

Group to aid those stricken with asthma

By Dennis Coffman
staff writer

Teen-age asthmatics can breathe easier, now that a new group has been formed to help them cope.

Tracy Reardon, 13, of Canton was elected program director of the Teen Asthma Club of the Michigan Asthma and Emphysema Association in January.

Her goal will be to help teach persons with asthma to deal with the problems that arise when asthmatics attempt to exercise.

For the asthmatic, even relatively light exercise like bowling can be an ordeal, unless the person learns his or her limitations and prepares for emergencies.

"It will be my job to think up things for us to do," said Reardon. One of her first projects will be a volleyball outing at a racquetball court, then a ski trip and possibly rock climbing.

The club plans to sell "giant spring-water cookies" to raise money for its activities.

"We want to be able to do things

around mid-Michigan, within our price range," said Reardon, who is the only Canton member — and the youngest — in the club.

BOWLING ALLEYS present a special problem, because they are always smoke-filled.

"There's a problem, unless their parents have been smoking," said Reardon. "It causes them to tighten up and they have to take medication. But in my case, my mother is a smoker and I've gotten used to it, so it's a normal thing."

"Most members of the association have had asthma since birth, but some develop the illness at 2 or 3. My father had it, so there is a hereditary factor," she said.

Reardon knows what it's like to overdo it. "At a volleyball game, I started wheezing, so they took me out. I took medication and used a breathing machine," she said.

THE MEDICATION (Theolair, Probenil, Oranade or Benadril) and breathing machine, as well as shots of

adrenalin, are always available during the group's physical outings.

Reardon said the group also hopes to start a camp for teens 12-16. "They (the association) ask us our opinion of what we'd like to do. Last year, we met Ernie Harwell (Detroit Tiger announcer). But they ask us first," she said.

Asthma can be deceiving, she said. "There are cases where it goes away as the person gets older. But sometimes, it will go away and then come back much worse."

As if she didn't have enough to worry about, Reardon also has allergies. "Allergies can trigger an attack," she said.

Reardon said "a lot of kids" in Canton's Lowell Middle School have asthma. In her case, a special van picks her up at home, because she cannot walk the distance to the regular school bus. "I'd only make it about half way," she said.

But I can go pretty much anywhere now. At first, I didn't know what to do and I would get scared. But not anymore."

WINTER BRINGS special problems. "The most common kind of attack oc-

curs when you catch a cold and the mucus goes into your lungs and you can't breathe," said Reardon. "The adrenalin shots help, because they open the bronchial tubes, so that you cough out the mucus."

To protect her against the cold winter air, she wears a mask when she shovels snow. Even though asthma is a fairly common illness, there are still those who don't understand it, Reardon said.

"It's surprising how many kids make fun of you when you have to take a special van to school," she said.

Other students also may not understand why she does not take physical education at school.

"The doctor said I don't have to take it, unless I start to get fat," she said.

Her own understanding of her illness could not be more complete, however. In the long run, it could be useful. "I want to be a doctor," said Reardon. "I understand what it's like to be ill and what half the children in the hospital are going through. I want to be a pediatrician."

Judge removed from abortion case

By Marie Chestney
staff writer

The first few days of February have brought two victories for pro-life groups in Michigan.

One was a victory statewide, when the Michigan House voted 77-52 to end Medicaid funding for abortions.

The second victory took place Monday in Wayne County Circuit Court. After a 45-minute hearing, Circuit Court Judge Richard Dunn ordered Circuit Court Judge Louis F. Simmons Jr. to disqualify himself from hearing a case involving a Livonia abortion clinic.

Dunn ruled that remarks made by Simmons showed bias and prejudice against the two anti-abortion defendants in the case, Livonia resident Lynn Mills and the Rev. Edward Perrone, formerly of St. Genevieve Catholic Church and now at Assumption Grotto Parish in Detroit.

Mills said Dunn's decision to reassign the case to Circuit Court Judge Arthur Bowman had ominous implications for pro-abortionists and abortion clinics across the state.

"Coupled with today's vote on Medicaid in Lansing, we feel the (abortion) clinics are very concerned," said Mills. "This case is important to them. If the abortion rate drops, they will lose income. The clinics want to win this case."

DUNN apparently agreed with Robert Van Cleef, Dearborn-based attorney for the two defendants, that Simmons had a "strong bias" against them.

Van Cleef had asked that another judge rule on Simmons' disqualification when, on Jan. 29, Simmons denied the attorney's motion to dismiss himself as judge. At the time, Simmons was hearing a motion filed by attorneys for the Women's Abortion Advisory Center, 27549 Six Mile.

Led by Southfield-based attorney George Leiken, the center was trying

to prove that the clinic had suffered financial losses and irreparable harm because of picketing done by Mills, Perrone and other anti-abortionists at the Livonia clinic and another clinic in the Detroit area.

Leiken was seeking the reinstatement of a restraining order against picketing issued by Simmons last April and later overturned by the Michigan Supreme Court. The state's highest court said the restraining order against the picketers could be reissued if the clinics could prove they had suffered such harm.

VAN CLEEF called Simmons' disqualification "unfortunate."

"He got caught up in the case," the attorney said. "I don't think (his bias) was intentional. Dunn ruled that he seemed to inject his personality and the personality of the individuals involved into the fray."

Van Cleef said Simmons showed bias both in his actions and in his comments. Attorneys for the clinic, Van Cleef said, argued that while Simmons might have been irritated at times, this irritation did not color his evaluation of the case.

They also argued that sometimes the judge was merely thinking out loud. Van Cleef said.

The attorney said he found most objectionable Simmons' request to have Perrone undergo a lie detector test.

"He was singled out for a polygraph when the test is not credible evidence," Van Cleef said.

A court date for the continuation of the case before Bowman has not yet been set.

Meanwhile picketers, including Mills, continue to walk in the cold daily outside the Six Mile medical clinic.

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