

August 2011

# MO MATH

News!

## WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL STREET FAIR CONTINUES TO DRAW THOUSANDS

June 5, 2011 - Thanks to support from Google, the *Math Midway* proved its enduring popularity on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, as part of the annual World Science Festival Street Fair. For the third year in a row, thousands of enthusiastic visitors celebrated the wonders of mathematics by engaging in the *Midway's* exciting exhibits. The Square-Wheeled Tricycle was again a crowd favorite, and eager riders stood in line throughout the day for the opportunity to take a spin.

The Museum also announced its inaugural membership drive, and discounted advance purchase prices will be in effect until the Museum opens its doors. For more information and an opportunity to join our first group of members, please see [momath.org/join](http://momath.org/join).

For folks who missed out on the World Science Festival, visitors to the west coast through mid-August can catch the *Midway* at the Discovery Center for Science and Technology in Thousand Oaks, California. MoMath is also pleased to announce that the *Midway* will be at nearby Liberty Science Center in Jersey City for three months, beginning in October 2011 (see details below). And after finishing its New Jersey run, the *Midway* will head to Dayton, Ohio, where it will be on display at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery through April 2012.



## LOOK WHO HAS A MoMATH T-SHIRT!



Academy Award winner Susan Sarandon poses for a picture during the World Science Festival.

## MIDWAY AT LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER

The Museum is excited to announce that the *Math Midway* will be returning to the metro area for a three-month visit beginning this fall. Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, New Jersey, will host the *Midway* from October 7, 2011, through January 22, 2012, and the *Midway* will kick off Liberty's *Year of Math* campaign. During the *Year of Math*, Liberty aims to broaden visitors' conceptions of mathematics, and highlight the many ways it relates to the world around us. MoMath and Liberty share a passion for changing the perception of mathematics, and for stimulating curiosity and discovery in children and adults of all ages. The Museum of Mathematics will participate with Liberty in several special events throughout the year—please watch our websites ([momath.org](http://momath.org) and [mathmidway.org](http://mathmidway.org)) and Liberty's website ([lsc.org](http://lsc.org)) for updates.



## MIDWAY ATTRACTS CROWDS IN DALLAS

The *Math Midway* had a highly successful run at the Museum of Nature and Science (MNS) in Dallas, Texas, from January through May of this year. Representatives from MNS reported that more than 25,000 visitors came through the museum during a nine-day school break, and MoMath received positive feedback from both the museum and its many Texas visitors.

# MATH ENCOUNTERS

*Math Encounters*, the innovative monthly presentation series presented by MoMath and the Simons Foundation, continues to inspire and energize audiences with dynamic presenters who seamlessly weave mathematics into sculpture, music, dance, art, and even basic human nature.

## The Geometry of Origami



### Erik Demaine • March 3

MIT professor Erik Demaine kicked off the presentation series by highlighting the surprising relationship between mathematics research and artistic inspiration. After the presentation, an enthusiastic group of participants worked together to create a large-scale mathematical origami sculpture.

## Symmetry, Art, & Illusion



### Scott Kim • April 7

Ambigram master Scott Kim described the mathematics behind artistic symmetry. Under Scott's direction, audience members were guided in creating their own unique graphic designs, and also explored the symmetries inherent in movement and music.

## The Man Who Loved Only Numbers



### Paul Hoffman with Joel Spencer • May 4

Paul Hoffman's presentation provided insight into the life of Paul Erdős, one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most remarkable (and most prolific) mathematicians. Paul regaled the audience with amusing anecdotes based on his best-selling book, *The Man Who Loved Only Numbers*. NYU professor Joel Spencer then capped off the evening with a version of the game "Twenty Questions," based on his joint research with Erdős.

## Soap Bubbles & Mathematics



### Frank Morgan • June 8

Frank Morgan continued the theme of dynamic and unusual presentations, surprising participants with the mathematical underpinnings of soap bubbles. Audience members watched with rapt attention as Frank created unusually shaped bubbles, then had a creative opportunity of their own using specially-crafted geometric frames to explore the world of mathematical bubbles.

