

Fred Arnold Obituary in Wisconsin State Journal March 11 2018

Arnold, Frederick Martin

MADISON—Fred Arnold, age 76, died peacefully in Agrace HospiceCare, on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Born in Winona, Minn., on Sept. 17, 1941, the son of Don Woodrow and Marian (Otto) Arnold, Fred grew up in Galesburg, Elgin, and DeKalb, Ill.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Barbara (Beale); three sons, Erick, Gary (Katie), and Steve (Jill); grandsons, Finn and Sorley and their mom, Shannon; granddaughters, Izzy and Cat; sister, Gretchen (Craig) Carpenter and brother, Steve; nephews and nieces, Amy, Jake, Ben, and Kate; cousins, Rick, Carol, and Art; and brother-in-law, John Beale. He was preceded in death by sister-in-law, Peg Arnold. Fred earned a B.A. in economics from Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa; Master's degrees in education and economics from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Ill. He and Barbara were Peace Corps Volunteers in Malaysia from 1965 until 1968, probably the most transformative experience of their lives. Fred loved teaching professionally and in every aspect of his life. He taught in St. Charles and Cicero, Ill., in Madison at Madison Area Technical College and at Edgewood College.

An Economics and Leadership as an Art instructor at MATC from 1969 until 2003, Fred held leadership roles in his department and in union politics throughout his years at MATC. A fierce, thoughtful voice for faculty and support staff, he earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues on both sides of the bargaining table, some of whom became among his closest friends. He received a Distinguished Faculty Award in 2000.

Community activist in multiple arenas: Elvehjem Neighborhood Association, an alder on the Madison Common Council from 1975-81, serving as President pro tem and President of the Council; Dane County Board Supervisor from 1986-1990; chair and member of multiple community boards and commissions; chaired the eight-neighborhood Stoughton Road Revitalization Project for five years. In 1979 Fred seriously considered running for mayor of Madison; he decided that he could be a good politician or a good dad, but was not confident he could do both. He chose the dad role and was always grateful he did. In 2011 he ran for the Wisconsin State Assembly with the tag phrase "How We Do Things Matters!" Fred believed in a fair process, civil discourse, and strategies for finding common ground among competing forces.

Fred was a superb sailor, astute reader, engaged play and movie goer, focused triathlete, active member of First Congregational UCC in Madison, passionate social justice advocate, incredibly proud dad and grandfather. Family vacations in Rockport, Mass., canoeing and camping in the Sylvania Wilderness of the Ottawa National Forest, and playing at the family cabin on Armour Lake were some of the best times of his rich, full life.

Beginning in 1998, he and Barbara participated in 13 social justice delegations in Chiapas, Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador, some faith-based and some with the Madison Arcatao Sister City Project. He loved sailing and nothing more than anchoring out under the moon and stars. Sailing with six friends and a Greek captain for two weeks among the Greek Islands was a highlight; the solitude, beauty, and challenge of the Apostle Islands fed his soul. Fred and Barbara sailed with their good friends, Shary and Jerry Bisgard, at least once a year for 30 years. For almost 50 years the Arnold and Bisgard families have been joined at the hip.

Doing triathlons around the state, Pilates, yoga, and Fit for Life classes at the Princeton Club kept his tall, thin frame fit. He was a faithful Cubs and Bears fan, even in Wisconsin.

A keen reader, he appreciated his men's book group and reading the New York Times daily at The Victory on Atwood Avenue. Fred, who loved and wrote poetry, was captivated by Salvadoran poet Roque Dalton's "Like You," with its powerful image of "unanimous blood," a sense of hope and solidarity among those who struggle everywhere.

Whether it was playing football and running track in high school and college, raising three sons, serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer or in local elected office, helping students appreciate and even like economics, participating in multiple social justice delegations, engaging in long conversations with friends and family, Fred Arnold was always a positive, constructive contributor. A listener, learner, teacher, and leader in whatever he did, he was passionate about life. Fred Arnold, you made a difference.

Fred's memorial service will be held at FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, 1609 University Ave., Madison (across from Camp Randall Stadium), on Saturday, March 17, 2018, at 11 a.m. followed by a celebration of his life with hors d'oeuvres and fellowship in the Chapel until 2:30 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Fred's name to First Congregational UCC, 1609 University Ave., Madison, WI 53726, or the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools, 101 Nob Hill Road, Suite 300, Madison, WI 53713. Please share stories about Fred at www.gundersonfh.com.

Frederick Martin Arnold

