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Mental health care advocates fight to keep sessions private

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

Psychiatrists say it's almost impossible to determine which patient will act on feelings or fantasies of violence. But a recent Michigan Court of Appeals ruling held a psychiatrist at

the Northville Regional Psychiatric Center liable for his patient's criminal act saying the doctor had reasonable cause to suspect the patient was prone to violence.

"Traditionally, in Michigan, the courts have ruled that a psychiatrist is not responsible for the behavior of his

patients," said Michael Shore, an administrative assistant to the state attorney general. "But with that (the Northville) decision, that kind of turns things around."

In the Northville case, the state Court of Appeals upheld an earlier court decision holding Dr. Yang-oh Lhim liable for his patient's criminal act. The patient murdered his mother while on a weekend pass issued by the psychiatrist, said state Assistant Attorney General Craig Atchinson. The dead woman's family was awarded \$500,000.

"To the best of my knowledge, this decision seems to be inconsistent with previous cases in Michigan," Atchinson said. Although Paul Swanson, a Detroit malpractice attorney, said the Northville case "didn't set a precedent at all," psychiatrists and psychologists "are painfully aware of what's going on."

"The worst evil of this decision shifts the burden from society to the doctor who is trying to help," said Dr. Douglas Sargent, a past president of the Michigan Psychiatric Society, who practices in Grosse Pointe Farms.

SARGENT SAID the trend toward suing psychiatrists and psychologists casts uncertainty on the doctor's role in patient treatment as well as the patient's right to confidentiality.

If a psychiatrist warns police about his patient's threat to commit violence, the patient most likely will become dishonest with the doctor or forego treatment.

"The patients are going to avoid getting turned in," said Sargent, also an attorney. On the other hand, there's the potential for psychiatrists to practice

preventive mental health treatments to avoid the possibility of being faced with a lawsuit, Sargent said. For example, if a patient shows the slightest propensity toward violence, the psychiatrist could recommend that he be institutionalized.

"But do you put everyone away who says they'd like to harm someone?" Sargent asked. "If you force a psychiatrist to practice defensively, society will be poorer."

And often, he added, a patient will respond more quickly and more effectively to treatment on an outpatient basis rather than being faced with the notion of institutionalization.

The idea of preventive medicine in psychiatry and psychology to avoid lawsuits, Sargent said, comes on the heels of pressure to discharge patients from state-operated institutions because of Michigan's economic problems. Mental health practitioners, he said, are being backed into a wall.

While aware of what's facing psychiatrists, Swanson is unconvinced preventive medicine should dominate mental health treatment.

"IT'S GOING to get ridiculous," the attorney said. "I can foresee a lot of problems with it."

But Swanson claims psychiatrists and psychologists should avoid allowing the fear of lawsuits to hamper mental health treatment. He said "there's always been a cause for action in Michigan."

"You can sue anybody for anything," Swanson said.

That fact, however, is the problem, Sargent said. The public knows doctors



DAVID FRANK/staff photographer

Special Olympian GERALYN SURMANN of Farmington is introduced to her celebrity team leader BO SCHEMBECHER, University of Michigan head football coach.

Moth offensive planned for May

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

If Mother Nature behaves herself, Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) officials will begin the first of two aerial sprayings Tuesday, May 10, to destroy gypsy moths in a concentrated area of hardwood trees in Farmington Hills.

As required by the Federal Aviation Administration, the Farmington Hills City Council Monday gave MDA officials permission to aerially spray the moth-infested neighborhood of 10 Mile and Inkster Road. Thirty-five patches of egg masses of the tiny destructive caterpillars were found in the area, said Carl Dollhopf, a supervisor in MDA's Detroit office.

The moths, in their caterpillar stage, which takes place in late April when the eggs hatch, attack and defoliate al-

most every type of tree, particularly hardwoods, Dollhopf said.

Unfortunately, the oak — the moths' "first love" — like beeches, walnuts, maples and birches, are susceptible to permanent damage from defoliation. The trees have little regenerative power to grow new leaves fast enough to stay alive, Dollhopf said.

Although concentrated in the 10 Mile and Inkster Road area, 320 acres in the area of infestation have been specified for treatment with Sevin, a common insecticide that can be purchased in any lawn and garden shop.

THE AREA to be sprayed is bounded on the east by Inkster Road, on the north a quarter-mile north of 10 Mile, on the west by Briarhill and on the south 1/2-mile south of 10 Mile.

About two years ago, bands of the ra-

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Passover has special appeal for the younger generation

By Diane Gais
staff writer

Traditions and symbols of the Passover holiday commemorating the freedom of Jewish people from slavery in 1280 B.C. are still relevant to young Jews today.

