

Laura McKeever honored as LWer for November

When asked why she allows herself to become so involved, Laura McKeever replies, "Because I intend to burn out, not rust out."

To celebrate her involvement in community activities McKeever will be honored as Leisure Worlder of the Month on Wednesday, Nov. 10 at 10 a.m. in Clubhouse 6. The public is invited to attend the ceremony, co-sponsored by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society.

Brought up by an older sister after their mother died shortly after Laura's birth, the child was stricken with polio. Her teenage nieces and nephews using the "Sister Kenny" massage therapy helped save Laura from permanent paralysis.

When she was seven Laura and her brother went to live with her father and his new wife. Because education and travel were the ambitions of her father for his children, by the time she reached college age she had journeyed through most of the eastern United States.

Two years were spent at Kansas Wesleyan University before her father decided to take an automobile trip to the west coast. A visit to the University of California, Berkeley

was a turning point for McKeever.



Laura McKeever

The school was on a trimester system and classes were to begin on Aug. 145,

a perfect date for her.

Leaving the family at Salt Lake City she returned to enroll at Berkeley.

She stayed at Berkeley earning a master's in English and receiving her teaching credentials. On graduation she was offered a position in the Fallbrook Union High School and went from teacher to vice principal.

At that time, Delta Kappa Gamma, the national honorary teachers' society was being organized and McKeever was chosen as a charter member. At the end of World War II, McKeever decided to leave Fallbrook. The next 20 years she was at Poly High School in Riverside as a teacher and counselor.

McKeever retired in 1966 and moved to Leisure World at the urging of a friend. But she didn't settle down quite yet. Two years were spent in overseas travel.

When she finally "came home" she became an active volunteer in the Medical Center and was an officer of Ebell, serving as president from 1971-72. A special project she developed helped meet the need for an activity center for stroke victims and other handicapped persons. She organized "resocialization teams" of Ebell members who met weekly to

provide games, refreshments, companionship and help families. The project lasted three years, until Saddleback Hospital officially opened its door.

McKeever then became a hospital volunteer and with about 4,000 hours of credit, she resigned last spring, when she needed cataract surgery.

Her next activity was with the Orange County Philharmonic Society. McKeever was attracted by their commitment to musical enrichment programs for the schools. From 1976 on, she has served in various capacities with the OCPS.

When the campaign began to build the performing arts center, McKeever became a charter member of the Beethoven Chapter in Leisure World. She also became a Founder and donor of the Center. She still remains active in Philharmonic and Performing Arts Activities.

Last year McKeever agreed to help with the Afternoon Forum in Clubhouse 3 and soon found herself on the board. And continuing with her volunteer work, she now helps out with the support group of the Saddleback Valley Eye Center, where she had her surgery.