Obituaries

Lucille Ollendorff, head of music group

By Jack Houston

Services for Lucille Ollendorff, president and general manager of Music of the Baroque, will be held at 10:30 a.m. Monday in Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at the University of Chicago.

Mrs. Ollendorff, 68, of the Southeast Side, died shortly before 2 a.m. Saturday in Illinois Masonic Medical Center of injuries sustained in a seven-car accident on Lake Shore Drive at Addison Street.

Mrs. Ollendorff was driving home from Evanston, where the Baroque music group had performed, when the accident occurred late Friday night. Five people were injured.

Among the injured were Ellen Harris, 41, chairman of the music department at the University of Chicago, and Judith Sagan, 59, both passengers in Mrs. Ollendorff's car. Sagan is Mrs. Ollendorff's niece.

Sagan was reported in stable condition at Weiss Memorial Hospital with a fractured pelvis and ribs.

Harris was reported in stable condition at Weiss with multiple cuts and bruises.

Also injured were Sandra Roland, 34, of 1600 W. Albion Ave.; Angela Morgan, 38, of 1738 W. Waller Ave.; and Kathleen Prendergast, 37, of 4327 N. Kenmore Ave.

Prendergast was reported in fair condition at Illinois Masonic Medical Center with chest and knee injuries.

Roland and Morgan were treated at St. Joseph Hospital and released.

Police said the accident occurred when Robert Bonkowski, 21, of 2404 N. Lorel Ave., driving south at 3600 N. Lake Shore Drive, changed lanes and hit a second car, also going south, driven by Emanuelle Rossi, 20, of Park Ridge.

Bonkowski's car then rear-ended Mrs. Ollendorff's southbound car, pushing it across into northbound traffic and leading to the other collisions, police said.

Bonkowski was charged with driving too fast for conditions, police said.

Mrs. Ollendorff's interest in Music of the Baroque began in 1974, when she noticed a poster in the window of a neighborhood grocery advertising a performance of Bach music for $3.50.

She attended and was surprised with the group's quality.

At the time, the group was only four years old, an offshoot of the St. Paul's United Church of Christ choir under the direction of conductor Tom Wikman, choirmaster and church organist.

Mrs. Ollendorff's commitment to the group began soon after meeting Wikman, who told her the organization was on the brink of financial ruin.

Wanting to help, she began contacting friends and neighbors and quickly raised $400. Later, she rounded up several people, including faculty members of the University of Chicago, to form the group's board of directors.

Mrs. Ollendorff was elected board president in 1975 and became the group's chief promoter and fundraiser on a volunteer basis. Three years later, she also became the group's general manager, a salaried position initially financed by The Chicago Community Trust.

"Music of the Baroque has become a frame of reference for me," she once said. "I'm constantly on the lookout for ways to promote it"

Lucille Ollendorff

Under her leadership, the 70-member ensemble developed a national reputation for its interpretation of Baroque music.

The group has performed twice at the White House.

Her successful fundraising brought her an invitation to serve on the advisory board of the Illnois Arts Council, Lawyers for the Creative Arts and the University of Chicago's music department.

She was a graduate of the university, having received a bachelor's degree in French language and literature and two master's degrees, one in education, the other in the humanities.

She taught social studies, English literature and composition for six years at Francis Parker School. She spent two years teaching history at the University of Chicago's Laboratory Schools and six years as a lecturer in liberal arts with the university's extension division.

She also served as the group's personal liasion with WFMT-FM, with whom she arranged national syndication of the group's concerts to 250 radio stations in the U.S. and Canada.

Survivors include two sons, K: Daniel and Thomas; two grandchildren; and two sisters.