

# Math News

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## Students in the News

**Rachel Skipper** won an award through the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program. The program is designed to prepare participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Rachel worked with Dr. Jonathon Rosenberg at College Park on a project involving the use of Zipf's Law to analyze the GDP of various nations across the world. Rachel will graduate in May and is quite excited about attending graduate school.

**Laura Reeves** also had a busy summer. Laura worked as a Program Support Staff Assistant at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center's Office of Education. She lent her mathematical talents in the creation of a report for the Office of Education titled, *NASA's Role in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education Reform*. Laura and her team presented their findings to Goddard senior leadership in order to stimulate a discussion of how NASA could help reform STEM education. Laura will graduate in May and plans to attend graduate school.

## Problem Solving Contest Winners

The spring problem solving contest involved a rather tricky paper-folding puzzle that was attempted by over 50 students. The Department would like to congratulate **Becky Miller** and **Laura Reeves** for solving the puzzle. Becky and Laura both received a certificate and a gift from the department. The department plans to hold a contest each semester, so look for the next posting near DH 203 in November.



Becky Miller

Laura Reeves

## KME Corner

KME will meet on Wednesday, September 22 at 5:30 p.m. in Dunkle Hall 202. New officers are **Josh Wilson** (President), **Rachel Skipper** (Vice president), **Jesse Otto** (Secretary), and **Kevin Loftus** (Treasurer). Drs. Barnet and Hughes continue as advisors.

## “Meet and Greet” Set

This year's “Meet and Greet” will be held on Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, from 5 until 8 p.m. in the Osborne Center (immediately below the campus police building). Any student with an interest in mathematics is invited to come for food, fun, and fellowship. Last year's event was a big hit. Spread the word!

## A Tribute to the “Mathemagician”

Martin Gardner, who wrote the "Mathematical Games" column for Scientific American magazine for 25 years and published more than 70 books, died May 22, 2010 at the age of 95. In a tribute to Gardner, professor and author John Allen Paulos says,

*It always seemed fitting to me that a man who'd written so engagingly on paradoxes should have had a career that was itself a bit of a paradox. Martin didn't study much (or any) math in college, yet probably did more to stimulate an appreciation for, curiosity about, and discussion of mathematical ideas than 213 of us mathematics professors. Over the years we exchanged a couple of book blurbs, a signal honor for me, and also corresponded a bit about jokes. I remember once being quite amused by a letter from him with some quite non-G-rated examples. A modest man, a clear-eyed skeptic, an expositor extraordinaire, he will be sorely missed.*

## Colors, Weights and Scales

Here is a nice problem by amateur magician Paul Curry: You have three pairs of weights, one red pair, one blue pair, and one white pair. In each pair one weight is slightly heavier than its partner. The three heavier weights all weight the same. The same is true for the three lighter weights. How can you determine which is the heavier weight of each pair in two separate weighing s of a balance scale?

## Moonlighting Math Majors

MATH majors **Sara Buzard**, **Laura Reeves**, and **Sabrina Winterling** are serving as instructors this term for Intermediate Algebra (DVMT 100). MATH majors **Kaiya Duppins**, **Kevin Loftus**, **Meghan Voelkel**, and **Amber Winterling** are instructing Pre-Algebra Mathematics (DVMT 095), as are ELED majors **Jennifer Cosner** and **Courtney Lowe**. For information about teaching one of these development mathematics courses, contact Beth Stallings in 150 Pullen Hall.