

Editor's Letter

Mike Larsen,
Executive Editor



Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I take over as the executive editor of *CHANCE*. I began reading the magazine in graduate school and have enjoyed it ever since. It has accessible articles about interesting and important topics that highlight the contributing role of probability and statistics. Topics and the background of authors are diverse. I look forward to working with contributors, columnists, and editors to produce a quality magazine each and every issue.

I would like to thank Michael Lavine for his great service as executive editor and for his tremendous assistance to me during the transition. Most of the articles in this issue were first submitted to *CHANCE* during his term as editor, and he and his editors deserve credit for their efforts. Michael has advised me on handling submissions and answered many questions without complaint. ASA Communications Manager Megan Murphy also deserves thanks for her guidance and help to me and for her work on this issue.

There are a few changes in *CHANCE* I would like to see occur during my time as editor. First, I would like to see *CHANCE* go online. This will increase access, impact, and attractiveness to people who might consider submitting articles. Wouldn't it be neat to have all the election-related articles from *CHANCE*'s 20-year history immediately available on your desktop? I have begun discussions with the ASA and Springer about options.

Second, the posting of online supplemental material for *CHANCE* can be greatly increased. Supplemental material can include supporting documents, survey questionnaires, videos, color graphics, and teaching material, including handouts and study questions. The ASA has already begun working on the web site. Have you noticed changes? Besides these two goals, I primarily want to maintain the high level of quality, relevance, and entertainment past editors have achieved.

This issue contains the diversity of topics that make probability and statistics such an interesting field of study. Erik Heiny conducts an in-depth analysis of the leaders of the PGA Tour,

America's top professional golf association tournament. David Peterson describes algorithms for drawing electoral boundaries to reduce the politicization of the process. Methods are illustrated for districts in North Carolina.

Three articles are related to probability. M. Leigh Lunsford, Ginger Holmes Rowell, and Tracy Goodson-Espy discuss an assessment of student understanding of the central limit theorem. Jay Kadane relates the Cauchy-Schwartz inequality to crowding on airplanes. I always suspected the airlines had goals other than my comfort! Jarad Niemi, Brad Carlin, and Jonathan Alexander compare strategies for playing sports betting pools.

Two articles concern gender differences. Kris Moore, Dawn Carlson, Dwayne Whitten, and Aimee Clement report on a survey of female and male executives. Chris Sink and three high-school students (Matthew Sink, Jonathan Stob, and Kevin Taniguchi) present a well-planned study of computer literacy.

Two entries concern experiments and observational studies. Michael Proschan describes the procedure he and his wife used to evaluate a medical treatment for their son. Determining whether a treatment works for a specific individual is quite challenging, but important. David Freedman offers an editorial review of the merits of experiments versus observational studies and subtleties of statistical approaches.

Completing the issue are the Visual Revelations and Puzzle Corner columns. Sam Savage and Howard Wainer demonstrate a visualization tool for probabilities of false positive determinations in the war on terror (and many other applications). Thomas Jabine gives us Statistical Spiral Puzzle No. 9.

I look forward to your comments, suggestions, and article submissions.

Enjoy the issue!

Mike Larsen