

Tribute to Louis J. Appell, Jr.

York County Honors Choirs join so many York Countians as we celebrate the life and legacy of Louis J. Appell, Jr. who passed away in June 2016. He was our mentor and friend from the very first year of our choir and he continued to give us encouragement, support and love every single year.

The York County Senior Honors Choir began as part of York County's 250th Anniversary Celebration nearly 20 years ago. Louis Appell headed the 250th Anniversary Commission which reached across the entire County to plan and celebrate this historic event. Marty Hodges and I were two of those Louis recruited, and as part of the celebration we wanted to include students from around the County to participate. We thought about a choir, asked Randy Yoder to help us...and the Honors Choir was born.

In December 2005, the Pennsylvania Society selected Louis as recipient of the Distinguished Citizen of the Commonwealth Award. The gala was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. When Louis was asked to accept this recognition, he invited the Senior Honors Choir to go to New York with him and be part of this memorable event...and we did! As part of the program that evening, the Choir sang "For Good," from the Broadway show Wicked. The lyrics of that song captured what Louis Appell meant to the Honors Choirs, and to York, and to Pennsylvania.

Once again, "For Good" says it best, and once again we honor Louis J. Appell with excerpts:

*I've heard it said that people come into our lives for a reason
Bringing something we must learn
And we are led to those who help us most to grow if we let them
And we help them in return.*

*Well I don't know if I believe that's true
But I know I'm who I am today because I knew you.*

*Who can say if I've been changed for the better?
I do believe I have been changed for the better.
Because I knew you
Because I knew you
I have been changed for good.*

*Judy Simpson
August 2016*