

# Boerger remains young at heart

## McCartyville man to celebrate 98th birthday Saturday

BY KATHY LEESE  
Staff Writer

MCCARTYVILLE — Herb Boerger seems to have some claims to fame as he approaches his 98th birthday Saturday. Boerger not only is the oldest living resident in McCartyville, but is also the only surviving member of the Fort Loramie Athletics championship semi-professional baseball team — and knows how to score a perfect 300 game when he bowls.

Boerger grew up in the Fort Loramie area near Ohio 705, the son of the late Frank and Emma (Ernst) Boerger, one of 14 children. Six of them survive and live in the area. They include Dorothy Wolfe, 99; Ralph Boerger, 91; Clarissa Thieman, 88; Mary Francis, 83 and Ruth Dabbelt, 81. They will all celebrate Boerger's birthday together next week.

Boerger attended Fort Loramie and Minster schools, although he never graduated, noting he was needed on his parents' farm.

Boerger, who was married to his wife, Alma for 60 years before her death in 2001, was a farmer and sold seed corn during his adult life. Together they reared five children, including Mike Boerger of Sidney, Carol Bucklew

of Centerville, Velma Matuszewski of Hilliard, Grace Burke of Pataskala and Denise Greve of Evergreen, Colo.

Boerger has 12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren and said there are "some more (great-grandchildren) in the hopper."

The McCartyville man said his daughter Velma seems to share his athletic abilities and ran in four Boston Marathons and finished all of them. She is 67 years old.

Boerger has lived through a lot of changes in Shelby County and said the difference in farms is the biggest change he has seen. He said farming equipment and farming have changed a lot. "We used horses," he said of his farming days.

Boerger knows how to stay busy. Besides bowling two days a week, he plants a garden that includes a lot of rhubarb, potatoes, cauliflower, cabbage and tomatoes. Boerger gives away a lot of his produce to friends and family, but also enjoys using the rhubarb. There is one recipe that he said is "the only thing I cook."

Boerger shared the recipe. It includes one quart of rhubarb, one 12-ounce can of crushed pineapple, one-half pound of

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SDN Photo/Kathy Leese

HOPING FOR a strike, Herb Boerger prepares to bowl during his turn at Bel-Mar Lanes in the Senior Citizen's League earlier this week. Boerger will turn 98 years old on Saturday and is still active. Boerger bowled a 206 game on the day this photograph was taken.

# BOERGER

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raisins, one-half pound of prunes, one-half cup of sugar or Splenda and one-fourth cup of water. Cook in a pan, first adding the water, the amount of which can be adjusted as needed, and then add all of the other ingredients and cook until the rhubarb is "mush," Boerger said. Once cooked, it can be poured over cereal or ice cream or can be eaten as a snack. The recipe will last up to two weeks in the refrigerator.

Boerger rides a stationary bike to stay in shape, grows flowers, still drives, mows his own lawn and shovels snow. He also enjoys baseball and the Cincinnati Reds.

In addition, Boerger likes to visit the Dorothy Love Retirement Community in Sidney and Heritage Manor Nursing Home in Minster twice a week, where he visits the residents.

Boerger is a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in McCartyville where he has served as an usher in the past. He is also a member of the McCartyville Knights of Columbus.

His faith is important. "I go to church pretty near every day," Boerger said.

Boerger and his wife, Alma, traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada and in Europe.

As a young man, Boerger was a member of the Fort Loramie Athletics, a semi-professional baseball team. In 1932 he was on the team when it became the West Ohio League champions. Boerger said they "didn't have softball in those days." He noted he is now the only surviving member of the team.

Boerger said he was a pretty good baseball player. "Otherwise, I wouldn't have made the team."

As a bowler, Boerger has been playing in the Senior Citizen's League since it began in 1980. He plays at Bel-Mar Lanes in Sidney and enjoys the people. The activity "gets me out."

Around the time of his 95th birthday, Boerger scored a perfect 300 game bowling a no-tap game. Earlier this week, he bowled a 206 game. When asked about his technique, he replied, "throw the ball .... be sure and hit your mark. That's the thing."

Boerger said he enjoys the attention he gets from the women at the bowling alley. "They all love me .... I got a lot of hugs from

women ... because it's my birthday."

Boerger is proud of McCartyville and its people. He said he has good neighbors "and everybody looks out for me." Boerger described McCartyville as a "very close-knit community. I think everybody there is a good friend of mine .... all very good people."

As for the secret to the long marriage with his wife, he said it is "give and take .... all the years we were married, we never had an argument."

Boerger has advice for those younger than himself: "Live a clean life. Stay away from alcohol and drugs."

As for the secret to his long and active life, Boerger said he "had a good wife. She was good to me." He said he also goes to church and "I never think that I'm old ... I enjoy life."

"I'll take what the Lord gives me," he said. "When my number comes up, I'm ready." He said he has had a "very good" life. "The Lord blessed me, that's all."

The family would welcome birthday cards and notes for Boerger. They can be sent to Herb Boerger in care of Mike and Pat Boerger, 1326 Hancock St., Sidney, OH 45365.



Photo provided

THE FORT Loramie Athletics was a semi-professional baseball team that went on to become West Ohio League champions. McCartyville resident Herb Boerger is the only surviving member of the team. This photo was taken in 1932. Shown in the first row (l-r) are: Urb Brandewie, Frank Schulze, Cliff Siegel, John Griner, Charlie Abbott and Bunny Busse. Shown in the second row are: Boy Brucken, John Maier, Fritz Anthony, Peanuts Ernst, Joe Borchers, Herb Boerger, Chick Barhorst, Fritz Inderrieden and Al Winner.