

Seniors volunteer to help peers cope with age

Margaret Leitchweil, 66, bristles at being dubbed a senior citizen. She prefers to be called a "seasoned" citizen.

Kilton Perry, 72, and Martha Engel, 66, agree with Leitchweil. They view the valuable experience and knowledge gleaned from years of living as assets they wish to use to help their peers.

Last winter the three enrolled in

Mercy College of Detroit's Senior Volunteer Program, a 12-week training session geared to teaching seniors to work with their peers in various settings in the community.

Twenty-two senior citizens participated in the program. They were taught how to understand normal, age-related, physical changes how to build empathetic communication skills, and

how to identify and manage problems. They were also trained in advocacy skills and were given information on community resources available for the elderly. After completing the training sessions, each participant was placed in a community agency or program.

Leitchweil, a Royal Oak resident and a nurse, had worked the past seven years with the elderly and decided to return to college to earn a gerontology certificate. She signed up for the senior volunteer program as student/informant teacher.

Leitchweil now volunteers two days a week at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital in the patient representative department.

She visits new patients and informs them of services offered by the hospital and how they may get answers to their questions or complaints.

"So many people feel that once they retire, that's it. That's not what I want to do. I'm not ready to sit down in a rocking chair yet," Leitchweil said, adding that she really enjoys the feeling of being useful and needed.

Perry, a Livonia resident, was wid-

owed a year ago and was searching for an activity to keep him busy.

"I wasn't looking for entertainment. I wanted to do something for others," said Perry, who retired seven years ago from Great Lakes Steel, where he was vice president of production control. "I took the opportunity at Mercy College because it offered some background into the information needed to help other seniors."

AFTER COMPLETING the training sessions, Perry volunteered at the West Central Adult Service Center in Detroit, helping to publish a newsletter and to plan special events like Health Day or Political Candidates Day. He also helped to publish a resource directory for the center's elderly participants.

Martha Engel volunteers as a home visitor through the Adult Service Center in Allen Park. The Southgate widow visits the home of trail senior citizens, helps them write letters, drives them to the bank occasionally, and often just lends a friendly ear for her patients' troubles and frustrations.

Engel credits the training sessions at Mercy College for teaching her to listen and respond to others.

"We who are active don't realize how much it means to have somebody to talk to," said Engel.

A new session of the senior volunteer program will begin in mid-October. Senior adults interested in taking the training and serving as volunteers may call program coordinator Elizabeth Williams at 592-6082 or 592-6158 to arrange an interview.

The training sessions will be held on Fridays for three hours per week. Because the program is funded by a grant

from the Sisters of Mercy Health Corp., there is no charge to participants; however, trainees will be expected to give 150 hours of volunteer service upon completion of the course.

Seniors who participated in the past volunteer-training sessions continue to meet in order to discuss their placements, to learn more about services to seniors and to renew acquaintances. This month they will meet on Oct. 12 at Mercy College's Manning Hall for a session on "Adult Day Care: Another Option to Care." This meeting is open to all senior adults in the community.

Libertarian makes the best of minor spot

Joseph Cole of Bingham Farms joins Republican incumbent William Broomfield and Democrat Allen Sipher on the Nov. 2 election ballot as the Libertarian Party candidate for Congress in the 18th District.

Cole, chairman of the Libertarian Party of Oakland County and vice chairman of the state organization, said he's running because, "I'm tired of what's going on in Washington."

"They're taxing us to death and taking away our individual freedom, and there's no real difference between the two major parties," maintains Cole.

Cole describes himself as a serious candidate for the office. "We're getting involved in all the meet-the-candidate nights, getting out literature and going door-to-door throughout the county."

Cole said the Libertarians will have more than 100 candidates on the November election ballots in Michigan.

THE 18TH Congressional District is newly drawn and contains a large portion of the old 19th District including Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bingham Farms, Franklin, Farmington, Farmington Hills and the townships of Avon, Pontiac and West Bloomfield.

Cole said he is challenging Broomfield and Sipher to an open forum debate. "Broomfield's old figures he's got it made so he probably won't take me up on it," he said. "But Sipher just might."

"But I'll debate them any time, any place on any subject."

Cole lived in Birmingham for 20 years before his recent move to Bingham Farms. In addition to his work in the Libertarian Party, he is a member of the Birmingham Optimist Club, the National Federation of Independent Businessmen, the National Machining and Tooling Association and the Scottish Terrier Club of Michigan.

COTE OWNS his own manufacturing company. He served in the U.S. Navy 1944-47. He has a bachelor's degree and master's degree from the University of Michigan.

In 1980 he was an unsuccessful candidate for Birmingham city commissioner.

In his election platform, Cole supports respect for individual civil liberties; free market economy; a nuclear freeze; end of U.S. involvement in the internal affairs of foreign countries with reduced troop commitments overseas; reduced state, power and expense of government.

Also, end of government subsidies to business and agricultural interests; tax credits for private school education; repeal of all vicious crime laws; and repeal of the draft registration law.

A typographical error appeared in a story headlined "Farmington schools hit hard by drop in births" which appeared in the Sept. 23 edition of the Farmington Observer.

The correct figure should have been "Enrollment figures in Farmington school district reached a high of 16,556 in school year 1971-72."

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Charles A. Mouser, an international advertising-marketing consultant with more than 28 years of serving the graphic communications industry, is the author of "My Customers Won't Pay For It." Mouser has studied at Pratt Institute, Eureka College and Cornell University. As an artist for the Department of Defense, his duties included art director of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe.

Charlie, as he prefers to be called, has vast experience as an ad agency director, in newspapers and outdoor advertising, and in sales training motivation. During the past several years, he has inspired more than 5,000 attendees, who have each paid \$125 per day to attend his seminars throughout the U.S.A. and Canada.

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