



## Edward "Ed" Sand

October 16, 1935 - January 1, 2022

On the afternoon of January 1st, 2022, Edward James Sand went into the arms of Jesus. Ed was born in Greenwalt, Minnesota, on October 16th, 1935, to Peter and Ida (Vornbrock) Sand. He was the youngest of 14 children. Two of them, Nicholas and Barbara, died as children, but Ed grew up with the other 11. In 1940, his family moved to Clarkston, Washington. As he grew up and attended Clarkston High School, he met his mentor, Rex Gardner. Rex inspired Ed in his musical gifts and helped Ed discern his vocation as a music teacher.

After graduating high school in 1954, Ed earned enough money driving a combine for a friend of the family to attend Gonzaga University that fall. He enjoyed singing in the Gonzaga Men's Glee Club. The following year, Ed transferred to Central Washington University to major in music education. He studied voice with another mentor there; Dr. Wayne Hertz, and sang in the Central Singers. It is there that he met his future wife, Mary Bryan. Mary was studying elementary education. They both graduated in June of 1957, and married the following summer on August 10th. They decided to make their home in East Wenatchee, and both began teaching in the new East Wenatchee School District. Ed started teaching music at Grant and Rock Island Elementary schools.

During the next few years, Brian and Cary were born, and Ed moved up to

teach at Eastmont High School. It was in those years that he joined the Wenatchee Apollo Club, just to have fun with a "bunch of guys who just like singing". By 1960, he became the Director of the club, which he would continue to enjoy for the next 40 years.

The 1960's brought more to the Sand home as daughters Penny and Mandy joined the family. Ed decided to build his family a home on the corner of 39th and Cascade in East Wenatchee. Family gatherings were celebrated there on holidays, and summers included many potlucks in their beautiful yard. Ed and Mary, loved to entertain and all were always welcome to stop by.

The late 1960's and 70's were active as Ed, started many singing groups at Eastmont High School. His students could enjoy being a part of Women's or Men's Glee, Swing Choir, Folk Choir, Flappers, and Concert Choir. It was in these years that he met Leon McKinney, the Eastmont Band Director, who became like a brother to him. They worked together to organize and manage their very large music programs. As Ed became the Eastmont District Music Coordinator, he helped encourage the music teachers in the rest of the district. Many kids called Ed "Coach", as he would give them encouraging pep talks before big performances. Throughout his many years at Eastmont, leading up to his retirement in 1987, many students came in and out of the school with a great love of music.

After he retired from Eastmont, he decided to give selling cars a try and worked at Leonard Evans for the next few years, as well as continuing to lease a small orchard that he and his family had been working for many years. In 1991, Ed decided to go back to teaching music and taught at St. Joseph Catholic School for 12 years. He began the St. Joseph School Honor Choir, which became a great joy to him and the school.

The Sand family enjoyed being involved at Holy Apostles Catholic Church. Mary, ran the CCD program there for many years, and Ed taught Catechism.

But his biggest joy was making sure to have a large choir rehearsed and ready for Christmas Eve and Easter mornings. Many family members, parishioners, and former or current students could always count on a call from "Coach" to come and sing at church!

Ed loved spending time on the golf course with family and friends. He really enjoyed watching sports on TV. In fact, Saturdays and Sunday afternoons were dominated by college and pro sports. His favorites being Notre Dame and Gonzaga, of course.

Throughout all these years, the Wenatchee Apollo Club, remained a large part of his life and the life of his family. Both sons, Brian and Cary, and his son in law, Greg Bush, sang in the club. His wife, Mary, was also a big part as she was in charge of publicity and programs, as well as the home concert receptions. Ed and Mary, rewrote the song, "My Way", and changed it to become the club's beloved theme song, "Our Way". Ed's musical arrangements were routinely used as a part of Apollo Club's carefully planned repertoire for each year's theme. Ed helped make the Wenatchee Apollo Club an integral part of the musical community of Wenatchee. After retiring from leading the club, Ed and a few of Apollo alumni, formed a small singing group called "The Rusty Barbed Wire Boys". They continued entertaining people with great music.

