

**Karen R.
Cottrell**
1944-2018

Karen's Life by Larry Cottrell

I first met Karen Rose McAfee in the spring of 1964. She was staying with her sister in California to help with a yet unborn child. I, Larry Cottrell, was visiting with my sister who lived on the same street. We were both 19 years old. Karen had suffered a nose bleed and she and her sister came to my sister's house for assistance.

Our first date was to try to find an apricot colored mouse that I intended to use to catch a nearby Kestrel. It was obvious to me that she was a bit different from most girls as she was interested and anxious to participate in such an adventure.

I was able to eventually get my first Kestrel and Karen was an active participant in her training. It wasn't long before she also wanted to work with raptors. I was hopelessly in love with her.

We married in January of 1965, and shortly thereafter moved to Oregon. She followed me to Alaska and North Carolina after I had joined the Army. After my hitch was completed, we returned to Oregon.

After our return, we both got serious about falconry, and continued our self-education of the practice. At the time there was no recognized falconry in Oregon. Raptors were held with a "holding permit" costing \$1.00. That didn't last long as there were more and more people interested in the sport. Eventually ODFW decided that hunting with hawks was illegal.

A group of interested falconers met in Eugene to see if we could get the state to allow falconry. We elected a president, Ben Elliot. He and his wife managed to get the legislature to allow falconry if we would pay our own way in the administrative costs. The legislature set a price of either \$125 or \$150.00 per year. We paid it and began the slow fight to get better regulations.

I became the next president. It was my job to make the regulations reasonable. While I appeared as the figurehead, Karen's job was just as important as was mine. She worked tirelessly to help me with the endless letters, presentations, and meetings in which she played her part with the officials that were impressed just because she also was a falconer. At that time there were very few women that were capable falconers. Words cannot possibly convey the things that she did for Oregon falconry which would have been so much more difficult without her.

As time went on, and regulations improved, club membership began to increase. Karen was a bit of a role model for young women who wanted to be falconers. She served as president, secretary, treasurer as well as regional director for Oregon Falconers Association. She hosted many meets and fed hungry falconers. She

made time to hawk as well. She flew Accipiters, Harris Hawks, Prairies, Hybrids and Peregrines. I think her most valued moment of recognition was her "Honorary" membership in Washington's "No Mercy Hawking Club".

In the last few years her heart began to wear out. She could no longer make the physical effort required for falconry. She compensated by driving along as I hunted my Harris. It wasn't much but she was out there doing the best she could. She agreed to a heart valve replacement, the second, in the hopes that she would again have the stamina to go hawking. Unfortunately it did not work out. Her heart failed Jan 31, 2018.

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Karen in Bend, Oregon



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Karen and Jessie



Larry and Karen, 1964

