



Pacific National Exhibition

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

PLAYLAND'S AWARD WINNING SCIENCE AND PHYSICS PROGRAM EXPANDS TO INCLUDE "FRENCH IMMERSION" DAY

For Immediate Release (April 14, 2009)

Vancouver, B.C.: Celebrating its 22nd anniversary in 2009, the Amusement Park Physics program held annually at Playland Amusement Park draws over 30,000 students annually from across British Columbia and Washington State.

Developed by Surrey high school science teacher Jim Wiese and based on using the principles of physics and mathematics to answer a series of problems involving a number of the theme park's rides, the Amusement Park Physics program has become one of the highlights of the school year for more than 30,000 students, and the model for similar programs used around the world.

"We introduced a "French immersion day" to the program as a test in 2008, and it was very well received," says PNE President and CEO Michael McDaniel. "For 2009 we are expanding the program to include French immersion schools from across British Columbia with the entire program that day will be run in French."

It's anticipated that in excess of 600 students from across BC will participate in French Immersion Day, being held on the first day of the 2009 Science and Physics Days program. In addition, program sponsor MITACS, has invited well known Canadian broadcaster and mathematician Dr. Jean-Marie De Koninck to speak at the Playland event.

Renowned Broadcaster To Inspire Local Students

Dr Jean-Marie De Koninck will be arriving from Quebec to speak to students participating in Science and Physics - French Immersion Day. He will host the May 1st tournament of MITACS *Math en jeu*.

Dr. De Koninck is a well-known TV personality in Quebec. Jean-Marie De Koninck obtained his Ph.D. in Mathematics from Temple University (Philadelphia, Pa, USA) in 1973. He is the author of six books and 78 research papers. He is now Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Laval University in Quebec City. He became very involved in outreach activities when he accepted in 2001 and 2002 to host a weekly television show on mathematics called "C'est mathématique!"

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In 2005, Dr. De Koninck created SMAC (Sciences et mathématiques en action), an outreach program whose main purpose is to show teenagers that mathematics and their applications are very useful in our day-to-day life and can actually be fun. Dr. De Koninck received the Order of Canada in 1994 and the Order of Quebec in 1999. He was named "Scientifique de l'année" in 2006 by the Société Radio-Canada. He is well known by the general public for having created the now famous Operation Red Nose in 1984, an awareness campaign against impaired driving, which now involves more than 56,000 volunteers from across Canada every December.

Media Note: Dr. De Koninck is available via phone for limited media opportunities.

For more information on the PNE please visit www.pne.ca. For more information on MITACS please visit: www.mitacs.math.ca.

-30-

Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit charity organization dedicated to providing over 3 million visitors a year with first-class cultural, sporting and family entertainment events. Founded in 1910, the PNE operates from a 114-acre site at Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization operates four business streams: an annual 17-day Fair, Playland Amusement Park, maintenance and care of the Hasting Park site and management of the site's year-round facilities. These facilities are utilized to celebrate a variety of hockey, amateur sporting, music, community, social, cultural and commercial events throughout the year.

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