

Community News

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UP CLOSE: FRANCES BRYSON

An intimate look at one of south Orange County's interesting personalities.

Curiosity and being born of pioneer Texas stock are two of the qualities that make Frances Bryson effervescent and enthusiastic.

"I have always been grateful that I've had a sense of history because of my heritage and a continuous desire to learn," Bryson said.

By age 21, she held three degrees — two from the University of Texas and a third from Louisiana State University.

Although she is now retired, Bryson is active. She is president of the Leisure World Camera Club, which has about 400 members. Club members give slide shows with narratives to community groups on subjects ranging from angelology, the medieval study of angels, and Renaissance art to the history of the California Missions.

Bryson gives about 15 different programs and said her greatest satisfaction comes from realizing what a powerful tool communication can be.

"When the lights go up after I've given a program and there is a kind of intense silence in a room filled with people, I realize what an awesome impact some of my subjects can have on an audience," she said.



Leland Holder/The Register

Frances Bryson, president of the Leisure World Camera Club, presents slide shows to community groups.

■ **Born:** Itasca Hill, Texas.

■ **Reared:** Hillsboro, Texas.

■ **Time in Leisure World:** 12 years.

■ **Previous residence:** Arlington, Va.

■ **Marital status:** Married to Bob Bryson for 44 years.

■ **Children:** A son, Rob, who lives in Maryland, and a daughter, Belinda, who lives in Bend, Ore.

■ **Religion:** Presbyterian. Bryson is an elder of the Geneva Presbyterian Church and is preparing a slide show and narrative on the history of the Laguna Hills church.

■ **Work experience:** Bryson was a legislative librarian at the Texas

State Library in Austin. She also was a librarian in the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. After resigning to raise a family, she worked as a remedial-reading aide for disadvantaged children.

■ **Clubs and affiliations:** Camera Club, Leisure World Historical Society, United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Astronomical Society.

■ **Hobbies:** "Being a doting grandmother to Erica, 15; Ryan, 7; and Lauren, 4."

■ **Last book read:** "Texas," by James Michener

■ **Favorite comic strip:** "Doodlesbury."

■ **Favorite television show:** "The Golden Girls" and "Nova."

■ **Last movie seen:** "Out of Africa."

■ **Favorite food:** "A Texas dish called Three-Alarm Chili that is strong enough to steam up my glasses."

■ **Favorite restaurant:** The Velvet Turtle.

■ **Magazine subscriptions:** The Smithsonian, Mercury, which is an astronomy magazine, and Yankee. **Proudest moment:** "Realizing the power of communication after giving one of my slide show programs."

■ **Secret to happiness:** "Being in harmony with others."

■ **Secret to success:** "I've always believed that the best preparation for the future is a good performance in the present."

— Compiled by Sarah Salkeld