

Grand ol' time

West Fest attracts crowds in NW Valley

By J.J. McCORMACK
Senior staff writer

The Grand Old West Fest Parade lived up to its name Saturday, entertaining Northwest Valley residents with traditional homespun parade fare.

Hundreds lined the sidewalks and grass borders of Del Webb Boulevard for the parade celebrating Sun City's 35th anniversary.

A trio of Sun Citians staked out a strategic spot in a La Ronde Centre parking lot, arriving

two hours before the scheduled 9 a.m. start. The threesome, Ann Northrup, Mary Oswald and Marilyn Warren, had breakfast at a nearby cafe, then watched the parade from Northrup's car.

"We sure enjoy a parade from a nice comfortable seat," Warren said.

"We've got all the comforts of home," added Northrup.

Twin sisters Dale Mattson of Sun City West and Gale Gloe of Sun City sat side-by-side in front of the reviewing stand at La Ronde Centre

► See Residents enjoy, A5

■ From A1

before the parade started.

Dressed alike in bejeweled Western vests and hats and fringed skirts, Dale and Gale were brimming with Grand Old West Fest spirit.

"We thought, why not go all out?" Dale said.

The twins and their husbands planned to take in all the 3rd annual West Fest events and were especially looking forward to the street dance Saturday night in Sun City West.

"We dance. We love to dance," Dale said.

Fred and Bea Held, Sun City newcomers from Crystal Lake, Ill., treated their five grandchildren, ages 4 through 12 from Peoria, to a morning of parade watching with grandma and grandpa.

The five youngsters, Kimberly, Todd, Keith, Nicole and Michelle Coltwiet, are parade fans who would have been home watching cartoons if grandma and grandpa hadn't invited them to the parade. The kids shared a blanket on a swath of grass at La Ronde Centre.

Julia Hardinger of Sun City was busy taking pictures as musicians, horses, dancing groups, floats and antique cars passed by her spot on the parade route.

"I wanted to finish off a roll of film," she said, adding that the parade was the best she'd seen since moving to Sun City 15 years ago.

"It's remarkable the age of these people and what they do," she said.

Julia's husband Billy, the janitor for Sundome Plaza in Sun City West, went to work early Saturday so he could make it back in time for the parade.

People marching in the parade showered spectators with

freebies — everything from balloons advertising a local real estate company to cheese snacks touting the Wisconsin Badger Men's Club.

Morris Mailman's souvenir cheese didn't last more than a couple of minutes. "It's delicious but a little bit salty," he said after devouring the snack.

Bob Moore of Westbrook Village watched the parade under an orange tree in the median. He had arrived late and a sheriff's posse member wouldn't allow him to cross the street during the parade. But Moore didn't mind staying put.

"I've got this spot all to myself," he said.

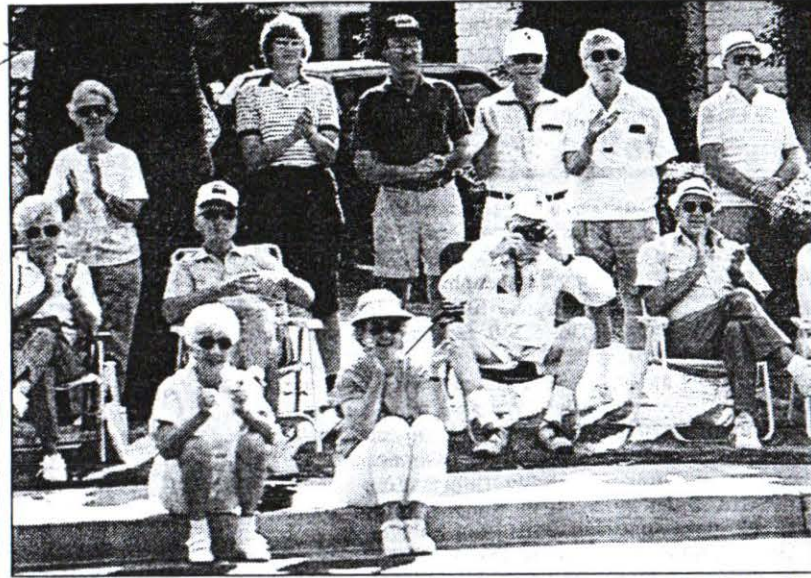
Parade winners had not been announced as of mid-morning today. The Daily News-Sun will publish the names of winning entries as they become available.

Fest activities continued through the weekend with the street dance attracting several hundred dancers Saturday night.

A country market Sunday at the Shops at Sun Ridge in Surprise featured 40 booths in which local vendors sold arts and crafts, handmade and baked goods and produce. A country western dance group, the Western Boot Scooters Association, performed country dancing.

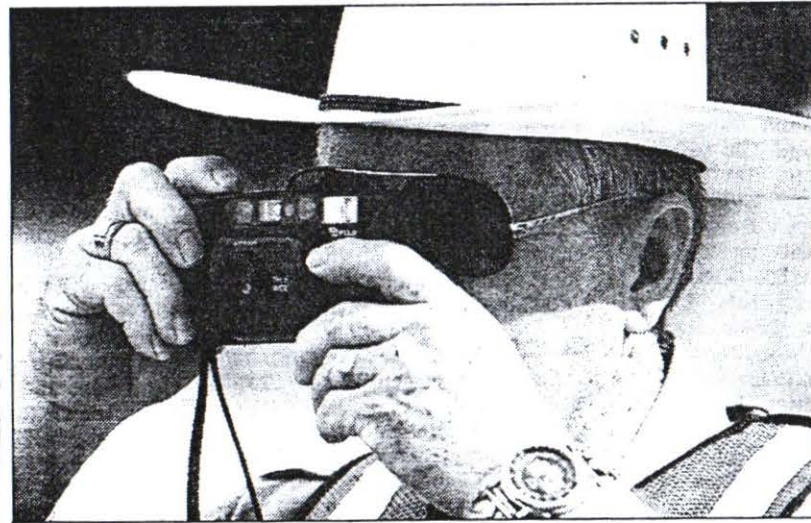
Del Webb Corp. staged fest events at its model home center in Sun City, where Troy Neighbors, former rodeo clown and bullfighter, was a key attraction performing rope tricks under a big tent.

