

**Lynn Taylor Staheli, MD** died peacefully and on his terms on August 10, 2021. He was 87 years old.

Born in Provo, Utah, he was educated in Utah before moving to Seattle in 1963 to start his orthopedic residency. He joined the faculty at the University of Washington and Children's Orthopedic Hospital (COH) in 1968. He was promoted to full professor several years later and served as the Department Director at COH from 1977-1992.

In 1979, Lynn became a founding member of the Pediatric Orthopedic Study Group, which eventually became our present-day professional society, the Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America (POSNA). He served as one of its first presidents a few years later. In 2002, he received the highest honor bestowed on a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, the POSNA *Distinguished Achievement Award*, for his leadership, academic contributions to the medical literature, and humanitarian efforts.

His leadership was certainly manifest in his co-founding of our society, but also evidenced by becoming the Founding Editor of the *Journal of Pediatric Orthopedics* in 1980. That journal was the first and remains, to this day, the most prominent international journal in the field of pediatric orthopedics.

Lynn's academic contributions include 85 peer reviewed articles, of which 25 are on developmental variations in the shapes of children's extremities. These studies significantly influenced the management of pediatric orthopedic conditions by demonstrating that normal children's lower extremities don't look like normal adult lower extremities, but they change from normal to normal on their own without need for unnecessary, expensive, and risky medical or surgical intervention. He also contributed 10 book chapters, 18 books (including monographs and subsequent editions of published books), 17 innovations (including operative procedures and limb examination techniques), and he delivered over 1000 lectures and presentations in 38 countries and 29 states.

Lynn always had a passion for teaching – from medical students up to practicing orthopedic and pediatric orthopedic surgeons around the world. His passion for teaching was generated by his passion for helping children with musculoskeletal problems both personally and by educating other providers to do the same.

Lynn was the most selfless, unassuming, altruistic individual I've ever known. He never took full credit for his many accomplishments but, instead, always recognized the contributions of others to his successes. He was inclusive of others and never felt threatened by the accomplishments of others. In his publications, he noted even the most minor contributions of others to his works by their name, photo, and email.

He realized early in his international lecturing career that there were very smart and talented orthopedic surgeons even in the most remote and resource-challenged countries. What they didn't have was Western knowledge because they couldn't afford the books and journals and/or couldn't read English. Their hospital libraries contained a few old editions of Western orthopedic texts that were Xerox copied and primitively bound. No

doctor had his/her own textbooks. His frequently stated mantras were: education is sustainable; teach others to fish; provide cost-effective care; more expensive isn't better.

So, in the late 1980s, he began desk-top publishing of pediatric orthopedic books so that they could be created at minimal cost and be easily accessed by even the most financially challenged orthopedic surgeons around the globe. Few words, lots of photos and colorful sketches to make the text understandable for non-primary English speakers/readers. Then, in 1995, at the age of 62 and at the top of his knowledge and skills, he retired from the clinical practice of pediatric orthopedics to concentrate on ways to provide even more educational materials to orthopedic surgeons around the world. Those efforts led to his 2002 creation of Global-HELP, a not for profit humanitarian organization with an international board and a global distribution capability. The organization's mission was to provide free or low-cost health care publications, primarily on pediatric orthopedics, worldwide. Recognizing that most doctors at the time, even in resource-challenged countries and regions, had computers but not books, he ensured that distribution was/is through both web site and low-cost printed as well as printable materials. Currently, Global-HELP publications are used in 40 countries with millions of downloads to date. Also recognizing that financial access is only part of the challenge, he asked his orthopedic surgeon contacts around the globe to translate the Global-HELP monographs into other languages. The first and most significant of the monographs, now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, is *Clubfoot: Ponseti Management*. It has been translated into 30+ languages for truly international knowledge distribution and access. And in classic Lynn Staheli style, each translator is acknowledged by name, photo, and email address.

Additionally, approximately 15 years ago, he convinced the major US orthopedic publishers to allow him to create a CD containing the most recent previous edition of most of the major orthopedic textbooks. It is well-known to most of us that there is little significantly new and important information in the latest edition of a text compared with the 4-year old last edition, particularly regarding base knowledge, understanding, and techniques. He and others carried and hand-distributed these free-of-charge CDs to orthopedic surgeons around the world during invited lectureships. Suddenly, digital libraries everywhere were full of the "nearly" latest orthopedic resources. Till the end, his mission was education of the providers of pediatric orthopedic care for the health and safety of children around the world. Do only what needs to be done. Appreciate the difference between average and normal, as well as the natural history of developmental variations and deformities. Let nature "cure" the apparent problem before you take over. Exhaust non-operative management to treat pain and dysfunction before resorting to surgery. Use the most time-tested procedures and the least expensive technology if the more expensive technology only adds cost and not measurable benefit. In 2018, Lynn received the well-deserved *Humanitarian Award* from POSNA.

Finally, Lynn was a mentor before mentorship became recognized as a vital aspect of medical training and practice. As soon as I joined him as a practice partner 36 years ago, he became my mentor, promoter, opportunity provider, conscience, reality checker, and friend. He, like any good "parent", wanted me to be better than he was. It didn't happen,

but I truly believe one of his greatest joys was watching (and helping) me succeed professionally. Right from the start of my time in Seattle, he claimed that he didn't have the time to write an invited textbook chapter or deliver an invited national or international lecture, but that his "junior partner was up to the task". My academic career got an enormous jump start by his promotion of me. I will forever be indebted to him. My success did not diminish him. His was the model of mentoring that we should all strive to duplicate. Selfless. Altruistic. No quid pro quo.

Calling him a unique human being who made the world a better place is a gross understatement. He never did, nor would he ever, accept or acknowledge his contributions. That's just Lynn.

And to Lana, his beloved wife of almost 50 years, thanks for sharing Lynn with us, i.e. the world.

Vince Mosca  
Seattle