

Marga Styra cared for others

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

A medical researcher dedicated to developing antibodies that could lead to early detection of lung cancer, Marga Styra of Farmington Hills will be remembered for her great love of humanity and the environment.

"She was very concerned about the quality of life for people," said Suzanne Paul, minister at Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington in Farmington Hills.

Styra, 43, vice president and senior staff scientist at Balnbridge Laboratories in Balnbridge Island, Wash.,

died in Samaritan Health Center in Detroit, shortly after collapsing in a restaurant near Belle Isle on New Year's Eve.

A competitive triathlete, she and her husband, Wayne State University economics professor Allen Scaturro, had just finished a late-afternoon run at the Detroit River park.

The exact cause of her death won't be known until toxicology tests are completed, said a Wayne County Medical Examiner's spokesman.

Paul characterized Styra as "a brilliant person, who, in a field with very few women, always did exceedingly well. Her resume is really inspiring."

STYRA MOVED to Seattle in 1985 after accepting a medical research position with Immunex Co. In 1987, she joined Balnbridge Laboratories. Since their marriage 3 1/2 years ago, she and her husband commuted

between Seattle and the couple's Farmington Hills home in Village Green Condominiums.

Scaturro recently landed a teaching position in the economics department at the University of Washington. He was scheduled to start Tuesday.

"Almost all of his staff had been moved out to Washington before Christmas," Paul said. "He and his wife came back here for the holidays to get the rest of his things."

Born in the Netherlands, Styra and her parents immigrated in 1962, when she was 16. The Royal Oak Dendero High School graduate earned a bachelor's degree in physics, with highest honors, from Michigan State University in 1977.

In 1983, she earned a doctorate in neuroscience from the University of Michigan. She then spent two years in a post-doctoral medical research fellowship at U-M Hospital.

A NEAR-LIFELONG Unitarian Universalist, Styra edited the newsletter and organized workshops for the Balnbridge Island UU Fellowship.

Paul officiated at a memorial service for Styra Thursday in Farmington Hills. "Her husband said it was very important to Marga that women do important things. She would have liked to have known that a woman officiated at her memorial service," Paul said.

In addition to her husband, Styra is survived by a daughter from an earlier marriage, Cora Styra; as well as her mother, two brothers, two sisters and one grandchild. Interment was at Oakview Cemetery, Royal Oak.

The family asks that memorials be made to three of the organizations Styra was active in: the National Organization for Women, the Association of Women in Science and the Sierra Club.

String of rapes prompts seminar

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Farmington Boosters vice president Bill Duncan, who brought the Ann Arbor-based seminar instructors to the north-side high school last year for a student/parent seminar.

"It just seems . . . with all the things happening, abductions at malls and so on, it's certainly the right topic," said Duncan, father of a teenage daughter.

The high school session tied in with a course taught by North Farmington counselor Jeanne Walkowicz, who works with young women about the psychological aspects of being attacked. Duncan said Walkowicz encouraged him to include this aspect when considering a program.

Duncan connected with Voss last spring and, with efforts on both sides, the seminar was scheduled. Instructors are Pam Kohn and Robert Williams, who not only teach women to defend themselves, but are also rape crisis counselors, Duncan said. The duo has taught

similar classes in Ann Arbor and in the state of Texas.

THE FARMINGTON seminar will address not only physical defense technique, but will address the psychology of being a victim and offer practical suggestions to women.

"It will offer a physical as well as an emotional and psychological dimension. It's designed for women to learn about their inner strength and talents," he added.

There is "no question" the area's rapes and attacks prompted the program, he said.

This month's seminar is limited to 20 women, who can be either members or non-members of the YMCA. Registrations are being accepted. Those interested can register in person at the facility, east of Farmington Road and north of 12 Mile, until Jan. 12. Or they can call 555-4020 and speak with Voss to get more information.

If successful, a similar seminar may be offered in the future for men who have a different set of concerns, Voss said.

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Drug awareness day set at Warner

Drug and alcohol awareness is the topic for a program slated at Warner Middle School next month that will include speakers, a school dance and a special dinner.

Sponsored by the Warner staff and School/Community Forum, parent group, the event is scheduled for 2:15-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8. Students will each get a T-shirt with a "drug-free" logo as part of the day.

Members of the Warner teaching staff will present a lesson to heighten student awareness and sensitivity to substance abuse and share any resources available to them. In order to participate in the event, students and parents will sign a contract, committing to become aware of the dangers of drugs.

Parents and students will have separate speakers during the afternoon event.

The objective of the afternoon session, according to organizers, is "to raise the awareness level of Warner students, parents and staff regarding substance abuse and its impact on

the user and the family members."

Warner counselor Ruth Daniels said the Farmington Hills school is seeking corporate contributors for the program by selling advertisements in a "sponsor's booklet." Contact Warner at 851-3400 for further information or to make a donation.

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Such is the difference between drug toxicity and allergy. Toxicity occurs when you have too much of a drug in your system; for example, aspirin. An excess may cause you to develop an upset stomach, ringing in your ears, or become deaf. If you stop taking aspirin for several days, the high blood levels of the medication recede, your stomach feels better, and your hearing returns. As long as the dosage doesn't exceed what your body can handle, you will have no toxicity from aspirin.

Allergy to a drug is different. Then, even a small amount of medication, far less than is therapeutic, will cause profound effects. Fever, rash, palpitations, and loss of appetite may occur along with damage to your kidneys, liver or lungs. If you stop the medicine, and take it again at a later time, even a minute amount will initiate the previous reaction.

Thus, physicians consider toxic reaction a nuisance while an allergic response represents a threat to your health.

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