



DONORS:

Raptor Resource Project, Janet Carstens



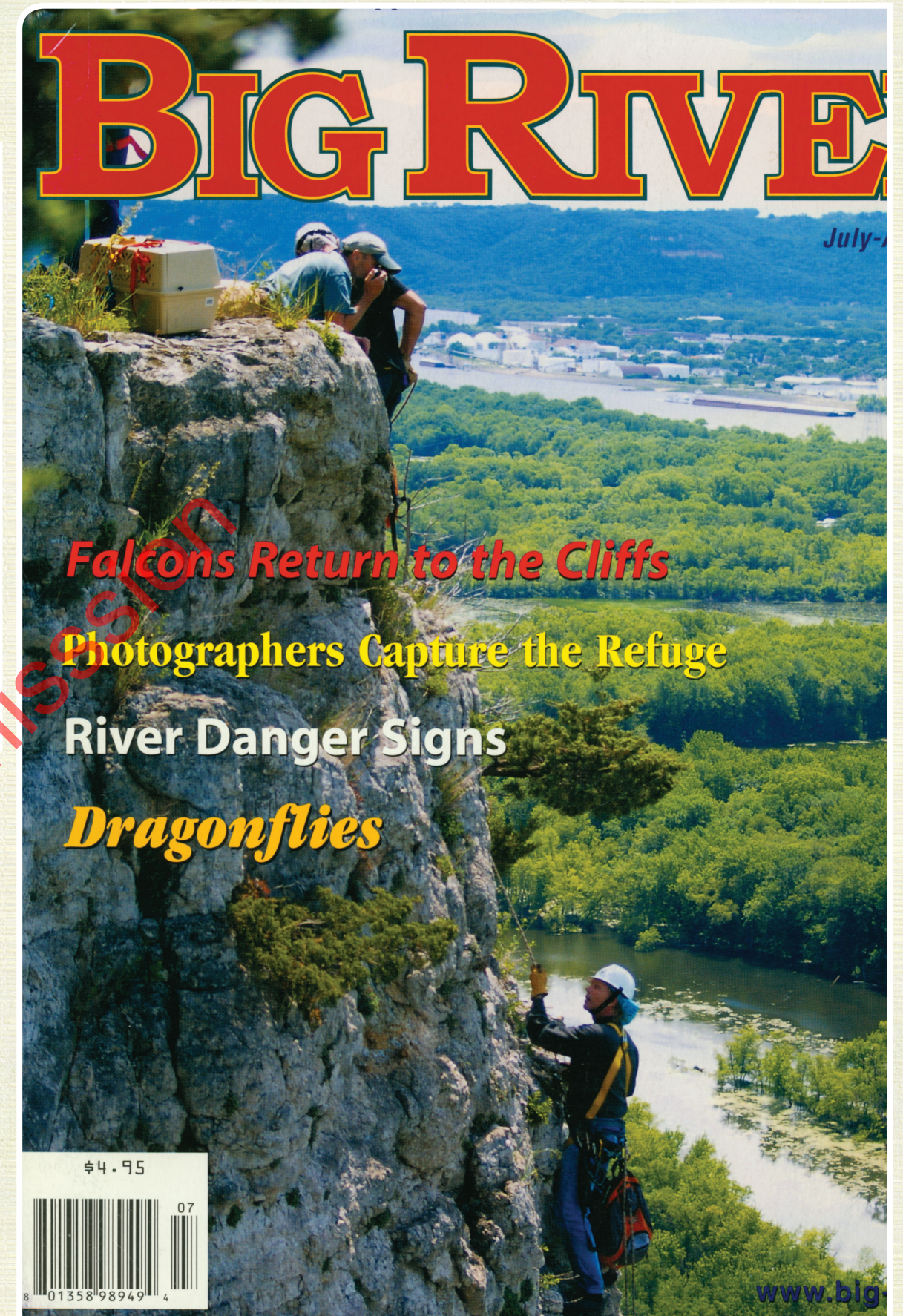
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-Jan Carstens (Rob’s wife)



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He loved flying it
and breeding it, and
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ROBERT MACINTYRE

North Minneapolis, Minnesota

Favored birds: Red-tailed Hawk

“I don’t know why we do it. Falconers — we’re all a bunch of nuts.”

