



DONORS:

Phil and Lori Smith, Jeff Rossey, Washington Falconers' Association

David's falconry started with his first red-tail in the mid 80's. His love of animals started as a young boy in the California desert picking up snakes, lizards and anything else he could outrun. He loved hunting and fishing any way it could be practiced. In 1976 a young lady came into the motorcycle shop where David was a mechanic. Cheri and David would start a 38 year adventure that ended with David's passing in the fall of 2013. Dave was one of the most patient falconers I've known, never rushing his hawk or falcon. His family was his main hunting partners but Jeff Rossey was invited to join in with his first Harris hawk in 1991. I (Jeff Rossey) remember many weekends Dave, Cheri and son Beau would drive out of their way to pick me up in a Subaru wagon, four people two Harris hawks and a few jack Russell and one cocker spaniel. We flew from morning till dark. David flew most of the species of hawk and falcon available to falconers and excelled at taking game with all of them. He was a hunter first and then falconer.

Dave was as proficient with a pack of big game hounds as he was with a tiercel coops. During David's life as a falconer he flew passage and imprint Coopers Hawks, passage Red-Tail Hawks, Harris Hawks, passage Prairie Falcons, and a Peregrine Falcon whose nickname was Duck because she always had to take a bath before she would hunt. Cheri and Beau have many memories going hunting with David and his Harris Hawk named Cholla. Cholla was a friendly bird (unless you are rabbit or pheasant). When we were out hunting if one of us flushed up some game, and she did not see it, she would land on the person's head if the person saw her coming. She wanted someone to flush. Cholla was gentle with her talons and we never needed to have a glove. During her first year David got a Jack Russell terrier named Pete. Cholla at first was not sure of Pete until after David took them hunting and helped her understand that Pete was there to help and then she accepted him. On one memorable hunting trip, Cholla tried to take full grown doe Mule Deer. She did hit it hard enough to drive it to its knees. Cholla hung while it was trying to shake her off waiting for David to come help her with the deer. David stood there not knowing what to do. Finally Cholla was shaken off when it would not go down. She landed on some rocks to pout and would not come to him for at least a half hour because he did not help her with the deer. On many hunting trips David and Cheri had fun watching Beau run through the sage yelling HO, HO, HO! like a skinny demented Santa Clause. On an early fall hunting trip with just David, Pete, and Cholla out at Banks Lake, it was really hot. David and Pete sat down to rest in some shade and wound up taking a nap. When they awoke, they found Cholla had hunted on her own and had caught a pheasant and teal duck. David and Jeff Rossey trapped a Prairie Falcon that David hunted for 9 nine years. Cheri remembers during a falconry meet they had done their hunting for the day. Jeff called on the cell phone. They met the rest of the falconers to finish the day. Some partridge had been found, but the bird in the air did not seem interested. Someone asked David to fly his Prairie Falcon. David originally

said no because he had already cropped up the falcon. But, he reconsidered and he got her out. She did him proud with a wonderful flight and catching a partridge. On her last hunt David and Jeff were in Oregon hunting Sage Grouse. The Prairie Falcon finally figured out how to catch the grouse only to be robbed by a Golden Eagle. David obtained a female Anatum Peregrine which Cheri named Lucy. He raised Lucy and started to let her learn to hunt. Lucy had only caught two head of wild game, when she got caught up into the jet stream. David followed the signal for about 65 miles then lost it. Two months later he received a call from a rehabber in Yucaipa, California (east of Los Angeles). She had Lucy. David and Cheri drove 27 hours straight and were reunited with Lucy. If Lucy could talk she would have some splaining (explaining) to do! In the spring of 2004 David was working bird abatement at Fairchild Air Force Base. While he was flying Lucy to a lure she had broken her one of her toes so it hurt her to land. While David was trying to get Lucy, a storm came up. For three days David followed her signal all over the Spokane area before he lost it. Five months later he received a call from a falconer from Miles City, Montana saying he had Lucy. David drove 24 hours straight to pick her up. When he got back he told Cheri he was sick of gas station coffee. From then on Lucy made sure she paid closer attention to David so she did not get lost. In 2003 David purchased a tiercel Anatum Peregrine from Ed Pitcher. On the way home Cheri named him Oscar after Oscar the Grouch because he was really pissy. Later, he would mellow out but the name stuck. David hunted ducks, partridge, and pheasants with both Lucy and Oscar. Over the next several years David and Cheri had fun with hunting both birds. After Oscar, David bought a Peregrine/Gyrfalcon hybrid from Jeff Rossey which Cheri named Stella. Stella grew into a big girl. David and Cheri had two lovely years with Stella and Lucy. Then David was diagnosed with mesothelioma. The chemotherapy had David feeling good enough one last hunting season in the fall of 2012. David passed away on October 18, 2013.



FOCUSED & FORWARD

by Allen Gardner

Dave Gardiner contacted me during the early 80's by route of the joint State/Federal apprenticeship program. As today, it offers, a program of guidance for the young and new. Dave was neither young nor new! It didn't take long to realize that in this relationship, I could easily have been the apprentice.



We put the two year program behind us quickly and effectively. During this time Dave and his family become a welcomed part of the falconry community. I was awed by Dave's becoming a master falconer, seemingly "overnight"! I taught Dave how to tie a falconer's knot and showed him the tools of our Art. He taught me valued lessons of life.

His first wild taken hawk, a female redbtail, become a twenty three year member of the family. His first passage prairie falcon, a seven year partner, became an excellent gamehawk. It was flown in Dave's inimitable style: "We'll let her go, take the dogs for a walk and just see what happens".

After he and Cheri became empty nesters, they could be seen frequenting the native shrub steppe of East Central Washington. Enjoying life.

It is here that I will best remember Dave's presence - Moving ever so carefully forward, stylish point ahead, Dave with his head tilted slightly back...focusing...falcon in command...a wry smile..Dave has moved forward...one more time.



David and David Jr., with 5'8" sturgeon, June 1982



David's three sons: Beau, David Jr., and Will.



David and wife Cheri of 38 years.