



Volunteer Kay Jeffers dresses a mannequin on Feb. 1 at West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop in Sun City. [Jacob Stanek/Independent Newsmedia]

EXPANSION

Big expansion for Sun City thrift shop

After 20-plus years in one spot, West Valley Lutheran nearly triples in size

By Steve Stockmar
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Re-imagining itself in a huge location has been quite a journey for the West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop.

After spending 23 years in their building on the west side of 107th Avenue in Sun City, the staff and volunteers moved the nonprofit shop right across the street late last year to 10615 W. Peoria Ave. The move was a big expansion, taking the thrift shop from 13,000 square feet to more than 35,000.

"It was an enormous task," Lynn Morey, store manager who's been with West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop since the beginning, said Jan. 30.

The shop had initially planned on closing for one week to make the move, but that swelled to two weeks before its official grand re-opening Nov. 13. A

IF YOU GO

What: West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop

Where: 10615 W. Peoria Ave.
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday. They take donations on-site through 3 p.m. on those days.

More Information:
wvlutheranthrift.com, 623-815-7061, or check them out on

big chunk of that effort involved reconfiguring the site from its former home as Jan and Dean's used furniture store, which left everything in place — literally everything, right down to pencils on desks, said Ms. Morey — for West Valley Lutheran to move around, change and add to its own inventory.

The thrift shop's all-volunteer staff — with an average age of 70 — was faced with an entire back of the store (which also was a Safeway in a past incarnation) that was piled up to the ceiling for 100 yards of stuff, including bags, furniture, old refrigerators, even tires. The thrift store also had some construction to take on, adding and subtracting walls to suit its own needs, as well as building shelves and bench-

es inside.

"We've reconfigured the whole back end," Ms. Morey said. "We're much more comfortable now than we were say in November. We've still got to live with it a little while and make subtle changes to make it feel like it's our own."

An added bonus with all that new space, she added, is the staff no longer has to spend 45 minutes at the beginning and at the end of each day hauling display items outside the store, including in the summer heat, simply to allow space to function inside. Those days are gone.

"As a manager, I love it," Ms. Morey said. "Everything is under one roof."

The thrift shop offers delivery on items for \$25 to Sun City, Sun City West, Peoria and Glendale, and for \$50 outside of that area. Their volunteer staff also picks up large items — with the exception of sleeper sofas — by calling the shop at 623-815-7061 to schedule a pickup.

Steve Stockmar can be reached at 623-876-2567 or sstockmar@newszap.com. Continue the discussion at yourvalley.net.

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VF 50 Business

MARIJUANA

More medical pot in Sun City

Allgreens relocates from Surprise

By Rusty Bradshaw
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Sun City area will get its third medical marijuana facility next month.

Allgreens Inc. officials plan to reopen their dispensary in the shopping center on the northwest corner of 99th Avenue and Bell Road in a former bank building. Dispensary officials expect the new location to be open by April 20, according to Anthony Harrington, Allgreens general manager.

"This is a better facility — better building, more space,

more visibility," he explained.

Allgreens will join White Mountain Health Center, 9420 W. Bell Road, and Swell Pharmacy, 12000 W. Michigan Ave., Youngtown, in the Sun City area.

Allgreens is now located at 13431 W. Westgate Drive in Surprise. The facility is in a converted garage with about 1,700 square feet, according to Mr. Harrington.

The Sun City building has 7,000 square feet.

"We will use the vast majority of it," he added.

The Sun City location will also utilize the drive-through of the former bank.

"We will be one of the first dispensaries in the country to have a drive-through," Mr. Harrington said.

The Sun City location was repainted and the dis-

pensary name added. The not-yet-occupied facility drew mixed reactions from residents.

"Just discovered a former bank turned into a 'dispensary,'" Sun City resident Arnold Chait stated in an email. "I do not believe we need yet another provider of marijuana in sun city."

He believes the business-

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es's location on Bell Road will not improve the neighborhood and could be detrimental to the real estate market.

Sun City resident Carolyn Copeland does not see a need for medical marijuana at all.

"I do not believe that the Sun City area needs even one marijuana dispensary," she stated in an email. "Sun Citians have enough problems with cognitive impairment; they don't need to be high on marijuana, too."

Sun City resident Katherine Barngrover sees additional dispensaries as inevitable.

"As more seniors discover the benefits of medical marijuana, the demand is increasing," she stated in an email. "An example is the benefit of sublingual cannabis oil for treatment for pain, insomnia, nausea for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy."

Having two dispensaries in such proximity as those on Bell Road is overkill, according to Sun City resident Diane Billings. "That being said, I do believe that having three dispensaries in Sun City (area) is needed — just spread out a little more," she stated in an email. "Those in need of this 'medication' in Sun City may have a difficult time traveling any distance due to the aging process and illness."

Having multiple dispensaries in a community does not violate the medical marijuana regulations established when voters approved the measure in 2012, according to Ben Palmer, Arizona Department of Health Services public information officer. He explained that initially one dispensary was allowed in pre-existing Clinical Health Analysis Areas for every 10 pharmacies statewide. By that calculation, 100 dispensaries were allowed in 2012.

"After three years, dispensaries that are relocated could go anywhere they wanted to," Mr. Palmer said.

While that opened the door for an unlimited number of dispensaries in a CHAA, Mr. Palmer believes it unlikely any analysis area would become overwhelmed with medical marijuana facilities.



Allgreens officials will have one of the first medical marijuana dispensaries with a drive-through when they complete the relocation to the Sun City building on Bell Road. [Independent Newsmedia/Rusty Bradshaw]

Palmer said. It is only the second allocation of dispensaries and no additional allocations are planned for the future, he added. There are no other limits on dispensary concentration within geographic areas.

"Cities and other entities can regulate that dispensaries cannot be located within a certain distance of a school or child care center," Mr. Palmer explained.

There are no schools or child care centers in the Sun Cities.

Arizona voters narrowly defeated a measure in the November 2016 general election that would have allowed recreational use of marijuana in Arizona.

Marijuana use continues to be a hot point for some residents concerned about the potential danger it brings to the community. Sun City West resident Diane Cheney is concerned about traffic accidents caused by marijuana impaired drivers. She cited a recent report of a marijuana impaired driver striking a teenage girl in Phoenix when he failed to obey a stop sign. The girl suffered leg and head trauma.

"How can we assure ourselves that drivers are not under the influence of marijuana? By having fewer marijuana facilities available," Ms. Cheney stated in an email. "Seniors have enough loss of mental abilities. Do we want to increase their problems, which become our problems on our streets and highways?"

Ms. Copeland agreed.

"I don't think we even need one (dispensary) for the whole Phoenix area," she stated. "Just because you have a prescription for

stances when its use is helpful to a health condition, but I'm certain that it is so over used," she stated in an email.

Ms. Clutter also believes having any dispensaries in Sun City is an invitation to outsiders to obtain drugs more readily and could bring unwanted traffic to the community.

"Is it really necessary to have these outlets a few blocks apart?" she asked. "I can't believe that there are so many residents of Sun City who rely on this use to alleviate their medical issues."

Sun City West resident Jean Goncalves is concerned with the growing number of dispensaries in senior communities, and is concerned about abuse.

"Colorado is experiencing a great deal of problems with its statewide availability of marijuana," she stated in an email. "Arizona has voted down recreational use of it, but there has been a lot of money and resources that have come into our state working hard to have it legalized."

She finds it frightening there is a need for so many marijuana dispensaries.

"How many unscrupulous doctors are prescribing it when it is not medically needed?" she asked. "Also, what's to stop young people from offering 'grandma' money in exchange for her getting it? There is always chances of great abuse."

Ms. Cheney, a psychologist, cited Feb. 23, 2017 "New England Journal of Medicine" article that stated cannabis comes with important risks, including impairment of cognitive and psychomotor function and strong evidence that THC

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While that opened the door for an unlimited number of dispensaries in a CHAA, Mr. Palmer believes it unlikely any analysis area would become overwhelmed with medical marijuana facilities.

"When enough have gone in a CHAA, saturation would create a self-limiting situation," he said.

DHS officials allocated this year another 30 dispensary licenses based on patient density in certain areas, Mr.

Palmer explained. "There are no schools or child care centers in the Sun Cities."

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"I don't think we even need one (dispensary) for the whole Phoenix area," she stated. "Just because you have a prescription for medical marijuana doesn't mean you should be able to drive around stoned, as happened in a recent accident."

Sun City resident Laura Clutter is opposed to any use of marijuana.

"There probably are in-

teresting cases of people who can't believe that there are many residents in Sun City who support the use of dispensaries in their medical cases."

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Ms. Cheney, a psychologist, cited Feb. 23, 2017 "New England Journal of Medicine" article that stated cannabis comes with important risks, including impairment of cognitive and psychomotor function and strong evidence that THC, the main psychoactive chemical in cannabis, increases the risk of psychotic symptoms or panic attacks.

Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newsp.com. Continue the discussion at www.yourwestvalley.com.

Minimum wage increase could be 'problematic'

Increased prices, employee cuts coming

By Philip Haldiman
and Matt Roy
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Hundreds of thousands of Arizona workers got a raise Jan. 1, and small businesses, particularly restaurants, are looking at some major changes.

Last week, a Maricopa County Superior Court judge

threw out a lawsuit filed by the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other groups that could have blocked the wage increase approved by voters in November. The Arizona Supreme Court rejected Dec. 29 an injunction, which might have prevented implementation.

The groups are appealing the ruling, but as the wage hike moves forward, it will increase from \$8.05 to \$10 per hour, effective Jan. 1. It will then increase to \$10.50

in 2018, \$11 in 2019, and \$12 in 2020.

Some West Valley restaurateurs voiced concern that higher costs will hurt their business.

Rose Gentry employs 14 people at her restaurant, Rosie's Italian Café, 13930 Camino Del Sol, which has been open in Sun City West for 19 years.

All but two of her employees work part-time. As those making minimum see their hourly rates increase, those already making more than

minimum will expect to get raises as well, she said.

"Those making more will want more. It's like a domino effect," Ms. Gentry added.

She does not plan to cut hours for her employees or the operation, but menu prices will need to rise to pay for the wage increases, she said.

"I'm going to have to increase my menu cost," said Ms. Gentry. "Everywhere you go, prices will go up. You're going to see a lot of business decline and close, unfortu-

nately."

Lazaro Gonzalez, an assistant manager at JB's, 9889 W. Bell Road, echoed her concern.

"At the beginning of the year our prices are going up," said Mr. Gonzalez. "We are going to have to make some change on our schedules to cut down on labor."

Prices will go up as much as 40 percent to 50 percent on some menu items starting in January. The restaurant typ-

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Increase

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ically employees around 21 people, 80 percent of which currently work full-time, but some will see hours reduced, according to Mr. Gonzalez.

"We don't know exactly how many hours we will have to cut. Right now we don't know how bad it's going to be," he said.

Supporters of the minimum wage increase say it could decrease poverty and increase opportunities for working-class families, as well as increase consumption. But it remains to be seen how it could affect the region's business community.

The Northwest Valley's commercial core, made up of Arrowhead Towne Center, P83 Entertainment District and the Peoria Sports Complex, sits on hundreds of acres supported by low wage earners effected by the minimum wage increase.

Economist Elliott Pollack said it is questionable whether pay raises work over such a large swath. He said when minimum wages increase, a number of things can happen — prices go up, capital is substituted for labor, profits go down or more productive people are hired and less productive people are let go.

Minimum wage increases can be problematic, he said.

"It is basic Economics 101. If prices go up, there's less demand for that good, people have less money to spend on other things, and then businesses suffer, which could lower employment," he said. "In effect, all you are doing is transferring money around. And when wages go up, businesses might substitute capital for labor, so you could start seeing kiosks instead of employees."

Guy Erickson, Peoria Chamber of Commerce president/CEO, said the minimum wage could especially create issues for small businesses and nonprofits. Businesses could let employees go, and see customer service suffer, which eventually hurts sales, he said.



Rose Gentry has operated Rosie's Italian Café in Sun City West for 19 years and voiced concerns that the new minimum wage will hurt small businesses. (Independent Newsmedia/Matt Roy)

of Central Arizona is devoted to helping the community by fighting unemployment through career centers for the public. The centers are free and there are at least three locations in the West Valley. Services range from developing resumes to help in applying for jobs.

"Although not specific to anyone affected by the minimum wage, our career centers provide services to whoever needs them, like interviewing techniques and access to open positions at hundreds of local companies," she said.

In the Peoria Unified School District, 443 employees — temporary workers, groundskeepers and a number of other employees — will be affected by the increase at cost of about \$100,000 to the district this year. Human Resources Administrator Carter Davidson said when wages go up to \$12 per hour, it will cost the district about \$2 million.

"We have a tight budget," Mr. Davidson said. "Unfortunately, we only have one pot of money and a lot of our money is in salaries."

With the failure of a \$198 million bond in November that would have funded two new schools, improvements to existing campuses and transportation, as well as new technology, the wage increase hits the district at an inopportune time.

However, Superintendent Darwin Stiffler said he anticipates a large enough increase through inflation funding to cover some of the

PAY RAISE

The Healthy Working Families Initiative, or Prop. 206, will increase the minimum wage from \$8.05 to \$10 per hour, effective Jan. 1.

It will increase to \$10.50 in 2018, \$11 in 2019, and \$12 in 2020. After that it will be adjusted annually based on cost of living.

Employees who receive tip income can continue to earn \$3 an hour less than the minimum wage if their employer can prove the employee is earning at or more than the minimum wage when tips are counted.

The new law outlines the sick time employers must provide and the conditions under which it can be used. This could include physical or mental illness, to caring for a family member, a public-health emergency, domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking.

SICK TIME

Employers with fewer than 15 employees: must provide 24 hours a year to each worker.

Employers with 15 or more employees: must provide at least 40 hours a year to each worker.

nity Services Department, for positions such as recreation leaders, library pages and life guards.

"Revenues increase each year, but it does take away from our ability to do other things, like paying for increased contractual utility costs," she said. "It's not so much about what we would have to cut, but what are not going to be able to do because of the wage increase. I will say this — We contract with vendors who may also be impacted by these new wage requirements."

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“It doesn’t matter what it is,” Mr. Erickson said. “A manager at a clothing store has a sales staff getting paid minimum wage. That manager is given X amount of dollars and has to make it go as far as it can. If you have to pay your staff more money, you’re going to have to let people go or raise prices.”

Lea Soto Graham, manager of marketing and communications, said Goodwill

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In Peoria, about 470 part-time, seasonal and temporary city employees will be affected by the minimum wage increase, with cost estimates of \$95,000 the first year, \$145,000 the second year and \$260,000 after that.

Katie Gregory, Peoria’s management and budget director, said the increase will mainly affect part-time employees in the city’s Commu-

less than the minimum wage if their employer can prove the employee is earning at or more than the minimum wage when tips are counted.

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In Glendale, the minimum wage requirement will affect 137 temporary employees in the district’s Community Services Department as well as the Public Facilities, Recreation and Special Events Department. Officials said impact to the budget is estimated at \$116,000.

A full analysis has not yet been completed, however, the impact to the general budget is expected to be minimal and no reduction in city services is projected, officials said.

ECONOMY

FEELING THE PINCH

Businesses see mixed 2016 sales

By Rusty Bradshaw
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Above average temperatures in the summer and the closure of Bell Road for overpass construction dealt some, but not all, Northwest Valley businesses a losing hand in sales.

Sales were somewhat down compared to 2015 figures, and while there are other factors, some business owners believe the weather and construction were the biggest factors.

"In the eight years I have been open, we had the worst summer ever," said Cathy Parker, Sun City's Consigning Women owner.

Bell Road was closed throughout the summer to accommodate construction of a bridge over Grand Avenue. The roadway reopened Nov. 22. During construction,

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Cathy Parker, Consigning Women owner, left, with Abby, and employee Sonya Hill double check the necklace displays on the store counter at the Sun City resale shop. [Independent Newsmedia/Rusty Bradshaw]

Pinch

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there were detours, but they took drivers blocks away from their normal route along Bell Road.

Ms. Parker said she could point to that as a major factor because a large portion of her regular customers come from west of Grand Avenue.

"I heard the same thing from the other shops in our shopping center (Bell Camino on the northwest corner of Bell Road and Del Webb Boulevard)," she said.

Not all businesses saw a drop in sales. Eugene Gentile, My Daddy's Bakery & Cafe owner in Surprise, said he expected to see decreased sales in 2016.

"It has been a surprisingly good year for business, even with the slowdown because of the ADOT bridge project at Grand Avenue," he said.

Bob Riddle at Bob's Variety Store in Sun City West saw a 10 percent increase in sales for 2016.

"My sales took a real hit in 2008, but each year we have been getting better," he said.

Part of this year's increase came because he expanded the store, adding 3,500 square feet and rearrang-

ing things inside to provide customers an easier shopping atmosphere, Mr. Riddle explained. The store also added a fabric shop.

Ms. Parker also said online shopping is also a factor in storefront businesses seeing a drop in sales. That is a nationwide trend, according to information on the website www.franchisehelp.com.

"The increasing strength of online sales is a major driver in the retail industry," according to a statement on the site. "Retailers that have only online sales or an efficient physical and online sales process can keep overhead costs low and are poised to continue to gain."

Ms. Parker does have a website for her store, www.consigningwomenaz.com, although there are no direct online sales available. However, she is taking advantage of the social media aspect of sales.

"We have pictures of what we have available on the website and our Facebook page," she explained. "We have a big Facebook following."

Mr. Riddle does not have a store website, but said it was on his bucket list. However, he is uncertain wheth-

er it will include an online sales options.

"When you have online sales you get a variety of problems, like shipping stuff and it not arriving, things being the wrong size or missing parts," he said.

In the brick-and-mortar stores, mobile payment options are becoming increasingly important to younger shoppers, as are in-store mobile devices such as mounted iPads helping consumers find what they're looking for, according to the Franchisehelp site.

With the return of winter visitors, Northwest Valley businesses are seeing sales pick up.

"But it is still a bit lower than last year," Ms. Parker said.

However, she is seeing more new customers and consigners coming into the shop because of expanded advertising. Ms. Parker said she is also seeing more younger customers in her store.

Mr. Riddle believes businesses will have some difficult times ahead as they adjust to the new minimum wage, now \$10 per hour after Arizona voters approved Proposition 206 in the No-

vember general election.

"It would have been easier to take if it had been in smaller increments," he said.

Simply raising prices is not an options for some businesses, he added.

"I have to be careful that I don't price myself out of business," Mr. Riddle said.

A smaller sales increased

statewide compared to 2015 was expected this year, according to projections by Arizona's Economy of the Economic and Business Research Center, part of the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management. Projected sales for 2015 were expected to increase by 4.7 percent, while 2016 predictions forecast only a 2.8 percent sales increase. Arizona's Economy researchers predict 4.7 percent sales increases in 2017 and 2018, a 5.3 percent jump in 2019 and a slight drop to a 5 percent increase in 2020.

According to the Arizona Department of Revenue annual report for the 2015-16 fiscal year, retail sales jumped 6.2 percent over 2014-15 fiscal year transaction privilege use tax collections in retail sales. The overall increase of all categories was 3.9 percent.

Arizona DOR officials did not respond by press time to

phone and email requests for sale figures through the first quarter of the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Smaller retail stores are now shying away from deep inventories with a broad selection of products and are instead focusing on a narrower spread of specialty items, according to information on the Franchisehelp website.

"Since shoppers can access such a wide swath of products online, retailers are finding strength in focus," the site stated. "Above all, retailers are focusing on a frictionless shopping experience — whether it's ordering online and picking up in store, easy payment options, a top-notch customer service experience or any number of other strategies."

Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com. Continue the discussion at www.yourwestvalley.com.

VF SC Business Independent Jan 21, 2015

Finding out about SCHOA



Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw
Sharon Major, left, chats with a Banner Olive Branch representative during the Sun City Home Owners Association's Jan. 15 annual meeting. In addition to getting information about SCHOA's operation, residents got a chance to get acquainted with other community organizations, including the Posse and PRIDES. Maricopa County Dist. 4 Supervisor Clint Hickman said those two organizations' efforts save the county \$3.6 million annually.

Dealing with evacuations

Businesses face challenges following bank robbery

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

When a bank is robbed the financial institution suffers ill effects, even if any money taken is recovered. However, the effects of some robberies spill over to surrounding businesses.

Three shops in the Bell Camino Shopping Center on the northwest corner of Bell Road and Del Webb Boulevard learned that first-hand Jan. 6 when the AmTrust Bank, 10706 W. Bell Road, was held up by a single

Related Link

www.mcso

suspect. Three stores — Consigning Women, Be Nails and Camino Beauty Salon — were evacuated when it was learned the suspect threatened bank employees with an explosive device.

"Our first and foremost concern is for the safety of the people in the area," Lt. Brandon Jones, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office spokesman, said of the agency's decision to evacuate those businesses.

Peoria resident Mark Edward Neal, 34, was arrested after deputies found him at his home with the help of a tracking device

inserted into the bag of about \$5,000 bank employees gave him. He faced charges including burglary, theft, armed robbery and misconduct involving weapons, according to an MCSO news release.

According to witnesses, the suspect entered the bank and demanded money from a teller, revealing a purported pipe bomb that he threaten to detonate unless the teller complied with his demand. That is what prompted the evacuation, according to Mr. Jones.

"It is not a standard procedure to evacuate in all cases, but it is better to be safe than sorry," Mr. Jones said.

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Evac

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This incident did not affect Kathy Parker's business, Consigning Women, much as they were alerted about the robbery at about 3:30 p.m., shortly before the regular 4 p.m. closing time.

"I told the girls to just close up," she said.

Management at Be Nails and Camino Beauty Salon was contacted for input, but did not respond by press time.

While bank robberies are somewhat common around the Valley, they are few and far in between in Sun City. Mr. Jones said there were only three business robberies handled by MCSO during 2014. One was a jewelry store, another at a convenience store and a third at a small restaurant.

This is not the first bank robbery affecting those shops. Ms. Parker said one robbery two to three years ago prompted a lock down of the businesses, which kept employees and customers alike inside the

shops for a little more than one hour.

"It does cut down on the foot traffic and it is an inconvenience," she said.

There is also an emotional toll, Ms. Parker added.

"Something like this is kind of scary," she said.

However, Ms. Parker appreciated the approach taken by MCSO.

"I would rather have it that way rather than not notifying people about it," she said.

