

# Sandy Harper

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF CYRANO'S THEATRE COMPANY IN ANCHORAGE



Photo by Bill Roth

**S**andy and her husband, Jerry, are the founding members of Cyrano's Theatre Company. Sandy has served on the national board of the Last Frontier Theatre Conference, the Anchorage Downtown Partnership, Rasmussen Foundation and the Anchorage Downtown Association. She also served as President of the Anchorage Cultural Council. Sandy's awards include: the "Contribution to Literacy in Alaska" award; the YWCA "Notable Woman of the Year" award; and is a ATHENA Society inductee. In 2011, she received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from UAA and the Lorene Harrison Lifetime Achievement Award.

## 1. What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Exciting theatre and full houses at Cyrano's. Ice cream that can be enjoyed in great quantities without any calorie consequences.

## 2. What is your greatest fear?

Personally, not having my health. Globally, that the human consciousness is not going to evolve quick enough to meet all the challenges of our times.

## 3. What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

A tendency to be on the defensive and not just listening.

## 4. What is the trait you most deplore in others?

Dishonesty.

## 5. Which living person do you most admire?

Ralph Nader (I have quite a lengthy list of dead people I admire!).

## 6. What is your greatest extravagance?

My grandchildren.

## 7. What do you consider the most overrated virtue?

Being practical.

## 8. What is the quality you most like in a person?

A sense of humor.

## 9. When and where were you happiest?

When Jerry and I were young and part of a cutting edge theatre company. It was 24/7 heightened awareness, learning and intense joy where your curiosity and imagination knew no bounds.

## 10. Which talent would you most like to have?

At first, I thought about giving a rather grand reply, such as the talent to be a playwright, composer or master linguist. But the truth is...I would love to have the chops and experience to be a musical-comedy star!

## 11. What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Being an entrepreneur and thus being involved in the creation of Cyrano's, the Alaska Center for the Book and other worthy enterprises.

## 12. If you were to die and come back as a person or a thing, what would it be?

Me, but as a smarter, wiser, more courageous me.

## 13. Where would you most like to live?

I love where I live, but I would like to travel a great deal more.

## 14. What is your most treasured possession?

My memories and family pictures. I keep my family pictures right by the bed—that's what I would grab in case of catastrophe or emergency.

## 15. What is your most marked characteristic?

I would say enthusiasm, resourcefulness and resilience. I might also add tenacity.

## 16. What do you most value in your friends?

Kindness and generosity. In other words, to be empathetic and compassionate and to appreciate a myriad of different perspectives.

## 17. What is it that you most dislike?

Greed. I wish that there was more of a sense of the common good along with the nurturing of the uniqueness of individuals.

## 18. What is your greatest regret?

My greatest regret is that I didn't realize, during his last year, that Jerry was really going to die and didn't just drop everything and make each and every moment full and present.

## 19. How would you like to die?

Knowing that my family was happy and living their lives well. As mentioned earlier—because of my love of ice-cream, perhaps a good way to go would be accidentally locked up in the back room of a gelato factory in Italy at night—death by ice cream bliss!

## 20. What is your favorite journey?

I'm on it...just being alive! 