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## Wahle Apartments

Central Washington University

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What is in a Name? Wahle Apartments

Roy P. Wahle, namesake for CWU's Wahle Apartment Complex, was a lifelong educator.

Wahle, who graduated from Central Washington College of Education in 1946, was actively involved in a wide variety of educational initiatives throughout his life, including serving as a member of the Central Washington State College Board of Trustees from 1957 to 1969. He served as chair from 1965 to 1966.

After obtaining his undergraduate degree at Central, Wahle earned a master's degree and doctorate degree in education from the University of Northern Colorado. He worked as a teacher and administrator for Bellevue Public Schools for many years, then became Dean of Instruction at Bellevue Community College.

From there, he became an associate professor of education at Seattle University, and taught in the doctoral program in educational leadership until he retired in 1990 (and was named professor emeritus). Then, he returned to Ellensburg and worked as a part-time instructor for Central Washington State University.

Born in Ellensburg in 1921, Wahle attended Central from 1939-42, then interrupted his studies at the start of his senior year to serve in Army Intelligence during World War II. He returned to Central shortly after the war ended and completed his degree.

During his time at Central, Wahle was extremely active in student organizations and served as the first president of the Student Government Association (now known as ASCWU), including crafting the organization's first constitution.

In a 2008 interview in the *Ellensburg Daily Record*, Wahle said he raised chickens and strawberries to earn enough money to attend Central.

Wahle met his wife, Betty Lou, while at Ellensburg High School, but they didn't begin dating until they were in college. They were married in 1944.

While on the Board of Trustees, Wahle was actively involved in the construction of Nicholson Pavilion. In his CWU oral history, Wahle said he had attended a basketball game at the University of Washington and was frustrated by the number of supporting posts that obscured the view of the floor during the game.

He told the architect working on Central's new gymnasium that he wished there was a way to hang the ceiling of the new pavilion from a sky hook. The architect began sketching ideas on a napkin for how to build the structure without supporting posts, which ultimately led to the unique cable-support system incorporated into the design of Nicholson.

Wahle said the other main accomplishment during his tenure was the selection of James Brooks to serve as the university's president in 1961. Brooks would go on to serve as the school's leader until 1978.

In 1969, the Wahle Married Student Housing complex was named in his honor. The complex, built eight years earlier, included 26 one-story duplexes for family housing. Each unit was constructed with a brick veneer (later replaced by vertical wooden siding). From above, the buildings in the complex have an accordion-like arrangement, a design characteristic prominent in mid-century Modern architecture.

In addition to his commitment to education, Wahle was involved in a number of community projects including helping to establish the Eastside Community Health Center in Bellevue, serving as a consultant for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1973-77, and sitting on the Board of Trustees for the Bellevue Public Library for many years.

Following a long illness, Wahle passed away on June 30, 2008.