The Reese T. Prosser Mathematics Lecture Series
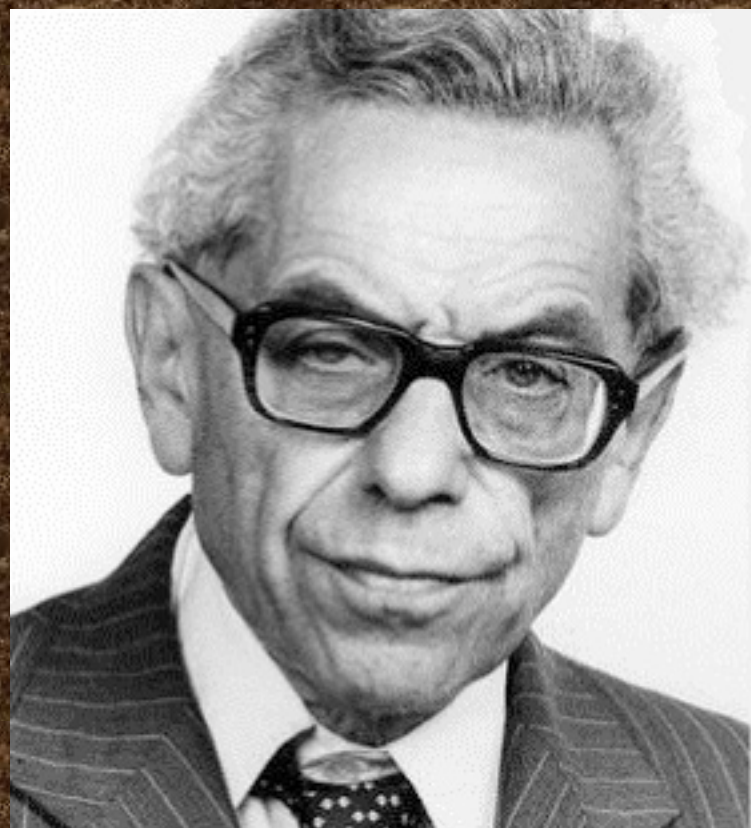*Presents*

From Erdős to Algorithms

**Joel Spencer
Professor of Mathematics and
Computer Science, NYU – Courant
Institute of Mathematical Sciences**

"I hope we'll be able to solve these problems before we leave."

Paul Erdős

Free and open to the public.

**Thursday, September 29th
7:00 – 8:00 PM
100 Arvo Oopik '78 Auditorium
Life Sciences Center**

Paul Erdős (1913-1996) was one of the great figures of twentieth century mathematics. He was the quintessential pure mathematician, wanting only to prove the existence of mathematical objects. And yet… And yet… There is today a great deal of work modifying his arguments to produce efficient algorithms which sort a billion items, round off a million numbers check for primality (critical for internet shopping!) and much more. We explore the relationship between pure and applied mathematics through the lens/wand of Erdős.

Uncle Paul, as he was universally called, had a unique life style. He had no money, no home, no job and no family, and a community of mathematicians that would do anything for him. The speaker knew Uncle Paul for twenty five incredible years and will include personal anecdotes about this remarkable man.