

Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

DR. WARD DARLEY

A small one-room unaccredited school in the mountains of south-central Colorado played a vital role in the success story of Rossmoor Corporation's Leisure Worlder of the Month for May.

From this humble beginning, Dr. Ward Darley, as one of the most respected medical leaders in the land, rose to the presidency of the University of Colorado and then went on to become Executive Director of the Association of American Medical Colleges.

The road this Good Samaritan has traveled in a half century of American medicine is long. Its milestones of achievement on the road to better health are almost too numerous to count.

To our good fortune Dr. Darley's success trail led him, finally, to Leisure World. As a member of the Golden Rain Foundation's committee on Health and Medical Care Delivery, he has applied his wisdom to help complete a study of all health and medical care services available to the residents of Leisure World; a vital adjunct to the improvement of the community's health program.

"Education for health and medical care," says Dr. Darley, "has been my all-consuming interest. My philosophy has been that the end result of all medical endeavor should be the improvement of patient care. This is the thrust of my interest that I have brought with me to Leisure World."

The most recent of a host of honors bestowed on Dr. Darley came last year when the University of Colorado's Department of Preventive Medicine and Comprehensive Health Care established an annual lectureship and a seminar room and library in his name.

The Darley road to success started in the San Luis Valley of south-central Colorado. There his father's farm in the foothills of the San Juan mountains was two miles from the one-room school to which he and his brother walked; or rode horseback when the weather was too inclement.

"Our teacher never knew whether she would have six or a dozen pupils," he remembers. "The number was controlled by the weather or the need for help on the farms."

Pauline Braiden was growing up at this time on her father's vast cattle spread in the same valley but they never met. Not until Pauline's senior year at the University of Denver when the Darley family was invited to a social event at the home of her parents did their paths cross.

"It wasn't until five years later in 1930 that we were married. Romance lasted longer in those days." Pauline's smile tells you she savors those memories.

Their Southern Colorado experience with its proximity to picturesque Taos, New Mexico has clung to the Darleys all their lives. Trout fishing, horseback riding and pack trips with their son and daughter were a way of life for years. All that is behind them but their living room here carries the mark of the Rockies through beautiful original paintings.

Dr. Darley practiced internal medicine in Denver until 1944 while teaching in the university's medical school. It was then that his career turned full-time to medical education. In rapid succession he became dean of the School of Medicine, vice president in charge of Health Sciences and then president in 1953.

Four years later the Association of American Medical Colleges lured him to its headquarters at Evanston, Illinois as Executive Director where he played a role in the development of new medical schools and strengthening existing schools. During the same time he was Executive Secretary of the National Intern Matching Program, spending a decade in these vital national medical activities.

In high school Dr. Darley discovered he had an ear for music. So he bought a piccolo at Montgomery Ward for five dollars. Although he could scarcely read a note, he soon learned all the marching songs and so played in the band. This carried over to his University of Colorado days. He said it was a good thing the Buffaloes needed bodies to fill out the band. If he had been selected by tryout, he'd never have made it.

To Dr. Darley an important emolument developed from this. Byron (Whizzer) White was a gridiron sensation at the time. "He was my hero," said Darley, "I got to see Whizzer play all but one of his collegiate games. The band didn't get to go to Hawaii, so I missed that one."

White went on to win the Heisman Trophy enroute to a seat on the Supreme Court bench. Dr. Darley's hunger for collegiate football now is satisfied each fall by television.

Space does not permit the listing of the scientific and medical societies to which Dr. Darley has been elected; his awards and citations; his honorary degrees; his consultantships to foundations, professional organizations and governmental agencies; his memberships on councils, commissions and committees; nor his addresses, lectures and publications. He is a Diplomate of the National Board of Medical Examiners and the American Board of Internal Medicine. He is a Master of the American College of Physicians and an Honorary Fellow of the American College of Hospital Administrators. The University of Colorado named him Emeritus Professor of Medicine and President Emeritus in 1973. To him one honor stands out above all the others. On the wall of Dr. Darley's den hangs a bronze plaque that reads:

"The American Board of Family Practice presents its Distinguished Service Award to Ward Darley, M.D., in recognition of his outstanding contribution to medicine. His vision, wisdom and leadership were significant factors in the establishment of family practice as the 20th primary specialty discipline." November 20, 1969.

As a member of the Leisure World community and in addition to his work for Golden Rain Foundation, Dr. Darley is a member of the Academian Society; Medical Society of Leisure World, Colorado Club, Historical Society and Institute for Living. As a member of Saddleback Kiwanis Club he helped install its blood pressure screening program. Wife Pauline is a member of Ebells, Panhellenic and Los Libros. Both are members of the Geneva Presbyterian Church.

"The lessons of history are very poorly learned by most of us," says Dr. Darley philosophically. "I suppose everyone has to discover the wheel for themselves. This is why I'm more interested in the future than in the past."