho  
Chapter Representative

The Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) is the largest annual international gathering of statisticians in the world. It is jointly sponsored by four major professional statistical organizations in North America - the American Statistical Association (ASA), the International Biometric Society (IBS has two regions - ENAR and WNAR), the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS), and the Statistical Society of Canada (SSC).

In this year, 2006 JSM will be held August 6-10 at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center located at 800 Convention Place in Seattle, Washington. During the meetings, all attendees will have tremendous opportunities to network through several receptions, committees, and social events. Each year, more than 5000 people attend. Activities of the meeting include oral presentations, panel sessions, poster presentations, continuing education courses, an exhibit hall (with state-of-the-art statistical products and opportunities), a career placement service, society and section business meetings, committee meetings, social activities, and networking opportunities. For registration and more detailed information about JSM 2006, please visit the ASA's website at <http://www.amstat.org> and click on "Meetings and Events." All members and non-members are welcome at JSM 2006. Hope to see you there! ☺

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*Silver-statistics* welcomes news items and letters from members and friends of the NV-ASA on matters of interest to the Chapter and the profession. Manuscript or items can be sent as a Microsoft Word document, PDF, or within an e-mail.

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**Check our website:**

<http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/>



**Current NV-Chapter Officers**



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|--|--------------------------|
| President:                                     | Charles B. Davis         |
| Past President:                                | Debra Stiver             |
| Southern Vice President:                       | Carol B. Thompson        |
| Northern Vice President:                       | Toni Sipic               |
| Secretary:                                     | Alejandra Livingston     |
| Treasurer:                                     | Paul Nakayu              |
| Chapter Representative & Newsletter Co-Editor: | Hokwon A. Cho            |
| Education Committee:                           | David W. Thiel           |
| Newsletter Co-Editor & Web Master:             | Alicia Chancellor Hansen |



For contact information, please see our website at <http://www.nevada.edu/~nvasa/officers.html> ♣