

# Helen Marketti's Music Corner

## Walt Sanders



It was 39 years ago in August since the one and only Elvis Presley passed away at the age of 42. Every year millions of fans from all over the world flock to his former home, Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee. Fans want to catch a glimpse of how their idol lived and to pay respects to his final resting place. The King may be gone but those who admire his work and career help to keep the memory alive and rockin'. One such person who has taken on such a task is Walt Sanders.

Walt Sanders and The Cadillac Band are often booked for shows where fans can relive memories of their first Elvis Presley record or hear their favorite songs. "I was raised on the music of the 50s including the Doo-Wop sounds," said Walt. "I was raised on great music and Elvis was part of that upbringing." "Around 1976, I got my first taste of music by listening to radio station, CKLW out of the motor city (Detroit). That is when I started listening to ELO and HEART. Believe it or not, my favorite song of all time is, "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" (Elton John and Kiki Dee).

What is it about Elvis that has compelled Walt to pay tribute to his music idol? "As far as I'm concerned, no other artist can compare to Elvis. He had everything. He could turn any style of a song into a million dollars," explains Walt. "I've always had the dream ever since I was a kid that I wanted to pay tribute to Elvis. I used to listen to his records. I would stand in front of the mirror and sing all of the songs, every single note until I got it right. I was

determined that I would wait for the day when I could stand in front of an audience and someone would say, "You sound a lot like Elvis!" I feel I am doing it for the right reasons. It's from my heart."

Walt has been paying tribute to Elvis in front of a live audience for 23 years. "I first started singing at a place called Johnny Angels in Sandusky. I was there for three years until the place closed. At first, I was trying to impersonate Elvis. I grew my hair and sideburns. I dyed the color of my hair. I was trying too hard to be someone that I was never going to be," remembers Walt. "According to me there is a difference between an impersonator and a tribute performer. As a tribute artist, you can pay tribute to anyone. I can pay tribute to Patsy Cline for example. An impersonator is an actor. It is someone who is trying to portray someone else. That's my take on it. I do not try to talk like Elvis.



I like to be myself. If I could sing his songs without wearing the jumpsuit and just wear regular attire, I would. You can't be anyone but yourself."

Walt has met a few people that have known and worked with Elvis. Ray Walker is the bass singer for The Jordanaires having joined the group in 1958. The Jordanaires were the back up singing group for Elvis. "When I first met Ray, I was completely in awe," said Walt. "We became friends and have stayed in contact. My family and I have been guests at his home several times." The music of Elvis Presley still keeps fans interested. New generations of fans are discovering the music of The King. "His music carries to each generation,"



said Walt. "Men wanted to be him and women wanted to be with him. I love working with the band and enjoy the opportunity to play whenever we get the chance. What I'm doing is helping to bring back memories for fans."

For more information about Walt Sanders and The Cadillac Band, please visit: [www.onenightwithyou.net](http://www.onenightwithyou.net)

**Picture Framing**  
Custom Picture Framing  
Frames, Glass, Mats  
Art Consultant Hours  
Wed-Fri 10-5  
Sat 10-noon  
**Color Haven Paint & Supply LLC**  
105 N Stone, Fremont  
419-332-6952  
[colorhaven.net](http://colorhaven.net)

**BROWN**  
*Painting*  
**EPOXY FLOORING**  
419-334-7376

[www.brownepoxyflooring.com](http://www.brownepoxyflooring.com)