

AIDS may affect many older adults



RENEE MAHLER

Q. I have recently heard about a 65-year-old woman with AIDS. Is this possible, and do many older people have the disease?

A. The National Institute on Aging has stated that as many as 10 percent of all AIDS-reported cases have involved people aged 50 and over. While the public is aware of this disease, little information has been printed that tells how this disease affects older people. It is not surprising to learn that so many older adults believe they are not likely to be affected. The institute believes that many older people have the disease and are either not yet showing the symptoms or have been properly diagnosed.

The AIDS virus affects the immune system, preventing the body from fighting infectious diseases. As people age, their immune system abilities tend to decline. Older people, then, are more susceptible to a variety of illnesses. Because of these natural changes the AIDS virus possibly affects older people differently than younger ones. Information from the Centers for Disease Control implies that most older people, with the AIDS virus, are likely to develop the disease symptoms more rapidly.

As the older population receives the highest rate of blood transfusions, as a part of its regular medi-

cal care, exposure to contaminated blood, received prior to 1985 before the public blood supply was screened for the virus, is a major cause for the occurrence of the disease in older adults. The number of older people who have received contaminated blood is unknown. One of the most serious results of this situation is that the person carrying the virus may be unknowingly infecting others.

To further add to the problem, older AIDS patients, who have early symptoms, may go undiagnosed. Early AIDS symptoms such as loss of appetite, extreme tiredness and swollen glands are similar to many other minor ailments. Without realizing it, health care professionals may dismiss these as symptoms of other, less dangerous, illnesses. While there is no cure for this disease as yet, it is imperative for people of all ages to be working with a physician who is knowledgeable about AIDS research and the latest treatments. To help find the name of a local expert, one should call his or her local university's medical school's department of infectious diseases. There is also a national AIDS Hotline that offers all types of information. Call the toll-free number, 1-800-342-AIDS.

Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and the director of communications admission at a Rochester Hills nursing facility. She is a former member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging. Send your questions to her at the Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

Album is published every third Monday

The Eccentric Newspapers Monthly Album is published the third Monday of each month and is reserved for residents and former residents of The Eccentric circulation area.

Photos and engagement or wedding announcements are due Tuesday, Sept. 8, for the Monthly Album to be published Monday, Sept. 21. Photos and engagements or wedding announcements are due Tuesday, Oct. 6, for the Monthly Album to be published Monday, Oct. 19.

Engagement announcements will be accepted no later than 45 days prior to the wedding. Wedding announcements must be submitted within 60 days following the wedding. Wedding announcements received past the 60-day deadline will be run only on a space-available basis.

Photos submitted should be black and white glossy, preferably a 5x7 inch vertical shot. Color photographs can be submitted but will not reproduce as well.

Please put an identifying name and daytime phone number on the back of the photo. Due to the vol-

ume of photographs handled, The Eccentric Newspapers is not responsible for any that may be lost or damaged. Photos may be picked up two weeks after publication and will be held for 60 days. If you wish to have the photograph back it should be marked "Hold for pickup." Photos will not be mailed back to families.

Engagement and wedding information forms can be obtained at the newspaper's information desk from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., 805 E. Maple, Birmingham. If you are unable to pick up a form, one will be mailed to you if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is sent to Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

Questions should be directed to the information desk receptionist in the Birmingham office at 644-1100.

For information about the Observer Newspapers Monthly Album for residents or former residents of the Observer Newspapers circulation area, contact Rose Butler at the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, phone 477-54550.

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Equestrian from page 1C

Joanna LaPrad, 19, of West Bloomfield is a member of the Advanced Exceptional Equestrian Drill Team, which will do a demonstration Sunday as part of the Tollgate Challenge Cup II program.

Though she is hearing impaired, LaPrad marvels at the ability of others who are physically challenged and able to overcome their fears.

"There's kids here who are not able to walk and who are in wheelchairs," said LaPrad, who will attend Oakland University in the fall. "There's a girl (who has cerebral palsy). She wasn't really confident and, after a season, it was amazing. There's a lot of kids who are really physically impaired. They're scared. They're scared to get on the horses. They end up loving it."

LaPrad herself admits she was a bit intimidated about climbing on a horse at first. She's afraid of heights, and because of the hearing impairment, balance can be tricky. "Luckily, it was a fat horse, so I knew I wasn't going to fall over," she said.

