

Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

Vern Alm

Leisure Worlders know Vern Alm as coordinator of the shuffleboard club for the visually impaired. He is known for producing an entire collection of recordings for blind, bed-ridden and shut-ins at Beverly Manor. Many letters attest to his hours of service. He is an active member of five police associations and numerous commendations adorn the walls of his home.

Alm will add another distinction to his list in April, as he is honored as Leisure Worlder of the Month. A ceremony for Vern will be presented by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure Worlder Historical Society on Monday, April 2, at 10:00 a.m. in Clubhouse Six. The public is invited to attend.

Vern was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. At age 25 he came to California and shortly thereafter began a career with the Bank of America that would span nearly 38 years. Throughout most of his professional days, Vern worked as a peace officer, retiring in 1966 as Chief Special Agent—Criminal Investigator. His territory covered most of Southern California and parts of Nevada, including Reno and Las Vegas. Vern worked at stopping holdups, counterfitters, forgers and extortionists.

"One trip to Reno we were after a guy who had forged a \$25,000 cashier's check," said Vern. "I got into town and the first thing the local sheriff did was dispatch two of his own men to me. We caught the forger in half a day."

He earned many citations in his career, since he also served as a Ventura County Deputy Sheriff.

Vern was quite involved with professional police associations. He is a "life member" of the California Peace Officers' Association, The California Check Investigators' Association, The Chief Special Agents' Association, The Los Angeles County Peace Officers' Association and the National Rifle Association.

Additionally, he has been a member in good standing of the Shriners since 1953.

In Leisure World, he's an active member of the Minnesota Club, the Cribbage Club and the Pinochle Club. He is also a member of the Shuffleboard Association and has ties with the Kiwanis Club. It's this affiliation that lead to a shuffleboard club for the visually handicapped.

"When Gary Hollaar of the Kiwanis Club approached me with the idea for starting the visually impaired shuffleboard club, I said 'sure!',"remembers Vern. "But I didn't know the job would last 11 years.

There were only four alleys and 16 players in the early days. Each morning Vern would prepare the courts for play, help out with transporting the players to the court, coach the players, keep score and when needed, fill in as a player himself.

Vern is also an untiring contributor to the people of Beverly Manor. Most weeks, he produces three new musical tapes for the shut-ins there.

"I have made tapes with everything from Beethoven to Big Bands. I've just finished my 280th," he said.

Vern estimates he has spent more than \$1,000 of his own money to produce the tapes, but according to him, "When I receive a smile or a thank you, it's all worth it."

The tapes are not the only thing Vern creates. He designed and built a landscape scene around a special bicentennial electric train. The scene is complete to the last detail, with telephone poles, cars, lights and inch-tall people.