

FRIEND OF SCIENCE TO WILLIAM WEHRBEIN



Bill Wehrbein majored in physics and mathematics at Nebraska Wesleyan University and studied planetary atmospheres at the University of Colorado-Boulder where he received a PhD in Astro-Geophysics. After a research appointment at the University of Washington he returned to Nebraska Wesleyan in 1981 where he served as physics department chair and faculty president before retiring in 2008. His primary teaching responsibility was the introductory physics course, which was transformed from the traditional lecture and lab to the highly interactive “hands-on” Workshop Physics format. In addition Wehrbein was active in general education revision at NWU and helped implement the Liberal Arts (freshman) Seminar program.

Wehrbein was president of the Nebraska Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and served as section representative at national meetings. He has written as well as reviewed articles for the Association’s publications, *The Physics Teacher* and *The American Journal of Physics*. Wehrbein has served as secretary of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences, Inc. since 2002.

While at Wesleyan Wehrbein has been involved in several science enrichment workshops for high school students and teachers in rural areas sponsored by the NSF and the HHMI. He is currently physics coordinator for the Wesleyan Honors Academy, which provides him opportunities to work with teachers in some of Nebraska’s smaller high schools.

For many years Wehrbein has served as a judge at Kahoa Elementary and Lincoln city-wide science fairs, the Nebraska Science Olympiad, and occasionally the Junior Academy competition. He provides a “bulbs, batteries, and generator” experience for fourth graders visiting NWU from inner-city Omaha schools.

Although officially retired, Wehrbein maintains an office at NWU, serves on several college task forces, stays active in the life of the physics department, and even occasionally teaches a course.