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David M. Foley, 60, passed away September 22, 2014, at his home in Mount Vernon, Washington. He was the son of Michael and Barbara Foley and the second of 8 children.

David had four children: Eugene, Sarah, Katherine, Joshua, and a stepson, Derek Austin. His wife, Joanne Austin, is a retired Extension Faculty for Skagit/WSU Extension.

Before moving to Mount Vernon, David had been a pre-med student, a microwave site technician for Ted Turner, and a general contractor/owner around Pullman, WA. After meeting his "to-be" wife, he decided to move to his favorite place on Earth, the Skagit Valley. Once again he changed his career. His hobby of falconry became his job. He was passionate about making falconry purposeful.

David, the "Bird Man," was a pioneer of bird abatement. He used falcons to prevent crop damage from starlings, a big bird keeps little birds out of the fields. He began work in 1996 at the Bayview Farms blueberry fields. This later extended to oil refineries, landfills, dairy barns, and fish processing plants. Other falconers sought him out to learn more about his training techniques and caring for birds of prey.

Those who knew David realize it would take more space (volumes!) to describe his lifetime. Life with David was an adventure and exploration of nature. He always wanted to know what made things "tick" and "why." He was known for his gift of gab, "Mr. Fix-It" skills, contagious laugh, high personal integrity, curiosity, wealth of knowledge, and love of family, friends, and nature.

## Remembering Dave Foley

By Randy Shaw

I first met David Foley when he was in high school in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He introduced himself as a young man interested in falconry. Over the next few years, it became obvious that the "student" was learning and practicing things so quickly that he was teaching the "teacher." Dave was one of the first people to hawk sage grouse in Wyoming when he lived in Riverton in the early 70s. For the most part, he trapped, trained and flew Prairie Falcons - which were challenged by the sage grouse!

In the early '80s, Dave decided that gyrfalcons might be more appropriate. He trapped his first gyr and with the help of Warren Higby, trained it, and flew it with some success. He helped me trap my first gyr! Dave taught me a great deal about falconry, hawking, and what it is like to be free and wild as a person. He was very intense, generous with time and knowledge, and I always learned from him. He was a great friend and I will always remember him fondly.

## The Adventurer

by Gordon D. Crawford-Casper, WY

In the winter of '78-'79 after a week of sub-zero highs the temperature rose to almost 0 degrees. Dave decided he needed to fly a passage prairie falcon before she lost condition. She rung up above some ducks in a field and killed. It was soon dark, but Dave had the new technology of telemetry attached to her. After triangulating her in a lone cottonwood tree in a fallow field some miles away from her kill we went to retrieve her.

Many times I wanted to turn back to the Jeep Wagoneer because my feet were getting too cold. Dave climbed the tree because she would not come to lure. He broke the branch her bloody feet were frozen to. Back on the ground he stuffed her in his coat for the 10 min walk back to his Jeep. I had no feeling from my knees down. All was numb. Upon reaching the Wagoneer he turned on the radio only to find the temperature to be a balmy -53 degrees. My feet have never been the same.

Dave was always an adventure. I can recount many of them. He became a singular light in my life. One of the most brilliant and compassionate human beings I have ever known or heard of.

