

# **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Three new inductees to Wisconsin Conservation Hall**

A conservation-minded Green Bay woman who led the national League of Women Voters (LWV) and two University of Wisconsin-Madison professors, one a colleague, the other a protégé of Aldo Leopold, are 2002 inductees into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame.

Ruth Clusen and professors Joseph Hickey and George Wehrwein will be inducted April 20 in Stevens Point, home of the Conservation Hall of Fame. This is the Hall of Fame's 18<sup>th</sup> induction ceremony.

Tributes to the inductees will be given at 10 a.m. at Sentry Theater, followed by a luncheon at noon in The Restaurant of Sentry Insurance Headquarters. A coffee, beginning at 9 a.m., will precede the program and luncheon. Luncheon reservations may be made by calling 715-341-1022 or 715-346-4992.

"All three of these inductees, like others in the Hall of Fame, were major conservation figures, both in Wisconsin and in the nation," said Bill Horvath, executive secretary of the Conservation Hall of Fame. "Clusen, through her work with the League and in the federal Department of Energy, was both a pioneer and a leader. Wehrwein and Hickey, as professors at UW-Madison and involved citizens in Wisconsin, helped both students and the general public to learn about conservation. All three influenced state and national policies on key conservation issues."

Clusen was born in Bruce, northwestern Wisconsin, in 1922. A school teacher in the Green Bay area, she became involved in the local League of Women Voters. She rose through the organization to become national LWV president (1974-78). She is credited with leading efforts to

steer the League into the environmental and conservation debate at a time when respected, objective voices were needed. As national president, she put the strength and prestige of the League behind efforts to assure passage of the 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act.

Clusen later served as assistant secretary of energy for the environment in the Department of Energy from 1978-81.

Wehrwein (1883-1945) was born in Newton, Manitowoc County. He was a land economist and an advocate of wise and efficient use of land. He was also concerned about soil conservation and deplored the depletion and misuse of the soil resource.

He collaborated with Aldo Leopold and others at UW-Madison to provide an interdisciplinary program in rural regional planning. As an economist, he expressed the then-novel view that land use policy can be used to make wise decisions about use of natural resources. He was a leader in helping shape land use policies for Wisconsin's cutover northern counties. Wehrwein is also credited with helping to balance Leopold's views on conservation with pragmatic economic realities.

New York-born Joseph Hickey was first recruited by Leopold as a master's student at UW-Madison and later in life to serve as second professor in the Department of Wildlife Management there. Leopold died a few months later, and Hickey was appointed head of the department in 1948. One of his first major accomplishments was to organize the effort to publish posthumously Leopold's "Sand County Almanac."

A world-famous ornithologist, Hickey assembled an atlas of all known peregrine falcon eeries east of the Rocky Mountains in 1941. Years later, in 1964, he resurveyed the sites and found that not a single occupied eerie could be found.

The pesticide DDT was to blame, and Hickey's research into the ecological effects of DDT led to the eventual ban of the pesticide, first in Wisconsin, then in the nation.

The new inductees bring to 45 the number of people memorialized in the Conservation Hall since it was established in 1985. Located at Schmeckle Reserve in Stevens Point, it includes interactive displays and information on Wisconsin's conservation history and conservation leaders. Its purpose is to educate and inspire people with information about how resource conservation has shaped our environment and our lives.

More information on Wisconsin's Conservation Hall of Fame is on the web at [www.wchf.org](http://www.wchf.org).

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