Major sponsors of the fest, named for the street which unites the Northwest Valley communities, were the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce, Del Webb Corp. and the Daily News-Sun.



Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Parade watchers clap along to the Grand Old West Fest song Saturday.



Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Bill Ward of the Sun City Posse takes a photograph of the Grand Old West Fest parade from his post on the parade route.

A R O U N D T O W N



Rick D'Elia/Daily News-Sun

Among Sun City's pioneers serving as Grand Old West Fest parade grand marshals are Evelyn Parry, front left, and Ina Dodt, front right, and William and Naomi Langdon, on the passenger side.



Rick D'Elia/Daily News-Sun

Saluting Sun City's 35th anniversary are two of the community's pioneer settlers, Florence Sears, center, and Edna Lee, right.

Around Town



File photo

The oldest home in Sun City, on Oakmont Drive, sold for about \$9,600 in 1960.

Happy birthday! Sun City is 35

The retirement community that became the model for master-planned retirement communities throughout the country turned 35 years old this week.

Sun City, which attracted more than 100,000 people during its first three days after opening Jan. 1, 1960, was an instant success. Homes sold the first day totaled 237. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society, which is housed in Sun City's first model home, says cars were lined up for miles to gain entrance to the new retirement community.

Today, about 46,000 people live in Sun City, and thousands more live in sister communities built by Del Webb Corp., including — Sun City West and Sun City Tucson in Arizona, Sun City Palm Springs in California, and Sun City Las Vegas in Nevada. More retirees will be moving into homes in Sun City Roseville in California, Sun City Hilton Head in South Carolina and Sun City Georgetown in Texas.

The original Sun City continues to attract international attention, with visitors from several countries touring the community each year.

Fest salutes

SC's birthday

Never mind the Sons of the Pioneers. We have the Pioneers themselves, heading up the Grand Old West Fest Parade Saturday.

Pioneers are those hardy folks who moved to Sun City in 1960, the year Del Webb first made homes available in his new-fangled retirement community.

Six of the 1960 Pioneers will be riding in classic cars as the parade's Grand Marshals, just behind the Color Guard from Luke Air Force Base.

Meet Ina Dodt, and Naomi and William Langdon, in the first car; and Edna Lee, Evelyn Parry and Florence Sears in the second car.

Ina Dodt, from Champaign-Urbana, Ill., was a model in Scottsdale; at the Arizona Biltmore and the Wigwam; her husband John was a Del Webb salesman.

Dodt volunteered at Sun Valley Lodge and at Boswell Hospital when it opened.

"I'm still active. I play golf three days a week and go 18 holes," she said.

The Langdons moved to Sun City from neighboring Peoria, not very far away at all, and then only because Youngtown wouldn't have them, recalled Naomi Langdon.

"We moved to Peoria, from Decatur, Ill.," she said. "My husband taught school out here for many years before we retired. We went out to take a look at Youngtown — (established in 1954) — but they wouldn't take us because we were too young. So we tried Sun City, and they said we weren't too young, so here we came."

(Youngtown required folks to be at least 55, while Sun City originally set 50 as the cutoff, later changed to age 55.)

The Langdons have been Sun City lovers ever since, and William still does community service with the PRIDES, helping to keep his hometown neat and attractive.

Evelyn Lee moved to Sun City with her husband, Harry, in 1960, from Spokane, Wash.

"We found the place strictly by accident," Evelyn Lee recalled. "We didn't know it existed until we drove by, but we looked at it and it seemed nice. My husband was a doctor. Not long after we got back to Spokane, he came home from the hospital and just said, 'What do you say if I tell them at the hospital that we're retiring?' I kinda nodded and that was that. We were on the way here."

Evelyn Parry spent much of her life in Wisconsin. She came here in 1960 with her husband, Lester, who immediately got a rather unusual job. He was known as "the key man," Parry said, for he greeted new home buyers as they moved in, giving them the keys to the homes, and making sure everything was OK.

But Parry made a name for herself, too, as a volunteer, at everything from a Glendale hospital to the Salvation Army, from the Sun Cities Information and Referral Service to the United Church of Sun City, tutoring schoolchildren in Peoria and serving as an officer of the Pioneers Club.

She's still busy as a volunteer, and will be picking up some of the other Pioneers to take them to the parade staging ground.

Florence Sears came from Lakewood, Ohio, in 1960, and almost at once found herself working for Del Webb, as a hostess at the now-demolished Kings Inn, 107th and Grand avenues. For \$35 a week, Webb let potential homebuyers try out the community, Sears said. "I cried when they took a bulldozer to those bricks."

She arranged tours for the visitors, talked with them, and generally made them welcome in the community. These days, she's a volunteer at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, and still attends the First United Church of Christ every week. But her volunteer work is confined to helping less-able friends get to the store or doctor.

"I've had a wonderful life," she said.

You'll find something for everyone this weekend at the third annual Grand Old West Fest, featuring a celebration of the 35th anniversary of Sun City.

Dining and dancing, entertainment, a chili festival, clowns and guitarists, even an outdoor country market are on the schedule, and best of all, everything except the food is free.

Kick off the weekend Friday with a local entertainment extravaganza in the Sun Bowl in Sun City. Starting at 6:30 p.m., the free show features long-time local favorites, repeating the kinds of performances that area audiences have come to know and love.

