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Biography of J. Timothy Kimmel, Ph. D. by Sam Kimmel (an older brother)

John Timothy (“Tim”) Kimmel and his twin sister, Charlotte Ann (“Cholly”), were born on December 15, 1951, and named after their parents. He was the third son in a family of ten children – five boys and five girls. The Kimmels operated a 300 acre dairy and cattle farm in western Pennsylvania. Tim always said with respect to country living that he could “never live any other way”. He would always have at least one dog his entire life. His lifelong interest in nature was encouraged by his grandmother, an avid birdwatcher. A chance water rescue of a great horned owl when he was six years old began his journey in the field of falconry and the study of birds of prey.



The ten Kimmel siblings in 1963

Tim was a better than average student. He played trombone in marching band, competed in gymnastics and pole vaulted for the track and field team. Tim graduated with a B.S. degree in Biology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (“IUP”) in 1974 and went to Southern Illinois University (“SIU”) receiving a M.A. in Zoology in 1977. His master’s thesis involved the study of the American Kestrel. He lived in a “Spartan” cabin in the woods while pursuing his master’s degree.

Tim was the winner of a National Wildlife Federation photo contest in 1980.

“Because Tim so well understood the nature and habits of wildlife (wild or captive) he was an **EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL** big game hunter, fisherman, and of course, falconer.”

-Ken Felix

His photo of young barn owls appeared on the front cover of National Wildlife magazine (April-May 1980) and was selected as Cover of the Year.

Tim returned to PA to teach biology at IUP after graduation from SIU. In 1981, he began teaching at Villa Maria College in Erie, PA. It was here that he truly began a history of service to his passion, profession and community. He served as President (1984-1988) of Presque Isle Audubon Society and as Newsletter Editor, Secretary/Treasurer and President of Pennsylvania Falconry and Hawk Trust (1982 – 1992) being named Life Honorary Member in 2003. In 1987 he obtained his falcon breeder’s license. In 1988 he became a licensed private airplane pilot. He hosted great parties, served wonderful dishes of unusual picnic food and entertained everyone with stellar performances on the flute and harmonica.

In 1988 Tim began work on his doctorate at The Pennsylvania State University, a favorite family institution of higher learning. His Ph. D. was conferred in Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences in May 1995 concluding studies of the habitat of the Northern Goshawk in Pennsylvania while he continued to publish in Wing Beat, Turkey Talk, Journal of North American Falconers Association, Pennsylvania Game News, Journal of Raptor Research and the Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania while giving scholarly presentations for the Raptor Research Foundation, Pennsylvania Wildlife Society, Pennsylvania Game Commission and others. He was the recipient of the 1991 Roger M. Latham Award for being an outstanding graduate student in the School of Forest Resources at Penn State and became a member of Phi Kappa Phi, an honorary science society.



Tim was the winner of a National Wildlife Federation photo contest in 1980. This photo of young barn owls appeared on the front cover of National Wildlife magazine (April-May 1980) and was selected as **Cover of the Year**.



Tim moved to Kansas in 1993. He taught at Barton County Community College until 1999 when he became Director of Institutional Research and Records and chaired a number of important committees. After a short stint in private industry he returned to teaching at Hutchinson Community College and Area Vocational School (“HCC”) and remained there as a beloved professor for the rest of his life. While in Kansas, Tim took up western dancing, served as President of the Kansas Hawking Club (1994-1996), and as Director At-Large (1992-1996) and President (1996-2000) of the North American Falconers Association. Many will remember Tim opening up his home at Ellinwood for lodging, standing room only, and setting up his tipi for “spillover” sleeping space at the many hawking meets held there. He began woodworking, making furniture and remodeling his home, in addition to tending his fruit and vegetable garden.

Tim traveled widely in his last fifteen years. He was a member of the Advisory Committee for the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey and chaired its Scientific Committee. In conjunction with his falconry-related travels and, independently, he continued to pursue his love of wildlife photography. He hunted African game. He traveled to France, Spain, Morocco, Poland and the UAE. He delighted in hunting with friends and taking North American game including elk, pronghorn antelope, deer and black bear. Tim had a great love for good friends, former students and family. Though he never married, he continued a search for a “soul mate” until his untimely death from natural causes on May 14, 2012. His friends and family will always remember his telephone calls, especially at birthdays and holidays, just to “say hello and stay in touch.”

GOD BLESS YOU, TIM. MAY YOU FOREVER REST IN PEACE.



Above: Tim with new Eyass
 Top & bottom second colum; Alaska, 2008
 Third colum, hunt in 2000
 Fourth colum top: Idaho, 2001, bottom: Africa, 2003



IN MEMORIAM: *Dr. J. Timothy "Tim" Kimmel*

TIM WAS A SCIENTIST, TEACHER, LEADER, OUTDOORSMAN,
 PHOTOGRAPHER, GRACIOUS HOST, MUSICIAN & GREAT FRIEND.

by Ken Felix

Tim Kimmel was one of the most multi-faceted individuals one could ever hope to meet.

He was first and foremost a scientist. Not a lab guy, but a real field scientist. He spent innumerable hours observing nature, documenting his observations, and then subjecting his collected data to exhaustive statistical analysis. Then and only then did he form an opinion. No one could ever argue with his results. He was probably the most well respected goshawk biologist in the country.

Tim was a teacher. He was extremely well versed in multiple disciplines including botany, limnology, physiology, anatomy, natural history, and statistical analysis, just to name a few. All of these subjects he taught at the college level. His students adored him because of his infectious enthusiasm, his vast knowledge, and his calm and amiable demeanor. His most valuable attribute was his ability to transfer that knowledge and enthusiasm in an understandable and enjoyable manner to his students. He was simply the best at it.

He was a leader. Tim was the president of his local Audubon Society Chapter at a time when falconers were not held in high esteem in that organization. The "dicky-birders" elected him to that office because he was able to educate them about the conservation accomplishments of the falconry community. He was elected by his fellow falconers as the president of the PFHT, Pennsylvania's state falconry club and later appointed by the Board of NAFA as their president as well. He served both offices with competence, efficiency and fairness.

Tim was an outdoorsman. Because Tim so well understood

the nature and habits of wildlife (wild or captive) he was an extremely successful big game hunter, fisherman, and of course, falconer. His birds, be they buteo, falcon, or accipiter were impeccably well kept and as gamey as anyone could ever desire.

Tim was a prize winning photographer. Some of his fantastic nature shots received national acclaim, appearing on the cover of such prestigious publications as National Wildlife.

He also was an accomplished gardener. His garden provided some of the most delectable fruits and vegetables ever to grace a dining table, and boy could he cook. Tim could make a duck breast or rabbit leg taste every bit as delicious as a filet at Ruth's Chris Steakhouse.

He was always a gracious host. Countless numbers of falconers made the annual fall visit to "Kimmel's Hotel and Restaurant" in Ellenwood. Tim would supply lodging, meals, guide service and entertainment to anyone who arrived. The entertainment came from **Tim the musician.** He could play the blues harp like no one else. When he would bend a note, the hair would stand up on your arm. It was sweet!

Tim was an athlete. Back in his college days, he was a competitive gymnast. He was remarkably strong, extremely agile, and unbelievably flexible. Up until just recently, he did a round-off back hand spring every year on his birthday.

Tim was a great friend. Tim possessed more integrity, loyalty, dependability, and quality than anyone could ever ask for in a good, good, friend. The world has lost one of its finest inhabitants.

If God has a refrigerator, there is a picture of Tim Kimmel on it.

