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Leisure Worlder

OF THE MONTH

LOUISE D. RENO

When Louise Reno graduated from college with a degree in business administration in 1933, it was not a prime time for job hunting. "Because of the Depression, I found myself lucky to get a filing clerk position with the Bank of America," she recalls. "Then I met my husband over a file cabinet, and lost that job due to the bank's policy on marriage. I never had time to look for another during the next 30 years."

The financial world's loss was society's gain as Mrs. Reno went on to assume leadership roles with civic and social service organizations in Los Angeles. Her capabilities in this area were quickly recognized upon arrival in Leisure World, where once again she became a leader in community club and philanthropic circles.

The former Louise Hinrichs comes from a large farming family in Pullman, Wash., where her father attracted national recognition for his innovative soil preservation techniques. After graduation from Washington State University, she headed for California with a small endowment from her parents. "When my money started to dwindle, I took it into the bank for deposit and told them that when it was gone I would have to go home," she says. That fateful visit led to a job with the bank and her subsequent marriage to banker W. Porter Reno.

For the next three decades Mrs. Reno was active in numerous organizations, most of which she served as president. She headed both the Beverly Hills Flower Guild and its four-guild parent organization, which provides volunteer workers in the physiotherapy department at Los Angeles County Hospital as well as financial support of a child care center in Sawtelle.

Mrs. Reno also wielded the presidential gavel for the Bel Air Guild of Children's Hospital, the Brentwood-Bel Air Woman's Club and the UCLA Intersorority Mothers' Club. She was vice president in charge of programs for the Bel Air Republican Women Federated and worked with the National Charity League in its support of speech therapy projects.

Recognition of the club leader's organizational skills came in the mid-60s when she was named to the Mayor's Advisory Committee in Los Angeles. In 1966 she shifted gears and became vice president in charge of personnel and employee relations for Production Heat Treating Co., a contracting firm in which her husband held ownership. Charges of nepotism were never leveled at the hard-working Mrs. Reno, who served the company for six years until it came time for retirement. "I loved it," she says. "I regretted retiring more than my husband did."

When the couple first moved to Leisure World in 1972, they frequently traveled to Los Angeles to maintain contact with friends and interests there. "Then, as most people do, we decided this was our home and we should make our activities here paramount," says Mrs. Reno. L.A. was soon forgotten as she became involved in local organizations and was elected president of Ebell, Panhellenic and Opera 100, which provides scholarships for promising young singers.

Currently she is president of the Laguna Hills Woman's Club, whose activities include raising \$6,000 annually for various philanthropies such as the Good Shepherd Lutheran Home, Hospice of Orange County and the Performing Arts Center. The club contributed to the fund for hearing aids for Clubhouse Three and makes regular donations to the community library. It also supports Saddleback Community Hospital with scholarship funds and contributions to the hospital's Eye Clinic and Meals on Wheels program.

At the suggestion of her daughter, a clinical psychologist, Mrs. Reno also worked until recently as a trained volunteer for the Peer Counseling Program of the Orange County Mental Health Department. The job entails visiting senior citizens in their south county homes and helping them cope with such problems as the death of a spouse, strokes, deafness and alcoholism.

"Sometimes I think I would like more time to myself, but then I am reminded how much better and happier I feel when I'm working at full capacity," she explains. Mrs. Reno maintains her energy level and keeps the neighborhood agog with a daily workout conducted for the past 40 years. It consists of a six-mile morning walk, clocked at a brisk four and a half miles per hour.