Mr. Jones said in cases of evacuation, MCSO officials work to get employees and customers back in the shops as soon as possible.

Fortunately, the previous robbery was resolved quickly, as was the Jan. 6 incident at AmTrust Bank. Deputies quickly located the suspect at his home near 107th Ave and Union Hills at 19216 N. Joy Lane in Peoria, just a mile and half from the bank. MCSO and Peoria police personnel surrounded the home and located Mr. Neal in the backyard. He was immediately detained without incident, according to MCSO reports.

Mr. Neal admitted rigging a fake device,

made from PVC and an electronic cigarette, to look like a pipe bomb, according to the MCSO press release. While the bomb was fake, law enforcement had to take the threat seriously until proven otherwise, Mr. Jones said.

"Because AmTrust Bank is part of a strip mall, it presented added challenges," he explained.

In most instances involving banks in standalone buildings, evacuation of surrounding businesses is not done, he added.

"In cases where we get a call about a robbery but there is no weapon, or the suspect is clearly out of the area, evacuation is not necessary," Mr. Jones said. "But in cases of weapons, explosive, hostages or any other

situation to threatens people's safety, we go on the side of caution."

He added the Mr. Neal told officers originally planned to rob the Wells Fargo bank, also in the Bell Camino center. After casing the bank for three days Neal decided to rob AmTrust, Mr. Jones explained.

Mr. Jones said MCSO officials always look for ways to improve their tactics, including how neighboring businesses are handled during emergency situations.

"We are constantly learning with each situation," he said. "We debrief after each incident."

News Editor Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com.

CLEAN UP

RV business to redevelop Grand Avenue eyesore

Business

By Jeff Grant
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The former New China Super Buffet — eyesore, frequent spot for garbage dumping and occasional home to squatters — is finally going to be cleaned up for good.

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has approved Phoenix-based Anthem RV's plan to develop the property at Grand Avenue off 108th Avenue as a sales lot with minor service functions.

No timetable was provided within a project description, and Anthem RV's owner, Phil Olson, could not immediately be reached for comment. The company had been awaiting approval of its request to have the property rezoned from C-2 commercial to C-3 for commercial where there is adequate access to major streets or highways.

The RV dealer is expected to purchase the site from the long-time owner of the Grand Avenue property.

"We have complained about the property for years. We're very happy someone is finally going to go in there," said Jim Powell, member of the board of directors for the Sun City Home Owners Association.

Plans call for Anthem RV, which has locations in An-



Weeds and overgrowth is seen around the vacant former New China Super Buffet on Grand Avenue. A Phoenix-based RV sales and service business plans to redevelop the site. [Jeff Grant/Daily News-Sun]

them and Mesa, to remodel the existing 7,921-square-foot structure formerly housing the Chinese buffet, establish space for displaying 50 RVs along Grand and 108th avenues while designating another

31 spaces — including two that are handicapped-accessible — for customers and employees.

A 6-foot-high wrought-iron fence would surround the property along Grand and

108th avenues as well as Coggin Drive while an existing 6-foot-high cinderblock wall would separate it from residential units immediately to the west.

There would be no vehi-

cle access from Grand Avenue. Customers and employees would enter and exit from driveways along 108th Avenue to the east and Coggin Drive to the south, where

» See Approval on page A

Approval

» From page A1

pair of 6-foot-high, wrought-iron rollaway gates would secure the lot during nonbusiness hours.

Existing lights and monument signs will remain.

Hours of business will be 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon-6 p.m. Sunday.

Approval of the development plan resolves all outstanding complaints against the property's owners, including one for having a dilapidated building and another for accumulation and storage of trash and debris.

Charlie Lindquist, a resident who lives next door to the property, said he is happy a new business is redeveloping it.

"You had people breaking in the building and living in there, maybe 8-10 months ago. I'm sure it was a safety consideration for a lot of people, especially older ones."

Another resident said while local traffic may increase, he has no problem with the RV business' plan.

"It will benefit the community. It's a great idea," said Ken Graham.

One area business owner welcomed the new venture.

"Anyone willing to run a business can benefit the community. Nobody likes to see vacancies," said Dion Karo, owner of Monty's Furniture in the Grand Avenue Shopping Center.

The board of supervisors' vote was unanimous and followed a unanimous recommendation Nov. 6 from the county's Planning and Zoning Commission.

Originally developed in 1978, the property was home

to another restaurant before New China Super Buffet moved in. It has been vacant for almost two years.

Violations were investigated beginning in October 2012, when the county's code enforcement office looked into complaints over trash and debris. Weeds were later added to the list, and although the site was cleaned up, it fell back into decline. The latest cases were opened July 11, 2013, and Aug. 22, 2014.

District 4 Supervisor Clint Hickman, who represents Sun City, said Anthem RV's plan addresses one of two vacant properties of concern.

Hickman said efforts are continuing to find a party to redevelop the property on the southwest corner of Grand and 107th avenues that currently houses a vacant, fenced-in former vehicle repair shop and gas station. Hickman said he addressed the issue with the Planning and Development Department two months ago, but so far, there's been no resolution.

Three weeks after taking office in April 2013, Hickman said he began traveling along the Grand Avenue corridor regularly and that addressing vacant properties is a priority in that area.

"I was a little stunned. You start looking at it, remembering what it was like and now see what it's become."

Doug Arthur, who lives across the street, welcomes the prospect of a new business in the neighborhood.

"I'm glad someone's coming in with the economy the way it is. From what I understand, it takes an act of God for somebody to come out and clean up that property."

Sun City / Sun

The Phoenix Gazette

SAVE

Merchants t

Safeway closing announced 1 day after celebration

By Roberta Landman
Gazette Northwest Bureau

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Warren Tiedeman plays music (left) at Grand Center's anniversary party. A day later Doro

SAVE

VF SC Business Phoenix Gazette Oct 30, 1985

Merchants try to keep store open

Safeway closing announced 1 day after celebration

By Roberta Landman
Gazette Northwest Bureau

SUN CITY — Last Wednesday, Grand Center merchants sponsored music and dancing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the pioneer shopping center.

The next day they were circulat-

ing a petition to prevent the closing of the center's Safeway store, a move they fear could spell the end of the center.

Members of the Grand Center Merchants Association worry that the planned closure of the supermarket will take consumer traffic away from Sun City's first shopping center. Safeway Stores Inc. has announced the store will close Nov. 9 and be converted to a Liquor Barn, also owned by Safeway.

The petition signed by mer-

chants and patrons was to be presented to Safeway this week in the hope that the food store chain would once again change its mind and keep the Grand Center operation a grocery store.

In 1981, pressure from nearby residents stopped a similar planned closure.

Safeway Stores spokesman Mel McCall said closure of the Grand Center store "is simply a matter of economics. It's too small. It's 25 years old and you simply can't

merchandise it the way you can a modern store.

"It's an out-of-date facility that's less than one-third the size of supermarkets today."

McCall said increased competition from other supermarkets in Sun City is also a factor in the decision to close the Grand Center Safeway.

Petitions will not affect the company's decision, McCall said. "We've done a lot of research on it and this is the only decision that makes good sense to do. There's really not anything else we can do."

The conversion of the grocery store to a Liquor Barn does not make sense to people who live in the vicinity, says Pearl Richman, a 17-year Sun City resident.

"They don't need a liquor joint up here, and on top of that we'd lose a place to buy food."

She said she has been calling people and urging them to sign the petition.

"I live within maybe a block and a half of the store," said the 87-year-old.

"We wouldn't have bought it (her house) if there wouldn't have been a grocery store."

Richman said the Del E. Webb Development Co. promotion that persuaded her and her husband to purchase their Sun City home included a guarantee that the shopping center with a place to buy groceries would always be there.

DevCo. sold all of its shopping

See • Center, NW-B



Mark Henle, *The Phoenix Gazette*

Warren Tiedeman plays music (left) at Grand Center's anniversary party. A day later Dorothy

Bonini (above) watches as Pam McClellan signs a petition to keep the center's Safeway store.

Center

From NW-A

centers to Prudential in 1980, said the company's spokesman, Ken Plonski.

Speaking for DevCo.'s chairman of the board, Fred Kuentz, Plonski said, "We were very careful not to stipulate long-term commitments back in 1960.

"Back in 1960, we had no idea if the community would fly or not. We are disappointed to see the Safeway store leave the shopping center.

"As for Webb making a commitment to it, the answer is no," Plonski said.

Jean Painter, owner of Grand Center's Jean's Sportogs and advertising promotion director for the merchants' association, says "pioneer" Sun City people come to her complaining they thought they had such a commitment.

"There are a lot of the original first people around here that moved here because they were guaranteed there'd be a shopping center and a supermarket by Webb Company ...

"A lot of them don't drive anymore ... They depend on this grocery store.

"We have people walking over here from Youngtown to this shopping center.

"It seems to me they could enlarge," Painter said of the Safeway store.

Painter, who has owned her women's clothing and accessories shop for 16 years, admits she is concerned about what the lack of a major food store will do to business for the more than 20 merchants in the shopping complex.

"I feel that I have a good business here, and I hope my customers will still come here." A table with petitions is outside her shop.

Greg Ambers, president of the merchants' association and owner of New Man Hair West for 12 years, said he, too, is concerned about the closure of the Safeway store and its possible effect on business. "There's no question about it. They provide a lot of traffic."

Breathing class set

Gazette Northwest Bureau

SUN CITY — A series of breathing exercise classes for people with bronchitis, emphysema or asthma will be offered Monday through Dec. 2.

The one-hour sessions will meet at 10 a.m. on Mondays and Thurs-

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Residents in favor of new grocery store

By Connie Cone Sexton
The Phoenix Gazette

SUN CITY — A grocery store they could walk to. A store that might provide home delivery. A store with wide aisles. A store with low prices.

To the Sun City residents who had seen several grocery stores in the community close, the talk of things to come seemed too good to be true. Like manna from heaven.

Sun Citian Mark Phillips said almost as much: "I think the spacious store would be a blessing."

His praise was for a proposed 82,000-square-foot grocery store that a company from Salt Lake City wants to build at 107th and Grand avenues.

The Sun City site is one of several in the Valley that Smith's Food and Drug Center wants to move into.

A request for rezoning of the Sun City site is scheduled to be heard by the Maricopa County Planning and Zoning Commission on Thursday.

A restaurant and motel now occupy the corner that Smith's wants in Sun City. Plans call for the Kings Inn Restaurant to stay, the Comfort Inn to be torn down.

Officials from Smith's met last week with area residents and business owners to explain their proposal.

Several residents were worried the project would bring traffic snarls at the intersection.

County officials, who also were at the meeting, said the two avenues already handle a large amount of traffic. The motel is on one side of 107th Avenue, the Grand (shopping) Center, on the other.

Guy Brunetti, who owns the restaurant, said he had mixed emotions about the project, at first, because it meant losing business from

those staying at the motel.

He also was worried how the store would affect the neighborhood. But after looking over the plans, Brunetti said he supports the concept.

"We feed 39,000 people a month. We don't have any traffic jams," he said.

Resident Tom Steele, who lives about three blocks from the site, said he and his neighbors are "very feverishly in favor" of the store. "We're very hungry and very anxious to see a grocery store," he said.

A few years ago, the Safeway in the Grand Center closed its doors and was replaced by the Liquor Barn. More recently, the A.J. Bayless store at 99th and Thunderbird avenues shut its doors.

There are other grocery stores in the area, but not enough, residents said. Safeway, at

See ■ Store, Page B

■ Store

From Page A

107th and Peoria avenues, is the only grocery store south of Grand Avenue in Sun City. There are three stores north of Grand.

During the meeting, several residents said the new store could help revitalize Phase 1 — Sun City homes south of Grand that date back 29 years.

"I'm growing a little weary of hearing that Sun City is dead," Dorothy Tiedeman said.

The Smith's store will anchor the shopping center, which also will include 13,000 square feet of small shops.

Zoning on the motel and restaurant property — 7.3 acres — is commercial, which is adequate for the grocery store. But the center calls for more space, an additional three acres now zoned residential.

Peter Barth, attorney for the food company, said public response to Smith's has been good.

The Utah-based chain owns about 100 stores in eight Western states. In Arizona, Smith's has stores in Kingman, Bullhead City, Prescott, Flagstaff and Tucson.

"We seemed to find a niche that no one else in the marketplace was operating under," he said.

"We've taken a step back to what used to be the old butcher shop with a service merchandise case, baked goods made at the store," Barth said.

The store also will carry non-food items.

Barth said the store may provide electric carts for customers to use while they shop.

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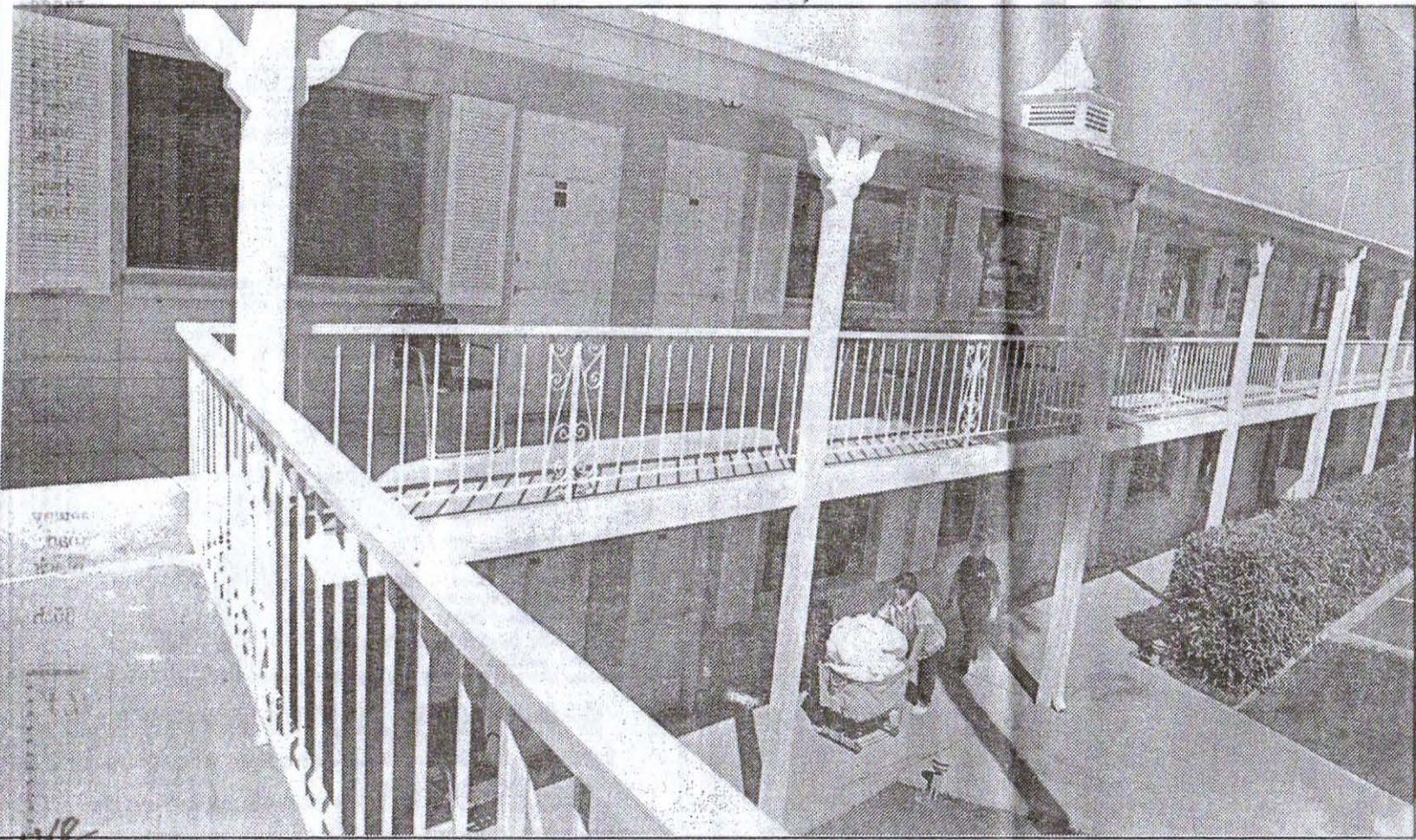
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Sundi Kjenstad, *The Phoenix Gazette*

The Comfort Inn in Sun City might be razed to build a grocery store.

Sun City works to retain businesses

Community at disadvantage since it is unincorporated

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

Sun City continues to struggle retaining businesses and officials, are looking for ways to reverse the trend.

While shopping centers away from major roadways, such as La Ronde and Sun Bowl, have long had trouble keeping spaces full, even high-traffic centers are seeing tenant turnover as the Valley economy continues to fight its way back. Bell Camino, at Bell Road and Del Webb Boulevard, lost two tenants, and the Sun Shadow Square at Bell Road and 99th Avenue also may soon see three spaces go empty.

The empty slots at Bell Camino may be filled quickly, according to Daniel Lupien, KRCV leasing agent.

"We have a couple of good leads for execution," he said. "But until the deals are final and they are ready to release information, I can't share who they are."

He added there are plenty of tenant opportunities out there.

"The Bell Camino center is in a good position because CVS and Safeway are doing well, and that draws a lot of traffic," Mr. Lu-

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Paul Herrmann, Sun City Visitors Center director and Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce board member, said all centers along Bell Road have the advantage of being located along a major traffic artery.

"That is a key because of the traffic, and it brings more than just Sun City residents," he said.

However, centers in other areas of the community suffer from reduced visibility, Mr. Herrmann added.

Sun City as a whole suffers in terms of drawing business because it is an unincorporated area of Maricopa County and does not have full-time staff for economic development, according to Mr. Herrmann. He is trying to find someone with that background to volunteer their time and efforts in that arena for the community.

Sun City is within the Surprise Chamber's sphere of influence, but the Chamber is not active in recruiting new businesses.

"The Chamber's only involvement in

See Retain — Page 17

making them harder to locate," Mr. Ankiwicz said.

He said the Youngtown publication will serve as a model for future directories. However, adjustments will be made for specific communities.

"Youngtown has different challenges than Sun City," he said. "Our goal is to find ways to bring customers to the businesses."

Mr. Ankiwicz said the business directories are viewed as economic development tools to help build businesses. He also believes community businesses, including competitors, should work together.

"Success breeds success," he said.
News Editor Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com.

moved to Surprise several years ago, will local medical offices in the anchor spaces, while moving existing retail businesses to other areas of the center.

The Surprise Chamber is preparing to launch a project that could help businesses increase their visibility, especially those off the beaten path. Jerry Ankiwicz, Chamber board member, said a business directory for Youngtown is being published and is expected to be distributed in the fall. The publication will include all town businesses, while an online component will include only Chamber members. He added Chamber officials have already begun to compile a similar directory for Sun City.

"We did the one for Youngtown because all of their businesses are on side streets,

too many shopping centers.
"When the community was new, it might have worked. But now there are so many other opportunities in the cities around us," he said. "We don't really need 16 shopping centers."

Search for customers

He advocates looking at other uses for spaces in some of the centers. In a previous interview he suggested a call center at one location because that type of business did not rely on retail traffic and had a willing workforce of retirees needing to supplement their income through short shifts.

Some center owners are looking at different uses. Owners of Thunderbird Plaza, which has struggled since Trader Joe's

Retain

Continued From Page 1

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Municipalities such as Surprise and El Mirage have staff members dedicated to business recruitment, but Sun City and Sun City West must rely on volunteer efforts and what little attention they get from Maricopa County Economic Development Department and Greater Phoenix Economic Development Council. But those agencies cover a vast area and Sun City's and Sun City West's needs get lost in the shuffle.

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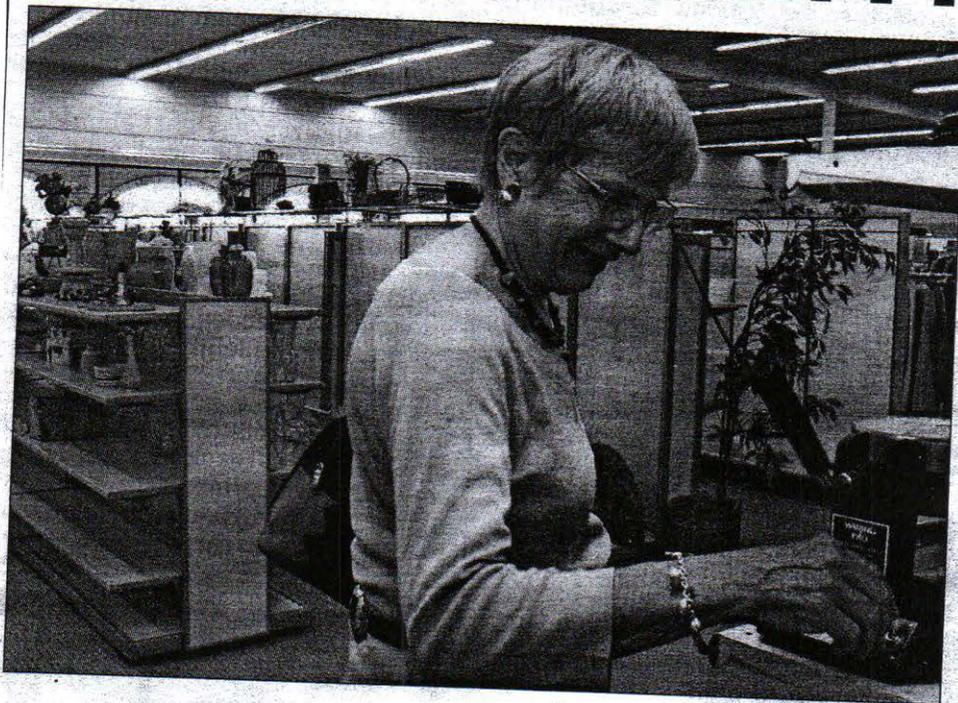
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Thrift store anchors Sun Bowl Plaza



Audrey Schander of Surprise shops at the We Are Family Thrift Store in Sun City Thursday. The store's inventory includes surplus or overstocked items from major department stores.

ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Larry and Audrey Schanders walked through the We Are Family Thrift store looking at everything from wedding gowns to furniture.

The Schanders said they remember when the store, which opened two weeks ago in the Sun Bowl Plaza on the southeast corner of 107th and Peoria avenues, was a Safeway, then a furniture retailer. They were amazed at the transformation and the items inside.

