

A. Mario Loiederman, 66, engineer, patron of arts who helped secure funds for BSO

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A. Mario Loiederman, who was instrumental in securing the funding to build the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's second home in Montgomery County, died Tuesday at his home in Bethesda.

His wife, Rona Loiederman, said that he had heart problems and that he died in his sleep, just hours after being honored Monday night at the Montgomery County Executive's Ball for his volunteer work on behalf of the arts. He was 66.

A native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Mr. Loiederman immigrated to Baltimore at age 12 with his family, graduated from Polytechnic Institute, and earned his engineering degree from the Johns Hopkins University in 1955.

A fraternity brother introduced him to Rona Wasserman of Park Heights, who was charmed.

"He was Argentinian. He loved to tango," she said. The couple were married in Baltimore in 1956.

Mr. Loiederman worked for a Baltimore engineering firm, Whitman Requardt and Associates, in the late 1950s and was a staff engineer for the Baltimore County Department of Public Works in the early 1960s.

He worked his way up the ladder at various engineering firms, then established his company, Loiederman Soltesz Associates, in 1980. The company worked on some of the area's biggest development projects, including the Federal Triangle complex in Washington and White Flint and Montgomery malls.

After retiring from the firm last year, he increased his volunteer work in the arts. At the time of his death, he was chairman of the Maryland State Arts Council and chairman of the board of the Strathmore Hall Foundation, an independent arts organization in a historic North Bethesda mansion.

Mr. Loiederman also was active in Democratic Party politics, was a supporter of Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan and accompanied Gov. Parris N. Glendening on a recent trip to Argentina, said a longtime friend, Bethesda attorney Roger W. Titus.

When Mr. Loiederman walked into a room, "you would think you were in the presence of Ernest Hemingway, because he looked like Hemingway," Mr. Titus said. "He could work a room like nobody. He was a charming Argentinian who could smile beautifully and listen well."

Mr. Loiederman, a devoted patron of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra since his college days, helped secure \$89 million in state and county grants for construction of a 2,000-seat concert hall and arts education center on the grounds of Strathmore Hall. Construction on the complex began in March.

When it is completed in 2004, the Baltimore orchestra plans to make the facility its second home, with a full season of performances every year.

Mr. Loiederman had two great loves: classical music and Argentina's national soccer team. He once told an interviewer he was passionate about "beautiful voices, fine arts and beautiful soccer."

"He was a fanatic about soccer, an absolute nut," traveling regularly to a sports bar in Northern Virginia to watch satellite feeds of the Argentinian national team's games, Mr. Titus said.

Mr. Loiederman also was chairman of the board of trustees of Maryland College of Art and Design, served on the board of Suburban Hospital in Montgomery County, and was active in the county's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Services were held Thursday in Rockville.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Loiederman is survived by a daughter, Karen Fleming of Olney; a son, Eric Loiederman of Conshohocken, Pa.; a brother, Roberto Loiederman of Los Angeles; and three grandsons.