

# Alumnews

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## The University of Wyoming Alumni Association

### Cliff Hansen to Receive Medallion Service

Distinguished Alumnus.

Honorary Doctor of Laws.

Medallion Service Award.

These are the three highest honors the University of Wyoming can bestow on one of its graduates. Very few individuals have been recognized with one of these awards, and less than a handful have received two. Until this year, no single individual had been honored with all three.

It is truly fitting that the first person to receive all three of the University of Wyoming's highest accolades is a man who has devoted his life and career to the betterment of both the University and the state. This year's Medallion Service Award Recipient, Clifford P. Hansen, has served as a county commissioner, president of the UW Board of Trustees, Governor of Wyoming and U.S. Senator, representing Wyoming and its University in Washington, D.C. for 12 years. Throughout his remarkable career, he has never forgotten those years at the University which, he says, made everything possible.

"Not a lot of people know this, but when I came to the University of Wyoming as a student, I had a serious speech impediment," Hansen explains. "I was a stutterer, and I joined the UW debate team to try and deal with the problem. It was there that I had the opportunity to speak before large groups of people and gain the confidence which enabled me to accomplish what I have during my life. I will always be indebted to the University for that, and for the fine education I received."

According to Hansen, that debt includes the opportunity to meet his wife, Martha Elizabeth Close, EX '35. The Hansens were married the fall after Cliff graduated, and they will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary next year. "As a student, I was active in stock judging and the debate team, but I spent the rest of the time studying or courting my future wife," Hansen says.

Following graduation, Hansen's first close involvement with the University came upon his appointment to the UW Board of Trustees in 1946. He served as president of the Trustees from 1955-1963, when he was elected governor of Wyoming. In 1966 Hansen was elected U.S. Senator, where he served on the Government Operations and Commerce committees, as well as the committees on Energy and Natural Resources, Finance, Veterans' Affairs and the Joint Committee on Taxation.

"Of all my years of public service, I think my greatest accomplishment was securing passage, over presidential veto, of legislation increasing the return of federal mineral royalties from 37½ percent to 50 percent to the public land states like Wyoming. This increase made possible much of the funding that UW has received since that time," Hansen says. "This had been an ongoing effort by Wyoming's representatives in Congress, and I was fortunate enough to be there at the time it finally went through."



Cliff Hansen, BS '34

After serving two terms, Hansen retired from public office. He continues to serve on the board of directors of the University of Wyoming Foundation, the Gottsche Foundation Rehabilitation Center, the Wyoming Industrial Development Corporation and a half dozen others. He is active in cattle ranching in Teton County, and maintains an office in Jackson. "My life today is, perhaps, not as exciting as it was in Washington, D.C., but now I can keep up with my family," Hansen says. "My wife and I get a great deal of satisfaction from being with our children, Mary Elizabeth and Peter Arthur, and our grandchildren, and I'm delighted to be home in Wyoming."

Not long ago, Hansen was given the opportunity to return to public life. "After the election, President Reagan offered me the post of Secretary of the Interior and I accepted," Hansen recalls. "But after thinking it over and discussing the fact that we would lose our grazing rights in Grand Teton National Park, my wife and I decided to decline the invitation, so I called Senator Paul Laxalt and withdrew my name from consideration."

This year Cliff Hansen was selected by the UW Alumni Association Award Committee to receive its coveted Medallion Service Award, given to an individual who has "unselfishly devoted time and talents to the University of Wyoming." Hansen was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 1964, and received an honorary Doctor of Laws from UW in 1965. "I feel very proud and honored to be recognized by the University of Wyoming again," Hansen says. "I feel that the University has been overly generous with me, but I am extremely grateful."

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