"This is so nice, and it's in a very good location to be with a lot of great merchandise," said Larry Schanders. "I'm so glad they're here and operating in the area."

Bob Thomas, manager of the thrift store, said sales benefit We Are Family International Inc., which provides the needs of the poor locally, nationally and in foreign countries.

Thomas said the organization, which is headquartered in Tempe,

SEE THRIFT, A5

THRIFT

FROM A1

has a thrift store in Mesa, but chose to have a West Valley location, as well.

Many of the items in the store are donated by residents. The inventory also includes surplus or overstocked items from a number of widely known department stores.

"We take a number of donations from churches, individuals, companies and stores," Thomas said. "It doesn't really matter as it's good quality."

Besides furniture and clothing, We Are Family Thrift Store also sells other items, such as

shampoos and lotions, at discount prices.

More than 75 volunteers help in a number of capacities from sorting to delivery of furniture.

In addition, the store has extra rooms if service organizations such as the Lions or Rotary Clubs would like to meet there.

"We're really glad to be here and be a part of this center," he said.

The goal is to be good neighbors and provide good service to people who are in need, Thomas said.

With the arrival of We Are Family thrift store, the retail center is at full capacity. Occupants include Bow Wow Pet Grooming, Miss Tina's Petite Boutique, Sun

City Barbershop, Dollar General, Edward Jones Investment and Tender Mercy Fellowship.

Luiuda Gashaera, who has owned the Sun Bowl Barbershop for 11 years in the center, said she's very happy the thrift store opened its doors.

"It brings life back into the center because no one has been in the old grocery store for awhile," she said. "I believe it could benefit us all."

Gashaera said she noticed more activity when the Dollar General Store opened, but expects even more shoppers with the thrift store.

"They are in the perfect location, because right across the street on the other corners are the other thrift stores," she said.

VF-50
BUSINESS

Sun City Manor developer files for bankruptcy protection

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A housing developer with plans to build homes behind Sunland Mortuary in Sun City has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

Bill Pearson of the Sun City Home Owner's Association said SCHOA received a trustee's bill of sale, which shows Bryan Cave LLP in Phoenix represented M & I Bank in the NamWest acquisition proceedings. James Wood, a spokesman for Bryan Cave LLP said his group was not able to comment on the situation. NamWest, a Cave Creek builder, partially built the Montecito Estates in El Mirage before declaring bankruptcy.

No homes have been built in Sun City Manor, but walls, streets and some infrastructure were placed in the subdivision next door to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Posse office. Pearson said SCHOA has received some calls from residents who want to know about the status of the subdivision.

NamWest had agreed to pay SCHOA \$500 for every home built, Pearson said, according to an agreement between the association and the developer.

NamWest didn't return phone calls from the Daily News-Sun.

Pearson said many residents have com-

SEE MANOR, A5

MANOR: 140 homes slated for Sun City site

FROM A1

plained about the upkeep of the property, which is scattered with weeds.

"It's actually beginning to look like a jungle back there and seems really shabby," he said.

The 140 homes that are supposed to be featured in Sun City Manor were to range from 1,568 to 1,822 square feet. Some units would

have separate casitas and extra space for golf cars in the garage.

The bankruptcy filing could be attributed to falling housing market, Pearson said.

In 2005, NamWest opened Montecito Estates east of El Mirage Boulevard and north of Thompson Ranch and Greenway roads but hadn't finished the subdivision before its financial problems.

Friday, February 6, 2009

www.yourwestvalley.com

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Business

A11

Business sparkles for Sun City jewelry store

JOY SLAGOWSKI
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When Irving Setterberg opened his jewelry store in Sun City, he started a family business that has thrived for 40 years:

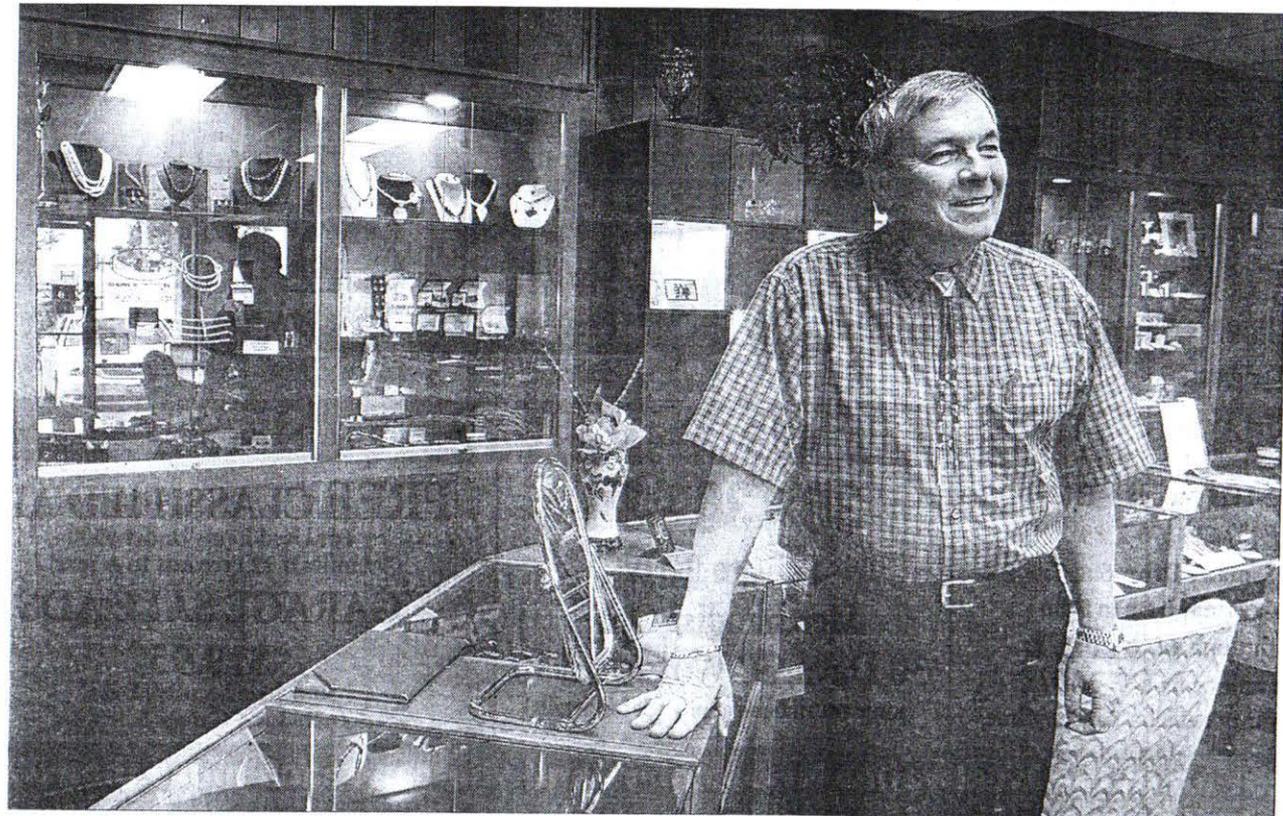
Though Irving died in 2006, the family tradition has been carried on at the store at 9885 W. Bell Road. The business is owned by Irving's son, Rick, and Irving's daughter, Marian Setterberg Tobin, and sister, Betty Setterberg Barnes also work there.

The store carries a selection of gold jewelry, diamonds and gemstones and watches. It offers both jewelry and watch repair.

Estate jewelry sales — where individual sellers may sell their heirlooms at the store on consignment — are a big hit.

"Dad started that as a little outlet for people who could leave things in our store on a consignment basis," Rick Setterberg said. "It's very popular. We have about 100 people selling items here. That's where we get a lot of our platinum jewelry, from old estates."

Setterberg also is playing host to an estate sale today until 5 p.m. The sale features Victorian, art deco, retro and designer pieces from a



ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Rick Setterberg is the owner of Setterberg Jewelers in Sun City. The local business was started by his father in 1968.

private company from New York.

"It's a fabulous collection," Setterberg said. "And it will be at all price levels."

After 40 years, Setterberg said his father's desire to provide personalized service remains a hallmark of the store.

"We came from a small town atmosphere in Cokato, Minnesota," he said. "And my dad always ran it like small town's own full-service jewelry store."

Rick said his father stressed customer service.

"That's what he prided himself in, doing everything he can for the customer to make them happy," Setterberg said. "And we have no high-pressure sales."

He said his father first got into the jewelry business in Arizona when he answered an ad for jewelry store owner, Paul Johnson. Johnson owned four stores in the Phoenix area, and Irving Setterberg became a partner in November 1968.

He opened the Sun City store, at that time as a Paul Johnson jewelry store. In 1980 Irving branched out

on his own, Rick Setterberg said, when he wanted to scale down the operation.

As the economic downturn causes some businesses to suffer, the jewelry store continues to remain largely unaffected, Setterberg said.

"It's been pretty steady because of our repair business," he said. "We do a large amount of repair, which keeps the door swinging open both ways. And we have a lot of customers who have been with us for years."

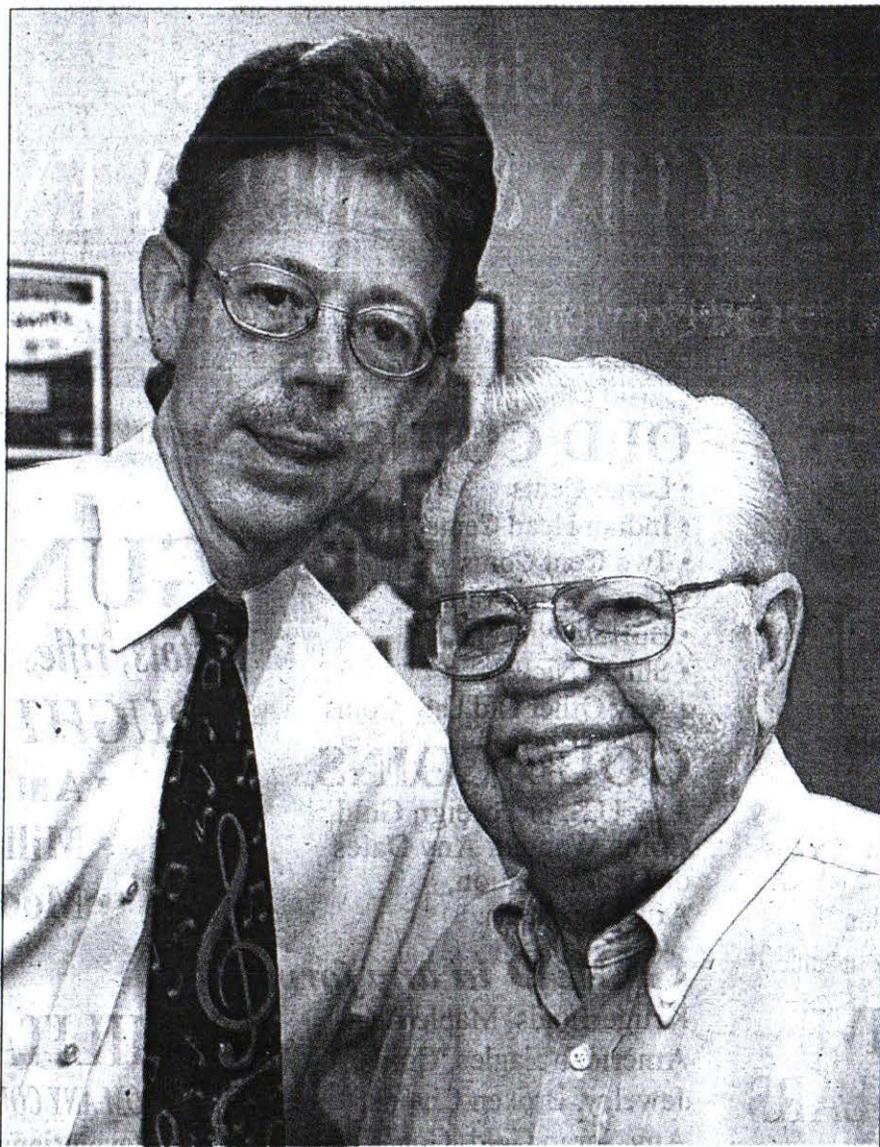
'You can't lose by treating people right.'

SC VF

BUSINESS

DAILY NEWS October 25, 2008

Success in Sun City



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Steve and Ken Meade celebrate 25 years of real estate business in the Northwest Valley retirement communities this week. Steve is the president of the company his father founded.

Ken Meade Realty marks 25 years

ERIN TURNER
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Ken Meade sat across the conference room and shared subtle tricks to solicit the response he wanted from others:

Smile when first meeting someone because a smile is "disarming."

Follow the Golden Rule.

Make a big deal about someone when they've done a good job.

Tricks a beloved coach or teacher might use on a young athlete or pupil. Fittingly, Ken Meade is more like a coach or teacher than a successful Realtor and owner of Ken Meade Realty. His knack for building rapport is as obvious as his love for what he does. His insistence on treating people with dignity has perhaps been his biggest asset.

In Ken Meade's own words, his business started 25 years ago almost by accident. Meade was fired from managing another real estate firm in Sun City (possibly, he believes, because he was getting all the attention for being such a success) and he was persuaded into starting his own company by several former co-workers, who appreciated his knack for cultivating

ing personal relationships.

"I got a couple of people who called and said, 'Why don't you start your own company? We'll all go with you,'" he said. "We had a meeting — and I always say it was kind of like the French underground. Everybody parked their cars down the street. There were about eight or 10 of us and they were all gung-ho about start your own company."

So on Oct. 23, 1983, Ken Meade Realty began with 15 agents and a snazzy copy machine.

"That was enough momentum for me to want to do it," he said. "Because there were 15 or 16 of them talking about definitely joining me. It was just about 30 days after I got fired that we started Ken Meade Realty."

The first few months rattled by slowly. At times the company had only one listing and when that would sell, it would be without any listings at all, Ken recalled with a laugh, something he does often.

"The very first listing we got was on Caron (Drive), on the very south end of town. I went with (the agent) when

SEE MEADE, A8

MEADE: The customer's always right

FROM A1

"We went for the listing," he said. "The guy said to us, 'What makes you think you can sell this house when you've just got two agents?' I said, 'Well, you just watch us. You just watch what happens. We've got nothing else to concentrate on but this house.' So he listed the house with us. We sold the house in about a week and we were without a listing again."

While not immediately a huge success, the camaraderie the employees in his young company shared foreshadowed and in many ways played a part in the success to come.

"We had virtually no friction between the agents, which is kind of marvelous. We're still lucky to this day. They really work together," he said. "That internal glow was what attracted other agents to the company. (The) enthusiasm, I think, helped make it grow."

Soon, agents were making sales to the tune of \$1 million annually, no small feat considering home prices in the mid 1980s, said Ken's son, Steve, who is the current president of the company.

"My father was a very knowledgeable sales person and he taught it very well. So many of those early people had very good success," Steve said. "By today's standards a million dollars might not sound that great but when the price of homes were \$40,000 average sale, that was good in those times. Most of those early salespeople had pretty good success under my father."

And the growing success of the company, resulting in large part from the principles Ken Meade advocates, soon meant that it permeated the market in Sun City and Sun City West. The once small business of 15 Realtors continued to attract more Realtors, clients and positive accolades.

"The fifth year was the first year we didn't gain at the end of the year. I thought, it's the fifth year and we're gonna go down the drain. But the next year it took off again and it's been up every year except a couple of years ago," he said. "It's far exceeded anything I've ever dreamt of."

Now Ken Meade Realty boasts five offices in Sun City, Sun City West and Sun City Grand, about 300 agents and around 3,800 annual home sales.

Deserved success for a man who built a business on professionalism, honesty and integrity.

"When you do a decent job, people will go to bat for you. They will really talk positively about the way you treated them and the way you handled it," Ken said. "The customer's always right. That was my philosophy. If you treat the customer that way, you will

always have a customer. You can't lose by treating people right."

Steve Meade said he strives to handle the business with the same integrity.

"My father would always say, 'The name on the sign is Ken Meade Realty and I live in Sun City West. I don't want to be introduced to people and hear them say they had problems with Ken Meade Realty. We have to make sure that everything gets done so I can walk around and feel good about having that name on the sign,'" he said. "Still, 25 years later, I always tell (agents) who come into the company that piece of it. I think the greatest thing we give them is not training, it's that reputation."

"I've learned a lot of things, a lot of places, but my father is my biggest influence."

Philanthropy is something Ken Meade practices as well. He's donated his time and thousands of dollars over the years to various local charitable groups and events and nationally to victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina. Most recently, he donated \$200,000 to a playground for Interfaith's new Hellen and John Jacobs Independence Center in Surprise in honor of his wife, Alice, who passed away. The playground, which is part of the large, facility that is to open around December, will be called, "Alice's Wonderland."

"I've just contributed \$200,000 to Interfaith because Alice loved kids and so the playground is for Alice," Ken said. "Everything in Surprise is children. It's intergenerational so that all the older people have a place to go. Women live longer than men and they still love kids. They're working the children into the program at Interfaith."

Though mostly retired in theory, Ken Meade still participates several days a week in the business. Steve has taken over most of the responsibilities and someday, perhaps, his two sons will have a hand in the widely respected real estate company their grandfather built.

After surpassing all expectations and preparing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his company, Ken Meade still retains his down-to-earth attitude and sense of humor.

"I'm the luckiest guy in the world. How many people get fired into the job where they're gonna make millions of dollars," he said, flashing a bright smile, something for which he is a staunch advocate.

Ken Meade Realty may be reached at 1-800-621-1777 or by visiting www.kenmeaderealty.com.

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Trader Joe's shutter Sun City store

Gloria Petersen said Monday she's happy Trader Joe's is opening a store closer to her home in Sun City West. She discovered Trader Joe's 12 years ago when she moved to Sun City, and has continued to make the drive after moving a few years ago because she prefers Trader Joe's products.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

fresh&easy slates openings in Peoria, El Mirage

JEFF DEMPSEY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When Trader Joe's closes its doors Thursday night, it will be for the last time.

The store has been serving the community for 14 years, but with the chain's new location in Surprise set to open, Sun City residents will be left to find other options.

"I was very sad to hear the news," said Anna Klein, a Sun City resident and frequent shop-

per. "I remember hearing they were going to leave a while ago, but I guess I just forgot. Now that it's happening, I don't know what I'm going to do."

Rumors of the store closing began to spread in November 2007. In May, a petition to keep the store — boasting more than 1,500 signatures — was handed over to Trader Joe's and the shopping plaza's operating company, Wessex Commercial Management.

"Unfortunately, it didn't do any good," said Todd Hetzel, assistant store manager. "It's just a business thing, you know?"

For shoppers such as Klein, however, it is anything but business.

"This hurts. It hurts really bad," Klein said. "I've grown very attached to Trader Joe's, and I know I'm not the only one."

Brady Byers, a Trader Joe's employee, said the reaction from customers has been universally negative.

"Everyone is really disappointed to hear it," Byers said. "I think

it hits our customers harder than most, too."

Byers said many of the customers at that location have mobility issues, and asking them to go to Surprise is a hard sell.

"A lot of them are from group homes," Byers said. "They come in here by bus in a big group, so it's convenient for them. Transportation is an issue for them."

The new Trader Joe's location will be at 14095 W. Grand Ave., roughly 7 miles from the current store.

But shoppers who

SEE TRADER JOE'S, A5

TRADER JOE'S:

Customers consider options

FROM A1

want to stay closer to home and are willing to try something else will soon have a new option. fresh&easy will be opening two new stores in the coming weeks, one in Peoria at 91st Avenue and Union Hills Road and one in El Mirage at Dysart and Greenway roads. fresh&easy is a neighborhood market chain, and Klein said it may be the option she and others are looking for.

"I've been to one of those before, and I liked it a lot. But I love Trader Joe's," Klein said. "I want to stay loyal to them, but I might have to consider going somewhere else."

Monday morning, employees had maps to the new location in Surprise ready for those who asked, but Hetzel

agreed that many customers simply will not be able to go there.

"We are encouraging people to go to our new location, but we do understand that traveling that far might be a problem," Hetzel said.

Another Trader Joe's is located at 7720 W. Bell Road in Glendale, an option Klein said she might also consider.

"Those of us who really want to shop at Trader Joe's are just going to have to get creative," Klein said. "Maybe organize car pools or something."

Either way, Klein said, when her favorite store closes at 6 p.m. Thursday, she'll be there.

"I have to make at least one last trip. Or maybe two or three."

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Retail endurance

Longtime shops at Bell Camino survive with hometown service

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Terry Wishner and his longtime business partner, Lou Kuretsky, have watched a pet store, camera shop and restaurants move in and out of Bell Camino Shopping Center in Sun City.

For 18 years, the two owners have operated Abbott's Men's Store, one of the original shops to remain in the center. The strip mall has been celebrating its 30th anniversary this year with a number of locally owned businesses.

"Things change so much, but we're still here serving our customers," Wishner said.

Though the years, there has been different owners, but Stone's Shoes, A.R. Wilde Jewelry and Abbott's are the last three of the original stores at the center.

Wishner bought Abbott's 20 years ago from the original owner, who originally had the store at Christown Mall in central Phoenix.

The store moved to Bell Camino Shopping Center, where Wishner and Kuretsky took over and added a tailor



ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Gregory Meyers, owner of Stone's Shoes, right, helps his customer, Mildred Decker, in his store. The store was one of the original shops opened in Bell Camino Shopping Center in Sun City 30 years ago.

shop.

They said they have always loved the personality of the center and the residents who regularly shop at the store.

Greg Meyers, owner of Stone's Shoes, said he remembers when Bell Camino was one of a few shopping centers in the Sun Cities. Due to business

and residential growth, the demographics have changed quite a bit over the decades, he said.

"I remember when the younger seniors used to shop here, but the average age now is between 70 to 75 years old," he said.

Anita R. Wilde, owner of A.R. Wilde Fine Jewelry, said the

shopping center and some of its store owners consider themselves to be part of the neighborhood.

"It's almost like a small town because many of us pride ourselves in having great customer service, which you don't often get at a lot of chain stores," she said.



Anita R. Wilde, owner of A.R. Wilde Fine Jewelry, in her store in Bell Camino Shopping Center says the secret to surviving in Sun City is good customer service.

ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The secret to A.R. Wilde Fine Jewelry's longevity, she said, has always been customer service and friendliness.

"We're a part of many of our customers' lives because we try to go above and beyond," she said. "I've received new customers because of the great word of mouth."

