

LEISURE WORLDER OF THE MONTH OCTOBER 1996

JUDGE (Ret.) SAMUEL M. KIRBENS

The Leisure World Historical Society is pleased to announce the selection of **Judge (Ret.) Samuel M. Kirbens** as Leisure Worlder of the Month for October, 1996. This event is sponsored by the Society and supported by the Ross Cortese Commemorative Fund.

Our honoree was born in Lincoln, Nebraska and received his primary and high school education in his city of birth. He matriculated at the University of Nebraska, receiving his BA and JD from that institution. He was president of Delta Sigma Rho (National Forensic Honorary Fraternity) while attending the university. He also was the editor of the Nebraska Law College Review. Subsequently, Sam Kirbens was admitted to and practiced within the Nebraska, Colorado and California State Bars. He is the only judge to have won the prestigious writing award, the Ross Essay Contest, given by the American legal profession.

Judge Kirbens functioned as an attorney in the fields of contract, copyright and entertainment law, was a Dale Carnegie instructor, had a private law practice and subsequently served as a judge in civil, criminal, probate and domestic relations trial courts in Denver, Colorado. He retired in 1985, but continued to function as an arbitrator/mediator and Judge Pro Tempore for Orange County.

His daily assignments did not preclude our honoree from carrying out civic activities as chairman of Denver's Mayor's Townhall Meetings, U.S.O. Council of Denver, member of the Scottish Rite Masons (32nd degree) and committee member of UCI College of Medicine, Brain Imaging Center. He is also listed in "Who's Who in the West".

Judge Kirbens has acquired an interesting international perspective of the world having visited many European countries, Morocco, Japan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Macao, the Philippine Islands and Israel. All the foregoing in addition to his service with the U.S. Air Force legal section in England.

Sam and Gloria came to Leisure World in 1986 and became active in community affairs. The Judge joined a mountain hiking group, was vice president of Leisure World Residents to Save the Canyon, volunteered for TRP, was vice president of the Foreign Policy Association, Audubon Society's "The Burrowing Owl" editor and held memberships in a variety of other clubs. He lent his legal expertise to a variety of Leisure World governance and community committees. He has chaired the John Feltman Lecture Series since 1991.

The Kirbens' nuclear family includes son Drew and daughter Andrea Gail, while the extended family encompasses grandchildren Kristy Anne, Shelley Rae, Brooke and Joshua David.

Judge Kirbens has had the unique experience on one-on-one contact with international personalities and nationally known members of the highest levels of jurisprudence but his feelings and concerns are reflected by his statement: "In my 21 years on the Denver trial bench, I heard thousands of cases. I enjoyed the intellectual challenge of the civil cases and frequently despaired from the necessary chastening of so many defendants. I did not relish criminal court assignments."