

Monday, February 18, 1980

Reyes syndrome

A message for those who love children



Michael Maloney is back home with his dog Cricket, back in classes at Southfield's John Grace school and back to activities in Farmington's St. Alexander Church after a bout with Reyes Syndrome. His mother credits the 10-year-old's recovery to a proper diagnosis of the disease in its earliest stages. (Staff photo by Randy Horst)

By LORAIN McCLISH

A chance meeting on a Knights of Columbus baseball field late last summer has resulted in an all-out push by two women to alert "everybody who loves children" to the symptoms of Reyes Syndrome.

Dana Allen of Bloomfield Township is now president of Michigan Region of National Reyes Syndrome Foundation, the region which carries the highest incidence of the disease in the country.

Diane Maloney of Southfield is her vice president.

Both are relative newcomers to the foundation.

Mrs. Allen lost a daughter last year to the disease and was attending a baseball game in Farmington where all proceeds were to be given to fight Reyes Syndrome (RS) when the two met.

Mrs. Maloney's 10-year-old son Michael is a survivor of RS and she went to the ballgame after hearing it advertised on her car radio "just to see if I could find someone there who knew what, if anything, was being done about it."

There is no known way of preventing RS, but the two women's work in the foundation have made them positive that the mortality rate drops considerably with those children who have parents who recognize the symptoms immediately.

THE DISEASE follows a pretty steady pattern, thus the word syndrome in its name, but symptoms are

often confused with encephalitis, meningitis, diabetes, poisoning, or in older children, drug overdose.

"So it is very important that parents be very aggressive and demand the proper tests for Reyes," Mrs. Allen said.

Reyes Syndrome is generally preceded by a viral disorder. Mrs. Allen's daughter was recovering from the flu when the disease struck. Michael was recovering from chicken pox. This is a brief period when the child is neither very sick or very well.

Then comes violent, relentless vomiting, the first serious sign of the syndrome, with temperatures that are normal.

This is followed by behavioral change: irritability, sleepiness, glassy eyes, often hostile or combative acts.

The syndrome continues with disorientation, then a hostility Mrs. Allen described as "animal like." The child may kick, bite, lash out, moan and scream incessantly, and demonstrate unusual strength before entering a coma.

Michael never did slip into a coma and was back in fourth grade at Southfield's John Grace School in about a month.

According to the foundation's records, one death occurred in nine minutes and there is one child in Mott Children's Hospital now who has been in a coma since September 1979. Duration of the disease is indefinite.

"SO ANYTIME your child begins

vomiting, just when he seems to be getting over another disease, this is the time to be alert," Mrs. Maloney said.

Reyes Syndrome was first described as a recognized disorder by Dr. R.K. Reye and two colleagues in 1953. The national foundation was established in Flint, in 1976, by three fathers who had simultaneously lost their sons to the disease in Mott Children's Hospital.

Mrs. Allen describes Reyes as "not so much rare, but rather little known."

As for statistics, the two women are adamant that death in some cases attributed to heart failure or kidney failure were actually caused by the syndrome.

But also statistically, the earliest diagnosed cases have the greatest survival rate.

Reyes hits those from infant to 18 years, but it is not communicable. Other children in the family are not in any danger, but it can hit the same child over and over again.

Survivors usually recover completely, though a small percentage have suffered disabilities, usually brain damage.

The incidence of Reyes seems to be increasing.

MRS. ALLEN is the state's one-woman speaker's bureau who has spoken to as many as 25 groups in a month's time spelling out tests that must be taken with a suspicion of Reyes, talking about research being done, promoting benefits and handing out pamphlets.

"But most important," she says, "is



DANA ALLEN

for parents just to not sit there and do nothing. Find other help. Be aggressive. It's your kid. Demand the right tests. Go to another doctor.

"Other diseases have time. The cause is known and the cure is known. With Reyes, time is the most important factor."

Mrs. Maloney added, "If parents want any information they have to come to us. Hospitals can't give us their names. Parents have to seek us out. We'll send them all the information they will need."

Individuals or service groups wishing to make donations, needing more information, or wanting to make an appointment for a program, are invited to call the Michigan Region's new telephone number, 334-2016.

Dramatic Lenten series planned in Hope church

Rev. Victor Mesenbrink, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, will turn "tour guide" for a dramatic series of Lenten services planned to begin at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, and continue on Wednesdays through the Lenten season. Worshipers will be led through the city of Jerusalem in typical tourist fashion, with dramatic readings. The tourists will get historical, cultural and

religious commentary on the city as it was nearly 2,000 years ago during the time of the Passover.

Rev. Mesenbrink promises "a couple of surprises along the way. These are all planned to confront the worshipers with some of the significant events in the Passion history of Jesus Christ," he said.

As an example, as tourists are going

through the temple, they will overhear the plot among the priests to betray Jesus. And they will be present when Jesus arrives at the temple to drive out the money changers.

The temple is the first stop on the tour itinerary.

The second stop, set for March 5, is a tour of the Mount of Olives.

This is followed by a stop at The Pal-

ace of the High Priest, then The Fortress of Antonia, then Skull Hill.

The series concludes on April 3, Maundy Thursday, with a Passover Celebration.

All Lenten Vespers begin at 7:30 p.m. in the church at 39200 Twelve Mile Rd.

All members of the community are invited to attend the series.

Fabulous Friday

Versatile seamstress tells how to design with sheets

By LORAIN McCLISH

Another good reason is the fabric's wash and wear qualities.

Patsy Price, owner and operator of Designs With Sheets, will visit the Farmington Community Center's Fabulous Fridays Series at 9:30 a.m. Feb. 22 to share a host of imaginative ideas in decorating with bed clothes and towels.

"I'll show how to make picture frames, aprons, shower curtains, napkins, dust ruffles and I'll bring along a few things I have made for clients," she said.

A cover for a round bridge table, slip covers for folding chairs, baby quilts and bumper pads are a few of the portable items that will be shown.

She has used sheets to cover a wall, in lieu of wallpaper, and has tented a ceiling connected with her work for interior designers as well as her own clients.

MRS. PRICE is saleswoman and designer for her business that keeps four seamstresses busy at the sewing machines in her West Bloomfield workshop. "I am hardly ever without my bag of pillow cases and towels," she said, "to show every pattern that is available."

Some of her own patterns, for ponchos, strapless nightgowns, caftans and the like, will be converted to graph paper for guests during the Fabulous Friday session.

"The patterns I've chosen will necessitate only straight sewing," she says, "though I believe I will be talking to women who will have some knowledge of the sewing machine. There are a few techniques I know they can use for putting on ruffles, shirring, and measuring."

Cost for the two-hour session is \$4 a person. Registrations are necessary, by calling the center at 477-8404.

"Designs With Sheets" is the fifth in the series of nine Fabulous Fridays.

The session continues on Feb. 29 when Tom Violante, owner of Holiday Market in Royal Oak, offers tips in buying and cutting meats.

March 7, a cake decorating seminar will be led by Sandy Rossin and Nancy Wise.



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