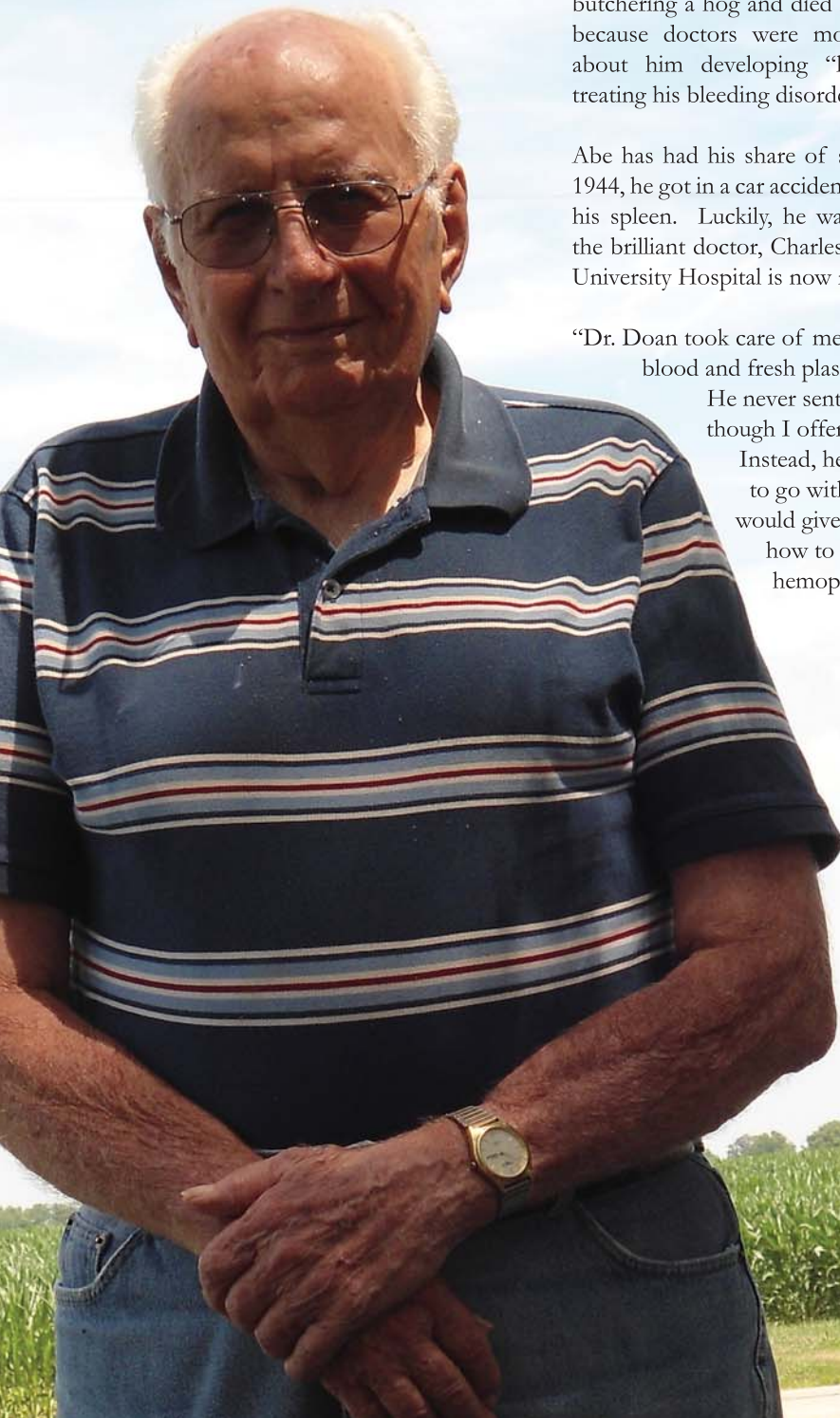


CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT

// Abe Hostetter //

At 91 Years Old, Plain City Man Reflects on Advancements in Hemophilia

Born in April of 1920, Abe Hostetter wasn't supposed to live into his 30s. After all, doctors didn't even know that defective platelets weren't the cause of bleeding disorders until 1937. But 91 years later, Abe continues to defy the odds and now stands proudly as the oldest living person with hemophilia in the country ... by one month.



"I've lived way beyond the normal lifespan for hemophiliacs," exclaims Abe. "A number of my cousins died in their teens and 20s from hemophilia."

When Abe was a young man, doctors simply didn't understand much about hemophilia. Hostetter recounts a story of how one of his cousins cut himself while butchering a hog and died in the hospital because doctors were more concerned about him developing "lockjaw" than treating his bleeding disorder.

Abe has had his share of scares too. In 1944, he got in a car accident and ruptured his spleen. Luckily, he was overseen by the brilliant doctor, Charles Doan, whom University Hospital is now named after.

"Dr. Doan took care of me with whole blood and fresh plasma," says Abe. He never sent me a bill even though I offered to pay him. Instead, he just asked me to go with him when he would give lectures about how to treat men with hemophilia.

Growing up on an old-order Amish farm, and continuing to farm 60 to 100 acres until he was 62 years old, Abe has hardly lived in a bubble. When asked how he managed to do such demanding work despite having hemophilia, Abe says "I seemed to get along pretty good, but I think it's because I was careful."

But don't ask him the secret to living a long life, because he'll just tell you he doesn't want to share that with you. He is, however, quick to point out that he's been very fortunate to live this long and that he believes in the power of prayer.

"I use the medical profession in with the Lord," says Abe. "You tell me how I escaped [the AIDS and Hepatitis C epidemic in the 80s and 90s]. I got quite a bit of treatment during that time, but I didn't get any of those diseases."

Nobody knows more about how far this country has come when it comes to the treatment of hemophilia than Abe.

"It's completely different now," says Hostetter. "It was touch and go back then, but now that they have factor IX, it's easy to have confidence."

Today, Abe says he's in pretty good health as far as he knows. He has breakfast every morning at Der Dutchman, still maintains his yard and house, and loves to tell jokes.

"My mother was horse & buggy Amish, so she used to tell me I couldn't kiss my wife until I got married," Abe says slyly. "But she wasn't my 'wife' until I got married!" Very clever, Abe. Very clever.