Prime numbers are as old as Euclid, but we are still finding out amazing new things about them, and equally amazing new uses. Once considered only a plaything of mathematicians, they are the basis of methods to ensure the accuracy and privacy of Internet communications. Prime numbers are even used to make messages universally understandable, so they might be understood by aliens on other worlds.

Last August, the mathematics and computer science communities were stunned by the discovery of a new and speedy screen for finding prime numbers. Even more startling was the fact that two of the three discoverers had just received their bachelors degrees in June.

This talk will describe some of the principal ideas in the new test, as well as its applications.

Free and Open to the Public
7:00 p.m.
Thursday
April 3, 2003
Middleton Auditorium
Strickler Hall 101

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