

IN MEMORIAM – WALT I. COLE

I met Walt just before he signed up to be a member of NEKAAL. He was enthusiastic about getting the idea of building a large club observatory off and running. He soon pulled out his check-book and made a sizable donation to the observatory fund at the same time joined NEKAAL. That was Walt. He carefully studied and investigated a project and when it was time for action there was no hesitation. He was a committed and loyal friend. He always sought a common sense approach to problems we would encounter along the way building Farpoint as well as club matters in general. He grounded us and kept realism in our sometimes misguided enthusiasm.

He provided enrichment and direction in a very unassuming way; a way in which everyone felt comfortable. He seldom criticized and always wanted to hear what others had to say. For decades he quietly let others lead and with Nancy's help accepted the more mundane job of club treasurer. Walt was a 'quiet' leader for NEKAAL and garnered the respect of everyone who worked with him.



They were many times I would seek his advice (and shamefully used it without so much as acknowledging the source of new-found wisdom). I had grown to depend on Walt for his soundness of judgment and enthusiasm for nearly everything life has to offer. I will miss him, greatly.

- Gary Hug (just one of Walt's many friends)

To me, after hearing everything that Walt did and loved to do made him in my eyes a very rare and often over looked renaissance man. Name it, and he probably did it.

Farewell, Walt. You will be missed by all.

Bryant Hertel



I joined NEKAAL in 1998, so I only knew Walt 10 years and was not privy to his detailed role in establishing the group or in the building of Farpoint. But I have been involved, as a physician and personally, in the more intimate details of the lives of an awful lot of people in my 60 years, and Walt was a certain type of rare person that is at a great premium in the world. Walt Cole was nonjudgmental, gentle, always had a great sense of humor and was totally dependable. His presence gave a sense of calmness and confidence that things were OK. I could tell immediately that he was an enlightened man, a person described by Lao Tzu as one “who animates the world, not appropriates it, a person who stays in the lead of men without their knowing, a person who leads by example not by command, and who, when a great task is finished, leaves people with the feeling, ‘we did this ourselves’”. I will miss him a lot. I wish I could be more like Walt more of the time.

- Bill Leifer

Editor’s Note: These are just a few tributes. There are many more who did not get their comments in for this issue, and they are welcome to add on for the next issue.

Remember, Nancy has designated NEKAAL for memorial contributions in Walt’s name.