

Project provides health testing

465 attend free clinic at Mercy

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

Target Belton got the word out.

The Medicare patients rights advocate was one of a handful of exhibitors at Project Health-O-Rama's Farmington Hills site at Mercy Center April 13.

"The most common complaint Medicare patients have is that they feel they're being released from the hospital too soon," said Belton, a nurse who is assistant director of community relations for the Michigan Peer Review Organization.

While senior citizens waited for health screening tests, Belton handed out literature.

"There's been a lot of interest. Often not for themselves but for someone they know. We also reach out to the care-giver son or daughter, who needs to know these things," said Belton.

"People are so thankful. It's very rewarding."

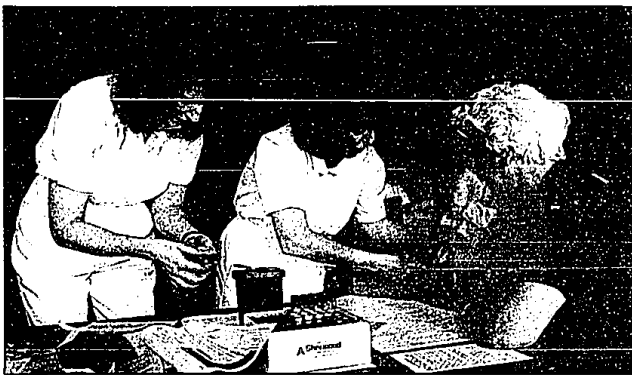
Peer Review Organizations are groups of doctors paid by the federal government to review medical necessity, appropriateness and quality of hospital treatment furnished to Medicare patients. Belton works in Plymouth in one of the state's eight PRO offices.

NEXT TO her display, Michelle Vansan and Martha Cooper of the Eye Care Institute in Berkeley told people about cataracts, an opaque condition in the lens of the eye that can cause blindness.

They passed out a card that listed dates for free vision screening at their office, 3003 Woodward, the third Thursday of every month from 1:30-3 p.m.

"The test checks for glaucoma, cataracts, retinal problems and visual acuity," said Vansan. "We passed out information today."

Health-O-Rama drew 465 people to Mercy Center for free health appraisals, including blood pressure check, vision and hearing tests, don-



Above, from left, medical assistants Emily Ington at Mercy Center. At right, Dorothy Strand and Lynn Henman from the Pearson Ardison of Farmington Hills takes a height measurement for Patty Gaul of Troy at Mercy Learning Center in Redford Township draw blood for testing from Betty Holsten of Farmington Hills at Mercy Center.

tal, skin cancer and podiatry exams conducted by medical personnel.

About 400 of these participants paid \$10 for a blood panel, a profile of 21 tests that usually cost \$100-\$150, to check things such as blood cholesterol levels. And 121 paid \$3 for take-home colorectal cancer screening kits.

"Turnout was wonderful — about 100 better than last year," said Gerry Dielenheim, Farmington site coordinator.

Dielenheim, chairman of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Commission on Aging, coordinated the 50 volunteers — mostly senior citizens — who made the day a success.

HEALTH-O-RAMA IS an annual health screening event sponsored by WXYZ-TV, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan and the United Health Organization. More than 8,000 volunteers at 100 sites in southeastern Michigan are participating this year. The event runs through April 29.

Anyone 18 or older can partici-

Health-O-Rama is an annual health screening event with more than 8,000 volunteers at 100 sites in southeastern Michigan.

pate. Last Wednesday's crowd in Farmington Hills represented a cross section of the community — from young mothers totting toddlers, to businessmen in work attire, to senior citizens.

"When we came in to set up this morning, people were already waiting in line," Dielenheim said.

Early morning participants had to wait about 90 minutes to get through the total series. Latecomers had a shorter wait — about 40 minutes, she said.

"The screening tests don't take the place of a doctor, but they can send

up a red flag for people."

Catholic Social Services, the Farmington Library for the Blind and the Farmington Hills Fire Department were among the other exhibitors.

"I'M HERE to answer questions about fire safety and prevention," said Ron Segell, firefighter.

A television monitor behind him repeatedly played a videotape on fire safety. Pamphlets on home smoke detectors, portable fire extinguishers and fire drills were among the literature available. Fire emergency phone stickers were available for Hills residents and Segell made sure people taking them lived in the city.

