



# LEISURE WORLD NEWS

Thursday  
May 25, 2000

## Society gives clubs' founder nod in June

By Cheryl Walker  
The News

The Aquadettes, Table Tennis and Lawn Bowling clubs might never have come into being but for the interest and drive of a special community dynamo.

But it's not just for being a club founder alone that the Historical Society has selected Myrtle Dermody as its Leisure Worlder of the Month in June.

The petite 34-year resident, who celebrates her 95th birthday June 1, has a long history of activism outside the walls as well: as a member of the original Sunshine Girls at Beverly Manor, as an emergency room volunteer at Saddleback Hospital and as a major donor at the Florence Sylvester Senior Center in Laguna Hills, where, last year, she donated the library.

"Myrtle really deserves this honor, she's a great lady; very committed and competitive. She's done a good job," says Laguna Woods Mayor Pro-tem Bob Bouer.

"She's a real contributor. She goes all the time, yet she's very thoughtful and sensitive to others' feelings," says Evelyn Henry, a fellow Aquadette.

"She waits on everybody, she's the first one to bring a casserole or lend a hand. In fact, the first time I saw her was 6-7 years ago (when she was in her late 80s) and she was cleaning the house of a friend who was ill," recalls another Aquadette Margo Bouer.

"Hundreds of seniors have spent hours upon hours enjoying the Senior Center Library, thanks to the generosity of Myrtle Dermody," adds Dr. Marilyn Ditty, executive director of South County Senior Services.

"She always finds time for everyone and she's got incredible



**Myrtle Dermody has a history of activism and volunteerism in the community. Her generosity and willingness to help others in need earned Dermody the Leisure Worlder of the Month award**

energy and the most positive attitude of anyone I have ever known," says former Table Tennis Club President Carol Cartwright. "I'm delighted that she's being honored."

**Background:** The Chicago native and widow worked for 40 years in the accounts payable department of Western Electric and says she always enjoyed being on

the go.

After she retired and moved to Leisure World in 1966, she was able to give more time to the sports and other activities she loved best and helped organize the Table Tennis and Lawn Bowling Clubs and Aquadettes, volunteered at local health facilities, honed her bridge game and kept

up a breath-taking schedule of activities until a few months ago when health problems arose.

In spite of her current difficulties, Dermody says it is her intention to get well, stay involved and do whatever she can in whatever way she can to "give something back to the community."

Says Dermody, "I always want to be involved in things that are active - people think it's something in my genes, but I've always been active, it keeps me going."

In spite of her track record of involvement, the Society has found Dermody a tough lady to honor. She declined it twice before and was going to do so again.

"I'd already booked a clubhouse and the caterer for my birthday party, but my friends said this (ceremony) would be like a party anyway.

"So, you see, I tried to get out of it, but my friends talked me into it."