

*By Meghan McKibbon*

**What better way to celebrate *pi* than with pie and prizes? Mark your calendars for March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 as Ryerson's Faculty of Science gets ready for its biggest-ever Pi Day celebration.**

On March 14<sup>th</sup>—recognized as 3.14 by the math community—the Faculty of Science will celebrate “Pi Day.” Festivities will kick off at the Sears Atrium, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 245 Church Street, George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre, with volunteers ready to hand out pie, which according to Dr. Dejan Delic, Interim Chair of the Department of Mathematics, is a new addition to the faculty's usual celebrations.

Hungry attendees can enjoy a second slice while listening to Dr. Pawel Pralat's talk about “one of the most exciting numbers in mathematics.” This will take place at The Chang School, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Heaslip House, CED-297 Victoria Street, starting at precisely 1:59pm (date and time, of course, representing the first six digits of pi: 3.14159) focusing on the history, advancement, and appearances of pi in pop culture.

The Provost of the University, Dr. Mohamed Lachemi, will make a special appearance to hand out the grand prize in a contest that is sure to excite all lovers of pi.

Pi Day has been celebrated for the past two years at Ryerson but for the first time, the festivities are moving outside the walls of the Math Department. Delic sees Pi Day as a great (new) tradition on campus. It makes sense to invite the whole Ryerson community, he says. “We all have reason to celebrate mathematics as an integral part of what we do. And it's fun!”

When asked if the talk will be useful to students from non-math disciplines, Pralat stated that “Pi shows up in so many different fields,” which is why he and Delic emphasize that the talk will be “accessible to everyone, not just the science community.”

But what is it about pi that keeps mathematicians coming back for more?

“It's a mystery of the math world,” says Delic. “It appears to be simple, but it is actually quite complex...and we only know a finite number of digits, which fuels the pursuit to continue the decimal expansion as far as possible.”

On top of the fascination to calculate the never-ending decimal numbers of pi, there is an ongoing challenge to break the Guinness World Record for reciting the most digits from memory, which is challenging due to the fact that pi never settles into a pattern of repetition. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Pralat will give us some tips and tricks to use for memorization.

So whether you have an interest in pi and its use in everyday life, a desire to memorize its many digits, or simply a sweet tooth, this year's Pi Day celebration at Ryerson is sure to satisfy. Remember to come to the George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre on March 14<sup>th</sup> and check it out!

If you would like to learn more about Pi Day (or pi), try some of these websites:

<http://pizone.org/>

<http://www.piday.org/million/>

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/pi/>