

The Lady Gives Back

By Helen Vogt Greene

Ruth Merchant was born February 17, 1930. Today, she is sharp as a tack, dedicated and a God-loving friend. Ruth was taught by her mother, “It is better to give.” And, she learned her lessons well, giving generously, with an open heart.

Ruth was born Ruth DuBois Nell’s Merchant at Good Samaritan Hospital of West Palm Beach. The hospital was 10 years old, opening May, 1920 with 35 beds. Ruth’s parents were Frederick and Anna Spader Dubois Nelm’s. All but two years of Ruth’s life have been spent in Palm Beach County.

Anyone who has lived in Palm Beach County for any amount of time, recognizes the name DuBois

as Pioneers. The mother of maternal grandmother, Ann Nelm’s, was Susan DuBois. Their first homestead was located on the shore of Lake Worth near the Norton Art Gallery. Now, the family home is open to the P.B.C. Park at the Jupiter Inlet.

Ruth’s family heritage allows her and her family to belong to the prestigious organization called the Lake Worth Pioneer’s Association, which pre-dates the City of Lake Worth.

As a single mother, with the help of her loving parents, she raised two beautiful daughters. Her daughter Debbie Towson lives in the same apartment complex called Boundbrook. Debbie is a professor at Palm Beach State.

Her second daughter,

Mary Louise Thompson, lives in California with her daughter and Ruth’s two ‘great-grands’. Family is always remembered.

After attending FSU, Ruth returned and attended Florida Atlantic University. She became a certified public accountant and it became her life’s work. For over 20 years, she served as the volunteer treasurer of the Boundbrook Residents Association.

Merchant, as part of giving back, loved to travel. In 1997, she discovered vacationing and volunteering.

When Ruth’s mother could no longer travel with her, she traveled with a close friend Joanna Hollis. Together, they traveled and volunteered throughout the USA and 14 countries.

Across the world, some of Ruth’s jobs were a bookkeeper in India, Poland, Spain and a teacher of English in Hungary. She counted birds and dolphins on Midway Atoll and cared for babies in Ecuador and much more. Ruth always indicates “traveling and giving back are part of the DNA.”

The love of sewing was taught to her by her mother and grandmother. Both daughters had the prettiest of new outfits.

For the past five years, Ruth has made over 50+ lap-robies for Garcilaso de la Vega, NSDAR. These, works of art, were given to the Veteran’s at the Veteran’s Hospital on 45th Street.

Ruth is also a well-loved member of the Linus Group. They sew and knit for chil-

dren in need.

A gift that keeps on giving is the “First Congregational Church Centennial Cookbook” written by Ruth. Within its pages are 100 recipes by some of the finest cooks in Lake Worth, the FCCLW history, and the history of the successful Tuesday Night Community Dinner, established in 2009,

The volunteers of this dinner have become ‘family’ to Ruth. Each Monday morning, she bakes a large cake, chocolate is everyone’s favorite. To make sure the cake arrives on time, Susan Peterson stops by and makes sure the cake arrives for everyone to enjoy.



Ruth Merchant, 91, is a woman before her time. She is an excellent example of a ‘Child of God’ that is a magnificent ‘giver’ and not a taker. A lesson we should all learn.

Ruth Merchant is a well-loved friend to many, not because of what she does, which is a lot, but of who she is. Ruth loves God and she loves serving His people of the world. May her 91 years inspire others to service. Happy Birthday Ruth Merchant.

Representative Emily Slosberg Files First Responder Protection Act

Tallahassee, FL – Today, Representative Emily Slosberg (D–Boca Raton) filed an amendment to HB 57, Transportation, entitled the First Responder Protection Act, which

would strengthen existing protections for first responders under Florida’s Move Over Law by prohibiting the handheld use of wireless communications devices while operating

a motor vehicle in the immediate vicinity of an active scene where first responders are working.

“Cell phones are the number one source of distraction for drivers

and I have fought to ban their use while driving,” stated Representative Slosberg. “We already prohibit the handheld use of phones in school and work zones. This expands that

to include active scenes where firefighters and law enforcement officers are working in the interest of public safety. The side of the road is one of the most dangerous places for first

responders because of distracted drivers. I believe we can provide another level of protection for the men and women who put their lives on the line for us every day.”

Looking Back... Cottrell Says Lake Worth Best Horseshoe Town in U.S.

That Lake Worth, Palm Beach County, Florida, is the best horseshoe ‘town in the United States today is the verdict of D. D. Cottrell, of North Cohoctoli, N. Y., head statistician of the National Horseshoe Pitchers’ Association. And he didn’t stutter when he said it.

“You’ve got the spirit here,” he said, as he stood looking ovyer the horseshoe cluhrooms and grounds. “I don’t think 1 was ever in a place before where every man, woman and child was behind a thing like you Lake Worth people are behind this horseshoe club.

“The menlbership of your local club is the largest in the country today, I’m sure. Six hundred fifteen members for a town of this size is nothing short of remarkable.

“I don’t need to tell you that while none of us doubted A1 Michler’s word at the Cleveland convention when he promised such wonderful things for the 1924 tournament if it came to Lake Worth, still we were mightily surprised when we got here and saw the courts, the club headquarters and all the elaborate preparations that had been made for our entertainment.

“The Club and the town is ‘doing itself proud’ and-I am here to tell you that the citizens of Lake Worth will never have cause to regret the money they have spent on this tournament.

It will come back to them a hundred-fold within the next four or five years.” Mr. Cottrell is a horseshoe fan and no slouch with the shoes. He has hung up some records, that have made even Frank Jackson sit up and take notice. In a game over at St. Petersburg he pitched eight double ringers, and followed them with four singles and a ninth double, coming out with percentage of 84.0 out of 26 shoes pitched. He will not be able to pitch in the tournament here because his official duties as statistician will keep him busy.

Mr. Cottrell designed the score sheet

in use by the National Association today. It was he who conceived the idea that a pitcher’s rating was hard to establish unless count was kept of the number of shoes pitched. In other words, that the same kind of a record had to be kept on a shoe pitcher as on a baseball pitcher if the batting averages were to be determined. The Cottrell score sheet is the result, and it is now in general use all over the country and has been adopted as standard by the National Association.

The Lake Worth tournament will be the third national meet with complete records, the other two being the Cleveland and St. Petersburg tournaments last year.

Public Reception To Be Bheld For Shoe Pitchers Tonight in Auditorium

National horseshoe pitchers in attendance at the mid-winter champion ship tournament will be guests of honor at a public reception to be given at 8 o’clock this evening in the town auditorium. The Lake Worth Horseshoe Club, which has made all arrangements for the entertainment of the visitors, will act as host.

President Al Michler is extending an invitation to all winter visitors, residents and the citizenry of near’by towns to attend the reception and become acquainted with the stars of the horseshoe world.

Tomorrow evening an elaborate ball is to be given at the casino in honor of the visitors. It will be preceded by a party at the Liberty Theatre, when the national contestants will be guests of the local club. Larry Semon’s latest comedy, “Horseshoes” has been brought to Lake Worth for this special entertainment for the shoe fans.

A banquet has been arranged for Wednesday evening at 6:30’ at the Methodist church.

Reprinted from The Lake Worth Herald, February 18, 1924

