

Blum, Olga H.

MADISON — Olga H. Blum died unexpectedly on Sunday evening, March 9, 1997. She was born to a delighted, young Swiss-American couple, Fred K. and Regula A. Freitag Hefty on September 4, 1895, on the family homestead in Town Washington near New Glarus. She attended the country school, called "The Marty School" through the sixth-grade, trudging one mile across fields each way, except for the wagon rides on the mornings when it was her father's turn to furnish the wood for the school stove. She attended the Monticello schools for seventh and eighth grades, riding her pony, "Birdie", from the farm each Sunday or Monday, staying through the week with her grandmother in the snug little house on the edge of Monticello's Lake Staedtler (now Montesian Lake) and riding home on weekends.



From her grandmother and mother, she learned to keep a tidy house and to cook and sew; and during many hot summers and autumns, she worked in the kitchen to help cook the heavy meals on the wood-stove and to help wash mountains of dishes for the neighboring farmers who worked for several days at the threshing and silo filling; with her own team of work horses, she cut hay out in the fields when an extra hand was needed. She spent many other hours weeding the vegetable garden, or raking sharp stones out of the driveway to prevent injury to the horses' feet, or mowing the grass or raking the thousands of maple leaves on the large, green, fenced in yard, or sweeping the sidewalk that curved around the house. During her entire life, she cherished farms, farmers, horses, and the countryside.

After graduation from eighth grade, she attended Carroll Academy in Milwaukee, and later Carroll College. She then attended Milwaukee Downer College, excelling in chemistry and mathematics, and later doing practice-teaching of sewing in West Allis.

On March 29, 1918, she married Fred G. Blum of Monticello. While he served in the Army, she continued her studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. When he returned, she ended her college career one semester short of a BS in Domestic Science and turned her loving attention to being a wife and mother in Milwaukee, and later, in more distant places.

On October 31, 1920, Marion Ruth was born, and on May 30, 1927, Fred, Jr. was born. As they were growing up, they had the privilege of many visits and some entire summers on the homestead farm in Town Washington, as well as other summers traveling the western states. In 1938, Olga and Fred, Sr., and the children moved to Westwood Village near Los Angeles for a year. In 1939, they moved to Leonia, New Jersey, where they lived for four years; and in 1943, they spent a year in Biscayne Park, near Miami, for yet another experience. Due to the vagaries of renting homes, during these six years the family lived in five different houses, each move requiring Olga's calm, efficient organizational ability. In 1945, the entire family returned to Madison, where Olga was happy to live for the rest of her life, except for the several trips to Europe and especially to Switzerland where she and Fred, Sr. used their fluency in Swiss to good advantage.

In December of 1985, her husband died and now she is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Dr. Fred G., Jr. and Mrs. Miriam (Eye) Blum who live on the family homestead; by her daughter and son-in-law, Marion and Elliott H. Sweet of Verona; by her much loved grandchildren and their spouses, Silvan and Brenda (Beckwith) Blum, New Glarus, Gale and Kent Duval, Menomonie, Wisconsin, Marion and Dr. Jan Hobbs, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania,

Heidi Blum, Montfort, Wisconsin, Elsbeth and Albert Ng of Madison, and Antonia and Robert Seitz, Monticello; Barbara and Tedd D. Cash, Waunakee, Nancy and Roy J. Gustavson, Monona, Jacquelyn and John W. Kuehn of Indiana, Pennsylvania; and Richard and Tamara J. Holmes Sweet of Madison; and by twenty-five also much loved great grandchildren; Jessica Blum; Alexis, Renata, Jana, and Joshua Duval; Hans, Ericka, Lisa and Monika Hobbs; Heidi, Jr., Donny and David Hughes; Joshua Ng; and Christopher-Robert Seitz; and Jamie, Melody, and Kathie Cash; Rena, Noah, and Jonah Gustavson; Carolyn, Philip, and Mary Kuehn; and Allyssa Holmes and Celia Sweet.

There will be a visitation on Thursday evening, March 13, from five o'clock until eight o'clock at the CRESS FUNERAL HOME at 3610 Speedway Road in Madison. There will be another visitation on Friday forenoon, March 14, at 10:00, preceding the 11:00 funeral, both at the ZENTNER—BEAL FUNERAL HOME in New Glarus Wisconsin. Reverend Mary Jean Bartholomew, Reverend R. David Hoffelt, and Reverend Charles G. Workman will officiate.

Following the committal service, the family would welcome friends and relatives to share in fellowship at the New Glarus Hotel. The family wishes to thank all the caregivers — both in and out of the hospital - for their loving attention. The family also suggests that, in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to a charity of one's choice, or to New Glarus' or Madison's or one's own EMS or library, or to one's own church or Westminster Presbyterian church in Madison, or to Hospice, or- with world farmers in mind - to Heifer Protect International.