

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS WILBER J. “TIP” TYLER

Wilber J. Tyler, professor emeritus of dairy science, died on August 8, 2011 at age 92.

Professor Tyler was born on February 23, 1919 in Pataskala, Ohio. Not fond of his given name, he adopted his nickname and was known by everyone as “Tip.” He graduated from The Ohio State University in 1940 with a major in animal husbandry. He then came to the University of Wisconsin where he earned his MS in 1942 and PhD in 1945 in the departments of genetics and dairy husbandry under supervision of Professor A. B. Chapman. During those graduate student years in Madison, he courted Lois Colton; they were married in 1945. Tip then took a faculty position in dairy science at West Virginia University. Tip returned to the UW-Madison dairy science department in 1951 as associate professor, was promoted to professor in 1958, and retired in 1984.

Tip came to Madison to lead a long-term project on systems of mating in dairy cattle at the Emmons Blaine Jr. dairy research farm near Lake Mills. The project was designed to measure the effects of inbreeding and crossing between inbred lines on dairy cattle performance. These systems were popular among dairy producers at that time, but their effects were not well documented in controlled studies. His work investigated the impacts of these mating systems on milk production and composition, growth, body conformation, and reproductive performance. During the last 20 years of his career, he redirected research with the Blaine herd to a long-term study of changes in animal health and reproductive performance associated with ongoing selection for high vs. average milk production. Superimposed over the two genetic lines were various studies of nutritional and reproductive management. For 33 years, he was the Wisconsin representative for a collaborative north central regional research project on dairy cattle genetics.

Most prominent among Professor Tyler’s publications was a pioneering series of studies on reproductive function and reproductive performance in the Blaine herd in collaboration with genetics professor L. E. Casida. Tyler, Casida, and their graduate students made weekly trips to the herd in Lake Mills to record detailed observations of growth, reproductive function, milk production, and more. Other themes in Professor Tyler’s research were genetic studies in dairy cattle of milk protein production; bull fertility and the advent of frozen semen; and, in collaboration with specialists in beef cattle, methods of producing high quality beef with Holstein steers (a breed developed for milk production).

In the mid-1970s, the college administration decided to close the well-worn Lake Mills facility and relocate the Blaine herd to a new facility at the Arlington Agricultural Research Station. Professor Tyler, with others, provided the leadership for planning and design of the new Blaine Dairy Center at Arlington; that center opened in 1977 and remained in operation until 2008.

Throughout his 33 years on the UW-Madison faculty, Professor Tyler taught Principles of Animal Breeding. The course was taken by nearly all dairy science and animal sciences majors. During the early years, this was part of a four-credit course co-taught with Professor Casida that included reproductive physiology. Later the two disciplines were separated into separate three-credit courses. For several years, Tip also taught a five-week course on animal breeding and genetics in the Farm and Industry Short Course program. His success as a short course instructor was recognized in 1984 with the John S. Donald Excellence in Teaching Award from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. He was academic advisor for a large number of undergraduate dairy science majors and several graduate students.

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Tip worked with all breeds of dairy cattle, but his love for Ayrshires was always prominent. He grew up on a central Ohio dairy farm with Ayrshire cattle. At the young age of ten, Tip's 4-H calf won Grand Champion Calf at the 1929 Ohio State Junior Fair; his Ayrshires won many more prizes in the years that followed. At West Virginia, he was project leader for the Reyman Memorial Ayrshire Cattle Breeding Project and served on the research council of the National Ayrshire Breeders Association. In Wisconsin, he was a member and served a time as director of the Wisconsin Ayrshire Breeders Association. From the beginning of World Dairy Expo at Madison in 1967, he assisted in managing the Ayrshire show including several years as superintendent; he continued this service for 25 years after retirement.

Tip was a fun-loving colleague, always ready with a friendly greeting and oft-repeated jokes. His outlook was positive, and his presence boosted the spirits of those in his company. An avid fan of Badger sports, he had season football and basketball tickets for many years. A member of Gamma Sigma Delta honor society in agriculture, he served the UW-Madison chapter on the board of directors and as president. He participated in a pioneering exercise physiology project for adults, playing soccer or basketball with other faculty and university staff for many years; he continued playing well into retirement. He was an active member of Plymouth United Church of Christ and East Madison Kiwanis, was a boy scout leader, and participated in a variety of volunteer activities.

Professor Tyler is survived by his six children: Patty (Jack) Green, Green Valley, Arizona; David (Karen) Tyler, Dallas, Texas; Nancy Tyler, Dallas, Texas; Connie (Kevin) Meyers, Marshfield; Ed (Angie) Tyler, Madison; and Lu (John) Marx, Tucson, Arizona. Also surviving are seven grandchildren. He was predeceased by Lois, his wife of 48 years, in 1993.

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