



Ernest ("Ernie") Brusubardis II

May 24, 2025

Ernest ("Ernie") Brusubardis II died on May 24, 2025 in Milwaukee at the age of 83 surrounded by family. In his final hours, he was surrounded by his family's love and music, a fitting coda to a life filled with both. Ernie was a gifted pianist, composer, conductor, and choir director and a teacher to thousands of students over the course of a 70-year career. He was born in Annuzi, Latvia but left with his family during World War II and lived in Displaced Persons camps in Germany until they emigrated to the United States in 1951. It was on the ship across the Atlantic where Ernie played one of his earliest concerts. The family settled in Milwaukee and Ernie lived there for the rest of his life.

Ernie's ability and work ethic were recognized from adolescence, and he accompanied groups at his high school, played as a featured soloist in area concerts and internationally in the Latvian community. He earned a place at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, where he received bachelor's and master's degrees in piano performance. Following in his father's footsteps, he conducted the Brusubardas Dzimtenes Latvian Choir. Days before Ernie's death, the choir honored him for 70 years of involvement, including 65 as a conductor.

Classically trained, Ernie was also a gifted jazz musician. Long-time Milwaukee residents have almost certainly encountered Ernie's music at local

museums, weddings, company events, parties, and festivals. He loved playing live with The Ernie Brusubardis Band, — a collection of talented players who double as some of Ernie's closest friends.

Ernie married Rosemarie Kursietis in 1962 and together had four children in 25 years of marriage. In 1992, he married Margaret Crowley, and they spent the next 33 years deeply in love. During that time, he acted as a second father to Margaret's two children.

He loved the Green Bay Packers, cool cars, and making people laugh — which he did constantly. Ernie's music and family are his legacy. He was immensely proud of all of his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Ernie was preceded in death by his parents, Ernest Brusubardis Sr. and Erna Ozolins Brusubardis; his brother, John Brusubardis, and John's wife, Virginia Brusubardis; his brother-in-law Samuel Migliaccio, and his niece, Lara Brusubardis.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret Crowley; his sister, Lidija Migliaccio; and his children: Ernest Brusubardis III and his wife, Indra Brusubardis; Theodore Williams-Brusubardis and his wife, Karen Williams-Brusubardis; Alex Brusubardis and his wife, Kathryn Brusubardis; Rebecca Brusubardis and her partner Michael Weix; Diane Reis and her husband, Alex Boquist; and Patrick Reis and his wife, Lindsay Monaghan.

He is lovingly remembered by his grandchildren: Ernest Brusubardis IV and his wife, Stephanie Brusubardis; Kristian Brusubardis; Viktor Brusubardis; Sonora Brusubardis; Daniella Brusubardis Smith and her husband, Riley Smith; Arianna Brusubardis Grace and her husband, Toby Grace; Aidan Williams-Brusubardis; Emrys Williams-Brusubardis; Wolfgang Brusubardis; Vigo Brusubardis; Kosette Brusubardis; Angelika Heyse and her husband

Ezekiel Heyse I; James Minor; Alyssa Minor; Annika Boquist; and Mattias Boquist.

He is further survived by his great-grandchildren: Violet Brusubardis; Ernest Brusubardis V; Ezra Smith; Evelyn Heyse; and Ezekiel Heyse II.

He is also remembered by his nephew, Jonathan Roberts, along with Jonathan's wife Kristina Roberts and their children, Lidija Roberts and Lara Roberts. He's further remembered by former wife Rosemarie Kursietis and former son-in-law Dan Minor.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Latvian Lutheran Church, the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, or a charity of your choice.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 30. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Milwaukee Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Holy Trinity Church
1853 N 75th Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Funeral Service

MAY 30. 11:00 AM (CT)

Milwaukee Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Holy Trinity Church
1853 N 75th Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Brusubardis was a teacher of mine, and I remember him well. He was talented, kind, and loved by many. I feel honored to have heard him play so often. He will be missed.*

Lisl Gapinski - May 31, 2025 at 09:25 PM

MC

Thank you, Lisi, for your comment. Ernie was an extraordinary, wonderful man.

Margaret Crowley - June 09, 2025 at 10:18 PM

MR

“ *Margaret and family,*

We are saddened to hear of Ernie's passing. Although our interactions with Ernie were brief and apart in time, Ernie certainly left a memorial impression on us as a kind and gentle man who loved music as he loved you and your family. You are in our thoughts and much love.

Connie and Mike Ronk

Michael Ronk - May 30, 2025 at 08:14 PM

MC

Thank you for your kind comments.

Margaret Crowley - June 09, 2025 at 10:17 PM

VD

“ 2 files added to the album Ernie Photos



Vincents Dindzans - May 30, 2025 at 08:18 AM

VD

Ernie conducting the Festival Choir at the Latvian Song and Dance Festival 2012 in Milwaukee.

Vincents Dindzans - May 30, 2025 at 08:26 AM

CK

“ *I feel fortunate to have known Ernie for many years—both as my childhood friend’s stepfather and at Summerfest, where he was a stage manager. What a testament to how full and well-lived his life was that being responsible for a stage at Summerfest was far from the most interesting thing about him. His kindness, warmth, and gentle nature left a lasting impression on everyone around him, including me, more than I realized at the time. I was lucky to have known him.*

Colleen Krynicki - May 29, 2025 at 04:58 PM

PR

“ 1 file added to the album Ernie Photos



Patrick Reis - May 28, 2025 at 03:16 PM

BS

What a great picture of Ernie!! His magical, musical hands and the ubiquitous smile in his tux were trademarks!! What a great man, husband, father, grandfather, teacher and friend. RIP, Ernie. We will all miss you.

Brigid Sullivan - May 29, 2025 at 05:04 PM

BA

I had the good fortune to be Ernie's barber for a number of years. I had a passion for "serious music" since I was quite young and being able to share and more importantly learn from Ernie was an important facet of my life. Because I was thinking about starting piano lessons and telling him about that, he was most encouraging. Because I had no idea if I could even learn how to move my fingers over the keys, he graciously invited me to his home and showed me the very most basics of how to play a key. He guided me to start lessons at the Milwaukee Conservatory of Music and started taking lessons at the age of 60. Never will I regret that move and will never forget his kindness and generosity. A truly lovely man---what a privilege to have known him!

Bradley Angell - June 01, 2025 at 08:32 PM