## From Points to Paints



### Angela Vierling-Claassen • July 6

Angela Vierling-Claassen focused on the influence of mathematical modeling on modern art with an engaging and dynamic presentation. Following Angela's talk, audience members constructed hyperbolic paraboloids using just paper and scissors. Participants enjoyed creating these three-dimensional paper weavings, especially when they surprisingly transformed from three dimensions to two with a simple snap.

*Math Encounters* will return on **September 7<sup>th</sup>** with award-winning author, mathematician, and NPR commentator Keith Devlin presenting "**Fibonacci & the Golden Ratio: Common Myths & Fascinating Truths.**"

Public enthusiasm for the series has led to new attendance records being set at each presentation to date. Register early at [mathencounters.org](http://mathencounters.org) to reserve your place!

## MATH TOURNAMENTS

MoMath organized three filled-to-capacity middle school math tournaments this season, involving more than four hundred seventh- and eighth-grade students from Nassau and Suffolk counties and the Bronx. The innovative format brought students from different schools together to cooperate in solving problems that developed creativity and analytic skills. Enthusiasm levels ran high as kids discovered that math can be both fun and exciting, and teachers are already inquiring about participation next year.

Encouraged by this success, MoMath plans to expand its middle school tournament program next year. In addition to Nassau, Suffolk, and the Bronx, MoMath plans to hold tournaments in two additional city boroughs, as well as a championship round. Con Edison's generous support allowed the addition of the Bronx tournament this year, and will be instrumental in the expansion of the program next year.

MoMath would like to congratulate all of this year's participants, especially all of the top scoring schools:

### NASSAU COUNTY

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TOURNAMENT:

- 1st: Weber Middle School
- 2nd: Merrick Avenue
- 3rd: Buckley Day School
- 4th: Grand Avenue
- 5th: Floral Park Memorial

### SUFFOLK COUNTY

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TOURNAMENT:

- 1st: Commack Middle School
- 2nd: Candlewood Middle School
- 3rd: Longwood Junior High School
- 4th: RC Murphy Junior High School
- 5th: West Hollow Middle School

### CON EDISON BRONX

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TOURNAMENT:

- 1st: Fieldston Middle School
- 2nd: Kappa
- 3rd: Kinneret Day School
- 4th: Villa Maria Academy
- 5th: The New School for Leadership and Journalism



## SPREADING THE WORD

George Hart, MoMath's Chief of Content, has been busy spreading the word about the Museum and what visitors can expect from this one-of-a-kind, interactive learning environment when it opens in 2012. George presented a talk about MoMath in conjunction with the Puzzle Exhibition at the Museum of Chinese in America. He also addressed high school math competitors and their teachers at an event at Vassar College. Other public presentations by Hart took place at the Central Booking Gallery in Brooklyn, as part of the New York University Geometry Seminar, and at Stony Brook University.

## MoMATH IN THE PARK

June 4, 2011 - Hundreds of children and their families filled Madison Square Park on a sunny Saturday afternoon to participate in Kids' Fest, a biannual event sponsored by the Madison Square Park Conservancy. The park was filled with music, activities, giveaways, and, of course, math. Visitors to the MoMath booth assembled the Amazing Acrobats sculpture and constructed their own rotating rings of tetrahedra. MoMath staff also had the opportunity to meet their new neighbors, and response was very positive for the Museum in its new home.



## MIT ALUMNI TOUR MATH-HATTAN



MIT alumni Joseph Stella ('61), Lixin Bas ('10), and Tony Laidig ('10)

May 7, 2011 - The Museum's offices provided an ideal starting point for another fun and exciting math walking tour, designed and led by MoMath Executive Director Glen Whitney. More than twenty members from the MIT Club of New York, including alumni from as far back as the class of 1961, celebrated the wonders of mathematics by participating in the tour. The group took a mathematical journey across

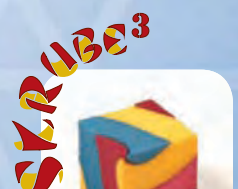
town to MoMath's new permanent space on the north end of Madison Square Park. Along the way, Glen revealed many mathematical curiosities hidden in and around Manhattan streets. Concepts such as linear mapping, angle calculations, and tessellations took center stage on the sunny spring day. A golden pyramid and a secret pentagram were also discovered by guests as the event wound down near the park. Following the tour, the group kept the math theme going by discussing queueing theory while standing in line for shakes at Danny Meyer's popular Shake Shack.



