Senior Presentations

It's that time of year when senior math majors are investigating interesting mathematical topics, writing papers, and preparing oral presentations. The senior presentations, which begin on **Tuesday, March 3rd**, will occur every Tuesday afternoon throughout the month of March. All presentations will be given in SAC 216 starting at 4:00 with refreshments available beforehand. Your attendance at these events would be greatly appreciated by our seven seniors who will be giving presentations on the following topics:

Reid Cuddy: "The Mathematics of Nuclear Weapons"

James Kruse: "Game Theory and the Environment"

Adam Sypniewski: "A Novel Cryptological System"

Ben Kosal: "The Nine Point Circle"

Brad Bockrath: "The Friendship Theorem"

Christine Wheatley: "The Four Squares Theorem"

Cody Moore: "Phi and the Golden Ratio"

New Books in the Library

Are you looking for a good book to read in your spare time? Our library has recently added several works of fiction with mathematical themes. I think you might find them interesting—so take a look! Here are three of the books:

Uncle Petros and Goldbach's Conjecture by Apostolos Doxiagis

The Wild Numbers by Philibert Schogt

The French Mathematician: A Novel by Tom Petsinis

Second Call for Problem Solvers

Math Students: *Your department needs you!* You are invited to participate in the 2009 Lower Michigan Mathematics Competition (LMMC), which will be held on **Saturday, April 4th**, at Albion College. This is a friendly competition among mostly small colleges in Michigan. Teams of two or three students will take the ten-problem exam from 9:30 to 12:30. After the exam we'll have lunch and head back to campus. We should be back on campus around 3:30. If you enjoy solving interesting math problems, then participating in the LMMC might be fun for you. If you're interested, please let Professor Sipka know.

Pi Day Celebration

Pi Mu Epsilon, the mathematics honorary at Alma College, will be showing the movie *Flatland* in celebration of Pi Day, which is ordinarily held on March 14th. Because March 14th falls on Saturday, we've decided to show the movie on **Friday, March 13th**; and of course, we'll begin the movie promptly at **3:14 pm**. The movie will be shown in SAC 216 with snacks available at 3:00.

Check this out!

Dr. Ed Burger from Williams College has a very funny, 5-minute video about the top ten algebra mistakes students make. Check it out! Simply go to YouTube (www.Youtube.com) and search for *Top Ten Algebra Mistakes*.

Seniors: Let Us Know of Your Plans

We would like to know what you'll be doing after you graduate in the spring. Have you found a job? Will you be attending graduate school? We'd like to know so that we could mention it in one of the later issues of the *Almagest*. So, when you find out what you'll be doing, please send an e-mail to Professor Sipka or stop by his office. Thanks.

Born around this date

Around this date two well-known statisticians from England were born: **Francis Galton** (top left) and **Sir Ronald Aylmer Fisher** (bottom right). Galton (1822-1911) was born on February 16th in Sparkbrook. His mother was a Darwin of the same lineage as Charles Darwin. His father was a very wealthy man and when he died, Francis began traveling a great deal, as he was financially secure. R. A. Fisher (1890-1962) was born on February 17th in London. His contributions included methods suitable for small samples, many sample statistics, and the invention of analysis of variance. He was one of seven children. The first two siblings were named Geoffrey and Evelyn. The third, named Alan, died shortly after birth. Their mother, being superstitious decided that all the following children would have a "y" in their names, explaining his middle name.
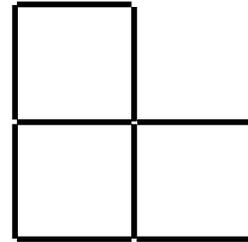
Famous Face Among Faculty

What member of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science most closely resembles Sir Ronald Aylmer Fisher?

Puzzle of the bi-week

Ten sticks have been arranged to form three squares of the same size. Show that it's possible to form four rectangles of the same size by moving only two sticks.

Famous Mathematician Quote

Since spring break is coming up, here is a quote from Aristotle for you to ponder: "The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet." So, take a break from chewing on the roots at SAGA, go home, get some decent food and get ready to keep working towards the fruit when you get back.