

Guide to the Arthur L. Padrutt Papers, 1941-1981

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Summary Information

Title: Arthur L. Padrutt Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1941-1981

Creator: Padrutt, Arthur L., 1917-1992

Call Number: Eau Claire Mss CS

Quantity: 3.4 c.f. (9 archives boxes)

Repository: Housed at the Area Research Center, William D. McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society, Library-Archives Division

Archival Locations: UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library / Eau Claire Area Research Ctr.

Abstract: Papers of Padrutt, a former Republican legislator (1941-1956) from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, and member of the Public Service Commission (1956-1975), consisting primarily of chronologically arranged constituent correspondence. Some of the correspondence concerns legislation requiring that stray animals be turned over to medical laboratories for research. The speeches document both his legislative career and his tenure on the PSC.

Language: English

Biography/History

Arthur L. Padrutt was born in Huron, South Dakota, September 26, 1917, and moved with his family to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin in 1928. He graduated from McDonnell Memorial High School in Chippewa Falls, and he received a B.S. degree from Eau Claire State Teachers College in 1939. Later, during the course of his legislative career he studied law, earning his L.L.B. in 1956 from the University of Wisconsin. Until that time, he worked as a professional photographer and a retailer of camera supplies.

In 1940, Padrutt ran for state assemblyman from Chippewa Falls and was elected. He served four successive two-year terms in the state assembly, following which he was elected to a seat in the state senate. He served as state senator for eight years, from 1948 to 1956. In 1956, he was appointed to the Public Service Commission by Governor Walter Kohler, and in 1965 was reappointed to this position by Governor Warren Knowles. From 1965 to 1971 he was the chairman of the commission. He was also very active in the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), serving as its president from 1972 to 1973. After leaving the PSC, Padrutt served as a hearing examiner for the Transportation Commission. He also served as a consultant to the states of Virginia and Kentucky.

Scope and Content Note

The Arthur L. Padrutt Papers consist of correspondence primarily relating to his career in the Wisconsin Legislature and speeches that document both his legislative career and his tenure on the Public Service Commission.

The legislative correspondence, 1940-1956, is chronologically arranged. The majority of the exchanges between Padrutt and his constituents and colleagues relate to pending bills. The letters, though for the most part of routine interest, deal with a wide range of topics. Many are products of local concern and thus involve particular regional problems, for example, the question of a state truck farm at the Eau Claire County Hospital. For the most part, however, the problems that the bills deal with are of statewide interest, such as deer hunting restrictions, teacher pensions, and plumbing regulations. In the correspondence are letters from Governor Knowles, Oct. 7 and 9, 1953, and letters from Senator Alexander Wiley, Jan. 29, and March 25, 1953.

The correspondence comprises about 3/4 of the Padrutt collection. Of this one box documents the World War II years, a period of Wisconsin legislative history that is under documented. An additional folder of legislative newsletters also documents this period.

In terms of the amount of mail in the collection, the Zaun bill was one of the most significant presented before the legislature while Padrutt was a state senator. The bill provided that stray animals be turned over to medical laboratories for research. It was violently opposed throughout the state. In February of 1949, Bill 441-S was introduced by Senator Padrutt to repeal the bill. Padrutt received letters from 1949 to 1951 in connection with both bills.

The speeches are also arranged chronologically, with only one folder relating to his tenure in the legislature. All of the speeches are prepared remarks either for radio broadcast or for presentation to a formal meeting. The collection includes no notes for floor remarks or for the many speeches delivered extemporaneously. A 1978 resume in folder 1 indicates that many of his speeches have been published in professional journals.

Administrative/Restriction Information

Acquisition Information

Presented by Arthur L. Padrutt, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, May, 1956, and by Lorraine Padrutt, Madison, Wisconsin, 1998. Accession Number: M2001-029

Processing Information

Processed by L.R.H., January 20, 1966, and by Carolyn J. Mattern, 2001.

Search Terms/Subject Terms

- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
- Animal Welfare—Law and Legislation—Wisconsin

- Legislators—Wisconsin
- Wisconsin—Politics and government

Contents List

Box/Folder 1/1	Biographical Material
	Correspondence
	Legislative
Box/Folder 1/2-11	1940, November - 1943, October
Box/Folder 2/1-9	1944 - 1949, March
Box/Folder 3/1-8	1949, April - 1951, April
Box/Folder 4/1-8	1951, May - 1953, March
Box/Folder 5/1-8	1953, April - September
Box/Folder 6/1-8	1953, October - 1955, April
Box/Folder 7/1-7	1955, April - December
Box/Folder 8/1	1956, January - February
Box/Folder 8/2	Commendatory letters, 1941-1953
Box/Folder 8/3	General, 1953-1956
Box/Folder 8/4	
Box/Folder 8/5	Public Service Commission appointment, 1963-1967
	Special
Box/Folder 8/6	Bloomer, 1947-1949
Box/Folder 8/7	Boyd, 1949-1951
Box/Folder 8/8	Cadott, 1949-1951
Box/Folder 8/9	Cornell, 1949-1951
Box/Folder 9/1	Holcombe, 1949-1951
Box/Folder 9/2	New Auburn, 1948-1949
Box/Folder 9/3	Stanley, 1949-1951

Box/Folder 9/4	Election Miscellany, 1952
Box/Folder 9/5	Newsletters, 1941-1943
	Speeches
Box/Folder 9/6	1941-1952
Box/Folder 9/7	1958-1959
Box/Folder 9/8	1964, "Wisconsin's Regulatory Climate"
Box/Folder 9/9	1965-1967
Box/Folder 9/10	1968, Telephone Association - Fall Conference
Box/Folder 9/11	1968, Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Symposium
Box/Folder 9/12	1969
Box/Folder 9/13	1972, "Self Help through Self Generation"
Box/Folder 9/14	1975, "Utilities in Crisis"
Box/Folder 9/15	Undated