Watch the Poms, the Sun Liners, the Sun City West Rhythm Tappers and the Sun City Steppers, and listen to the sounds of Dutch Schultz, the Desert Aires, the Polka Pops Band and the Banjo Band.

Be sure to bring a chair or blanket.

Then, on Saturday at 9 a.m., join the throngs along Del Webb Boulevard and thrill to the action as the Grand Old West Fest Parade moves southward in a profusion of colorful floats, fire trucks, horses, golf cars, go-karts, a Watsui steer, old-time cars and old-

Fest salutes SC's birthday

You can't tell the players without a scorecard ... and you'll want to know just whose float, golf car or horse you're watching in the Grand Old West Fest Parade.

So here's the starting lineup, subject to the usual last-minute changes or unexpected glitches.

Clip it out and take it along, so you know who you're seeing.

Starting from the Faith

Presbyterian Church parking lot:

1. Posse lead cars.
2. Luke Air Force Base Honor/Color guard.

4. Classic car — Pioneer Grand Marshals — Ina Dodt — Naomi Langdon — William Langdon.

5. Classic car — Pioneer Grand Marshals — Edna Lee — Evelyn Parry — Florence Sears.

6. Classic car — Sun Cities Area Historical Society (President Jim Hawks)

7. Peoria Centennial High School Band (Sponsor: Award Realty).

8. Classic convertible — Ms. Senior Arizona 1995 — Jackie Schneider.

9. Classic convertible — Former Ms. Senior Arizona (1994, Mary Ann Mitcham, 1992, Darlene Jorgenson.)

10. Class convertible — Former Ms. Senior Arizona (1992, Dr. Loisruth Bartel, 1990, Sue Singleton.)

Dignitaries unit 1:

Mayor of Surprise — Joan Shafer
City manager of Surprise — Dick McComb.

City manager of El Mirage — Jose Solarez.

Rep. Jerry Overton, Rep. Robert Burns, Rep. Robert Blendu, Rep. Scott Bundgaard.

Supervisor Ed King, Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, Supervisor Betsy Bayless.

Sen. John Kaites.

*Clip out this
lineup for the
Grand Old
West Fest
Parade so you
know who
you're seeing.*



Banjo Band with four golf cars (Sponsor: Award Realty).

Dignitaries unit 2:

Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce President — Mary Ann Zimmerman.

Sun City Home Owners Association President — Jack McLaughlin.

Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association President — Ed Cirillo.

Sun City Recreation Centers President — Ed Anderson.

Float — Daily News-Sun with music (Mary Atkinson singing) and fest committee.

City of Surprise, (Old Fire Truck/Police Car).

Youngtown Civic Association (marchers with banners)

Dutch Schultz van with music (Sun City Ambassador of Western Music).

Golf car — Rex Mayberry.

Golf car — Sun City Host Lions Club (Dave Hopkins)

Golf car — Loren Anderson.

Golf car — Max Hudson (Fountain of Life Lutheran Church); 11 cars driven in shape of cross.

Golf car — Clifford & Clare Olson.
Sun City Poms with golf car and

music.

Golf car — Prudential Mull-Smith, marchers with flags.

Clown — Jean Wohlbruck.
Riverview Bicycle Club (20-plus members).

Starting from the St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church south parking lot:

Sun City Fire Department units.
Citizens Utilities.

Sun City PRIDES, vehicles and marchers.

Classic van — Westside Food Bank.

Float — Norwest Bank.
Wisconsin Badger Men's Club with music and Bucky Badger mascot.

Sundial Bicycle Club (15-plus members).

Float — Alves Flower Shop (Sponsor of Sundial Bicycle Club).

Float — Sun Country Federal Credit Union with music.

Float — Sun Cities Independent.
Classic Cars Unit 1, 4-5 cars;

(sponsor: AARP Chapter 4).

Miss Arizona (Cara Jackson).

Starting from Fountain of Life Lutheran Church parking lot:

Sun City West Rhythm Tappers with music on golf car.
Float — Sierra Winds Lifecare

El Zaribah Shrine clowns and El Zaribah Shrine Desert Chariots.

El Zaribah Shrine Drum & Bugle Corps, and El Zaribah Shrine Legion of Honor.

Brownie Troop 1841.
Parker & Sons Van.

Brighton Gardens Van.
Sun City Travel Trailer Club RV.

Float — Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce Amigos.

Float — Sun Cities Lions Foundation.

SCAT Van (Sun Cities Area Transit).

Car — American Legion Post 101.
Classic Cars Unit 2, 4-5 cars.

Westbrook "Bootscooters" Dance Group with music. 50 participants.

Float — APS (Old Line Truck and Electric Car).

Float — AZ Steamboat Cruises (miniature steamboat).

Peoria Police DARE program.
Mustang and Go-Kart.

Float — The Madison, Sun City West.

Classic Cars Unit 3, 4-5 vehicles.
Moore Graphics.

Starting from the Citizens Utilities parking lot:

Watusi Longhorn Steer (Beaugard) — Bob Shephard.

Float — Sun Health Corp/Boswell Hospital (horse-drawn).

Horses — Karen and Amber Steele from Waddell.

Horses (Former Ms. Country Western Jr. Teen 1992-93).

Tewalt Car, with president of Independent Lifestyles Association.