One of Wilde's customers, Hope Simpson, has been a patron of the jewelry store since it opened.

"I've been friends with her for a long time," said Simpson. "(Wilde) used to work at another jewelry store in Sun City before she branched out on her own."

Simpson has had all of her jewelry designed by Wilde.

"There isn't a thing that Anita doesn't know about jewelry," said Simpson. "She knows this business like the back of her hand, that's for sure."

Meyers said he's witnessed numerous businesses start well but eventually leave the center. Harsh economic times, he said, have caused many "mom and

SEE SERVICE, A5



ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Terry Wishner, with his partner, Lou Kuretsky, have been owners of Abbott's Men's Shop for 18 years. Their store was one of the original shops opened in Bell Camino Shopping Center in Sun City.

SERVICE: Bell Camino shops ring up sales for 30 years

FROM A1

pop" shops to fold.

Stone's Shoes, along with several other stores have lasted, even as large chains continue to be built in the area.

"We've seen some of our business decline as things continue to grow, but we're always going to keep fighting to be here as long as we can," Wishner said, adding he'll continue "to offer in my own way good prices and customer

services."

Terry Weatherly, a Sun City West resident, discovered Bell Camino Shopping Center and Abbott's in 2000 when he moved from Peoria, Ill., to Arizona.

"I was actually driving down the street when I noticed the shopping center," he said. "I noticed Abbott's, which was very similar to a store back in Illinois."

Weatherly said he's pleased with the service from Abbott's and Stone's Shoes, where he said

he shops at quite often.

"I've gone to department stores, but they're just not as personal as the stores at Bell Camino."

Simpson said she's proud the shopping center has lasted 30 years and hopes it continues.

"It's still going strong as ever, and we must support it because it's a part of our neighborhood," Simpson said.

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IGA to close, faces another move

ANNIE BOON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

For Marie Luise Kahuda of Sun City, the relocation of the Butcher and Farmer's Market in La Ronde Center means she must once again shop for a new grocery store.

"This will be terrible. I won't really know what to do," Kahuda said Monday after learning that the store would be announcing its relocation today. "I suppose I'll have to cross Grand Avenue to go to a big store just to get the little items I could get here. I don't want to do that."

Kahuda initially was a loyal customer at the Sun Foods IGA off 99th Avenue and Greenway Road until it closed in 2003 and moved its stock to the Del Webb Boulevard and Talisman Road location, which became known as the Butcher and Farmer's Market.

"IGA already moved from Greenway, so I had to come here," Kahuda said. "And it's moving again? This is not good news."

The market's relocation announcement advertises 25 percent off everything during an inventory reduction sale. But information about its new location was not released. Store officials would not say where or why it's relocating, but indicated that the business is not closing.

The relocation news did not sit well with Christine Major of Sun City.

"It's been so handy to have it right here," she said, complimenting the store's deli and produce departments. She hopes to soon learn where the store will relocate to, but said proximity is key. "I'll go there, too, if it's not too far."

Mobil broker confident

Closed stations should sell

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

No replacement businesses have been found yet for three Mobil stations in the Sun Cities, but clarification of what can locate at the sites may bring renewed interest.

Mindy Korth, senior vice president with Trammell Crow Co., which is the exclusive broker for ExxonMobil in Arizona, said ExxonMobil officials last week clarified their restrictions on use of the property.

"We've been showing the properties pretty regularly to both users who would want to reopen them as service stations and gas stations, and those who would use them for other uses," Korth said.

Korth said she had seen some early interest from prospective buyers who wanted to use the properties for health-care facilities, but she believed that kind of use was forbidden under ExxonMobil's environmental policies due to the long-term storage of gasoline at the sites.

"I had a lot of people contact me early on and they were discouraged because we had this clause in our flier that said no medical uses," she said.

Korth said ExxonMobil officials have since clarified they will allow the properties to be used for medical

From A1

facilities as long as they do not involve patients staying overnight. Trammel Crow's marketing fliers have since been changed and more interest is cropping up, Korth said.

"Given that these facilities are in proximity to other health-care facilities, we are making sure those involved in health care are aware that these are there (for sale)," she said.

Buyers would have to sign a contract stating they understand the properties can never be used for

Fyi

■ SUN CITY:

- 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard: Closed.
- Del Webb and Thunderbird boulevards: Closed.
- 99th Avenue and Bell Road (Mobile on the Run): Open.

■ SUN CITY WEST:

- Camino del Sol and R.H. Johnson: Closed.
- Meeker and Camino del Sol boulevards: Lease extended through June; owner plans to relocate to R.H. Johnson location.

anything involving overnight stays.

Korth said previously she

hoped the three stations — two in Sun City and one in Sun City West — would be sold by the first quarter of 2005. She still believes the properties will sell soon, and likely to different buyers rather than a single group.

"I'm pretty encouraged. We don't have anything right now, but we're hopeful."

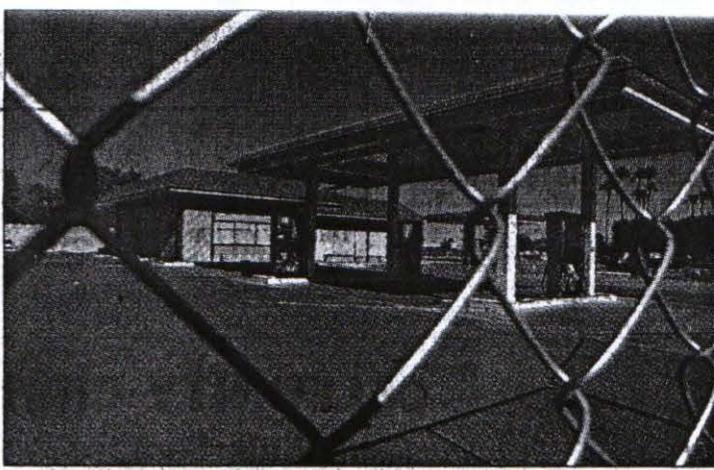
In Sun City West, the owner of an independently operated Mobil at Meeker and Camino del Sol boulevards has finalized negotiations to move to the community's closed Mobil station, at Camino del Sol and R.H. Johnson Boulevard, said Chuck

Ullman, president of the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association.

"The negotiations are complete, but he can't move over until the state goes through its environmental check," Ullman said.

The environmental review has not yet begun, Ullman said, and the owner has received an extension on his existing lease through June. The lease previously was set to expire at the end of March.

Ullman said the owner plans to close one of the two service bays at the R.H. Johnson station and add a wash rack.



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Fencing surrounds this Mobil at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard in Sun City that closed Oct. 8.

ExxonMobil broker looks for buyers

HOA, PORA quizzical

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Three former Mobil stations in the Sun Cities will remain shuttered into the first quarter of 2005, but the properties' broker said she hopes to have buyers lined up soon.

"My hope is we'll be able to get them back as gas stations with service bays to continue serving the community," said Mindy Korth, senior vice president with Trammell Crow Co., the exclusive broker for ExxonMobil in Arizona.

"Our company works on behalf of ExxonMobil not only nationally but internationally," said Korth, whose company represents about 20 Mobil stations in Arizona that closed recently. That includes two in Sun City and one in Sun City West. A Mobil on the Run Station at 99th Avenue and Bell Road in Sun City remains open.

Korth's estimated timetable for selling the properties contrasts with what Sun Cities' officials believe will be happening. Board directors with the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association and Sun City Home Owners Association

said they had heard Mobil planned on keeping the stations closed and surrounded by temporary fences for three years.

PORA President Chuck Ullman said the owner of the station at Meeker Boulevard and Camino del Sol had agreed to move to the former Mobil at R.H. Johnson Boulevard and Camino del Sol, leaving the former site empty.

"Mobil will keep it boarded up for three years to get a tax write-off," Ullman said. "I think it behooves us to take a stance."

Ullman said he plans on having PORA officials talk with legislators "about how this is not the best thing for our community."

PORA Director Lou Goldman suggested Ullman formulate a plan with HOA officials since Sun City also has Mobil stations.

HOA President Jim Corcoran said he, too, had heard the stations would remain closed for three years.

"I tried to call the people who had them up for sale. I've tried three times and I can't get a hold of them," he said. "Ask them why they're

From A1

not returning the Sun City Home Owners Association's calls."

Due to his inability to get a hold of Trammell Crow officials, Corcoran said, he and HOA President-elect Tom Stolt would be writing a letter to ExxonMobil's headquarters.

"We're going to write and tell them it's not a good idea," he said.

Korth scoffed at the suggestion that the stations might remain closed for three years.

"Not if I have anything to do with it," she said.

She said ExxonMobil's closing of the Arizona stations was "a natural phenomenon. It's not at all unusual as the sites get too small and they're not large enough to handle the (growing businesses)."

She didn't have a time

MOBILS

- Closed: Thunderbird and Del Webb boulevards, Sun City.
- Closed: 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard, Sun City.
- Trading places: R.H. Johnson and Camino del Sol site expected to be taken over by station owner at Meeker Boulevard and Camino del Sol in Sun City West, leaving the latter property vacant.
- Open: Mobil on the Run at 99th Avenue and Greenway Road.

frame for when the stations might reopen, but said her company is focusing on 2004 closings right now and will begin concentrating on the Sun Cities stations in the first quarter of 2005.

"It becomes a complicated process when you're talking about tanks and transfer of tanks," she said.

Korth said there already are internal negotiations for selling the Sun City West

station, but she couldn't confirm whether it was with the owner of the nearby gas station. The Sun City stations have also had preliminary interest from potential buyers, she said.

Corcoran said the Mobil at Del Webb and Thunderbird boulevards was the first Sun Cities Mobil to close, and it "started becoming a little bit of an eyesore."

"You let it sit long enough and weeds come up," Corcoran said. "When you start to close businesses, you start creating a problem."

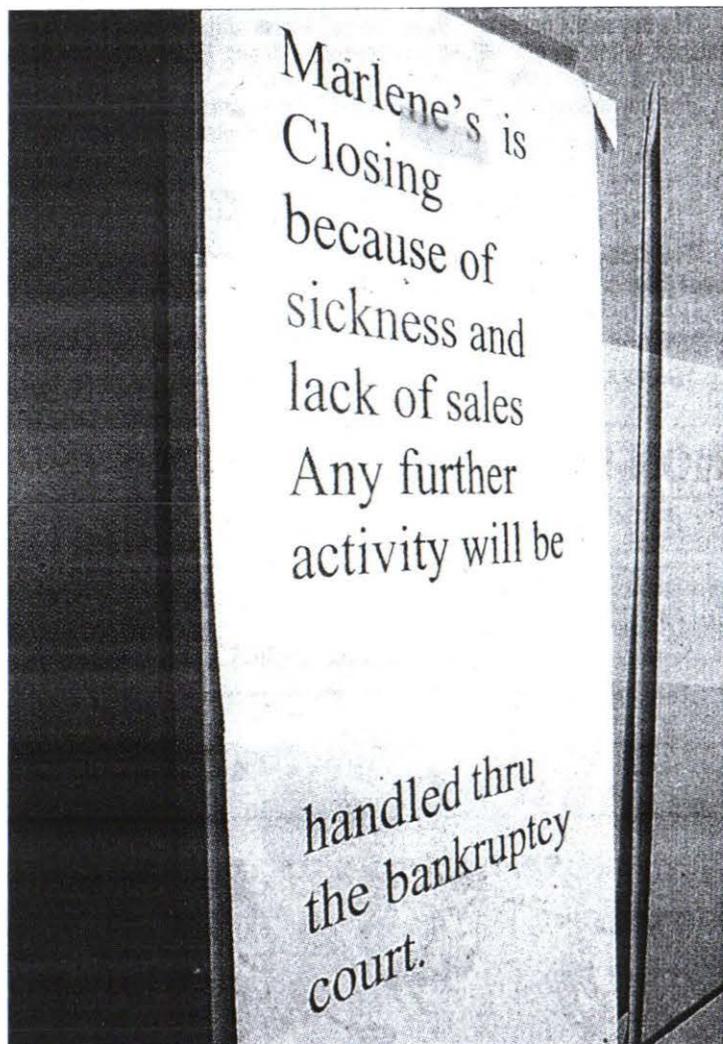
Korth said Trammell Crow has a national contract with a company to maintain the closed properties.

"If we get calls — because we have our signs up, people call us — we just call them and say, 'Hey, you guys need to get back out there.' It gets to be a bit of a problem," she said.

Shop closes, consignors jilted

BUSINESS

VF



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

This sign is posted at Marlene's in the Thunderbird Plaza at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard in Sun City.

Complaints filed with BBB

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Another Northwest Valley consignment store has gone out of business, leaving customers wondering where their property has gone and sheriff's officials warning consignors to pay close attention to their contracts.

Marlene's Boutique, 13628 N. 99th Ave., posted a sign a couple weeks ago stating the business was closing because of "sickness and lack of sales."

Sun City West resident Donna Reed said she dropped off 27 items at Marlene's on May 29 for consignment, but has yet to receive any income or any of her clothes back. The items were valued at \$417 and were due for pick up Sept. 1.

"I went back often and I didn't see any of the stuff there, so I assumed it sold because it was good Liz Claiborne-type stuff," she said.

Each time she visited the store, Reed said, staff members told her the manager, Karen Swanson-Shunk, was not on the premises or was



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN FILE PHOTO

Karen Swanson-Shunk surrounds herself in fur when her shop, Marlene's, opened in December 2002 in the Thunderbird Plaza shopping center in Sun City.

unavailable, or that the computer wasn't working.

"Whenever I went in there, there was always an excuse," Reed said. "I just had a sense months ago that something wasn't right."

Swanson-Shunk and her husband, George Shunk, could not be reached for comment. Calls to two numbers listed for Marlene's went unanswered and a residential phone number could not be found. Reed said she tried to contact the couple at their Sun City home recently and

found a moving truck there.

Although the sign on Marlene's entrance states, "Any further activity will be handled through bankruptcy court," the Daily News-Sun could find no record of the company filing for bankruptcy through the Voice Case Information System of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, District of Arizona. A separate Chapter 7 filing for Karen Ann Shunk exists from 1996.

Marlene's incorporated on Oct. 6, 2003, according to the Arizona Corporation

Commission. It has an unsatisfactory record with the Better Business Bureau "due to unanswered complaints."

The Department of Revenue placed a lien on Marlene's and all other property owned by the Shunks Oct. 28, 2003, because of more than \$10,000 in back taxes and unpaid penalties, according to records with the Maricopa County Recorder's Office.

Reed said her concern was

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OVER

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piqued when she heard about another consignment store, Sun City Estates and Consignments, 10725 W. Peoria Ave., that went out of business without returning items to consignors. The owner of that store, Joan Picha, attempted to reopen a store in Youngtown recently, but did so without a license, according to town officials. Picha now faces a Dec. 9 court date for operating without a business license, according to Youngtown Municipal Court administrator Petra Mendez.

Ken Rice, Youngtown's code compliance inspector, said he cited Picha Sept. 13 for operating a business in the town without a license. The charge is a misdemeanor felony punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$2,500 fine, said Youngtown Police Chief Dan Connelly.

"We've never put anybody in jail because of this," Connelly said.

Connelly said the business license requirement is an important one because it protects residents from fly-by-night businesses.

"This is not uncommon for

'People need to be very careful and pay close attention to the contracts that they sign. Unfortunately, people aren't paying close attention to the contracts. Morally, ethically, yeah, they're a victim, but prosecutorially, it doesn't qualify.'

**Detective Chris Osborn,
Maricopa County Sheriff's
Office, District III in Surprise**

people to do this and then they pack up their things and do it elsewhere," Connelly said. "That's one of the reasons we require business licenses here."

Rice said he's been in Youngtown about three years and never had a similar problem with a business.

"Everybody's real honest," he said. "We just don't have problems like that with our businesses."

Rice said the problem with Picha began a few weeks prior to the citation being written when he found Picha working on her store and told her she needed to get a license. A few days later, he

said, she still hadn't gotten one, and a couple days after that, she said she wasn't going to open the business. Rice, however, found out she had already had a sale there.

Mendez said an arrest warrant had been issued for Picha, who lives in Glendale, after she didn't appear for her original trial. Picha told the court the notice was sent to the former Youngtown business rather than her residence, so the court quashed the warrant and rescheduled the trial, Mendez said.

Detective Chris Osborn with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office District III substation in Surprise said detectives are investigating the situation with Sun City Estates and Consignments, and sheriff's officials have received complaints from residents who had items on consignment there. There have been no complaints involving Marlene's, he added.

Osborn said he's been with the District III substation almost four years and this is the first time he's heard of a consignment store closing without giving word to clients. He said the fact there's

been two in recent weeks appears to be a coincidence, but it should provide a warning for residents.

"People need to be very careful and pay close attention to the contracts that they sign," he said. "Unfortunately, people aren't paying close attention to the contracts. Morally, ethically, yeah, they're a victim, but prosecutorially, it doesn't qualify."

Osborn said people who think they are victims can contact the Better Business Bureau or pursue relief through a civil lawsuit in the courts.

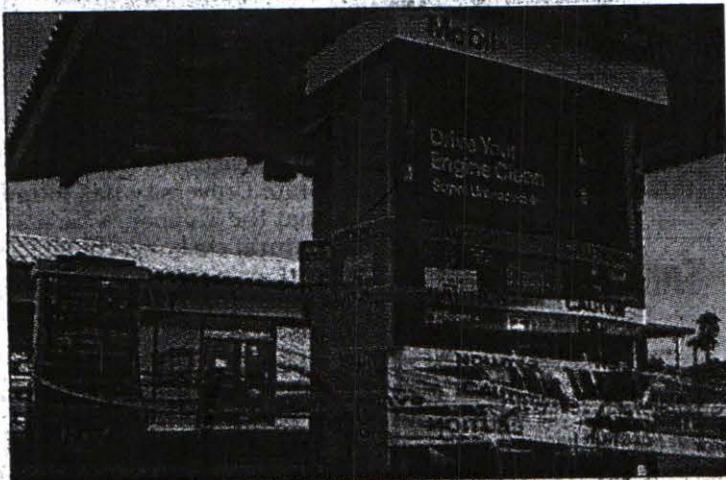
"If it was me, I would definitely get very aggressive with a lawyer," he said.

Reed said she believes she'll never again see her consigned clothes or the profits from them, but she won't stop consigning items.

"I've used them before in the past in other places and always done well," she said.

Reed said her past experiences usually involved stores that gave proceeds to charities.

"I think I'll stay away from those run by individuals in the future," she said.



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Clarence's Mobil gas station at R.H. Johnson and Camino Del Sol in Sun City West was one of many Valley Mobil stations to shutdown.

Mobil pulls out of area to chagrin of owners, patrons

AMANDA MYERS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

It's time to gas up and get out if you prefer pulling into a Mobil station in the Sun Cities. Most of them will be shut down by the end of the year — if they haven't shut down already — and owners and employees have been left without much warning or many answers.

Mike Egbert of Glendale used to own the Mobil station on Thunderbird and Del Webb Boulevard in Sun City, until Exxon, the company that owns Mobil, gave him 90 days notice of his closing in January.

"They screwed me out of a quarter of a million dollars," said the angry 55-year-old, who lost his wife to brain cancer less than a year and half prior.

Now, Egbert runs Mike's Sun City Auto Care on Grand Avenue, in hopes of making back his retirement funds.

"I'll have to work until the day I die," said Egbert, adding, "Which is fine with me — I like to work anyway."

While Exxon-Mobil corporate officials did not return phone calls regarding the situation, Egbert said he was told the oil and gas conglomerate was shutting down nearly 40 stations throughout Arizona because of low revenues.

Egbert claims Mobil raised gas prices at his station almost 9 cents higher than the state average earlier this year, then claimed that its volume of sales was decreasing.

"It's a joke," said Egbert, who says he can't sue them because no lawyer will take on the case.

"They haven't even settled Valdez yet because it's cheaper for them to (continue to) pay the lawyers

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then pay the settlement," said a frustrated Egbert.

He's not the only one fuming. Employees of the Mobil station at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird in Sun City say today is their last day in business after being open for almost 30 years. One employee said everyone was "pretty upset" about shutting down.

disappeared, like the stations on 134th and Del Webb in Sun City, 67th Ave. and Peoria, 87th Ave. and Bell Road and 82nd Avenue and Thunderbird Road in Peoria, and Camino del Sol and R.H. Johnson Boulevard in Sun City West.

The Mobil station at 139th Avenue and Meeker Blvd. in Sun City West and 99th Avenue and Bell Road in Sun City are two of the few Mobil

The owner of a Phoenix Mobil station at 18th Avenue and Glendale Road said Exxon officials told him he could either buy his station or be shut down like the rest. The man said he decided to purchase the station he had run for 15 years, but had to remove Mobil's name and is no longer able to take the company's gas credit cards.

Meanwhile, other stations around the West Valley have already

stations that remain in the Northwest Valley.

Employee David Hibbert said the corporate-owned store on Bell has not yet received word of shutting down, but he can't guarantee they're exempt. Manager Victoria Melgar of the Meeker Boulevard Mobil station said they'll only be open until the end of the year.

Amanda Myers may be reached at 876-2513 or amyers@aztrib.com.

See Gas, A5

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2004

Sun City's 'Club Mac' being reborn with 'lounge' look

McDonald's outlet will have a new face after costly remodel

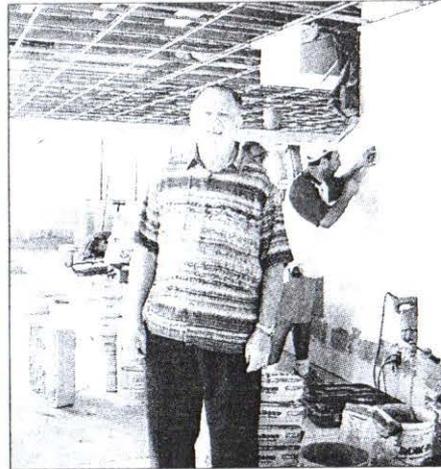
By Brent Whiting
The Arizona Republic

A McDonald's restaurant in Sun City, a popular gathering place sometimes known by patrons as "Club Mac," is getting an expensive face lift.

Gone will be the usual red, white and yellow decor when the nearly \$300,000 remodeling gets finished this month.

The exterior of the fast-food outlet, 10040 W. Bell Road, already has been repainted with an earth-tone color.

