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Paul and Linda Mascuch, Larry and Jude Miller, Frank and Araceli Metallo, Bob Collins, North American Falconers Association

## In Memory of **JOSE SOTO SR.**

**Jose Soto Sr.**, 74, of Oswego, Illinois passed away after a short illness on January 13, 2018 surrounded by loved ones. He was born in Puerto Rico and was employed at Henry Pratt for 43 years. Jose is survived by his devoted wife of 47 years, Kathy (McNamara) Soto, son James, and grandchildren Tre, Dominique, Jacob and Kayla, his brother Mario and many other loving family members. He was preceded in death by his son Jose Jr., brother Flor, sister Carmen, and his parents.

Jose was a devoted father, husband, uncle, grandfather and best friend to all who knew him. Jose never missed an opportunity to pick up new hobbies. He was a black belt in karate and taught the art to many. In his youth, he rode a Harley Davidson chopper. He was an excellent falconer and an active member of the Great Lakes Falconers Association. The family enjoyed many rabbit and pheasant dinners. Jose loved to run – and completed the Chicago Marathon. Jose developed an interest in photography and won ribbons at the Sandwich Fair. He was a member of the Classic Chevy Club. He was proud of his '56 Chevy Belair and his wife's '64 Impala convertible. He loved renovating their home inside and out. Jose built a large Koi pond and loved maintaining it. He had the fish eating from his hand. He was an avid reader and taught himself how to grow and shape bonsais. He would carve miniature houses. He was known for his popular annual pig roast and took great pride in seasoning and roasting one to perfection. He will be remembered as a most interesting and friendly man.



*I first met Jose in 1973. Ever since then, we hawked together almost every weekend, along with drinking a "little" tequila after hawking at either his house or mine. There are too many great stories that come to mind to mention. Anyone who knew Jose knows that whenever he was around there would be lots of laughs. Jose was more than my best friend for over the last 45 years – he was like a brother to me. I'll miss no one more.*

**FRANK METALLO  
REMEMBERING  
HIS FRIEND**







**JAMES SOTO REMEMBERING HIS DAD**

Jose Soto (Joe) was very dedicated and passionate about Falconry. His Hunting, Trapping, Training and Medical knowledge was entertaining and quite inspiring.

Jose epitomized the essence of the unwritten origins of Falconry. The first Falconers most likely devised the Raptor & Hunter bond in order to obtain food. During a stretch well over a year, Jose's company was on strike and times were difficult. Jose took on side jobs and hunted game in the time-honored tradition of Falconry. He had multiple birds, but one named Cowboy would quite often catch three Pheasants a day. His wife Kathy had a Wild Game cookbook, which she won at a Game Dinner, with an outstanding Braised Pheasant recipe. With the steady supply of Wild Pheasant, Rabbit and Duck, combined with inexpensive wild rice and natural asparagus found while hunting, though times were difficult, the family ate like kings.

Jose benefited, as a building block of Life, the deep bonds that he made while enjoying the sport. The friendships that he acquired through hunting, affectionately known as Hawking Buddies, became a Brotherhood and extended members of the family. The countless hunting tales and insights of life will continue to be passed on for generations. It would also be remiss not to mention his longest standing bird a Red Tail named Jenny. She was around so long, that she was considered a member of the family.



**LARRY MILLER REMEMBERING HIS FRIEND**

Jose and I met at his first Great Lakes Falconers Association meeting. He had flown a kestrel in his native Puerto Rico and wanted to expand his falconry experiences. His enthusiasm for falconry and his perpetual smile quickly won the support of the GLFA members. Since he and I both lived in Aurora, Illinois, I agreed to be his sponsor.

His training in the martial arts had conditioned him to listen and learn. He quickly put together the basic falconry gear. As his sponsor, I tried to instill in him the satisfaction of making his own falconry equipment. No store-bought things (other than bells and swivels) allowed! After the basics were quickly completed, we set out to trap a passage hawk.

I had built a blind along the Fox River south of Aurora. The Fox is a minor fall migratory route in central Illinois. We settled into the blind and waited for that immature red-tail that was looking for an easy meal.

Our wait was short. A red-tail appeared above the oaks that

bordered the northeast corner of the field. A slight pull on the lure line and the bird folded immediately. As it "whooshed" past the blind, it mounted, did a wing-over and flashed a brown tail. Seeing immediately that it was an immature, Jose was ecstatic! In his marvelous Puerto Rican accent, he whispered "ees a emmature, ess a emmature!" Down it came. The bow net triggered. Jose had his hawk!

I turned to tell Jose to get out of the blind. He was gone. I should have known. I looked at the bow net to see Jose already standing on its edge to make sure there was no chance of the hawk escaping. Success! We socked up the bird and headed for Jose's house.

Jose's wife Kathy could not believe we were back so quickly – and with a hawk. Jesses, leash, swivel and hood were attached. Jose's falconry had begun in earnest. Jose's expertise progressed rapidly as the years went by. Thanks to his partnership with very good friend Frank Metallo, he became proficient with both long and shortwings.

It was my privilege to have had many experiences with Jose, both in falconry and socially. The latter best fit for late night or campfires!

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