

In the lurch

'They wanted the option of using that machine'

By Pat Murphy
Staff writer

At least 10 Oakland County residents waiting to use the controversial suicide machine were disappointed by the court order banning its use, according to the president of Homelock of Michigan.

"They wanted the option of using that machine," said Janet Good, the Farmington Hills woman who heads the state chapter of the Homelock Society that favors suicide as a legal option for the terminally ill.

Oakland Circuit Judge Alice L. Gilbert threw legal cold water on those hopes in Michigan Tuesday when she made permanent an order prohibiting the use of the suicide machine invented by Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

Kevorkian triggered a nationwide debate over the use of the machine on June 4 when he helped Alzheimer's victim Janet Adams, 54, of Portland, take her own life in a van parked in an Oakland County park.

The physician was acquitted of first-degree murder charges, but remains embroiled in civil litigation related to the use of his machine he views as a humane option for the terminally ill.

IN A 11-PAGE opinion, Gilbert made permanent an injunction that prohibits Kevorkian from using his machine or promoting assisted suicide. Gilbert was critical of Kevorkian's role in the Adams case, saying he violated professional ethics and standards.

The order was criticized by Kevorkian's attorneys, Geoffrey N. Fieger and Michael A. Schwartz, 50, of West Bloomfield Township, who said they will appeal the decision as soon as possible.

Fieger insisted there is no law to justify Gilbert's order and accused her of using her personal religious convictions as legal basis. "Judge Gilbert has no legal grounds for her order," he told a horde of reporters outside the courtroom.

Janet Good also responded to questions from the media. Homelock of Michigan is an intervenor in the case and its attorney has filed briefs on behalf of Kevorkian.

Good said she is disappointed but not surprised by Gilbert's decision.

"WE EXPECTED Judge Gilbert to rule against Dr. Kevorkian," she said. "I personally know 19 people who wanted the right to use that machine, including 10 in Oakland County."

"They are people who are suffering and have no hope," Good said. "They are suffering too. They can't find a way to ease the pain of their loved ones."

Good said she is "angry" about what she considers Gilbert's unwarranted personal attack on Kevorkian's character. Gilbert may have acted as if she considered to be anti-death law, said Good. But the public comes to go out of her way to

Kevorkian says he violated injunction

By Pat Murphy
Staff writer

Kevorkian said he was barred from using his suicide machine because he was not a dentist. He said he was a dentist in Michigan.

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I playmobil
Victorian
Dollhouse
plus
Perfect for Valentine's Day
The Doll Hospital
& Toy Soldier Shop

chastise Kevorkian.

"The multiple eccentric, unorthodox and controversial remarks by Dr. Kevorkian provide convincing evidence he has a flare for flamboyance, a propensity for media exposure and seeks recognition through bizarre behavior," Gilbert said in her opinion.

Dr. Kevorkian envisions himself as a charitable maverick, destined to revolutionize the practice of medicine," Gilbert continued. "His peers look upon him as a menace that

threatens the existence of the medical profession and those creeds that have endured since the time of Hippocrates."

ASKED ABOUT the judge's scathing description, Kevorkian said Gilbert is "totally ignorant" of medical history. Those who make medical breakthroughs have always been persecuted, he said.

Good agrees that Kevorkian is being persecuted. "He's a physician whose only goal is to help suf-

fering people," she said. "He's a hero to me."

As much as she disagrees with Gilbert's opinion, Good said it probably helps the cause she espouses. "It helps the public debate continue," she said, with more and more people advocating legalized suicide.

Since the plight of Adams and Kevorkian surfaced in June, state membership in her organization has more than doubled, Good said, from less than 200 to "well over 500. This issue is not dead."

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— Janet Good
Homelock Society



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