

# Lynn Moers' journey home will take some time

By SANDRA ARMERUSTER

Lynn Moers wants to go home. But it will be at least four months and \$30,000 before he gets there.

Moers, 30, has been paralyzed from the neck down since July 16, when a tree struck the Westland resident as he was clearing his yard of debris left from the violent storm last summer. When it fell, Moers was flipped, breaking his spinal cord.

His past three months have been spent in the intensive care unit at Wayne County General Hospital. Waiting to bring Moers home is his wife of six weeks, Sharon.

The Moers had planned a big wedding for Aug. 8 with a trip following to Hawaii. All that had to be postponed.

After recovering from surgery in mid-August, however, Lynn and Sharon were married in the hospital Sept. 3.

"I love her very much," said Moers, watching his wife through his tears. Moers is on a respirator and his whispers are barely audible. His wife watches his moving lips to help interpret the words.

"Lynn thought he would be out sooner. He wanted to walk me down the aisle," said Mrs. Moers. "But now he realizes that probably will never happen. We are still planning to have a wedding Mass and reception when we get home."

**THE MOERS WILL** travel to the Craig Rehabilitation Institute of Colorado. That's where the time and money comes in.

Special therapy for four months there will cost \$85,000. Of that, Moers' insurance from Unistrut in Wayne will cover \$55,000, leaving a \$30,000 balance.



After spending three months in the intensive care unit at Wayne County General Hospital, Lynn Moers and his wife, Sharon, are preparing for a trip to the Craig Rehabilitation Institute in Colorado where Moers will receive four months of special therapy. Helping to coordinate fund-raising efforts for the \$30,000 still needed is the Rev. Walter Burke. (Photo by Jim Rawlinson)

While at the institute, Moers will be trained to become "functional enough to live at home. He'll be able to sit up in a wheelchair which he can operate

with his mouth," Mrs. Moers said. "Through rehabilitation, he may get gross neck and shoulder movements."

The Moers hope to leave next week. Moers was checked by a team for the institute, and Tuesday he underwent tests to determine if surgery in August was successful in fusing his neck bones using one from his hip.

Preliminary cost figures include "enough equipment to come home with, but we'll need more later," said Mrs. Moers. Those figures don't include Mrs. Moers' living expenses in Colorado.

"We can't wait to get home to live as normal a life as possible," she said. "He can't wait to get home to both of my two kids."

"OUR KIDS," he corrected her.

Mrs. Moers, a widow, has two sons ages 8 and 11. One son is a catcher for Little League baseball team. That's the same position Moers played on the Unistrut Detroit team. A picture of the team hangs near a television set, placed so Moers can glance at it, and two of his baseball trophies stand on a nearby shelf.

"They were both little when my first husband died. Lynn has been the only father they've really known," Mrs. Moers said. A nursing student at Schoolcraft Community College, Mrs. Moers has temporarily dropped her studies.

"I'm not totally ignorant of what care he will need," she said. "I know this will be a long-term thing, but that's all right. I don't mind at all."

Hospital employees are trying to raise the \$30,000 needed for the trip to Colorado. Jim Rawlinson, department

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head of respiratory therapy at the hospital, is coordinating a 10,000-meter run for 9:30 a.m. Oct. 25.

The run, which is equivalent to 6.2 miles, will be on the hospital grounds at Michigan Avenue and Merriman in Westland.

Entry fee is \$6. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Prizes and trophies will be awarded, and cider and donuts will be available for participants.

**SUPERVISING THE** overall fund-raising effort is the Rev. Walter Burke, who serves the hospital as chaplain. "I told them (the Moers) that this wasn't an accident. God did this to you,

I said, because you have a job to do. And look! He (Moers) is becoming involved with hundreds of people," said Burke.

Donations for Moers can be mailed directly to him at the hospital or made to St. Camillus Church, in which case they are tax deductible. Mailing address in both cases is 2345 Merriman, Westland 48185.

Since Moers served seven months in Vietnam, organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans are raising money. Also gathering contributions are 7-11 Stores, St. Mary Church and other smaller groups, according to Burke.

## Ripson-Stein

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ripson of Troy announce the engagement of their daughter Marilyn to Stephen H. Stein, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Stein of Southfield.

The bride-elect, a graduate of Birmingham Seaholm High School and Michigan State University, is employed

in the editorial department of the Daily Tribune.

Her fiancé was graduated from Southfield-Lathrup High School and MSU. He is a sports writer at the Daily Tribune.

A Nov. 29 wedding is planned.

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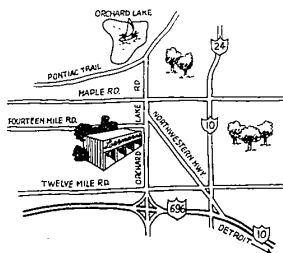
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