



LEISURE WORLD NEWS

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Society's June honoree is 'confused' like a fox

BY CHERYL WALKER
THE NEWS

There ought to be a name plate on the first seat to the left of the microphone at all board meetings signifying it is reserved.

For Libby Marks, that is, the resident who frequently claims she's "confused," forcing directors or staff to explain issues in simple English.

Marks says she speaks up so everyone can understand what is going on.

And she's been doing such a good job of it in the decade she's lived in the community that the Historical Society decided it was time to recognize her as their Leisure Worlder of the Month.

The June honoree was once a properly reserved British lady. But Marks says the gloves began to come off after she came to the United States in 1951 and got involved in charitable, political and personal improvement projects that broadened her mind and uncovered an innate talent for leadership, public speaking and championing the truth.

"Now, nothing intimidates me," says Marks who measure somewhat under five feet in height. "I have no axe to grind and I'm not afraid of anything."

Ceremony facts

Who: Libby Marks

What: Leisure Worlder of the Month for June

Where: Clubhouse 6

When: 10 a.m., Wednesday, June 1

Sponsors: Leisure World Historical Society, with funding from Renaissance at the Regency and Palm Terrace.



Libby Marks has been named Leisure Worlder of the Month for June. A collector of penguins, she also has an extensive rock collection.

News photos by Rod Veal

But when the Society called she says she did something very non-Marks-like: "I was speechless."

Marks says although she's willing to serve on community and city committees as an advisor, she would not consider running for a board or city council seat.

"I can do more good doing what I do." Being the unofficial ombudsman and resident advocate, that is, suits her just fine.

Linda Wilson, United director, says what's special about Marks is her genuineness. "Her resident advocacy cuts through the rhetoric and resonates the feelings of all of us."

Former Third and Golden Rain Director Seymour Welikson adds that Marks is "somewhat of an independent watchdog of Leisure World, questioning the deliberations and decisions of all the boards and asking for answers to questions that the resident



should want to know, but are too busy, too apathetic, too unknowledgeable to pursue."

General Manager Milt Johns adds that people should not be fooled when Marks introduces herself as confused. "That's probably the last adjective I would use to describe her: she does her homework, understands the issues and, due to her love for the community, takes issues on with great decorum and great tenacity."

Background: Marks says she's on her fourth life after having three close calls during the Blitzkrieg in her native

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London, England during World War II.

She says she plans on living to 100, loyal to the advice of her father inculcated during a rather privileged childhood in Edgware/Middlesex, England; that is, to do charitable work and help others.

And help she has in her native land and in her adopted home in the US, and she has numerous plaques and awards from years of volunteer work.

She also was active in politics and fought to have nuclear weapons testing conducted under (rather than above) ground.

She also is very proud of the fact that she helped change federal law to allow cooperatives to be bought in the name of trusts and to take away the barriers to banks writing reverse mortgages, when they formerly were only open to purchasers of real

property.

Currently, she is active on the city's transportation committee, golf trails subcommittee and ACCESS group, helping residents with disabilities fill out applications for the special county bus service.

She also volunteers in United Looks Ahead (the mutual's long range planners) plus Golden Rain's security committee, golf trails subcommittee and clubhouse advisory.

She took part in the Project 21 planning project, was a Security "meter maid" (to catch vehicles illegally parked in the community) and a volunteer in the Friendly Visitor program.

Her clubs include Opera 100, Lovers of Music, Concerned Citizens, Serendipity, Community Concerts and Community Civic Organization.

When not attending board or committee meetings, she enjoys playing Scrabble, bridge and the piano; visiting her children and grandchil-

dren; reading; and enjoying the antics of penguins.

Penguins? "I'm crazy about them," she says and points to a stuffed example and souvenir of the Edinburgh Zoo atop the chest of drawers she ducked under for cover during the Blitz, one of the few pieces of her furniture that remained unscathed during the near nightly bombings.

At the Scottish zoo, she explains, she was urged not to miss the parade every day at 2 p.m., much to the delight of tourists and locals alike.

The first time she saw the parade she took a zillion pictures and couldn't contain her excitement.

In fact, after the penguins did their brief walk around and sauntered back into their pen like clockwork, a bystander asked her if she was all right. "You were screaming."

Marks, who in her young life was quite the "quiet young lady," giggles at the memory. "Me?"