The Humboldt State University Department of Mathematics Presents:

The 50th Harry S. Kieval Lecture**

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Thursday, September 27, 2007
8:00 P.M.
Natural Resources 101
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Dr. C. Edward Sandifer

**Professor of Mathematics
Western Connecticut State University**

"The Story of The Euler Story"

Some people used to be famous, but aren't any more (e.g. Herbert Hoover) and others are fairly well known now, after being neglected for a while (e.g. Eisenhower or Jefferson) Leonhard Euler (1707-1783) has been famous among mathematicians and scientists more or less continuously since 1735, but the reasons for his fame have changed. Professor Sandifer will discuss how people have changed their "favorite things about Euler" over the centuries.

**A lecture on some popular and/or broad aspects of mathematics attractive to undergraduates and the public
For More Information go to: http://www.humboldt.edu/~mathdept/HarrySKieval/kl.html

HSU is an AA/EO institution.
Disability accommodations may be available from event sponsor at 826-5347

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM

Dr. C. Edward Sandifer
Professor of Mathematics
Western Connecticut State University

Thursday
September 27, 2007 4:00P.M.
Founders Hall 163

Pre-Colloquium Tea

Outside BSS 320 3:30 P.M.

"A Tale of Two Gamma's"

Leonhard Euler (1707-1783) is responsible for both things we call "gamma" today, gamma the function and gamma the constant. Even though he didn't name either of them, it is a coincidence that they have the same name (though one upper case, the other lower case) and more interesting that the derivative of the gamma function at x=0 is the negative of the gamma constant. It turns out that Euler found this result first, in a chapter of his differential calculus textbook (1755) that he calls "On inexplicable functions." Professor Sandifer will present the story of this remarkable coincidence.

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Biographical background

Professor Edward Sandifer is a graduate of Dartmouth College and received his doctorate from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Ed is also a regular marathon runner having completed over 30 Boston Marathons. Professor Sandifer's fascination with math history began in 1988, stimulated by a talk on the history of American math textbooks and later in 1995 after attending a three-week program at the Institute for the History of Mathematics and Its Uses in Teaching. Eventually his interest centered on the Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler. Sandifer has co-authored a two-volume biography of Euler, the first written in English. He writes a regular on-line column entitled "How Euler Did It" on The Mathematical Association of America's website. In addition, Sandifer is one of the founders and officers of The Euler Society, which has a project to translate papers and passages from longer works of Euler that might be useful as historical resources in teaching undergraduate and graduate mathematics. Most recently Professor Sandifer has edited *The Early Mathematics of Leonhard Euler* (MAA, 2007) and co edited with Robert E Bradley *Leonhard Euler: Life, Work and Legacy, a collection of essays in honor of Euler's 300th birthday.* (Elsevier, 2007)