



## Earl Norwood

July 27, 1934 - June 28, 2018

Dr. Earl Norwood, a resident of Wenatchee, Washington, died on June 28, 2018.

Earl was born to Inez Guymon Norwood and Francis Raymond Norwood in Boise, Idaho, on July 27, 1934. He grew up in Walla Walla, Washington, as the youngest of six children. From a very early age he had an interest in music. He played the violin as a child and learned the tuba as a high school student. With his love of music, he became the first child in his family to go to college, earning his bachelor's and master's degrees in music at Washington State University. He then went on to earn a Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Oregon.

Earl started his career in Genesee, Idaho, where he taught music at all levels, grade school through high school.

He came to Wenatchee from Idaho in the fall of 1959 and was hired to direct and build the choir and orchestra at HB Ellison Junior High School and Wenatchee High School. Both schools resided in the same building on Idaho street, HB Ellison becoming Orchard Junior High School. Through the next six years, Earl built dynamic programs, developing a reputation for excellence throughout the Northwest.

Wenatchee High School musicals under his direction (he also directed the pit orchestra) were huge hits locally. These included Brigadoon, Oklahoma, South Pacific, Lil' Abner, Music Man, My Fair Lady, and Camelot. The Wenatchee High School Acapella Choir was selected to perform at the State

Music Educators Convention in 1964 in Yakima and at the All Northwest Music Educators Convention in 1965 in Portland, Oregon.

Earl found time to be involved in community groups outside of the schools, including involvement in founding and developing the Orchard Avenue Opera Company and Music Theater of Wenatchee.

In 1960 Earl met the love of his life, Vivian Ball, a young music student at Central Washington College, who was student teaching at Lincoln Elementary School and walked into his classroom to observe his class. Together with their love of teaching and music, they built a life teaching kids, both young and old, about the joys and appreciation of music.

In 1966 he moved on to the collegiate level, leaving behind a legacy of admiring Wenatchee students, many going on to successful careers in music and theater. His influence on Wenatchee continues through this day.

In 1969 Earl became the Choir Director for St. Catherine and St. Thomas Universities in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He took his passion for music performance and developed the choir, so they could perform the world premiere of Krzysztof Penderecki's *The Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Saint Luke* at the famous Carnegie Hall in New York City with the Minneapolis Orchestra.

Earl taught choral and vocal classes at the University of Portland while he was finishing his doctorate. In 1975, he was noted as an Outstanding Educator of America in recognition for his contributions to higher education and service to community.

In 1973 he became the Chairman of the Music Department and Choir Director at Plymouth State College in Plymouth, New Hampshire. Taking his love for community, he started the Pemigewasset Choral Society, a community and university-based choir that flourished and continues today.

In 1978, Earl moved to Tennessee taking a position as Chairman of the Music Department at the University of Tennessee at Martin. During his tenure in Martin, he developed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program and became the Director of the Division of Fine and Performing Arts. The degree programs he

directed included Music, Art, Dance and Theatre. He also introduced Graphic Arts to the department, innovatively bringing together design and composition with state-of-the art computer technology. During his time there, he was a member of the Music Educators Association, The International Council of Fine Arts Deans, and The National Association of Schools of Music. Through NASM he participated in accrediting music departments at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Being known as a maverick in his field, he worked tirelessly to promote the arts as a way for communities to come together and make the arts accessible to all.

In 2003 Earl retired, and in 2005 he returned to his northwest roots in Wenatchee in to be near friends and family. For three years, he volunteered his time to serve on the board for the Wenatchee Performing Arts Center and enjoyed being around friends and colleagues. Aside from music he loved long driving trips, creating beautiful furniture from fine woods, and had a flair for technology; but most of all, he spent time fulfilling his biggest love – his love for his family.

Earl is survived by his wife of 56 years, Vivian, children Kerry Covington (m. Shane Covington), Kelly Norwood (m. Mike Elble), Kimberly Avery (m. Scott Avery), and Earl Norwood (m. Audrey Norwood). He has five grandchildren Madeline Hahn, Katherine “Masha” Covington, Kaylee Hahn, Nora Beth Avery, and Leila Elble.

The world is a better place for him being in it.

Dr. Norwood’s life will be celebrated on Thursday, July 5th at 11:00 AM at Grace Lutheran Church, 1408 Washington Street, Wenatchee. Interment will follow at Evergreen Memorial Park, 1301 10th Street NE, East Wenatchee. A reception will follow at the home of Dan Jackson.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Service

JUL 5. 11:00 AM (PT)

Grace Lutheran  
1408 Washington St  
Wenatchee, WA 98801

# Tribute Wall

DJ

“ *Dr. Earl Norwood was a beacon of light for the Music Department at the University of Tennessee at Martin, a man of integrity and musicianship who set the example of how to treat students, colleagues and members of the community.*

*In addition to his administrative responsibilities, Earl directed a choir of university and community musicians who performed large choral works at Christmas and in the Spring. It was a joy to sing in his choir! His depth of knowledge and understanding of the music inspired both singers and orchestral members to raise their level of performance.*

