



Margo LaGattuta returned to college after her children were in school and found a new career as a writer. (Staff photo by Dick Kelley)

Poetry series proves its worth

By CORINNE ABATT

The success of the poetry series at Birmingham Unitarian Church surprised its founder, Margo LaGattuta, as much as anyone — maybe more.

The third program featuring Detroit poet, Linda Nemec Foster, will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday. Once the featured poet has finished reading, there's a coffee break and an opportunity for poets from the audience to take five-minute turns before the audience.

Although skeptical friends warned Mrs. LaGattuta when she was planning the series that nobody was interested, there were at least 100 people at each of the previous programs. She's also had phone calls and letters coming in steadily ever since.

"We're getting a lot of people not connected with schools who write," she said, "I guess you'd call them closet poets. I really don't know why the series has been so successful, it just must be the secret desire of a lot of people to write poetry."

At the November program so many signed up for the allotted five-minute reading time that not all could be accommodated.

"I don't do any screening ahead of time," Mrs. LaGattuta said. "All that's required is that they come and sign in. It's an opportunity that

hasn't been available. And it's fun for me because I like people."

The whole idea of the series, organized for once a month at the Unitarian Church through June, sprang from a workshop Mrs. LaGattuta took at Oakland University.

Mother of three school-age children, she returned to the university to complete her degree in English. She developed a consuming interest in writing after she took a course in creative writing from Paye Kinnorway who led off the poetry series last October. The workshop atmosphere, reading works to each other, was so pleasant, Mrs. LaGattuta decided to expand upon it for the general public. There is a dollar charge for the programs which covers the basics like rent and coffee, but doesn't allow for paying the featured poets.

So far, the poets have been most cooperative about helping out because they believe in her idea, Mrs. LaGattuta said. Tom Fitzsimmons of the Oakland University faculty will be the reader for the February program and Herbert Scott of Kalamazoo will be the series guest in March.

Mrs. LaGattuta is considering putting an anthology together from some of the things read by members of the audience.

Mrs. LaGattuta is also thinking about doing a book of her own work.

Bowl-a-thon nets \$1,253

The Ladies League of Farmington Lanes bowled themselves a good scoring series as well as collecting \$1,253.50 from sponsors to benefit Farmington Community Center's Bowl-a-thon.

The event was one of a series of benefits staged in observance of Farmington Community Center Month, proclaimed in celebration of the center's 10th anniversary.

When thanking Pat and Fred Hamlin

of Farmington Lanes, the bowlers and their sponsors, Betty Paine, the center's executive director, gave dinners-for-two to four bowlers who collected the most money for the center.

Carol Young won a dinner at The Leather Bottle in Livonia; Lynette Rangel will be dining in DeBricat's of Farmington Hills; Jean Dembeck won a dinner at Botsford Inn in Farmington; and Janet Whitcomb, Red Cedars in Southfield.

B'Lynn plays Santa

Bea Lyndoffer, owner and operator of B'Lynn Coiffures, has taken on the job of Santa Claus for four young retarded boys who live in The Volz Home, in Novi.

She met the young men after she read a flyer, distributed in her neighborhood, asking for used clothing for the boys in the home.

She collected a mountain of clothes

for them," said a member of her staff at B'Lynn Coiffures, 38255 Ten Mile Rd.

The boys were invited in for haircuts, and members of the staff at The Volz Home were given manicures and pedicures.

And with her intervention, the four some will have a special holiday dinner prepared for them at Lin's.

Horticultural tips on call

A phone message service that provides quick and timely information, mostly on horticulture, operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Persons may call 858-2519. New topics, pertaining to the season, are changed every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The service is given by Michigan State University's Cooperative Extension Service.

Coming up are hints on humidity for houseplants, and fertilizing houseplants. There will be tips on saving time and money for holiday baking, and a talk on how to select a Christmas tree.

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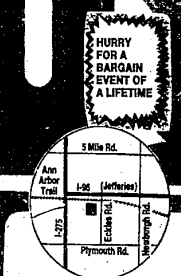
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