The interior, still a work in progress, eventually will feature a lounge atmosphere, including love seats and hanging lights over dining tables.



Brent Whiting/The Arizona Republic

Don Mellon operates 10 McDonald's restaurants in the West Valley.

"We're redoing the whole thing, inside and out," said Don Mellon, the fran-

chise owner.

"It will be like walking into a brand-new McDonald's."

The outlet, which opened in 1986, has been targeted as part of a "reimaging" campaign that the worldwide food giant announced two years ago.

McDonald's Corp., based in Oak Brook, Ill., said in March that it planned to spend \$725 million this year to refurbish up to 2,160 stores worldwide.

Reimaging can take the form of new landscaping, the repaving of a parking lot or a complete remodeling, said Bill Whitman, a McDonald's spokesman.

In Sun City, the Bell Road outlet is one of 10 franchises that Mellon operates throughout the West Valley. He has others in Avondale, Goodyear, Glendale, Peoria and Surprise.

Despite the remodeling, the Sun City store remains open for business at the drive-through window. The reopening is scheduled for next Friday.

Mellon said the Sun City restaurant has a loyal customer base, mostly senior citizens, some of whom have been coming to the outlet for 16 years.

Some of them may stop by as often as twice a day, he said.

"We have a dollar menu that seems to go over very big with seniors, some of whom have limited budgets," Mellon said.

Ice cream by far is the biggest seller — the restaurant has sold as many as 20,000 ice-cream cones a month, he said — followed by fish sandwiches, Big Macs and Egg McMuffins.

Mellon, a McDonald's franchise operator for 35 years, said the Sun City store is known as "Club Mac" among some of his loyal customers.

Barbershop quartets sometimes perform at the business, but Mellon said the most popular feature is Tuesday bingo sessions in which customers play for free meals.

Bargains beckon shoppers

AMANDA MYERS
and ANNIE KARSTENS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Fashion hunting is a sport for all ages, as many women and yes, some men, will attest. Part of the game is keeping up with the latest styles and showing them off at dinner parties. The other part is the quest for a great

deal, followed by a ritual bragging to friends about how little was paid for that fabulous pair of shoes.

Contrary to the some people's beliefs, it doesn't take a fortune to look like a million bucks. It doesn't even take a department store or a fancy catalog to wind up the fashion queen — or king — of your neighborhood. Some of

the best fashions are hiding right around the corner at a local thrift store.

Jane Cole, day manager at the West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop in Sun City, said there's "no comparison" to shopping at the mall after you've visited her store. She said eager shoppers come through her doors "continually."

"In the winter time, it's wall to wall," she said. A regular shopper there herself, Cole is no stranger to bargain hunting with the best of them.

To show just how easy it is to find great summer fashions on the packed racks of donated clothing, the Daily News-Sun found a few willing models, and dressed them up

in just a few minutes in outfits for under \$15.

Helene Jacob is both a regular shopper and a volunteer at the Lutheran Thrift Shop.

"We get a 20 percent discount!" she said.

When she's not searching for bargains at the shop, she can be found at Robinsons

See THRIFT SHOPS, A5

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May, but the deals, she admits, don't compare to that of \$3 pairs of shoes and \$5 handbags.

The Sun City woman — a first-time model at the young age of 76 — was adamant she was "too old" for the outfits chosen for her. But from the flattering comments of those shopping in the store around her, it was apparent she needed to rethink her stance.

Her first outfit, a yellow-and-brown flowered skirt, white sleeveless turtleneck top, open-toe sparkly brown heels, and brown thatch bag is perfect for a casual summer day. The bag was the most "expensive" item at \$5, and the shoes, skirt, and shoes were \$3 each, bringing the total to \$14.

Jacob's second ensemble was a red-and-brown plaid skirt, forest green V-neck tee, and open-toe red heels with a brown clutch. Jacob admitted falling in love with the classy shoes, making sure they wound up in her shopping

basket, which were a bargain at just \$3. All four pieces of her outfit were only \$3 each, putting the cost of the ensemble at \$12.

Finally, Sharon Roppolo of Sun City was eager to snatch up a very classy black button-down dress for a whopping \$1. A splash of color is added with a mauve and black silk scarf and matching mauve pumps. A simple black clutch completed the look. The shoes were priced at \$3, as was the bag, and the scarf was marked at fifty cents, making Roppolo's outfit just \$7.50.

Roppolo, who usually shops at Dillard's and Arrowhead Towne Center, admits the department stores' styles are "definitely overpriced." That's why she roams the racks at the Lutheran Thrift Shop about once a month. Her husband is an entertainer, she said, and she is always on the hunt for that great "going-out" outfit.

Amanda Myers may be reached at 876-2513 or amyers@aztrib.com.

OVER

PRETTY THRIFTY



PHOTOS BY STEVE CHERNEK/FAMILY 12.29.10/11

Helene Jacobs of Sun City, above, models a skirt, top and shoes from West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop in Sun City. Sharon Roppolo of Sun City, left, wears an ensemble priced at \$7.50.

Eatery fire constrains neighboring businesses

ANNIE KARSTENS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Businesses who shared a strip mall with the Hot Wok restaurant are getting burned because of a fire that destroyed the restaurant on April 12. Buck's Pizza, The American Gentleman's Barber Shop, John Tissaw's Dentistry and Gonstead Chiropractors are all up and running as normal, but it's been a slow return for some store owners.

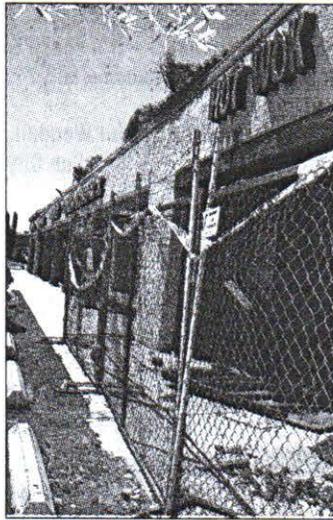
The Hot Wok was situated on the far east side of the strip mall, located at 9420 W. Bell Road. The restaurant has been classified as a total loss, with damages totaling between \$300,000 and \$400,000, according Maricopa County Sheriffs Office fire investigator Jim McCarthy.

Unfortunately, the losses don't stop there. The four other business housed in the strip mall were all closed for a time, some for a few days, others for a couple of weeks. The closures resulted in loss of customers and revenue, some store owners are saying.

"It's really a shame," said Diane Wettstein, co-owner of Buck's Pizza, a pizzeria in the strip mall. "Maybe people think we're gone, but were still here, and they need to know that this little strip mall is alive and well."

Wettstein and her husband Guy bought Buck's from the previous owners a week before the Hot Wok fire. Buck's was unharmed in the blaze, but had to close for four days because the water supply was cut off and it needed a major cleaning that cost \$3,100.

Guy Wettstein said business has gone down



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Store owners in the Sun City strip mall where the Hot Wok was destroyed by fire say they are losing business.

from A1

40 percent to 50 percent since the fire. The previous owner, Giovanna Failla, also said she'd noticed the dramatic loss of business when she compared the weeks following the fire to the weeks prior. Buck's even lost a \$200 pizza order from a local school who thought the pizzeria was closed.

"Normally, 12 to 15 people would come in every day, and it's amazing how much it's gone down," Failla said. "Now, about four to five people come in, maybe."

In an effort to compensate for the losses, Buck's has painted bright signs in their window, put advertising on the street and are calling schools to say they're still in business. All they can do is hope the community realizes that Buck's pizza production is back in full swing and customers come back to their beloved pizzeria, Diane Wettstein said.

Dr. John Tissaw's dentistry office, the third suite from the west end of the building, was slightly damaged by smoke and water and was closed for two weeks. Pam Sottysik, receptionist, said the interior of the office

and some of the dental tools were covered in a thin layer of soot and required a thorough expert cleaning. Last week, the office reopened and is accepting new patients.

"Everything had to be taken down and a crew came in to clean everything, even the carpets and the walls," Sottysik said.

Over the course of the two week closure, Sottysik and other staff members called Dr. Tissaw's clients to cancel their appointments. Some of those clients never called back.

"The insurance company gave us a flat fee for loss of production, but that doesn't account for patients we may have lost," Sottysik said.

Smoke and water damaged Gonstead Chiropractors, next door to Hot Wok. The offices were closed for a week after the fire. Kris Holladay, chiropractic assistant, said the week they reopened was difficult.

"People weren't sure we were open and the stench was terrible," Holladay said. "We're keeping a positive attitude. We're very blessed that the fire didn't spread to us."

Annie Karstens may be reached at 876-2532 or akarstens@aztrib.com

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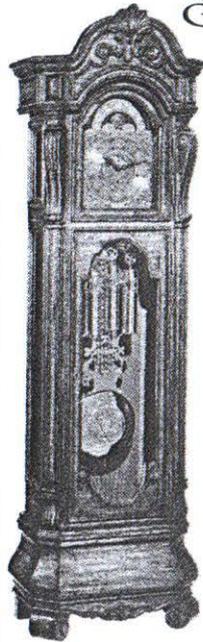
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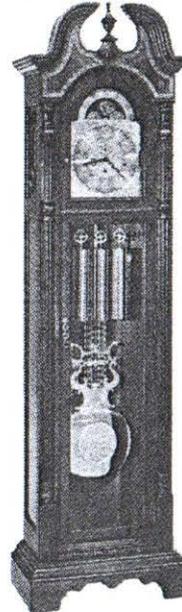


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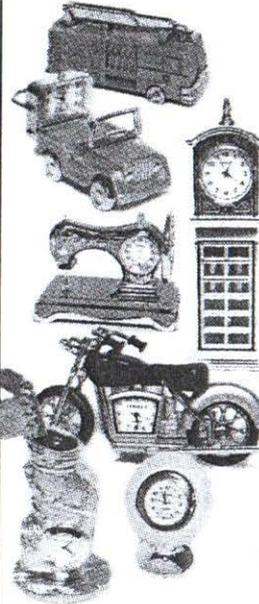


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Clock shop keeps business ticking in Sun City

ERIN REEP

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Like a fine piece of furniture or a stylish automobile, clocks are unique and can be treasured as family possessions for years, says clock shop owner Karl Robinson. A grandfather clock is a particularly beloved item, he said.

"Having a grandfather clock is like having a piece of furniture," he said. "It's got to be the best-made. You only have one all your life, and you want to pass it on to your children."

New England Clock Shop was founded in Youngtown 30 years ago. Today the store is located in Campana Square at 9805 W. Bell Road in Sun City.

Walking through aisles filled with ticking clocks, small watches and novelty clocks, mantle clocks and cuckoo clocks, Robinson stopped to point out the features of a grandfather clock.

He opened the face of a Sligh brand clock, with black Roman numerals on the gold face and a moon and stars circling over the numbers. The clock was priced at \$3,299.99 (Regular price \$8,599).

"This clock's unique. The clock plays Beethoven, Ave Maria and the Westminster Chimes," Robinson said.

He moved the hands of the clock around to noon. The clock played the chorus of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," then chimed the time. "It does this on the hour," Robinson said.

Robinson said it is the music that makes a grandfa-

ther clock unique, in addition to the craftsmanship of its construction and the type of wood used. New England Clock Shop carries more than 50 different styles of grandfather clocks. The two primary brands it offers are Sligh and Howard Miller, which are crafted in Holland, Mich.



Karl Robinson, owner and founder of New England Clock Shop, shows off a Howard Miller grandfather clock.

deals and fair deals."

The store also sells cuckoo clocks that are made in Germany. The clocks sound like the cuckoo bird, and

Other grandfather clocks in the shop resembled curio cabinets, made of glass and light wood with the face of the clock on top.

Grandfather clocks range in price from \$1,099 to \$9,000, Robinson said.

Robinson's goal is to offer fair prices lower than other furniture and clock stores.

"I believe in selling a clock for a lot less and just turning over merchandise - just by giving people good

that's where the name comes from, Robinson said. The clocks are most popular during Christmas time, he said. Cuckoo clocks range in price from \$100 to \$3,000.

Along the back wall are musical clocks, featuring small figurines, hot-air balloons, cityscapes and zodiac signs on the faces. On the hour, the clocks play a variety of tunes; the faces split and reveal hidden shapes and designs behind. The novelty clocks draw the attention of customers, said manager Doug Kepler.

"They really are unique," Kepler said, looking up from changing a watch battery. "I have people ooh-and-ah. While they're standing here waiting for a watch battery, they're looking at the clocks." The novelty clocks range in price from \$200 to \$500.

Long tables are covered with costume watches of all shapes, sizes and colors; reds, pinks, purples and blues. Robinson sells men's and women's costume watches for \$10 to \$12 in price.

Robinson's beginning in the clock industry started when he purchased a small clock shop in the mall. Within a few years he built up the business to six stores. In 1970, he opened New England Clock Shop in Youngtown and in 1994 he moved the store to Sun City.

Robinson said his customers are primarily seniors, but about a third of his business is young couples or younger people buying wedding or housewarming gifts.

OVER



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bob Gallion, general manager of Freed's Fine Furnishings, puts the finishing touches on a room on display at the Sun City West store.

Change at top

Freed's owner steps away from stores

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After 50 years in furniture retail business, Dick Johnson retired and named Bob Gallion as Freed's Fine Furnishings new general manager.

"I'm sure he'll (Johnson) be on hand from time, but I don't think he'll wear a tie again," Gallion said.

The Sun City West store recently finished a three-month-plus retirement sale for Johnson. Gallion said a lot of stock had been sold.

"We appreciate the support of the community with the entire sale," he said.

"People thought we would be closing our store, but that's not true."

Gallion steps in as the new leader after working with Johnson and the company for 22 years.

Johnson worked in furniture retailing for five decades — starting with an after-school job, while in high school in Nebraska during the 1950s. The teenager helped his father and uncle with the family store. Then a relative opened a small store in Sun City on Grand Avenue.

He moved to Arizona after the family member's death, taking over the shop. Along with Freed's Fine Furnishings, he now has two other businesses in the area — Furniture for All and Freed's Consignment, both in Sun City.

Before his retirement, Johnson put the final touches on a new department at the store — a 1,300-square-foot design center next to the shop.

The new section has a professional designer, who gives customers advice about interior design. There are also samples of drapes, wallpaper and shutters.

"I'm always thinking of ways to improve this business for people," Johnson said in a recent interview with the Daily-News Sun.

Gallion said new merchandise will arrive at the Freed's Fine Furnishings soon. They'll redecorate parts of the building as well.

"I'm really thrilled about this," he said. "We're going to keep pleasing our customers."

For information, log on to www.freedsfurniture.com on the Web.

Mitchell Vantrease can be reached at 876-2526 or mvantrease@aztrib.com.



Photos by Tom Tingle/The Arizona Republic

Quilting instructor Mary Blecha (right) helps Dottie Sosnicki of Litchfield Park make a photo quilt at Cotton Fields Quilt & Knit in Avondale. Owners Kate Moody and Mary McElvain opened the store in September.

MOVE OVER, GRANNY

Knitting, quilting moving into the fast lane

By Angela Rabago-Mussi
Special for The Republic

From Page 1

Knitting and quilting used to conjure up images of grannies in rocking chairs. But that image is changing with bold pop-art quilts appearing in magazines and celebrities showing off scarves they've knitted.

"It's not just baby booties and shawls," said Jenafer Forrest, whose family runs a knitting store. "It's the popular thing to do right now."

Forrest has a collection of articles about the new knitting craze, including a book called *Celebrity Scarves*, which was released in September.

Forrest and her brothers, Scott Forrest and Jeff Hayes, opened Knitter's Nook in Sun City last August for their mother, who is a lifelong knitter.

See **KNITTING** Page 2

Knitter's Nook, at 99th Avenue and Bell Road, is one of several new West Valley shops devoted to these homey crafts.

Shop owners say customers who have never picked up quilting or knitting needles are filling beginner's classes and getting hooked.

It happened to Peoria resident Vicki Baki.

Although her 81-year-old mother is a lifelong knitter, Baki never followed until her mother wondered who would continue the family tradition of knitting Christmas stockings for the grandchildren.

Baki took a beginner's class at Knitter's Nook and now goes in at least once a week to shop and knit with others.

Her mother is "absolutely thrilled" that she's taken up the hobby, Baki said, adding that she does see a difference in the new knitting yarns and patterns.

"It's not like my mother's knitting was," she said. "There are so many different beautiful yarns nowadays."

Alongside the old-fashioned demure yarns are funky skeins that can be used with new style designs for everything from bags to socks.

Where to shop

Some West Valley knitting and quilting shops:

- Cotton Fields Quilt & Knit, 12409 W. Indian School Road, Avondale.
- Knitter's Nook, 10001 W. Bell Road, Sun City.
- Needlers Nest, 12133 W. Bell Road, Surprise.
- Quilter's Bee, 7549 W. Cactus Road, Peoria.
- The Quiltery, 10757 W. Grand Ave., Sun City.
- Sally Knits, 6823 N. 58th Ave., Glendale.

that sense of community building.

On one recent afternoon, Joan Salik and Shotzie Workman walked in together sharing fabrics that they had found on a quilting fabric shopping spree.

The two women met at Cotton Fields, and Salik, who's been quilting for over 20 years, offered to take newbie Workman around to local quilting shops.

OVER

Salik now teaches classes at Cotton Fields, while Workman has taken two beginning classes to learn how to quilt.

So far, Workman has completed a wall hanging and a table runner and is working on "building a stash" of fabrics.

Likewise, at Knitter's Nook, an informal gathering of knitters arrives early every Wednesday to get a good seat for the weekly "sit and knit," Forrest said.

Many of the women have met during classes and become friends. They talk and laugh as they work on projects, sharing ideas and knitting hints.

Forrest said everyone has a theory on the newfound popularity of knitting, but she believes in times of turmoil people like hobbies that keep them close to home.

"Unlike yoga, you can knit while you sit with your family," she said.

Quilting is changing with the time-crunched times also, said McElvain.

Patterns are made for all levels, and some can be made in a weekend.

"People used to say they didn't have time to take up quilting, but that's not true anymore," she said.

At Cotton Fields, the owners are trying to attract those new crafters with classes for young kids and are planning to start a club for busy moms.

In Cotton Fields Quilt & Knit shop in Avondale, the store is filled on one side with yarn, and the other is devoted to quilting fabrics. Colorful quilts hang along the walls to show off patterns and advertise classes where crafters can learn to make the quilts.

Kate Moody and Mary McElvain opened the store in September, just seven months after the two friends came up with the idea of pulling the two hobbies together into one shop during a golf outing.

"For me it's always been a lifelong avocation," said McElvain, a former nurse. "I have a passion for fabric."

McElvain has lived in Litchfield Park for 16 years, and with the population explosion in the southwest Valley, the two felt that the area needed a store devoted to knitting and quilting.

So far, the response has been great, she said. Most of their customers find out about their Avondale shop through word of mouth.

The two owners hope their shop becomes a gathering place for people to share projects and ideas.

After all, from the first quilting bees, the craft has always been a "very people-oriented hobby," McElvain said.

The shop owners already see

Daily News-Sun - Monday, October 6, 2003

Lease troubles force closure of IGA store

STAFF REPORT

A problem with the building lease has forced the closure of one of two Sun Foods IGA stores in Sun City.

Just 17 months after converting an ABCO grocery store to his second Sun Foods IGA store in Sun City, owner John Smirniotis Jr., said today the store at 99th Avenue and Greenway Road in the Greenway Terrace Shopping Plaza closed because its lease expired.

Smirniotis said the bankruptcy of Fleming Co. prevented him from securing a new lease. Fleming owns the building, which was an ABCO grocery store until going out of business. Fleming was the owner of all ABCO grocery stores and its locations in the Valley.

The Sun City store purchase was part of a four-store purchase in 2002 for Smirniotis. He had converted four ABCO supermarkets — three in the Phoenix area and one in Sun City — to IGAs.

Smirniotis, who still owns the Sun Foods IGA at Del Webb Boulevard and Talisman Road, said the amount of business at the new location was not the reason the store was forced to close for good.

He said his existing store in Sun City will remain open because he has a long-term lease at that location.

"We have a store a mile away on Del Webb," he said, adding he is hoping the customers who patronized his store at 99th Avenue and Greenway will shop at his existing store.

"It is not that far away" he said.

Spinning a whole new yarn ^{VF} ^{BUSINESS}

Knitter's Nook in Sun City features designer threads

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Knitting isn't a hobby solely for grandmothers anymore.

It's more than making socks, sweaters, scarves, gloves and hats. There are designer patterns and special blended yarns as well.

The Knitter's Nook, at 99th Avenue and Bell Road in the Sun City Promenade Center, showcases the craft to customers of different ages. The store sells a variety of yarns, spools and pattern books.

"It's not what people have been accustomed to," said Barbara Hayes, manager of store.

In addition to knitting materials, the shop offers classes to its customers. The sessions last five weeks and range from beginning to advanced.

Two-hour courses include "Knit to Fit," socks and crochet. Supplies must be purchased through Knitter's Nook, which gives a 10 percent discount on items used for a class.

"We want them to realize — when they come in, they could get help," Hayes said.

The Knitter's Nook opened last year to customers from the surrounding areas. The Ventana Lakes resident manages the store for her



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Barbara Hayes manages the Knitter's Nook in the Promenade Center, 99th Avenue and Bell Road.

daughter and son-in-law, Jenafer and Scott Forrest.

"This a great place for anyone to come and start a very wonderful hobby," she said.

Jenafer said she and Scott decided to open the store because of her mother's love for knitting. She remembers receiving a lot of sweaters as she grew up.

By the time Jenafer entered college, she had received 70.

"I've always had sweaters on sweaters," she said. "I know she adores knitting a lot. That's why my

husband thought the store would be a great idea."

Yarns of different colors and textures are available at the store. Examples of socks, sweaters and vests are displayed around Knitter's Nook.

A variety of related reading materials have been sold in the shop. From purses to hats, plenty of subjects involving the hobby are covered by books in the specialty store.

Hayes said a popular book is "Celebrity Scarves," by Aubra Edelman. It features scarves made by the likes

of Darryl Hannah, Jennie Garth and Eartha Kitt.

"This really shows how popular knitting has become in our culture," she said.

For information on classes, yarns or patterns, call 584-1557 or visit www.knittersnook.com on the Internet.

Know of a unique business that fills a niche in the Northwest Valley? The Daily News-Sun would like to know about it. Please call Mitchell Vantrease at 876-2526 or e-mail mvantrease@aztrib.com.

