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Friends of Lynn Straight, The California Hawking Club

"For me, she was the truest friend a person could ever be. She touched every person in my family in one way or another. She was always honest and upfront about everything, and I do not know of one other person in 15 years that has not done anything that made me feel angry, mad or bad. In fact, she was just the opposite. She always had that beautiful bright smile, warm and friendly eyes and always projected a feeling of friendship and caring. I always left our meetings feeling better and somehow, a little special."

- Larry Baines



In Loving Memory of Lynn

by Kim Mauch

Born August 23, 1938, Dr. Lynn R. Straight grew up in Bellevue, Washington. From an early age she loved animals, especially horses, and wanted to be a veterinarian. She acquired a quarter horse from the infamous Doc Bar bloodline, and in her late teens won Grand Reserve Champion/Western Pleasure Class at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. Her passion for horses continued until her early twenties, when she left them behind to pursue her advanced education.

Lynn earned a Master's degree in English Literature from the University of Washington and her PhD in Education Administration from Michigan State University. She had an illustrious career as Assistant Superintendent, first with Boulder Valley Schools in Colorado followed by the same position with Antioch Public School District in California.

Lynn was a very special person - elegant, charming, and the classiest person one ever met. She was a strong, competitive, accomplished woman without any of the negative inferences that comes from being seen as such. Lynn had an infectious easygoing manner and amiability, and was never concerned about impressing people with her many extraordinary accomplishments. Anyone meeting Lynn would be impressed with her laser-like focus on any goal and her strong will to do what was necessary to achieve it.

Lynn began her falconry career with red-tailed hawks but falcons were what Lynn was truly passionate about. One of the highlights of Lynn's falconry career was flying a hacked peregrine over one of her own dogs. She and Bob made several trips to experience falconry on the Scottish moors, as per invitation by Roger Upton, Steven Frank and Umberto Caprioni.

In 1988 the Straights moved to Walnut Creek, California, where her passion for and interest in falconry was continuously expressed through her many contributions to the California Hawking Club (CHC). An extremely adept writer and editor, Lynn authored

sixteen CHC Newsletter and Journal articles and served as Newsletter Editor in 1992 and Journal Editor in 1993. She also produced the Club's first video entitled The Lure of Falconry, which NAFA rated as the best beginner video available. Lynn also supported author Rick Holderman in his efforts to create the CHC Apprentice Study Guide and she served as its editor during production.

Throughout the 1990s, Lynn served in many Club capacities including Director and Secretary. In 1995 and 1996, Lynn served as the first woman president of the CHC - quite possibly the first of any falconry club. During this tenure she was instrumental in guiding a major revision of the Club's bylaws. For the 1995 CHC Annual Field Meet in Yuba City, CA Lynn and I co-chaired the raffle and first-ever silent auction, which became the most successful meet in Club history up to that point.

While being passionate about falconry, Lynn had a special place in her heart for the relationship between hunter and hunting dogs. Consequently, Bob and Lynn started their own kennels, Straightaway Kennels, breeding German shorthaired pointers. With their goal of producing dogs that excelled at both field trials and the show ring firmly in mind, The Straights bred/owned national champions in both field trial and show venues.

Perhaps one of Lynn's most admirable qualities was her sense of humor. One year as an apprentice in Colorado during the holidays, Lynn purchased a ticket at an auction for a turkey. When she won and went to claim her prize, only then did she find out it was a live turkey! Not to be undaunted, she decided to see if she could man the fowl, including getting it to perch on her fist like a falconry bird (see photo sequence on right page).

She was a dear friend, companion and mentor; an example of how to be the truest of friends and live a most outstanding life. She is sorely missed.



"Lynn was an elegant and compassionate friend who loved horses, dogs and birds of prey. A Master Falconer and accomplished educator, she led by example, improved the apprentice program, and enriched the falconry community. With her, falconry was truly an art."

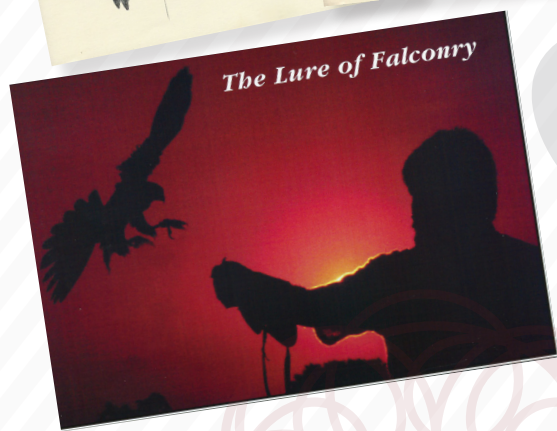
- Ken and Loretta Hein



One more time, lift her up . . .

Tah-dah! She's upright!

Uh, guess not.



"I was lucky enough to have Lynn as a friend and mentor when I was young. She gave me my first Falconry glove and helped me to feel at home in a sport dominated by men. She showed me it was possible to be a smart, talented, and beautiful woman while still being taken seriously. She blazed a path for others to follow and always did it with grace and tact. I will always be indebted to her for helping to instill in me a love of this sport. She showed me the beauty of falconry and helped to open doors for other women to follow in her steps." — Meghan Hein

"Without Lynn, the Apprentice Study Guide would not have happened. Somewhere around the fifteen-month point, I had grown weary of the project. I had been sending her fresh pages every week and she had been returning the fresh edits on the same schedule. She corrected my just plain wrong information, knitted together my split infinitives, propped up my dangling participles, righted my wrong tenses, red-lined my bad humor, and did it all without making me feel like I was back in high school. I had run down and was ready to abandon the project. I was done; she wasn't and chided me to complete the blasted thing. She spent two years editing the Guide as we went through revision after revision until it was RIGHT. Today, nearly every new falconer in the U.S. buys one. The few that don't borrow their sponsor's." — Rick Holderman

