

LEISURE WORLDER OF THE MONTH

Ward Payne

DECEMBER, 1989

LAGUNA HILLS—He served his country in two wars, worked his way from a 40-cent-per-hour shipping clerk to regional sales manager and today contributes to life in Leisure World.

To celebrate all his accomplishments, Ward Payne will be named "Leisure Worlder of the Month," on Wednesday, Dec. 6. The public is invited to attend the ceremony, which begins at 10:00 a.m. in Clubhouse Six. HomeFed Bank and the Leisure World Historical Society jointly sponsor the program.

Ward was born in Dallas, Tx., in 1919. When he was two years old, his family moved to Hollywood, Ca. Ward attended area public schools and graduated from Fairfax High in 1937.

Immediately after graduation at age 17, he started to work at Hall-Mack Co., a manufacturer of bathroom accessories, then a privately owned firm headquartered in Los Angeles. His first job, in the shipping department, paid \$.40 an hour.

Ward moved progressively from the shipping and order departments to architectural promotion/sales. His new position consisted of calling upon architects for the purpose of having Hall-Mack materials included in their bathroom specifications.

He was inducted into U.S. Army, March 1941, and stationed at Ft. Sill, Ok., then Ft. Warren, Wy. On Dec. 7, 1941, his artillery unit moved out to Ft. Lewis, Washington and set up their 155mm howitzers on the Washington coast to help repel the expected Japanese invasion.

While at Ft. Lewis he met Ruth McCleary who had graduated from University of Washington and was working for Boeing in Seattle.

He was selected to enter the Infantry Officer Candidate School at Ft. Benning, Georgia in mid-August 1942 and graduated "Armistice Day" Nov. 11th, and commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. Ward was assigned to Camp McCain, Mi., and obtained an important few days leave in Feb. 1943—a leave that enabled he and Ruth to marry at the home of his uncle and aunt in Oklahoma City.

He received overseas orders on D-Day, June 6, 1944, and after a short time in England joined the 9th Infantry Division which was engaged in heavy combat on the Germany-Belgium border. Ward was a rifle platoon leader in battles of Huertgen Forest, Ardennes, across the Rhine at Remagen, where he was wounded and sent to the General Hospital in Liege, Belgium.

He returned to action later to overrun the Nazi concentration camp at Nordhausen and free the prisoners. He ended the war on the Elbe River.

After the war, Ward rejoined Hall-Mack in Los Angeles. He was assigned a five-state sales territory in Jan. 1950 covering Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North & South Dakota. The Paynes purchased a home in Des Moines, Iowa which was necessarily sold in June 1951 when he was recalled into the Army.

This time, Ward was assigned to Ft. Riley, Ka., then sent to Korea to serve as a Captain with the 40th Infantry Division until Jan. 1953. He was awarded an additional Bronze Star and cluster to Combat Infantry Badge.

Following his time in Korea, he again rejoined Hall-Mack and was promoted to the newly created position of Eastern Sales Manager with office in Clifton, N.J. Hall-Mack became a division of Textron Inc., and he assumed responsibility for all East Coast sales—Maine to Florida—plus operation of the branch warehouse and world-wide Export sales. He travelled with salesmen in all areas of Eastern Seaboard to call upon established key accounts and develop new ones.

Textron sold Hall-Mack to Scovill Manufacturing Company in 1975. Ward immediately obtained a position as Eastern Sales Manager for Franklin Brass Co. of Los Angeles, a company who had been a major competitor. Ward spent the next five years in an almost identical capacity with that firm.

When Ward retired at the end of 1980, the Paynes moved to Leisure World and into the manor that had previously been owned by Ward's parents. Coming to the community in 1964, the senior Paynes, along with Ward's aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Rouse, were among the earliest Leisure World residents. His aunt still resides here.

The Paynes promptly became engaged in available activities. Both of them became members of the Garden Club and Tennis Club. Ruth was President of the Garden Club in 1983-84, while those same years Ward was President of the Tennis Club. Ruth is active in the Ebell Club and served as President 1986-87. They are active in the Mayflower Congregational Church of Laguna Hills where Ward is presently serving as Moderator and Ruth is the Church Clerk.

Ward was elected to the Board of Directors of United Mutual in 1986 and served as its President in 1988. At the present time he is a member of the Golden Rain Foundation board, and Chairman of the Security Committee.

Other Leisure World activities include being President of the Washington Club and a member of Saddleback Kiwanis Club. His hobbies include tennis, swimming, a prolific garden plot, and walking "the world's most beautiful dog," the Payne's Golden Retriever, Amber.