PROMOTING GOOD CAUSES AT POETS
Owner Kris Callen's Community Commitment

Of course, Poets is also a restaurant, and Kris tells me his lunch business is doing really well. But no doubt most folk associate the place with promotions like Tenacious Tuesdays and Blue Thursdays. Others, however, who have benefited from Callen's philanthropy must have yet another point of view.

Callen adopted the needs of children in Acadiana as a cause four years ago when he organized the first annual "Poets' Pig-Out for Kids" benefiting the Louisiana Council on Child Abuse. In years since, he's also sponsored a chili cookoff and, most recently, the golf tournament to benefit The Children's Shelter. Callen says he also supports the Acadiana Educational Endowment program, but his community involvement doesn't stop there.

While he may be in the bar business, he says, "drinking is a privilege for some and a death trap for others." As part of his commitment to the promotion of responsible drinking, he opens Poets up six mornings each week for

Kris Callen's Latest Fund-Raising Idea Was the Night Light Golf Tournament to Benefit the Children's Shelter.

BY CHERRY FISHER MAY

RED LELLIETTE HAS BEEN INDUCTED INTO THE FITNESS HALL OF FAME.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and has been doing that for three years. And he started recycling glass and cardboard at the club three years ago.

Callen has been involved in the food and beverage business for 32 years. He started as a waiter at Poets, working at night while holding onto his job as a bookkeeper. When the opportunity presented itself to buy the establishment several years ago, he jumped on it. In an industry known for its high rate of business failure, Callen says, Poets is alive and well.

THANK GOODNESS THERE ISN'T A LOT OF pomp and circumstance associated with Red Lelliott's latest honor. Red was recently inducted into the Fitness Hall of Fame which is sponsored by Club Industry, a trade

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24
Continued from Page 23

journal for health clubs. Upon learning of his selection, Red told his staff, “Well, I guess that means I’ll have to go to another convention!”

Red now joins the ranks of acrobatics pioneer Dr. Kenneth Cooper, dietitian Nathan Pritikin, ageless fitness guru Jack Lalanne, and others on the who’s who roster, but he says the previous honorees whose ranks he most gladly joins is Joe Gold.

“I was a member of Joe Gold’s first club when it opened here in the ’50s,” Red told me last week. Gold, of course, founded both Gold’s Gym and World Gym at a time when Americans were first becoming fitness-conscious. (Now that I think about it, it’s about the time of my earliest memories of Jack Lalanne on TV.)

Red, of course, went on to win Mr. America and Mr. Universe titles. He opened Red Levilie’s Health Club in 1965 after obtaining an economics degree and securing a $250 loan from his father. What is now the snack bar and women’s workout room was the whole club when I took my first trip to Red’s over 30 years ago; in those days the club was open to men and women in separate shifts.

Through the years, as Red’s has grown, he has received his share of awards, including The Times-First National Bank Business Achievement Award a few years back. But Red isn’t really one for such accolades. “It’s nice to be acknowledged by my peers in the industry,” Red says, “but what people think of me here at home is what’s really important to me.”