

Fred W. McNelly 91, of Bella Vista, died March 30, 2009. He was born June 29, 1917, in McIntosh, Minn., to the late Chester LeRoy and Florence Hibbard McNelly. He grew up in rural Minnesota and attended pre-med at the University of Minnesota. He joined the U.S. Army National Guard at the age of 18, and the U.S. Army Air Corp in 1938 at the age of 21.

Fred married his childhood sweetheart Ella Frances "Fritzi" Cutter in 1939.

Fred was a pilot and an officer with the U.S. Air Force Strategic Air Command for 27 years, first serving in the World War II Pacific Theater. Following WWII he returned to the University of Minnesota and completed a degree in engineering. Fred made a career of the U.S. Air Force, achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel. He was in charge of airplane maintenance, was the director of supply at various U.S. Air Force bases throughout the United States and Newfoundland, and taught ROTC at the University of Oklahoma.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1962, he and his family settled in Albert Lea, Minn., where he was sales manager for Culligan Water Service and office manager for Streater Division of Litton Industries. Fred and Fritzi also established and managed a landscape and Christmas tree business.

After his second retirement in 1974, he and Fritzi moved to Bella Vista in 1976

Fred was a member of many social and service organizations, including the Masonic Western Star Lodge No. 26 in Albert Lea, Minn., and was Chairman of the Albert Lea branch of the American Red Cross Assoc. for several years. Fred was an Eagle Scout and a life long active Scout troop committee member for various Scouting organizations as he and his family moved with his Air Force work assignments. Fred was a member of the Bella Vista Community Church, where he also served on the building committee, was active in "Men In Action," and sang in the choir.

He served as the treasurer several times for the Kiwanis Club of Bentonville, and also served as treasurer of The Retired Officers Association.

Fred was the founder of the Bella Vista Friends of Hospice and donated thousands of hours of volunteer service to Hospice, Crime Watch of Bella Vista, and several other community organizations. He was also a member of MENSAs and of The National Association of Retired Military Pilots ("Quiet Birdmen"), and of the Bella Vista Men's Chorus.

Fred was preceded in death by his first wife: Frances "Fritzi" Cutter Mc-Nelly, and his second

wife: Jane Nielsen McNelly, brothers: Chester McNelly, Dean McNelly, Donald Mc-Nelly, and Richard McNelly, a sister: Gertrude "Jerri" Christiansen, and brother-in-law: Dr. Harold Christiansen.

He survived by his son: Dr. Frederick W. (Rick) Mc-Nelly, Jr. of Rockford, Ill., a brother and sister-in-law: Harold and Mary Niles, sisters-in-law: Joyce McNelly and Edna McNelly; and five grandsons, four great-grandchildren, three great great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held April 13 at the Bella Vista Community Church in Bella Vista.