Steven G. Krantz Appointed *Notices* Editor

Elaine Kehoe

Steven G. Krantz of Washington University in St. Louis will begin a three-year term as editor in chief of the *Notices* starting with the January 2010 issue. He succeeds Andy Magid of the University of Oklahoma, who has been editor since 2004.

Steven Krantz did his undergraduate work at the University of California Santa Cruz and earned his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1974 under the direction of Elias M. Stein. He then became an assistant professor at the University of California Los Angeles. He served on the faculty at Pennsylvania State University from 1981 to 1987, then went to Washington University, where he has chaired the mathematics department.

Krantz has published more than 150 research articles and more than fifty books. His research interests include several complex variables, one complex variable, harmonic analysis, analysis on Lie groups, partial differential equations, and differential geometry. He received the Chauvenet Prize of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) for an outstanding expository article in 1992 for "What is several complex variables?", published in the *American Mathematical Monthly*. He was also awarded the MAA's Beckenbach Book Prize in 1994 for *Complex Analysis: The Geometric Viewpoint*. Among other honors and awards, he has held a Richardson Fellowship at Australian National University and received a Faculty Mentor Award from Washington University in 2007. Most recently he was elected to the Sequoia High School Hall of Fame. He has held visiting professorships at many universities, including Princeton, the Institute for Advanced Study, Beijing University, and the Mittag-Leffler Institute. He has organized and been principal speaker at many meetings, including the AMS Summer Research Institute on Operator Theory (1993), the NATO Conference on Several Complex Variables in Edinburgh (1995), the Conference in Honor of Lars V. Ahlfors at Stanford University (1997), and the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Atlanta (2005).

Krantz has had a long association with the AMS, of which he has been a member since 1971. He has served on the Council and the Executive Commit-

Steven G. Krantz

tee and has chaired the Committee on Publications. He has been an associate editor of the *Notices* and is a book review editor for the *Bulletin*. He serves on the Editorial Committee for the Graduate Texts series and on the Committee on Committees. He has been a steady contributor to the *Notices* in many forms, including editorials, book reviews, and articles.

A large part of Krantz's contribution to the profession has been in the areas of pedagogy and of forging a career in mathematics teaching and research. With such books as *How to Teach Mathematics, A Primer of Mathematical Writing, A Mathematician's Survival Guide, Mathematical Publishing: A Guidebook*, and *The Survival of a Mathematician: From Tenure to Emeritus*, all published by AMS, as well as numerous other articles and books, he has established himself as a specialist in mentoring new mathematicians.

"I've always been interested in teaching," Krantz said. "I was serving on an NSF panel for an education program in the late 1980s and an NSF officer came to our table to chat us up in preparation for our work. He began by saying, 'Are we all agreed that the lecture is dead?' I must say that I'd never heard this before, and I was dumbfounded. That question, together with my experience on that panel, got me interested and concerned with teaching reform."

He remembers an experience while he was a visiting faculty member at Princeton in 1980 and attending an orientation session. "The person conducting the session, a very senior and famous mathematician, got up in front of the room and said, 'These days you can prove the Riemann hypothesis or you can learn how to teach.' And that was the extent of his advice to us on the craft of teaching. I started to wonder whether we could do better."

Later Krantz taught a graduate course on teaching and found all the available texts wanting. He decided to write his own book on teaching and used his manuscript as the class text. When he

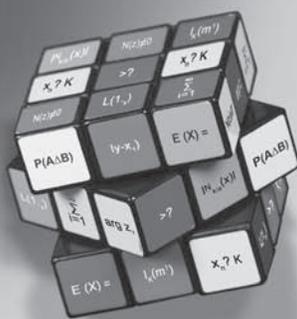*Elaine Kehoe is a* Notices *contributing writer. Her email address is* elainelkehoe@cox.net.

wanted to publish the book, however, despite very positive responses from mathematicians, "things went nowhere with the commercial publishers," he said. "Fortunately John Ewing and Don Babbitt at the AMS took a great interest in the book, and I ended up publishing with the AMS."

About the "survival guides", Krantz said, "I've always been fascinated with the observed fact that mathematicians, upon leaving school, are just supposed to figure out what to do. There is nobody there to guide them. And the attrition rate is therefore very high. I thought perhaps I could do something about it. Ed Dunne at the AMS encouraged me in this mission, and those two books resulted."

Krantz's interests extend beyond writing for mathematicians and their students. His two books *Mathematical Apocrypha* and *Mathematical Apocrypha Redux*, published by the MAA, aim at a general audience by presenting brief stories that illuminate the human side of many well-known mathematicians, including their foibles and vulnerabilities. For instance, he recounts a story of how William (Willy) Feller (1906–1970) and his wife were once trying to move a large circular table from their living room into the dining room. No matter how hard they pushed, pulled, and maneuvered, they could not get the table through the door. Feller sat down with a pencil and paper and devised a mathematical model that proved that what they were trying to do was impossible. While he was busy doing this, his wife got the table into the dining room.

The eclectic nature of Krantz's interests extends to the interactions of mathematics with other disciplines. He appreciates that the *Notices* "is a primary tool for communication among mathematicians," and as editor he hopes to broaden the scope of its offerings, including more articles about applications and about the interaction of mathematics with other fields. "We hope to provide forums for opinion and discussion of issues of broad interest," he said. "We hope to attract a broad range of contributors." He is already planning some articles based on mathematics and art and has begun reviewing articles.

Overall, Krantz's work is a reflection of his philosophy. "I think that one of the keys to success in life—not just in academics but in art and in any creative field—is to find the means to periodically reinvent yourself. If you don't, then you atrophy, you want for ideas, and your creativity dries up. If you can manage to be reborn, then you get a fresh start with rekindled enthusiasm and new viewpoints." An academic mathematician, he said, has "a great deal of freedom and independence to explore your own thoughts and create your own intellectual path. With luck, you can have considerable influence over the development of others, just as my many fine mentors have had over me."