

NEWSLETTER

Department of Mathematics & Statistics

Friday, 4th October 2002

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DEPARTMENTAL VISITORS



Welcome to Giuseppe Sanfilippo (who goes by "Pippo") who has come to visit us from the University of Catania in Sicily and the University of Rome. He will be working with Frank Lad on some computing projects until the end of December. Pippo is a colleague of Romano Scozzafava who had visited us a few years ago as an Erskine Fellow. He will be working in the same office as Frank, Room 721, extension 8338.

Frank Lad

Visitors due to come next week will be Dr David Bulger and Dr Peter Lockhart from Massey University, Palmerston North.

NEW HOD

David Wall thanks to all the staff for their support for him as the next HOD. This recommendation from the department has been confirmed by the Acting Vice Chancellor Bob Kirk. However, as he is on study leave until 1 February 2003 John Hannah has kindly offered to act as Acting HOD from 1 December until David's return from leave. This has also been confirmed by the administration.

David Wall

PAPER OFFERED

Wake, G.C., (with Korobeinikov, A) "Lyapunov Functions and Global Stability for SIR, SIRS and SIS Epidemiological Models' Applied Mathematics Letters, Vol. 15, 2002: 955-960

Graeme Wake

PAPER ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

Watson, N.A., A generalized Nevanlinna theorem for supertemperatures. Ann. Acad.Sci. Fenn. Math., to appear.

Neil Watson

MASSIVE CASH FOR SCIENCE IN UK SPENDING REVIEW

The British Council's Science News reports that the UK Government's Spending Review plans for the next three years foresee an increase in spending on science of £1.25 billion in 2005-06 compared with 2002-03. This represents an unprecedented average increase of 10% per year in real terms and amounts to a doubling of the Science Budget since 1997. Most of the increase is earmarked for the Science Budget (£890 million), with the remainder going to Education for recurrent research (£244 million), capital funding for science infrastructure (£50 million), and additional funding to improve the supply of scientists and engineers (£100 million).

Douglas Bridges

MURPHY'S LAWS AND MATHEMATICS

MURPHY'S LAW AND ITS COROLLARIES ARE FAMILIAR TO EVERYONE WHO STUDIES MATHEMATICS.

- ⚡ **MURPHY'S LAW: IF ANYTHING CAN GO WRONG, IT WILL.**
- ⚡ **COROLLARY 1: AT THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME**
- ⚡ **COROLLARY 2: CAUSING THE MOST DAMAGE**

HERE ARE SOME WAYS IN WHICH MURPHY'S LAW APPLIES TO MATHEMATICS:

1. **THE HARDER YOU STUDY, THE FARTHER BEHIND YOU GET.**
2. **EVERY PROBLEM IS HARDER THAN IT LOOKS AND TAKES LONGER THAN YOU EXPECTED.**
3. **WHEN YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM, IT ALWAYS HELPS TO KNOW THE ANSWER.**
4. **ANY EXPRESSION CAN BE MADE EQUAL TO ANY OTHER EXPRESSION IF YOU JUGGLE IT ENOUGH.**
5. **KNOWING MATHEMATICS AND TEACHING MATHEMATICS ARE NOT EQUIVALENT.**
6. **TEACHING ABILITY IS INVERSELY PROPORTIONAL TO THE NUMBER OF PAPERS PUBLISHED.**
7. **PROOFS DON'T CONVINC ANYBODY OF ANYTHING.**
8. **AN OUNCE OF EXAMPLE IS WORTH A POUND OF THEORY.**
9. **WHAT IS "OBVIOUS" TO EVERYONE ELSE WON'T BE "OBVIOUS" TO YOU.**
10. **NOTES YOU UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY IN CLASS TRANSFORM THEMSELVES INTO HIEROGLYPHICS AT HOME.**
11. **TEXTBOOKS ARE WRITTEN FOR THOSE WHO ALREADY KNOW THE SUBJECT.**
12. **ANY SIMPLE IDEA WILL BE EXPRESSED IN INCOMPREHENSIBLE TERMS.**
13. **THE ANSWERS YOU NEED AREN'T IN THE BACK OF THE BOOK.**
14. **NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU STUDY FOR EXAMS, IT WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH.**
15. **THE PROBLEMS YOU CAN WORK ARE NEVER PUT ON THE EXAM.**
16. **THE PROBLEMS YOU ARE CERTAIN WON'T BE ON THE TEST WILL BE.**

17. THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM YOU COULDN'T WORK ON THE EXAM WILL BECOME OBVIOUS AFTER YOU HAND IN YOUR PAPER.

