

Conservation Hall set to induct three

By Tim Eisele

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STEVENS POINT — The Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame will induct three new members on Saturday.

They are: George Archibald, co-founder of the international Crane Foundation in Baraboo; the late Wakelin McNeel, whose 21 years of "Afield with Ranger Mac" reached thousands of students on Wisconsin Public Radio from 1933 to 1954; and Dan Trainer Jr., retired dean of the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point.

Trainer had two careers in natural resources, working first to help establish wildlife disease studies at UW-Madison, and then building the Natural Resources College at UW-Stevens Point.

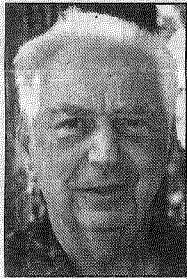
Trainer, 79, was destined to work in the natural resources field. His father, Dan Trainer Sr., worked as a conservation warden in Marquette and Green Lake counties for the Wisconsin Conservation Department, retiring in 1950.

"The biggest crime back in those days was in trapping, because there was not much money and someone could make money from illegal trapping," Trainer, Jr. said.

Trainer grew up in Princeton, earning a bachelor's degree at Ripon College and a Ph.D. in 1968 at the University of Wisconsin. He became a member of the UW faculty and started the Veterinary Science program.

In 1971, he was recruited to UW-Stevens Point as dean of the College of Natural Resources. He worked there until he retired in 1990.

"One of the reasons I came here was that Lee Dreyfus had also been on the faculty in Madison and when he became chancellor at Stevens Point he asked me to head up the college," said Trainer, who be-



Trainer

came the first dean and built it into a respected program.

"The program had lots of potential and I was very impressed with Dreyfus, who said he would make natural resources the mission of the university, which he did," Trainer said. "He was as much responsible for making that college go as anyone."

The college offered an undergraduate program in natural resources, which was not available at UW-Madison, and then started a conservation law enforcement major which was the first in the Midwest. Graduates could then be hired by the DNR as conservation wardens.

"We took advantage of the resources we had around us," he said. "At the peak we had over 2,000 students majoring in natural resources, becoming the largest undergraduate natural resources program in the country. And when they graduated they got jobs."

Trainer went on to serve on the Natural Resources Board in the 1970s and early 1980s. He became very involved with land acquisition, serving on one of the first Stewardship Committees chaired by Rep. Spencer Black.

"Land use should be a top priority in natural resources," he said.

From his experience, a good board member is someone who looks at things from a statewide standpoint and is someone who is objective.

"You can't be an expert on all these things, so you have to listen," Trainer said. "The DNR holds the natural resources in trust for the public, and the board is in charge of the DNR."

CONSERVATION INDUCTION CEREMONY

Induction ceremonies for the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame will take place Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Sentry Insurance Theater at the Sentry Building in Stevens Point. For more information, call 715-346-4992.