



## Bela Eugene Varga

December 5, 1929 - March 21, 2021

Béla Eugene Varga survived cancer, heart bypass surgery, even exposure to atomic bomb testing, yet he celebrated 91 full years of life. He passed peacefully at home surrounded by his family on the first day of spring, as he loved the sunshine.

He was born December 5, 1929, in Ecorse, MI, the son of Vincent and Mary (Gergye) Varga, Hungarian immigrants who came to America through Ellis Island.

He graduated from Ecorse High School and served in the US Army at Fort Bliss, TX from 1951-53. As Private First Class, he was proud to be part of the First Guided Missile Group serving on the short-range anti-aircraft missile (SAM) project. He received a National Defense Service Medal.

In 1959, he married Patricia Nowak and they embarked on a journey of 61 vibrant years together.

Known throughout his life as Bill, he was gregarious, loved by all, and brought a ray of sunshine wherever he went. He served as President of the Ecorse Jaycees and belonged to several organizations, including St. Malachy Church, Warren Theatre Guild (as resident videographer), and – his favorite – the Clean Plate Club.

Bill owned Post Cleaners in Detroit before his final career with Prudential Insurance, where he spent 20 years earning many accolades including Rookie of the Year. His nature was not as a salesman, rather a good friend who sincerely cared about people.

A devoted father and grandfather, Bill attended countless school concerts, athletic events, plays, school art shows, and Thanksgiving Day basement talent shows. He was proud of all the kids. His favorite phrase, which became our family creed, is “This is living!”

Bill had a great sense of humor and enjoyed having fun. He and Pat never passed up an opportunity to rip up the dance floor doing the Jitterbug, Cha-cha and Foxtrot. He made a mean Southern Comfort Manhattan and was a creative guy who could fix just about anything with duct tape, paper clips and string.

He and Pat had a great retirement, traveling the U.S. and abroad. He loved food and often closed his eyes while eating. Bill savored everything, and he wanted you to savor life with him – his joy was infectious.

Bill is predeceased by his parents, brother Richard Varga, and son-in-law Alan Shippey. He is survived by his wife, Pat, and children: John (Cheron Surant), Laura (Colette Jacobsen), Lynn Shippey, and Jeff (Riley Whinnery); and 9 grandchildren: Dylan (Brandy), Vance, Brendan, Jay, Emily, Kara, Adam, Evan, and Mary; as well as his nephews, David and Tom Varga.

There will be a private Celebration of Life, and his ashes will be inurned at Resurrection Cemetery. As in life, he would like to take care of Pat, so in lieu of flowers please donate to Michigan Parkinson’s Foundation ([www.parkinsonsmi.org](http://www.parkinsonsmi.org)) or simply be nice to people. Bill would love that.

# Tribute Wall



“ 2 files added to the album *Bill Varga Memories*



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**Deb Remkus** - March 24, 2021 at 09:47 AM

MK

“ To my dear friend Lynn and her entire family,

*You may not know this, but your home on Bunert was a sanctuary for me. Yours was a family that loved being together, and voices were never raised unless you were breaking out in song. I remember vividly hanging out with Lynn in the basement and Mr. Varga coming home from work. He sought Lynn out to check in with her, say hello and ask how her day was. It baffled me at first, but I came to understand that was the way loving families acted with each other. Mr. Varga was always so nice to me, and he was so dang funny. Such an incredibly sweet man. He will be so missed. He made an awkward young girl feel safe and welcome, and I will never forget him.*

xoxoxoxo...

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**Michelle Kline** - March 23, 2021 at 06:41 PM

LS

*This is beautiful, Michelle. I am so glad Dad's kind spirit reached you when you needed it. Now he's watching over all of us. xo*

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**Lynn Shippey** - March 24, 2021 at 11:08 PM

MC

“ Bill was my mother's first cousin. Their mothers were sisters. My Mom Margaret often shared stories of visiting Bill and Richard as children and playing in the yard when trains traveled nearby. As a result she always loved the sound of trains. I remember being at Bill and Pats wedding as a child. The 3 cousins kept in sporadic touch as long as possible. I remember Laura being a singing telegram girl and Pats theater acting! I last saw them at our son's wedding. Bill was a terrific dancer!!!! He is my last Hungarian family connection! I know the love those 2 shared and the wonderful family they created and were so proud of. He will surely be missed by so many whom he touched! 91 years is amazing and leaves a beautiful legacy! Much sympathy to Pat and family.  
Marcia Phillips Collins

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**Marcia Collins** - March 23, 2021 at 06:12 PM

JK

“ I will always be grateful for meeting Bill and being able to share some special moments with him. Whether it be at St Malachy Festival, a birthday party, or summer party, I always enjoyed his quick wit and infectious personality. My most favorite is the time he can to Lynn's party wearing his beer cup around his neck. What a guy he was to enjoy all 91 years with a beautiful family and always with a smile when I saw him. REST IN PEACE BILL. MAY GOD'S LIGHT SHINE UPON YOU FOR ETERNITY!- Jim Kline

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**Jim Kline** - March 23, 2021 at 10:54 AM

RF

“ Dear Laura and Family, I never met your wonderful father, but after reading about his life, I am now a fan of his! May he rest in sweet peace. Love, Robin Francis

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**Robin Francis** - March 23, 2021 at 09:57 AM

RP

“ *It has been some time since I have seen Bill and Pat. But everything written in the beautifully written obituary is what I remember most about Bill from our Warren Theatre Guild days. It was always a pleasure to encounter Bill and Pat during our rehearsals and performances through out our theater days. And of course the fun, jovial times after our productions was a high point too. Always a joy, kind hearted and a helpful soul, your spirit will be missed Bill Varga but always fondly remembered. My condolences to the entire Varga family and all who knew and loved Bill.*

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**Robert Paul** - March 22, 2021 at 11:42 PM