Wiegands’ Algebra Family
SYLVIA WIEGAND

& her mathematical daughters
Sylvia’s Students

Aihua Li 1994
Azime Saydam 1998
Meral Arnavut 2002
Melissa Luckas 2007
Christina Eubanks-Turner 2008
Ela Celikbas 2012
AIHUA LI, 1994

- On my “famous Woman Mathematicians” list
together with her grandmother
- Guide to Noether’s Family

SYLVIA WIEGAND

- Mother
- Advisor
- “Proj” Master
- Running Partner (challenging!)
- Tea Lover

On my “famous Woman Mathematicians” list together with her grandmother
Now whenever I teach an undergraduate proof course, I always remember Sylvia’s lectures and her great smile when she was explaining very difficult proofs, and tell myself smile when I see confusion on my students’ faces...

Moreover, I always remember and treasure Sylvia’s fresh, warm and colorful conversations over English scones, cucumber sandwiches and hot tea! ...

When it comes to Roger, it is hard to forget him not because I spent countless hours to prove his conjecture but because of his great kindness and humor...
...Just like the hiking we had, the process of my graduate studies faced many challenges, but Sylvia has always been there, trying to make it as easy as possible for me. Without her encouragement, understanding, and help, I would have not gotten to the place I am today. There aren't enough words to express my appreciations for Sylvia. I am so thankful for her and everything she has done for me and my family. I never have and never will forget all that she has done for us. Sylvia and her family already have a special place in our lives. Thank you for ALL Sylvia, and enjoy your retirement. You deserve it!...
SYLVIA:
(The following list is in alphabetical order)

ALGEBRAIST
Proved a lot of theorems with her ink pen

ADVISOR
Always supported her students over the years. Thanks for everything!

CHEF OF THE GREAT PARTIES
Yummy brownie, pie, fruit punch, etc. maker

EXPERT TRAVELER
Knows how to handle with finitely many bags during the trips

MOM
Raised two beautiful children

PHOTOGRAPHER
Wonderful group photo taker-Smile everyone!

RUNNER
How many marathons she completed is still a mystery!
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Fischer</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Bette Midgarden</td>
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<td>William Krauter</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Bao-Ping Jia</td>
<td>1990</td>
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<td>Nuri Cimen</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>David Jorgensen</td>
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<td>Kurt Herzinger</td>
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<td>Darren Holley</td>
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<td>Graham Leuschke</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Karl Kattchee</td>
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<td>Ryan Karr</td>
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<td>Nicholas Baeth</td>
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<td>Andrew Crabbe</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Olgur Celikbas</td>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>Silvia Saccon</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Micah Leamer</td>
<td>2011</td>
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I am the luckiest person in this wonderful world: Beginning from the first day of my student life at UNL, Roger not only tirelessly taught me mathematics and English, but also helped me in crucial times before and after my graduation.

I now understand what the word ADVISOR really means.

-----Baoping Jia (1990)
We wish you a nice happy gathering.

We are sending big hugs to all of you.

From Nuri Cimen, 1994
Perhaps most memorable is the party Roger and Sylvia threw for Kurt and me on graduation day. … I got about 3 hours of 'sleep' and ran the Lincoln Marathon the next morning.

One week later Kurt and I found ourselves clinging for dear life to a rock face near Roger and Sylvia's cabin in Colorado. It turns out we both survived to tell the tale, and thus the annual rock-climbing, beer-drinking and theorem-proving event known as **Bottlesmashing** was born.
The most important thing I learned from Roger, apart from climbing rocks and drinking (non-light) beer, is how to prove theorems.

He taught me that if you don't understand something, just look at what happens in some examples.

This adage has served me well. And I now emphasize this with my own students. Speaking of examples, Roger and Sylvia not only made research in mathematics possible for us, they made it fun too.

They have set such a wonderful example for me, and all their students. I hope I can repay them by setting a similar example for the next generation of rock-climbers, beer-drinkers, and theorem-provers.

David Jorgensen
They are both natural teachers with a passion for mathematics and a desire to help their students learn and appreciate the beauty of the discipline.

From Kurt Herzinger, 1996

Having Roger and Sylvia as professors was wonderful.
Having Roger as an advisor was a singular experience. He instilled in me a desire to investigate mathematics on my own and taught me to be tenacious. The success I have enjoyed in my research program is due largely to the training I received from Roger.
I count having Roger Wiegand as my advisor and friend as one of the great privileges of my life. He has been a role model for me for going on two decades, and trying to live up to his example has made me a better mathematician, a better member of the commutative algebra community, a better writer, and a better person.

