



## Samuel "Sam" Sands

February 21, 2026

Samuel Carl Sands passed away on February 21st, 2026, in Fort Collins, Colorado at 72 years of age. He was born to Carl Lee Sands and Dr. Mary Alice Sands (Ryan) on November 22nd, 1953, in Wheeling, West Virginia. His sister Annette Lynne Sands was born just shy of three years later. Due to their father's career, they lived in Cameron, West Virginia, Rushville, Ohio, Somerset, Ohio and Mt. Sterling, Kentucky before settling in Johnstown, Colorado.

Sam graduated from Roosevelt High School as class valedictorian in 1971. He earned a B.A. in Mathematics at the University of Northern Colorado before completing his graduate studies in Computer Science at the University of Colorado.

Sam spent the majority of his career working for Hewlett-Packard Company as a successful Systems and software engineer. He was also an inventor who was awarded 9 patents.

Sam married Catherine Burgess on July 10th, 1987. They were devoted to one another for 40 years. They made homes on the Northern range of Colorado, settling in Fort Collins.

Cathy was passionate about Newfoundland dogs. Sam was passionate about

cars and travel. They were both passionate about their friends and families. They combined their interests by raising Newfoundlands, participating in showing, cart and water trials, and became very involved in rescue groups for the breed both locally and at the National level.

Sam had a variety of interests; mountain hikes, bicycling, clock building and repair, all kinds of puzzles (especially complicated mathematical equations) and music. He played an eclectic assortment of instruments and enjoyed singing to others. Sam enjoyed bird watching. (He preferred people watching though).

Sam developed an interest in sports. He loved attending Denver Nuggets and Denver Broncos games with his friend Gene... especially if he could get a hotdog and soda pop while there.

Sam and his sister, Annette, remained extremely close their entire lives. They loved to get together and reminisce about their childhood often.

Sam and his wife were soulmates. They did most things together. When Cathy began to lose her vision, Sam was there for her. When Sam experienced kidney issues and needed surgeries, Cathy was there for him.

As Cathy developed dementia, Sam insisted on being her sole caregiver. She was his world.

In late January, Sam experienced strokes. He and Cathy spent their last month at Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins.

Cathy passed away on Thursday, February 19th. This devastated Sam. He had heart-to-heart talks with his daughter, nieces, his friends and his brother-in-law. Sam was preceded in death by his parents and his sister.

He said his goodbyes then departed this life to join his best friend in Heaven on Saturday February 21st.

Sam was an organ donor. Even in death he continues to give to others.

Sam is survived by his stepchildren, Freya (Pete) Rottmund and Cedric (Sally) Lundberg, four nieces, Carrie (Stephen) Brown, Christiana (Joshua) Hansen, Laurie (Shane) Harrison, Danielle Botello, and his brother-in-law, Ys (Mary Lou) Botello.

Sam was a brilliant, kind, funny and talented man whose sunny grin charmed others wherever he went. He will be greatly missed by those he left behind (for now).

A combined celebration of Sam and Cathy is planned for July 11th, 2026 in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Please contact his daughter Freya if you have stories of Sam or would like to attend the memorial.

# Tribute Wall

JK

“ *Sam was a great guy and devoted to his wife. I will always remember how excited he got when we would say don't want to go to a game and he said yes I can get a hot dog. It was so sweet. I will miss you Sam.*

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**joyce Kohlmeier** - March 11 at 05:54 PM

JW

*I really enjoyed working with Sam at HP. He was a kind and friendly engineer and that's not always easy to find. I'm sad he's gone, but glad he's happy with his wife in a better place.*

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**Jeff Walls** - March 13 at 11:22 AM