



Woodley Butler, a consummate volunteer, has been selected as Leisure Worlorder of the Month for July

News photo by Rod Veal

The Butler did it

Honoree's volunteer efforts recognized by Historical Society

BY CHERYL WALKER
THE NEWS

Woody Butler is the kind of volunteer every organization dreams of: conscientious, reliable and totally dedicated.

In March of last year, The News interviewed the retired educator and provided an exhaustive list of his many volunteer efforts in the community.

Since then he's not only added more but recently was selected by the Historical Society as its Leisure Worlorder of the Month for July.

Butler says he can't help himself, when he sees a good cause he plunges in.

"I came from a very loving family and I'm just a people person," says the honoree.

United Director and Earthquake Task Force spokesperson Linda Wilson says the Society's distinction is well deserved.

"Woody is the first person to come to mind when planning a project and wanting an

Ceremony facts

Who: Woodley Butler

What: Leisure Worlorder of the Month for July

Where: Clubhouse 6

When: Wednesday, July 6, 10 a.m.

Sponsors: Leisure World Historical Society with funding from Renaissance at the Regency and Palm Terrace.

upbeat, positive, pragmatic foundation for a team effort. Without fanfare or trumpets, he gets the job done -- the applause comes from his fellow workers."

Frequent associate with Butler in many volunteer efforts is Denice Welch, Third director, County Volunteer of the Year and recent Volunteer and Transportation Awareness Days Co-chairperson.

The two are currently developing various computer programs to assist seniors and volunteers; a disability etiquette booklet; a Medicare Part D program volunteer corps, to assist residents in filling out the forms for prescription drug financial assistance; and an Disability Awareness Day, in September, in cooperation with Leisure World Social Services.

"No one deserves this more than Woody: he's been work-

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ing for this community since he came to live here and is an outstanding advocate for seniors and others who need help, especially those with disabilities."

But Butler also donates his skills outside Leisure World. One of his project is working on a federal grant for the hearing impaired; another, a master gardener program to introduce elementary school students to the joy of gardening; and another is helping put together a marketing strategy for an innovative product developed from clam guts.

The latter is from Alaska and an all-organic plant food that helps that state's economy, provides native employment and gives gardeners a natural way to enhance plant growth.

Another project he's currently working on that he's very excited about the prospects of is the 2-1-1 Info Link and its launch to the public July 1.

Butler says he first learned about the one-stop link up to health and human services while on a trip and has been working to bring it to California ever since.

Info Link makes it easy to tap into resources that were always available but difficult to find like emergency food, clothing, shelter, medical care, counseling and childcare.

Butler, a West Texan, says he loves to volunteer and has

done so all his life.

He volunteered for the US Air Force during World War II earning a Distinguished Flying Cross and an Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters.

He got his bachelor's degree in English from UCLA and did graduate work at UCLA, Pepperdine, Chapman and California State University.

He then tried on a variety of career hats, merchandising, farming, insurance and real estate, before going back to his first love, teaching, where he met Carol, his wife of 54 years.

When their child was diagnosed with a severe hearing disability, the couple's quest to get him the best care possible led to Butler's becoming an advocate for better care for all those similarly challenged.

Butler retired from his pay job but not from volunteering.

A partial list of the organizations that benefit from his service includes: the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the California Retired Teachers Association, the National Retired Teachers Association, Sertoma International, Providence Speech and Hearing, Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc., the HI (Hearing Impaired) Club of Leisure World and the Hard of Hearing Advisory Council (Golden Ear Foundation).

He's also served as a mem-

ber of Laguna Woods city council advisory groups (community and social services) and helped coordinated Leisure World and city community events like the Exercise Challenges, the Senior Fraud Fest and Consumer Awareness Day.

He also successfully lobbied Golden Rain to provide Senheiser systems for the hearing impaired in clubhouses as well as movie subtitles for films shown on Channel 6.

In spite of all he's done for the community, Butler says he was "shocked" when the Society called to say he was their July choice.

"I love what I'm doing," he explains.