In 2003, Ed was awarded with the Wenatchee region's highest level of recognition for the support of the arts, the Stanley Lifetime Achievement Award. Ed treasured this award because he loved performing and creating enthusiasm for music in the Wenatchee valley.

After Mary passed away in 2015, Ed spent his last few years at Highgate Senior Living, surrounded by family and an extremely loving staff that truly

cared for him.

Survivors include his children, Brian (Diane) Sand, Cary (Teri) Sand, Penny Buffington, and Mandy (Greg) Bush. Ed had 12 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren.

There will be a Rosary Service for Ed, held on Friday, March 18th, 2022, 6:30pm at Chapel of the Valley in East Wenatchee. A Memorial Mass will be on Saturday, March 19th, 2022, 10am, at Holy Apostles Catholic Church in East Wenatchee.

Contributions to his memory can be made to The Edward J. Sand "Spirit of the Choir" Endowment Fund, at the address below.

<https://cfncw.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create?funit id=4381>

Arrangements by Chapel of the Valley, East Wenatchee.

# Tribute Wall

JD

“ I had the privilege to know Ed Sands as a student in Concert and Swing Choir from 1975 to 1977. Ed Sands was one of my beloved teachers, along with Leon McKinney and Glen Carr, who played an important role in my life, inspiring and encouraging my passion for music that I still continue with to this day. Like so many of his students during his career, he helped to provide an opportunity for me to be selected for All State and All Northwest Choir, a wonderful time in my life that I shall always cherish. He was also so kind enough to allow the Concert Choir to sing several of my choir compositions and arrangements to hear what these sounded like - there was no software generated sampled voicing or midi back then as there is now.

To his family, thank you for sharing him with us. I can imagine it may not always have been such an easy feat to do so. But know that in teaching so many generations of students for decades to sing and enjoy music, he gave them courage and confidence to go on through life, to learn more skills, and to meet any obstacles they may have encountered. That is the true art of music education and Ed Sands was a master of it!

Ed Sands will be forever in the annals of Washington State Music Education and forever in our hearts. Well done, our teacher, our friend, well done! He is now with our Lord in the Music of the Spheres, along with Handel, Puccini, and Rodgers and Hammerstein, all applauding him with a standing ovation.

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Joanna Danahey - March 19, 2022 at 12:07 PM

WC

“ Ed Sand was for decades, a well-known and well-loved choir director for the Wenatchee Apollo Club Men's Choir and at Eastmont High School. Ed directed the Apollo Club five different times beginning in 1960 and ending in 2005. He served as director for 40 years! Literally thousands experienced his vocal tutelage over the years. In the 112-year history of the Apollo Club those who fell under Ed's guidance will always remember and appreciate his efforts.

*As director of the Apollo Club, Ed was able to take new singers (and better-trained vocalists as well) and mold us into a choir that had fun, was entertaining and was the example for other choirs on how to perform. Our "Home Concert" in the Spring of each year, was the highlight of the season. It was usually held at the Wenatchee High School so we could accommodate the large audiences. There were times the high school was completely full. All songs were sung from memory, and we were dressed in our tuxes, with matching cumber buns and bow ties.*

*Ed had a terrific ear and was always aware when the "third of the chord" was missing and he was not shy at sharing the things that made us better individual singers and a better choir. Ed molded us into a choir that was the envy of other choirs in the region.*

*We in the Apollo Club will miss Ed and will always fondly remember him and his efforts to make us the best choir we could be. Thanks Ed.*

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**Wenatchee Apollo Club** - January 28, 2022 at 12:56 PM

JB

“ I started singing in the Eastmont High School choir the first year Mr. Sand taught music fresh out of Central Washington University. He had a good method of teaching and didn't put up with any disturbance with unruly students. He made sure that we were in choir to learn how to sing. He wasn't all music all period, but was fun at times and told good stories. I remember when he played the guitar and sang at an assembly one time, I thought what a talented person. He selected me to sing a solo at graduation and I thought how I was going to get through the music since we had to sing by memorizing the music. I did alright as I remember. After graduation I sang in the Apollo Club when Ed was the director. He sure had an ear for music being sang correctly. He would stop the song at practice and say he could hear a note being sang incorrectly. He had what was called perfect pitch. He had funny little comments if we were singing flat. He said if we keep singing flat he was going to have us set on a sheet paper. He sure had an ear for music and was an interesting person. I will always remember "Mr. Sand"  
John Brockwell  
Class of "60". Go Eastmont