"We don't want you calling the wrong number in an emergency," he told one woman.

For information on other health screenings slated for Oakland County during the next 10 days in Pontiac, Wixom and Royal Oak, call the Project Health-O-Rama hotline: 424-8800.



Dr. Jon Blum of Farmington Hills does a skin cancer check on Harry Weaver of Farmington Hills at Mercy Center.

Ralph Swoveland, 39, dies; family, friends recall his life

By Tom Henderson
staff writer

The friends and family of Ralph Swoveland of Livonia said goodbye to him Saturday, 30 or 40 years too soon.

They cried because the former Farmington Observer advertising representative left them while still a young man of 39. They laughed as they told each other anecdotes of a guy filled with boundless energy and a love of life and family and job. Through laughter and tears, they will miss him forever.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. What then of the pictures of his life? Of the family snapshots his loved ones thumbled through at the funeral home? Of those captured scenes of his marriage and honeymoon, of his wife pregnant with their first child and then with their second? Of that wonderful, infectious smile? Of the shots of him building a deck in the yard he tended so religiously, surrounded by the roses he cherished? Of those frozen moments in a life lived fully, but not long enough? How many words equal those portraits of a good man gone already?

The words of those who knew him are special, though. Listen to those words and the pictures come alive. Ralph Swoveland — father, brother, husband, Observer & Eccentric newspaper retail ad salesman, fanatical golfer — comes alive, again. Words from . . .

HIS SISTER, who has always known him, since the day she was born seven years after him:

"How could you be Ralph's sister and not be into sports?" asks Paula. At Southwestern High School, her brother had played basketball, and football, ran track, swam. Later he played golf passionately and well.

"He never bought me a doll. It was a baseball. He taught me to catch and to hit. He bought me a mitt."

"He had a lot of energy and was always bouncing around. There was a smile on his face all the time. When you were feeling cranky, it drove you nuts. He'd call and say, 'How ya doin' sister Sue?' I don't know why he called me sister Sue, but he did. His last few years were great. He loved his wife and his kids and he had a job he loved, too. He'd obtained everything he'd ever wanted."

HIS WIFE, who met him eight years ago and married him a year later:



Ralph Swoveland

'He had a lot of energy and was always bouncing around. There was a smile on his face all the time.'

— Paula Swoveland
Ralph's sister

"I didn't used to like sports before I met Ralph," says Janice. "I like sports, now. I watch the Masters and basketball. Can you believe the Red Wings had to go back to Toronto? And I know how football works — they get four tries to move the ball. 'He loved the kids and the house and his roses. He built the deck, that

was his claim to fame. You know, the only thing he asked me to take care of was his roses. He knew them all by name."

"I bought him a new briefcase for Christmas, and he had it packed and ready to go back to work. Besides living for those kids, he lived to get back to work. He was worried about his territory. He'd check the paper. 'Is that ad still in there?' and 'What position did they get?'"

"And did you ever know anyone who loved to cut the grass so much? You had to restrain him before 9 so he wouldn't wake up the neighbors. He always had so much energy. He was always into doing fun things. 'Let's do this. Let's do that.'"

HIS BOSS, Mark Lewis, Wayne County retail manager at the Observer:

"He was an excellent worker. It's hard to say this without making it sound like an obituary, but he was a personable guy who got along with his peer group and with management."

"Whatever you needed from Ralph, he could do it. He was as comfortable calling on the president of a Fortune 500 company as he was trying to help the local businessman put together his advertising. He handled major accounts as well as mom-and-pop operations."

"He was well liked by everybody. Is there an adversarial relationship between advertising and editorial? Yes, in theory. But not with Ralph."

Not with Ralph — who helped organize the Observer and Eccentric golf scrambles event, which brought writers and editors and ad sellers together; who taught Sunday school at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Livonia and coached church-team basketball; who took one last vacation in Florida in February and, contrary to doctors orders, mailed down his golf clubs so he could play a final round; who while fighting cancer from intensive care would write funny notes to friends and family, who tried so hard to live to see his son's first T-ball game but missed by just a few weeks.

He was born Sept. 30, 1948, and he died April 13, 1988. He left behind son Jeffrey, 8; daughter Julia, 3; wife Janice, sister Paula, brothers Paul and Roger; and all those who knew him.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.



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