DAILY NEWS-SUN TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2003

Sun Foods scrambles for new distributor

CLOSURE:
Despite out of state delivery, IGA president denies price increase

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The president of IGA Sun Foods said he was shocked to learn that his store's food distributor is closing, but that should not affect the local grocer's operation or prices.

"It's not the end of the world, but we were definitely in shock," said John Smirnitis, the president of Sun Foods, who operates two stores in Sun City and three in Phoenix.

Smirnitis said the stores are scrambling to find a new distribution center. But it will take a few weeks to obtain a new supplier, which will probably be out of state and charge more to ship products to Arizona stores.

"This won't affect our items' prices with any of the changes, though," he said.

Fleming, the wholesale distributor, recently announced its division in Phoenix and four other cities would close

by mid-June to cut cost. The divisions are worth \$1 billion in annualized revenue.

The company supplies items to more than 15 of the Phoenix-based IGA grocery stores. Fleming is considered one of the leading suppliers of consumer packaged goods to independent supermarkets in the country.

"This could force shoppers to shift their business to other stores like a Safeway," said Joe Bellizzi, a professor of marketing at Arizona State University West.

Bellizzi said independent grocery stores have a disadvantage over major chains in these situations. Most outlets like Fry's and Bashas' have their own distribution centers.

"The trick for a lot of independent grocers surviving is that they'll have to find alternative routes with another center if their distribution center shuts down," Bellizzi said.

Bob Jones of Sun City sat in his golf car outside of IGA's Sun Foods at 99th Avenue and Greenway Road, waiting for his wife. Normally, they shop at the grocery store once or twice a week.

Jones said the switch in distribution centers won't affect his purchases.

"A can of beans is a can of beans," he said. "But I'm sure they'll find another source outside of Fleming."

For Hazel Whitte of Peoria, the change in wholesalers isn't important. The Peoria woman has been shopping at Sun Foods for several years.

"It doesn't matter to me as long as the quality is still there, then I'm fine," Whitte said.

Mitchell Vantrease may be reached at 876-2531 or mvantrease@aztrib.com.

© THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2003

Bookstore writes last chapter

Waldenbooks closing after 17 years in Sun City strip mall

By Christine L. Romero
The Arizona Republic

Falling sales and corporate consolidation will force the Waldenbooks in Sun City to close after 17 years.

Waldenbook's parent company, Michigan-based Borders Books & Music, plans to close 40 of its smaller bookstores nationwide. The company did not renew the lease on the Sun City store. Several employees reportedly tried to save the store through a petition to the corporate headquarters but to no avail.

Borders spokeswoman Emily Swan said the store will close Jan. 25 with the company vacating the space by Jan. 31. Positions at other stores have been offered to the handful of Sun City employees of Waldenbooks, Swan said.

"It wasn't viable to keep it open anymore," she said.

The next closest bookstore is several miles away, including a Borders Books & Music at 75th Avenue and Bell Road. Surprise resident Barbara Wood works in the strip mall at 99th Avenue and Bell Road and says many Sun City resi-

dents need to have these types of amenities close to home.

"This is a horrible hit to them," Wood said. "Most people within proximity to this store don't go beyond two miles. I feel sorry for them."

Sun City resident Vicky Horvacz said other bookstores are far from her home, which is less than three miles from the Waldenbooks.

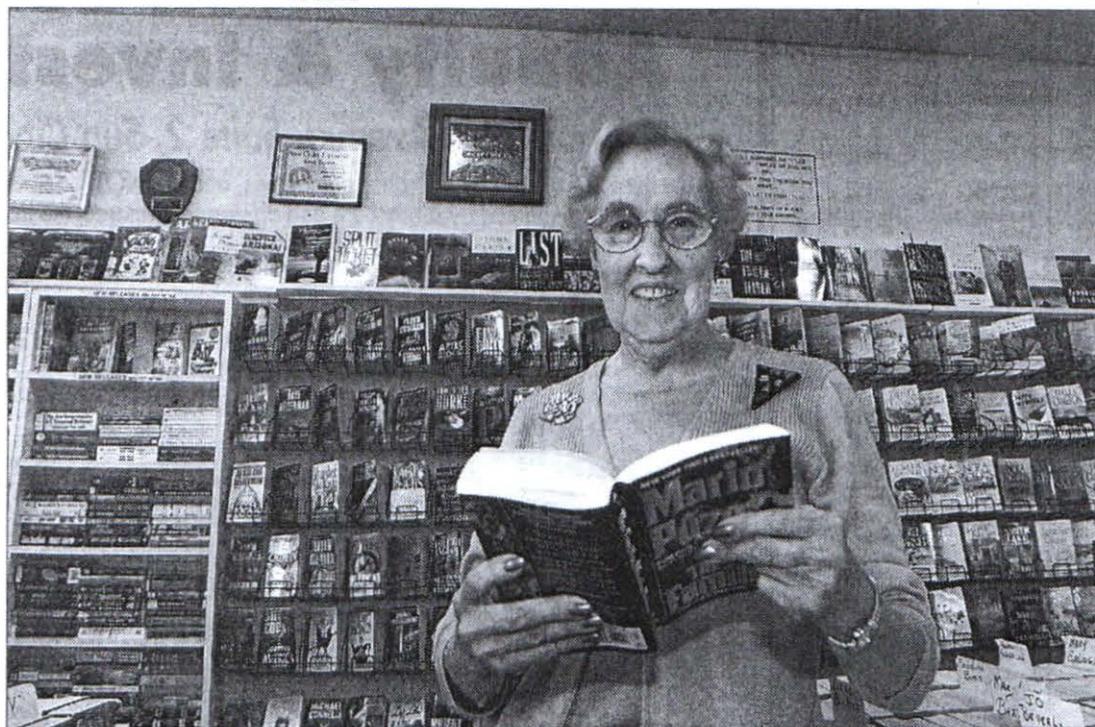
"They have been here for so long. We got used to it," Horvacz said. "I'm disappointed. But if they can't make it, they can't make it."

Several storefronts in the strip mall now sit vacant. Retailers in the mall blame rising rents.

Borders plans to continue the nationwide expansion of its big-box stores, according to the company's filings with the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission. The company blames falling sales at Waldenbooks on decreased mall traffic and the impact of superbookstores.

Reach the reporter at
christine.romero@arizona
republic.com or (602) 444-6922.

Dealer uncovers hard-to-find literature



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Elaine Harr owns the Book Trader in LaRonde Centre. She has been in business for 20 years. The store sells used paperback books at half the cost of new books.

BOOK TRADER: Sun City business turns page on 20 years

ERIN REEP
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When you step inside the Book Trader, you are greeted within seconds by owner Elaine Harr and her staff.

"How are you doing today? What are you looking for?" Harr asks customers as they enter the store.

For first-timers, this type of service might seem a bit unusual. Many of the larger-chain bookstores are less personal, letting customers browse for what they want. However, helping customers is what has kept the Book Trader in business for 20 years. The store sells used paperback books at half the cost of new books.

The Book Trader offers an ocean of paperbacks — well-organized and neatly stacked on white wooden shelves. Harr estimates she has about 80,000 to 100,000 books.

Harr opened her store in 1982 with 6,000 books. The business now turns over 5,000-6,000 books a day. The Book Trader has been at its present location, 14806 Del Webb Blvd., Sun City — in the LaRonde Centre — for 10 years.

The business began out of Harr's passion for reading. "I love books," she said. Harr says she read a book every day when she was younger. She and her husband moved to Sun City 26 years ago, but Harr wasn't ready to retire.

The secret of Harr's success is "service, service, service," said her son Bobby, one of the store's five employees.

Sun City Grand resident Ken Allen was browsing in the Book Trader one recent afternoon. Harr sidled up to Allen, eager to help.

"Have you read this yet?" Harr said, picking up a paperback. "You'd like this," she said.

Knowing her customers and their likes and dislikes are an important part of Harr's business. She and her employees offer to help everyone that comes in. If they can't find the book a customer is looking for, the

OVER

staff will attempt to obtain it.

Because of the quick turnover, some customers don't have to wait long. "So you can ask for a book and it's not here, and five minutes after you leave, it's here," Harr said.

One of the trademarks of the Book Trader is the tidy and organized appearance, which Harr says is a draw for many of her customers.

Allen said he's been shopping in the Book Trader for about five years. Location and selection are the two main reasons he frequents the business, he said.

"It's bright and clean and well



laid-out," he said.

Harr is selective about the books she accepts in trade, too: only paperbacks in good condition are received. The Book Trader has every kind of book one can think of: biographies, Westerns, romances, adventure/suspense, war stories, religious, travel, art, music and children's books. The store also offers books on tape and large-print selections.

Books are sold at half the original cover price. The Book Trader gives credit for books traded in; customers receive a quarter of the original cover price in trade.

The Book Trader serves customers of all ages from all over the Valley, Harr said. They have two small rocking chairs in the rear of the store with the children's books, inviting children to sit and read. High school students often come in to look for hard-to-find books or out-of-print copies of classics from 100 years ago.

Harr recalled a couple that came in with their child, looking for a book that they couldn't find anywhere.

"They wanted a certain book, and I went and found it," Harr said. "They jumped up and down for joy, because they could not find it anywhere else."

Harr said she was recently listed in the Phoenix Bargain Guide as one of the best retail shops in Phoenix. For more information about the Book Trader, call 977-6404.

DAILY NEWS-SUN WEDNESDAY, AUG. 7, 2002

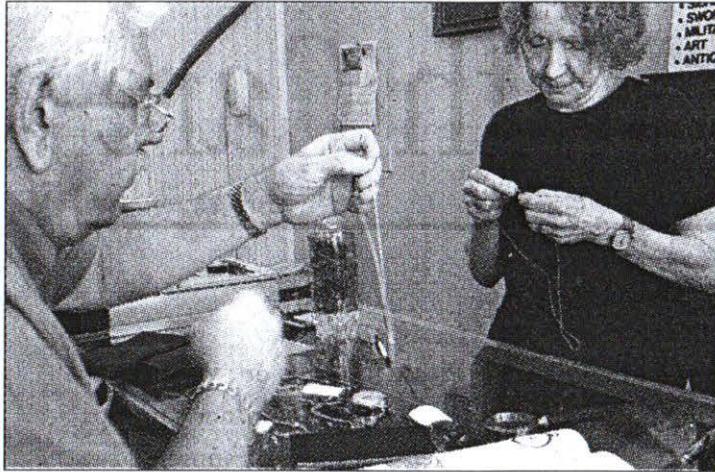
Make way for Sun City's new buffet



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Phil Nelson of Frankie's Fine Signs Company, peels back the protective cover of the New China Buffet sign. The buffet will open soon in the former location of JB's Restaurant on Grand Avenue west of 107th Avenue.

Sun Citians show loyalty toward moms-and-pops



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jerry Mueller of Antique Coin and Jewelry Exchange in Sun City, right, shows customer Donald Doyle some gold chains.

CUSTOMERS COUNT: Businesses specialize in personal service

ERIN REEP
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Gone are the days of small-town America, where mom-and-pop businesses lined the main streets of every community.

Corporate mega-marts have forced the closure of many such shops — but to a lesser extent in the Sun Cities, where local stores still attract the loyalty of residents.

Local stores such as the

Antique Coin & Jewelry Exchange and Bob's V & S Variety Store have thrived in the community.

National Small Business Week, being observed this week, is promoted by the National Federation of Independent Businesses to honor the work and impact of such businesses.

"Small businesses create ... new jobs and really feed the economy," said Todd Bradford, NFIB assistant

See Moms and pops, A5



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bob and Cynthia Riddle, owners of Bob's Variety Store in Sun City West, stand in their new Dollar Days aisle.

OVER

VF BUSINESS

From A1

state director.

Antique Coin & Jewelry Exchange at 99th Avenue and Greenway Road in Sun City deals in coins, watches, gold, silver, jewelry, crystal, swords, guns and other antiques.

Owners Keith and Jerry Mueller have been in the antique business for 22 years, Keith said.

The Muellers got into the business by going to yard sales and buying antiques, which they resold for profit. Jerry is a retired teacher and Keith worked as a firearms instructor for the Air Force.

"We knew the fellow who owned this store," Keith said. The Muellers bought the store when the owner was leaving the area and put up it up for sale. The Muellers have owned the Sun City store for nine years.

The couple buy and sell antiques and guns, and sometimes travel to shows. "We do some gun shows to sell military stuff," Keith said.

Although the couple deal in a variety of antiques, coins drive the business. "We couldn't run this place if it wasn't for the coins," Mueller said.

Mueller said area seniors often will bring old coins for appraisal and not realize their worth. He gave the example of a widow whose husband had been hiding coins around their house for 40 years. She was going to take them to the bank to deposit but brought them in



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Keith Mueller, owner of the Antique Coin and Jewelry Exchange in Sun City, talks business Tuesday. He and his wife, Jerry, have owned the shop for nine years.

to the coin exchange first.

One of the coins was a rare penny worth \$250. Mueller had the woman sit down for 10 minutes before leaving the store because she was in such shock at the discovery.

"If you have any kind of older coins laying around your house, the bank is the last place you should take them," he said. He recommended pennies and silver coins be left in the condition they are found; polishing old coins often detracts from the value, he said.

"Do not, under any circumstances, clean coins," he said. "Collectors do not buy coins that have been cleaned."

Antique Coin and Jewelry

Exchange has protective bars on the windows and a doorbell that customers must ring to be let inside.

Just as the local coin store offers the community the increasingly rare concept of personal service, residents provide an added benefit to the owners. Mueller said he prefers doing business with Sun Citians because the clientele are locals and he knows the goods being brought in for sale are not stolen, as is sometimes the case in metro areas.

Bob's V & S Variety Store at 13583 Camino Del Sol, Sun City West, was founded in 1989 by Bob and Cynthia Riddle.

Bob previously managed a variety store in Sun City.

When it closed, he opened Bob's V & S Variety, a 10,000 square-foot shop offering a little of just about everything under the sun.

The store includes a United States Post Office sub-station and a section where customers can make photocopies.

"We have a large fabric department," Riddle added, also pointing out the stationary, crafts and flower departments.

"We have a health and beauty aid department, a housewares department," Riddle said. Bargain hunters might enjoy a stroll down the dollar spices aisle, or the "dollar department" — offering cardboard boxes of goods that cost \$1.

Arizona souvenirs abound, including T-shirts that are three for \$10. Bob's V & S Variety also offers cards at 50 and 75 percent off — making some of them 39 cents apiece.

"Excuse me, could you tell me where I could find a doorstop?" a customer asked Riddle.

"A doorstop? Right over here," he said, guiding the customer to the correct aisle.

Riddle said he is seeing more young people, including some from Surprise, visiting the store than in the past.

"At Christmas and Easter, we see a lot of people," he said, explaining that many of them are Sun Citians' visiting children and grandchildren.

One unusual item carried by the store is corks. Riddle said many stores nowadays don't offer such items.

"Stuff that people don't carry anymore, we still carry," he said.

Sun City opens a 'Cupboard'

BRIAN POWELL
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Country Cupboard tradition will continue in Sun City under the leadership of a local fine dining restaurant's owner.

Kurt Vogt, owner of Le Rhone Restaurant and Tropicana Cafe and Sportsbar on Thunderbird Road in Peoria, has put his name behind the long-standing Country Cupboard restaurant at Greenway Road and 99th Avenue.

Le Rhone's Country Cupboard Restaurant and Bakery opened Feb. 25 with little advertising. But that's not to say people haven't taken notice.

"We made a quiet opening since things always go wrong in the beginning," Vogt said. "But more people than I expected have come in."

Vogt, along with pastry chef Hans Glauser and Darryll Hapken, the owner of Arrowhead Foods, are the new owners of Le Rhone's Country Cupboard.

Vogt, a Glendale resident who has owned Le Rhone Restaurant since 1986, said he was not in the market for a new restaurant. He said the building's landlord asked him six or seven times to look at the property, which has sat vacant since last fall.

"It was closed at the time, the place was filthy and needed a lot of fixing, but hey, why not," Vogt said.

Although the Le Rhone name is attached to both restaurants, the menus are different. The original Le Rhone Restaurant is a fine dining

establishment with three-course meals starting at \$18.50, while Country Cupboard is a family restaurant with prices ranging from \$4.25 to \$14.

The styles may be different, but Vogt said the quality is not.

"I'll stand behind my product here as much as Le Rhone's," Vogt said. "That's why I put my name into it."

Vogt said blue-plate specials are offered each day, ranging from roast pork loin to a half-baked chicken to a Friday fish fry to prime rib sandwiches.

"It's something inexpensively special," Vogt said.

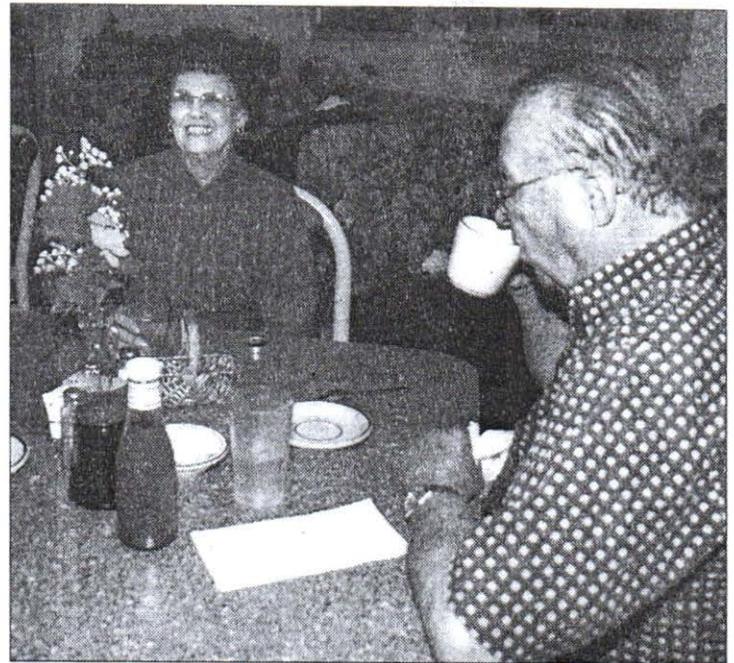
Vogt said he likes the banquet facilities at Country Cupboard, which can accommodate 200 people. Le Rhone's can hold up to 30 people. He said many organizations have already contacted him about banquets.

Eunice and Clarence Lauder of Sun City were enjoying a meal at Le Rhone's Country Cupboard Saturday morning, a place they frequented when it was under different management.

"We saw their opening sign on the door," Eunice Lauder said. "We're glad to see them opened up since we live around here."

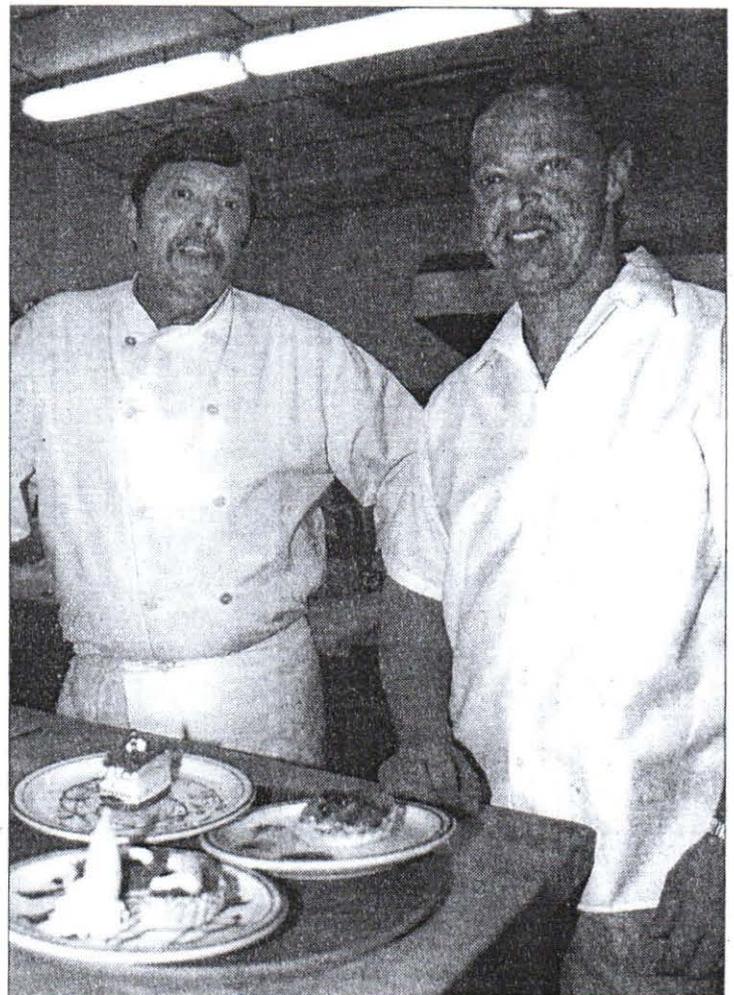
Le Rhone's Country Cupboard, at 15400 N. 99th Ave., is open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. For more information, call 583-7494.

Brian Powell may be reached at 876-2531 or bpowell@aztrib.com.



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Eunice, left, and Clarence Kauder enjoyed the new Le Rhone Country Cupboard Saturday. The couple was glad to have the restaurant open in their area.



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Le Rhone Country Cupboard owners Hans Glauser, left, and Kurt Vogt opened the Sun City restaurant with little advertising and were surprised by the opening-day response.

Daily News-Sun • Saturday, March 9 and Sunday, March 10, 2002

Poised to produce

FILLING A NEED: Sun City neighborhood welcomes mini-grocery market

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When the Safeway grocery store at 107th and Peoria avenues closed to move to another location last year, residents voiced concerns that there was no other nearby grocery store where they could shop.

But there is now some relief for those residents as the Desert Oasis Grocery and Produce store recently opened a mini-grocery market on the southwest corner of Peoria and 107th avenues.

Sun City resident Valerie LeBlanc said the mini-grocery store should provide some help to her neighbors who have trouble traveling long distances.

LeBlanc, who said she would likely shop at the store once a week, emphasized the smaller grocer would not take the place of the larger typical grocery store.

"I will pick up a few items and some produce," she said. "These prices are good. If I have to get something quickly I would come here."

