

Pi guy

Around the Placerville offices of Anova Architects, consultant Gerry Hughes is known as "the numbers guy."

Not only for his skill at precisely estimating project costs for company projects. But also for this: his uncanny ability to memorize multiple digits of pi, the infinite number that represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter.

Last week, in honor of national pi day, he recited the first 2,024 digits.

His pi fixation started as an annual effort to motivate young students and adults with learning challenges who attend El Dorado Hills' Neuro-Linguistic Learning Center, where Hughes is director.

"It started as a little exercise," says the 52-year-old Hughes. First he memorized 100 digits. Then 300. Last year he got to 1,000, then doubled that this year.

Next year? "My goal is 5,000," he says.

Claiming no special memory skills, Hughes says he practices a little each day. It's all part of his message to clients dealing with dyslexia, autism and other learning hurdles:

"You can memorize anything, anywhere, any time."

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