
LEISURE WORLDERS OF THE MONTH

JOHN AND ELECTA EHRLE

FEBRUARY 1, 1989

LAGUNA HILLS—Longtime Leisure World residents and stars of Operetta and Musical Comedy, John and Electa Ehrle will be honored as co- Leisure Worliders of the Month for February.

The Ehrle's special ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, February 1, at 10 a.m. in Clubhouse Six. The public is invited to attend.

Electa was born and raised in St. Louis, Mo. Eventually, through her father's business, she moved to Chicago. It was there that her soprano voice was "discovered" and she began singing in school and church. She and her brother also performed in amateur shows.

According to Electa, her first experience in "show business" was in a road company production of "The Student Prince."

John was born in Genoa, Oh., and grew up in Toledo. The youngest of three boys, he attended Waite High School. John sang in the Glee Club and performed in various plays.

John went on to Denison University in Granville, Oh., where he served as president of the musical group and the Glee Club.

John's gridiron skills were also developed. He was chosen "All-Ohio" as a guard.

After graduating Denison, John taught English and coached basketball and baseball back home at his alma mater, Waite High. He remained there four years, until an opportunity to move to New York and "break in to show business" proved too good to resist.

His first show was "Castles in the Air," which traveled to Chicago and played there a year. After they year, the cast was split for simultaneous productions in New York and Chicago. John took over the role in the Chicago production that he had originally been understudying.

It was there that John and Electa met.

Electa came to the Chicago company to understudy the Prima Donna. Meanwhile John was playing the second lead while understudying the leaning man.

"Destiny," John calls it, since he and Electa were together in understudy rehearsals several times each week.

They next appeared in the Chicago Company of "The Desert Song," and were married during the show's run at the Great Northern theatre where they were both understudying leading roles.

A third company of "The Desert Song" was organized to play the southern states. John was given the leading role of the "Red Shadow", which played 121 cities from New England to Florida and from New Orleans to North Dakota.

It was the Ehrle's honeymoon trip.

The next shows for both John and Electa were based in New York. These included "New Moon" with musical standards "Stout-Hearted Man" and "Lover Come Back to Me," followed by "Fine and Dandy" and "Face The Music."

Then Edwin Lester, who founded the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera, brought John and Electa to Los Angeles for three successive seasons of operettas, including "Chocolate Soldier", "Blossom Time", "New Moon", "Desert Song." This stint ended with John opposite Helen Gahagan in "The Merry Widow."

While in Los Angeles, they "fell in love with California" and resolved to someday move permanently.

After Los Angeles, the Ehrles organized and played in The Toledo Civic Light Opera in a 5,000-seat outdoor theatre.

After three years of success the venture ended when John was called into active military duty. He served more than six years in the Air Force in the US, Brazil and Hawaii. He was discharged as a Colonel.

Today, The Ehrles have sung for most every club and organization in Leisure World. They have also given several two-hour shows on the stage of Clubhouse Three spotlighting the music from various shows they've appeared in.