

DONALD J. VOEGELI

February 8, 1920 - November 21, 2009

MADISON-Donald J. Voegeli, age 89, well known Madison musician, Professor Emeritus of the UW Extension, died on Saturday, November 21, 2009, due to complications after a fall.

He was born in Monticello, February 8, 1920, the son of Jost J. and Rose (Schilt) Voegeli. He attended Monticello Public Schools.

In 1937 Professor Voegeli was the recipient of one of the first ten scholarships awarded to the UW's summer "Music Clinic" for high school students. That fall he enrolled in the School of Music. He was very interested in Public Radio and in time, Public TV, which subsequently gave him a home for his talents in playing and composing.

Professor Voegeli had a joint appointment with the Department of Communication Arts and School of Music, where he taught part-time. In the middle fifties, Professor Voegeli took an official two-year leave from the UW to become involved in the free-lance writing, arranging, and producing of radio and TV commercial sound tracks. Some of his clients were Plymouth Automobiles, Continental Airlines, Johnson Motors, 7-UP Bottling Co., Chung King Foods, Ken-L-Ration Co., and Schlitz Beer. Some of the nationally known singers he worked with were Ethel Merman, Dona Ameche, the King Sisters, Johnny Desmond, Betty Johnson, Eddie Arnold, Rosemary Clooney and Singers Unlimited.

In 1968 Professor Voegeli received a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to establish what he called the Electrosonic Studio and electronic music studio that was devoted to producing special materials for Public Radio and TV. Up to the time of his retirement in 1982, Don wrote the music and "realized" (a term used in the production of electronic music) twenty-eight records. The second of two themes he wrote in the 1970's for National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" still introduces the program daily.

Don was well known in Madison music circles, continuing in his retirement to play professionally (ten years as a house pianist for the Maple Bluff Country Club) and volunteering weekly for the UW's Clinic and Hospital waiting room, for Attic Angels, and the Anderson Hospice Center.

Don was a member of the Downtown Rotary Club for more than 50 years serving as the Club pianist for 35 years, on the Board of Directors twice and was Vice President in '75. He was recipient of three awards, the Paul Harris Award, the Rotary Senior Service Award, and the Joseph Werner Meritorious Service Award.

Professor Voegeli was preceded in death by two wives, and two children, Jean Lapple, mother of children, Robert, and Donna, and a second wife, Anne Richardson.

He is survived by four children from his wife, Jean; and six grandchildren; Thomas Voegeli and children, Oliver and Lucy of Marine on St. Croix, Minn; Kim (John) Sievers and children, Kristin and David of Centennial, Colo., James and Dawn Voegeli of Stillwater, Minn., and Julie (Randy) Martinson and children, Kelly and Brian of Madison. He is also survived by his dear friend and companion, Marcia Schug of Edina, Minn.

A Memorial Celebration of Don's life is planned for 11 a.m. on Monday, February 8, 2010, at COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 326 S. Segoe Road, Madison, WI 53705. This date is very meaningful, as it would have been Don's 90th birthday. In lieu of flowers the family suggests that memorial contributions may be made in Don's name to Covenant Presbyterian Church, the Downtown Rotary, or Attic Angels. The family wishes to give special thanks to the caring staff of Attic Angels, and Meriter Hospital and especially to his physician, Dr. Tom Ansfield and his staff.