

# Season of giving lasts year round

## Dolezals contribute more than just money

By Cheryl Walker  
The News

**F**or some, the season of giving comes once a year - not so for December's Leisure Worlders of the month, Jessie and Frank Dolezal.

From helping lepers in India and feeding starving children in the Philippines to gathering clothing for Navajo and Hopi Indians and finding donors to ignite the Tree of Life for Saddleback Hospital hospice patients, these outstanding givers and 19-year Leisure World residents have donated a lifetime of service to their fellow man.

Yet, the Dolezals say they can't believe the Historical Society singled them out to honor.

"We were surprised when we learned we were chosen ... we're very private people and others have done so much more," says Jesse.

Yet, friend and former Golden Rain President Wally Bjornson says the recognition is well-deserved: "They are both so upright, decent, hardworking and conscientious - I just think the world of them!"

Former Golden Rain Director and Frank's fellow Kiwanian Ward Payne adds to that the couple is "always available" to lend a helping hand - "with enthusiasm" - to any good cause.

Payne notes that Frank is on call, in particular, for heavy work, such as unloading fruitcakes for the service organization's annual Holiday Cake Sale or loading trucks with pots and pans, blankets and all-weather gear destined for the Indian reservations sustained by the Danny Davey drive.

Former Leisure World Philharmonic Committee President Carlann Luetzow adds that Frank is a gentleman "in the true sense of the word" and singles out Jesse's jack-of-all-trades input into her organization - ushering events, supporting its various programs and racking up impressive sales on benefit tickets to raise funds to bring the sound of music to more than 300,000 Orange County school children.

She adds that the couple also routinely attend Philharmonic series, are generous donors and had an outstanding seven-year tenure on the Community Concerts Committee signing up top artists.

"I'm so glad the Historical Society for once chose people who are not on the (governing) boards but who are very community-minded and consistently giving-and they (the Dolezals) just give, give and give of themselves."



Janine Swiatkowski/The News  
Frank and Jessie Dolezal have never shied away from volunteer work whether it involved lepers or music.

### Ceremony facts

**Who:** Frank and Jessie Dolezal  
**What:** Leisure Worlders of the Month for December.  
**Where:** Clubhouse 6  
**When:** 10 a.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7.  
**Sponsor:** Leisure World Historical Society.

**Background:** Canadian-born Jessie and Chicago native Frank met and married in London where she was working with Pan Am airlines and he with Standard Oil.

Frank's work in the oil and petroleum refining industry became a major reason why world travel became as much a part of their lives as volunteerism as they enjoyed

the challenges of living in a variety of cultures including Lebanon, the Philippines and India.

In those exotic settings, the Dolezals answered the call of service wherever they heard it, stepping outside their safe and secure company compounds to try to do something about the poverty, disease and malnutrition encountered beyond their havens' walls.

Jessie explains, for example, that the sight of unhealthy mothers and their undernourished babies in the Philippines spurred her efforts to help create a nutrition program and solicit the donation of ambulances from Frank's company.

Then, after the volcano Taal blew its top, the Dolezals helped coordinate a relief effort that beat even the Red Cross' in its prompt response

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in relieving the suffering of the disaster's victims.

In Vizakhapatman in Southern India, Jessie assisted lepers, worked alongside nuns in a health clinic and running the library (as she also had in the Philippines).

They retired to Leisure World in 1975, and when not travelling around the world or participating in Elderhostel programs they serve as active members of a variety of clubs and service organizations.

For Jessie, this means participation and support of Opera 100, the Saddleback Hospital Hospice program, Laguna Hills Philharmonic Committee, Community Concert program and the Saddle, Tennis, Dance and California Clubs.

For Frank, this means similar contributions to the same groups with the addition of the Golf and Saddleback Kiwanis Clubs.

It's no wonder that the couple keep three books for appointments with barely a date unscheduled.

"It does get a little bit hectic at times, but things are getting better," says Jesse.

"We want to get involved, we like being busy - it's fun," adds Frank. "And we're not over yet."

**Lighting up the darkness:** One of the Dolezal's main efforts right now is finding donors for the Saddleback Hospice Tree of Light, scheduled to begin sparking Dec. 4 on the hospital grounds.

The tree honors or memorializes the terminally ill or deceased with a light, ornament or star. Donations of more than \$1,000 will also be listed permanently in a Book of Remembrance.

Funds raised through the project will help fund the hospital's hospice program. To contribute to the effort, call 452-3963.