

Friday, May 29, 2009

MTD Professor Danny Jordan dies at age 64



The Department of Music, Theatre and Dance lost a treasured member of its family Wednesday, May 27, with the death of jazz instructor Professor Danny Jordan. He was 64.

A funeral service will be held Monday, June 1, 11 a.m., at A. J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Home, 2600 Crooks Road (between Maple and Big Beaver) in Troy. Visitation will be Sunday, May 31, from 2-8 p.m.

Danny was born on April 5, 1945 in Fort Worth, Texas to Roy and Marjorie Jordan. He grew up in the Fort Worth area before moving to Detroit during his high school years. Danny was born with a natural love of music. Blessed with perfect pitch, he began playing the piano at the age of four.

Danny graduated from Grosse Pointe High School in 1963 where he performed on the piano and served as the conductor for the school orchestra. He then began his long and distinguished career as a professional musician, traveling and performing in Europe and working in clubs in the Detroit area. During the heyday of the Motown era, he worked for Jobete Music and Hitsville USA and continued to be in demand as a pianist and arranger for recording studios in the Detroit area.

While performing at the London Chop House, Danny met singer Marlene Hill, a defining moment in his life. In 1970, they married and formed the group, "The Loving Cup". With Danny at the piano, combined with Marlene's beautiful voice, "The Loving Cup" became one of the most popular acts in the Detroit area. Through their many years of performing, they developed lifelong friendships with their loyal fans. Occasionally they performed out West, but they preferred staying close to home.

Regardless of the numerous musical accomplishments throughout Danny's life, nothing compared to the reward of the companionship of his loving wife and soul mate, Marlene. From the moment they met, they remained inseparable throughout their 39 years of marriage. They were best friends and the love of each other's lives. Their special bond was evident to anyone who knew them.

One of Danny and Marlene's greatest joys was raising their daughter Lori. Danny was the perfect Dad for Lori and all her friends. One of his proudest moments was walking her down the aisle at her wedding to Randy. This union brought him even greater joy with the birth of three grandsons, Jake, Ryan, and Parker.

Danny attended Wayne State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Music degree with Highest Distinction. He created the Jazz Program at Oakland University where he served as the Director of Jazz Studies and directed the OU Jazz Band, the Oakland Jazz Singers, and the Oakland Jazz Improv Singers. He was President of Michigan Association of Jazz Educators as well as a pianist of their Reading Band, which performs at the Detroit International Jazz Festival. He also served as adjudicator at many jazz festivals and competitions and led the Danny Jordan Jazz Ensemble. Danny touched the lives of his students and always had an open door. He advised, inspired and instilled a love of music and jazz to all. Teaching young people was his true passion.

Danny's intellect and interests were far reaching. Not only was he an amazing musician, attested to by all who heard him, but he had a great love of baseball. As a child, he amassed the largest baseball card collection in the city of Fort Worth! He was a true blue Tiger fan. Danny was an accomplished chess player and also served as a Microsoft Beta Tester. He and Marlene enjoyed traveling and spending time with friends and family.

Danny was a true gentleman and scholar. Despite his many accomplishments, he remained modest, kind and humble. Danny had a great sense of humor, a relaxed and unassuming nature and his character was second to none. We will miss him dearly.

Memorial tributes may be sent to The Salvation Army, Danny's favorite charity or designated to the Oakland University Jazz Program in Rochester, Michigan.

For more information about funeral arrangements, please visit www.desmondfuneralhome.com

A **Facebook tribute page for Professor Jordan** is on line as well.

SUMMARY

The Department of Music, Theatre and Dance lost a valued member of its family Wednesday, May 27, with the death of jazz instructor Professor Danny Jordan.

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