George Thompson, who manages the non-profit store with his wife, Donna, said the market is trying to fill a void because a lot of residents in the surrounding neighborhood are unable to drive and were at a loss when Safeway moved out.

"We are filling the void the best we can," he said. "We have been here one week, and we have doubled our sales."

The grocery store used to be housed in another building in the same center where its thrift store also is located.

But now that the store has its own location, Thompson is able to purchase more items from his supplier.

"We added the cold case and all the shelves," he said. The old location had only three shelves. "We are four times bigger," he said.

Thompson said the location, which used to be the Community Council Thrift Store, attracts about 100 customers a day.

"There are some who come two or three times a week to buy a few items," he said. "We get a lot of regulars."

The store, part of the Desert Oasis Fellowship Church, started as a thrift store in its old location after Safeway had already moved to 107th and Olive avenues.

"I have been in the the grocery and produce business for 30 years," Thompson said, adding that he knows how upset people were about Safeway moving. Desert Oasis should provide for some of their needs.

"It's bigger than a Circle K," he said. "It's a neighborhood grocery store."

Some Sun Citians are starting to catch on to the new neighbor.

Emma Schepperley stopped in at the store on Friday afternoon to pick up a few items. She normally shops at one of the bigger grocery stores.

See Market fills, A5

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Donna Thompson, left, rings up a bag of carrots for Emma Schepperley at the Desert Oasis Grocery and Produce store located at the southwest corner of Peoria and 107th avenues.

From A1

"I knew it was coming here, and I was at the (Olive Branch) Senior Center," she said. "I look for all the bargains."

Another customer, Curtis Wyatt of Youngtown, wanted to see what the new store had to offer.

"I just happened to walk by and I decided to see what they had," he said. "I am a bargain hunter, and this might be the right place."

Dianne Meehan, a winter visitor from Michigan, said the prices were affordable, while Robert Davis called the grocery store just OK.

The Sun City Home Owners Association had been pushing for some type of grocery store on the corner since Safeway moved. HOA President Gerry Unger was surprised to hear about the Desert Oasis Grocery and Produce Store.

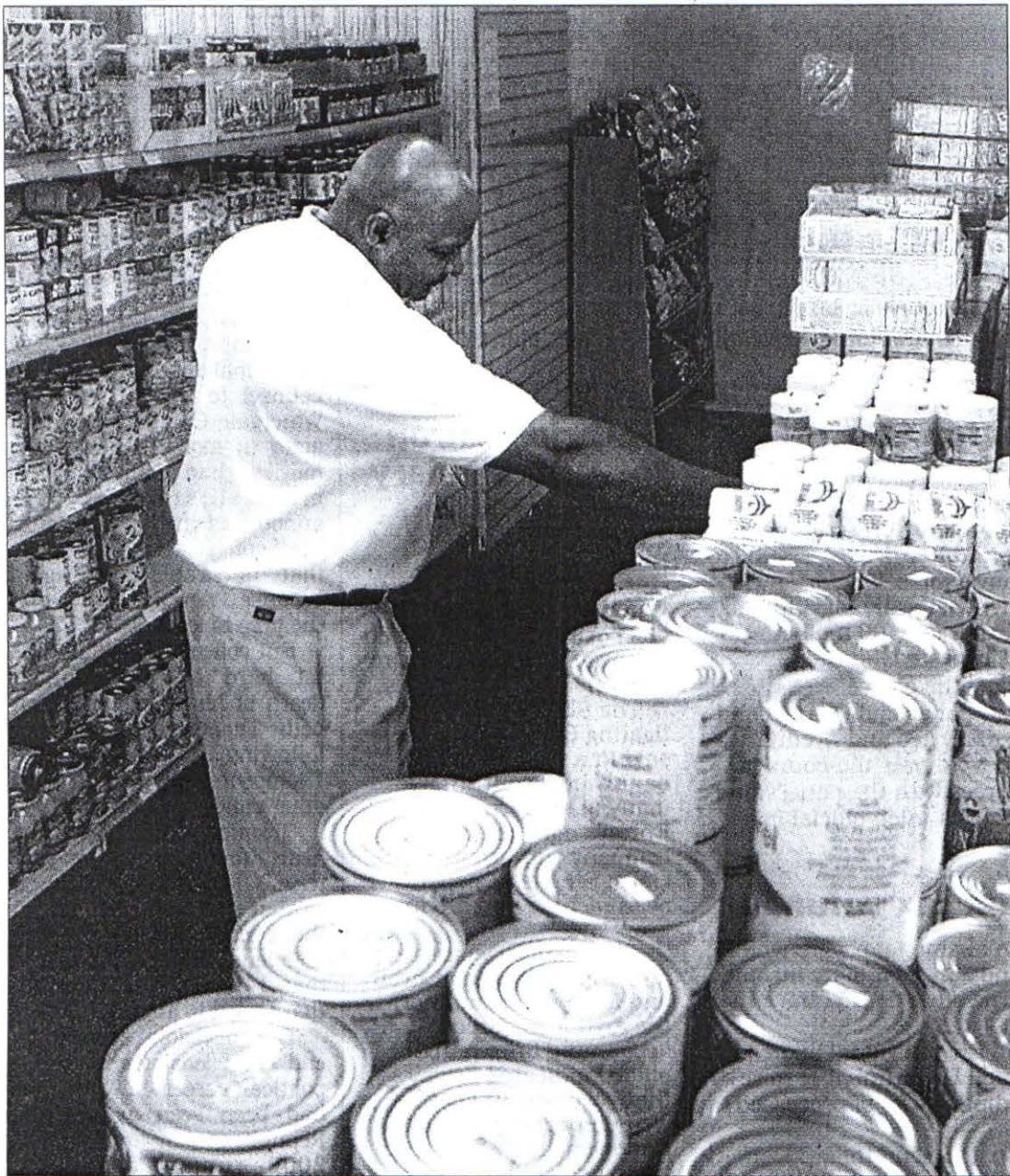
"I haven't seen it but any grocery store is wonderful,"

Unger said. "If they have produce that is the main thing." Former HOA President Ed McCrea agreed.

"It's better than nothing. That is for sure," he said.

The store is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Monday. The store is closed on Sunday.

Michael Maresh can be reached at mmaresh@aztrib.com or at 623-876-2513.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Curtis Wyatt of Youngtown shops at the Desert Oasis Grocery and Produce store. The mini-grocery market is located at the southwest corner of Peoria and 107th avenues.

Daily News-Sun • Monday, Jan. 21, 2002

Buying helps battered women

HELPING HEARTS:
New Sun City thrift store benefits
Sojourner Center

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A new thrift store in Sun City is aimed at helping battered women.

Helping Hearts opened its doors in Sunbowl Plaza, 107th and Peoria avenues, the day before Thanksgiving and has been busy ever since. The store is filled with clothes for every age group, furniture, kitchen supplies, books, music and toys.

On the counter is a basket with used cellular phones that the store is collecting to present to battered women.

"We donate to the Sojourner Center because it has a variety of programs for women, children and men," said Jean Pajari, co-owner of the shop. "We researched a lot of different centers to give to and this one was the best because it gave to more than just one group."

Although not a nonprofit store, the thrift shop welcomes donations, and distributes many donations as well. Pajari said she is working on a program to provide



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Dixie Schoening, left, and Jean Pajari own Helping Hearts, a new thrift store in Sun Bowl Plaza, 107th and Peoria avenues in Sun City.

OVER

professional-style clothes to women leaving shelters in order for them to be dressed competitively as they enter the job market.

Pajari's daughter, Dixie Schoening, who co-owns the store, said it is important to such women to receive donated clothes because many women arrive at shelters with nothing more than the clothes on their backs.

"They literally have nothing," she said.

The Sun City thrift store is the first joint business venture for the mother-daughter team, who spent months researching locations and charities before opening the doors in Sunbowl Plaza.

"We checked all the way east in Scottsdale and went pretty far south in the Phoenix area," Pajari said. "We spent a couple of months parked outside of this store seeing what the traffic flow was like, and it looked like this was the best place to be."

Schoening said research was key in determining a site for the store. They also took a few business

classes at local colleges to learn how to run the enterprise.

If customer volume is any indication of the success of the business, Helping Hearts is successful.

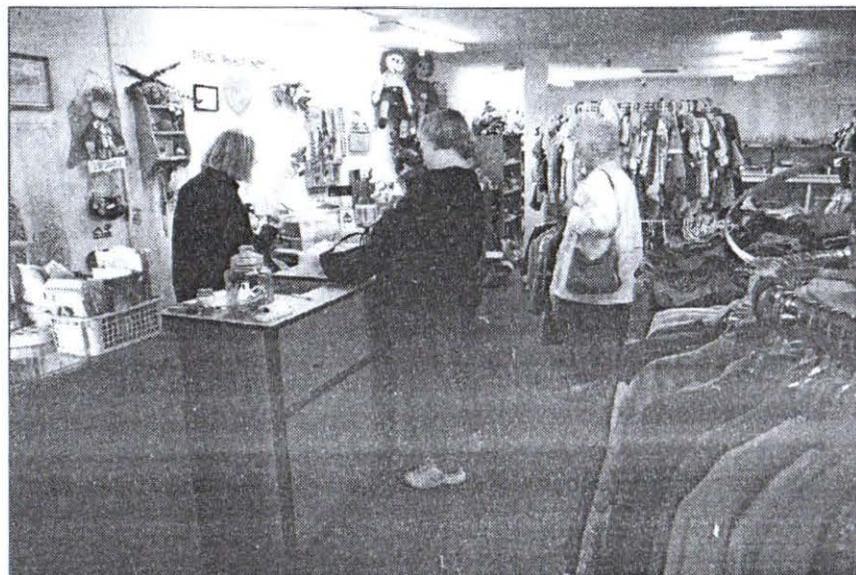
"We've been very busy since we opened," Schoening said.

But keeping an eye on business is just half of what Pajari and Schoening are hoping to accomplish with the store.

With proceeds making their way to the Sojourner Center, the business partners say they are hoping to make a difference in the lives of others.

The Sojourner Center is a nationwide organization aimed at helping battered women find a way to break the cycle of domestic abuse. The centers offer shelter, education programs and protection for women and have programs for rehabilitation and children.

John Sokolich can be reached at 876-2526 or jsokolich@aztrib.com.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Owner Dixie Schoening, left, rings up a customer's purchases at Helping Hearts, a new thrift store in Sun City's Sun Bowl Plaza.

Daily News-Sun • Saturday, Jan. 19, and Sunday, Jan. 20, 2002

Grand Avenue JB's set to close

STAFF REPORT

A long-time Sun City restaurant and meeting place will close its doors at the end of this month.

JB's Restaurant at 10801 Grand Ave. will close Jan. 30. Any banquets scheduled after Jan. 29 will be canceled.

General Manager Rick Stephens said the restaurant's closing is due to circumstances beyond his control. He said the corporate office of the restaurant doesn't own the building, but rents it.

A sign on the door of the restaurant urges residents to use other JB's locations in the

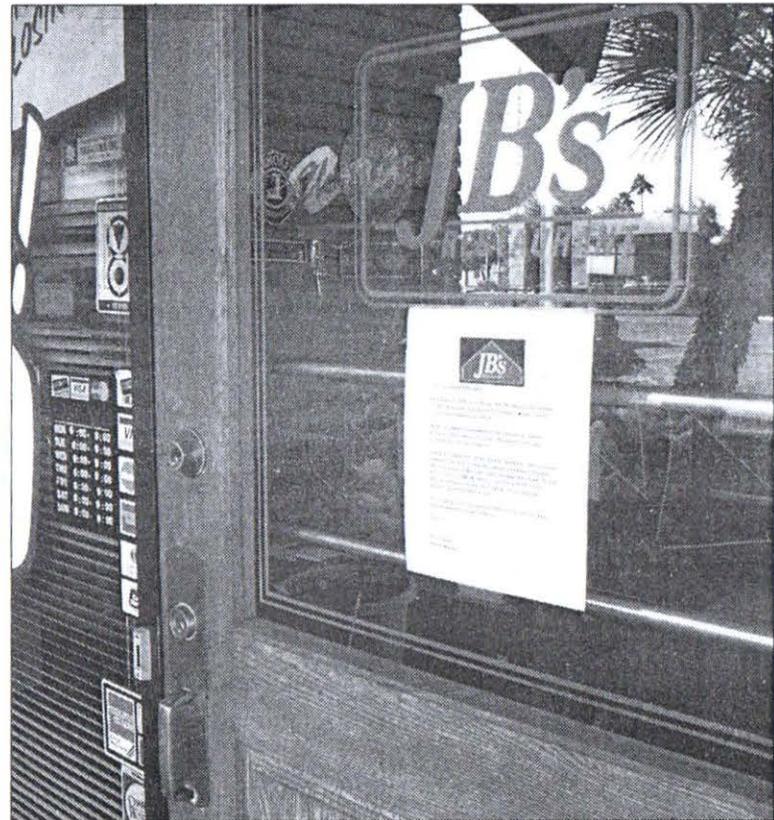
Northwest Valley, which will remain open.

Stephens wouldn't comment specifically about the closing, referring comments to the sign on the door.

The sign thanks people for their patronage and apologizes for the short notice about the closure. It also asks people and groups storing personal items in the restaurant to pick them up as soon as possible.

The closest JB's Restaurant in the area after Jan. 30 will be located at 9889 W. Bell Road, in Sun City.

A letter on the door at JB's, 108th and Grand avenues, notifies customers that the restaurant will close at 11 a.m. Jan. 30.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Daily News-Sun • Friday, Nov. 30, 2001

QUILTING HEAVEN

THE QUILTERY: New shop becomes focus of enthusiasts' attention

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Angels, Christmas bears, birds, horses and bees dot the palm-sized quilt pieces Sun Citian Donna Schoen is sewing as she seams up the sixth side of hexagons for an "I Spy" quilt.

Caught up in a quilters craze in Sun City, Schoen is making the quilt for one of her grandchildren.

"My grandson is 3," said Schoen. "He can name the colors and he especially liked a patch with a football on it. He showed it to his dad."

Schoen is a member of the Creative Quilters group that meets at The Quiltery, a new shop in the southwest quadrant of Grand Center Plaza at 107th and Grand avenues in Sun City. She said different designs on quilt pieces help children with hand-eye coordination, counting and identifying words with images.

Though Schoen's work looks professional, she considers herself a "learner" in the vast world of quilting.

"I love it. I want to do it all the time — and I can because I'm retired," she said, laughing.

Schoen is joined in The Quiltery on Wednesday by several women shopping, working and advising others.

"As you can see, there's nothing like sewers and quilters," said Jeanne Meisser, who was cutting fabric into "fat quarters," which are the smaller squares of 100 percent cotton fabric that quilters like to use. "They're all friends. We just struck gold."

The Quiltery, owned by Dianna Gates and run by her sister-in-law, Regina Lally, has only been open 2½ weeks. The two rely on Meisser and other staff members who are more experienced quilters to help guide customers.

Meisser said she enjoys helping people with fabric colors and designs.

"Most people like other people's opinions about color. A lady was in here the other day and she said, 'I've

got to leave — it looks like you don't have any dinosaurs,' and I said, 'Oh, but we do,'" Meisser said.

Esther Bernstein of Glendale is making a Hanukkah quilt featuring a Star of David that she plans to use as a wall hanging.

"I stop when it's the right size," said Bernstein, who has made 10 quilts. "Sometimes it's relaxing, sometimes it's frustrating. I don't worry about my mistakes. I don't take it seriously, which may be why I enjoy it. We're happy there's a quilter's shop here."

Lally said she encouraged her brother-in-law to invest in the shop after noticing women in the area got together for bus trips to other towns to buy quilting fabric. Lally moved to Sun City 2½ years ago.

"I know how to get what I want," Lally said with a wink. "You just have to ask the right people."

Gates has been interested in fabric for many years.

"I like bright fabrics," she said, pulling out a bolt of tropical-print fabric in cheery pastels. "This is a bright store, although some people specialize in reproductions, which are more muted."

Gates pointed to a striped fabric that is a reproduction from the 18th

century. She said the American Textile History Museum is sponsoring a quilting contest, the deadline for which is July 5, that features such fabrics. Rules are available at the shop, along with information about upcoming seminars.

The shop is offering a couple of seminars of note in February. On Feb. 7, Karen Combs, a nationally-known instructor, will present a discussion on "Optical Illusion Quilts." On Feb. 4 and 25, the shop will offer classes on making "Bargello Hearts Quilts."

Before Christmas, the shop is asking customers to make lists of items they would like to receive as gifts.

"We're having a 'Gentlemen's Evening' on Dec. 22. Most men put off shopping until the weekend before Christmas. We'll give them their wives' wish-lists," Lally said.

Schoen said she has made good friends through quilting.

"Quilters make the best comforters," she said with a giggle.

For information about The Quiltery, call 815-7341.

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or 876-2532.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

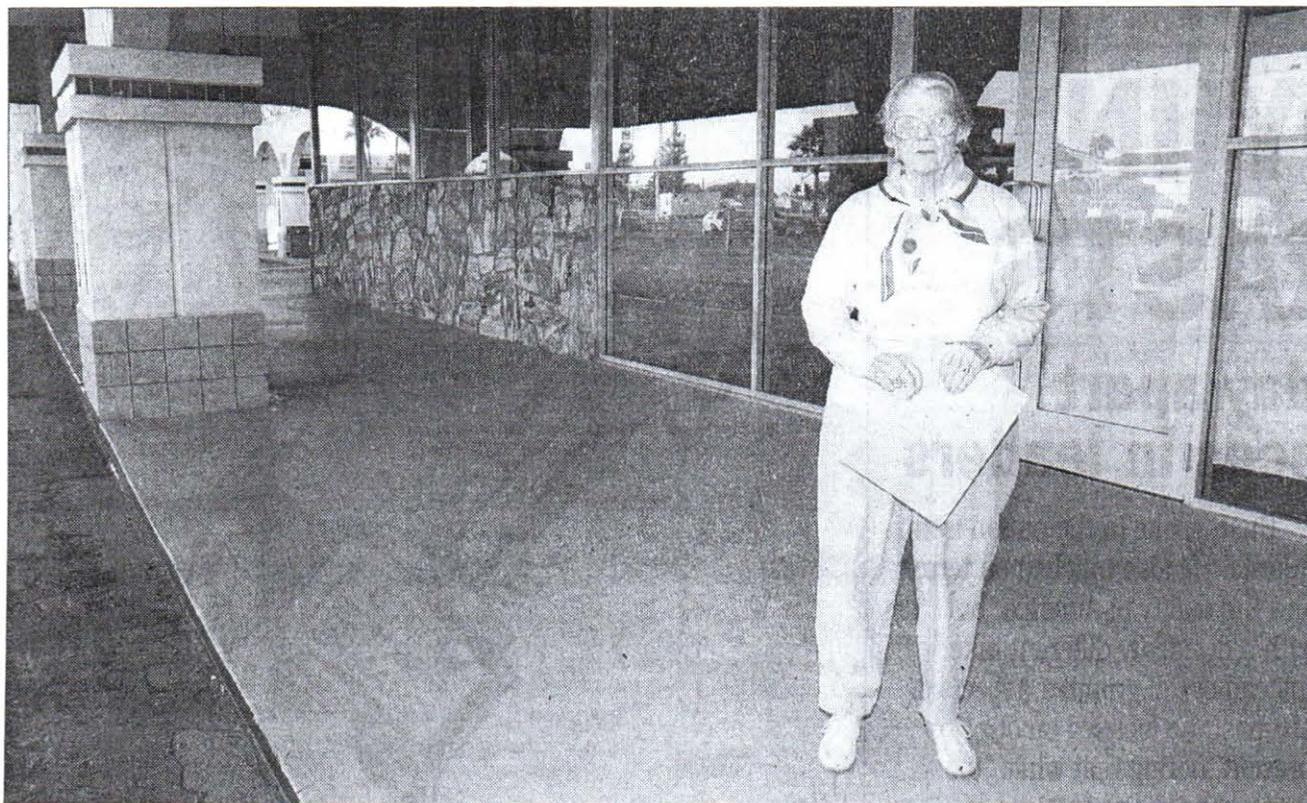
Quilters shop for fabrics Wednesday at The Quiltery in Sun City.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Carol Reynolds, left, and Dianna Gates, owner of Sun City's The Quiltery, help Hallye Richardson of Glendale choose a fabric Wednesday for a new quilt she plans to make.



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jane Freeman stands outside the old Safeway building on the southwest corner of 107th and Grand Avenues in Sun City. The building in Grand Center has been remodeled into Freed's Furniture for All, opening soon.

LOOKING BACK

HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Volunteer historian offers pictorial 'then and now' Wednesday

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

With a steady flow of newcomers calling Sun City home, there are few residents here who remember what the community looked like 40 years ago.

But an opportunity to learn about the community's past is coming soon. Jane Freeman, who recently completed research into Sun City's past, will present her findings Wednesday at the West Valley Art Museum in Surprise during the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's annual fall membership meeting.

Freeman will use a series of 1961 photos contrasted with 2001 photos of the same locations in this presentation titled "Early History of Local Sun City Merchants and Growth of the Business Community."

Freeman, who works as a volunteer historian with the historical society and who co-authored "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona," said she began the business-history project because the society had not yet covered the subject.

"Jubilee," with co-writer Glenn Sanberg, was published in 1984. The book is available for \$5 from the historical society.

"Del Webb's Hiway House is now a Fry's Supermarket at 107th and Grand," said Freeman. "Not long after Hiway House opened, it changed to Del Webb's Kings Inn. Motel units were added but they're all gone now. King's Inn was very popular."

Efforts at preserving historic buildings in the area have been challenging, she added.

"A predecessor to Fry's promised to build around King's Inn, but a year later, King's Inn was gone," Freeman said.

In the center at the southwest corner of 107th and Grand avenues, an old Safeway has been remodeled into the new Freed's Furnishings for All.

"It's now Grand Center," Freeman said. "Greenway Drugs and 1st National Bank also were on that corner. In the early days, they had big parties when opening new stores in that addition."

In "Jubilee," Freeman and Sanberg said this of Del Webb's initial plan: "The availability of businesses and services was one of the primary concerns. The first business

established in the newly developed shopping center (now Grand Center) was the Safeway Supermarket. It had opened on Dec. 31, 1959, the day before the public first viewed Webb's model homes. The new market was a spacious store covering 14,400 square feet, with wide aisles and shelves laden with a fine selection of staple and fancy groceries."

