

Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

JOHN W. LUHRING

The editors of "Who's Who in America" devoted 31 jam-packed lines to their 1980-81 entry on John W. Luhring. Not content to rest on those impressive laurels, the former bank executive and law school president keeps adding new activities to his busy schedule.

The two most recent of these are the presidency of Leisure World's Third Mutual and a County Board of Supervisors' appointment to the innovative Aliso Viejo Housing Opportunities Corporation.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Jack Luhring worked a 60-hour week at Union Bank while attending night classes at Southwestern University School of Law. He earned his law degree and went on to have an illustrious 43-year career with the bank before returning to the university as its president from 1975 to 1977 and as board chairman for an additional three years.

During Luhring's tenure at Southwestern, the university received accreditation from the California State Bar and American Bar Association as well as the Association of American Law Schools. Its current ranking as California's largest accredited law school and as sixth largest in the nation is "enormously gratifying" to its former administrator.

Luhring's legal skills were combined with administrative capabilities during his years with Union Bank, where he created and organized the firm's first law division as well as serving in management and corporate administration. He was appointed regional vice president in 1963 and became executive director for public affairs seven years later.

Earlier in his bank career he was selected to attend the Pacific Coast School of Banking. His graduate thesis on oil production financing can still be found in the school library, located at the University of Washington.

Civic activities were expanded in the 1960s with Luhring's mayoral appointments as director of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and to the board of Water and Power Commissioners of Los Angeles, which he served as president.

His public utility knowledge led to a 1972 appointment by President Nixon to the National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere, an "unexpected and fascinating" post that took him to Washington once a month for three years. He was also a Governor Reagan appointee and board chairman of the California Job Development Corporation.

Other leadership roles were assumed in numerous organizations, including the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, American National Red Cross, Big Sister League, USO, California Space Museum, Resthaven Sanitarium, Braille Institute and Founding Friends of Harvey Mudd College. He is one of few people to receive a 50-year pin for volunteer service to United Way and its predecessor groups.

Further recognition came in 1970 when he was decorated as a knight of the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem, the Malta-based humanitarian organization which aids disaster victims throughout the world.

Operating on the busy-man's-motto that "you can always find time to do what you want to," Luhring is also a wine and food fancier who holds membership and former offices in the Chevaliers du Tastevin, Comman-derie de Bordeaux and Wine and Food Society of Southern California. He is the recipient of three Cordon Bleu (blue ribbon) awards from the latter group. One is for his famous cheese cake recipe once featured in *Gourmet Magazine*. Another is for a memorable member-cooked dinner he was in charge of in 1959.

The Gallic dinner featured lovingly selected recipes for which Luhring, ever the purist, had the key ingredients flown in from France. Upon arrival the shipment was carefully examined by custom officials, who turned thumbs down on the fresh artichokes it included.

An inventive Luhring gained permission to transport his forbidden cargo along the airport runway to an LAX restaurant, where he spent most of the night cooking the vegetables so they could be legally removed from the airport grounds. One radio newscaster of the time gleefully referred to the incident as "the Great Artichoke Controversy at LAX."

To the continued delight of his wife Jo, Luhring prepares all their family meals. He has been married to the recently retired law office manager for 24 years. He has two children and she one daughter from previous marriages. Together they share four grandchildren, some of whom Luhring taught to cook at an early age in duplication of his own childhood introduction to the culinary arts.

His Third Mutual work in Leisure World has included serving on numerous committees in addition to being finance chairman, treasurer and vice president. He also is a director of both Saddleback Community Hospital and its fund-raising foundation.

Luhring was appointed by Fifth District Supervisor Tom Riley to the Aliso Viejo Housing Opportunities Corporation, which administers the company's affordable housing contract with the Coastal Commission.

He considers himself "richly rewarded" by each activity he undertakes. "It's added new dimension to my life. . . . I've been the real gainer," he notes.