

SUMMARY OF LAURA MCKEEVER

Quite by accident the other day I came across the following quotation of Booker T. Washington regarding achievement. He said, "Success is to be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life as by the obstacles he has overcome while on the road to success." I think that applies to our honoree today.

Laura was born in Evanston, Illinois, Her mother, who was the youngest in a large family, died shortly after Laura's birth. Her mother's oldest sister, who had teenage children, took the baby to care for. When Laura was stricken with polio, the children devotedly took turns massaging her, applying the "Sister Kenny" treatment saving her from permanent paralysis.

By the time she was seven, it would have been hard to tell that anything had ever been wrong. Her father had remarried and she went to live with him and his new wife.

Her father's ambitions for his children were a good education and extensive travel. By the time she reached college age, she had traveled throughout most of the eastern United States.

She attended Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina where the family lived. Then her father decided to take a trip to the West Coast by automobile. Laura went along to help with the driving and while on this trip she visited various campuses including the University of California at Berkeley. This was a turning point for Laura and since classes were to begin August 15th, she decided to leave her family and enroll at Berkeley. With the help of her maternal grandfather, Laura stayed at Berkeley securing a teaching credential and a Master's Degree in English. Fortune favored her and she was offered a position in Fallbrook Union High School where she taught from 1928 to 1945 advancing from teacher to the post of Vice Principal.

At that time, Delta Kappa Gamma, the national honorary teachers' society, was being organized and Laura was chosen as a charter member.

By 1945 when World War II had ended, Laura decided it was time to make a change and so went to Riverside where she spent the next twenty years in various capacities as teacher and counselor.

Laura retired in 1966 and moved to Leisure World at the urging of a friend. She didn't settle down, however, but spent two years in overseas travel to England, the Black Sea, Spain, Portugal, the Orient and the South Pacific.

*Spent  
up in  
Kansas*

*Father  
a  
minister*

*President*  
When she finally "came home" she became an active volunteer at the Medical Center and an officer in the Ebell Club, serving as President from 1971 to 1973. A special project she helped to develop was an activity center for stroke patients and other handicapped persons. She organized "Resocialization Teams" of Ebell members who met weekly to provide games, refreshments, companionship and support to their families. The project lasted three years until the Saddleback Hospital opened and there was no longer space available in the Medical Center.

Laura then became a hospital volunteer serving in various capacities until last spring when she had to have cataract surgery having accumulated some 4000 hours of service.

During the interim Laura had joined the Orange County Philharmonic Society which was of great interest to her because of their commitment to musical enrichment programs for the schools. Since 1976 she has served in various capacities in that organization.

When the campaign to build the Orange County Performing Arts Center began, Laura became a charter member of the Beethoven Chapter in Leisure World. She also became a Founder and donor of the Center. She still remains active in Philharmonic and Performing Arts activities.

Last year Laura agreed to help with the afternoon Forum in Clubhouse 3 and soon found herself on the Board of that group. And continuing with her volunteer work, she now helps out with the support group of the Saddleback Valley Eye Center where she had her surgery.

When asked why she allows herself to become so involved, she replies, "Because I intend to burn out, not rust out."

So with these comments it gives me great pleasure to present Laura McKeever, Leisure World ~~Star~~ Star of the Month for November.

*Claine Still*