Contributor Profiles:
Václav Konečný

Václav Konečný was born in Břest, Czechoslovakia in 1934. Both of his parents were elementary school teachers. He used to watch his mother teaching basic arithmetic and he became fascinated with mathematics at an early age.

After the end of the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1945, his parents sent him and his brother Antonín to obtain their high school education at the Archbishop Seminary and Gymnasium in Kroměříž. There he excelled in Mathematics and Physics, but did poorly in Latin and Greek. The Communist government closed the school in 1950, and he completed his high school education in Gottwaldov in 1952, where he competed in his first Math Olympiad. After a year's work at a factory he studied physics at Masaryk University in Brno. He graduated in 1958, his thesis being on Lommel's problem in Optics (Prof. Albéric Boivin of Laval University verified Václav's correction of one of his formulas).

He was hired by the Physics Department of the Technical University of Brno on the strength of his thesis and his involvement in Physics Olympiads. He began by preparing physics labs, but soon became a Lecturer in Physics.

In 1959 he married and subsequently had two children.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Khartoum hired Václav as a Lecturer in mathematics in 1964. There he began preparing students for the Cambridge exams until 1970. He also started publishing in the areas of Differential Equations, Combinatorics, Solid State Physics, Optics, Mechanics and problem solving. He received a Ph.D. in Mathematics in 1968 and an M.Sc. in Computer Science in 1984, all while he continued to work.

He was a Post-Doctoral Fellow in mathematics at the University of Saskatchewan for six months in 1970, then moved with his family to Hawkins, Texas, to teach mathematics and physics at Jarvis Christian College. His wife and children returned to Czechoslovakia in 1973. Václav followed, but three years later fled back to Hawkins. He was finally reunited with his family in Texas in 1980, the year he became a professor at Ferris State University.

He retired in 2001, but still promotes *CRUX* by presenting problems to faculty and students at Ferris nearly every year. When time permits he solves *CRUX* problems, especially the geometry problems. He likes symphony music, but he listens to the Beatles too. He enjoys reading books in foreign languages, especially Spanish, and *El conde de Montecristo* is one of his favourites.

Václav's sincerest hope is for world peace.