Rob MacIntyre may have considered himself a nut, but many also considered him an inspired genius. Or, in the words of Bob Anderson, a “mad scientist” who couldn’t resist a challenge.

You can witness his

exuberance and problem-solving for yourself by checking out the PBS documentary “Raptor Force.” Not only will you see the constant boyish smile on his face, but you’ll see the first person to figure out how to rig a hawk, eagle and falcon with a small camera and wireless transmitter and literally experience a bird’s eye view of a peregrine’s speedy descent to its quarry. (To accomplish it, he fabricated a special lithium ion battery from scratch.)

“When he threw himself into something, he threw himself into it totally,” said his wife, Jan. “He never finished college, but he could do anything and fix anything.”

“He’s one of those people you dream about being,” said wildlife artist Jim Robinson.

A big kid at heart, he loved scuba diving (he was an instructor), rappelling down a cliff (he spent years restoring the population of peregrine falcons in the Mississippi River Bluff country), metalworks (he built an extravagant iron fence around his swimming pool area) and he was an avid gardener.

“He was the most self-motivated person I know,” Robinson said.

Frank Taylor said he was very focused, yet was also good at getting people on board. “He was 110 percent all the time.”

He absolutely loved the sport of falconry. (He also loved his Red-tail hawk and was one of the first people to demonstrate that hooding the species could be done successfully. Telling Rob something couldn’t be done was the same as a dare to him.) And as President of the Raptor Resource Project at the time of his death, his love of the birds allowed him the opportunity to repatriate them and return them to their environment. He was thrilled at being able to work with Bob Anderson at the Project to reintroduce peregrines back into the wild. Rob didn’t want a falcon of his own until he was able to obtain one legally from the wild. He felt strongly that it was his right to be able to fly a bird, and he got great joy out of working toward those goals. The Raptor Resource Project was established in 1988 and is still going strong. The nesting web cameras will distract even the casual viewer into realizing that a morning or afternoon has suddenly slipped by. Rob’s innovations for a bald eagle nest camera was deemed the “most-watched video stream on the Internet” with more than 100 million hits in the Spring of 2011.

Rob was well known in Minnesota, and was always tinkering with technical things, like modifying incubators. But in his many travels, he was also known to falconers in Italy, where he was once featured in a local paper for helping rid a town square of pigeons with the help of peregrine nests.

But he was best known in his own neighborhood of North Minneapolis.

Whether it was a community garden or the manufacture of one of his creations, in which he required it be done locally, he was intently civic-minded. He was a strong supporter of the Tree Trust, which hired youth and planted trees throughout the metropolitan area.

And the kids. The kids were fascinated by him. He didn’t talk down to kids, and they loved him. One young child even spoke at his funeral.

“He wanted to make a difference in kids’ lives,” Jan said. “Boys, girls, it didn’t matter. They all came to play with Rob.”

Always smiling, happy and cooperative, “he was a delight,” said Connie Oar. He was truly a man who would give you the shirt off his back, she said. (And one time, he actually did just that, when someone admired his shirt.)

He died the same way he lived his life. With a cheerfulness, a sense of community and one more of life’s challenges. A tornado struck his neighborhood on May 22, 2011. Once he was assured that his wife and puppy were safe, he emerged from the basement, surveyed the damage and, with a smile, announced that his beloved shade garden was now a sun garden. Next, he went door to door to check on his neighbors, then he took a chainsaw to the tree in his driveway and hopped on his tractor to help his clear debris. He died that day of a heart attack, too young, at age 53.

Rob was an idea man, a gadget man and an outside-the-box thinker who was “not a person to let anything grow under his toes.” He affected lives with his contributions to raptor species, falconry, education and community. After his death, an anonymous contribution was made of \$50,000 to the Tree Trust to help repopulate his neighborhood with trees.

But it always came back to his love of raptors and falconry. It began at an early age, when he read about a falcon in a book, later featured in the movie “My Side of the Mountain.” After that, he was hooked.

And he loved his Red-tail. He loved flying it and breeding it, and he loved working to preserve the species for future generations. “I call it bird watching,” he said. “But just a different level of bird watching.”

— *Reminiscences: Jan Carsten (Rob’s wife), Bob Anderson, Jim Robinson, Frank Taylor, Jack and Connie Oar*

**Loved by his friends and neighbors
and helped others to the very end.**

