

# Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

## FERDINAND A. HALL

When Ferdinand A. Hall was a student at Northwestern he was a member of the then famous Wildcats flying trapeze team. "I was the catch-man" says the tall and still athletically trim man who recently stepped down from the presidency of Golden Rain Foundation. He flexed his strong hands as if to say he seldom dropped anyone.

"In the job he's leaving, Ferd was still something of a catch-man, if you know what I mean," said a friend in speaking of the community problems Hall has helped to handle. Ferd is the first to admit the trapeze act analogy might have some merit.

Because of an unusual succession of circumstances Hall has been involved in community governance almost from the time he and his charming wife Florence moved in a decade ago. First he was a director of Mutual 32, and after that three times president of Third Mutual, 1973 through 1975. His election to fill a one-year vacancy in 1977 was followed by being selected for an ensuing three-year term and that accounts for his presence on the GRF board for four years — one year beyond the normal tour of duty.

Now that Hall is finished with the governance "trapeze act", the Rossmoor Corporation selection committee felt it was time for Ferdinand Hall to take a bow and so it has chosen him as its Leisure Worlder of the Month for May.

From the time he left the Northwestern campus at Evanston, Hall's career was insurance. He started out with the Illinois Automobile Club in Chicago, came to California in 1937 and after a five-year stint with E. Broox Randall & Sons his forty-year career was well started. Included were fifteen years as vice president and Pacific Coast manager for Security Insurance Co., of New Haven, Connecticut; thirteen years as vice president of Mission Equities Corp., while serving as senior vice president of Mission Insurance Co.

Hall was born in the shadows of old Comisky Park in Chicago. His Swedish immigrant father moved the family to Evanston a few years later.

Ferd was a sopping-wet 175-pound football tackle at Northwestern under the famous coach Dick Hanley, good enough to win a letter although he never earned a starting role.

"My father was a milkman," Ferd recalls. "My brother and I took turns hitching up the wagon and accompanying Dad on his route at 1 a. m. when we were in grade school. It was automatic that I would go to Evanston Township High and then on to Northwestern."

It was while working in the Evanston postoffice to pay his way through college that young Hall met a blue-eyed Irish colleen named Florence McGrath.

"Ferd worked at night and since I worked days at the postoffice we used to exchange love notes on time cards," says Florence. "We tried to keep our romance a secret so when I pinned her, instead of wearing my fraternity pin on her blouse Florence attached it under her collar," Ferd reports.

"Our five children can truthfully say their grandparents came over on the Mayflower. That's where my mother and father met, on a steamer named the Mayflower."

The Halls have sixteen grandchildren. "At last report, that is," says Florence with a twinkle in her Irish eyes.

Needless to say, with his many official duties Hall hasn't had much time to become a joiner in the community. As a longtime member of the Oakmont Country Club in Glendale it was automatic he would join the Laguna Hills golf club, and every Sunday morning at eight o'clock mass he is an usher at St. Nicholas Church but that's about the extent of it. Now that he's no longer an office holder, Ferd figures he will have time to pay more attention to his golf game. He might even sit down occasionally and play the electric organ that graces their living room. The trouble with that is their living room window overlooks the eighth green of the third nine and on a still day Ferd can hear someone holler "Fore."