

Early setbacks pave way for success for March LWer

Ruth Grossfeld was not about to accept a decision she thought was unfair, even though it was the "rule." She had had to drop out of high school to tend her sick mother and wanted to go to night school to complete requirements for graduation.

But the Los Angeles School Board, in its wisdom, had decreed that no one under 18 could attend night school. Ruth was 16.

She appealed the bureaucratic ruling and one board member finally turned back the red tape. Ruth Grossfeld graduated high school before her 18th birthday and not long before her mother's death.

The most important lesson garnered from this experience did not come from books. It was that if the cause is right, and you have determination you can win.

To honor Ruth Grossfeld for her lifetime of achievement both before and since she moved to Leisure World, she has been named Leisure Worlder of the Month for March. She will be honored at a ceremony on Wednesday, March 2 at 10 a.m. in Clubhouse 6. The program is sponsored by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society. The public is invited.

Born in Chicago she came with her family to the Los Angeles area in

1923.

Following high school, she desired a college education. To accomplish that however, she had to go to work. Working part-time as a secretary she enrolled at the University of Southern California School of Business Administration, the sole woman student in that field.

When it came time, however, to take the state CPA examination, Grossfeld was told she could never be certified in California since the state had never certified a woman CPA. Even if her written work was 100 percent correct, the three man board would flunk her on orals.

Bitterly disappointed, she cleaned out her locker and left the campus. But the experience created in her a strong belief in the equality for women. Looking back, she wonders if her impulsive action was wrong. Perhaps she should have challenged the system.

After four years as an assistant controller with a Los Angeles firm, she married Chicagoan Edward Grossfeld, and returned to the place of her birth.

She opened her own public accounting firm in 1941. The business was successful and in 1960 one of her clients died and she was asked to manage his business. Grossfeld took



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on a wholesale dry cleaning firm and made it grow. And all the time the businesswoman was also a mother with all the activities that come with that profession.

The Grossfelds retired to Leisure World in 1976. She got involved in emeritus classes and recreation, swimming, golf, fishing and travel.

She spearheaded a move for earthquake preparedness and helped write a pamphlet on the subject which the Community Association mailed to all residents. She also was president of that organization.

But it wasn't enough for her. And about five years ago, Grossfeld realized that the area did not offer any respite care for the frail elderly. In fact there were only seven such centers called Adult Day Care Centers, in the entire country. Starting a fund drive and collecting information, particularly on the care of Alzheimer's people, Grossfeld was soon at the forefront of the Saddleback YMCA Adult Day Center and is currently on its board of directors.

She is also an advisor to the Golden Rain Health and Welfare Committee, the Area Project Review Committee and takes a keen interest in Leisure World governance.

A firm supporter of the Leisure World lifestyle, Ruth Grossfeld continues to give back to the community some of the pleasures and benefits it has given her.