

# The Almagest

The bi-weekly newsletter of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. Your trusted source for news.

Volume 1, No. 4

March 11, 2009

Alma College  
Alma, MI 48801

## Senior Math Presentations

Don't miss your chance to attend the math presentations given by our senior math majors. All presentations will be given in SAC 216 starting at 4:00 with refreshments available beforehand.

Tuesday, March 17:

**Adam Sypniewski:** "A Novel Cryptological System"

Tuesday, March 24:

**Ben Kosal:** "The Nine Point Circle"

**Brad Bockrath:** "The Friendship Theorem"

Tuesday, March 31:

**Christine Wheatley:** "The Four Squares Theorem"

**Cody Moore:** "Phi and the Golden Ratio"

Your attendance would be greatly appreciated.

## Fall Term Registration

Registration for fall term classes begins next week, and we thought you'd like to know what classes will be available for majors and minors.

### Mathematics

MTH 122 *Calculus II* (Putz)

MTH 180 *Problem Solving* (Sipka) 2 credits

MTH 210 *Multivariable Calculus* (Putz)

MTH 220 *Math Foundations of C.S.* (Molina)

MTH 310 *Linear Algebra* (Nyman)

MTH 341 *Probability & Statistics I* (Dai)

MTH 390 *Combinatorics* (Molina)

### Computer Science

CSC 120 *Object-Oriented Programming* (Thall)

CSC 230 *Software Engineering* (McNally)

CSC 335 *Computer Graphics* (Thall)

## Pi Day Celebration on Friday

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 14<sup>th</sup>. Because March 14<sup>th</sup> falls on Saturday, we've decided to show the movie on **Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**; and of course we'll begin the movie promptly at **3:14 pm**. The 35-minute movie will be shown in SAC 216 with snacks available at 3:00.

## Mathematical Limericks

Here are two limericks involving  $\pi$ .

'Tis a favorite project of mine,  
a new value of  $\pi$  to assign,  
I would fix it at 3,  
for it's simpler, you see,  
than 3 point 1 4 1 5 9.

If inside a circle a line,  
hits the center and goes spine to spine,  
and the line's length is " $d$ ,"  
the circumference will be,  
 $d$  times 3.14159.

## Math 210 Offered At New Time(s)

If you plan on taking *Multivariable Calculus* (Math 210) in the fall term, you need to be aware that the class meets from 9:30 to 10:20 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and from 8:30 to 9:20 on Tuesday. The Tuesday class will be a "regular" class, but it's now labeled as a lab. So, when you sign up for the course, be sure to register for both MTH 210 and MTH 210L.

## Seniors: Let Us Know of Your Plans

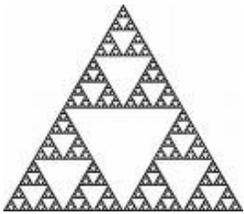
We would like to know what you plan to be doing after you graduate. Have you found a job? Are you looking for a job? Do you plan on attending graduate school? Whatever you're doing, we'd like to know so that we can mention it in the last issue of the *Almagest*. So, when you find out what you'll be doing, please send an e-mail to Professor Sipka or just stop by his office. Thanks.

## Born around this date

**W**acław Sierpinski (1882-1969), along with Albert Einstein, was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March. Unlike the German Einstein, Sierpinski was born in Warsaw, Poland, which was, at the time, part of the Russian Empire. Sierpinski's most important contributions were in the areas of set theory, point set topology, and number theory. He is best known for a triangle he constructed in 1915 called the Sierpinski triangle. The triangle is one of the best examples of a self-similar set because it is a



mathematically generated pattern that can be reproducible at any magnification or reduction. It has many interesting properties. For more



information about the Sierpinski triangle visit:

[www.zeuscat.com/andrew/chaos/sierpinski.html](http://www.zeuscat.com/andrew/chaos/sierpinski.html).

## Math in the News

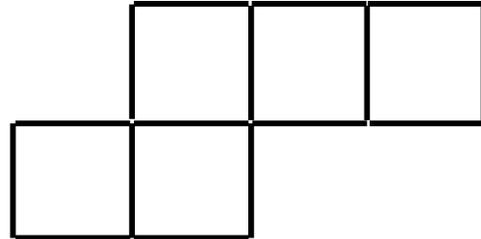
If you are craving more interesting mathematics and computer science information, or you are just really bored, check out these sites:

- [www.sciencedaily.com/news/computers\\_math/](http://www.sciencedaily.com/news/computers_math/)
- [www.sciam.com/math](http://www.sciam.com/math)
- [discovermagazine.com/topics/physics-math](http://discovermagazine.com/topics/physics-math)

Some may require a bit of searching around, but they have numerous interesting articles.

## Puzzle of the bi-week

Sixteen sticks have been arranged to form five squares. Show that it's possible to move exactly two sticks and form four squares none of which share a stick as a boundary.



## Famous Quote

In honor of Einstein, as he was born around this date also, here is something he would like you to consider: "Do not worry about your difficulties in mathematics, I assure you mine are greater."

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*If you would like to submit an announcement or a short article, please send it via e-mail to Matt Mansell (11mgmans) or Tim Sipka (sipka).*