A Tribute to Jim Totten

In March, 2008, the mathematical community lost a dear colleague, Dr. James Totten. Jim's work in research, outreach, teaching and problem solving spanned over 30 years. A conference, *Sharing Mathematics: A Tribute to Jim Totten*, that celebrates Jim's spirit will be held May 13-15, 2009 at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC.

The conference themes are outreach, enrichment, and innovation in mathematics education. We encourage all who knew of Jim's work to participate. The organizers include Jim Bailey (College of the Rockies), Rick Brewster, Faie DeBeck and Robb Fry (Thompson Rivers University), John Grant McLoughlin (University of New Brunswick), Shane Rollans and Mohamed Tawhid (Thompson Rivers University). They can be contacted at SharingMath2009@tru.ca. A website www.tru.ca/sharingmath/ is being set up.

"A Taste of Pi" – Long and Lasting

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The Mathematics Department at Simon Fraser University (SFU) has a long history of bringing the excitement and beauty of mathemathe of ty -10 (a(t) -10 (s) -10 (t)120 (t) -10 (b 0 0 1 18 -18cm BT 10 0 0 10 39

80. The invitees are asked to pay a $15 registration fee for each set of three sessions, to partially cover the costs, and as a commitment to attend the meetings. In many cases, the schools pay the registration fee. Teachers are invited to attend; they pay no registration fee. Usually, there are several teachers in the audience during each presentation.

The events are held in the most modern lecture room at SFU, the IRMACS Presentation Studio, from 9:00 until 12:30. Each event starts with a mathematics presentation, given by faculty members from the SFU Department of Mathematics, or occasionally by faculty visitors to the department. On occasion, colleagues from the mathematics department at UBC have given talks. We are very proud that, during the first five years of the program, we never repeated a presentation, and that only one of the presenters spoke twice –but this was only because he liked the experience so much that he asked us to be allowed to do so.

Our colleagues talk about research, about new and exciting developments in the mathematical sciences, and about contemporary applications of mathematics. The mathematics talks are followed by a problem session, during which students work on problems and activities related to the concepts introduced in the preceding talks. Problem sessions are led either by the presenters themselves, or sometimes by graduate students. The meeting ends with a talk given by a faculty member from another scientific discipline.

Each talk starts with an introduction of the presenter by a student participant. Students volunteer for this activity. They are asked to meet in person with the faculty member, and to get information about the presenter's career and research interests. This information often includes facts about the influence that the presenter's high school teachers and university instructors had in the presenter's choice of the scientific field. The organizers provide a list of possible interview questions, but the interviewers are encouraged to conduct the research about the presenter on their own and to ask questions they find fit. The student's introduction of the speaker is an excellent icebreaker and sets a positive tone for the rest of the meeting.

During the refreshment breaks, and after the event, the students, their teachers and parents have an opportunity to talk to the faculty members and to the graduate students helping with the events. They can ask questions about the talks they have just heard, about mathematics in general, about careers in mathematics and sciences, and about the life at the university.

EDUCATION