

Fred "Doc" Blum

MONTICELLO - Fred "Doc" Blum, age 90, passed away on Tuesday, October 31, 2017 at his family's homestead. He was born on May 30, 1927 to Fred and Olga Hefty Blum in the old 1000 bed University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison. Fred attended Nakoma Grade School through the 5th grade, after which the family moved to Westwood Village, CA in 1938. In 1939 Fred's father secured a job on Wall Street and moved his family to Leonia, New Jersey near New York City. During the summer Fred worked in New York as an office boy for The Geological Society of America. Fred and his family relocated to Miami, FL for his junior year of high school before they permanently resettled back home in Madison, where Fred was able to reunite with his boyhood friends at Madison West High School. While in high school Fred enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve and was called into active service two weeks prior to graduation. He served on the USS Tarawa aircraft carrier as a Hospital Corpsman Pharmacists Mate. His sea service included sailing from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba through the Panama Canal to the Pacific.



Following his discharge from the Navy in 1947, Fred studied at the University of Wisconsin-Madison graduating with a degree in Zoology. On June 10, 1951 he was united in marriage to Miriam "Mickey" Eye. After graduating Fred was accepted to the George Washington School of Medicine in Washington, DC graduating in 1954. In 1955 Fred and Mickey moved to Wilmington, DE to serve his internship. Following his internship Fred was an Ophthalmology resident at the University of Michigan until 1958 and was also awarded a Master's degree in Ophthalmological Science. In 1959 he was named the Head Fellow in Retinal Surgery at Washington University in St. Louis, MO. Fred and Mickey moved back to Madison, WI in 1959 to join a private Ophthalmology practice. He was also an Assistant Clinical Professor in Ophthalmology at the University of Wisconsin. In 1976 he started Madison Eye Associates which later was purchased by the Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Wisconsin in 1993. Fred was a pioneer in the practice of Ophthalmology. He was the first in the area to perform outpatient cataract surgery. He also adopted the team approach to Ophthalmology by integrating an Optometrist into a medical practice along with performing laser surgery and refractive surgery in the clinical setting. Notably, he developed new surgical procedures for rare degenerative eye conditions. The practice was supported by long-time faithful staff Dr. Eugene Cropp O.D. and the "Eye Angels".

In 1965 Fred and Mickey made the momentous decision to move their family to the Homestead Farm between Monticello and New Glarus. The farm was settled by Fred's ancestors who emigrated from Switzerland in 1848. Initially Fred and Mickey raised horses and then added beef cattle. Their beef operation was noted for producing beef bulls with the fastest gain in the state for two years running. In the 1980's the Hefty-Blum Homestead Farms began a dairy operation milking as many as 89 cows.

Fred and his family traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and abroad. Following his retirement from practice Fred and Mickey wintered in Naples, FL and Roswell, NM. In partnership with one of their daughters and her husband, Fred and Mickey started a successful internet business and continued to manage the farm. Fred and Mickey were active members in Believer's Fellowship in Monroe, WI since 1985. They were also active in The Care Net Pregnancy Center of Green County. Fred was also a member of the New Glarus Lions

Club since 1965, and served as president of the New Glarus School District Board. He was interested in conservation and received awards for stream bank improvement. In keeping with Fred and Mickey's sense of history and preservation the Homestead was listed with the National Historical Registry of the National Parks System. It was a long-held dream of Fred and Mickey to see The Homestead continue as a producing farm while keeping with the tradition as a leader in conservation and heritage.

Fred is survived by his six children: Silvan (Jane) Blum, Marion (Jan) Hobbs, Gale (Kent) Duval, Heidi (Bill) Sarbacker, Elsbeth "Baeti" (Albert) Ng, and Antonia (Robert) Seitz, beloved Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren. He is also survived by brother-in-law, Elliot Sweet and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife Mickey, sister Marion Sweet, and a child that he and Mickey lost due to miscarriage.

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at the Zentner-Beal Funeral Home, 29 Sixth Ave., New Glarus, WI with Pastors Jeff Cole and Kent Duval officiating with burial in the Swiss Church Cemetery, New Glarus. Military Honors will be accorded.

Relatives and friends may call from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, November 3, 2017 at the Zentner-Beal Funeral Home in New Glarus.

A memorial fund has been established.