

Swim teacher-coach at Mercy mourned

By Susan Buck
staff writer

Students at both Mercy High School in Farmington Hills and Catholic Central High School in Redford are mourning the death of swim teacher and coach DeLoris Yager: a woman they called "Mom."

Yager, 62, died Nov. 17 in her Farmington Hills home.

"She was a swim teacher for 22 years and coach most of that time for Mercy High School's swim team and coached Catholic Central's swim team," said Sister Regina Marie Doelker, Mercy principal.

A funeral Mass was held Friday at Mercy Center, attended by almost 500. Sister Regina said.

The Rev. Dennis Andrews II, Cath-

olic Central principal, celebrated the Mass. An honor guard assisted. It consisted of National Honor Society students from Mercy High and members of both schools' swim teams.

DISCIPLINE WITH love was Yager's trademark. She always had an open door policy for her students. Yager was a short woman, a touch more than 5 feet. She literally looked up to her students, some of whom towered near 6 feet.

"She held the line. This lady could direct all the big guys," Sister Regina said.

YAGER GAVE up coaching three years ago when illness weakened her. But she tried to keep her terminal illness a secret.

"She couldn't handle it anymore, but she didn't want to give in," Sister Regina said.

In 1987, the Harvey Barcus Award was renamed the DeLoris Yager Athletic Leadership Scholarship Award. Each of six schools annually nominate their best athlete who also excels in scholarship.

In addition to Mercy High, students are nominated from Regina High School, Harper Woods; Shrine of the Little Flower, Royal Oak; Marian High School, Birmingham; Bishop Foley, Madison Heights; and Our Lady Star of the Sea, Grosse Pointe Woods.

"DeLORIS HAD an unparalleled record as a coach and instructor in the Catholic League," Sister Regina said.

Yager's teams won several tournaments and she won Coach of the Year awards while she successfully divided her time at both schools. The Mercy High pool has been named in her honor.

She last taught Oct. 7.

YAGER IS also remembered for her kindness and empathy to the poor, especially the poverty-stricken residents of Ixtatapa, Mexico, said her daughter, Pamela.

"She had four or five young men, ages 15 to 20, that she took under her wing when she vacationed there two or three times a year, for more than

15 years," Pamela said. "They used the money she gave them just to survive. She taught them English."

Yager had the spirit. "She loved children and was always mothering," Sister Regina said. Yager was born in Carnegie, Pa. She is survived by her husband, Ralph; three daughters, Janis Dobler, Pamela and Maureen; two sons, James and Ralph; three grandchildren; and one brother.

Burial will be in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

The family asks that memorials be sent to the American Cancer Society.



DeLoris Yager

Humanists coming to Hills

Humanists from across the nation converged on Farmington Hills last weekend for the second annual National Humanist Weekend.

More than 100 people from all parts of North America attended events at the Birmingham Temple and the Farmington Universalist-Unitarian Church, in Farmington Hills. A weekend session of the New York-based Humanist Institute was also held.

The weekend was sponsored by the North American Committee for Humanism (composed of the six leading Humanist organizations in

North America), and the local hosts, Rabbi Sherwin Wine of the Birmingham Temple and minister Suzanne Paul of the Universalist-Unitarian Church of Farmington.

On hand were Howard Radest, director of education of the American Ethical Union; Edd Doerr, executive director of Americans for Religious Liberty; Frederick Edwards, executive director of the American Humanist Association; Bill Jones, a leading Black Humanist, professor of religion at Florida State University; Roger Greeley, retired minister of People's Church in Kalamazoo;

and Paul Beatty, the minister of the Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh and president of the Fellowship of Religious Humanists.

Humanism is a philosophical alternative to traditional religion and includes several variations of the basic theme that a person's moral and ethical code should be based on rational inquiry, the scientific method, and mutual respect for all human beings. Humanism as an organized movement is found throughout the world and is especially strong in Western Europe.

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