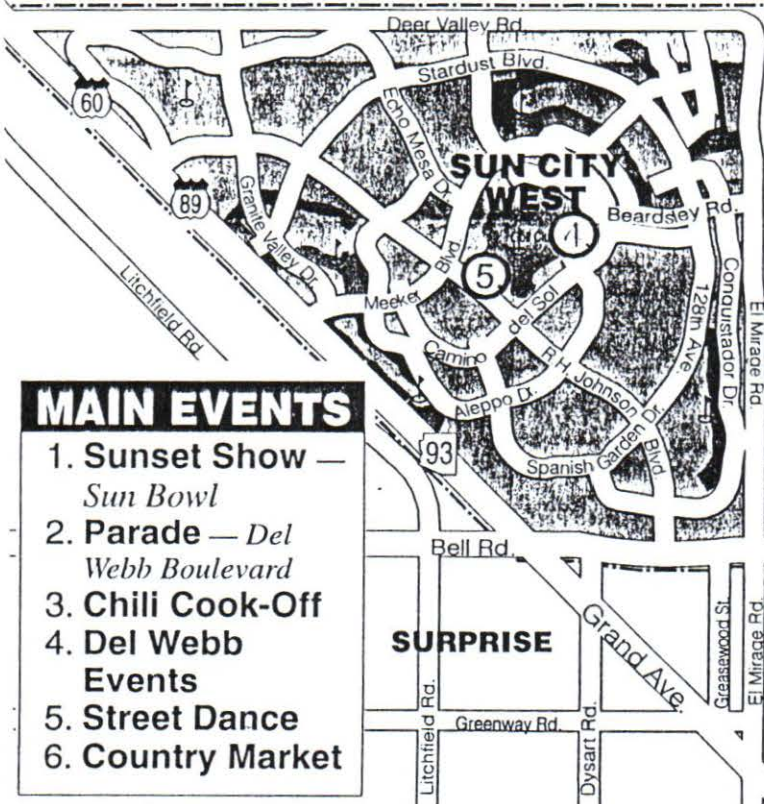
Horse — Bill James.

Float — Del Webb Corp. (two horse-drawn vehicles).

Dune Buggy & Cab — Dan Bertram.

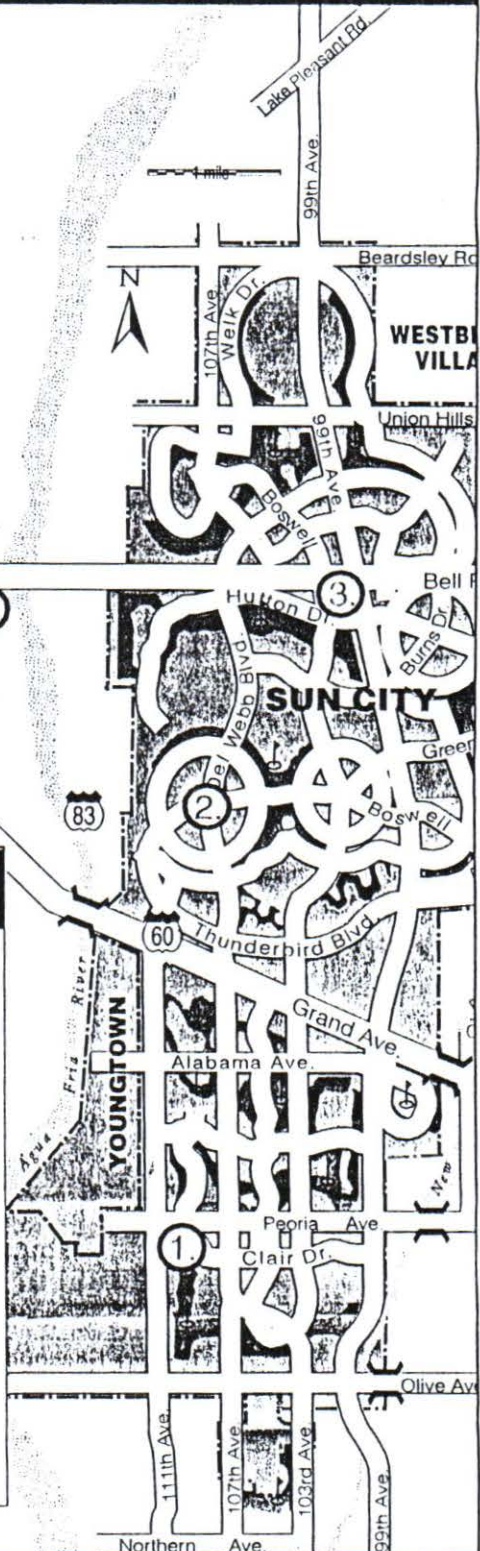
Posse, two cars.
Maricopa County Street Sweeper.

Sun Cities Area Map



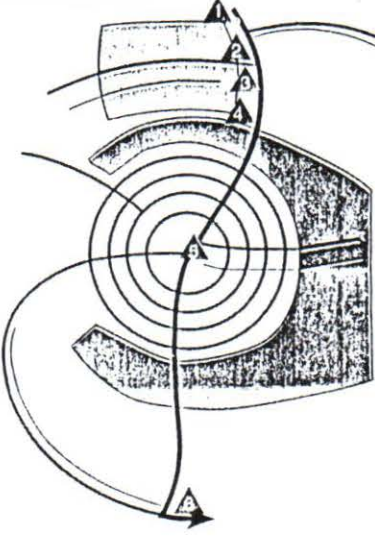
MAIN EVENTS

1. **Sunset Show** — *Sun Bowl*
2. **Parade** — *Del Webb Boulevard*
3. **Chili Cook-Off**
4. **Del Webb Events**
5. **Street Dance**
6. **Country Market**



Parade Route

NORTH



Staging Areas:

1. Fountain of Life Lutheran Church
2. St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church
3. Faith Presbyterian Church
4. Citizens Utilities

Reviewing Stand:

5. La Ronde Centre

Finish:

6. Lakeview Recreation Center

Sun City brightens golden years

Arizona retirement community celebrates its 35th anniversary

SUN CITY, Ariz. (AP) — In 1960, few people were sure the idea would work.

Popular theory had it that retired people would never move away from their families and friends to live in a community for senior citizens, Jane Freeman recalled.

