

Senior Citizens To S'craft: Day, Neighborhood Classes

By KATHY MORAN
Senior citizens would like programs on medical care, social security and legal information offered during the daytime and in their neighborhoods.

These are some of the conclusions drawn from a survey taken of senior citizens by Mrs. Betty Andrews of Plymouth in cooperation with Schoolcraft College and the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Michigan.

And these are some of the results that led Schoolcraft to offer a six-week retirement studies program this fall and to initiate plans for hiring a person to conduct the program beginning in January.

A LACK of programs for senior citizens was apparent to Ron Griffiths, who came to Schoolcraft more than a year ago to direct the community services programs.

So when Mrs. Andrews, a graduate student at the institute, inquired about the college doing something for senior citizens, the wheels began rolling.

Senior citizens from Plymouth, Northville, Livonia, Garden City and Clarenceville were surveyed and the survey was printed in the Aug. 9 edition of the Observer Newspapers to give those who hadn't been surveyed a chance to respond.

One woman, age 68 and recovering from a plastic hip operation, responded to the newspaper article saying "I thought I would let you know how wonderful of your young people to want to help the old."

Another responded saying her biggest problem was finding an apartment, so I had to move to Livonia and pay \$170 per month which I can't afford.

"As far as legal matters - every senior citizen needs that because they are charged so much."

"As far as school is concerned, I don't think many

would be interested - they like enjoyment, playing cards and games or just getting together for coffee," she added.

Another respondent offered his services for the program to put his talents to work for his peers.

A total of 430 persons filled out the survey, answering questions on their needs and interests.

RESULTS SHOW that 35 per cent wanted information on medical care and services, 33 per cent on social security benefits, 32.7 per cent on making the most of retirement income and 31.8 per cent on legal information on wills and estate planning.

Other results include 31 per cent wanted information on good health during retirement - nutrition, fitness and personal hygiene; 27.8 per cent on uses of leisure time; 27 per cent on how to buy more economically; 25.3 per cent on selecting a nursing home; 24 per cent on different living arrangements for retirement years; 19 per cent on family and friend relationships after retirement; 15 per cent on employment opportunities and rights for retired persons; 14.8 per cent on meal planning and preparation for the small family; and 13.8 per cent on training for volunteer opportunities.

MANY INDICATED - an interest in the cultural events that take place at the college, including 22 per cent for the film series and musical concerts.

Nearly 20 per cent said they were interested in short courses in bridge and other games, 19 per cent in knitting, 18 per cent on floral arranging and jewelry making and 11 per cent on investments after retirement.

Fifty per cent of the older persons said they preferred daytime programs while only 10 per cent preferred evening programs.

Asked whether they preferred programs in their neighborhood or at the college, 58 per cent said they

preferred them in their neighborhood.

Griffiths said that the program offered this fall is a "meager effort" to meet some of the needs pointed out in the survey.

A SIX-WEEK program began Monday in Northville and today (Wednesday) in McNamara Tower No. 2 in Livonia.

The program will emphasize social security and Medicare, financial planning, health, legal affairs and opportunities for retirement living.

Participants will help evaluate the program, and the information will be used in planning future programs, Griffiths said.

Schoolcraft is a pioneer in retirement studies at community colleges in Michigan, he said.

"To my knowledge no other community college in the state has a person who is devoting his energy to retirement studies as a special program for older citizens," he said.

Schoolcraft's efforts will be enhanced by an allocation from a state grant to the college. The exact amount that will be pumped into a retirement program is still uncertain.

EVENTUALLY THE college hopes to reach persons from 55 years on up for a "pre-retirement" program, he said. One area that Schoolcraft

hasn't touched on is the transportation problems of many senior citizens, he said. The survey indicates that 26 per cent need transportation to programs at Schoolcraft and 18 per cent would even need transportation to neighborhood programs.

"This is a real critical problem," Griffiths said. Griffiths pointed out that more than 9,000 persons over age 65 live in the Schoolcraft area. More than 10 per cent of the City of Northville's population are senior citizens with 8.8 per cent of Plymouth's population, 6.8 per cent of Northville Township, 4.4 per cent of Livonia, 3.8 per cent of Plymouth Township and three per cent of Garden City's population is over 65.

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Cousin To Speak At St. Mary Fete

Jacque Cousin, executive vice-president of the United Foundation, will be the principle speaker at the dedication of the new wing of St. Mary Hospital on Tuesday, Nov. 21.

Sister Calasanta, executive director of the hospital, made the announcement of the dedication on Monday and stated that the ceremonies are to be held in the afternoon, with the Most Rev. Walter J. Schoenherr presiding at the dedication and blessing of the addition that will double the size of the hospital.

The new wing, now nearing completion, will contain 171 beds and will bring the capacity of the hospital to 342 beds.

Opened in 1959 St. Mary has shown a constant growth, and the new addition - the second built in four years - will make the announcement of the dedication on Monday and stated that the ceremonies are to be held in the afternoon, with the Most Rev. Walter J. Schoenherr presiding at the dedication and blessing of the addition that will double the size of the hospital.

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