A CELEBRATION OF DAYS GONE PI

Few things in life are certain. Thankfully, there is a mathematical constant that keeps the world going round.

Pi

As any sixth grader can tell you, Pi is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter. Pi is an irrational number, meaning that when it's written as a decimal, it will go on forever without any repeating pattern. Pi is represented by the Greek letter π .

Math geeks celebrate Pi Day on March 14 because the sequential date, 3/14, represents the first 3 digits of Pi.

This year's Pi Day is extra special because the sequence is expanded to 5 digits of Pi using the mm/dd/yy format, 3.1415.

The most devoted Pi enthusiasts will expand the sequence even further and celebrate the precise moment at 9:26:53, which represents 10 digits of Pi, 3.141592653.

This opportunity won't present itself again for another 100 years.

Pi Day was founded by San Francisco's science museum, the Exploratorium, in 1988.

In 2009, Congress supported the designation of a 'Pi Day' to "encourage schools and educators to observe the day with appropriate activities that teach students about Pi and engage them about the study of mathematics."

But why celebrate Pi and not any other irrational number?

According to Professor Doug Yegge, it's just another number, which happens to have interesting applications in trigonometry and calculus. He said there is also some intrigue that surrounds it.

"Pi is an interesting number because it seems to have this mysticism attached to it," Yegge said. "People know about it, but they don't always know what the significance is and perhaps making it a national holiday gets people to be a little more aware."

The Exploratorium suggest Pi-related activities including baking pie, reciting Pi-ku, doing Pi themed crafts, and wearing Pi inspired clothing.

"It's become more of a novelty," Yegge said, "but if that's what the mathematical world needs to share the beauty of mathematics with the masses, then so be it."

One thing is for certain, the world's fascination with Pi will go on forever.

MICHELLE MENES @michelle_menes Albert Einstein was born on Pi Day in 1879.

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If the circumference of the earth were calculated using Pi rounded to the ninth decimal place, it would be accurate to a quarter of an inch.

The United States is the only country that uses the mm/dd date format, so celebrating Pi Day on March 14 is as American as apple pie.

In 2013, Shigeru Kondo and Alexander Yee claim to have computed 12.1 trillion digits of Pi. The computation took 60.2 TiB of disk space to perform and required 9.20 TiB of disk space to store the compressed digit output.



"I prefer Pi" is a palindrome.

Chao Lu of China holds the world record for memorizing Pi to 67,890 places.

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In an episode of Mythbusters, Grant Imahara wore a prison uniform with the inmate number 3.14.



Do you like Pie Guy? He'll have his own booth at the Claremont Pie Festival on March 14th from 11a.m. to 4pm. You'll be able to buy Pie Guy shirts, buttons, stickers, prints and even a collection of all of the Been Better comics featuring Pie Guy.

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