
**Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emeritus William John Goodger**

Dr. William John “Bill” Goodger (May 23, 1941—March 13, 2018) was employed in the UW-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine’s Department of Medical Sciences as Associate Professor of Food Animal Production Medicine from 1989 until his retirement in 2007. While at Wisconsin he played a key role in developing the Food Animal Production Medicine Program, with its far-reaching clinical impact on students, the veterinary profession and the dairy industry.

Dr. Goodger’s long, diverse and fulfilling professional career, as well as every aspect of his daily life and personal interests, were characterized by intense commitment, indefatigable perseverance, personal integrity and a sincere concern for people and animals in need. He was a basketball coach throughout his life; his leadership-style was to instill independence, responsibility, work ethic and a belief in yourself. He applied what he learned through this avocation as he distinguished himself mentoring students in a wide range of settings. These included the UW dairy teaching herd that he developed and managed, the Piedras Blancas northern elephant seal rookery, where he developed a field research internship, and Dana Hills High School, Dana Point CA, where he was a member of the basketball coaching staff. Dr. Goodger will be remembered for his easy grin along with his dry sense of humor. Former students recall a kind, encouraging, insightful and dedicated instructor and a great mentor, full of boundless energy and ideas.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, with family roots in Wisconsin, Dr. Goodger earned his B.S. in 1962 and, in 1964, his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Michigan State University. He worked as a small animal veterinarian; first in the Chicago area, then in California’s San Francisco Bay Area, where he specialized in small animal surgery. His accomplishments included the development of innovative surgical methods to protect unborn puppies from the effects of anesthesia during surgery. During this period, he and his family were involved with a community service organization, working with impoverished urban and rural communities, including Native American populations.

Dr. Goodger’s developing vision of service and contribution through veterinary medicine led him to leave small animal practice and return to school to earn advanced degrees from the University of California-Davis: Master of Preventive Veterinary Medicine, 1977; M.S., Agricultural Economics, 1980; and Ph.D., Comparative Pathology, 1981.

In the 1980s, Dr. Goodger began working internationally with the United Nations through the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Coordinated Research Program and with the USDA. This work continued for more than 20 years, taking him to every South American country, China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and parts of Africa to provide epidemiological analysis and data management techniques for dairy cattle nutrition, reproduction and disease.

Dr. Goodger’s professional career came full circle at UW-Madison. He regarded his years there as the highlight of his professional career. He was passionate in his work with students, both personally and academically. The teaching herd he helped establish (which included “Red”, his favorite cow) provided hands-on learning opportunities to over 400 students, of which more than 70 were later accepted into the DVM program. The dairy herd setting particularly suited Dr. Goodger’s approach to teaching - working in the field with students. He asked them to take full

responsibility and ownership in a team effort that augmented classroom learning. His passion and commitment to students and to teaching were evident as he continued to work in the herd with those students on a regular basis for five years after his retirement in 2007. His academic work included research related to mastitis in dairy cattle. He was widely published in veterinary and production medicine journals.

Following his retirement, Dr. Goodger and his wife Pat moved to San Luis Obispo, California, where he immersed himself as a volunteer and board member of the Friends of the Elephant Seal, serving as a docent, organization treasurer and research coordinator. In this capacity, he promoted the concept of citizen scientist among his fellow docents and established an internship program for Cal Poly students that formalized a relationship between the Friends of the Elephant Seal and the Marine Mammal Center—Moro Bay.

Dr. Goodger approached his wide-ranging personal interests with the same intensity, commitment, curiosity and engagement that he brought to professional endeavors. He was a lifelong, ever-optimistic Chicago Cubs fan. An avid theatergoer and knowledgeable Shakespeare enthusiast, he supported the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland and Wisconsin's American Players Theater. His love of basketball (he played college basketball at Michigan State University) led him to work with his daughter coaching high school basketball. He also organized an annual UW veterinary student versus faculty basketball game that was widely popular with many of the students. An ardent backpacker, he led his family on numerous treks in California's Sierra Nevada mountains, including a memorable successful assault on Mt. Whitney. He took up cycling in midlife and with characteristic enthusiasm, dedication and passion became an accomplished Masters cyclist and racer.

Dr. Goodger is survived by his wife of 54 years, Pat Goodger; daughter Anne Honey (Doug); son Tim (Monique); grandchildren Matthew, Megan and Jason Honey, and Julian Goodger; sister Nancy Goebel (Richard); many nephews, nieces and extended family in Chicago, Michigan and France; and his beloved golden retrievers Whitney and Wally.

A Celebration of Life was held on May 4, 2018 in San Luis Obispo CA, where family and friends gathered to honor a life well lived.

“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. . . . Life is no ‘brief candle’ to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.” George Bernard Shaw