Today, the memory brings a slight grin to her face.

Sun City is not only celebrating its 35th anniversary in January but is the model upon which a growing number of retirement communities are based.

Freeman, a volunteer at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society and co-author of a book written for the city's 25th anniversary, knows what makes the concept work.

"People stay active out here," she said, holding a directory listing reams of recreation opportunities. This Del Webb Corp. development about 10 miles west of Phoenix wasn't quite the first of its sort, Freeman said.

Elmer Johns, a builder from Lakewood, Calif., developed nearby Youngtown in 1954, but the project never really got off the ground. Freeman believes it was because developers didn't pay enough attention to recreation.

Phil Dion, CEO of Del Webb said

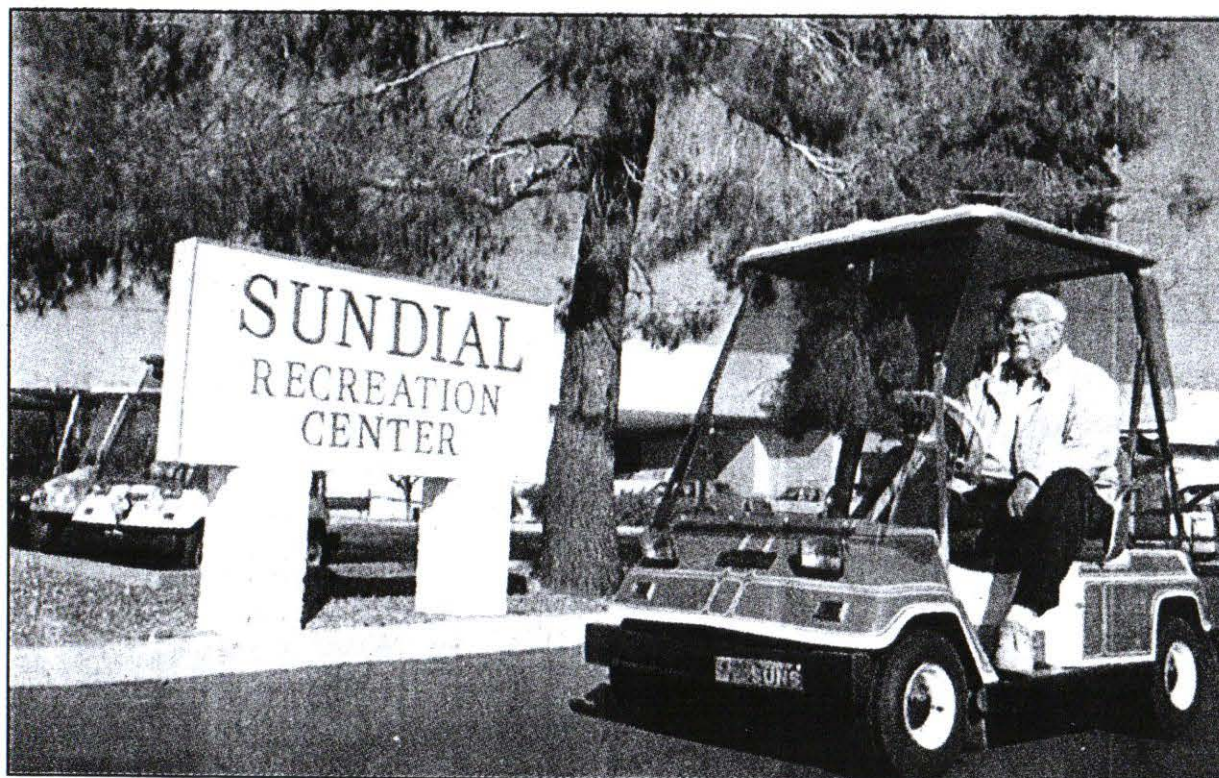
Webb and his colleagues improved on the idea by building golf courses and shopping centers to attract residents before the first homes were sold.

Sun City's wide streets, lined with orange trees, bear witness to good planning. It is difficult to find a stick out of place on either the immaculate, curving thoroughfares or the all-weather, low-maintenance yards filled with rocks, saguaro cacti and palm trees. Everything here is tailored for residents' convenience.

"It's utopia," said Hering, who stopped to chat with friends at the Sundial Recreation Center before heading in to a water aerobics class. "There's not one thing that has been left out."

At the Sundial — one of seven multimillion-dollar recreation centers here — residents can participate in everything from swimming and weight training to sewing, ceramics or art classes. The building also houses a mineral museum, photo lab and shuffleboard facilities.

Eleven golf courses have been built over the years, and designers are making each one tougher as they find retirees are better golfers than they first thought.



Associated Press

Jim Gramlich drives his golf cart home after a workout at Sundial Recreation Center in Sun City, Ariz.

Golf carts are a common sight in carports and on the roads, where they're legal transportation.

"You can do as little as you want to, you can do as much as you want to," said Louise Meyer, who moved to Sun City in 1971. "That's the life here. It keeps us moving, keeps us young."

Today, Sun City has about 45,000 residents; an additional 25,000 live in Sun City West, 14 miles northwest of Phoenix.

Del Webb Corp. has opened additional Sun Cities in Tucson; Las Vegas, Nev.; Palm Springs and Roseville, Calif., since 1987. It's now opening a new Sun City near

Hilton Head, S.C., and has plans to break ground in Georgetown, Texas, this year.

"I'm racing into the sunset, but when the end comes, I won't even know it because I'm keeping so busy," said Fern Overlook, a Sun City resident since 1986. "They say it adds 10 years to your life."

Marinette memories bring history to life

By DAN BURNETTE
Daily News-Sun staff

The land on which Sun City is built often is described as a "former cotton field," but to Amanda Durand, it was much more.

