

Escape route: Dr. Alan Bredin demonstrates how the escape plan was to work for Jackie Ponke.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEMIEUX



Unlocked door: The sliding glass door was unlocked so that Jackie Ponke could escape and run past the trees and around the fence if need be.

## Death from page 1A

ily doesn't make it easier.

The family is filing suit after a claim for worker's compensation was denied, Bredin said. He knows it's not personal, but added "It still makes me feel like scum. Jackie would turn over in her grave."

Bredin and Ponke were working on a patient on the Saturday morning when a man entered and began hitting her several times with a hammer.

Bredin tried to stop the man, but was thwarted. Bredin and the patient went to a neighbor on James Court to call police.

Since then, Bredin has returned to the office every day. He sought the help of two nephews who completed the remodeling.

### 'My heart was beating'

Monica Rubin said she still had trepidation as she approached the front door last week.

"My heart was beating a mile a minute," said Rubin, who has worked for Bredin for two years. "That's how I felt, not knowing what to expect. . . I didn't want to face that scary feeling I thought I'd have."

Until a few days ago, Rubin couldn't sleep without a night light. She said she was fearful someone would be sneaking around in the dark.

"It [darkness] depressed me. It gave me the creeps," Rubin said. "I used to love the evenings."

The new look of the office has helped, Rubin said. So too have patients, who Rubin was afraid might want to know a lot of the details. She said they've been very supportive.

Bredin said he was willing to recommend another dentist for patients who were uncomfortable about coming in. So far, no one has.

Many are like James Fanzini, who has been a patient for 15 years. He was in Monday.

"I didn't have any fear," Fanzini said. "The apprehension I had was for them, not me. I felt real bad for them."

"I knew when every patient came in, they would have to answer every question."

Gentle reminders of their beloved colleague, though, are difficult to ignore.

### Painful reminders

A dental hygienist went to hand a patient's chart to an employee at the front desk and began crying, Bredin said. She realized those charts usually went to Jackie Ponke.

A person who collects hazardous waste from the dental office wasn't aware of the murder when he came in.

"He said, 'Where were you, on vacation?' . . . I almost wanted to cry," Rubin said.

Kathy Babcock, who trained Jackie Ponke on the job 20 years ago, was helping Rubin learn

how to process insurance forms and schedule appointments for Bredin's 2,000 patients.

Babcock, who is a nurse, returned when she heard about Jackie Ponke's murder.

"Dr. Bredin is a friend of mine. He's still the dentist for my family," said Babcock, who called Jackie Ponke the most enthusiastic and pleasant person she knew. "We're trying to pull together just to try and get things in order."

Both have been impressed with their employer, who they say is willing to talk about the tragedy. That's allowed them to open up.

"It's a healing thing," Babcock said.



Patient Jim Fanzini: "The apprehension I had was for them, not me."

## Arena from page 1A

a positive revenue source for the city."

Several residents, like Bill Hodges, said they had children who play hockey or figure skate who would use a local arena.

"We have to go to Plymouth and Livonia," he said. "There are kids waiting for ice time."

That sentiment seemed to reflect findings of the committee that there was demand for ice time from residents, especially those with children.

Buha questioned the results of a market survey showing support for an arena and, along with others, questioned whether the council would put the question to the voters.

Lichtman said he was concerned that a skewed vote could defeat such a proposal.

"Will the people who vote be representative of the city?" he said. "The council makes a number of important financial decisions that the public does not vote on."

Councilwoman Joanne Smith cited the San Marino Golf Course, the Mercy Center, and other recreational facilities as city projects that provide recreational opportunities to residents that had not been put on the ballot. The report

■ 'If this is such a wonderful project, businessmen should be beating down our door to build it, and they aren't.'

Hills resident Mary Buha

has demonstrated a real demand for an arena, she said.

"If you don't keep in step, eventually you're behind," she said.

That is the way a democracy decides such issues, Buha said.

Councilman Terry Sever said his biggest fear would be that a few people would give the proposal "a nasty twist" to defeat it.

Masha Silver and Massie Kurzeja both questioned how such an arena would be financed.

