
Leisure Worlder of the Month

Ruth Smitherman

LAGUNA HILLS—Ruth Smitherman's ingredient for life-long happiness is sharing. She is a living example of her philosophy that in life we should learn to give as well as take.

She has been giving to others all of her life and says, "sharing has enriched my life."

This month Ruth will be thanked for her sharing nature when she is named "Leisure Worlder of the Month," on Wednesday, September 7, at 10 a.m. in Clubhouse Six. The public is invited to attend the program, which is sponsored jointly by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society.

Ruth's involvement with community organizations can be traced to her ancestry, beginning with John Strong, an elder of the Puritan Church who came to Boston in 1630. He was a founder of Roxbury, Massachusetts, and active in colonial politics. Three of Ruth's ancestors fought for our independence during the American Revolution, and her great-grandfather was one of the founders of the Republican Party.

Ruth was born in De Pere, Wisconsin. She received her bachelor's from Northern Michigan University, where she studied history and political science. She received a master's degree from the University of Michigan.

She did a year's post-graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, and also studied at the University of Chicago, the University of Minnesota and the Hoover Institute at Stanford.

Ruth has taught government in Michigan, California and Illinois, where she met her first husband, Charles O. Rothmeyer. They had one daughter, Ruth Anne.

After her first husband's death, Ruth married William H. Smitherman and they moved to Hillsborough, California.

Ruth's interest in education led her to become involved in local, county and state committees.

She participated in the pageant which celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Illinois Education Association. She holds the California P.T.A. award for Outstanding Teaching and Community Participation, and was a Rehage Scholar.

Ruth holds a life membership in the National Education Association, the California Teacher's Association, Northern Michigan Alumni Association, the Leisure World Historical Society and the El Toro Library.

Ruth has been a member of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution for 42 years. She is a Past Regent of the Aliso Canyon Chapter N.S.D.A.R. in Leisure World, and during her administration the chapter won many national honors.

She is a member of the Cavalier Chapter Colonial Dames of the XVII Century at Leisure World, Dames of the Court of Honor and Daughters of 1812.

Ruth also has a strong interest in philanthropy. Through the Christian Children's Fund, she began sponsoring a three-year-old girl in India. The girl is now attending college and Ruth continues to support her.

The two met six years ago when Ruth visited her in India. It was then she began contributing to a leper colony in India.

Ruth also donates to The Hindman Settlement School, located in a poverty-stricken region of Kentucky.

She is interested in conservation and is a member in such organizations as the Animal Protection Institute, the World Wildlife Fund, the National Wildlife Fund, Defenders of Wildlife, the Whale Adoption Program, and the Audubon Society.

Ruth is a Patron through the Beethoven Guild of the Orange County Center for the Performing Arts; a Patron of the Ballet School of Mission Viejo; and a Patron of the Irvine Animal Shelter.

At Leisure World, Ruth belongs to fifteen clubs and organizations. She is Second Vice President of the Leisure World Historical Society and is serving her second term as President of Woman's Club.

She has also been President of Aliso and Ebell, the only local resident to have served as President of the three major clubs for women.

She says her greatest sense of joy comes from her daughter, an attorney living in Pasadena, married to James P. Modisette, and her grandson.

Ruth's hobbies include reading, traveling, collecting plates (she's collected about 300 so far), and playing bridge. She shares some of her reading by giving book reviews. Although she travels extensively, she says, "no place can compare favorably with that of the United States, the state of California and the community of Leisure World."