Plus, it's expanded my vocabulary; I never got around to compiling a lexicon of Rogerisms, but every day I do my best to torgle, rensellate, and bieberbach until I'm quartzed.
Roger and Sylvia inspire me with their tireless energy, their boundless generosity, their unfailing kindness, and their great good humor. When I grow up, I want to be them. Except for the running thing.

I never got around to compiling a lexicon of Rogerisms, but every day I do my best to torgle, rensellate, and bieberbach until I'm quartzed.
From Karl Kattchee (2001)

- Being a student of Roger in Lincoln was a very fun time in my life. I was lucky to have the company of academic siblings Dave, Kurt, Graham and Ryan while I was there.

- It was a challenge to keep up with them all mathematically, and I would say Roger was quite patient with me, but there never seemed to be any doubt that it all comes down to beer, really, and the Crane River was right there!
While I was a graduate student, Roger and Sylvia's home on Sheridan Blvd was a prime party location. They were very generous.

I recall that some reasonably competitive games were played at their basketball hoop, just down the steps from their deck, where I recall the keg was kept.
...... The Spring of 2000 represents a major turning point in my life. I was struggling with my Nebraska thesis, living with a woman and four kids in Texas, running low on student loan money. My dad was working for Lucent Technologies and claimed he could hook me up with a sweet gig in Saudi Arabia checking microwave cell towers and making 60 G's a year, tax exempt. At this juncture, I received some pivotal, long-distance encouragement from Roger. He reassured me that I had good momentum and a good chance of completing a thesis if I chose to continue on that path. That's exactly what I did and I eventually won. It's very likely that if I had chosen otherwise, I would never have completed a Ph.D. later in my life.

Thanks, Roger!
The term "Sylvia Brownies" is synonymous with decadence and no party or event is complete without them. Roger cares enough about his students to spend hours on an Easter Sunday pouring over "feces in theses".

"Cognac is a required nightcap after a "hard" day of proving theorems and/or climbing rocks. It's painful to watch the proof of the existence of an algebraic closure if one's professor has just completed the Hard Rock 100. It's OK to treat students as friends and colleagues.
It's OK to treat students as friends and colleagues. You can die of constriction doing the Mobius strip. Bonnets are always in style. Climbing a chimney at a party is both a requirement for acceptance to graduate school and for earning a Ph.D. It's nice to have a "mom and dad" in your mathematical family. If you spend enough time around Roger, you will begin to incorporate bits of his language into your own speech. One should take time to enjoy the good things in life.

One should always be looking for "interesting" eigenvalues. When near the Wiegands, one is always close to friendship, laughter, great conversation, and vast quantities of beautiful mathematics.
Roger throws fun parties, hosts delicious dinners and gathers lively groups for climbing parties in his cabin in Colorado. In Roger's words, if you know the definition of a Gorenstein ring, like climbing or mountains or knows someone who does then you are welcome to come to one of Rogers bottle smashing.

Micah Leamer
He always found time to listen to me and discuss math with me---just a few days after his knee surgery, he welcomed me in his home, and provided feedback on a talk I was preparing.

Roger, I will always be grateful for all the encouragement, guidance, and advice you have given me during my years in graduate school at UNL.
ROGER:
(The following list is NOT in alphabetical order)

ALGEBRAIST & ADVISOR
Rhom...The day we met at Algebra Days in Antalya, Turkey is a big turning point in my life.
You are a great algebraist and a wonderful advisor!
It was a pleasure to work with you over the years.
Thanks for your support, encouragement, humor, and for all the recommendation letters, etc. 😊

OLGUR CELIKBAS

ADVENTURER
Climber, Hiker, Camper, Bottle Smasher
Oh boy, he loves climbing mountains!

EXPERT TRAVELER
With Sylvia, they make a good team in this category.
Roger can handle with all sorts of delays.

BEER LOVER
Before I stepped in his office:
Roger: Come on in, have a beer!
During our meetings:
Roger: A solution to this problem will be worth a beer or two!
Some Roger Quotes:

• “No beer, no math”
• “This is the kind of math that polite people don’t do in public.” (when doing a very technical proof)
• “Of course, we can’t divide by zero because that’s illegal in Nebraska.”
• “Choose a real number \( r \) so that it is larger than \( 2^t \), which we can do unless \( t \) is really big.”
• “You know, math is hard.”
• “One should always be looking for "interesting" eigenvalues.”

Rogerisms

torgle, rensellate, and bieberbach, Rhom, quartzed, barf and vomit, more to collect ……
Roger and Sylvia,
You are the Greatest Advisors!