



I Hated Math!

When I was in elementary and high school, I struggled with math. I found it hard to understand and comprehend. Each year it was my poorest-performing subject; no matter what I did to improve, I could not do better than Cs in math on report cards (had Ds, and close calls, too!). I had little retention of concepts and principles outside of the basics of adding, multiplying, dividing and subtracting. Algebra was like Greek to me. Numbers with letters, and those letters had numeric values that were unknown and needed to be solved. You're kidding me! Throughout it all, math was hard work, and I hated math.

The lights of understanding math suddenly switched on for me during a trigonometry class I was enrolled in as a college freshman. There, I had an instructor who recognized my mathematical shortcomings after my first test and recommended I join him and some fellow classmates outside our M-W-F lecture schedule for a trig study group. He said, "It's one or two hours extra per week, give it a try, we're just trying to make Trig easier by making it fun!" Math, fun? I hated math!

Just wanting to get through Trig, I decided to join the group. I saw this study group as an opportunity to gain a better understanding, and a few "brownie" points with the instructor, so I went to the study sessions. We worked as a team, discussing the concepts, theory and practicality involved in trigonometry, solving problems, doing lab work and homework. As it turned out, the study group was a smash-hit for me! A home run! For the first time in my life, math had a deeper meaning. It was clearer and complete. It made sense, and it was because of the team effort.

I learned some very valuable lessons about working as a team during those study sessions that semester. We all had common goals and weaknesses; we all demonstrated a discipline and commitment to improving our understanding and knowledge; and we enjoyed ourselves. Slowly our fears of failure and uneasiness faded away. I passed Trig with an "A" that semester and had a greater understanding and comprehension of math concepts like I had never had before.

I am certain that the current MAGCS Board of Directors, like all those who have served our Association in the past, have all felt compelled to serve, to give back and to be part of this team as I have, and I would strongly urge every MAGCS member to support our Association's standing committees by volunteering your time and talents within one of them. With an attitude of servitude, the needs of the team become more important than those of any one individual, but it's not just the team that benefits—it's individuals too. As I learned during my college Trig class, that is the essence of teamwork—service and commitment to others for the betterment of the whole.

I am proud to serve on the Midwest BOD as a director and I relish the opportunity. When you add it all up, whether it's math or an attitude of servitude, the equation is clear, complete and makes sense.

Have a healthy and prosperous 2006.



*Add it up . . .
you plus your
participation in
MAGCS equals
a stronger
Association.*