



LEISURE WORLD NEWS

Thursday
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Society taps couple for March honors

By Cheryl Walker
The News

For 18 years, Martha and Charles Hellmann have left their undeniable mark on the community with outstanding service to the boards, Saddleback Hospital and various clubs and organizations.

And in March the Historical Society will give them their just due as they become Leisure Worlders of the Month.

"Both of them are a real class act," says former Golden Rain President, Laguna Woods City Councilman and February Leisure Worldeer of the Month himself Bob Ring.

"Charlie is an astute businessman who is easy to work with, accepting of new ideas and always handles things in a professional manner while Martha is a nice, nice lady – always gracious and upbeat – one of those people you fall in love with the first time you meet," he explains.

Former United Mutual President and LW Communications Officer Bob Miller adds that Charles' outstanding contributions to the organizations and groups he's been part of reflect the depth of his "interests, intelligence, integrity and leadership skills."

While Virginia Volz, a long-time volunteer and supporter of Saddleback Hospital, says Martha has proven herself a real asset, particularly in her charity work at the hospital, with her "enthusiasm, good taste and a real interest."

"I have felt for a number of years that Martha and Charlie should be named Leisure Worlders of the Month ... they are always contributing to improve



Martha and Charles Hellmann will be honored together as Leisure Worlders of the Month.

whatever activity or organization they are involved in and their efforts ... have made Leisure World a better place for all of us."

Background Both Charles and Martha are natives of Louisville, Ky. She was the daughter of a doctor; he the son

News Photo by Rod Veal Ceremony facts

Who: Charles and Martha Hellmann

What: Leisure Worlders of the Month for March

Where: Clubhouse 6

When: 10 a.m., Wednesday, March 6

Sponsors: Leisure World Historical Society

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of a motion picture operator.

The Hellmanns met in high school, but when World War II broke out, Charles went into military while Martha worked towards her bachelor degree in journalism at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in Indiana.

When he returned, thanks to the G.I. Bill, he went back to school and earned his degree in commerce from the University of Louisville while Martha wrote for a radio station. In 1947, they married.

After graduation, Hellmann went to work for General Electric and began a successful relationship that lasted 30 years (in sales, marketing and management) until his retirement.

During those years he lived in several states and traveled across the nation and Europe.

He and Martha also had six children which gave homemaker Martha more than enough to do when he was on the road.

Charles said he had little time for service work (except for company-mandated associations) while at GE, but Martha always found her way to a hospital to volunteer.

The couple learned about Leisure World from friends Al and Portia Potter. A visit to the community convinced them this was where they wanted to retire - especially with their shared passion for golf.

They made the leap in 1984 and Martha quickly became involved in the 18-Hole Women's Golf Club, Saddleback Memorial Medical Center's Associates Board, and the Saddleback Hospital Gift Shop as a buyer.

Charles also became involved in the Men's 18 Hole golf club, serving as a director and president of that group as well as the Leisure World Bowlers Club.

He also responded to a call to run for the Third Mutual Board, of which he eventually

became president, then followed it with service on the Golden Rain Foundation then again served the Third Board.

In between his board and club duties, he became involved in Saddleback Hospital's Associates Board (of which he became president) and the Saddleback Foundation's investment committee.

Although Hellmann suffered a major stroke three years ago, he fought back with characteristic fortitude doing so well that he was able to answer yes to the Golden Rain Foundation when asked to be a member then president of LW Communications, Inc., the GRF subsidiary that owns, operates, maintains and is responsible for programming on Leisure World's cable TV system.

Lucky for Leisure World, his health has continued to show dramatic improvement and he shows no sign of slowing down.

In fact, he's just added membership in the Kiwanis Club to his list of duties and there are those who would like to persuade him to run for the Laguna Woods City Council.

When asked what each thought was the reason their better half had been the Society's choice, Martha said of Charles, it's his dedication, "he has worked hard for this community and never stops."

As for Martha, Charles explains that "when she gets into anything she does it really well and follows through on what she says she will do."