Marinette, Ariz., was the place where Durand grew up, where her parents earned their livings, where Durand and her husband, John, started their lives together. These grounds, where so few remnants of Marinette still stand, teem with the memories of family and friends who have since moved elsewhere or died. While Durand loves Sun City, she still orients herself in the community with the nearly cryptic cues from where melon fields or cotton gins or wells once stood.

The wells that Sun City still uses



for its drinking water are much older than the retirement community, dating from the 1920s, when Marinette grew into a bustling farm community operated by Southwest Cotton Co., a subsidiary of Goodyear Tire & Rubber. The community, mostly spread along Grand Avenue between 100th and 105th avenues, included a school, post office, store, boarding house and a few frame houses. Among those early residents was Amanda Monreal, now Amanda Durand, who lived in Marinette from 1928 to 1962.

"You can say I really lived here all my life, because even though I was born in Phoenix and my family lived in Glendale for awhile, I spent almost all my time out here," Durand, now 71, recalled this week.

Durand's mother was the postmaster; her father bought the company store when Amanda was 4.

Durand often worked in the store, where, along with groceries and dry



Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Amanda Durand looks over clippings and other items about Marinette before it was developed as Sun City.

goods, farm workers picked up their pay. She also started her present career in real estate.

"I knew where every piece of land was," Durand said. "You just had a

lot of dirt roads and no signs. We used to have land listed in a store, so when someone came in and wanted to look at the land, my father just

See Woman's Sun City, A5

Woman's Sun City roots run deep

—From A1

sent me out to show them. Those were the days, of course, when you didn't have to worry about someone taking your children and not coming back. So you can say I got the sellers and buyers together, because I knew where everything was and where everyone lived."

The many irrigation wells drilled around what are now Sun City and Sun City West were the real centers of activities. The farm hands, virtually all migrant workers from Mexico, clustered around the wells and put up hundreds of tents for shelter.

"Each little tent city around

the wells had a name, usually taken from the little towns in Sonora where the workers came from," Durand said. "When workers came up, they usually wanted to stay with friends and family from their village."

After working hard picking cotton by hand, the farm workers unwound with frequent celebrations: births, marriages, baptisms, Saints Days — "just about any reason to have a party would do," Durand said.

The peak population of 15,000 began declining in the 1930s, as more mechanization reduced the need for farm hands. J.G. Boswell Co. bought

Marinette Ranch in 1936. Both Amanda and her husband, John, worked for the Boswell company through the farm's demise with the construction of Sun City, beginning in 1959.

Durand was concerned about where the workers would go, but her concerns were allayed as many began working for better pay as part of Webb's construction work force.

Durand lived a while in Glendale, then moved to Sun City in 1969. She said fellow Sun Citians sometimes ask her how long she's lived in the retirement community.

"I tell them, 'All my life.' "

GOLDEN YEARS

Many happy returns, Sun City

IF imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then Arizona's Sun City has known high praise for most of its 35 years. The plaudits will continue well into the next millennium as the model of active senior living is replicated in retirement communities from California to South Carolina.

Although some questioned the concept at the start, Sun City has proved that senior citizens thrive in an active atmosphere with dozens of choices — from golf to shopping to civic projects — of what to do.

Sun City gives its residents a chance to live fully, leaving it up to them to decide what form such a life should take. It gives alternatives when a society that should know better, given its own advancing age, insists on mainly limiting lifestyle options of old age to sedentary choices, such as the rocking chair or the park bench.

Life closer to the end of the spectrum can be as ripe with opportunities and zeal as at any other time. Sunsets can be spectacular, as many Sun Citians know from experience.

Sun City offers something for every senior citizen: for those wanting to take it easy and for those clinging tightly to the feelings of youth who want to give old age — the physical and mental challenges — a good fight. The west-side community and

the neighboring Sun City West offer places for older Valley residents to enjoy their golden years.

Obviously, Del Webb knew what he was doing in 1960 when he began developing Sun City, not only as a place to live, but as a lifestyle.

In a sort of *Field of Dreams* twist to retirement, he built golf courses and shopping centers before the first homes on Oakmont Drive went up: If he built the things active, older residents want close at hand, they would pack up their households, say goodbye to family and friends, and come live in a community he built exclusively for them.

They came all right.

Sun City, which will celebrate its 35th anniversary this month, has a population of about 46,000. It is a development of 26,000 homes, seven recreation centers and 11 golf courses. And it is the prototype for six other Del Webb Corp. planned communities around the country. A groundbreaking is planned this year for a seventh Sun City in Georgetown, Texas.

Sun City is a place to go to grow old and have fun doing it. It is indeed a lifestyle, a charming one at that.

It's also a state of mind, and as the elderly population continues to grow, more and more people will find that it is a healthy one.

'They say it adds 10 years to your life' Sun City lifestyle celebrates 35 years

By Marla Dial
The Associated Press

In 1960, few people were sure the Sun City idea would work.

Popular theory had it that retired people would never move away from their families and friends to live in a community exclusively for senior citizens.

The memory brings a slight grin to Jane Freeman's face.

Sun City not only is celebrating its 35th anniversary in January, it is the model for a growing number of retirement communities.

Freeman, a volunteer at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society and co-author of a book written for the city's 25th anniversary, knows what makes the concept work.

"People stay active out here," she said, flipping through a directory that lists reams of recreation opportunities. "I think that's why we have a tendency to live longer."

This Del Webb Corp. development about 10 miles west of Phoenix wasn't quite the first of its sort, Freeman said.

Elmer Johns, a builder from Lake-wood, Calif., developed nearby Youngtown in 1954, but the project

RETIREMENT CITIES' PROFILES

Facts about Sun Cities, with the year construction began on each:

Sun City (1960)

Population: 46,000.

Homes: 26,000.

Recreation centers: seven.

Golf courses: ten 18-hole, one 9-hole.

