

LEISURE WORLDER OF THE MONTH FRANCES BRYSON

August 2, 1989

LAGUNA HILLS—If you've attended Frances Bryson's slide presentations, you've probably been struck not only by their visual quality, but the completeness of the information.

Once you learn that she served as librarian and research specialist in locations from Texas to Montana to Washington D.C. to Leisure World, and that she's president of the Leisure World Camera Club, it's not hard to see how her obsession with quality grew.

To acknowledge all her service and activities, Frances will be named "Leisure Worlder of the Month," on Wednesday, August 2. Her special ceremony, which is jointly sponsored by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society, will be held at 10:00 a.m. in Clubhouse Six. The public is invited to attend.

Frances was born in Texas, where she grew up appreciating "a rich sense of heritage." She learned to read at age four, graduated from high school at 16, received her degree from the University of Texas, and an advanced degree in Library Science from Louisiana State University at age 21.

Frances is not a woman who wastes time.

"Plunging" into a career as a librarian, her first job was with the WPA as a library supervisor for five West Texas counties.

A developing interest in research led her back to the Texas capital of Austin to work as a legislative reference librarian for the Texas State Library. In 1942 she moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, to become the county librarian and work in a library that had a bookmobile to serve the remote schools and communities.

On one bookmobile excursion, Frances met a group of young geologists from the U. S. Geological Survey. Although she didn't know it at the time, the party chief, Robert P. Bryson, would become her husband just two years later.

First stop for the new Bryson family was Washington D.C., where Robert shipped off to the Philippines for the conclusion of WWII and Frances accepted a job as reference librarian in the Library of Congress. Here her two great interests of history and research came together.

Following the war, the Brysons took varied assignments, including a stint in Broadus, Montana and Albuquerque, New Mexico, while interspersing trips back to the capital.

In the late 1940s, a bigger change occurred. Frances retired to a new career and title—mother—of their new son, Rob, and later, to daughter, Belinda.

The family lived 24 years in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Virginia, where Frances spent a good deal of time in community service. She ran a book cart at the hospital, served as a teacher's aide in a reading clinic for disadvantaged children, was president of the woman's club, worked in the Presbyterian Church and started her now-established illustrated lecture series for community groups.

With husband Robert's retirement, the Brysons moved to Leisure World and immediately became involved in the community.

Frances' affiliation with the Camera Club, along with scriptwriting classes at the Emeritus Institute of Saddleback College, have led to the development of 15 finished programs, including "Angels", "Crosses", "California Missions", patriotic and seasonal themes and a new-found interest in astronomy and the Voyager spacecrafts.

She's also served as both secretary and chaplain for the Leisure World PEO Group and Chapter EY of Laguna Beach. She's also been a ruling elder for the Geneva Presbyterian Church, and is a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Astronomy Club and the Leisure World Historical Society.

Frances holds an intense belief that communication is a powerful tool that must be used responsibly.

"Knowledge, impact and sharing are all a part of communicating, and when used on behalf of the fine groups in Leisure World, there is satisfaction to all," she says, adding her personal motto..."the best preparation for the future is a good performance of the present."