

# Guide to the Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson Collection, 1965-1982

Last Modified on 09/14/2021 1:11 pm CDT

## Overview of the Collection

**Repository:**

Special Collections & Archives  
McIntyre Library  
University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire  
P.O. Box 4004  
105 Garfield Ave.  
Eau Claire, WI 54702 - 4004  
(715) 836-2739  
<https://library.uwec.edu/archives/>

**Reference Code:** USGZE UHC313

**Accession Number:** 08-051

**Collection Number:** University Historical Collection 313

**Creators:** Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson (Eau Claire, Wis.)

**Title:** Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson Collection

**Dates:** 1965-1982, bulk 1980-1982

**Quantity:** 0.2 linear feet (1 archives box, 4 cassette tapes)

**Location of Collection:** A10/3e

**Languages:** Collection materials are in English.

**Summary:** The collection contains materials relating to socialist activists Olin and Emma Swenson. Materials include newspaper clippings, correspondence, photographs, a family history, and interviews on cassette tapes.

## Biographical / Historical Note

Olin and Emma Swenson were prominent activists in the fight for socialist causes in the Chippewa Falls, Wis. area. Beginning in his youth, Olin Swenson organized lectures and debates concerning issues such as women's suffrage and prohibition. In the early 1920s he founded a cooperative creamery on his farm. In 1924, he married Emma Bartz, his lifelong companion and partner in political activism. He supported the formation of the Group Health Cooperative and was involved with

Northern Thunder to protest the construction of a nuclear plant in Durand. Olin Swenson was also the mastermind behind the formation of the Surplus Food program in Chippewa Falls in the 1960s.

Olin Swenson died in October 1980. The Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson was formed in 1980 by University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire faculty and staff. The organization aimed to honor the Swensons' lives and accomplishments by collecting documents and ultimately writing a book about them. It appears that the book was never written.

## Content Description

This small collection contains newspaper clippings on the activities of Olin and Emma Swenson, letters from friends and family sharing their recollections of the Swensons, correspondence, family photographs, a family history, Olin Swenson's eulogy, and interviews with Olin and Emma Swenson on cassette tapes. The material was gathered by a committee, the Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson, in an effort to write a book on the couple and their activities.

## Administrative Information

**Acquisition Information:** Donated to the Special Collections & Archives, University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire by the Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson in May 1982.

**Access Restrictions:** This collection is open to the public.

**Use Restrictions:** Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. Copyright not owned by the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire.

**Preferred Citation:** Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson Collection, 1965-1982, bulk 1980-1982. UHC313. Special Collections & Archives. McIntyre Library. University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire. Eau Claire, WI.

**Processing Note:** Processed by Lark Keating-Hadlock and Jamie Hoehn in October 2007.

**Arrangement:** Flat.

## Subjects

### Personal Names:

Swenson, Olin, 1888-1980  
Swenson, Emma

### Corporate Names:

Chippewa Farmers Union Cooperative (Chippewa County, Wis.)  
Friends of Olin and Emma Swenson (Eau Claire, Wis.)  
Group Health Cooperative of Eau Claire (Eau Claire, Wis.)

### Subject Terms:

Labor unions -- Agricultural laborers -- Wisconsin  
Socialism -- Wisconsin  
Food cooperatives -- Wisconsin

# Detailed List of Contents

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Box/Folder 1/1	Biographical Information	1965-1982
Box/Folder 1/2	Material Gathered by Committee	1980-1982
Box 1	Interviews on Cassettes	1975-1980

---