

Math Club Talk

Wednesday, September 24, 2003, 4:30 p.m.
Room 113 Cowley Hall

A PARADOX OR BETTER TO OPEN

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Abstract: With the possible exception of coffee, nothing spurs mathematical thought the way a good paradox can. Every mathematician should have a mental warehouse of paradoxes to contemplate and attempt to unravel occasionally, perhaps while in line at the post office or while waiting on the phone for the Next Available Customer Service Representative.

In this talk, we will take an informal look at a smattering of paradoxes to confound and delight you. There is a bonus for math ed majors: Paradoxes make great brainteasers, and nobody's brain needs a good teasing more than a student's. The speaker has introduced some of these paradoxes to math classes, even a Basic Math class at the high school level, and has been rewarded with higher-than-usual levels of student attention. After all, if you can open a poker game with a pair of jacks, why can't you open a math class with a paradox?

Your money back if you don't leave this talk scratching your head and muttering, "Wait a minute..."