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In Memory of Elizabeth Grenon

by Neal Ratzlaff

On November 11, 2016 cancer claimed the life of long time member and friend of NOU, Betty Grenon, perhaps best remembered as our very intelligent, personable, meticulous treasurer and tenacious guardian of organization funds. Our records indicate Betty became a member in 1991. Her talents and qualifications (CPA and Nebraska's first female Certified Management Accountant) were soon recognized. She became NOU Treasurer in 1994, a position held until her death, except for a 3 year hiatus when her employment with Enron took her to Houston, Texas. NOU has benefitted in a number of other ways from Betty's organizational skills and attention to detail. She was the meticulous keeper of our membership data, tracked subscriptions to our quarterly journal and, in recent years, arranged for copying and mailing of our newsletter. She was the "go to" person for our twice yearly meetings, taking all the reservations and verifying our arithmetic, checking us in at the meeting site, paying the vendors and caterers and, on occasion, making the



Betty Grenon. Photo courtesy of Rick Schmid.

lodging and meal arrangements. Betty was often the “glue” that held things together or the “grease” that kept them moving. Her last days at home before she determined it was time to move to hospice included time getting NOU’s finances in good order to be handed off to the next treasurer.

Betty, born in Connecticut, lived in a number of states and abroad with her Air Force family before coming to Bellevue, Nebraska, in 1974. Here, she and her family discovered Fontenelle Forest, where she soon became involved as a volunteer, an active participant in the FF Bird Club, board member, and an “on demand” staff member in the finance department on at least three occasions.

She was the volunteer coordinator of the Omaha Christmas Bird Count (and the spring count) for many years, continuing the traditional chili potluck compilation at day’s end. Betty trained for and eventually obtained a bird banding permit, which qualified her to do educational programs and initiate a long term MAPS station, using banding to investigate bird productivity and survival. She was active in the Inland Bird Banding Association where she served as an officer and occasionally as meeting organizer. She was also a certified Nebraska Master Naturalist.

Betty enjoyed traveling with the Fontenelle Forest Bird Club, friends and family, birding around the U.S., Canada, Peru, India, Australia, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, the Netherlands, Germany, France, the U.K., Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Costa Rica, Belize, and Panama. A number of these were with her son Alan, an accomplished birder, who shared her interest in birds and nature. She loved the view of the woods from her home near Fontenelle Forest, witnessing the historic return of Wild Turkeys, nesting Cooper’s Hawks, and Pileated Woodpeckers from her living room, as well as the birds she coddled at the feeders.

Betty is survived by children, Norman (Kim), Donald, and Alan Grenon; grandchildren, Alice, Libby and Alfred; former husband Maurice; and brother, George (Anne) Hawkes.

Go look at some birds. That one you’re looking at was her favorite.