

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS WILLIAM FEY

William “Dr. Will” Fey, distinguished professor emeritus in the Department of Psychiatry, passed away on October 13, 2009. He was 87.

Will was born on March 8, 1922, in Elyria, Ohio, to Blossom and Milo Fey. He was the youngest of three boys. The Depression confined the family entertainment to their local golf course, Cherry Ridge, where Will caddied and, by his teens had become a regional champion. He followed his brothers to college at Miami University in Oxford. In 1943, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was selected for pilot’s training. Five months later, he was flying a B25 across the Atlantic Ocean toward a deployment in Corsica. He flew 63 successful bombing missions over Italy from this base and returned to college 13 months later, to complete his undergraduate degree.

Will came to the University of Wisconsin in 1945 to pursue a PhD in clinical psychology. It was here he met and fell for a fellow graduate student who offered to tutor him in statistics. He and Florence Elizabeth Tobey (Betty) married in 1949 and bought a modest bungalow outside of Verona situated within a four-acre woods. They cultivated a huge garden, planted dozens of white pines and started a family. Three kids later they sawed off the bungalow roof and raised it to add a full second floor. When the local school system failed to challenge their children, they moved into Madison and bought an old 150-acre farm near Dodgeville to fill the country void. The farm quickly became the center of family life and celebrations. There were few weekends spent elsewhere for the next 20 years. Will wrote a journal entry for every one of the days spent at the farm, in his beautiful, calligraphic hand, documenting his projects, the weather, the food and his conversations with others.

Will was the first PhD ever hired by the Department of Psychiatry in the UW Medical School. His intuitive clinical skills earned him a primary role in managing the psychiatry residents, and he became the face and the heart of that program for many years. As a clinician, anecdotal evidence suggests that he saved many lives and marriages, strengthened families, and helped many to be kinder to themselves. He was deeply admired, respected and loved as a clinician, teacher and colleague. Although he took only a handful of sick days in his 35-year tenure, he took every Wednesday afternoon off to go to the farm with his beloved wife, Betty. This unprecedented, unconventional and admirable practice became legendary among his peers.

Right up to the final days of his life, he had a twinkle in his eye and a smile that made you glad you’d walked through the door. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
Ned H. Kalin