Sun City West (1978)

Population: 24,000

Homes: 13,436

Recreation centers: four.

Golf courses: eight 18-hole.

Sun City Tucson (1987)

Population: 3,526

Homes: 1,793

Recreation centers: two.

Golf courses: one 18-hole.

Sun City Las Vegas (1988)

Population: 8,000

Homes: 4,372

Recreation centers: three.

Golf courses: two 18-hole.

Sun City Palm Springs,

(1992)

Population: 1,000

Homes: 654

Recreation centers: one, one planned.

Golf courses: one 18-hole golf course, one planned.

Sun City Roseville, Calif. (1994)

Population: projected 6,000

Homes: projected 3,500

Recreation centers: one planned.

Golf courses: one planned.

Sun City Hilton Head, S.C. (1994)

Population: projected 15,000

Homes: projected 8,000

Recreation centers: one "recreation campus" planned.

Golf courses: three 18-hole golf courses planned.

Source: Del Webb Corp.

never really got off the ground. Freeman believes it is because the developers didn't pay enough attention to recreation.

"It didn't provide a lifestyle," agreed Phil Dion, Del Webb chairman

and chief executive officer.

Dion said Webb and his colleagues improved on the idea by building golf courses and shopping centers to attract residents before the first homes were sold.

"Del Webb did a marvelous job when he planned this out," said Ann Rose Hering, who moved to Sun City three years ago from Illinois. "He was way ahead of his time."

Sun City's wide streets, lined with orange trees, bear witness to that planning. It is difficult to find a thing out of place on either the immaculate, curving thoroughfares or the all-weather, low-maintenance yards filled with rocks, saguaros and palm trees.

Everything here is tailored for convenience.

"It's utopia," said Hering, who stopped to chat with friends at the Sundial Recreation Center before heading to a water-aerobics class. "There's not one thing that has been left out."

At Sundial, one of seven multimillion-dollar recreation centers, residents can participate in everything from swimming and weight training to sewing, ceramics or art classes. The building also houses a mineral museum, photo lab and shuffleboard facilities.

"You can do as little as you want

— See **SUN CITY**, page B2

Sun City 'utopia' celebrates 35th anniversary

— SUN CITY, from page B1

to, you can do as much as you want to," said Louise Meyer, who moved to Sun City in 1971.

"That's the life here. It keeps us moving, keeps us young."

Del Webb officials say they market a lifestyle as well as homes. The idea is increasing in popularity but proved intriguing even in 1960, when more than 100,000 people visited Sun City within three days of its opening.

"It was a massive traffic jam. Mr. Webb couldn't even get there for the grand opening," Dion said.

The corporation sold 1,050 homes that year at prices around \$8,500. A simple, 660-square-foot home of pink cinder block on Oakmont Drive was the first to be occupied. It now houses the historical-society facilities.

Today, Sun City has about 45,000 residents, and 25,000 live in Sun City West, which opened in 1978. Beginning prices for typical ranch-style homes are about \$100,000.

Since 1987, Del Webb Corp. has opened additional Sun Cities in Tucson; Las Vegas; Palm Springs and Roseville, Calif.; and Hilton Head, S.C. The company has plans to break ground in Georgetown, Texas, by



T.J. Sokol/The Associated Press

Golf carts — like the one Jim Gramlich is driving — remain the vehicle of choice of many residents in Sun City. The retiree mecca turns 35 this month.

mid-1995.

The "active adult" communities are proving to be lucrative business. Del Webb's profit for the year that ended June 30 was \$17 million on revenue of \$510 million. Corporate officials say

80 percent of the money came from Sun City operations.

The aging of the population triggered industry growth in the 1980s. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 31.8 million Americans were 65 or

older in 1991, and the number will grow to 56.6 million by 2010.

Officials also say Americans are retiring sooner, living longer and acquiring more wealth.

Del Webb capitalizes on such demographics to market the Sun cities, which are off-limits to residents younger than 18. At least one household member must be 55 or older to purchase a home.

Children may stay with residents for a maximum of one or two years, Freeman said, and then only after the guardians obtain legal approval.

"On one hand, I think it's kind of cruel," she said, "but if you open it up, it's no longer a retirement community."

Yet Hering said the community does not lack the sound of children's voices, particularly during holiday periods.

Many residents say they are too occupied to miss the cross section of society they left behind in such places as Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois.

"I'm racing into the sunset, but when the end comes, I won't even know it, because I'm keeping so busy," said Fern Overlook, a Sun City resident since 1986. "They say it adds 10 years to your life."

35 YEARS OF COOPERATION

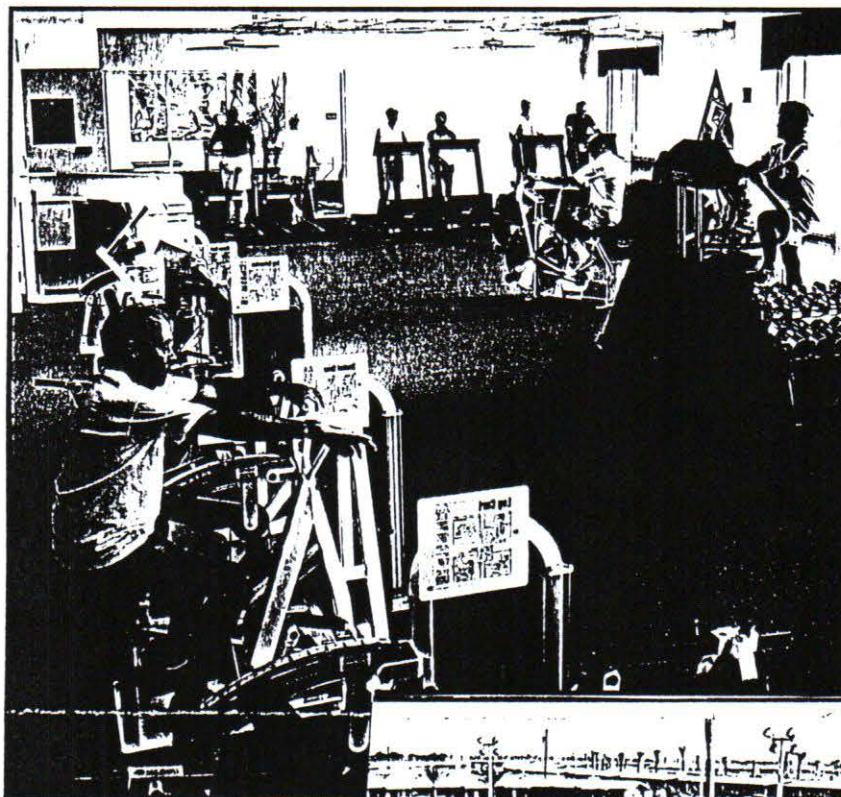
In 1960, the play "Bye Bye Birdie" was on Broadway, a cup of coffee was a dime and Sun City, the world's first active adult community, opened to thousands of curious people.

