Ode to Russell
by Debbie Taylor

I wish I could sing today for you my dear
But emotions run high now that’s very clear
The pain and the hurt will someday go away
When we all meet in Heaven,
we’ll all be there someday.

For now, Love, I now you are safe and sound
With God and His Angels all around.
I’ll remember dear Russell
all the good times we had
And never look back on anything bad.
Oh Lovey, we danced, we sang and we played
We always thought there’d be another day
I shall cherish your memory
Keep my songs bright
You’re safe now dear Husband
You have gone to the light
So fly like a falcon
And run like the deer
Swim with the fish
In my heart you’ll be near
Be at peace my dear Husband
You had such a full life
With all of my love,
Debbie your wife
Russell K. Taylor was born in Honolulu, Hawaii on March 6, 1942 to Lloyd K. and Rose (Whang) Taylor. Like many falconers in Russ’s generation, he was interested in environmental sciences. He received his Environmental Engineering degree from Purdue University. He went on to a 27 year career with the Washington State Department of Ecology. Russ became a falconer in the 1960’s and was instrumental in the state of Washington’s adoption of the first federal falconry regulations. Russell served one term as North Pacific NAFA Director, in 1974 and 1975. He had fond memories of hawking rabbits with his goshawks on San Juan Island. Among his several falconry articles, his article on hawking San Juan rabbits appears in the December, 1971 Hawk Chalk. His other interests included scuba diving, archery, big game hunting, and all kinds of fishing.

For me and my close falconry friends, Russ Taylor was a mentor. Brian Sullivan and I made many trips to the Taylor residence in Selah, WA, for hawking excursions. Some of my fondest memories were of hawking in the area, sitting at the kitchen table with Russ, making hoods and discussing falconry techniques and politics. We learned much from Russ over the years and became close with the family. In 1978, Russ and Charlene held a falconry meet at their residence in Selah, WA. The NAFA President and multiple NAFA directors attended. Russ was influential in the formation of the current Washington Falconers Association as this meet was the spark that started the current club.

As the years passed, we lost touch with each other, but after his diagnosis with cancer, he was able to visit our home with our long time friend, Steve Seibert. It was refreshing to see that Russ had not lost his interest in falconry and imparting his knowledge to others.

Russell lost his brave battle with cancer on March 26, 2010. His impact on those around him cannot be measured.