"I enjoy being in synagogue and I enjoy doing what the holiday represents," Jeff Lupovitch said. "Many people my age feel the customs are obsolete and don't apply to modern times, but many feel much the way I do."

The eight-day holiday, filled with meaning for Lupovitch, began March 27 at sundown and continues through sundown on April 5. The rituals were recited by Lupovitch's ancestors thousands of years ago, and they're still enacted across the world in a commemoration of Moses leading the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt.

APART FROM the holiday being a symbol, it's also a time when the family can meet and contemplate what happened during the year. Lupovitch grinned and explained that Passover is a happy holiday that marks a new beginning and is considered the first month of the year.

Suppressing an urge to break into Hebrew to describe the many symbols of the holiday, Lupovitch said the main goal of the celebration is to capture the children's attention and to educate them about Jewish history and religion.

"To a very great extent I feel a part of the same Exodus that happened thousands of years ago. We discuss that and learn about that at the Seder," Lupovitch said. "Feel those — were my people taken out of Egypt."

"To a great extent, I feel a part of the same Exodus that happened thousands of years ago. We discuss that and learn about that at the Seder. I feel those were my people taken out of Egypt."

— Jeff Lupovitch

THE SEDER is the ceremonial Passover dinner, which is celebrated the first and second day of the holiday.

Passover represents the freedom of his ancestors thousands of years ago, but Lupovitch said it also brings to mind suffering Jews in the Soviet Union and Syria today.

During the Seder Lupovitch thinks about "people freedom" everywhere. To him, the ceremony represents human liberty for people of all races and creeds.

On a spectrum with very liberal Jews on one end, and the strictest Orthodox Jews on the other, Lupovitch, a member of the Congregation Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills, considers himself in the middle.

REPRESENTING THE liberal members of Judaism is Harriet Maza, principal at Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills.

Maza explained that most members of the Temple consider themselves primarily a cultural group.

"When we celebrate holidays we are, in general, people-oriented," Maza said. "It's our Jewish culture and human culture that gives us our identity."

Maza said her family minimizes the importance of the rituals tied to the holiday. Instead they emphasize the significance of the people involved.

"Wherever you go Jewish people know there are other Jews celebrating. It may be in a different fashion, but they're all recognizing their connections," she said.

SINCE 16-YEAR-OLD Lupovitch is the youngest of his immediate family, it's his duty to ask the four symbolic questions at the Seder. They're intended to prompt inquiries and discussion, especially among the children to show why that night is different from all others.

The Seder dinner is rich with cultural and religious meaning. A plate at the center of the table holds six dishes with a different item on each. They include a roasted bone; a mixture of apples, nuts and wine; a hard boiled egg; bitter herbs, horseradish; and parsley. Each morsel represents either Jewish suffering or freedom.

After he marries and has children, Lupovitch said he plans to carry on the same religious customs that sparked his interest and devotion to Judaism.



RANDY BORGSTADT/staff photographer

The Cup of Elijah is filled with wine symbolically waiting for the prophet to arrive.



RANDY BORGSTADT/staff photographer

Sixteen-year-old Jeff Lupovitch explains why youths find meaning in the Passover traditions.

oral quarrel How do you feel about psychiatrists being sued?

On the second anniversary of John Hinckley's assassination attempt against President Reagan, mental health advocates are being attacked for keeping patient conversations confidential when other persons' lives are threatened. Recently, courts have been leaning toward forcing psychiatrists to reveal those conversations and break the bond of confidentiality which now exists. Mental health officials feel this is a violation of their ethics. Those on the other side of the issue believe lives will be saved if police are notified of these threats.

Today's Oral Quarrel question is:

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PSYCHIATRISTS KEEPING SECRET THOSE THREATS MADE TOWARD OTHER PERSONS? SHOULD LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS BE INFORMED?

You have until 1 p.m. Friday to answer this question by calling 477-5498. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

1st apartment goes for cable

Within a month, Hunters Ridge will be the first apartment complex in the MetroVision cable firm's tri-city consortium area to turn on cable television.

Officials from MetroVision of Oakland County, the cable firm which holds the franchise in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi, signed an agreement with Hartman & Tyner, the Hunters Ridge management firm, to begin cable television construction for 487 units in the complex. The agreement will allow MetroVi-

sion to first construct the system and then market the firm's cable services, said Joe Adams, Hartman and Tyner's director of property management.

UNLIKE PRIVATE residences, an agreement must be signed before MetroVision can wire an apartment or condominium complex for cable television, said Tom Bjorkland, the cable firm's general manager.

"We will be contacting residents (at Hunters Ridge) as soon as cable service is available," Bjorkland said.

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