

June 21, 1984

# O'Connor will be honored

To list the activities and interests of Thomas J. O'Connor would take considerable space. He has lived in many places, worked at several different positions and careers and has always found time to serve his fellow man through affiliations with clubs and professional organizations.

In July, he will be honored as Leisure Worlder of the Month. A special ceremony to commemorate the event will be held on Monday, July 2 at 10 a.m., in Clubhouse 6. The public is invited to attend.

Tom O'Connor was born in Salem, Mass., on Dec. 6, 1916. He went to Boston College and graduated in 1938, with his A.B. in Latin and psychology, he began his professional days as a teacher of Latin and Greek.

An avid swimmer, in 1941 O'Connor was appointed director of first aid, life saving and water safety by the New Haven County, Conn. chapter of the American Red Cross. As director, in addition to his supervisory duties, he taught classes at Yale and at the Connecticut State Teachers' College.

In 1942 he joined the war effort and soon was graduated from Officer Candidate School in Miami Beach. Following his commissioning, the Air Force called upon his prior experience and assigned him to teach military hygiene to cadets and officers at the Santa Ana Army Air Base. From Santa Ana, he was assigned to the War Department Personnel Center as chief of the counseling center at Camp Shelby, Miss. Shortly thereafter, he took over as chief of counseling for the entire southwest United States.

In 1949, he joined the staff at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut as coordinator of counseling and guidance. During his career at Mt. San Antonio, the student population increased from a scant 600 to more than 24,000.



**Thomas O'Connor**

Throughout this time, O'Connor continued his association with the Air Force as a reserve officer. He was recalled during the Korean action and served as adjutant general for a Strategic Air Command Wing. He was retired from service in 1976 as a lieutenant colonel.

With retirement, some people might consider slowing down, but not Tom O'Connor. Since coming to Leisure World in 1978, he has served as president of the Saddleback Kiwanis, the Saddleback Kiwanis Foundation, the Torch Club and the Hikers' Club. He has been a Mutual 77 director, a member of the advisory board of El Toro High School and the Leisure World Historical Society. He is a member of the Travel Club, the Ballroom Dance Club, the Republican Club, the California Club, the Saddle Club, vice president of the Aerospace Club.

But even with this long list, what O'Connor is probably best known for is his affiliation with the Saddleback Community Hospital. He is a past chairman of the Escort and Messenger Service and is currently the president of the hospital volunteers. He works extensively with the hospital's Stroke Club on rehabilitation and recreation for stroke victims.