

Illinois Conservation Hall of Fame

Since 2002, the Illinois Conservation Foundation has recognized several Illinoisans for their life-long dedication to promoting and enhancing outdoor recreation and natural resources conservation by selecting them for induction into the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame. Selection to the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame is reserved for those individuals that have made significant contributions to or exhibited unparalleled dedication in preserving, promoting, enhancing or supporting natural resources or outdoor recreation opportunities.

Some inductees have touched the lives of thousands of youth and adults who can enjoy outdoor recreation in by promoting fishing, hunting, conservation, and safety education. Others have spearheaded efforts to preserve or enhance fish and wildlife habitat or protect and restore lakes and rivers. Yet others have been national and international leaders in efforts to understand our natural world.

Hall of Fame inductees are recognized at the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame Banquet, with proceeds used to support the annual Scholarship Achievement program and programs at the ICF Torstenson Family Youth Conservation Education Center located near Pecatonica in Winnebago County.

Nominations must be submitted on the official Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame nomination form available on the ICF web site at www.ilcf.org. Completed nomination forms and accompanying supporting documents are due annually by October 31.

For more information on the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame Banquet, contact the Illinois Conservation Foundation, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271, phone (217) 785-2003, or visit www.ilcf.org

The ICF is an IRS 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation established in 1995 to support the programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Charter Members, 2002

Frank Bellrose, Havana: one of the world's foremost authorities on waterfowl and wetlands, with a career spanning more than 50 years with the Illinois Natural History Survey

Jack Ehresman, Hanna City: outdoors columnist for the Peoria Journal-Star, who worked as a sportswriter for the paper for 45 years

James Helfrich, XXX: a 33-year employee of the Illinois Department of Conservation, the agency's assistant director from 1977 until 1986, championed outdoor education and expanded recreation opportunities

John Husar, Willow Springs: an award-winning sportswriter and columnist for the Chicago Tribune

Gene Morgan, Sesser: a high school biology teacher and founder of the Sesser-Valier High School Outdoorsmen's Club, advocating outdoor recreation opportunities for people with disabilities

Class of 2003

Henry Barkhausen, Lake Forest: a successful businessman who for more than 30 years has championed the protection and preservation of the Cache River wetlands in southern Illinois, served as director of the Illinois Department of Conservation from 1970-1973

Bill Cullerton, Sr., Oak Brook: a decorated World War II veteran, business representative for manufacturers of hunting and fishing equipment, and host for more than 30 years of WGN Radio's Great Outdoors show in Chicago

Jim Edgar, Mahomet, Governor of Illinois from 1991-1999, advocated and promoted outdoor recreation expansion, natural areas protection programs, founded the state's Conservation 2000, Eco Watch, Conservation Congress and the Illinois Conservation Foundation

2004

Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly, XXX: spurred the creation of the Donnelly State Fish and Wildlife Area, restoration of prairie chickens at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, creation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal Nation Heritage Corridor and preservation of the Cache River basin

Bonnie Jo Fee, XXX: educator, outdoor enthusiast and founder of successful events highlighting and celebrating western Illinois' famed hunting heritage

J.R. Black, Kankakee: longtime chairman of the Kankakee River Basin Partnership, a coalition of local individuals and organizations concerned about the long term health and restoration of the Kankakee River ecosystem

Floyd (Jake) Kringer, Vandalia: served for more than 40 years as a state biologist and wildlife program manager, and also served as president of the Illinois Waterfowl Alliance and helped found the Illinois Federation for Outdoor Resources

2005

Kenneth V. Fiske, Woodstock: former executive director of the McHenry County Conservation District

Dr. W.D. Klimstra, Carbondale: founding director of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

G. Brent Manning, Wheaton: Director Department of Conservation/Department of Natural Resources and executive director Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

William L. Rutherford, Sr., Peoria: member of the Forest Park Foundation and instrumental in the establishment of the Forest Park Nature Center, Wildlife Prairie Park and Rock Island State Trail

2006

Ralph Frese, Niles: known as "Mr. Canoe," he worked on behalf of conservation efforts on the Fox River in northeast Illinois and founded of the annual Des Plaines River Canoe Marathon

Don Swensson, Moline: founded of one of the state's largest, most active and effective independent outdoor recreation organizations, the Quad City Conservation Alliance

