



LEISURE WORLD NEWS

Thursday
February 27, 1997

An Orange County Register Publication

Leisure World honoree:

Head in the trees, feet on the ground

By Cheryl Walker
The News

It all started with a daily lunch hour walk with a neighbor's dog for a hard-working, self-employed draftsman and structural engineer.

Now, decades later, Manny Ackerman, retired and minus the dog, is often accompanied by his wife of 55 years, Rose. He tries not to let a day go by without a brisk jaunt in the great outdoors where he can appreciate the beauties of nature.

Beauties which he's helped open up to his fellow Leisure World residents through the programs sponsored by the Hikers and Audubon clubs, both of which he currently leads as president.

The Historical Society selected Ackerman as its Leisure Worlder of the Month for his outstanding efforts in forwarding those programs, particu-



David E. Caballero/The News

Manny Ackerman, president of Leisure World Audubon Society, will be honored as Leisure Worlder of the Month.

larly the Audubon's Adopt-a-Tree Program.

To date, nearly 3,000 trees have been labelled thanks to residents who pay \$5 to tag any Leisure World tree, with an ID. Donors receive a certificate commemorating a birthday, anniversary or other special event or person.

Ackerman is quick to point out, however, that the program

isn't an Audubon Club innovation. That honor belongs to its predecessor, the Naturalists Club.

No one denies that the program flourished under the aegis of Audubon.

In fact, Ackerman notes that although he has no formal training in tree identification and sometimes relies on the expertise of one of Leisure

World's staff arborists, Ismael Saenz, he's learned over the years to identify most of the 160 different kinds of trees in the community.

Says Ackerman, the trees, with names like Monkey Puzzle, Spanish Bayonet, Victorian Box, Chinese Flame and more, come from areas all over the globe including Australia, Malaya, New Zealand,

Ceremony facts

Who: Manny Ackerman
What: Leisure Worlder of the Month for March.
When: Wednesday, March 5 at 10 a.m.
Where: Clubhouse 6
Sponsor: Leisure World Historical Society

Asia, Mexico, Ireland, India, China, Brazil, Japan, Chile, South Africa, the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands, the Himalayas and the United States.

Oscar Eisenberg, who assists Ackerman with the tree-tagging project, says they are working on lists of Leisure World's arboreal treasures which will become permanent records of the Leisure World Historical Society.

Like Ackerman, Eisenberg says he had no prior tree knowledge, "I'm from Brooklyn, the only tree I knew was the one that grew there."

But, he adds, soon after he came to the community he met Ackerman, whom he dubs "one fine gentleman," who got him involved in the Audubon Club, of which he's been an active member ever since.

See HONOREE, page A17

HONOREE

From page A1

Former Club President Irma Franklin agrees that Ackerman has been a wonderful member and leader of the organization.

"He's a very modest man, no fuss, but he produces."

Although Ackerman is best known for his work with the Adopt-a-Tree program, she says, he also is active in promoting and supporting the club's other efforts: the spring and fall Tree Walks, Spring Award Benefit, trips, scholarships, elementary school nature programs and the publication of the club's bi-monthly newsletter ("The Borrowing Owl").

Ackerman explains that one of the most important sections in the latter is Audubon's "Armchair Activist" which alerts members to local, state and national issues relating to the environment and how readers can send letters to lawmakers expressing their opinions.

He explains that, although most people think Audubon means birds, since the club's

namesake, John James Audubon, is best known for his pictures and writings on the birds of North America.

But, Ackerman notes, although club members are aware of and appreciate the more than 160 species of bird who call Leisure World home seasonally or year-round, they are only a part of the club's concerns.

Other important concerns on the club's agenda are the preservation of parks, wilderness areas, wetlands, endangered species, forests, ecosystems, wildlife refuges and sanctuaries and waterways, to name just a few.

The native of Cleveland, Ohio and eight year Leisure Worlder says the club also keeps tabs on environmental issues close to home, like the future of Laguna Laurel and Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, since preserving the natural environment surrounding the community is important to its future.

"One of the things I really

believe in is nature," explains Ackerman. "So, I'm happy to do the work."

Ackerman says membership in both clubs is open and invites anyone interested to come to an Audubon meeting at 7:30 p.m., the second Thursday of the month in Clubhouse 3's Dining Room 1 or a Hiker's Club walk any Saturday starting at 8 a.m. from the Clubhouse 3 parking lot. "It's a great way to meet people."