# Woman's rare malady requires special treatment

BY SURAN B. TAUBER STAFF WRITER "author Coe. homocomm.net

Jennifer Pettibone knows what the expression "bleed to death"

the expression bleed to deter really means.

The 28-year-old woman can't bend over, lift objects, sneeze or cough because those activities could cause her to bleed exces-

cougn necause chose activities could cause her to bleed excessively.

Pettibone suffers from the discusse arteriovenous malformation. It causes an abnormal collection of blood vessels to gather. If the blood vessels togin to bleed, the patient can suffer a severe headache or even a fatal stroke.

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Ricarda Schmalzried of West Bloomfield is trying to get the word out to the public that Pettibone needs help.

Pettibone is traveling to Beth Israel Medical Center in New York next month for surgery. Her doctor is craniofacial surgeon Dr. Inn Jackson with the Institute for Craniofacial and Reconstructive Surgery associated with Providence Hospital in Southfield and Novi. He recommended she see the specialists in New York. They will try to help Pettibone by temporarily reducing the AVM-affected areas of her face, particularly in her right eye and forehead.

"It might be my only chance to keep me alive," said Pettibone, who graduated from Walled Lake Western High School. "The operation isn't a cure but it may be a way to prolong my life."

#### Fund-raiser

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Pettibone's younger sister, Jodi Nicholas, 27, is sponsoring a Sunday dinner fund-raiser for Jonnifer from 1-5 pm. Sunday, Jan. 20, at the Richardson Center, 1485 Oakley Park Road between Haggerty and South Commerce roads.
She and other volunteers, including Schmalzried, will be there cooking and sorving the meal. They also will collect money to help with Pettibone's trip to New York and the cost of the stay, which could last as long

as three weeks, according to Schmalzried.
Péttibone is hoping her sister. Nicholas' husband Andrew and their children, Ashley, 20 months, and Zachary, 10 weeks old, can be with her for at least the first week.

I have an extremely strong bond with my sister, "the older Pettibone sister said. "She is the perfect person to be with me. She knows how to handle my bleeding. I would be very said if she couldn't be at the hospital with me. Having my niece and nephew there would be an added bonus — a healing power for me."

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"Jennifer lives with an extreme grief prognosis. There's not much hope," said Eva Forman, a social worker for the Craniofacial and Reconstructive Surgery Institute.

"Dr. Jackson is sending her to New York to a highly specialized radiologist who may be able to intervene in a way that we cannot. We just hope maybe there's something there for her."

Forman said Pettibone will have tremendous expenses.

"And we don't know if her



Young dreamer: Jennifer Pettibone, while in high school, dreamed of a life with a career and a family



Sisters and friends: Jodi Nicholas (left) and her son, Zachary, sit with Jodi's sister and best friend, Jennifer Pettibone, who suffers from Arteriovenous Malformation. Nicholas is Zaciary, st. with Jours assert data east pretty, competent Pettibone, who suffers from Arteriovenous Malforma-tion. Nicholas is trying to raise enough money to accompany Jennifer to New York for life-prolonging medical treatments.

insurance will cover all of it, part of it or any of it. It would be nice if she learns she needs money for the treatment, she could say she has it," Forman added.

#### A subdued life

A subdued life

Due to her disease, Pettibone
can't work. Sometimes she can
drive. Besides having Bible
study at her house on Thursday
nights and visiting people, there
isn't much she can do.

She also can't fly so she's taking an Amtrak train to New
York. Her friend, Kendra Strasser of Walled Lake, is going with
her and staying until Pettibone
can return home.
"The Amtrak ticket costs \$210.

can return home.

"The Amtrak ticket costs \$210. Just the hotel could run all of them almost \$2,000 for the stay," Schmalzried said. "These are young people. They don't have that kind of money."

Schmalzried knows Pettibone through Schmalzried's daughter, Shannon, who is a friend of Nicholas.

#### Life-threatening surgeries

Pettibone was only 16 when she learned she had AVM. She was at school when her friends told her about a throbbing pink spot next to her nose. Since then, she's had to undergo many surg-

cries, including a major operation in 1996.

It was during that surgery
that doctors removed portions of
her face, nose, a cheek and bruper pallate.

"She's not only had to deal
with a life-threatening disease,
she's also had to deal with people staring at her and making
crude remarks," Schmalaries
said. "She's had offers to rebuild
her nose, but she said she's used
to the way she looks. She wishes
other people would get used to

it."
Nicholas hopes she can accompany her sister to New York.
"The bleeding ... I'm afraid one day it isn't going to stop. She bleeds every day." Nicholas said. Pettibone said her strong belief in God gets her through

belief in God gets her through every day.

"That's the only way," she said. "He provides me with the friends and family I have and the good attitude I have. I wish I could be more active. I used to hang out with friends, go out on dates, play more aports. I can't do any of that anymore.

Pettibone is a member of West Oaks Christian Church in Wixom.

## Clarenceville seeks to improve attendance

BY JONI HUBRED STAFF WRITER Jhubred@oe.hom

While elementary attendance levels aren't a critical problem, Clarenceville school officials are

levels aren't a critical problem, Clarenceville eshool officials are making an effort to let parents know they care when children are chronically absent.

A new attendance brochure, which will be distributed with the next round of report cards, was presented to Board members Thursday, Botsford Elementary teacher Lisa Piontek, who chaired the committee that worked on the brochure, said the policy of intervening begins with families whose children have been absent at least three consecutive days.

"We need to be more active intervening early," said Botsford principal Joe Schiffman. "After three days, it's more just to show care and concern."

Policies range from having a

Policies range from having a teacher call or mail a letter home, to a possible court referral for students absent more than 20

days.
"We hope we don't see kids
who are more than 20 days
absent, but it does happen," Pio-

absent, but it does happen," Pio-ntek said.

The brochure outlines the dis-trict's attendance policy, while centers around the idea that absence from school interferes with a child's opportunity to learn. Michigan state law requires every school-aged child

to be in school, and parents are responsible for their children's

responsible for their tunideals attendance.
Legal excuses for absence include illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, court proceedings, religious observances or an educational opportunity.
Any other absence or a child's willful absence without a parent's knowledge are considered "unlawful absences."
The district's goal, according to the brochure, is to have children nchieve a 90 percent or better daily attendance. Piontek said Botsford Elementary achieves about a 95 percent attendance

Botsford Elementary achieves about a 95 percent attendance rate overall.

Supt. Tom Tattan said improving attendance was also a district-wide goal.

In a memo to board members, he noted the district will work with county authorities to find positive interventions for serious attendance problems. While officials hope parents will read the brochure, Tattan said those who most need to know these policies may not.

may not.
"If they don't, they'll learn about it when the intervention comes," said Board member Bryan Bentley.

Bryan Bentley.
Officials approved the draft version of the brochure, which will also be distributed when families register their students for school.

### FHS to offer orientation

All incoming eighth grade students who will be attending Farmington High School in the fall of 2002, and their parents, are invited to attend freshman orientation on Thursday, Jan. 21

31.
Festivities begin with a kickoff in the school's auditorium at

7 p.m.

Tours of the building, curriculum information, orientation to the school, and an opportunity to sign up for clubs and athletic teams will all be a part of the



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