



## Richard Steven Varga, 1928–2022

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It is with a great sadness that we have to report that Richard Steven Varga passed away on February 25, 2022.

Richard was born on October 9, 1928, in Cleveland, OH, in a family from Hungarian origin. After graduating from West Technical High School, he studied mathematics at Case Institute of Technology, and received his B.S. in 1950. He was also a member of the college wrestling team. Then, he entered Harvard University where he earned his master's degree in 1951 and ultimately his PhD in mathematics in 1954 under the guidance of Joseph Leonard Walsh. Varga married Esther Marie Pfister (1926–2015) in 1951. They had one daughter, Gretchen.

Varga worked for Westinghouse, and Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory in Pittsburgh, PA, where he contributed essential research for nuclear reactors. He also participated in research for the Los Alamos National Laboratory. In 1960, he joined Case Institute of Technology (now Case Western Reserve University) in Cleveland where he stayed as a professor until 1969. It was during this period that he wrote his famous book *Matrix Iterative Analysis* that was instantaneously recognized as landmark in numerical linear algebra. He became a University Professor at Kent State University from 1970 until his retirement in 2007. There, he was the Director of the Institute for Computational Mathematics (1980–1988), and then the Research Director for the Institute (1988–2007). Concurrently, Varga was also an adjunct professor in the department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Akron (1983–1990). He held more than 25 academic posts.

The work of Richard Varga covered linear algebra, partial differential equations, spline functions, approximation theory, and the Riemann hypothesis. He wrote seven books, translated into six languages, authored 243 journal publications and advised

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25 PhD graduate students from around the world. He served in the editorial board of many journals. In particular, he was editor-in-chief of *Numerische Mathematik* for fourteen years, co-founding editor of *Electronic Transactions of Numerical Analysis* (ETNA), and a member of the editorial board of *Numerical Algorithms* from its foundation in 1991. Over the years, he organized more than 20 international conferences, and was a visiting professor in many countries.

Some of the most notable honors and prizes Varga received include a Guggenheim fellowship (1963), the Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Scholar (California Institute of Technology, 1974), President's Medal from Kent State University (1981), von Humboldt Prize-senior U.S. Award (1982, 1987), Hans Schneider Prize in Linear Algebra *for research, contributions, and achievements at the highest level of Linear Algebra* (2005), Fellow of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (2012), and the Inaugural Class of Fellows of the American Math Society (2013). He has also been awarded two honorary doctorate degrees, one from the University of Karlsruhe, Germany (1991), and another one from the University of Lille, France (1993).

Richard was a wonderful person. He was well known for his love of music and song, and also for his jokes, his sense of humor, his knowledge of car mechanics, and his mastery in table tennis. He was humble and generous with his time and encouragement to others. We miss him.

*Requiescat in pace, notre ami!*

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