

In Memoriam: Alan Walter Kelm (May 3, 1964 – September 30, 2022)

Obituaries

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It is with profound sadness that the Canadian Mathematical Society (CMS) shares the news of the passing of our colleague Alan Kelm, Electronic Services Manager.

Alan was born in Regina and grew up in Saskatoon. He excelled in languages and remained a hobby linguist throughout his life, learning Greek, Hebrew, Latin, German, Romanian, Polish, French, and Russian. In 1984 he moved to Ottawa to get his PhD in Mathematics, where he met his beloved wife, Angie. They married in 1992 and celebrated their 30th anniversary on August 29, 2022. Alan taught university classes for a time before beginning his career at the Canadian Mathematical Society, where he has been an integral component for almost 3 decades. His tireless work and dedication have helped us grow and learn as an organization. Alan knew the inner workings of the CMS by heart and could always be counted on to help (and teach) new colleagues.

Many knew him as the Electronic Services Manager at the Canadian Mathematical Society, but he was much more than that to the staff at the Executive Office. Alan was a part of our family, a dear colleague, and friend. He will be deeply missed by all who had the pleasure of working with and knowing him.

Alan's colleagues wished to share their fond memories of him:

Alan was the heart of the CMS. His intelligence, compassion, and mentorship fostered a positive working environment. He was a wonderful colleague and a dear friend to many of us. We are deeply saddened by this loss and will miss him greatly. He adored his family, and to them I wish to extend my deepest sympathies. – Termeh Kousha, Executive Director

We are profoundly saddened by the loss of our dear friend and colleague. Alan had been a pillar for the CMS for well over two decades, steadfastly working with dedication to manage our electronic systems and support our other operations. We will miss him deeply. To his beloved family, we extend our most heartfelt condolences. – David Pike, President

I had the pleasure of working with Alan for 19 years. He was one of the most caring and gentle people I know. It was comforting to know he was there to help whenever needed. I appreciated Alan's dedication, attention to detail and sage advice. Alan will be dearly missed. – Yvette Roberts, Finance and Operations Manager

Alan Kelm was an extremely dedicated member of the CMS Executive Office for over 25 years. He made many contributions to the significant growth of the CMS over this time, particularly as Manager of the CMS Electronic Services. He was always there to go above and beyond in so many ways. He will be greatly missed as a colleague and as a dear friend of the Society. – Graham Wright, Former Executive Director

I knew Alan since he was a graduate student at the University of Ottawa. I had the pleasure to teach in parallel with him on many occasions. I got to know how much he was loved and respected by students and colleagues alike. He always had a solution for any problem and faced every challenge with a reassuring smile. I also worked with him on many projects for the CMS and got to appreciate his deep devotion for the CMS and for what it represents. Alan passing is a big loss for his family, the CMS and the Canadian mathematical community. Rest in peace, my friend. – Joseph Khoury, Math Camps Committee Chair

There are no words to express the sorrow on Alan's passing. I worked with him for almost 14 years and during that time he was always so helpful and knowledgeable while being professional and friendly. Alan was a kind soul, and he will be solely missed by all who had the pleasure of working with him. Rest in peace, Alan. – Denise Charron

Alan was always a joy to work with and had such a calming quiet presence. He knew everything about the CMS and could recall people he worked with decades prior and always had something nice to say about every one of them. He could recall every minute detail about a project and often came up with questions that nobody else would ever have thought of. Alan never left a detail to chance and put so much thought into every email and project he worked on. Everyone can recall the very long emails from Alan where he wrote every piece of information you would need. He was caring and always offered praise and acknowledgments when someone was working hard on a particular project. He always made me feel like what I did mattered and would always be sure to check on my well-being when working longer than usual hours. It was clear that he cared. Alan loved the CMS and put his everything into supporting the CMS. He was more than an employee, he was a real piece of the CMS and a great force behind all the CMS initiatives over the last 30 years whether it was a meeting you attended, or a competition you wrote, Alan was behind them all. He will be greatly missed by the entire CMS community. – Sarah Watson

Though Alan is no longer with us, he will live on through the wonderful legacy that he has created and in the memory of all who had the pleasure of knowing him.