

## Toll sets record

# Hills resident falls prey to botulism

The number of botulism cases resulting from the serving of home-canned peppers at a Pontiac restaurant last week rose to 39 Tuesday, surpassing the previous record of 29 set in 1921. Four new patients were admitted to St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital in Pontiac Monday night. They were Helen Levine, 23, 22561 Gill Road, Farmington Hills; Betty Rainsor, 48, 136 E. Hickory Grove Road, Bloomfield Hills; Barbara Mayer, 29, 274 Shirley Drive, Troy; and Jenny Coe, 23, of Pontiac.

Ms. Coe was listed in critical condition, according to a hospital spokesman. Others were reported in stable condition.

Michael Niemann, a spokesman for Oakland County Executive Daniel Murphy, said more cases could turn up this week, as the incubation period can be eight days after ingestion of the tainted food.

The 39 victims were being treated in five Michigan hospitals and one hospital in Ohio.

A Bloomfield Hills man, John Slater, 26, was one of three victims listed in critical condition. Niemann said critical condition is defined as requiring breathing assistance.

Diane Sprenger, 26, of Union Lake, was the third critical patient. Most of the patients, 24 of the 39, were admitted to St. Joseph's, which is located adjacent to Trini and Carmen's, the Mexican restaurant which reportedly served the tainted food.

Two more patients were being treated at Little Traverse Hospital near Petosky. Another was at Saint Lawrence Hospital in Pontiac and yet another at Medical College of Ohio, near Toledo.

Scientists at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta traced the botulism poisoning to home-canned peppers contained in a sauce served with nachos. The restaurant, 848 Woodward, was closed last Thursday and health officials subsequently confiscated 147 jars of the sauce, which had been canned by a restaurant employee.

Officials speculated that traces of the toxin may have remained in cooking utensils, causing additional contamination prior to the closing of the restaurant.

Some of the victims reacted less adversely than others to the botulism poisoning and had nearly recovered by Tuesday.

"The doctors are hopeful of releasing some of the patients this week," Niemann said Tuesday.

The county spokesman added that physicians have secured an ample supply of anti-toxin used to treat the victims and that more is available from Atlanta if needed.

Niemann said the investigation was continuing and no decision had yet been made on what action to take against the restaurant, which remained closed.

State law prohibits the use of home-canned goods in restaurants. Violators can be convicted of a misdemeanor.

ONE OF the patients reportedly filed a class action suit against restaurant owners Monday, seeking more than \$10,000 in damages.

The case has been assigned to Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Francis X. O'Brien.

Botulism affects the neuromuscular system and is generally associated with improperly canned foods. It is considered one of the most dangerous of all poisons, with a mortality rate of 65 per cent.

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, fever, double vision, difficulty in swallowing and slurred speech.

## Louise Nobili speaks to Farmington artists

Louise Nobili, prominent metropolitan Detroit area artist, will be the guest speaker at the April 13 meeting of the Farmington Artist Club.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Twelve Mile Library.

Mrs. Nobili's works are represented in museums and in public and private collections. A native Detroit, she studied at the University of Wisconsin, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago School of design. She received her BFA and master's degree from Wayne State University.

She has been a professor at Wayne State University since 1958 and is a frequent lecturer and art juror throughout the area.

Mrs. Nobili is a charter member of the Michigan Water Color Society, an honorary member of the Grosse Pointe Art Association and a member of professional jury of the Detroit Artist Market.

She has exhibited in international exhibitions in addition to more than 125 regional juried and 21 solos.

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