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**John Brockwell** - January 19, 2022 at 01:01 PM

DM

“ I was in Concert Choir in the late 70's at Eastmont High and had Mr. Sand for all choir classes. I found him to be such a nice man and so encouraging to us fledgling choir participants. I remember him fondly and can still see him standing in front of us, mouthing the words while we all sang at concerts. He would beam at all of us standing in front of him. He surely touched so many of us! Rest peacefully and know that you truly made a difference.

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**Denise Foubert Mays** - January 18, 2022 at 03:37 PM

JM

“ I first came to know Ed when the Apollo Club performed at a benefit concert the Wenatchee High School was singing for in the early 90's. My daughter was in the high school choir and we had gone to watch her. I remember sitting in the audience with my wife (a former student of Ed's) listening to the Apollo Club sing the John Denver song, "Late Night Radio", and turning to my wife to say, "I think I could do that. They sure look like they're having fun." A couple months later, I found myself in the Eastmont High School choir room on a Tuesday night to see what Apollo Club was all about. Ed invited me back to the "tryout" room, where he had me sing a few scales and promptly pronounced me to be a first tenor (yeah, the high one...). Having sung in my high school and college choirs (and thinking I knew better), I told him, "But I can sing baritone or bass, too. And I've never sung first tenor." His reply? "We need first tenors. You're a first tenor." And you know what? I did sing first tenor - for a few years. As Perrin said in his post, if Ed knew you could do more, he would gently (or not so gently) move you towards it. He knew how to motivate someone without offending them (too much, anyway); whether it be by direct bluntness in front of God and everyone, or more tactfully away from the group. About the third year I was in the Club, he had us do a medley of songs by George Cohan, and he asked me to do a solo on Yankee Doodle. When I got home from practice, I told my wife about it. She told me Ed had caught her chewing gum in his choir class about 20 years earlier and, to help her remember not to do it again, he had her sing, "Yankee Doodle" in front of the class. I joked with her she was the one who got caught chewing gum, but I was somehow still paying for her misstep 20 years later. Anyway, it was all fine and "dandy" learning the solo and getting it down - until a few weeks before our concerts began; when he announced I also needed to wear a red, white, and blue top hat, and strut back and forth across the stage while I was singing the solo. OK, I was already pushing my limits by doing a solo, and the top hat was one thing, but strutting across the stage was a totally different matter. But, I made it through and became a more outgoing and less self-conscious person the rest of my life because of it. A couple years later, we did the medley again

*and he asked if I would do that solo again. I said I would, but there would be no top hat or strutting this time. I thought we were in agreement, but a couple weeks before our first concert, the top hat made its appearance at practice, again. And yes, I wore it and strutted. Like I said, he had a way of motivating you.*

*Practices with Ed were always fun, and usually pretty hard. Ed's ear was well-tuned and he was able to hear and change tiny little things that made big differences in the professional sound his choirs routinely attained. Funny gestures and witty sayings were commonplace; like when he would act as if he was tearing his nose off his face and throwing it to the ground when we stunk something up, or when he would slowly draw a square in the air out in front of him to let us know we didn't sing something quite hip enough, or when he'd (frequently) remind us, "consonants are the vehicle of drama and emotion." His insistence that sheet music not be used during performances led to a bunch of middle-aged and older Apollo Club members having their memory skills enhanced for years after. We worked hard during practice, but enjoyed it so much, whatever cares of the world were weighing you down when you entered practice didn't seem so bad when practice was over.*

*Ed's skill in directing choirs during performances was unsurpassed. He had the ability to engage the singer that made them feel as if they were actually participating in his directing of the song; not just following it. I was so reminded of this when I saw pictures from the Wenatchee World's online article about the Ed Sand Spirit of the Choir endowment set up last year. When I zoomed in to try and find my wife in a couple of the high school choir pictures where they were performing, I was blown away by how intently focused in on Ed every person in those choirs was. In spite of the intensity, Ed always made it fun (well, except maybe for that top hat strutting thing). I cannot remember a performance when people didn't comment on how much fun it looked like we were having. And we were having fun - mostly because of Ed's work with us. Good times. I also have fond memories of Ed the singer; as a member of the Rusty Barbed Wire Boys, and singing next to him in the Apollo Club*

