

After year of controversy, Nick Ugrin relaxes

By Patricia Millan
News Staff Writer

Nick Ugrin wasn't wearing a tie last Monday.

The immediate past president of the Golden Rain Foundation says he has been "relieved and relaxed" since his three-year term in GRF ended last week, and his lack of a suit and tie this week illustrated his point.

Although Ugrin is a soft-spoken man, more prone to conciliation than confrontation, his term as GRF president was laced with controversy.

Ugrin and the GRF board found themselves dealing with three major issues, all outside the community: the proposed Forbe's Ranch (Rossmoor Business Park); possible joint commercial/military use of the

El Toro Marine Corps Air Station; and the proposed Laguna Hills incorporation.

All three issues predated Ugrin's presidency, and all three remain unresolved as a new Board of Directors under President Al Hanson takes its place.

Hopefully, the new committee organization completed last year will help the new Board to deal with such broad issues in the future, as well as with others exclusive to Leisure World, Ugrin says.

The re-organization meant including more members of the housing corporations on GRF committees, identifying each committee with a division of Professional Community Management, and opening all Board meetings, even those closed to the

general public, to committee members, Ugrin explains. It has been very effective in keeping United, Third and Towers mutual members advised on what's going on, he says.

If he had it to do over again, he wouldn't change his position on any issue, Ugrin says. He would have liked to see some things expedited, such as the long-delayed construction of the golf course irrigation system, which has been under discussion for more than three years.

Leisure World's involvement in the Coalition For A Responsible Airport Solution, a group opposed to joint or commercial use of the Marine Corps Air Station El Toro has been very strong, and is sure to continue with the new Board, Ugrin says. "I feel we have to build a wall of people to stop joint use," he explains.

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Ugrin, a strong proponent of the proposed Laguna Hills cityhood, says incorporation will help Leisure World fight such issues as joint use of the base and zoning and development, although it may not be able to stop the development of the Forbes Ranch (Rossmoor Business Park).

However, he is confident Leisure World will be able to stop the present plans for the 192-acre site southwest of the intersection of El Toro Road and Moulton Parkway, Ugrin says, explaining a scaled down version of the business park, which would have less traffic, noise and air pollution, might be the best Leisure Worlders can hope for.

He didn't expect the controversy which flared up over the Board's support of cityhood, Ugrin says, but he feels the Board's support is warranted.

In hindsight, it might have been better to conduct a community-wide referendum on cityhood in January of 1988, when the issue first began to develop, Ugrin says. However, once Leisure World became identified with the City of Laguna Hills, a referendum in

Leisure World alone would have been meaningless, he explains.

If cityhood is voted down in Leisure World June 6, but passes with a large enough majority in Laguna Hills to mandate incorporation, "I'll still feel we did the right thing," Ugrin says. "It's a strong city. We may never have this opportunity again."

It's very unlikely he will run for a city council seat if cityhood succeeds at the polls, Ugrin says, although he does plan to become involved in the city "to the extent that I can," perhaps on a commission.

Win or lose, the cityhood issue, which has heated up emotions and Board meetings for more than a year, will have not long term effect on life Leisure World, Ugrin says.

An average of 100 manors are sold each month in Leisure World, he explains. That means 1,800 new people move in each year, and in five years, 6,000-7,000 new people will be living in Leisure World.

"I don't think there will be any grudges held because of this," Ugrin says. "I don't have any grudges."

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•Nick Ugrin, immediate past president Golden Rain Foundation, reflects the past year.