

Older women face financial problems

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urance, Clare said, at a time just when they need it most.

Although she is not poor, a serious health problem "could wipe out my whole settlement and then I'm on Medicaid and poverty," Clare said.

Nicoll, from the Farmington chapter of the Older Women's League, said that approximately 3 1/2 million U.S. women between the ages of 45 and 65 have no basic health insurance.

"If you're not employed or if you lose your husband through death or divorce, then you lose your health insurance," Nicoll said.

ALTHOUGH MEDICAID and Medicaid do cover some health care expenses, their coverage isn't as extensive as many believe, according to Kathleen Gmelner, staff attorney for Michigan Legal Services. Those younger than 65 aren't eligible for the Medicaid program. The income restrictions of the Medicaid program put its coverage out of the reach of many.

For older women, the primary health care need is for treatment of chronic health problems that may not require extensive hospitalization, the Older Women's League's Nicoll said.

"We fall dismally to provide that for older women."

The Michigan Legislature, in its 1985-86 budget, directed that the Michigan Women's Commission study the three areas of health insurance, availability and impact of pension systems, and employment/training programs.

The commission will include the testimony gathered throughout the state during the hearings in its report, which is to be presented to the Legislature before Oct. 1 of this year.

Hearings were held "to gather testimony from different areas that we could use in the report," said Neal, the commission's director of programs.

Turnout at the hearings has been fairly low throughout the state, she said.

"BUT I would like to say we've had excellent testimony," Neal attributed the fairly low turnout to reluctance on the part of older women to tell their stories in public.

"It's a matter of pride, with older women in particular. Also, a lot of people are intimidated by public speaking."

The commission's Task Force on Older Women's Issues includes 33 representatives, both from the private and the public sector. Four state legislators — Senators John Engler (R-Mount Pleasant) and Jack Faxon (D-Farmington Hills)



BILL BRESELER/staff photographer

Panel members from the Michigan Women's Commission task force listen to testimony on the problems of older women. Task force members who were winding up a tour of such meetings throughout the state included (from left) Patty Clare, Miriam King and Janet Good.

and Representatives Justine Barnes (D-Westland) and Shirley Johnson (R-Royal Oak) — serve on the task force.

The Michigan Women's Commission will accept written testimony up to May 15. Written testimony should be sent to: Michigan Women's Commission, Department of

Management and Budget, North Ottawa Building, P.O. Box 30026, Lansing, Mich. 48909.

As the deadline for written testimony has neared, more of it has been coming in, Neal said. "I am getting more written testimony."

AAUW honors its membership

Farmington Branch of American Association of University Women recognized two of its members by announcing that named grants would be sent to the National Educational Foundation of the organization in their honor.

The honorees are Jean Moran and Patricia Isham.

"The two were selected because of their many contributions both to AAUW and to the community," said Bonnie King, speaking for the branch.

The grants are made possible by money raised at the group's annual fall used-book sale. Appropriately marked barrels are located in cooperating supermarkets now for the deposit of used books. The books go on sale every September. Money gifts are made in the spring for educational purposes, and the entire process is repeated each year.

JEAN MORAN is a native of Illinois, grew up in Florida and graduated from Farnham University in South Carolina with a degree in elementary education.

Her first child, Caroline, was born in Germany where she lived while her husband was in the military. For a while she taught school when the family moved back to South Carolina; then another move brought them to Louisiana where her twins, Ellen and Andrew, were born.

While the children were growing up, Moran took a substitute teaching job and simultaneously took on her first concern in school issues. Overcrowding in the local schools led her to organize a campaign that eventually raised money to provide additional schools in that area. It was also in Louisiana that she became a member of AAUW.

Moran joined the Farmington branch AAUW in 1979 where she

served as corresponding secretary, vice president in charge of programming and once as chairman of the used-book sale.

In addition to this activity, she is a landscape consultant for Hill and Dale Garden Club, and a Girl Scout leader who also volunteers her time to train other women as leaders.

She is president of Farmington Area PTA Council, and remains an active member on Longacre Elementary School PTA board where she once served as president.

For the past year she has been employed as an agent for State Farm Insurance.

PAT ISHAM is a native of Illinois who grew up on a dairy farm and attended a one-room school through the eighth grade. After graduation from high school in Rockford she attended Marquette University in Wisconsin where she majored in speech therapy.

While working as a therapist in Rochester, N.Y., she met her husband Richard. The couple now have two sons, both college students. The family lived in several states before moving to Kokomo, Ind., where Isham established a day care center for the children of the migrants who came there to work in the tomato fields. The day care center was accredited and then became the only licensed infant care center in that section of Indiana.

When the family moved to Farmington Hills Isham became involved

in several community organizations.

She has served the Farmington AAUW as corresponding secretary, has devoted many hours in marking books for the annual used-book sale and most recently was elected vice

president in charge of membership.

She is a volunteer at Farmington Community Center and a volunteer at Metrovision where she works in producing public access television programs.



Jean Moran



Patricia Isham

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Congregation honors rabbi

The congregation of Temple Kol Ami, West Bloomfield's pioneer reform synagogue, will honor its rabbi, Ernst J. Conrad, with a testimonial dinner beginning with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 15, in Tam O'Shanter Country Club.

The occasion will mark the 55th birthday of the rabbi and the completion of 20 years of service to the congregation which he founded with eight families in 1966. The congregation now numbers 270 family units.

Conrad has been active in Jewish Community Council, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Michigan League for Human Services, Michigan Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and Michigan Coalition for Human Rights.

He will become "Founding Rabbi Emeritus" of the temple July 1, 1986.

He will continue to serve until a successor is appointed and remain active in the congregation, the Jewish and general community.

Winfrey's on the road

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Much of the audience were high school girls, excused from classes to participate in the Health Expo Teen Day, hosted by Little Caesar Pizza for 2,000 girls from Wayne, Macomb, Oakland and Washtenaw counties.

Students from Livonia, Plymouth, Garden City and Redford Township were among those who attended.

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