

In Memory of **Bill B. Fischer**

August 28, 1921 - January 30, 2012

“A weed is but an unloved flower”

Bill Fischer worked for the UC Agriculture Extension Service for 35 years, specializing in weed control. After retiring from the University Extension Service, he continued working in the industry for eight years. He loved to help growers in the valley and could be seen driving his pickup on the shoulder of back roads up-and-down Central California surveying orchards, vineyards and fields.



Born in (then) Czechoslovakia in 1921, as Bela Fischer, Bill grew up on a village farm and came to the US with his mother and two teenage brothers when he was 18. Three years later he was back in Europe, serving as a medic for the US Army in France.

After the war, Bill attended Ohio State and then UC Davis where he received a Master's degree in Horticulture.

At the Fresno branch of the UC Extension Service, Bill studied the effectiveness of herbicides on different varieties of weeds. Across twenty years he worked on and published the *California Grower's Weed Identification Handbook*. The Handbook remains an important reference for growers. When you are driving through the valley and see weed-free orchards, Bill contributed significantly to that achievement.

He traveled extensively to study and consult with colleagues worldwide. Bill liked to say he had visited every continent except Antarctica. He gravitated to climates similar to Fresno's, twice spending a year in Griffith Australia, and later studying drip irrigation techniques in Israel. He consulted in China, Africa, and throughout Europe in the 1970s, and in New Zealand in the 1980s.

Bill celebrated his 90th birthday in August and died peacefully at home on January 30th.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 56-years, Jane; his son Andrew and his wife Linda, his grandchildren Lucy and Jacob and his two brothers, Joseph and Louis. He was preceded in death by his daughter Susan.

For over 50 years, Bill was active in the Fresno Unitarian Church.

A celebration of Bill's life will be held on Tuesday, February 14th at 12:30 PM at the Fresno Unitarian Church, 2672 E. Alluvial Avenue, Clovis, CA 93611.

In lieu of flowers please make your donations to the Bill and Jane Fischer Vegetation Management Scholarship Fund, UC Cooperative Extension, 1720 South Maple Avenue, Fresno, CA 93702.

Published in the Fresno Bee on February 5, 2012