

LEISURE WORLDER OF THE MONTH

January, 1994

IRVING GOLDBERG

The Leisure World Historical Society is pleased to announce the selection of Irving Goldberg, Leisure Worlder of the Month for January, 1994. The event is sponsored by the Leisure World Historical Society, supported by the Ross Cortese Commemorative Fund.

Irv Goldberg was born on the historic Lower East Side of New York City (circa 1914), the youngest of five sisters and five brothers. In high school he was business manager of both the weekly newspaper and the annual literary magazine, wrote a weekly sports column, and played varsity basketball. He was student treasurer of the General Organization and was listed in the Seniors' yearbook as "most likely to succeed."

He attended the City College of New York where, in his Jr. year, he received a grant to train as a student intern at the Mt. Sinai Hospital Children's Clinic. This led ultimately to an appointment to teach classes for the mentally retarded in the New York City School System. He had achieved tenure as a special education teacher; he had an ancillary position lecturing in Adult Education and Counseling; he was in a doctoral program at New York University preparing for a supervisory position in special education; he was exploring business opportunities in summer camp enterprises; and he was flaunting the latest in automobile sophistication - an Oldsmobile with fully automatic transmission.

Pearl Harbor changed all of that. Unable to secure a naval commission because of poor eyesight, he wound up as a draftee at Camp Barkeley, Texas. After basic training, Irv went to the University of Mississippi for a program in Advanced Army Administration. Posted to Algiers, he was placed on special assignment to investigate a serious problem at a General Hospital caused by an inordinate number of psychiatric casualties. He developed a comprehensive rehabilitation program for processing, treating and reassigning these cases. Cited by the Surgeon General for this work, he received a direct field commission as a Clinical Psychologist in the Adjutant General's Department. Shortly after his return from the Army, Irv met Ruth (his wife to be) who, too, was back from two years service in the WAC's, where she had served with the Air Force at Kearney, Nebraska Airfield.

Through the 50's, 60's and 70's, Irv forged a career in government, education and social agency responsibility, all centered on serving individual and group needs. In this period, he held positions, sometimes concurrently as (1) Teacher and Principal of Special Education Facilities; (2) Director of Social Agency and Camp Activities; (3) Clinical Psychologist for the VA; (4) Adjunct Professor and Chairman of Rehabilitation Section / Special Education Department of Teachers College, Columbia University; (5) Associate Project Director of the Institute for Training Teachers of Special Education at Teachers College; and (6) Member of the Comprehensive Health Planning Committee, H.E.W.

By 1980, Irv had decelerated to doing only volunteer community service permitting Ruth to arrange an extensive program of travel which took them throughout the world. On a trip to Hawaii, they met a couple who described a Shangri-La. They visited with them - of course, it was Leisure World - and the Bermans, Jack and Regina were so right!

After three years of snow-birding between Florida and here, Ruth found the unit she wanted right on Aliso Creek. Once settled, in characteristic fashion, the Goldbergs sought ways to serve. Through the Saddle Club, Irv became involved at the Stables. He worked the appointment desk - set up coffee for the morning's riders, qualified for the drill teams and rode with them for the horse shows. With AARP, for whom he had served back East, he resumed his work teaching Safe Driving classes both in Leisure World and at the Laguna Hills Senior Center. Irv has served in AARP's Tax Counseling Program for over 12 years and now is the local coordinator of the program here in Leisure World, where twice weekly during the tax season, and on call at other times, his dedicated group of experienced counselors help residents prepare their income tax returns at no charge for the service. As an expression of his interest in community affairs, he had become an advisor to the Community Activities Committee of the United Mutual. This led, in turn, to his nomination and election to the Board of Directors of United. During his term of office, he served on various committees, including Finance, Capital Improvements and Landscape. He was elected President of the Board of Directors in his final year on the Board. Irv served on the GRF Ad Hoc Management Committee from its inception and was co-author of its report to the Committee at the conclusion of its work. He has also served on the GRF Legal Committee, the GRF Nominating Committee, the Ad Hoc Assisted Living Committee and the Committee on Future Health Needs. Irv is also a member of the Audubon Society and the Historical Society of which he is the immediate past president.

For his never failing willingness to serve, the tirelessness of his effort and the value of his contributions to our community, Irv Goldberg roundly deserves the distinction of Leisure Worlder of the Month for January, 1994.