Signs of Sun City's Past by Ed Allen

How did Sun City get its name?

Name This Active Arizona
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
Win a New Way of Life

... with a Beautiful New Home in This Unique, Fun-filled Arizona "Town" Reserved for America's Senior Citizens!

WHO? For you alone who have reached the golden age of 50 or more ... are retired, semi-retired or planning retirement and want to actively enjoy the best years of your life!

WHAT? This completely-different, completely-planned community incorporates everything that years of research revealed you wanted most. Lovely single-family homes and individually designed co-op apartments in a garden park setting are just $8,000 to $12,500 *including all improvements*. And the endless variety of facilities for every recreational and creative interest are yours at no additional cost.

WHERE? In fabulous Arizona ... sun, fun and health capital of the world ... Favorite playground of the sportsman, the sight-seer, the young in heart. You'll live in a rich green valley, 12 miles from Phoenix, encircled by golden desert and picturesque mountains. Snow is unknown, rain is a rarity and every day is full of sunshine and clear, dry, invigorating air.

WHEN? Official opening is scheduled for January 1, 1960, when all facilities will be complete!

- Championship Golf Course
- Olympic-Size Swimming Pool
- Community Center
- Co-op Apartments
- Shuffleboard — Horseshoes — Croquet — Archery
- Agricultural Project
- Creative Activity Center
- Commercial Center
- Hiway House Motor Hotel

WHY? During his more than 30 years of "building America from coast to coast", this unique community has been the dream of Del E. Webb, master-builder ... and co-owner of the New York Yankees. Reflecting his designing and building genius in every facet ... it has been created as a tribute to those who have shared in America's most important decades of development.

HOW? Capture this unusual community's vibrant, active spirit in your entry and win one of these fabulous prizes!

1st Prize ... A 2-Bedroom, Top-Quality House (1600 Sq. Ft. under roof) located on a choice Fairway Lot.
2nd Prize ... Fully Improved Fairway Lot.
3rd Prize ... Two-Week All-Expense Vacation at Del Webb's Hiway House in Phoenix.

"NAME THE COMMUNITY" CONTEST, BOX 69, LOS ANGELES 51, CALIF.

( ) "I would like the community to be named ..." because (complete the statement in 25 words or less).

( ) Please send brochure with complete details.

Name _____ Street & Number _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Entries must be postmarked on or before Dec. 8, 1959.

Contest open to any person who has reached the age of 50 years or more on or before January 1, 1960. In order to avoid any possible conflict of interest, the judges, the advertising agencies and their immediate families, cannot enter the contest. To participate, fill out the coupon and mail it with your name and address clearly. Your entry must be your own original work. Prizes will be awarded on the basis of originality, interest and suitability of the name and supporting reasons by Boden N. Donnelley Corp. Decision of the judges is final. Prizes will be awarded on the basis of fair, honest and ideas therein become the property of Del E. Webb Development Co. Winners will be notified by mail 30 days after contest closing date. Contest subject to Federal, State and local regulations.

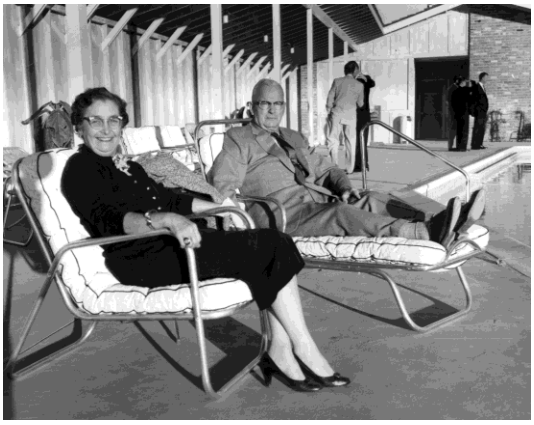
Del E. Webb Development Co.

With $1.3-million committed by partners Del Webb and Jim Boswell and more than enough land, the stage was set for the birth of a new city – one that had to be built from scratch. The first earth was moved in August 1959 and over the next five hectic months, a complete model community would emerge. But, what would its name be?

The Reuben Donnelly firm was hired to conduct a national contest, and this ad appeared in 27 of the largest Sunday newspapers plus LIFE and the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Prizes for the winning name were:

- A 2-bedroom, top quality home on a golf course lot
- A fully improved, golf course lot
- 2-week vacation at Del Webb's HiWay House in Phoenix

Dec. 8, less than a month before the grand opening, Donnelly execs brought their recommendations to the Webb Corp. They were in the midst of presenting the best candidates when the door opened and in came Del Webb. Looking at the names on display around the room, he pointed to "Sun City," said, "I like that one," and left. Webb execs began picking up their papers, but the Donnelly people protested. They' claimed they'd been hired to not only run the contest, but also recommend the winning name. "You don't understand," they were told, "Mr. Webb has made the selection.



The winners of first prize were the E. A. Brittons of Eugene, Oregon. But they weren't home. It seems they were RVers, and gone for the winter. Neighbors weren't sure where, but reported they did like to spend time in Palm Springs. The sheriff there was offered $1000 for the county's Benevolent Fund, and his men searched local RV parks – finally finding the Brittons.

They came to Sun City in March 1960 (right) to accept the deed to their house, which would be completed in September. The house sits on the North Golf Course at 12801 Augusta Drive. While the ad for the contest promised a "top quality, 2-bedroom home with 1600 sq. ft. under roof, the house is a "Meadowgrove" and the same size as the model that houses the museum. Evidently, the square footage included roof overhangs, carport and storage areas!

The Brittons moved in in October and put the house up for sale the following March. The sale brought criticism to the Brittons, and they wrote a letter to the newspaper confirming that Sun City was a wonderful location – but they preferred the mobility of an RV for winter months, and their many friends in Eugene the rest of the year!

Today, "Sun City" is part of the names of some 60 active adult communities nationwide.