



NEWS PHOTO BY ROD VEAL

Burns Nugent is Leisure Worlder of the Month for December. Nugent spent several years in television. Here he is posing in the Channel 6 control room at the LW Community Center.

The man with 'the voice'

Society picks veteran director for December

BY CHERYL WALKER
THE NEWS

That voice, that voice, that beautiful voice," says former United Mutual President Irving Goldberg, speaking of the man who the Historical Society has named Leisure Worlder of the Month for December.

His voice and perfect diction resonate in the ears of Community Civic Association

members to remind them to come to meetings each month.

Burns Nugent never trod the boards but he did make his name in broadcasting as a television and radio station operator and industry watchdog for the National Association of Broadcasters.

Goldberg, who encouraged Nugent to go into Leisure World governance, says he believes Nugent is the voice of the community. "He's got depth but he is also charming, intelligent, has a superlative background and has outstanding support from the lady of the house," that is, Nugent's wife, Joan.

"Burns is very intelligent, funny and keeps up with everything," adds Betty Hohweisner, who worked with both Nugents on Community Concert programs.

Another member of that group, Frank Carr, credits Nugent with solving the organization's federal and state tax problems as well.

Joseph Heller, Golden Rain second vice president, who worked with Nugent on boards and various governance committees and study groups, says Nugent is a "neat

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guy to work with, a knowledgeable jewel of a sweetheart."

The honoree, a second generation Leisure Worldeer who's lived in the community more than a dozen years, says while he's accepted the Society's honor, he doesn't relish being the focus of attention.

"I hate standing up like a

dummy and talking about myself," he explains and promises instead to talk about the broadcast industry when he has his "hanging" ceremony Wednesday, Dec. 1 in Clubhouse 3.

"I'll tell how TV got where it is today," he promises.

And Nugent is in a unique position to know.

Background: Born in Algona, Iowa, he earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard, where he majored in government; served in the U.S. Navy

(1945-6) and got his juris doctorate from the University of Iowa College of Law.

His uncle, Bill Quarton, urged him in the 1950s to follow his lead into broadcasting.

He did, and never looked back working in management executive positions with WMT-TV Inc. (TV, radio and eventually cable), Black Hawk Broadcasting Co. and his own Nugent Broadcasting Corp.

He also was executive vice president of station relations with the National Association

of Broadcasters in Washington, D.C.

One of his key responsibilities there was getting subscribers to voluntarily adhere to an ethics code. In a 1973 interview with Broadcasting magazine he said if the industry didn't self regulate Congress would do it for them.

He says the industry was doing a pretty good job of it until a contingent in Hollywood in the late '70s decided to challenge the code as impinging on their freedom of artistic expression.

They started chipping away at taboos that has led to the current situation, where virtually anything goes (except, perhaps, a "wardrobe malfunction" at the Super Bowl halftime show).

Throughout his career, Nugent always found time to remain active in the artistic, religious and industry organizations in his community: the Duluth (Minn.) Symphony; Oregon Association of Broadcasters; Wasco County, Oregon Library Board; and the Waterloo, Iowa Trinity Episcopal Church.

And, after moving into Leisure World, he continued the tradition taking part in governance as a director of the Golden Rain Foundation and United Mutual; serving on a variety of committees, sub-committees and work groups; and acting as co-president of the Leisure World Community Concert Association, vice president of the Community

Civic Association and cable television coordinator for Taxpayers for Responsible Planning.

TRP was the grassroots South County group that successfully fought to prevent the commercialization of the former Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro.

When the honoree was asked to look back on his long and successful career for benchmarks, he said there were two special ones: his work on the Leisure World boards and "being a successful broadcasting general manager."

Former United President and Golden Rain Director Bob Miller says Burns' expertise has been an invaluable special gift to Leisure World in the last few years, with the fiber optic TV system rebuild, as well as now, as the community contemplates system upgrades to keep the asset up to 21st century standards.

Says Miller: "What a gift we have been able to take advantage of with his extensive professional background in communications and law, he's has made great contributions to our community, particularly GRF's TV Services Committee and truly deserves to be honored by the Historical Society."

Note: The ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 1 in Clubhouse 6. It is sponsored by the Leisure World Historical Society.