

LEISURE WORLDER OF THE MONTH

BENJAMIN SIMINOW

FEBRUARY 1994

The Leisure World Historical Society is pleased to announce the selection of Benjamin Siminow as Leisure Wordler of the Month for February 1994. This event is funded through the Ross Cortese Commemorative Fund.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Ben was one of three children. He attended public schools in Brooklyn, but was unable to attend college and pursue his dream of becoming a surgeon as the family needed both sons to help support the family. At 12, he delivered newspapers, weighed potatoes, and later worked in a department store shipping department.

He started his business career as an assistant bookkeeper. He hiked with the New York Hiking Club on Sundays where he heard about a unique knapsack, manufactured in Norway. He ordered a dozen for himself and friends. This was the beginning of a business which led to the establishment of "Camp and Trail Outfitters." This was his business until his retirement in 1970.

In 1941, he hired a part time worker, newly arrived from Austria. He married that worker, Irene Fleischer in 1942, and they celebrated their 52nd anniversary this past year. They have one daughter, Marlene.

Declared 4F because of a leg deformity, Ben looked for ways to aid the war efforts. He was soon manufacturing furlough bags and down sleeping bags. After the war, he started importing rock climbing equipment. He helped outfit expeditions from Mt. Everest to Antarctica. The New York Times mentioned the selling of his business as the end of an era.

The Siminows moved to California in 1976. After three months in Laguna Beach, they moved to Leisure World. Ben became involved with the life of the community almost immediately, starting as vice-president of the local AARP chapter. He became active in the exercise program. As president of the HEP Club, he was influential in securing the Clubhouse I mini-gym.

Ben attends the open meetings of both United and Golden Rain Foundation Boards. Beginning in 1985, he served as resident advisor on GRF Committees. The first appointment was to the Capital Improvements Com., followed by service on the Security Committee, Grounds and Water Com., and the Maintenance and Construction Committee. He is presently advisor to GRF subcommittees: Aquatic, Physical Activities, and Community Activities. He headed fund raising activities for the carillon system and for the bus passenger shelters adjacent to gate 3.

Ben spends his afternoons at Pool 4 where he is the unofficial "Mayor." There, he shares his advice and his time on all kinds of problems. Although a heart condition slowed him down a bit, his activities were not curtailed until he sustained a back injury in 1993.

Ben is a happy, sharing, generous man with an indomitable spirit. We salute him, and wish him many more active years in Leisure World.