Bay Area Mathematical Adventures

Angela Hicks

The Case of the Determined Drivers

Santa Clara University, Daly Science 207

Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 7:30 pm

Five cars drive down a one way street with five parking spaces. In each car, a napping passenger awakes at a random time and demands to be dropped off immediately. Each driver, determined to obey, parks in the next available space. What is the likelihood that each car can park? This simple half-century old puzzle has been tied to complex mathematical concepts. The result? An easy to understand symmetry problem that has confounded mathematicians for a decade.
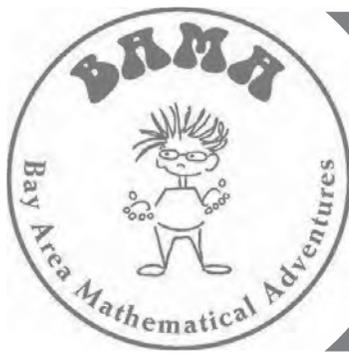
Angela Hicks is a National Science Foundation Fellow in the mathematics department at Stanford University. This past summer, she received her PhD in algebraic combinatorics at the University of California- San Diego, where she was the mathematics department's first Inamori scholar and one of the cofounders of the school's graduate chapter of the Association for Women in Mathematics. As an algebraic and bijective combinatorialist, she is especially intrigued by problems which are simple to state but challenging to solve.

* See back for map and directions.

Visit the Bay Area Mathematical Adventures (BAMA) at http://mathematicaladventures.org

To receive email notifications about BAMA talks, please contact Frank Farris at ffarris@scu.edu .

BAMA

Bay Area Mathematical Adventures

A series of presentations on diverse topics by remarkable mathematicians. All talks are free and open to the public.

WHY?

BAMA aims to challenge and motivate students to think mathematically. Speakers will present real mathematics, and will share with the audience modern views of mathematics. Some talks will provide students with related problems, or will enable teachers to expand later on the topics with their students.

WHO?

BAMA is aimed at bright high-school age students. However, all are welcome: younger or older students, teachers, parents, and the general public.
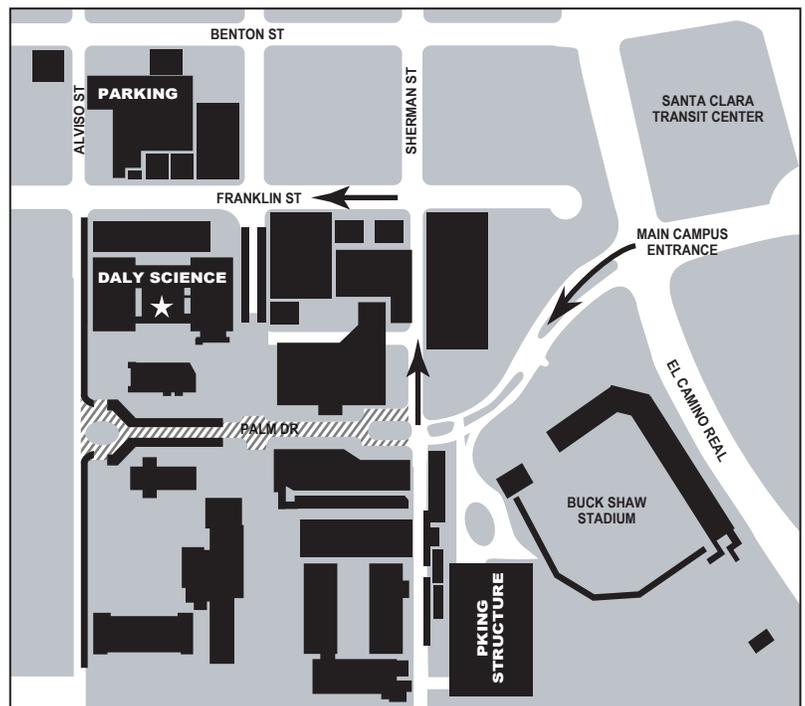
WHEN?

Evening talks will be given approximately once a month between September and April. Each talk will be self-contained (speakers will not assume their audiences have attended previous talks).

WHERE?

Santa Clara University
Daly Science, rm. 207

■ From US Highway 101, take the De La Cruz Blvd/Santa Clara exit and follow the signs to El Camino real and main campus entrance.

■ From I-280, take I-880 north toward Oakland to The Alameda exit. Turn left onto The Alameda (which becomes El Camino Real) to main campus entrance.

■ From I-880, take The Alameda exit, travel north (The Alameda becomes El Camino Real) to main campus entrance.

Note: If you bring your car to a talk at SCU, use the formal entrance to the University and ask the guard where to park for the BAMA talk. If you have printed a parking coupon (see website), exchange it for a parking pass; otherwise, the parking fee is $3 for BAMA. Palm Drive is now closed, so leave a little extra time to find your way.

■ If you have a disability and require reasonable accommodation, please call anyone on the steering committee, or 1-800-735-2929 (TTY—California Relay) 24 hours in advance.

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http://www.mathematicaladventures.org

BAMA Steering Committee:
Tatiana Shubin SJSU 408-924-5146
Frank Farris SCU 408-554-4430
Bradley Jackson SJSU 408-924-5100
Gerald L. Alexanderson   SCU 408-554-6894