



Third Mutual Director Isabel Muennichow has been chosen as Leisure Worlorder of the Month for November.

News photo by Rod Veal

Honoree looks to LW's future

Muennichow's goal is a master plan

By Cheryl Walker
The News

When soft spoken Isabel Muennichow was chosen to chair the housing committee of Project 21, her talents were virtually unknown to the community.

Established in the mid 1990's Project 21 was supposed to come up with a master plan for the community. During those years, no one worked harder than the elegantly slim long-distance runner.

It wasn't long before Muennichow was recruited by Third Laguna Hills Mutual which she first joined as a director in 1998 and, except for a bylaws required hiatus, has served ever since.

Those years of outstanding service to the community have finally been recognized by the Historical Society which has named her its choice for Leisure Worlorder of the Month for November.

"She's very conscientious, hard-working and an outstandingly thoughtful person," says former Third President George Portlock.

Former Third Treasurer Marty Rhodes adds that Muennichow is "a lady of the utmost integrity: she always has members interests and community concerns paramount in her deliberations."

Laguna Woods Mayor Bob Ring, former Golden Rain President and co-worker with Muennichow on the Project 21 community planning project, commended her foresight "and ability to look at long-range issues constructively."

And her good friend Ken Dooley, also a former mutual director, adds "she always comes prepared, does her homework and has a knack for coming up with solutions."

Background: The computer software analyst was born in New York City, getting her bachelor's degree in social sciences from New York University.

She worked as a statistician with the Wisconsin Industrial Commission sequed to System Development, travelled west to California and finally worked for TRW, from which she retired in 1995.

She learned about Leisure World from a cousin and decided it would be a nice place to live, now that her son was grown and had a life of his own.

Her intelligence and expertise soon attracted the attention of community leaders like Eliot Brody and the late Eloise Kight who encouraged her to get involved in governance.

She took their advice and was soon taking on more and more responsibilities which she handled with cool, precise considered care.

Besides serving on Project 21 and the Third Board, she's served on a host of both mutual and Golden Rain Foundation committees, subcommittees and other work groups includ-

ing landscaping finance, planning, traffic, government, security, bus, broadband, parking, noise abatement, public relations and bylaw revisions among others.

She is also active in the Historical Society, Aerospace Club, Foodies Club, Smart Ideas, Friends of CUNY, Mac Club, Community Civic Association and Theatre Guild (both as a performer and behind the scenes).

Muennichow, a single mom, says when she was working she didn't have any time for extracurricular activities.

But, she adds, she always liked to organize things and once she retired she "looked for a place where I could spend what might otherwise be idle empty hours."

She loves to travel and has gone all over the United States and seen much of the world.

But she wanted to do something with her days that was really meaningful in the long term for her community.

"Leisure World has certainly proved capable of filling that need: I find myself participating in so many things."

Tops on the list, she says, is her work on the board "and my ability to make (or try to make) a difference in the community's future.

"It is exciting to not only participate but to get deeply involved in all sorts of activities."

She says there are many areas as a director that need to be explored for good decisions to be made for tomorrow and that will bring her full circle, re-framing the idea of a Project 21 comprehensive blueprint for tomorrow for a new generation of Leisure Worlorders.

"We have got to keep up, make improvements, set priorities and face the future ... but most of all we have got to master plan."

Ceremony facts

Who: Isabel Muennichow
What: Leisure Worlorder of the Month for November
Where: Clubhouse 6
When: 10 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 3

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