

Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

LEONARD S. JONES

When Leonard S. Jones left the pulpit and embarked on a successful business career he carried his ethical teachings with him.

"I set my goals so I could put something worthwhile back into life," says Rossmoor's Leisure Worlder of the month for September.

An officer or director in more than a dozen enterprises during a career as a real estate developer and entrepreneur in business and manufacturing, Jones never lost sight of his original life's intent.

He tries to keep his philanthropies undisclosed but they are many. His dozen years as a Presbyterian minister, 26 years as a family counselor, an avocation as patron of the arts and his enviable career in Rotary which will lead to the district governorship next year — all these have set the tone of his life style.

Rotary's motto of "Service above Self" could be his personal creed.

In 1939 when a U-boat sank the liner Athenia the hostile act brought World War II one step closer for the United States. It also had a profound personal effect on Jones.

"My wife Louise and I had booked passage to Europe on the return trip of the Athenia," he recalls. I had a fellowship from the Presbyterian Seminary of Chicago for graduate studies abroad."

It was to have been both a honeymoon and pursuit of a doctorate degree in Europe. The imminence of war put an end to those plans.

Jones' educational career was strewn with honors, beginning at Pomona High School with the award of the California Scholastic Gold Seal in 1931.

He worked more than 50 hours a week while attending Occidental on a scholarship; was awarded a three year scholarship after receiving his B.A., and that paved the way for his divinity degree in Chicago. Meantime he had saved \$2,500.

Jones' propensity to make and save money had started at an early age.

"I used to buy broken-down cars, fix them up and sell them at a profit," he remembers. "And my knack for successful swaps steered me to the world of music. When I was 12 I traded a bike for a guitar, learned how to play it and then exchanged it for a violin. The real musician in our home, however, is Louise. She can *play* the violin. I just fiddle."

Together they are supporting members of such organizations as the USC Friends of Music, Orange County Philharmonic Association, Friends of Young Musicians Foundation, Los Angeles Music Center Unified Fund and the Orange County Music Center.

While their three daughters were growing up and in the years since, the Joneses have shared their home with almost 200 students.

Leonard says of his work as a counselor:

"It's strange, but I've found that family problems usually relate to bad management. I'm no high-powered advisor, but there's a saying that any man with bifocals can help a blind man."

Jones joined Rotary in 1960 in Covina and since then has served it in many capacities including chairmanship of International Service; the Foundation Committee; conference inspirational speaker; in 1976 was president of Laguna Hills Rotary, and now is district governor-elect.

His affection for Rotary International is obvious. "Do you realize that Rotary has made a greater contribution to advancing education than the famous Rhodes scholarships?" he challenges. "Rotary has given more than \$60 million in scholarships."

Leonard Seiber Jones is proud to be a part of the organization whose motto is "Service above Self." And he is too busy pursuing that course today to wonder which might have happened, had not the Athenia been torpedoed.