Advanced team

She rides five times a week and is a leader on the Drill Team and helped choreograph the routine for Sunday's event, which will include starbursts, pinwheels and a series

of criss-cross movements called "thread the needle."

Her mother, Pat, also rides and is a volunteer with the program.

In the last year, LaPrad said she's become less self-conscious about her hearing impairment.

Bonnie Richards of Redford Township has seen the same transformation with her two sons, Jonathan, 14, and Ryan, 10. Jonathan has a learning disability and difficulty with motor skills. Ryan has a closed head injury resulting from an automobile accident.

They started out with two volunteer walkers at their side and another person leading the horse. Today, they ride by themselves.

"The horseback riding has helped (Jonathan) there, because he has to tighten the reins," Bonnie Richards said. "Balance wise and posture, he's made great improvement."

"Emotionally, after the accident, that was (Ryan's) greatest need. It gave him the confidence he needed at times."

Cindy Richards of the Tollgate program notes therapeutic riding is not a replacement for physical therapy, but it makes the rehabilitative process more bearable.

"It still might hurt, it still might be a little painful," she said. "Somehow, it (riding) is a little more fun."



DAN DEAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

High-five: Joanna LaPrad, 19, of West Bloomfield, and riding partner Jill Shodack, 18, exchange congratulations after a successful run-through of their routine in preparation for Sunday's benefit polo match at the Detroit Polo Club.

Cindy Richards speaks from experience. Doctors told her family she would never be able to hold a job after she suffered a closed head injury after an auto accident in 1986.

"Six weeks after they put me on a horse, I was out looking for a job."

The Tollgate Challenge Cup II

Barneys from page 1C

In a walk-through of the store last week, there wasn't much to see yet beyond the workmen finishing the bare interior. By Aug. 23, however, Barneys main floor will be filled with women's clothing, plus an Apothecary department where lotions and spa products including Barneys own label are sold; Chelsea Passage for unique gifts including one-of-a-kind artistic plates; Chelsea Baby, special infant and toddler clothing and accessories; and women's accessories — handbags, jewelry, scarves and sunglasses.

The second floor, devoted entirely to men's clothing, will be accessible from the main floor by staircase or elevator, or may be reached through a separate entrance on the second level of the mall.

Thomas Fletcher of Rochester Hills, who is assistant store manager of the men's department, said, "Barneys has been well known for such a long period as a men's store, and now as a women's store as well. I expect the market to be very excited by the prospect of having a Barneys in the area."

Although store manager Pyke has worked in the retail field throughout the country, including Dallas, Chicago, Minneapolis and New York, she grew up in the Clarkston area and went to Michigan State University. Her parents, Wayne and Carol Pyke, now live in Bloomfield Hills. Her West Bloomfield residence is a townhouse apartment.

Likes shopping

"I have a brother and his wife in

Walled Lake, with two nieces, 1 1/2 and 1 month. It's very exciting to have small children around the family," Pyke said. She has a dog Isabelle — a combination Labrador, Doberman and German shepherd. Pyke is single, but if people ask, "Do you have children?" she said she replies, "My child has four legs. She's a big, big baby."

Pyke is blond, with a healthy glow that is undoubtedly a result of her interest in sports. "I do a lot of things outdoors," she said. "I like to rollerblade and downhill ski. I've been doing a lot of golf this year."

Her other interests include vacationing and — despite her kind of job — "Oddly, enough, I like to shop."

Pyke believes that balance is important in everyone's life. "Work is fun, but I have a life outside work," she said. "The whole '80s were obsessive — a little out of control."

Worked at NM

Her first job after college was working in Dallas for Neiman Marcus (a new neighbor at the Somerset Collection). Then she came back to Detroit to work for Hudson's before moving on to Minneapolis, in the Dayton-Hudson buying office.

Next Pyke went to Chicago, as a retail analyst for a wholesaler at Polo Ralph Lauren. She covered the Midwest territory and had several

major department stores as accounts. "I've had a tremendous exposure to retail in general," she said.

Later, she moved from Chicago to New York, still working for Polo Ralph Lauren and for Ralph Lauren women'swear. She moved back to the Detroit area to work for Lord and Taylor, for the last year and a half.

Her first exposure to Barneys began when she moved to New York five years ago. "I shopped the store," she said, and was impressed by "their unique product and the

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