



International Festivals & Events Association

Ken Walstad (D) 1995 IFEA Hall of Fame Inductee Formerly of Minneapolis Aquatennial



Ken Walstad served as Managing Director of the Minneapolis Aquatennial from 1961 until his death in 1983. Described by one colleague as the “heart and soul” of the festival, Walstad brought prominence to the Aquatennial as one of the top ten festivals in the U.S., hosting more than two million visitors annually.

Walstad also served IFA with distinction, first as a volunteer President, 1964-1965; and then later as Managing Director of IFA from 1969 until 1983. At that time, the “international” in IFA became a reality as numerous festivals outside the U.S. became members.

Friends say Walstad always believed IFA should provide festival managers the chance for fraternal and educational exchanges, a vision that perpetuates the association today. He encouraged the development of professionalism in the field of festival and special events management and called on event leaders to continually strive for a higher level of competency.

“Those who make up the [Aquatennial] Admiral’s Club will always remember Ken’s many great contributions – he is still sorely missed by those who worked closely with him,” said 1995 Aquatennial Grand Admiral, Fran Anton. Each year, Aquatennial bestows an honor known as the Ken Walstad Memorial Award.

Editor’s Note: Ken Walstad passed away in 1983.