

# 73-year-old likes 'nice people' at arraignment

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Leave it to Janet Good to see the good side of things.

After being threatened with arrest, fingerprinted and ordered to court on felony charges, the 73-year-old Farmington Hills grandmother talked about "all the nice people" in Ionia.

"I really can't get over how nice everybody was," Good said following her arraignment Tuesday in the mid-Michigan town northwest of Lansing.

Good, the founder of the Michigan Chapter of the Hemlock Society, faces the identical charges filed against Dr. Jack Kevorkian, her friend and philosophical ally.

They were expected to go to trial at the same time, possibly next summer, according to defense attorney Michael A. Schwartz. But any timetable is uncertain.

Good was diagnosed with ter-

minal pancreatic cancer in the summer of 1996 and given six months to live — a circumstance that Ionia County Prosecutor Raymond P. Vogt said may prompt him to dismiss her criminal charges.

"I think I'll still be around then," Good said Wednesday. "I want to see how this whole thing (the trial) ends."

Good would also like to take advantage of an invitation from a group of senior citizens she met at a fast food restaurant on the outskirts of Ionia. "We stopped at Wendy's," she said, "and I met this wonderful senior citizens swimming team. They invited me for a swim."

That invitation was typical, Good said, of how people reacted to her. "Even the man who took my fingerprints was friendly," she said.

One man actually apologized, she said. As she was emerging from court the man said some-

thing to the effect that not everybody in Ionia agreed with the charges, Good said.

The warmth from the swim team and other people she encountered made an unwanted trip to Ionia memorable, Good said. "I have a deep respect for the legal system," she said. "Even though some of the things I've seen (charges against her and Kevorkian, for example) are kind of dumb."

Good is a former equal employment officer with the Michigan Employment Security Commission. She was inducted in the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 1991 for her work combating sexual harassment in the work place and her leadership in organizing the Older Women's League.

When Good returned to her Farmington Hills home Tuesday, her answering machine was almost overloaded with messages — including some related

to her ongoing role with the Hemlock Society.

"Most of the calls were from reporters and people voicing support," Good said. "But there were from people who said they are suffering and want to get in contact with Dr. Kevorkian."

Calls from people who say they want help ending their lives have increased lately, Good said, probably because of increased publicity about the latest round of charges.

"Some of those people are crying," she said. "They say they want somebody to help end their misery."

Although Kevorkian has faced varied and numerous charges related to his advocacy for physician assisted suicide, this is the first time Good has been charged, something that infuriates her attorneys.

"Even (Oakland prosecutor) Dick Thompson didn't go after Janet Good," said Schwartz.

"This is the lowest thing I've ever seen a prosecutor do."

Separate from 19 charges Kevorkian faces in Oakland County, the retired physician who lives in West Bloomfield is accused of four felonies in connection with the death Loretta Peabody, 54, an Ionia woman who committed suicide in Aug. 30.

Schwartz insisted the charges were particularly flimsy because Peabody's death was initially certified as resulting from natural causes and her body was cremated. "So they (the Ionia prosecutor) have no body, no witnesses and no evidence," said the defense attorney.

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