



Former MAA President Lynn Steen Dies

Lynn Arthur Steen, who served as [President of MAA](#) in 1985-86, died on June 21, at age 74. He was Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at St. Olaf College.

As [the obituary on St. Olaf's website](#) notes, Lynn spent more than four decades making mathematics accessible to all students and shaping the way teachers approach the discipline." His record of service, both within MAA and beyond, attests to his success.

That record extends to his 2015 establishment, along with his wife Mary, of the Project NEXt New Initiative Fund. With this gift, Lynn and Mary join the [Icosahedron Society](#). The fund will be used for innovative or exploratory projects that support early-career faculty, in line with the established goals of MAA Project NEXt.

Lynn served as Editor of [Mathematics Magazine](#) from 1976-1980. Subsequently, he chaired the MAA Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics. From 1988-1990, Lynn chaired the Conference Board for the Mathematical Sciences, while at the same time leading the writing of the influential 1989 National Research Council report, "[Everybody Counts: A Report to the Nation on the Future of Mathematics Education](#)." He later chaired the [Mathematical Sciences Education Board at the National Academies of Science](#) (1992-95). In 1992 he was awarded the [Gung and Hu Award for Distinguished Service](#), the most prestigious award for service offered by the MAA.

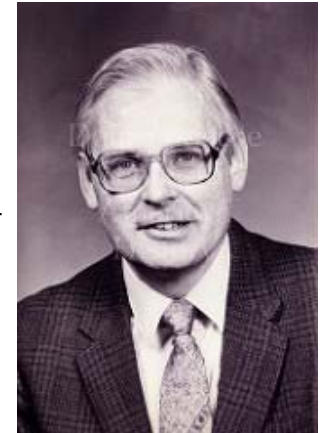
Lynn went on to become a leader in the nascent quantitative literacy (QL) movement, and was the lead writer in "Achieving Quantitative Literacy: An Urgent Challenge for Higher Education" (2004). This report, along with others on QL, many authored at least in part by Lynn, are [available on the MAA website](#).

In written correspondence with Joel Cunningham recorded in "Leadership in Undergraduate Mathematics Education: An Example," an article authored by Cunningham that appeared in the [Spring-Summer 2013 issue of the Journal of Mathematics Education at Teachers College](#), Lynn remarked on his leadership style: "Communicate effectively to make people aware of issues and opportunities; provide resources and ideas for approaches to solving problems; then get out of the way and applaud everyone who is working hard in their own environment."

As those who knew Lynn can attest, his ability to effectively and consistently demonstrate these qualities was remarkable. The mathematical sciences community has lost a tremendous leader, but will long profit from his contributions.

Additional information on Lynn's life can be found in the [obituary from Benson and Langehough Funeral Home in Northfield \(MN\)](#). Services were held on Friday, June 26 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Northfield. An interview with Lynn Steen written this spring, including his thoughts on the most important issues facing the MAA today, will appear in the June issue of *Mathematics Magazine*; a longer appreciation of his work will appear later this year in *MAA FOCUS*.

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