

Welcome hostess is going to say goodbye

By Lisa Bowen
Staff Writer

Irene Puhlmann, PCM's Welcome Information Manager, is going to be saying goodbye to her job. She's tried it before, but this time she says it's for good.

Puhlmann established the Information Center, under the direction of Government Relations director T.J. Tandle, about eight years ago. But this career was just one of many throughout her 76 years.

In one of her previous positions, which was supposed to be her last, she was a public relations officer and fundraiser for the Children's Home Society in Los Angeles, which she said was the largest adoption agency in the country. She had to retire from that position to go back to her home state of Minnesota to take care of her ailing mother.

Even though she was retired, she still continued to work voluntarily. She started a mental health society and worked on her stamp collection.

When her father died, she moved to Leisure World with her mother. That was in March 1967.

"I barely made the age requirement," she said.

During World War II, she worked for E. I. DuPont Construction in Hanford, Wash. She said she was the first female supervisor for the company, which she said constructed atomic bombs, although she didn't know what she was manufacturing.

"Nobody knew what we were making. We said we were making sandbags to drop on Hitler," Puhlmann said.

She didn't discover what her company was manufacturing until the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, which disturbed her.

"I went to church and prayed a lot," she said, after her discovery.

After moving to Leisure World, she was involved in community work, becoming a director for one of the mutuals and later (1972-75), secretary of Golden Rain Foundation. She then became a move-in hostess for a year and a half, just so she could stay continue to contribute to the Leisure World community. She next became the supervisor of the hostesses.

That's when Tandle gave the or-

ders.

"One fine day, Mr. Tandle looked at me and said, 'Irene, you're going to set up an information center.' The reason was that residents were complaining that they weren't getting service," she said.

Puhlmann put together a 29-page booklet that lists every service organization in the community.

"It's everything from ants, all the way through county services. They can get an answer to almost any question," she said, adding that the large task was "fun."

And now, after 12 and a half years with PCM, she is finally, and forever, calling it quits, effective Jan. 15. Why?

"I don't have to tell you I'm an old lady," she joked, then on a more serious note, she said, "I think the time comes in everyone's life, when you should have a little more freedom. This (job) was more than I intended," Puhlmann said noting that she can't stay out late because she has to get up early to go to work.

She claims she is retiring and said she will never go back to being a paid employee, but she said she will con-



Irene Puhlmann

tinue to do volunteer work. First, however, she'll visit her sister in Camarillo, spend time with friends and clean out her closets.

"And maybe even stay up until 11 o'clock on a week night."