Robert Torstenson, Pecatonica: enhanced wildlife habitat on his own property and supported natural heritage and wildlife conservation programs throughout the state and nation

2007

Carl Becker, Petersburg: served as one of Illinois' foremost conservationists and stewards of the state's natural resources during a career that spanned four decades

Jared Garver, Cobden: credited with helping advance one of Illinois' most remarkable wildlife success stories as the state's wild turkey project leader

John Kidd, Jr., Crete: founder and president of the Fishin' Buddies youth fishing club, an organization that has introduced thousands of inner city and suburban children in northeast Illinois to fishing, outdoor recreation, and the natural world around them

Glen C. Sanderson, Champaign: a renowned wildlife biologist with more than 50 years of service to Illinois, is considered one of the world's leading authorities on the biology and ecology of raccoons and one of the country's leading advocates for development of non-toxic shot to alleviate lead poisoning in waterfowl

2008

Don Dubin, Lincolnwood: an advocate for improving and expanding fishing opportunities in Illinois, instrumental in the formation of Salmon Unlimited in Illinois and promoted creation and expansion of an Illinois muskie fishing program

George B. Fell, Rockford: instrumental in creation of The Nature Conservancy, founded the Natural Land Institute and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

John R. "Duke" O'Malley, Chicago's Clearing/Garfield Ridge community: wrote twice-weekly outdoor columns for the Daily Southtown for about 30 years and organized fishing derbies that introduced thousands of Southland kids to the sport

2009

William H. Guerrini, Spring Valley: a lifelong advocate for outdoor recreation in Illinois and one of the state's first volunteer Hunter Safety Education course instructors

Don Hankla, Anna: a long time sportsman, conservationist, and advocate for natural resources conservation in Illinois who, after retiring with a distinguished career as a wildlife biologist volunteered his efforts to the conservation of the Cache River watershed

Dwight Hoffard, Johnston City: the driving force behind the success of the Southern Illinois National Hunting and Fishing Days festival on the campus of John A. Logan College in Carterville

Dr. George B. Rabb, Brookfield: president emeritus of the Chicago Zoological Society and a dedicated conservationist known internationally for implementing programs focused on conservation research and education

2010

Alfred Hayden, Dahinda: one of west-central Illinois' leading advocates for youth participation in the outdoors and a tireless promoter of hunting, fishing and other natural resources-based outdoor recreation

John "Jack" Jadel, Wilmette: a longtime supporter of conservation education in Illinois, donating funds to the ICF to support the Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant program

Denny Sands, Shabbona: founding president of the Shabbona Lake Sportsman Club, which has supported fisheries enhancement project and recreational opportunities

Mary Jo Trimble, Carterville: an advocate for the preservation, protection and enhancement of public lands for multiple recreational uses

2011

Dr. Thomas Dunstan, Macomb: professor emeritus of biology at Western Illinois University, is one of the nation's foremost authorities and researchers on birds of prey

Dr. David Kenney, O'Fallon, MO: professor emeritus of political science at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, this noted historian, author and conservationist served as director of the Illinois Department of Conservation from 1977 to 1984

Bob Long, Jr., Chicago: one of Illinois' best known advocates and promoters of youth fishing and participation by youth in the outdoors as "The Fishin' Guy" for the Chicago Park

Ed Mullady, Kankakee: published The Sportsman's Letter, one of the nation's longest-running outdoors publications, since 1958, and known as the "Godfather of the Kankakee River" in recognition of his passion for, knowledge of, and dedication to protecting the Kankakee River basin

2012

Philip 'Chauncey' Niziol, Westchester: outdoor writer and broadcaster, and promoter of youth participation in Chicago area fishing tournaments and fishing derbies

Casimir ‘Cass’ Sliwa, Chicago: dedicated himself and recruited others to the cause of enhancement, preservation and promotion of the Lake Michigan fishery as the longtime president of Salmon Unlimited of Illinois

Warren Gale, Orion: one of Illinois’ foremost advocates for conservation education of youth and safety education for youth and adults in the outdoors for four decades

Allie Lymenstull, Quincy: promoted outdoor recreation, waterway and habitat protection for more than 60 years in western Illinois

2013

Marcia and Ken Polhamus, Galena: long-time IDNR volunteer hunter safety education instructors who host a number of ICF youth hunts and volunteer as Illinois coordinators of the National Wild Turkey Federation’s JAKES youth program