

IN MEMORIAM
RICHARD R. OLENDORFF
1943–1994

The raptor research community lost one of its leading and most beloved members recently. On 24 February 1994, Dr. Richard R. “Butch” Olendorff died of complications from diabetes at the age of 50.

Butch was a charter member of the Raptor Research Foundation (RRF) and served as editor of the *Journal of Raptor Research* from 1971–76, secretary of the RRF from 1975–1976, and president from 1977–1981. He also served on the RRF Board of Directors from 1975–1977, and from 1980–1982. In 1991, the RRF honored Butch with its most prestigious award, the President’s Award, and the 1994 RRF annual meeting will be dedicated to Butch’s memory.

Butch received the B.S. degree in zoology from the University of Washington in 1967, and completed a Ph.D. at Colorado State University in 1971. Between 1971 and 1974, he was a Post-doctoral Fellow and Research Associate at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. In 1974, he joined the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as Endangered Species Liaison Officer in Washington, DC. From 1977–1989, Butch served as the Endangered Species Coordinator in the BLM California State Office in Sacramento. In 1989, Butch moved to Boise, Idaho to establish the Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center, now a unit of the National Biological Survey.

Butch’s love of raptors came to him early. He took up falconry at the age of 15, and was a founding member of the North American Falconers Association. He quit flying his birds only when the demands of his profession became too great. For his post-doctoral research he studied prairie raptors in the Pawnee National Grasslands of northeastern Colorado where, he often said, he found his spiritual home among the buttes. His work there led to a number of published papers and a book, *Golden Eagle Country*, about raptors and the problems confronting them. In addition to his regular duties with BLM, Butch found time to write a number of state-of-the-art papers concerning raptors, and during his professional life produced over 35 publications. During the 1980s, he developed a computerized bibliography on raptor management with over 10 000 references. In 1985, he conceived of and was instrumental in organizing the World Raptor Meetings in Sacramento, California, the largest such event in the history of the raptor profession.

Those of us who were close to him in his last days will remember the dignity with which Butch faced the illness that finally took him, and his determination to continue his work. He was at his desk until a few days before his final trip to the hospital working on a revision of his well-known paper “Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Powerlines.” A few months before his death, he published his last major work, an exhaustive review of the ferruginous hawk literature.

It may be for his boundless energy and lifetime commitment to raptor conservation that Butch will most be remembered, but all who knew him will also remember Butch for his kindness, sense of humor, and deep personal integrity. Butch was scrupulously fair and examined all sides of every issue. Throughout his professional life he was respected for the courtesy he showed everyone regardless of which side of an issue they were on. He had the rare ability to recognize the values of others without passing judgment, perhaps accounting for his ability to bring people together to work toward common goals. He was direct and unflinching in his assessments of both people and issues but he was never mean-spirited. In a very real sense, Butch set the standards of personal and professional behavior that guided the raptor profession through its early years.—**Robert Lehman, National Biological Survey, Boise, ID 83705 U.S.A.**

Butch Olendorff Memorial Library. The Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center (RRTAC) will establish the Butch Olendorff Memorial Library to house Butch’s professional papers and as a center for bibliographic research on raptors when RRTAC moves to Boise State University in 1995. Memorials to fund the library may be made to the Butch Olendorff Memorial Fund, % West One Bank, Skyway Branch, 2730 Airport Way, Boise, ID 83705 U.S.A.

Butch Olendorff Lifetime Achievement Award for Conservation of Birds of Prey. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has established the Butch Olendorff Lifetime Achievement Award for Conservation of Birds of Prey, an occasional award to recognize individuals and organizations that make remarkable contributions or sacrifices to raptor conservation. The first two recipients were Idaho Governor Cecil Andrus and Morley Nelson, both of whom were extremely influential in establishing the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.