*Earl guided the music department and the art department through some important growth years always insisting on the highest of standards at every turn. His ethics were evident time and again as he worked to improve and guide these departments in their support of the Arts in West Tennessee.*

*I count myself lucky to have had Earl both as a colleague and as a dear friend. My deepest sympathy to Vivian and her entire family.*

*Dr. Barbara Jones  
Emerita Professor of Music*

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**Dr. Barbara Jones** - July 24, 2018 at 03:04 PM

CD

“ I remember back in the fall of 1973 when a group of friends from New Hampton, NH drove up to Plymouth State College to join a new community choir that Earl Norwood was starting to serve the Central NH community!! That first night-Earl asked if anyone would be willing to accompany the newly formed Pemigewasset Choral Society and I raised my hand and became their first piano accompanist for the first five years of this wonderful new arts organization!!

*Earl was an outstanding and very dedicated conductor and in no time we were performing all over Central NH!!*

*I consider Earl Norwood to be one of my most important musical mentors!!*

*He gave me my first important piano performance position in NH!!*

*I will always be so grateful and hold a very loving spot in my heart for Earl and his lovely wife, Vivian!!*

*May God hold Earl in his Eternal Arms Always and Forever!!*

*Love,*

*Catharine Dornin*

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**catharine Dornin** - July 19, 2018 at 08:24 PM

DM

“ It was a privilege and a pleasure to have known Dr. Norwood during the years of his return to Wenatchee. He was a humble, gracious and delightful man to spend time with. He enjoyed hearing some of my personal stories as I did his at his periodic appointments. I remain particularly grateful for his hosting of my wife and I for the performance of *Chaunticleer* several years ago. My condolences to all that mourn his departure.

*David J Houghland MD*

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**David Houghland MD** - July 08, 2018 at 05:20 PM

KM

“ I was in Mr. Norwood's choir for 4 years and was in both Brigadoon and South Pacific. He taught me this: "Results, Not Excuses!" I didn't realize what a marvelous music program and choir we had at Wenatchee High School until I went to college and didn't join the choir because it wasn't as good as my high school one! He was a wonderful teacher, never forgotten! My heart goes out to Vivian and the whole family at this tragic loss of your beloved husband, father, grandfather.

*With sincere sympathy, Karen (Pulsipher) Meyn, Class of 62.*

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**Karen Meyn** - July 05, 2018 at 07:25 PM

SL

“ We all go through this life, wanting to leave it better than when we first got here, and with Earl that truly is the case. For those of us, who had the opportunity to be apart of the musicals that he directed, sang in his choirs, and who had the great pleasure of living next door knew what a great person that he was. My love of music was the direct influence of his leadership and dedication and made me realize that music was a part of my life that I could not do without. Because of this, I was offered the opportunity to perform, not only with several coral groups in the navy, but to sing with the Wenatchee Apollo club for forty years, and my greatest pleasure was afforded me when I was asked if I would ask Dr. Norwood to introduce one of the songs and the soloist at our centennial concert.

**WHAT A GREAT MAN**

*My thoughts and prayers go out to Vivian, and family over your loss. Truly this world is a better place because Dr. Norwood was here and thank you for sharing your husband and your dad with all of us. He has made our lives richer for having had him in our lives.*

*Skip*

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**skip laney** - July 05, 2018 at 03:45 PM

EH

“ Sorry to hear of your lost. You and your family are in our prayers.  
*Eddy and Priscilla Hicks*

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**Eddy Hicks** - July 05, 2018 at 03:09 PM

LA

“ *I took piano tuning from Dr. Norwood as an evening class, I think it was the last year that he taught it (1997). I often referred to him as "Colonel Sanders" thanks to his white beard.*

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**Larry** - July 05, 2018 at 12:49 PM

DC

“ *I am saddened to hear the news of Earl's passing. He was a respected musician and artist. His choirs were always superb. Earl was a fierce, unapologetic promoter and defender of the arts. The only thing he cared for more was his wife and family. My condolences to everyone in the family and hope for Vivian's swift recovery.*

*- Douglas Cook*

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**Douglas Cook** - July 05, 2018 at 10:09 AM

TP

“ We, Mr. Norwood’s students were so very, very fortunate to have him in our lives.

*Participating in choir, Madrigal group and musicals gave me an education and appreciation of music and theatre for life.*

*Our choir motto, “Results not excuses” which as painted on the trailer hauling choir risers and pulled by his huge Pontiac stated EXACTLY what he expected of us .... and himself.*

*I thought of that motto often in difficult times pursuing higher education and later a business career.*

*I like to think I was “special” to Mr. Norwood. But the truth is, we were all special and he had the unique gift of making each of us feel special.*

*Mr. Norwood was always proud of my accomplishments.....his students accomplishments in later life. We were important to him. He will always be important to us.*

*Tib Plughoff*

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tib plughoff - July 04, 2018 at 02:41 PM