

## Of Koreans in Leisure World

Seal Beach Leisure World is a utopian place for retirees. The place is gated town with 9,400 residents, housed in 6,608 units in the area of 541 acres, located 23 miles of South from Los Angeles International Airport. It's near Seal Beach. The place is endowed with ocean breeze and warm weather.

Medical facilities and services are located in the center of the community, six large club houses, located sparsely throughout the area, each of which offer 200 different activities such as dancing, open forums for various lectures, drama, hula dance, music, video and computer classes.

Also there are nine holes golf course, swimming pool, Jacuzzi, amphitheater available to the residents. Access to all of those programs and facilities are free to the residents. It is a fantastic place for senior folks for those who want to engage themselves in building and enriching active life. For me, Seal Beach Leisure World is perfect place for seeking and sharing "Golden Happiness".

The other day on our way to the down town of Los Angeles, my wife suddenly changed her mind, drove to the car washing place near Club House 2. She wants to drive a clean car. We stopped over self-service car washing place with 6 stalls, each of which equipped with two powerful water hoses. As I was splashing over my car, a woman from the other stall came to me, shouting "Are you Korean? ". I stopped washing car and moved toward her and started conversation.

Yes, I am Korean, why do you ask?

All Koreans are rich

what do you mean by that?

They drive expansive car and spend a lot of money  
in fixing house (renovating flat)

Is that so, we are new here, I have not notice that.

My wife joined the conversation. What our neighbor at the car wash wants to tell us is that Koreans in Seal Beach Leisure World are too visible to the other residents as a target of Jealousy. She was giving a subtle warning to my wife and I; "you better be careful as a member of Leisure World community"

I pondered all the way to the down town Los Angeles about an image of Korean-Americans reflected to other members in the Leisure World. Is it because of cultural difference with respect to language we speak and food we eat? Is it because of Koreans are insensitiveness to a value of mosaic harmony in the community? Is it because of Koreans having splash life style?

My wife and I moved to the Leisure World last summer from Northern Virginia; we followed our friends. They are retired professors and ministers of Christian churches. The most of new friends we met are through ties of universities, professional association or church affiliation. To a large extend our friends in the Leisure World have a common thread of having had professional achievement and upper income level when they were young.

Another common agreement among our friends is that Seal Beach Leisure World is the best place to enjoy our golden happiness: happiness of taking care of our health, of having satisfying social interaction, of actively engaging with community programs, of enhancing our spiritual and intellectual wellbeing. We all acknowledge benefits we are receiving from the Leisure World community.

Koreans in the Seal Beach Leisure World is less than 10% of total residents. Nevertheless, Koreans are active and visible in playing golf, table tennis, swimming, gymnastics, dancing. At the same time, they are also stands out themselves as a group separated from other residents in the community.

Lately, I am evoking Koreans' consciences about responsibility of enhancing and preserving community life. What have we done to foster beauty of community life in the Leisure World? What have we done to enhance harmony of mosaic life style we enjoy so much at the Leisure World? What contribution we made to undergird the value of our community?

Appreciating the Leisure World community life, my wife and I are exploring various avenues to preserve the value of community life we enjoy. As we search for a new avenue to undergird the value of Leisure World community, one sentence from Galatians 5; 14 is deepening my heart, ““Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Seon H. Cho, Ph.D  
13610 Burning Tree Lane, Unit 1G  
Seal Beach, California 90740  
Seon.h.cho@gmail.com



