



LEISURE WORLD NEWS

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An honoree with pep

Nurse gets Society's May nod

BY CHERYL WALKER
THE NEWS

"The girl has pep," says Ruth Allen's high school yearbook. Another yearbook notes that whatever Allen did she would do it because it was the right thing to do.

Both were on target about the Historical Society's May pick.

The career registered nurse, even after more than a half century of work, still finds it important to volunteer as a leader of the Golden Rain earthquake and disaster preparedness task force nurses group and as a rehabilitation therapist at Saddleback Hospital.

She is also an active member of numerous Leisure World groups all of which have a common goal: to make the world a better place.

Even so, Allen, who has a Spirit of Volunteerism Award from the County of Orange, says she was "overwhelmed" when the Society called, "I could say nothing."

Barbara Strauss, president of Leisure World's chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, says she's known Allen since she first came into the community and both share an interest in art and doing things for others (teaching youngsters at the Olivewood School and English to Russian emigrants). "She's a take-charge kind of person, if you want anything done, just ask Ruth."

Betty Rockefeller, who heads the community's disaster task force, said her group is awed by Allen's organizational skills with the medical teams and purchasing medical supplies. "We're really indebted for her help."

Background: Allen, a Brook-



May honoree Ruth Allen with a picture of herself as a young nurse.

News photo by Rod Veal

lyn, N.Y. native, went into nursing at the suggestion of her best friend and immediately knew she'd found her niche as she fearlessly accepted the challenges of her profession in a big city environment.

Once certified she also found nursing offered endless flexibility allowing her to practice in a variety of settings: public health, hospitals, camps and schools, to name a few.

She also had a second avocation as an artist, exhibiting her work in juried shows in Chicago and Florida, and art teacher, developing skills that years later she used as ther-

apy for seniors and others suffering with cognitive chal-

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Ceremony facts

Who: Ruth Allen

What: Leisure Worlder of the Month for May

Where: Clubhouse 6

When: 10 a.m. Wednesday, May 4

Sponsor: Leisure World Historical Society with funding by Renaissance at the Regency and Palm Terrace.

MY TURN

BY MYRA NEBEN
LEISURE WORLD NEWS EDITOR

There are some times when it makes you smile to see your grandchildren fight. Not physically of course, but over something that makes a grandmother feel good - such as who gets the last matzo ball for their second helping of grandma's chicken soup or who gets to read the Passover story.

We're a diverse family. We celebrate a variety of holidays, eat a variety of foods, worship in a variety of different way. But it's always as a family.

In December we celebrated

Hanukkah by lighting candles and eating potato pancakes fried in oil, which, as far as my research can find, is not on anyone's list of healthy foods. We followed that with Christmas dinner, gorging with little regard to the pyramid of recommended portions.

A few weeks ago we celebrated Easter at a brunch where we again ate too much of all the wrong foods.

This latest foray into non-essential foods occurred for Passover.

Rachel and Matthew both attend church and have gone

through First Communion. They were also, as babies, named in a synagogue and have over the years, learned Jewish prayers, many the same or very similar to those they learn in church. And they do not find it confusing. In fact, from our conversations, they find it exhilaration to compare, debate and challenge concepts.

But whatever holiday it is, we join together - to eat.

And it's on holidays such as Passover and Hanukkah that their Jewish roots really surface. They devour gefilte fish,

slurp up chicken soup with matzo balls, slather charoset on matzo. "Not enough wine," Matthew admonishes his mother who made the concoction of apples, nuts and wine.

They fill up on brisket and potato kugel (pudding). And they argue over who will read the Passover story.

"I like to read," says Rachel. Those words are music to my ears. "Not fair," shouts Matt. So they share the reading.

We laugh at some of the pronunciations and let Matt, as the youngest around the table, ask the four questions - from the wise child, the wicked child, the simple child and the child who doesn't un-

derstand. And we let Rachel respond.

As evening winds down, it's time for them to head home - since they have to be up for church on Sunday morning.

And on Monday for me, it's back to yogurt and cottage cheese. But I feel at least a little less anxious since the latest research on weight says I can keep those few extra pounds as long as I run around the house a few times a day.

Now I wait for the research that says potato pancake fried in oil have some benefit to good health, along with chocolate which I know is good for me, wine, of course and hot fudge sundaes.

HONOREE

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allenges due to strokes, Alzheimer's Disease and head injuries in rehab and adult day care centers.

She married Jack in the late 1940s and raised a family while continuing her career and contributing to her community via membership in parent/teacher organizations the League of Women Voters, a library board, an art gallery, the National Council of Jewish Women and the National Organization for Women.

She first retired to Florida then came to The Golden State where, after she moved to Leisure World, she volunteered at the South County Adult Day Health Care Center, the Saddleback Hospital Rehab Center and Leisure World's disaster task force's medical response team.

She's also a member of the Leisure World computer club, People for a National Health Care and assists with new member orientation.

She also assisted with elections and helped register voters (both in Florida and later in California).

Asked when she plans to really retire, Allen says that's not in the cards yet. As long as she can, she'll do, she explains. "I can't sit still and do nothing."