Would this concept of retirement living in the desert really work? Certainly there were skeptics. But today, Del Webb's dream has emerged prophetic. The original Sun City, located near Phoenix, has 46,000 residents. Each day, approximately 10 new homes are sold throughout our growing family of Sun Cities located from coast to coast. Yes, it works.

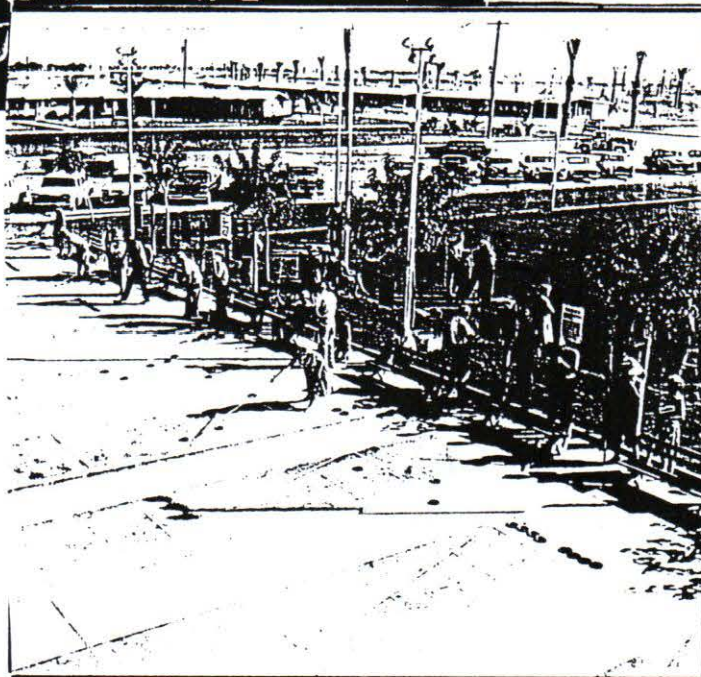
Why?

Because of people just like you. Because of the commitment of Del Webb. "Together," Mr. Webb said in 1960, "we can create a way of life unprecedented in America." He was right. Since that innovative experiment which transformed cotton fields northwest of Phoenix into the nation's first active adult community, nearly 80,000 people have worked together with Del Webb to redefine retirement.

One thing which has endured since 1960 is Del Webb's promise to you. A promise of creating a community with exceptional lifestyle opportunities and quality homes. Many times that promise extends far beyond the scope of golf, housing and warranty service. It extends to the relationship we have developed with you.



Sun City amenities have gone from Shuffleboard in the 1960's to state-of-the-art fitness centers in 1995.



If the 80,000 people now living in the Sun Cities had not placed their trust in Del Webb, the Sun Cities would never have succeeded. What built the Sun Cities? You did. You and your confidence in Del Webb. It was your calls to friends back in the Midwest; sharing your experi-

ences with a new acquaintance during your travels; enjoying a free concert; touring friends through the model home center, and making new friendships in a craft class or volunteer activity. All this and more built the Sun Cities.

continued on page 2

ANNIVERSARY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Now 35 years later, the story hasn't changed that much and the bond between Del Webb and Sun Cities' residents remains a cornerstone to the company's success. This bond is why Del Webb is so active in community affairs. Whether it's sponsoring special events, supporting volunteer activities, representing the communities at the legislature or working together on the design of new facilities, the partnership remains strong.

Company executives have also learned to look and listen. Building a community and customers' confidence takes time. In 1960 Del Webb was a well established name, not only in the building business, but as owner of the New York Yankees. His success and reputation instilled confidence in those early Sun City buyers. Today, gaining the customer's confidence requires a lot more because they are more sophisticated home buyers. We understand that.

Market research therefore plays an important role in our business. It tells us not only where you might want to live, it also tells us how you want to live. What amenities are popular? What type of home do you want? Are you satisfied with the service you receive? All of these questions help us to serve you better. And after all, that too, has built the Sun Cities.

Anniversaries are always a time of reflection. At Del Webb, we reflect on what we've learned from you, our customers. As Sun City residents, you can reflect on a lifestyle that not only met, but hopefully exceeded your expectations. While "Bye Bye Birdie" may only be a memory (just like the 10 cent cup of coffee), the Sun Cities are as popular as ever before.

At Del Webb, we've enjoyed the last 35 years and all that it's taught us. We look forward to working together with you, and you future neighbors, in fulfilling Mr. Webb's promises in the decades ahead.



*How have Sun City homes changed during the last 35 years?
The original...about 1,100 sq. ft. and \$8,900. Today...about 2,000 sq. ft. and \$150,000!*

