



Ovid Young

May 10, 1940 - August 24, 2014

Although he accomplished so much of which to be proud, Dr. Ovid Young was a humble man who found such happiness in giving to all who were within his reach. He was a talented composer, musician, and performer who was well known within the community he loved. A loving and devoted husband, father, and grandfather, Ovid's richest reward was found in his family who were his greatest source of pride and joy. He was also a mentor, a visionary, a teacher, and a friend who had a vibrant zest for life that was contagious to those around him. Dr. Young inspired others through his compositions and through musical performances, but it will be his unwavering faith throughout his entire life's journey that will be his lasting legacy. The 1930s brought us some of the most trying days we have faced as a nation as the entire decade was cloaked in the hardship of the Great Depression. With the dawn of the 1940s, the unemployment rate was on the decline, which whispered a promise of what could be in store, but there was also growing concern as the tensions of WWII continued to escalate overseas. It was during this eventful time that a young couple from Portsmouth, Ohio, was pleased to announce the birth of their baby boy on May 10, 1940. Ovid W. was one of six children born to his parents, Quince and Nellie (Suthers) Young, and he was raised in the family home alongside his three sisters, Donna, Faye, and Jane, and his two brothers, Harold and Dale. He was a student at local schools who went on to graduate from Olivet Nazarene University in 1962. With his education behind him, Ovid was poised for greatness. He was a versatile musician who was an

accomplished pianist, organist, composer, and conductor who had to his credit more than 7,000 performances in major concert halls, churches, and colleges around the world. Dr. Young performed for audiences in virtually every sizable city in the United States as well as abroad in England, Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Denmark, India, and the Caribbean. Millions more witnessed his performances on television throughout the United States, Australia, Western Europe, and the former Soviet Union. As an organist Dr. Young played many of the largest and most interesting organs in America as well as numerous cathedral church organs in Europe. Because of his knowledge of and passion for the instrument, he played an integral role in acquiring the mighty Ruffatti pipe organ for Olivet's Centennial Chapel. Dr. Young took such joy in bringing it to life through both university and community-wide concerts. In addition to solo performances, Dr. Young made numerous orchestral appearances through the years including with the English Chamber Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra, Seoul (Korea) Philharmonic, Bohuslav Martinu (Czech Republic) Philharmonic, Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Aarhus (Denmark) Symphony, Florida Philharmonic, and the symphonies of Denver, Phoenix, and Nashville. Additionally, he was the music director and conductor of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra from 1974 to 1984. In addition to performing, Dr. Young was a talented composer whose many compositions and arrangements are published by several American publishers. As someone who composed orchestral scores for several feature-length films, he is widely remembered as the pianist-arranger-conductor for the prominent operatic singing duo of Robert Hale and Dean Wilder. Ovid was also known as one half of the celebrated piano duo, Nielson & Young. Dr. Young's affiliation with his alma mater continued throughout his entire life. For nearly four decades he was commissioned annually by the president of Olivet, first by Dr. Leslie Parrott in 1976 and later by Dr. Bowling, to write an original arrangement of an outstanding hymn or gospel song for presentation by the Orpheus Choir and instrumentalists at the conclusion of the baccalaureate sermon. His latest

composition of “How Deep the Father’s Love” for the 2014 baccalaureate service was a fitting summary of Dr. Young’s life and legacy. The lyrics, which state in part of one who “does not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom,” describe the extraordinary man that Dr. Young was. In everything he did he always pointed back to his first great love and the saving grace of his Heavenly Father. For much of his life Dr. Young served his beloved alma mater in numerous capacities including his most recent appointment as artist-in-residence for the school of music. In this role he performed, taught, and oversaw Olivet concerts and recital series. Dr. Young also acted as an ambassador-at-large for the music program. Although he found great reward in his career, Ovid also cherished his family. He was blessed to share his life with his true love, and together he and Laura raised two sons, Erik and Kirk. It was always fun and interesting to be Ovid Young’s son as they both got to go places, see things, do things, and meet people solely because of who he was. They were able to see numerous cities, a few countries, the insides of many recording studios, and many back stages by tagging along with him. Ovid’s sons certainly saw the exciting side of life, but they also learned that success comes through hard work as he truly approached every job or show as though he had something to prove with his own standard to meet. Ovid’s sons were inspired to live their own dream through his example. An amazing father, Ovid was also a fantastic grandfather who always made his grandchildren feel so special. He took his granddaughter’s scrawled notes on a piece of sheet music and brought them to life. Through these and other little things Ovid showed her how he could find the beauty in everything and everyone. He gave his grandson, Josh, a summer to remember when Ovid got him a job at the Chicago Bears’ training camp. Not only did Josh work under Gary Griffin, but he was also able to stay with Ovid and Laura the entire summer. Kristen was so excited to get the phone call from Grandpa every year on her birthday as he played “Happy Birthday” on the piano. He also provided the music when she twirled and whirled around the house wearing Laura’s beautiful gowns, pretending to go to the theater. As his family and friends can attest, Ovid

Young was a man of musical talent, but he was also blessed with a great sense of humor, a fun-loving spirit, and a giving heart. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered. Dr. Ovid W. Young died on August 24, 2014. Dr. Young is survived by his wife, Laura (Rees) Young of Bourbonnais; two sons: Erik (Heather) Young of Kankakee and Kirk Young of Frisco, TX; grandchildren: Quincy, Adelaide, Milo, Jackie(Nate) Camp, Kristen Young and Joshua Young; and sister, Jane (Dick) Salmon of Knoxville, TN. Ovid was preceded in death by his parents; two infant twin daughters, Laurie and Leslie Young; two sisters, Donna Young and Faye Ellessor and two brothers Harold and Dale Young. A time for family and friends to gather will be held at the Bourbonnais Chapel of the Schreffler Life Story Funeral Home, Friday, August 29, 2014, from 4-8 p.m. There will be a Memorial Concert on September 27, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. It will be held at the Centennial Chapel of Olivet Nazarene University. In lieu of flowers please make memorials to: Friends of the Fine Arts Fund (Olivet Nazarene University) or to the Nielson-Young Piano Scholarship (Olivet Nazarene University). To learn more about Ovid's life, archive a favorite memory or photo and sign his online guestbook, please visit www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ovid Young*

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