

Narrative: Dan's Life

Daniel Alan Molter was born November 6, 1940, in Pittsburgh, PA, to Daniel W.C. and Helen Marloff Molter. Dan has one younger sister, Marcia, born 3 years later. Dan had fond memories of childhood time spent with his Austrian paternal grandmother, Elizabeth, and remembered her affectionate phrases in German. His paternal Aunt, also Elizabeth, was influential in his early years, especially encouraging his love of music with regular trips to the record store. As a teenager he had an extensive record collection of classical music.

Dan began playing the trumpet in elementary school, took lessons, was a member of the Pittsburg Youth Orchestra and attended summer music camps including Interlochen. Dan won a scholarship and pursued his undergraduate education at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, where he received his degree in accounting. Dan was active in the choir, glee club, orchestra and band. In his senior year he filled in at the last minute when the soloist playing the Hummel trumpet concerto fell ill.

After graduation Dan accepted a job at an accounting firm in New York City and quickly became involved in vocal music groups, including the Renaissance Chorus of New York, who later found him in 2009 for the centennial celebration of the chorus' founder, Harold Brown. He returned to graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania and received his MBA in Finance from the Wharton School of Business. Upon graduation he moved to Morristown, NJ, where he began his own singing group specializing in early music. Dan's love of opera led him to participation in amateur opera where he sang the part of a soldier in a production of Carmen. Dan told a story about one performance where, in one scene, Carmen storms offstage, catching her wig on the buttons of his uniform and leaving it behind dangling.

Dan commuted to Manhattan for many years, working in market research analysis on Wall Street and in finance for various companies. He eventually moved back to the city, sang in the Dessoff Choirs, and began another small a capella singing group, called The Billings Singers, who had a diverse repertoire.

Dan married in 1977, then moved to Philadelphia, again working in finance as a comptroller and chief financial officer. In Philadelphia he sang with the University of the Arts Chorus. His daughters, Theresa and Anna, were born in 1980 and 1984. Dan became ill with what was eventually diagnosed as chronic fatigue syndrome in 1982. In 1986 he moved to Arizona for his health. He opened his own investment consulting business in Tucson in 1992, which gave him the opportunity to use his skills, work his own hours and accept as many clients as he felt he could manage.

Dan quickly became involved in vocal music groups including Arizona Repertory Singers, the Caliente! jazz vocal group and the Lane Justus Chorale. In the late 1990s Dan's voice became less dependable and he returned to playing his trumpet, eventually settling on a cornet. Dan was a member of the Arizona Symphonic Winds, Tucson Concert Band, Old Arizona Brass Band (4th Cavalry Band) and the Old Pueblo Brass Band for many years.

Dan and Marcia met while playing together in all of the bands just mentioned. Over the years their relationship developed from acquaintances and fellow musicians to good friends, and eventually marriage in 2008. Each had found the love of their lives. Many of you here were a part of those years.

In 2007 Dan was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. In retrospect, many of his unexplained health issues since the mid 1990's were most probably early symptoms of the disease. Dan continued his involvement with his instrumental music, attending his last rehearsal on Friday evening, February 16. He was admitted to the hospital on February 18th with aspiration pneumonia. Although his ability to play was diminishing he was welcomed by his music groups. The kindness of many fellow musicians during the last months was heart-warming and most appreciated, allowing him to continue participation in the music he loved so much. With the Parkinson's symptoms progressing he never lost his mental ability to read music or to pick an investment.

Dan loved to travel and throughout his life visited many parts of the United States and Europe. Among adventures during a trip to Spain in his 20s included the story of being somewhat lost after dark in a quiet area and deciding to sleep on the ground rolled up in a recently purchased rug beside his small rental car, only to be awakened early in the morning by heavy equipment noise and to discover he was on the edge of the city dump.

Dan will always be remembered as a loving, intelligent, kind gentleman with an incredible knowledge and love of music. His trademark was a memorable sense of humor, specializing in word-play and puns. After all, he was born in Pennsylvania. Recent comments from his financial clients describe him as "an elegant gentleman", "a trusted friend", "helped me at a very hard time in my life", "took a personal interest", "really cared".

To the end, Dan's inner strength and courage were evident. He accepted his diminishing abilities without complaint and kept going forward each day with dignity. Nothing cheered him more than his daughters, Theresa and Anna. A visit, telephone call or card lifted his spirits for days.