*after he retired as director. His bass/baritone voice was fun to try and match, and constantly gave us an audio reminder of the "right way" to sing; whether that be booming or soft. The Rusties practiced with "Coach" last summer for the final time, and he was as sharp-of-ear as ever. He worked us over pretty good for over an hour and still caught parts we weren't singing quite right. And he would know; most of our arrangements were done by him, as were a good deal of the numbers Apollo Club sang. When he passed, the world lost one of the most capable arrangers of four-part male harmony that existed. And that is not an overstatement.*

*Ed seemed bigger than life and, everywhere we went (I mean everywhere), people who knew him would come out of the woodwork to greet him. And, they always had a look of excitement that they were getting to see him. He clearly had a positive effect on hundreds, if not thousands, of people in the Valley, and beyond. He did on me. I continue to benefit from it and continue to be a better person for it. I and many others look forward to seeing him again and hearing that familiar encouragement, "Way to go guys!"*

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**J Michael** - January 16, 2022 at 04:14 PM

DL

“ There are two memories I have of Ed Sand. The first is through my brother Aaron. Back in 1993-1994 they co-wrote the alma mater for Eastmont High School. I don't remember if my Brother was a Junior or Senior at the time. Ed Sand was the Chamber Choir Director at the time. The other memory was more first hand. It was the one and only time I went to a solo ensemble competition. I think it was 1995. He was my voice coach. To say I was an introvert would be the understatement of the century. I was surprised how much confidence and sheer amount of energy he released from me that year. I was able to secure a "SUPERIOR" rating at the competition that year as well. He was one talented dude.

*Thanks Ed. Rest Easy, and Happy Trails  
David LuBean*

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David LuBean - January 15, 2022 at 02:55 PM

PC

“ I first got to know Ed at EHS. In 63 he asked me to narrate a concert performance. It was fun and I got hooked on working with the public. Later years our paths crossed and he always seemed the same... happy to see you, remembered you and had a good word. Much later on a whim I took voice lessons from him at St Josephs. I enjoyed it and am glad I did. Still later he drug me to Apollo Club and I was in and out of the club over a ten year period most of which Ed directed. He could be a task master especially if he knew you could do more. At the same time if you were struggling with the music or singing he would realize and offer his help. I for one will miss him even though I haven't seen him since he moved to Tri Cites (then later back here). Though I did talk with him a couple times. All my best wishes to his family and to Ed God Bless and God's Speed!

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Perrin Cornell - January 15, 2022 at 01:08 PM

GS

“ One of my first memories of Mr. Sand was from a first grade assembly where he lead the EHS concert choir at Grant Elementary. I remember thinking afterward..."someday I'll get to sing in a choir!" And how many EHS (class 1971) students did he inspire thru the years with a love of singing? And more than just the music...with enthusiasm and fun and doing our best. I still sing in a community choir because he taught me that blending voices in song refreshes the soul. Mr. Sand, thank you for filling my life with music!

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**Glenda Smith** - January 11, 2022 at 11:32 AM

ST

“ What an incredible human being Ed Sand was. I have so many special memories of being part of one of the best high school choir programs in Washington state (class of '86). He was truly one of a kind and shared the gift of music with so many. I have no doubt he's singing with the angels. Prayers being lifted for all the family.

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**Susan Tate** - January 10, 2022 at 10:49 PM

TB

“ Coach grew my singing ability for several years. He was a constant encourager and instilled a discipline to excel not only musically, but as a person. I remain so thankful for the hours of private and class teaching. Coach so often was more confident in me than I was of myself. Thank goodness for that. Brian, Cary, Penny, and Mandy-I am sorry for the loss of your dad. He was a huge inspiration to me. All my love and a hug for each of you-Trish (Shriner) Blevins

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**Trish Blevins** - January 06, 2022 at 01:01 AM