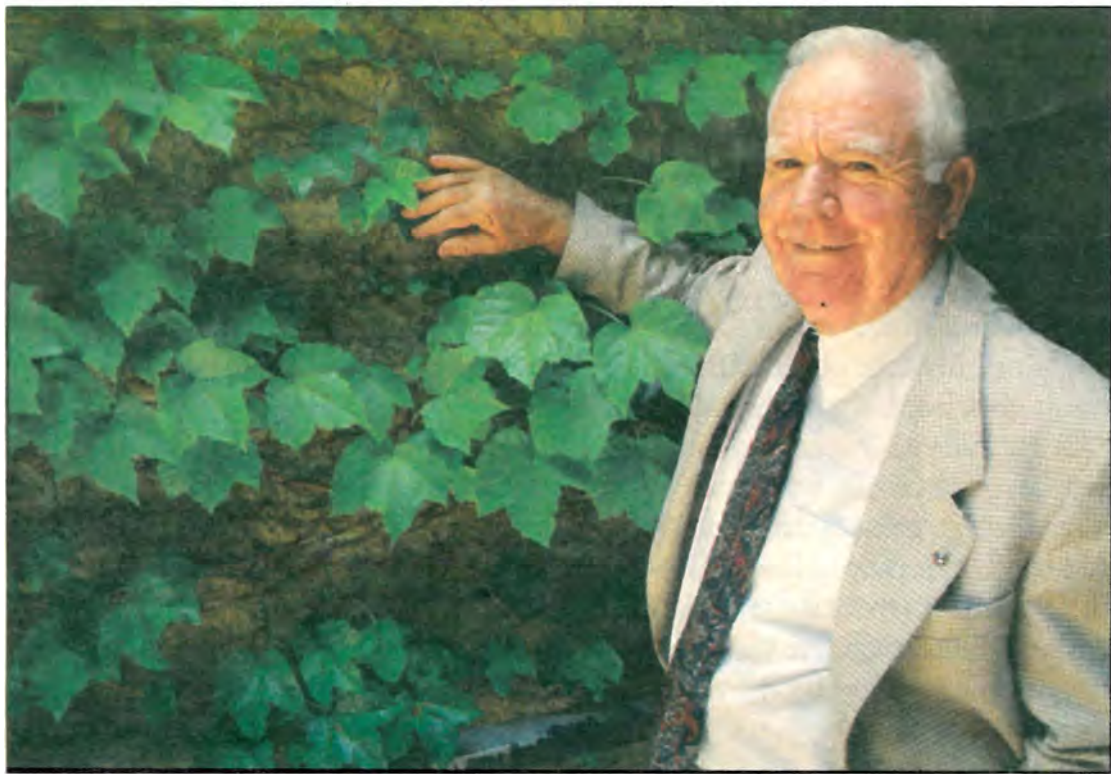


Making up for lost time



Jim Max/The News

Wes Westre, Leisure Worlder of the Month for August, relaxes prior to the start of the Laguna Hills Kiwanis Club meeting at Villa Valencia. Westre is president of the club.

August honoree thrives on involvement

By Cheryl Walker

The News

During his pre-retirement years in the defense industry, South Dakotan Wes Westre didn't have a moment free to devote to community service.

When he moved to Leisure World in 1989 he made up for lost time establishing a track record as an active member of a dozen clubs and as director of the Third Mutual board that inspired the Leisure World Historical Society to name him the August Leisure Worlder of the

CEREMONY FACTS

Who: Wes Westre
What: Leisure Worlder for August
Where: Clubhouse 6
When: 10 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 3
Sponsor: Leisure World Historical Society

Month.

"Friends got me involved (in clubs) in the beginning," recalls Westre.

Now, says Westre's wife Vern, who belongs to many of the same clubs her husband does (and somewomen's organizations besides), his Leisure World club commitments have snowballed to the point where even travelling is out

of the question — except important local trips to visit grandchildren.

But both admit they enjoy the challenges of their full schedules. In fact, says Westre, he was surprised when the Historical Society decided to make him Mr. August. With characteristic self-deprecation he quips, "I guess as the months go by it gets harder and harder (for the society) to find someone new."

But his colleague, former Laguna Hills Kiwanis Club President Adrian Pothus, says the honor is long overdue.

In fact Laguna Hills Kiwanis members last week presented Westre, the club's

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current president, with an engraved wall plaque recognizing his "outstanding leadership" in the organization and support of its priority concern: helping children.

"Anything good you can say about Wes is not wasted," says Pothus. "As president, he's devoted his life to our programs."

Pothus says Westre promoted memberships, visited the sick in hospitals, "worked like crazy" to make annual candy sales successful and made a tremendous personal commitment to Key Club programs and students at Laguna Hills High School.

School Principal Wayne Mickaelian agrees with Pothus's assessment. Under Westre's leadership, he says, the Kiwanis sponsored Key Club and the school have created a "strong partnership . . . one of the healthiest relationships we have."

Margaret Olson of Leisure World's Dakota-Iowa Club credits Westre with practically saving her organization from extinction by coordinating potluck dinners, encouraging new members to join, creating a membership registry and putting together fun excursions.

Lorraine Patton, who shares membership with Westre in Leisure World's Petroleum/Energy Resources, Scandinavian, Republican, Hikers and California Clubs, says he proves himself an asset to any organization he joins because of his dedication. "He's a good worker."

Former Third Director Don

Thompson notes Westre was equally generous of his time and talents as a member of the mutual board. "He is a very community-minded individual, very industrious; he puts his heart and soul into his work."

Another former Third Director and fellow Dakotan, Frank Prophet, says he and Westre had an "immediate kinship."

As a director, he notes Westre was a good listener, insightful contributor to difficult discussions and strong advocate of water conservation and conservative tree removal policies.

"He was a great person and I'm proud to have served with him on the board."

Former Amateur Radio Club President Orrin Gilbert says his group can rely on Westre's help whenever its needed, "He's a real nice guy." He points out as well that Westre has even volunteered to be a member of Leisure World's Earthquake and Disaster Preparedness Task Force.

In case of an emergency which knocks out power to Leisure World, Westre will help man a communication center at Clubhouse 1 making contact with outside emergency services and sending health and welfare messages from Leisure Worlders to their families in all parts of the nation.

Westre doesn't see his efforts as extraordinary; just a matter of digging in to do what must be done to make something worthwhile succeed.

As he explains it, "I'm too hard a loser (to let that happen); I've been that way all my life."