

The Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame



Robert S. Ellarson

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Hall of Fame News.

Archibald, McNeel, Trainer Are Stellar Inductees: Ceremonies Set for April 20 in Stevens Point

George Archibald, Wakelin "Ranger Mac" McNeel and Daniel Trainer are the 2006 inductees into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame.

The trio will join 54 other distinguished inductees to the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame in ceremonies at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 22, 2006, at the Sentry Theater in Stevens Point.

Archibald, 59, is a co-founder and chairman of the board of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo. His efforts to save rare crane populations have taken him around the world and earned him recognition as Wisconsin's international conservation ambassador.

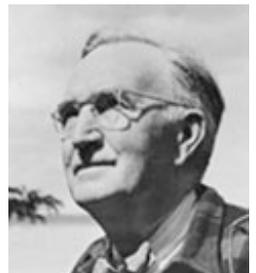
McNeel, a native of the Wisconsin Dells area, was best known for his conservation education radio program "Afield With Ranger Mac," which was broadcast to Wisconsin school children on the Wisconsin Public Radio Network from 1933-54. The program reached an estimated 700,000 young listeners over that period and earned a Peabody Award in 1942 for the outstanding educational program in the U.S.

Trainer, 79, Stevens Point, has been active on a variety of conservation fronts. He served as dean of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Resources from 1971-87, a period that saw the college grow to become the largest undergraduate natural resources program in the U.S.

"This is truly one of the finest set of inductees we've ever been privileged to honor," said Earl Spangenberg, president of the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame Board of Directors. "Their conservation work spans more than half a century and continues to this day. The first two inductees to the Hall of Fame – Aldo Leopold and John Muir – would certainly be proud of the accomplishments of these three men."



George Archibald



"Ranger Mac" McNeel



Archibald, a native of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Canada, co-founded the ICF in 1973 as the world center for the study and preservation of cranes. He and Ron Sauey, a colleague from Cornell University, started the foundation in a horse barn owned by Sauey's parents. The center has since moved to sprawling grounds just outside of Baraboo. The ICF's scope of activities includes work in 45 different countries. Its research center annually hosts crane researchers from around the world. Archibald has traveled extensively on behalf of cranes and conservation, often to hotspots of international tension. "In international affairs, it's important to focus on matters of mutual interest, rather than conflict. Cranes are really good ambassadors for habitat and international good will," Archibald said.



Daniel Trainer

People from all walks of life recognize Archibald as the man who danced with a crane. He successfully bred, through the use of artificial insemination, a human imprinted whooping crane named Tex by imitating the courtship dancing and behavior of a male crane. The "offspring" was the celebrated whooping crane named Gee Whiz, which produced seven of its own offspring of the extremely rare cranes.

McNeel, who was a forester and educator, is credited with revolutionizing conservation education in Wisconsin. "Afield With Ranger Mac" was broadcast weekly to K-12 school children. McNeel frequently drew from his own memories of exploring nature as a child to weave lyrical tales with conservation education messages. He is also credited with helping to establish Camp Upham Woods environmental education camp near Wisconsin Dells. He died in 1958.

Trainer is the son of a game warden and a native of Princeton. He earned a reputation as an international expert on animal diseases while serving on the veterinary faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He went on to UW-Stevens Point in 1971. In his time as dean, the College of Natural Resources grew from about 500 students to 1,600. "In many ways, my impact on the environment was through the students. We prepared them to go out and work on the front lines," he said.

Trainer was also a member of the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board from 1980-86. While on the board, he was especially interested in land purchases for preservation. He was also a founder of Intra-State Recycling, a pioneering volunteer recycling group in Portage County. He was also a member of the founding committee for the 24-mile Green Circle Trail in the Stevens Point area and also helped to found the Plover River Alliance.

Tributes to the inductees will be given at 10 a.m. at Sentry Theater, located at the Sentry Insurance Headquarters, 1800 North Point Drive. A 9 a.m. coffee will precede the program. A luncheon at noon in The Restaurant of Sentry Insurance Headquarters concludes the day's activities. Luncheon reservations cost \$10 and can be made by calling 715-346-4992, the telephone number for the Schmeckle Reserve Visitors Center, where the Conservation Hall of Fame is located.

The new inductees bring to 57 the number of people memorialized in the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame. 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. The surrounding nature reserve has extensive walking trails and is a link in the Stevens Point area's 25-mile Green Circle Trail.

Open seven days a week, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Located in the Schmeckle Reserve Visitor Center
 North Point Drive – Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481

For more information, call 715.346.4992