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PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

9/15/09 due NOON 9/28/09

CAN YOU GIVE US A SOLUTION?

Problem No. 4 (Fall 2009 Series)

Let $n \geq 5$ be an integer. Show that n is prime if and only if for every decomposition $n = n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + n_4$, where $1 \leq n_1 \leq n_2 \leq n_3 \leq n_4$ and each n_i is an integer, we have $n_1 n_4 \neq n_2 n_3$.

A panel in the Mathematics Department publishes a challenging problem once a week and invites college & pre-college students, faculty, and staff to submit solutions. The objective of this is to stimulate and cultivate interest in good mathematics, especially among younger students. Solutions are due within two weeks from the date of publication. They can be faxed to (765) 494-0548 or sent by campus or U.S. mail (no E-mail please) to:

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK, **8th Floor**, Math Sciences Bldg., Purdue Univ.,
150 North University St., West Lafayette, IN 47907-2067

Solvers should include their name, address, and **status at the University or school**.

The names of those who submitted correct solutions will be posted in the Math. Library, along with the best solution. Every Purdue student who submits three or more correct solutions will receive a Certificate of Merit. A prize fund of \$300.00 will be distributed among the Purdue undergraduates who have contributed at least six correct solutions for the total Fall 2009 series.