Baby Tee



Onesie



Even more diabolical than its 2-piece cousin!

## NEW ITEMS ADDED TO ONLINE SHOP!

Visit [momath.org/shop](http://momath.org/shop) to view all available items.

## EXHIBIT PLANS REVEALED AT DESIGN CHARRETTES

In an effort to solicit broad-based feedback, the Museum's design team presented a series of design charrettes to members of MoMath's Advisory Council, groups of math educators, MoMath staff, and the Board of Trustees. Participants discussed proposed exhibits, played with prototypes, and explored mathematical ideas at the Museum's Math-hattan offices. Insight from the sessions proved instrumental in guiding the ongoing development of exhibits, and will help to ensure that MoMath's offerings will appeal to a wide range of potential visitors.

## MoMATH ON THE JUMBOTRON!

The Museum was recently featured on the CBS Jumbotron in Times Square. A fifteen-second loop ran every hour from late April through early July, displaying exciting images from the *Math Midway*, *Math Encounters*, math tournaments, and other MoMath programs. Two lucky Twitter fans tweeted the first pictures of the Jumbotron and received a free MoMath T-shirt.



## SUPER SATURDAY AT HARLEM ARMORY

May 21, 2011 - The Museum of Mathematics enthusiastically participated in the Super Saturday STEM Exposition, held at the Harlem Armory. MoMath joined organizations such as Google, Cornell Medical College, Iridescent Learning Center, and many others for the hands-on event presented by Morningside Area Alliance and Manhattan's Community School District 5. Hundreds of visitors to the MoMath booth enjoyed constructing rotating rings of tetrahedra, as well as exploring the curious cross-sections that appear in the exciting Ring of Fire exhibit.

## MoMATH UNVEILED



The plain storefront at 11 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan was recently transformed by the addition of an eye-catching window design featuring MoMath's dynamic and colorful logo. Visible from within Madison Square Park, the bright signage attracts positive attention from both residents and passers-by, and the Museum has received a warm welcome from many of its neighbors in the historic Flatiron District. The interior of the space is up next, and MoMath's design team is working hard to fill it with innovative, creative, inspirational, and fun-filled exhibits in preparation for the opening in 2012.

## MoMATH AROUND THE WORLD

News of MoMath has been spreading not just in the United States, but around the world. Stories about the Museum have appeared in news outlets as far away as The United Kingdom, Russia, Israel, Australia, Italy, France, and Brazil. Although words vary from place to place, it seems the language of mathematics is indeed universal, and appreciation for its beauty knows no boundaries.



## WHITNEY'S WANDERINGS

MoMath's Executive Director continues his personal quest to inspire diverse audiences with the wonders of mathematics. On the west coast, Whitney delivered an engaging, interactive presentation drawing hundreds of people to the Discovery Center's Science Speaker Series in Thousand Oaks, California. Back on the east coast, attendees of Andrew Davidson & Company's annual seminar on mortgage-backed securities enjoyed an unusual break from the rigors of financial analysis when they participated in a mathematical exploration that had them playing with literally hundreds of hula hoops. And in the Museum's new neighborhood, Whitney delivered a presentation that captivated hundreds of high school students at Baruch College High School with striking and surprising patterns created using no more than a webcam and some math. Whitney continues to be in demand, receiving frequent invitations from around the country.

## MoMATH WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

MoMath's staff has grown again. As Accounting Coordinator, Irene Ilevbare oversees the financial reporting process and will work to ensure fair, accurate, and timely financial statements. Victoria Winters, who has been serving as Volunteer Coordinator, recently agreed to take on an additional new responsibility as Education Research Coordinator. Among other tasks, Victoria is now overseeing the progress of Math Midway to Go (MM2GO), a program sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Finally, Melissa Budinic has joined MoMath as Assistant Exhibit Designer, where her efforts will help move numerous new exhibit ideas from conception to reality.

**MO MATH**  
MUSEUM OF MATHEMATICS

Opening in Manhattan in 2012  
[momath.org](http://momath.org)

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