

MEET THE SHELLEYS

By Vic and Vickie Meyers

Herb and Jo-Shelley are beloved names in the Diablo Council Area, deserving of highest praise in many fields of Folk Dancing.

Their most famous contribution is the "March of Dimes" Dance, held annually in the Concord Armory. This event, started in January 1955, by Herb Shelley, through the Pleasant Hill Folk Dancers has contributed \$4000, the largest single amount to the Polio Fund in the County, to date. Wheel Chair dance groups and other exhibitors are program highlights, as well as noted callers from other areas. This is properly a "little Festival" with as many spectators as dancers. Hundreds flock from nearby towns to make this a spectacular event, indeed. The Pleasant Hill Club members each year spend months of effort, and the prizes donated by local merchants contribute to its success.

At the first dance, after everyone holding their breath for weeks, they watched the huge armory fill to overflowing and hum with excitement. Over six hundred people had come and almost seven hundred dollars was raised. Each year has matched or bettered that first night.

In addition to the Pleasant Hill Folk Dancers, the first club the Shelleys started in 1953, Herb and Jo formed the "1-2-3" Club in 1957, where beginners to advanced dancers meet for delightful evenings in the local Recreation Hall each fourth Friday night. Both Clubs are sponsored by the Pleasant Hill Recreation District.

More than 1200 folks have had their lives marked, not only with the fun of dancing, but shared fellowship with this popular couple. Barbeques are held each year between sessions of the Federation Festival in Walnut Creek, under the able direction of Jo Shelley, at their beautiful home. Work parties of "March of Dimes" committee workers as they formulate plans, or paint decorations, always find Shelleys home open to them.

Friends, as well as teachers to their pupils, Herb and Jo started dancing in 1943 when Jo dragged Herb to classes to learn Folk Dancing for her Girl Scouts. For ten years of outstanding service with Girl Scouts and Brownies, having organized the first two troops of each, Jo Shelley won a life membership in the P.T.A. Herb won the same honor for outstanding service as a school Trustee. As each daughter became Worthy Advisor in Rainbow, Jo was President of the Mothers Group and thus active for 10 years with her girls. Last year Herb received a wristwatch commemorating 25 years with Shell Oil Co., of Martinez, and it was for Shell Oil Workers' Union that Herb and Jo began as interim teachers in the spring of 1950. That fall they started Adult Education classes in Pleasant Hill, and in

June 1953 began teaching under the Pleasant Hill Recreation District.

Last year at Thanksgiving they celebrated 32 years of a marriage crowded with rich experience. Proudest of all their accomplishments are their three lovely daughters, all married and adding rapidly to the family. Jeanne and Reverend William Sanford, with babies, Susan and Laura, live in Paradise, California. Virginia and Ken McGraw, with Shelley, Kevin and Christopher, reside in Frankfurt, Germany, and joining them, recently in nearby Dachau, Germany, were Laura and Rockwell Cramer, newly married. Chris makes history as the first boy since three generations ago.

In 1959 Jo, a fourth grade school marm, organized a Folk Dancing Club at Oak Park School, of 4th, 5th and 6th grade students. All this, and much more, the Shelleys have done to foster and maintain Folk Dancing, and thus, this brief salute, to a truly marvelous pair, Herb and Jo Shelley.



Herb and Jo Shelley, in final pose of the dance "Hof-Brau Haus Laendler," dressed in authentic Bavarian costumes sent to them by their daughter, Virginia, who lived in Bavaria last year.