
Leisure Worlder of the Month

John Caldwell

LAGUNA HILLS—This story could be titled, “From around the world to Leisure World.”

John Caldwell served the United States Foreign Service from 1940 through 1974. Ports of call along the way include Texas, California, Washington D.C., Mexico, all of Central America, with stations in El Salvador, Panama, Jamaica, Zaire and Cuba. In fact, he was on duty at the Embassy when Fidel Castro assumed power in Cuba on Jan. 1, 1959.

John has been a Leisure World resident since May 1976, and on Wednesday, June 3, he will be honored as “Leisure Worlder of the Month.” A special ceremony has been planned for 10:00 a.m., in Clubhouse Six, which the public is invited to attend. The program is sponsored by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society.

John Caldwell was born in Edwardsville, Il. in 1908. He lived in midwest until 1924.

After moving to California, he attended Hollywood High School and several institutions of higher learning, including UCSB, USC as a business administration major, and LaSalle Law, The Armed Forces Institute, and the Saddleback Emeritus Institute.

In 1932 he married Ouida Hooper in Westwood. A religious man, John practiced the Episcopalian faith, and served on the vestries of St. Alban's in El Paso, Tx. and St. John's in San Salvador, El Salvador. He was Junior Warden of both Churches and served as a licensed lay reader.

John began his professional career with the Bireley Company in Hollywood, CA in production, sales, accounting and supervision. He stayed with Birely for 12 years before entering the U.S. government service in July 1940. He retired in March, 1974, as Foreign Service Officer of the U. S. Department of State.

Since coming to Leisure World, John has served as president of the local chapter of the National Assoc. of Retired Federal Employees, Commander of Post 257 American Legion, president of the Masonic Club, president of the Camera Club, Treasurer of the Jewelry and Enameling Arts Club, secretary-treasurer and board member of the old mutual 57, former member of Third Laguna Mutual Capital Improvements committee, member of the Rock and Gem Club, president of Saddleback High Twelve Club, member of the GRF/PCM biennial Festival Committee, member of the Leisure World Continuing Education Committee, coordinator of the annual Scottish Rite Maundy Thursday Ceremony held in L.W., member and director of the Foreign Policy Association.

He also performed military service from Sept. 1942 until Oct. 1945 in Coast Guard Intelligence, and from 1948 to 1950 in the 340th CIC MI unit.

But the above list is far from complete. He's a charter member and Past Master of the Saddleback Valley Masonic Lodge, an affiliated past patron of the Saddleback Valley Eastern Star, member of Royal Order of Scotland; Santa Ana Scottish Rite Consistory; the Santa Ana Royal Arch; the American Foreign Service Association and the Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired of Washington, D.C.

In addition, he's former secretary of the Cornerstone Club of Washington, D.C., and a former member of the Master/Wardens association of Los Angeles. He has served on the Ad-Hoc committee for the resettling of the Cuban refugees for Los Angeles County and on the Episcopal Bishop Bloy committee for the resettlement of Cubans as well as the committee of the Los Angeles International House. He is area vice president and board member of the California State Association of High Twelve Clubs. He's also served as chapter dad for the Order of DeMolay for Boys, was a member of the Advisory Committee for 10 years and served on the Order of Rainbow for Girls Advisors Council in El Paso.

Following his retirement from the Foreign Service, he became Traffic Commissioner for the City of Cypress, CA from 1974 to 1976. In the community, he worked on United Fund and Red Cross fund raisers. He is an active volunteer for Saddleback College during class registration and is Chairman of the College Emeritus Council Executive Committee. He's also president of the Emeritus Council, and a member of the Liaison Committee.