



2018 INDUCTEE

## STAN MEYER

1935–

Sometimes it takes a while for life to reveal one's avocation.

Consider Stanley F. Meyer, who graduated in journalism from Iowa State College in 1956, a year after his beloved Jane graduated with a similar vocational interest.

Stan and Jane married and moved to Great Falls in 1957 where Stan was hired as a radio and TV farm broadcaster.

By 1964, both Stan and Jane joined Wendt Advertising in Great Falls.

There weren't many overt signs of conservation bents in the Meyers in those days—aside from Jane agreeing to move to Great Falls sight unseen if it looked anything like Glacier National Park.

Once in Great Falls, Meyer took an interest in Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery. This was several years before the Lewis and Clark Historic Trail Foundation was formed—and decades before historian Stephen E. Ambrose wrote his 1996 bestseller, *Undaunted Courage*.

In 1966 on a minuscule budget, Meyer directed a 23-minute film depicting the Lewis and Clark Expedition's journey across Montana. The film, "In Lewis and Clark's Footsteps," was intended for use in elementary schools.

If you had to put your finger on it, that's where it started. The next year, the Meyers built a cabin on the Blackfoot River near Lincoln. It became a cherished family retreat.

By 1987, Meyer became board chair of The Nature Conservancy of Montana. He spent his time enthusiastically explaining TNC's conser-

vation philosophy to the public. In those early years, TNC Montana preserved a million acres of native grasslands, timberlands, wetlands, grizzly bear habitat, and more.

It's also where Meyer learned the collaborative resource management techniques that attracted the attention of a newly elected Republican governor. Gov. Marc Racicot pegged Meyer, also a Republican, as one who'd make an effective Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks commissioner.

With Meyer's leadership, during his eight-year (1993-2001) public service stint as an FWP commissioner and chairman, FWP managed to preserve more than 250,000 acres of critical wildlife habitat via the purchase of conservation easements from more than 25 landowners.

Although innovative, not everyone approved. Meyer was enlisted to explain the hunter-funded conservation easements to skeptical state lawmakers, stockgrowers, and farm groups. Those discussions managed to get "Habitat Montana" reauthorized so the conservation of additional critical wildlife habitats could be pursued.

Later, Meyer embarked on his own eight-year odyssey to revivify an almost forgotten 400-acre Indian landmark, Ulm Pishkun, south of Great Falls. Today, the renamed First People's Buffalo Jump State Park is a 2,000-acre sacred place, and a National Historic Landmark. It's among the last intact Indian buffalo jumps in North America.

Each accomplishment had its detractors, but more than most, Meyer's advocacy was always Stan establishing friendships to protect and celebrate Montana's outdoor heritage. ■

