

Couple to be honored in reactivated program

By Cheryl Walker
The News

When Doyle Selden moved to Leisure World from St. Louis in 1980, he had little time to take advantage of the many activities and opportunities it offered.

His wife, Ruth, became active right away in the community's chapters of the American Association of University Women, Foreign Policy and Community Associations, Aliso, Ebell, University of Michigan Alumni and several bridge clubs.

But Doyle had to wait until he retired from McDonnell-Douglas in Huntington Beach in November 1986 to follow suit.

Since then, it would be hard to think of a major problem facing the community, internal or external, that Doyle has not been instrumental in trying to solve.

Among the problems are: cable TV services; Moulton Parkway widening projects; Leisure World incorporation; the development of the Rossmoor Business Park; and how to prevent the commercialization of Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro and find a suitable airport site to serve Orange County.

A member now of many clubs and organizations, he also serves on the Golden Rain board and chairs its Government and Public Relations Committee.

In the latter post, he watchdogs the interests of Leisure World at the county, state and even national level, often spending, without reimbursement, his own money.

The combined activism of the Seldens is why the selection committee of the newly reactivated Leisure Wordler of the Month program named them as its First Couple for July.

The Leisure Wordler of the Month program was discontinued at the end of 1991 after 17 years, due to the pullout of a major sponsor. Now, the program will

Ceremony facts

When: Wednesday, July 15

Time: 10 a.m.

Where: Clubhouse 6

How to nominate:

Send a letter describing the nominee and accomplishments to

Irving Goldberg, president,
Leisure World Historical Society,
P.O. Box 2220,
Laguna Hills, 92654.

be coordinated by the Leisure World Historical Society and supported in part by the Ross Cortese Commemorative Fund.

The fund, created to honor the founder and developer of Leisure World and original supporter of the program, will help ensure that each month someone will be recognized for outstanding volunteer contributions to the community.

Ruth says community involvement is something that comes naturally to the Seldens. Born in Worcester, Mass. and educated at the University of Michigan, Bryn Mawr and St. Louis University where she earned her doctorate in social services, she traces her own activism to her New England roots and a belief in a strong local government.

The Seldens met in a beginning philosophy class at the University of Michigan, married and raised two sons while participating in a variety of community groups, including the PTA, Boy Scouts, League of Women Voters and symphony and art support guilds. They also kept a watchful eye on their hometown city councils.

Ohio-born Doyle jokes that Ruth volunteered him for most of the activities, but admits once committed he did his best to live up to his responsibilities.

He'd had plenty of practice. Doyle's father died when he was

in high school and he had to work his way through college, earning both a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's in business administration from the University of Michigan.

He spent 20 years in the navy, including wartime service in the Pacific and Korea. He achieved the rank of commander before retiring from the service and joining McDonnell Douglas Corp. in St. Louis as a director of material in 1963.

Doyle says the service and civilian experiences taught him a powerful lesson that he's been able to put to good use in negotiating solutions to business and community problems.

"I learned early in my career that teaming with diverse disciplines and building consensus is a powerful technique for problem-solving and successful enterprise. . . It worked for me in the Navy in achieving a spectacular reduction in material shortages and at McDonnell in winning contracts."

Doyle says he hopes to build consensus - not foster rancor - in Leisure World as it takes on the question of whether to become Orange County's newest city.

"We hope, through the help and participation of clubs in Leisure World to have a number of small group discussions of this question. We hope to be able to do this rationally, calmly, without acrimonious dispute."

Doyle and Ruth say they feel honored being chosen Leisure Worlders of the Month and hope the program will serve as a catalyst to bring the community together.

Doyle notes that, having attended the monthly celebrations in the past, it was the one occasion when barriers dropped and "personalities" disappeared.

The program, he says, seems to foster unity: "It's served as a bridge to bring people together and I'm glad Ruth and I are now part of it."



Jim Max/The News

Doyle and Ruth Selden, Leisure Worlders of the Month for July, agree that being active in community affairs is imperative to keeping Leisure World an ideal place to live. "It takes a lot of time and work to get things done, but we've got to be vigilant," says Ruth.