
For Your Information

Prototype of Mathematics Digital Library Released

An early prototype of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Digital Library of Mathematical Functions (DLMF) has been released for public inspection and comment. The DLMF is designed to be a complete and authoritative online reference on the definition and properties of mathematical functions that occur in applications. Examples include Bessel functions, hypergeometric functions, and various classes of orthogonal polynomials. The DLMF, which will be freely available via the World Wide Web, will contain more than thirty “chapters”, each centered on a class of functions, written by recognized authorities. The emphasis is on information that is useful in applications, as well as on methods of computation. The online reference work will contain many complex mathematical formulas that can be downloaded into word processors and symbolic computing systems, graphics that can be manipulated by users, and tables of relevant numerical quantities, some of which will be computed on demand. Math-enabled search facilities will guide users to relevant information, including pointers to software that compute various functions.

The newly released prototype, at <http://math.nist.gov/DigitalMathLib/>, is designed to show the scope of the planned project. It contains a sample chapter on Airy functions written by F. Olver and a sample chapter on applications written by C. Clark and D. Penn. These chapters are designed to be used as models for other authors. Pending external funding for the remaining chapter authors, the DLMF is scheduled to be completed in 2002.

—From the NIST Web page

Everett Pitcher Lectures

The next series of Everett Pitcher Lectures will be held April 13, 14, 15, 1999, on the campus of Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The speaker will be Herbert S. Wilf of the University of Pennsylvania. The title of his lectures will be, “Recursive Structure of Combinatorial Families”.

The lectures, which are open to the public, are held in honor of Everett Pitcher, who was secretary of the AMS from 1967 until 1988. Pitcher served in the mathematics department at Lehigh from 1938 until 1978, when he retired as Distinguished Professor of Mathematics. Further information can be obtained by writing to Pitcher Lecture Series, Department of Mathematics, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015, or by calling 610-758-3753.

—Department of Mathematics
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