"I have nothing against an ice arena," said Kurzeja, a community activist and 34-year Hills resident. "But this is too much money (\$6 million to \$8 million) not to say to residents, 'Do you want to fund it?'"

No specifics involving the structure itself and the location have been discussed, Kurzeja said.

Lichtman said that since the report had just been introduced for transmittal to the council, those issues had not been discussed, but would be. He added

that there would be public hearings on the issue.

Buha said she was concerned about tax dollars going for an arena, but city manager Bill Costick said an arena would be financed by revenue bonds, not city taxes. After the meeting Costick said he was surprised by Buha's remarks.

"She made a dramatic display of distorting the facts," he said. "It was an attempt to discredit an effort conducted in public meetings over a year-long period."

Lichtman said the council, which already discussed the report in a study session Jan. 18, will take it up over the next two months and hopefully come up with a plan by April 1. That would be soon enough to allow the city to take advantage of low interest rates if the city decides to float revenue bonds. It would also allow the city enough time to put an ice arena question on the August primary ballot and avoid the costs of a special election.

## Prognosis good for Bates' husband

When council woman Nancy Bates made a hurried departure from Monday's Farmington Hills City Council meeting, it was because her husband Charlie had

been taken to the hospital.

Turns out he has two blood clots and is being treated this week. But the former mayor said the prognosis is good.

"He's going to be just fine," she said from her Lansing office. "He had tests and he's being treated for the blood clots. He'll be in the hospital for a week."

## Computer from page 1A

fects of the ballot proposal's 6 percent sales tax opposed to the 4 percent called for in the Legislature's version. Supowit went back to a table provided by the Internal Revenue Service, which estimated the amount of sales tax a person spends annually based on income.

Other factors are weighed as well.

State equalized value of property is multiplied by both the ballot-proposed 6 mills and the Legislature-proposed 12 mills. Supowit said he also figures in the provision that allows some districts to make up millage.

The formula includes the differences in personal exemptions — \$2,100 on the ballot proposal or

\$3,000 on the Legislature's.

"I ask the person how many packs of cigarettes they smoke," said Supowit, considering the proposed increase in the cigarette tax to 75 cents from 25 cents.

So far, the ballot proposal comes out ahead of the Legislature one in Supowit's analysis.

"It's hard to come up with a profile where the Legislative proposal does better," said Supowit, who added that he has no political axe to grind. "It's amazing really."

Supowit admits the final tally is a projection. The purpose is only to compare the two so voters can make up their own minds.

"What year 1995 income is

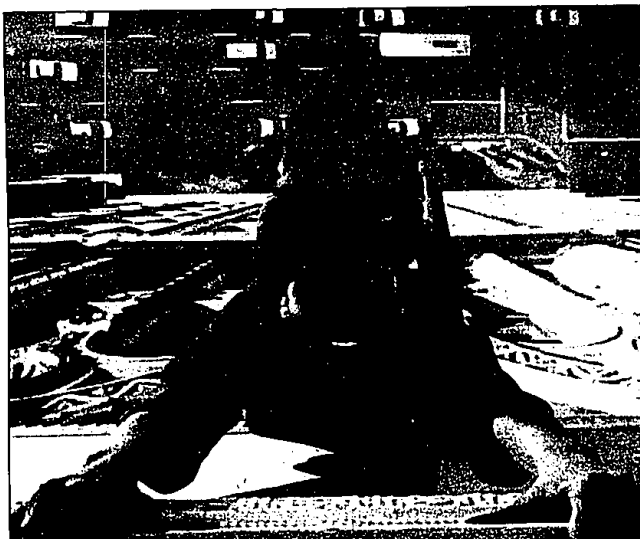
going to be is a guess on your part," Supowit said. "It's only as good as the person's assumptions. Given the assumptions, it's accurate."

Supowit has just started advertising the service. He figures it's cheaper than going to an accountant.

People fill out a form, which he uses to do the analysis. People are mailed or faxed the results.

So far, he has had few takers. "It's a good product," he said, "but it's the marketing that needs to be worked out."

For information about Ballot Proposal Analysis, call (483-1764) or write to: 22666 Kewallwood, Farmington Hills 48334.



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