



100th birthday – a blessed event

Medical pioneer traveled a long road

By Cheryl Walker
The News

Milo Tedstrom doesn't look or act like a man who on Nov. 22, celebrated his 100th birthday.

He walks an hour a day, travels, is constantly busy and has the enthusiastic outlook on life of a teenager.

Perhaps because from his vantage point he can look back on a long and productive life well spent making a difference: in his profession, medicine; in his adoptive homeland, Orange County, California; and through the service organizations in which he still actively participates.

The Orange County medical pioneer who advanced research in diabetes, cardiology and allergy control and helped mold two of the area's key medical facilities, is a legend in Kiwanis, International in which he has been a member for more than 70 years (never missing a monthly meeting in all those decades). He served his nation in the military during World War II achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel in the United States Army Air Corps and is a doting and beloved patriarch to his extended family.

In his recently published biography, "Milo K. Tedstrom" penned by Brent Johnson and culled from hours of interviews, the author points out that his subject was guided in his life "by a genuine sense of community ... he made himself an instrument for enhancing the lives of his family, his friends and his patients."

Milo, he added, lived according to the code whereby pros-



By Rod Veal/The News

Dr. Milo Tedstrom, at 100, still grows yellow roses which he wears in his lapel at a tribute to his late wife.

perity is "achieved by elevating others and raising up the common good: that is his genius."

Background The 23-year Leisure World resident of Swedish heritage was born and raised in Arkansas where his father ran a successful grocery store and his mother was very religious and like her spouse extremely social.

Other influences on Tedstrom's early life were the presence of the railroad (which sparked his love of travel), a social group that encouraged reading (he loved Horatio Alger) and particularly a country doctor (whom he accompanied on house calls and learned his

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love of the profession he was to pursue as a career).

Tedstrom got his bachelor's and medical degrees from Washington University in St. Louis, the city where he also did his internship at Barnes Hospital.

While serving at Barnes, he wed a teacher, Mildred Lothrop, in whose honor he continues to grow and wear as a boutonniere a yellow rose, in commemoration of his now late bride's native state.

Their first home was in Corinth, Miss. and Tedstrom admits that if general practice would have been his aim, the couple would have stayed put.

But Tedstrom wanted to specialize as an internist in cardiac and diabetic care so he (with the full blessing of his spouse) jumped at the chance to join the Johnston and Wickett Clinic in the then sleepy town of Anaheim.

The year was 1928, and the clinic, a former hotel, was across the street from the city's Sanitarium.

Tedstrom recalls that the first Sunday he was in Anaheim, the cornerstone for St. Joseph's Hospital's original building was laid in a ceremony which he attended.

His boss at the clinic, Dr. Herbert Johnston, became the first chief of staff at the new hospital; Tedstrom, the third.

And during his association with the medical facility, the first cardiac surgery in Orange County was performed at St. Joseph's, the first electrocardiographic equipment was employed there as well as was the first pacemaker.

Tedstrom, who always studied (often at the Mayo Clinic) to stay on the cutting edge of his profession and wrote several papers on his own research and findings, also was instrumental

in establishing the first acute cardiac care unit in Southern California at St. Joseph's.

He also helped establish Hoag Hospital (he was the Newport Beach facility's first chief of staff) and the Beaumont Club where medical specialists would meet to share information and give papers to inform each other on the latest news in their various areas of expertise.

He also established the first Heart Sunday in California where volunteers sought donations to foster research to fight heart disease. That led to his initiation of the Orange County chapter of the American Heart Association. He also started the county's chapter of the American Diabetic Association.

Tedstrom notes further that he belonged to a plethora of professional organizations, as well as the Kiwanis International, throughout his career in his never ending quest to "help people" both the sick and the young, especially the ones who needed assistance to achieve their full potential.

Not surprisingly, over the years Tedstrom has amassed a trophy room full of plaques, honors and awards for his hard work including, a Tablet of Honor, Kiwanis's highest award; the Diamond Hixson Fellowship from the Kiwanis International's Foundation; Physician of the Year from the Orange County Medical Association; Membership in Chapman University's prestigious Heritage Society; and in March, 1987 Leisure Worlder of the Month.

This month he was also singled out by the Laguna Woods City Council with a certificate as a distinguished resident of the community.

Tedstrom, who still walks at least an hour a day, says he attributes his longevity to good genes, moderation (though he admits he is a chocoholic) and continued involvement in life whether it's reading, playing

bridge with friends, giving out scholarships to students with Kiwanis, being the patriarch of his family or keeping in touch with former patients, old colleagues and friends.

Fellow Kiwanian Dr. John Fernald says Tedstrom has more friends than there are people in Orange County. "Because he's a great guy and a loveable individual ... you can't balloon that up enough!"