

# Conservation Leader Laurence Jahn Dies

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By Louie Estrada

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Laurence R. Jahn, 74, a natural resource conservationist who ascended to the leadership of the Wildlife Management Institute in Washington and helped to shape national environmental policies and legislation enhancing wildlife habitats, died of cancer Aug. 15 at Inova Fairfax Hospital. He lived in Vienna.

Dr. Jahn, who was also a wildlife biologist, writer and administrator, spent much of his extensive career focused on treating the ecosystem as a whole, championing actions that bridged different approaches to conservation. He testified before congressional committees, lectured frequently and wrote more than 100 technical and general-interest articles and book chapters on wetlands, watershed management issues and wildlife.

"His view was that you couldn't save the ducks without saving the water," said Richard McCabe, vice president of the Wildlife Management Institute. "He was effective because of his intelligence and incredibly high energy. He never stopped going."

Dr. Jahn was the institute's vice president from 1971 to 1987. He then served as president for four years before retiring in 1991 as chairman of the board of directors.

Far from retiring, he kept an active schedule that included chairing an organization of hunters, anglers, biomedical researchers and conservationists in a campaign to challenge the animal rights movement. The United Conservation Alliance, formed in 1991, has worked to pass anti-harassment legislation to protect hunters on federal lands.

He served from 1992 to 1996 on the board of the Virginia Game Department and did work on behalf of the National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs as a liaison officer, helping secure state and federal grant money.

He developed an early appreciation for nature on a dairy farm in Jefferson, Wis., where he was born and raised. He was a Navy veteran of World War II and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, where he also received a master's degree and doctorate, both in wildlife management.

He began his career with the Wildlife Management Institute in 1959 doing field work in the country's north-central region. Conservation pioneer Ira Gabrielson, then head of the institute, tapped Dr. Jahn to become the organization's director of conservation in 1970.

Throughout his career, Dr. Jahn served on boards, advisory committees and technical groups of numerous agencies, institutions and professional organizations. He was past president of the Wildlife Society, past chairman of the Natural Resources Council of America, past secretary-treasurer of the North American Wildlife Foundation and past chairman of the Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board.

In 1989, he received the Aldo Leopold Medal of the Wildlife Society for his contributions to conservation.

He also was a member of the National Audubon Society, the American Forestry Association, the Whooping Crane Conservation Association and Fairfax Presbyterian Church.

Survivors include his wife of 53 years, Helen F. Jahn of Vienna; two children, Katharine M. Cook of Custer, Wis., and Richard A. Jahn of Crestview, Fla.; a sister; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

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