



**Dedication of the Irma Broun-Kahn Education Building, July 13, 2013**  
**Remarks by Stephen B. Edge, M.D.**

Good afternoon. On behalf of the Board and my family, thank you for coming to this dedication of the Education Building at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary.

Like many of you, I have been coming to Hawk Mountain all my life. My earliest memories are from the late 1950's with my father at Board meetings at Schaumbach's and in this room. Grandmother, and of course Irma and Maurice, were here.

However, like many of you, I did not really know Irma. But the historical record makes clear that dedicating this Education Building and the education program to Irma is the best way to honor her legacy and to use her example to educate future generations.

The mission of Hawk Mountain is to conserve birds of prey worldwide. That mission can only be achieved through the three pillars of Hawk Mountain:

**Conservation Science:** Conducting, supporting and fostering cutting edge research in raptor biology, conservation and ecology

**Education:** Providing education on raptors, ecology, the environment and sustainable technologies to people of all ages in Pennsylvania, the nation and around the world

**Stewardship:** Providing a world class sanctuary and protecting the mountain for its glory and for its role in raptor conservation ... as we have seen today, truly a "School in the Clouds."

Like the legs on this podium, failure of any of those pillars brings down the whole mission. In its early days, a similar triad supported Hawk Mountain: Rosalie. Maurice. Irma.

The record speaks clearly: While we all hear how a young ornithologist was recruited by Mrs. Edge, it was really a young, daring couple that she prevailed upon to come here.

As characterized by Maurice, in the early days, in addition to keeping him, she was the "keeper of the gate." Like in many marriages where the outward work is done by one of the couple – we hear about Maurice's counting, and work. But like many of those marriages, the real work went on out of the limelight. In this case,

**It was Irma** who made the signs and posted the property.

**It was Irma**, more often than not, who confronted, cajoled, and ultimately befriended the hunters.

**And it was Irma** who was the first "Director of Education" at Hawk Mountain.

Her philosophy from the start was **experiential education**, with a **policy of teaching, not preaching**.

Now, while we are here today to honor our past, none of the three founders were prone to look back. All were visionaries who looked to the betterment of tomorrow. So I can only imagine how proud all three of those pillars ... Irma, Maurice and Rosalie ... would be to see Hawk Mountain today:

The world's leader in raptor conservation science

Steward of one of the nations' finest sanctuaries and destinations to observe and learn about the natural world.

And particularly, how proud Irma would be to see the fulfillment of those early education sessions at the gate, now manifested as the broad education program for..

children of all ages on the mountain – Don't all of us still marvel and learn every time we come here?

Our community and our leaders,

...and the world's finest education and training program for young raptor biologists and field workers from literally around the world

So I am sure Irma would be proud to be here today. But I am also sure Irma's message would be this:

"It's OK to pause today in celebration. But tomorrow is Sunday, the busiest day at the Mountain. So tomorrow bright and early, it will be time to *GET BACK TO WORK.*"

Today we celebrate, but we need to remember that there is still much to be done, and so many to teach about these beautiful birds, and about protecting our fragile world.

So today Hawk Mountain is dedicating itself to this mission to be the world leader in conservation education to match its continuing global leadership in conservation science.

Thank you again for coming, thank you to Irma and the Irma Penniman Kahn Foundation and thanks to all of you, on behalf of the Board and our family, for all you do for Hawk Mountain and the birds.