

Sue Krone, Always in Our Hearts

By Walter Putnam

Two things stand out the most in my mind whenever I remember Sue Harper Krone: her love for and devotion to my friend and mentor, Dr. Bob Krone; and her conservatism and patriotism, born out of the independent nature of the American West.

The first may have been obvious to any who knew them, for she and Bob were married almost 40 years, working and touring the world together. In fact, she was with him on a trip to Portugal in 2012 when the seeds of the *Journal of Space Philosophy* began to grow in Bob's mind. It was nurtured there by the realization that burgeoning human space travel is remarkably similar to leaving European shores to explore new worlds centuries ago.

As for her feelings of American exceptionalism, it did not take too much bring that out, either, for Sue was quite outspoken about it. Any discussion of politics or foreign affairs was almost certain to give rise to opinions rooted in the deep-seated American values that ran in her veins.

Sue was born on Cathedral Rock Mountain in Oak Creek Canyon, Sedona, Arizona, on September 6, 1930, the sixth child of Marion Harper. She went to work at age 8 and essentially supported herself.

She became one of first women in the Air Force, 1951-53, where she trained as a Korean War medic. Sue served later as administrator in USAF hospitals. Her first priorities were always family, country, friends.



The Harper family, 1932

She and the Colonel met in 1974 at Norton Air Force Base, where he was Director of Personnel and she was a civil service employee. They married in April 1976 and spent the next 18 years directing, managing, and teaching around the world the University of Southern California's Master of Science in Systems Management Degree Program. It was the first of its kind and grew to 83 global study centers by 1993.

Sue was a fixture at space gatherings, too, supporting Bob's endeavors to spur extraterrestrial exploration and development in any way she could. In fact, one of my most poignant memories of this beloved couple is from the International Space Development Conference in Washington, DC, in May 2012, shortly before their trip to Portugal, which played such an important part in establishing the *Journal*.

The last night of the conference, my son Jonathan and I joined the Krones in a short trip from our hotel to Chinatown for a light dinner. We took a cab the few blocks to the restaurant where we ate, but it was cooler when we finished and not that far, so we decided to walk back.

As we strolled along behind Bob and Sue, I was touched by the fact that as they walked along the DC sidewalk they held hands like newlyweds – even after being together through four decades. That warm moment alone was enough to seal her in my memory forever.

The loss of Sue created a void in the Kepler Space Institute community. One of the driving forces behind the founding of KSI is a firm belief in the power of unbridled creativity.

Ideas unlimited. That is what Bob and Sue called it. In fact, they wrote the book on it – *Ideas Unlimited: Capturing Global Brainpower* (2007).

Education and research, KSI's main foci, are methods of putting those ideas to work creating new benefits for humanity.

On the philosophical side – considering that this is a journal of philosophy – many of us also believe that these ideas ultimately are generated by one creative source. That is why KSI Board Chairman Joe Sobodowski, a lay pastor, took the following approach – in the form of a prayer – in a tribute to Sue soon after she left us Christmas Eve, 2014:

Creator God,

You are above, in, and through all. In our limited way, we grasp that our vision and understanding is as if we are peering through a darkened glass.

But Lord, we believe that one day, we will understand as we are understood by You.

Sue has transitioned to the realm of greater understanding and while our head accepts that she is with You and that there's no more tears, sorrow or pain ... our heart aches because she's no longer in this realm.

We ask that You provide a special measure of comfort to the entire family in this time of grief.

Thank You for understanding our human nature. You made us in Your Image and along with intellect, You gave us emotions. Our feelings are quickened and while we accept that Sue has finished this part of her journey, we ask that Your Love, Spirit of Comfort and Peace fill our souls so that we may better deal with her transition and our sense of loss.



We remember the words of Diane Mariechild, a noted author: “A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture, and transform.” That appropriately describes Sue. We miss her creativity. We miss her devotion to family. We miss her transforming influence.

However, we take a measure of comfort in the realization that each of us has the sweet, guiding and loving imprint from Sue on our hearts.

As we continue our walk on this side of eternity, we are grateful our immediate grief and hurt through the healing element of time will be replaced by warm and heartfelt memories of Sue’s love, thoughts, and wisdom. We will be able to hear her voice in our quiet moments and that will bring comfort

God, along with the gifts of intellect and emotion, please add the Gift of Your Presence. Help us to understand better that while we are citizens of this Great Land that in the broader sense we are Citizens of Your Universe and Beyond. Sue has returned to You, and there is a void that we ask Your continued Guidance and Strength in our efforts to fill.

As the poet said,

The woods are lovely dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep.
And miles to go before I sleep.
And miles to go before I sleep.

As such, we have much to do.... Sue would expect that of each of us.

Let each of us resolve to live in such a manner as to honor the unique “Full Circle Wife, Mother, and Friend” we love and know as Sue.

In the name of our Lord,

Amen.