



Staff photo/Mallory Kemper

Pictured above is Dorothy Wolf, Ralph Boerger, Herb Boerger, Chris Thieman, Mary Francis and Ruth Dabbelt. Together these siblings' ages add up to 552 years.

## Boerger celebrates 100th

By MALLORY KEMPER  
Staff Writer

NEW BREMEN — More than 552 years of the Boerger family generation still shares family secrets and traditions.

Herb Boerger celebrated his 100th birthday at Elmwood Assisted Living in New Bremen on June 5, along with five of his brothers and sisters.

Herb grew up with 13 brothers and sisters, seven boys and seven girls. Six are still living — including an older sister, Dorothy Wolf, 101.

There's also Ralph Boerger, 93, Chris Thieman, 90, Mary Francis, 85, and Ruth Dabbelt, 83.

All added up, the siblings reach 552 years.

The Boerger family is originally from Fort Loramie, and their parents' names were Frank and Emma Boerger.

Out of the 14 children, there are 53 grandchildren in the family.

Children and others said at Elmwood turning 100 is very impressive, but Herb didn't seem to be quite as

enthused.

"To be 100? No, no the good Lord just let me live," Boerger said.

"It's a big deal," said Herb's oldest daughter, Carol Bucklew.

"He just won't admit it. You have to embrace change, accept what the good Lord gives you and do the best with what you got."

Herb celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends and said that family is the most important thing to him.

"Mostly, I think about getting together with my family," Boerger said. "I always said and I still say family first."

Boerger married Alma Boerger and they moved to McCartyville and started a dairy farm. Boerger was a dairy farmer his whole life and together, Herb and Alma raised five children, 12 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Alma passed away in 2001 and Herb said that he wishes she was here to celebrate his birthday.

"The secret to living a long and happy life is to have a good wife, a very good wife, an ex-

cellent wife," Boerger said.

"My wife was my life and we did everything together. She was one sweet lady. Alma was one sweet lady. There is nobody in my life that meant more to me than what my wife did. I am just sorry that she can't be here with me today."

Bucklew said that up until a year and a half ago, Herb was still bowling twice a week, riding a bike and walking around town.

"My father even bowled a 300 game at the age of 95," Bucklew said. "We are very proud of him."

Herb still wakes up everyday at Elmwood and thinks about his wife and family he said.

"When I die, I hope to meet her," Boerger said.

"A guy told me that when you go to heaven everybody is your friend so I don't believe that. I think that my wife would be a special friend to me. You have sickness and health when you take your marriage vows.

"Always take one day at a time. When I get up in the morning and I can raise my feet I know I am OK and I am still alive."