



# LEISURE WORLD NEWS

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## He can't say no



Sarah Reingewirtz/*The News*

Ed Watson, a past president of Kiwanis and chair of the local United Way campaign also finds time to volunteer as a Bingo caller at Vocational Visions.

## February's honoree is consummate fundraiser

By Cheryl Walker  
The News

**B**ingo caller, fruitcake seller, pancake flipper, potluck organizer and more - it seems like Leisure Worlder Ed Watson will wear most any hat to raise money for a good causes.

His involvement runs the gamut from programs to train the developmentally disabled, to fundraising campaigns to constructing plants for the manufacture of iodized salt to protect children from a variety of mental and physical ills.

Tim Shaw, the local director of United Way, agrees the Historical Society made an excel-

lent choice when it designated Watson as February Leisure Worlder of the Month.

"He's a great guy and the kind of volunteer you love to have; he just never lets you down," explains Shaw.

Shaw's predecessor, Susan Jones, who now works at UW's corporate offices in Irvine, adds that she "can't say enough wonderful things about him."

She notes that Watson, a UW volunteer since 1990, who's chaired United Way's Leisure World campaign and been an active council member since 1994, has even garnered one of UW's Helping Hand Awards for "outstanding volunteerism county-wide."

She also credits him with devising a way Leisure Worlders can make donations to United Way earmarking funds for programs of importance to residents, like the Laguna Hills Adult Day Health Care Center.

Former Kiwanis President  
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### Ceremony facts

**Who:** Ed Watson  
**What:** Leisure Worlder of the Month for February  
**When:** 10 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 5  
**Where:** Clubhouse 6  
**Sponsor:** Leisure World Historical Society.

# HONOREE

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Ward Payne says Watson is "one of the hardest working people I've ever worked with."

He explains that his activities in the service organization has included hawking fruit cakes and flipping pancakes to raising money for charity, serving as an officer (Watson is a past president), coordinating parties and events and starting and continuing to sponsor in a big way the Kiwanis's Aktion Club for the developmentally disabled assisted by Vocational Visions in Mission Viejo.

He even frequently acts as caller for Bingo evenings at Visions, which every week brings in \$500-\$1,000.

"He's wonderful," says Vocational Visions Sue Brown who notes Watson's wife, Janice, also donates her time at the weekly fundraisers selling a novelty called "pull tabs," a game of chance played by pulling up tabs on a card.

Watson says the Aktion Club is run like a key club where members use their modest dues (25 cents/week) to pay for philanthropies of their choosing; among them, supporting a child in Africa, donating money to earthquake victims and making up holiday food baskets for poor people, selected by the Adopt-a-Neighbor outreach organization in Mission Viejo.

**Background:** Watson, a nine-year resident of Leisure World and Indiana native with a degree in mechanical engineering from Purdue, says he approaches charity work with the same creativity and ingenuity he devoted to problem solving in the petroleum industry with Ethyl Corp. for 35 years and as a consultant for seven years after that.

"I got my first touch of community involvement when I lived in an area of Houston without fire protection," recalls Watson who, working with others, succeeded in getting a water supply and a fire department. Later, he also won election to the water district.

Watson, a Shriner for many years (as his father was before him), says he followed his mother's lead to Leisure World where his new neighbors urged him to join the Kiwanis and help with the United Way campaign. His community service activities have snowballed ever since.

His affiliations now include the Petroleum Club, Republican Club, Geneva Presbyterian Church's Mariners Club and the Saddleback Memorial Foundation Associates.

Watson particularly enjoys fun fundraising events, like bus tours to Hollywood shows and Bingo at the Rossmoor Regency, "where with a little bit of human effort you get a lot of return."

For him, that return is not just a windfall of money for charity but the reward of meet-

ing a particular challenge and "a whole new class of friends."

Watson credits his ability to dedicate himself to charity work with such fervor to a lesson he learned as a teenage airplane pilot.

Although flying came naturally to the student pilot, the first time his instructor gave him the green light to solo in his J3 Cub it made him think of the flip side of the perks of being an adult.

"It made me stop and think at a very early age that once I was up there I couldn't suddenly say I quit - you can't pull an airplane over to the curb like you can with a car.

"If you start, you must finish."