

Andrews University

Digital Commons @ Andrews University

Lake Union Herald

Lake Union Herald

3-2018

Pancakes and Problem Solving

Gillian Sanner

Andrews University, sanner@andrews.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>

Recommended Citation

Sanner, Gillian, "Pancakes and Problem Solving" (2018). *Lake Union Herald*. 21.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/21>

This Faculty Stories is brought to you for free and open access by the Lake Union Herald at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lake Union Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.

Pancakes and problem solving

NEW MATH PROFESSOR JOINS FACULTY

Anthony Bosman, who joined Andrews University as assistant professor of Mathematics in July 2017, first connected with Andrews as a guest.

"Over the last few years, I have visited Andrews a number of times to give talks and attend conferences," he says. "During these visits, I was impressed with the strength of the academic programs and the global reach of the campus, offering an unparalleled opportunity for students to learn to engage in contemporary issues from an Adventist commitment."

Bosman earned his B.S. in mathematics from Stanford University in 2012 and completed his Ph.D. in mathematics from Rice University in May 2017. He researches properties of knots and links in three- and four-dimensional settings.

Andrews students have quickly recognized Bosman's passion for teaching. They approached him with a request to sponsor them for the William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition, an annual, notoriously difficult mathematics marathon with universities in North America. Bosman agreed to prepare the students for the event, a first for Andrews, making Andrews only the second Adventist university to participate.

Bosman met with the team of seven on Sunday mornings throughout the fall semester. He prepared pancake breakfasts for the students while helping them develop their problem-solving skills.

Traditionally, the Putnam takes place on the first Saturday of December. The Andrews team was given a special Sabbath exemption, allowing the students to take the exam after sunset

— from 5:30 p.m. to midnight. The team spent Sabbath together in worship and took a brief hike on campus. Christon Arthur, provost, shared a devotional thought before the team started the exam.

Mykhaylo Malakhov, sophomore mathematics major, says, "Many years ago, long before I reached high school age, my dad told me about his experience in mathematical olympiads in the Soviet Union. The creative and unusual problems, the long hours spent in preparation and, above all, the thrill of doing something very difficult captivated me, and ever since then I dreamed about participating in one myself. Now the unceasing dedication of Dr. Bosman and others in the Department of Mathematics has made my dream a reality. I relished every moment of the process from the first of many 'Pancakes and Problem Solving' sessions to the actual competition, during which six hours flew by so quickly they seemed like minutes."

Bosman and the team are still waiting on the exam results, but he is confident the students did quite well. He notes, "There was no class credit for the exam. I believe our students were simply drawn to the idea of working together to accomplish something incredibly challenging that called forth their best efforts."

Bosman appreciates that, at Andrews, he is free to help students integrate their faith into their studies and professional goals.

He says, "Moving students to a place where they can solve problems they never thought themselves capable of helps

remind them that they are Divine Image bearers. Introducing students to the inexhaustibility of mathematics awakens in them a longing for eternity. As such, teaching allows me to play a small role in the plan of redemption. Students often stop by my office, and I ask them what they're learning in their classes and how it relates to their faith in Christ. Nothing brings me more joy than to see students develop a mature, robust faith where they love God with all their hearts and minds."

Gillian Sanner, Media Communications manager,
Andrews University



Courtesy of Anthony Bosman

Anthony Bosman (bottom right) with Putnam participants (bottom, L-R) Lucinda Ford, Christiane Gallos, Dorothea Gallos, Mark Kent, Devin Garcia, Mykhaylo Malakhov, (top, L-R) Darrick Horton and visiting friend, Isaac