

May honoree has no time to slow down

By Cheryl Walker
The News

When May Leisure Worlder of the Month Jane Slavin says she has had a rich life she doesn't mean her bank account rivals Fort Knox.

The Leisure World Historical Society's honoree is referring to the intangible rewards derived from giving one's best to improve the lives of others.

"I just love people," explains the former teacher, lawyer and social worker.

"Being of help and service to people is the greatest satisfaction for me," she adds. "I'm proud of my record of supporting civil rights, human rights and women's rights."

Leisure World Community Association Second Vice President Dave Blodgett says Slavin lives by the rules of consideration, cooperation, courtesy and concern for her fellow man.

"And she's the kind of person that when you know something has to be done well-and fast-you call Jane . . . she's a real foot soldier and a remarkable lady."

South County Seniors Executive Director Marilyn Ditty, a co-worker of the honoree for 15 years, calls Slavin "a lovely person with a big heart for social service needs-especially families in serious dilemmas. "I wish we had 10 more like her."

Former Golden Rain Director Shirley O'Connor agrees with both assessments adding that Slavin "only thinks of giving of herself in every sense of the word."

"She's not afraid to get involved in controversial issues, is interested in everything and has great energy . . . I feel like



Jeff Gritchen / The News
Jane Slavin is involved in numerous activities, one of them is volunteering at the Adult Day Health Care Center near Gate 14. She was among the volunteers honored there last week.

my life has been enriched enormously be having her as a friend."

Background: Born in Pittsburg, Slavin grew up in Ohio, got her teacher's certificate from the University of Michigan, law degree from Western Reserve Law School and social workers certificate from the University of California.

An only child, Slavin says she was blessed with "very" loving parents who instilled in her the principles of responsibility,

honesty and the need to care for the less fortunate.

Early in her career she pioneered programs to bring education to hospitalized youngsters and had a general law practice, marriage and a business venture (a furniture and decorating firm) with her spouse.

She curtailed her community service activities although she was a driver for the Braille Institute, chaired the Legislative Committee of Los Angeles and

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Cermony facts

Who: Jane Slavin
What: Leisure World for
When: 10 a.m. Wednesday, 11-11-93
Where: Clubhouse 6
Sponsor: Leisure World Historical Society

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acted as vice president of the Los Angeles League of Women Voters.

But, after retirement from the business world in 1963, she quickly changed all that - particularly after she answered an ad looking for social workers in Laguna Beach and got the job.

Soon her activities included coordinating a variety of programs dealing with, among others, foster care, board and care licensing, sheltering battered women and abused and neglected children and mental health patient advocacy.

She also established Laguna Beach's Senior Center, chaired its Senior Club for several years and worked with homeless people at its Friendship Shelter.

In addition, she served as a member of Orange County's Senior Advisory Board and volunteered as an English tutor for the Laubach Literary Program and was a pink lady at South Coast Hospital.

After seven-and-a-half years working as a social worker, Slavin says she retired. "The highest and best use of life is to do good for others and I really felt like what I was doing was affecting people - but when

you're really intent you can get burnt out."

Slavin's retirement from the workplace, however, by no means signaled a departure from the fertile field of social work as a look at her current list of community activities (both within and without Leisure World's walls) demonstrates.

She's an active member of Leisure World's People for a National Health Program, Concerned Citizens for Peace, the Sunday Discussion Club, the Democratic Club, Save the Canyon, Planned Parenthood, the Independent Living Club, Community Concerts, the Film Club, O.R.T., American Civil Liberties Union, the City of Hope, the League of Women Voters and the Foodies.

She also works, typically on a weekly basis, at the Laguna Hills Adult Day Health Care Center (she helped found that facility's fundraising auxiliary as well) and Saddleback Community Outreach, which provides food, shelter, utility vouchers, emergency cash and other crises intervention for area families and individuals in need.

She's served as well on the Community Association Board and the Golden Rain Social Services Committee.

Slavin said she's trying to

curtail her activities but admits she thinks helping people "is wonderful."

A PNHP co-worker of Slavin, Leisure Worlder Bea Levin, says Slavin is as good as her word and always goes the extra mile for those in need - like getting job leads for the unemployed or staying up all night to be with someone recovering from surgery.

"Whenever someone needs help, there's Jane . . . I think her motto is to do at least one good deed every day.

"Everyone is Jane's best friend and Jane is everyone's best friend."

Slavin notes, however, that she's not afraid to speak out when she sees injustice. "I call Washington all the time - and I write a lot of letters and cards too," she says, noting that she stays up on top of current events reading the newspapers thoroughly.

Co-worker and fellow Leisure World resident Shirley Levy says, however, that although Slavin is a tireless worker and a "great humanitarian," she never loses her energy or good humor.

"She's a tremendous, marvelous woman who participates in life to the fullest - any accolade you can think of you can attach to her."