

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS EDWARD BALISH

Emeritus Professor Edward (Ed) Balish died on September 13th, 2013 in Charleston, South Carolina. Ed was born in 1935 in Scranton, PA. He played football as a lineman in high school and at the University of Scranton and was invited to try out with the Green Bay Packers but instead entered graduate school to study microbiology at Syracuse University. It was there that he began the two themes that characterized much of his scientific career: the use of gnotobiotic (germ free) animals to study the effects of the microbiome and investigations of the pathogenesis of the opportunistic fungal pathogen *Candida albicans*. Following completion of his Ph.D. in 1959, he undertook postdoctoral training in radiation biology at Argonne National Laboratory. He then accepted a position as Scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he remained until 1969.

Ed then moved to the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he was offered a joint appointment in the Department of Medical Microbiology and the Department of Surgery in the School of Medicine. Ed rose through the academic ranks and was promoted to Professor in 1976. He served as the acting Chair of Medical Microbiology for two years (1988-1990), easing the transition between the chairmanship of the late Professor Duard Walker and Professor William Weidanz. Ed retired from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2001. He and his wife, Marion moved to Charleston, South Carolina to enjoy their Golden years. However, Ed could not stay away from the laboratory and secured a faculty position at the Medical University of South Carolina, where he continued to carry out productive NIH-funded research until 2012 when he fully retired.

Ed was a big-picture scientist. His contributions are broad in scope and considerable significance. He authored more than 230 scientific papers, on various bacterial and fungal organisms, that have been cited more than 7,000 times in the literature. He was most widely known for his use of germ-free (gnotobiotic) animals to study how the microbial flora that we all possess can be beneficial or detrimental to their host. Ed was clearly ahead of his time in this endeavor as evident in the current growth of research on the microbiome and microbial symbiosis, and the general interest of the public in probiotics. Ed's enthusiasm for the subject was reflected in his leadership in the American Society for Gnotobiotics, which he served as President and in other important leadership positions during his career. Ed established what was to become one of the largest gnotobiotic laboratories in the world on the west end of Williamson Street in Madison. When Ed gave tours of the facility, he would point out what he claimed was one of the world's largest autoclaves, in which you could sterilize a Volkswagen if need be!

Ed contributed much to the campus instructional program in microbiology. He taught medical mycology to undergraduate and graduate students for many years. But Ed's greatest educational impact was as a mentor. He served as the major professor for 20 Ph.D. and M.S. students and mentor of several postdoctoral trainees who went on to success in academia, industry and government service. Ed gave his students the freedom to follow their own ideas and develop truly independent projects. As one of his former students states, "Ed was a one in a million and deserves every accolade possible."

Ed and his wife Marion wed in 1961. They spent 43 happy years together until her death in 2004. Together they raised three sons: Christopher, Marty and Stan. Time spent with his family was always a high priority for Ed. Together they enjoyed many vacations, fishing expeditions, ski trips and golf outings. Ed was thrilled to shoot a hole in one while golfing with his sons just months before his death.

Ed was an eternal optimist, encouraging even when a project seemed to be going nowhere. His enthusiasm and positive outlook were unshakable. Ed always treated everyone with kindness and humor, whether they

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were a colleague, student or support staff. Ed also was a great role model for his students: he was a successful scientist and faculty member who maintained balance in his life. He made time for family and friends, and for other important activities (like fishing and golf), and kept physically active throughout his life. For many years, Ed was a regular jogger along the campus paths. Later he participated in exercise classes held at the Camp Randall Recreation Center.

Ed was a generous collaborator and an outstanding colleague. Those who knew him feel fortunate to have called him a mentor, colleague and friend. He will be missed by all who knew him.

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