In her presentation, Freeman points to old ads such as those touting a one-pound can of Butter-nut coffee for 49 cents and packages of hot dogs for 10 cents.

To conduct her research on the first businesses in Sun City, Freeman said she used the Daily News-Sun's morgue, where past issues are stored.

"I pulled out a lot of information," she said. "Sears Catalog store closed in February 1993. We've seen

a lot of businesses come and go and not be replaced. A lot were what we call the 'mom 'n' pop' stores. Some were run by people who'd retired here."

Freeman said the historical society has benefitted whenever Del Webb Corp. has cleaned house, often gaining precious photos that become historically significant. Del Webb Corp. is now The Del Webb Group of Pulte Homes.

"With the Pulte merger, we've gotten 10 big cartons and 12 scrapbooks, because, again, Del Webb is cleaning out," Freeman said.

The annual fall membership meeting and luncheon of the Historical Society starts at 11:30 a.m. The public is invited. For reservations, call 974-2568.

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or 876-2532.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

All that remains of Del Webb's Kings Inn, seen below in a file photo, is the name of the shopping center at 107th and Grand avenues, now occupied by fast-food restaurants, shops and a supermarket.



DAILY NEWS-SUN

Daily News-Sun • Saturday, Nov. 3, and Sunday, Nov. 4, 2001



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Lawrence Goldberg stands in the chapel of his new Regency Mortuary at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard.

New business sees niche

REGENCY: Owner says competition good for market

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun Citians have a new provider to choose from for their final arrangements.

Regency Mortuary opened its doors in Sun City on Oct. 16 in the former Southwest Savings and Century 21 building at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard.

"We're family-owned and independent," said Lawrence Goldberg, funeral director and owner. "The (community) can sustain one more mortuary. I did case totals for the percentage of cremations to actual burials for all the major mortuaries. The percentages are weighted towards cremation."

An 18-year Sun Citian whose mother, Sally Goldberg, has lived here since 1973, Lawrence Goldberg decided he wanted to become a mortician after working in the limousine business as a contractor to other mortuaries.

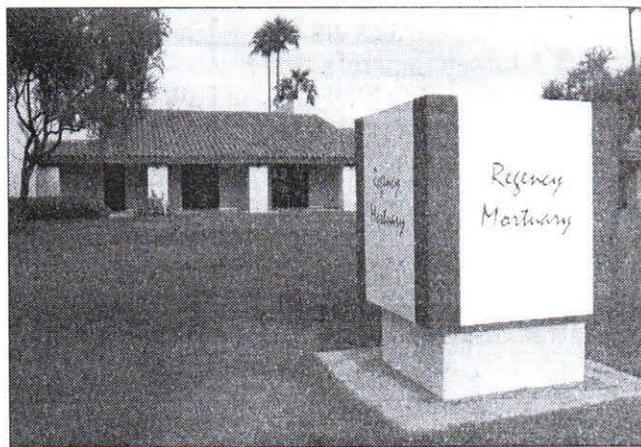
"I had 22 funeral home accounts until the conglomerates came to Sun City," Goldberg said.

Now Goldberg has his own 4,000 square-foot mortuary, including a chapel that holds 75 people. He did a large portion of Regency Mortuary's remodeling and decorating, which features a navy, gray and cream decor.

Licensed as a funeral director and embalmer, Lawrence Goldberg graduated from mortuary school after one year of study in Cypress, Calif. His son, Adam Goldberg, assists him in the business.

Goldberg said Regency Mortuary will provide any form of disposition a family chooses for their loved one, even themed funerals.

"The whole point of a funeral is to memorialize and commemorate a person's life. I encourage people to bring in things that relate to the person's life," Goldberg



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Regency Mortuary opened Oct. 16 in a former bank building at 99th Avenue and Thunderbird Boulevard.

said.

Goldberg also offers a selection of elegant burial outfits for men and women whose families are caught off-guard by their deaths.

"We're a full-service mortuary with pre-arrangement plans. We provide shipping and receiving. We don't recommend one specific cemetery. We fulfill our clients' requests."

Urns range in price from \$39 to \$250. Caskets from \$1,125 to \$2,700, with some doubling as cremation units.

"We work with an independent crematory I trust implicitly," Goldberg said.

While his business is new, Goldberg said he is confident Regency Mortuary will be a success.

"I'm known here and I have a following," he said.

For more information, call 875-7500.

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or by calling 876-2532.

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT SEPT. 19-25, 2001

HOA loses in attempt to secure a grocery store

By MIKE RUSSO
Independent Newspapers

Sun City Home Owners Association efforts to obtain a grocery tenant for the vacated Safeway store at Peoria and 107th avenues were dashed last week.

HOA board President Ed McCrea announced that he had spoken with the president of a company that has signed a lease for the 30,000-square-foot building.

The company wants to remain anonymous for now, according to Mr. McCrea, but he did say, "it is not a food store. I am very unhappy about that."

Freed's Fine Furnishings reportedly took possession of the building last Tuesday.

HOA had been working for several months to get a new grocery tenant for the vacant building and had been part of negotiations between Arizona Partners, the building's owner, and IGA, which had expressed an interest in occupying the former supermarket.

Mr. McCrea expressed disappointment in the announcement.

"We have been misinformed by Safeway and Arizona Partners," he said.

"I think we ought to let the grocery-buying public know about the double-talking Safeway gave us," said HOA director Bob Kortright, who had led an individual attempt to get Safeway to allow another grocery store to occupy the building, on which Safeway still holds a lease.

"Safeway has been something short of candid with us," Mr. Kortright said.

Telephone calls placed to

Safeway and Arizona Partners went unreturned.

Many Sun Citians have been inconvenienced when it comes to grocery shopping since Safeway abandoned the Peoria Avenue location about a year and half ago.

When Safeway closed that store, "it was a disappointment and hardship to its former customers," Mr. Kortright wrote in a recent letter to Safeway officials. "The area previously served by Safeway is made up of elderly, retired folks with a median age over 75.

"My next door neighbors used to walk to Safeway, about a third of a mile away," Mr. Kortright explained. "They sure are not going to walk to the new store.

Safeway vacated the Sun City store, one of the oldest and smallest of its west Valley stores, for a new, larger edifice at the corner of Olive and 107th avenues, in Peoria, just across the street from Sun City's western perimeter.

Daily News-Sun • Friday, Sept. 14, 2001

Freed's plans to move

STAFF REPORT

Freed's Furniture Mart in El Mirage is about to move into new digs.

"We just leased and are remodeling the Old America Store at 10722 Grand Ave. in Sun City," said Dick Johnson. "It will be called 'Freed's Furniture for All.'"

Many people may remember the store as a Safeway,

which then became a Liquor Barn and later became Old America.

Johnson said a second new store will be located in the previous Safeway store at 107th and Peoria avenues.

"It will be called Freed's Consignment Center. This will be the first time we've set up a special store for consignments," Johnson said.

The consignment store's

opening will follow the Grand Avenue store.

Meanwhile, people needing furniture can shop at Freed's El Mirage store, 12420 W. Thunderbird Road.

"We're running a sale in the El Mirage store right now. We hope to be open at the new location in October," Johnson said.

Johnson also owns Freed's Fine Furnishings in Sun City West.

Pub keeps young, old connected



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Patrick McCarthy, who opened a pub in Sun City's Sun Shadow Square in the spring, draws customers of all ages from a variety of West Valley cities.

SUN CITY NIGHT SCENE: At McCarthy's, patrons play pool, grandmas are cool

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A new night spot in Sun City is finding a niche in bringing residents and their grown children together.

McCarthy's, sandwiched between Tuesday Mornings and Ace Hardware in Sun Shadow Square at 99th Avenue and Bell Road, opened in March and is drawing both seniors and younger patrons in search of West Valley entertainment.

Surprise resident Wendy Sampson said she visits the sports bar every few weeks because of its location.

Sampson was shooting pool with her husband Michael and her 55-year-old father, Sun City resident Conrad Seibel, at the sports bar. The three cited McCarthy's laid-back atmosphere, location and abundance of pool tables as the reasons they chose the pub.

"We try to support the locals," Wendy Sampson said. "Darts and pool. That's good."

Seibel, Wendy Sampson's father, visits the Irish pub for the same reasons.

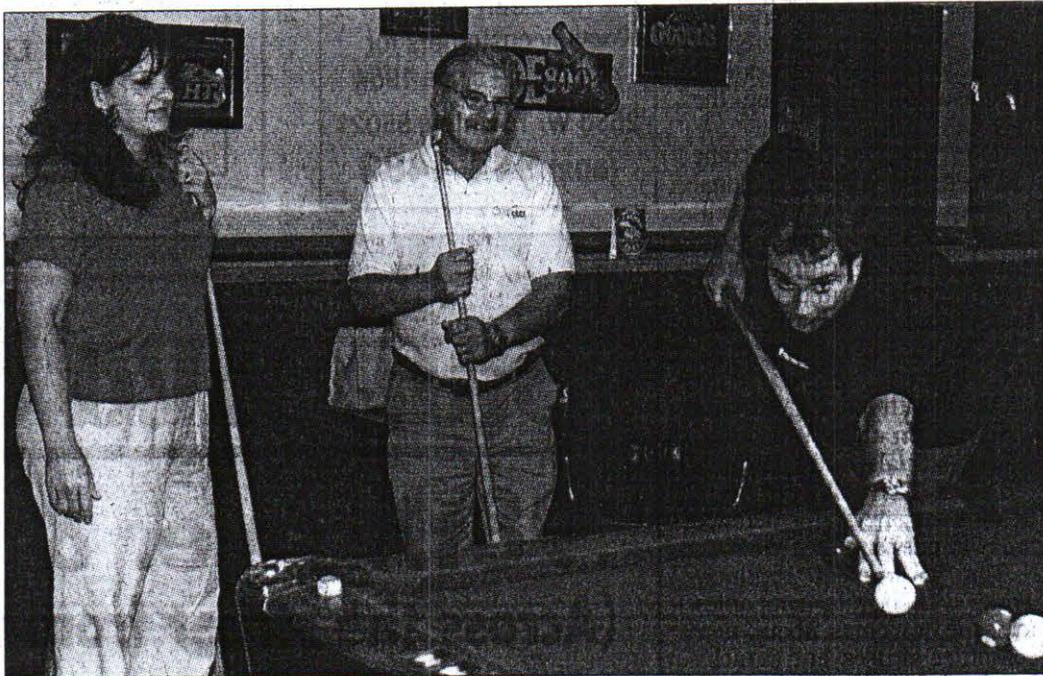
"I come here for the pool," he said. "I like the beer and Diet Coke."

While the sports bar is in Sun City, it also caters to a much younger crowd.

Richard Yvette, 25, was visiting for the first time Friday night because of its location.

"I have a job here," he explained. "It is an Irish bar, and I am Irish. I like it a lot."

See Pub connects, A5



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Conrad Seibel, center, of Surprise, plays pool with his daughter and son-in-law, Wendy and Michael Sampson, also of Surprise at McCarthy's in Sun City.

OVER

Yvette said he is drawn to McCarthy's because of the overcrowding and noise found in East Valley clubs.

"I don't like large and loud crowds," he said. "It's very down to earth."

Friday night there were about 30 to 40 people at the pub, though the bar attracts 150 to 200 customers when there is live entertainment.

Surprise resident Mike Cash said the Sun City bar is a great place to spend time with friends without all the distractions larger clubs present.

"We like it because it's nice place to get with your friends," he said. "We like to come here for the pool."

Cash said his parents are also regular visitors to McCarthy's, and the family often gets together at the pub for dinner and a few games of pool.

Teri Alydevell of Surprise, who was also on hand to try to persuade other customers to take part in Karaoke, said Friday was a slow night.

"Normally there is a big and young crowd," she said. "Everybody is here to have a good time."

Patron Wayne Ambrult said that while the pub draws a younger crowd than Sun Citians may be used to



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Wayne Ambrult, left, of Youngtown, sings "Sweet Caroline" with his wife, Patty, right, and Terri Glidewell, center, of Surprise at McCarthy's in Sun City.

seeing, the people who frequent McCarthy's are not the stereotypical "yuppie" crowd.

"We have a down-to-earth attitude," he said. "We have fun because we are the people."

Wendy Edwards, 22, who lives with her grandmother in Sun City, said she likes the location and the smaller crowds as a change of pace from the usual bar scene.

Patrick McCarthy, owner of the pub, said in the four

months the bar has been open, he has seen customers from as young as 21 to seniors as old as their late 90s visiting his establishment. McCarthy said the sports bar draws patrons from 25 to 55 on a regular night.

McCarthy opened the pub after researching the West Valley club scene. He perceived a lack of sports bar-type entertainment in Sun City, and chose the location because of its location and

amount of traffic. The pub's proximity to Glendale, Peoria and Surprise helps draw the diverse crowd McCarthy enjoys.

"We pull from everywhere. They come here because there is nothing to do on this side of town," he said. "We aren't a restaurant. We are a sports bar. We want people to come in and have fun."

"We have the young guys dancing with the grandmas. It's cool."

Daily News-Sun • Friday, July 20, 2001

Sun City restaurant closes doors

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A simple, handwritten sign greets former customers at the Lovin' Touch Restaurant in Sun City.

The sign reading "Closed — out of business" hangs on the front door of the restaurant in the Bell Camino Shopping Center near 107th Avenue and Bell Road.

Lovin' Touch's owner, Janet Buglisi, could not be reached for comment, but nearby business

owners commented on the closure, saying they were somewhat saddened and a little confused.

"It was a neat place," said Anita Wilde of A.R. Wilde Fine Jewelry, two doors east of the restaurant. "I'm sorry not to see her there."

"They served breakfast on July 1, and then they closed; that's all we know," said Richard Seidner, a travel consultant with Sun City Travel, next door to the restaurant.

Rob Ackatz, also next door to the

restaurant at Golf Cars of America, said business usually is slower in the summer when snowbirds leave town, but Lovin' Touch was the only restaurant in the shopping center.

"I'll sure miss the place," Ackatz said. "We were very fond of Janet and her staff. All I know is, one Monday morning I came to work and it was closed."

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or 876-2532.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Lovin' Touch Restaurant at Del Webb Boulevard and Bell Road in Sun City has gone out of business.

Pharmacy cancels plans for store in Sun City

NEIGHBORS GLAD: Condo owners refused to sell units for parking lot

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After an outcry from surrounding condominium owners, CVS Pharmacy officials pulled the plug on a proposed free-standing store in Sun City, officials report.

For the past several weeks, CVS has been in negotiations with condominium owners at Lakeview Condominiums to purchase their dwellings to

make room for an expanded parking lot at the vacant Bank of America building, Greenway Road and 99th Avenue. According to Sun City officials, CVS balked at the project after the Sun City Condominium Association refused the sale of the land at Lakeview.

"Condominium owners have the right to sell their complex, but not the land they're on," said Joe Moore, president of COA. "We brought this fact up to our lawyers, and then CVS pulled out of the project."

Ed McCrea, president of the Sun City Home Owners Association, said he received confirmation the issue was dead from the Gustine Co.,

which handles acquisition of new sites for CVS.

"I think it's long overdue," McCrea said, "but the issue is dead. They closed the book on the project because it would have been impossible for them to purchase the surrounding land around the bank. And we would have gone against any zoning changes that would have been needed, anyway."

News of CVS' decision not to pursue the project at 99th Avenue was well received by Sandy Wilgus, whose property borders the condominiums.

"It's a good thing," she said. "We are not against

See Pharmacy project, A5

having another pharmacy in the community, but not if it came at the price of tearing down people's homes. There are many other locations that the store would fit better in."

Following the CVS announcement not to pursue the store in Sun City, J.P. Brost of Sunset Plaza Leasing in Sun City said his company is in the process of purchasing the vacant Bank of America building to renovate it for use by a hospice volunteer service, a real estate agency or a financial investment firm.

"When this happens," Brost said, "the condos that border the property will be left alone. I want to put the minds of those residents around the bank at ease."

Brost said the businesses up for consideration are ones that will fit in with what the community wants.

"We can assure every one of the residents that these types of firms are exactly what they would want as neighbors," he said.

Brost's project has been hailed by COA directors, who said the plan would fit well in the community.

John Sokolich can be reached at jsokolich@aztrib.com or at 876-2526.

Daily News-Sun • Friday, May 4, 2001

IGA nears completion of Greenway ABCO buyout

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

If a lease agreement is settled by the close of business today, the soon-to-close ABCO supermarket in the Greenway Terrace Shopping Plaza will reopen as an IGA Sunday.

As part of a four-store purchase earlier this year, John Smirniotis Jr., owner of Sun Foods IGA, already has converted three ABCO supermarkets in the Phoenix area to IGAs. The remaining store in Sun City is scheduled for conversion this weekend.

"Right now I am working to make sure everything gets done," he said. "The landlord wants to make some lease changes, so the whole thing is tied up with the lawyers right now. But I think everything will continue as scheduled."

Smirniotis has owned and operated Sun Foods for the past 11 years, and two months ago expressed interest in purchasing several ABCO supermarket buildings to expand his base.

He said the customer base in Sun City will be beneficial to his new businesses because there are very few other supermarkets in the area

catering to seniors.

"We will concentrate on offering what seniors want," Smirniotis said. "We will put things that they want to buy in the store and they can expect ads and pricing that will be geared to what their needs are. We want to take care of our customers."

In addition to targeting seniors' merchandise needs, Smirniotis said, the store also will offer customer assistance for those with hearing, vision or mobility limitations.

The news of the store's change-over comes on the heels of efforts by the Sun City Home Owners Association to replace the ABCO since it closed.

At recent HOA meetings, President Ed McCrea said a closed supermarket will cause a hardship for residents who live in the area because it is the only such store near many homes.

Board members had tried contacting several supermarket chains in the Phoenix area to see if the companies were interested in moving into the building, but the larger supermarket chains were not interested because of the comparatively

small size of the existing store.

Ione Boynton, HOA's executive secretary, said this morning she was relieved to hear a supermarket would stay in the area.

"There are too many people who don't have another option but to shop in that location," she said. "I am very pleased to hear it won't become just an empty hole in the plaza, and I know that many people in the community are relieved as well."

If all legal problems are fixed by the end of the day, the ABCO store will be closed down this evening when a team of 100 employees will work throughout the night and through Saturday converting the store to an IGA. The store, under new ownership, is expected to reopen 8 a.m. Sunday pending the legal agreement.

Daily News-Sun • Thursday, April 5, 2001

Card store owner buys Sun City shop

STAFF REPORT

Bob Riddle, who owns Bob's Variety in Sun City West, has taken over the former Miller's Hallmark store in the Greenway Terrace Shopping Center in Sun City, and converted it to a discount greeting card outlet.

Riddle said he "had to jump through a bunch of hoops" to get the deal completed before Miller's contract with the U.S. Postal Service would have been terminated in February.

Bob's Variety in the Sundome Plaza operates a contract postal station that is highly popular with customers, as is the entire store.

With several contract stations in Sun City closing last year, some as the stores in which they were located closed, Riddle said "postal officials wanted to see what could be done to keep them open, and asked me if I was interested in taking them over."

Those contract stations were located at 107th and Peoria, and at GT's Hallmark in the La Ronde Centre, he said.

No accord was reached on those stores, but Riddle did act on the Miller's Hallmark shop.

The new Riddle store at Greenway Terrace "will not be another Bob's Variety," Riddle said, but will sell discount cards — as do two other stores Riddle operates — plus party goods and related materials, as well as offering the postal contract station.

Sun Cities' moms, pops keep pace

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The hefty boost in populations of communities surrounding the Sun Cities has served as a magnet for retailers, but owners of smaller, locally owned stores in Sun City and Sun City West say they are keeping up with the competition.

Even though the Wal-Marts and Costcos can sell items for lower prices, many Sun Cities residents are more likely to pay a little bit more to continue to shop at their smaller neighborhood stores, some store owners said Tuesday.

Stone's Shoes Manager Greg Myers said that although he would be happy if there were none of the so-called big box stores, the large retailers aren't having much of an impact on his business.

Myers said the shoe store in Bell Camino shopping center in Sun City caters mostly to people between 50 and 75, and the seniors who shop there understand and enjoy that.

Specializing in one type of merchandise also keeps customers coming back as the store has a variety of shoes they can choose from. Large retailers, on the other hand, buy in bulk on popular items, Myers said.

And customers, he said, will not shop at businesses where they are treated rudely.

"We give them the service they are entitled to," he said,

From A1

adding that his employees still measure their customers' feet, a service not likely to be found at a store selling everything from produce to motor oil. He said this is one added dimension that smaller stores will do to let customers know their business is appreciated.

"If I were selling shoes for 25- to 40-year-olds, it would be hard for (the store) to survive," he said.

Loyalty, Myers added, is a lost art in the younger generation, but still means something to seniors.

"Our customers will not shop elsewhere if they can get from us what they want," he said.

And business is still booming at the Hair Barn in the Sundome Plaza in Sun City West, said Diana

Krekeler, an employee at the salon.

Krekeler said the salon is serving 150 to 200 customers a day, and it shows no signs of slowing down. Part of that business, she said reflects steady customers.

And loyalty, she added, is a big issue at the Hair Barn.

"We get a lot of customers that do come back," she said.

She added that being so close to a main shopping anchor (Safeway) is one reason the shop is so successful.

Lila Stephens, manager of the Sun City Visitors Center, said residents prefer to shop in their hometown for a variety of reasons.

The major shopping

malls outside of Sun City are busier, and the smaller stores in Sun City and Sun City West are designed for seniors.

"They get more personalized attention," she said. "Our generation appreciates the extra service."

Stephen said local mom-and-pop stores are still a staple among seniors because such stores were the primary businesses when today's seniors were growing up. And very few, she said, are closing in the Sun Cities despite the lower prices in bigger stores nearby.

Seniors also do not like to go outside the Sun City to shop because of the bumper-to-bumper traffic they encounter, Stephen said.

"Traffic has a lot to do with it," she said. And with

a couple dozen strip malls serving retirees, there is no reason to go to the larger one-stop department stores, she added.

"On the whole, the people tend to trust the stores in Sun City more," Stephens said. "We like our local businesses, and we would like to keep them here."

However, Stephens said, if a major retailer were to come to the community, she has no doubt retirees would flock to the discount store to get the best bargains.

"They shop where they can afford to," she said.

Ryan Peterson, president of the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce board of directors and spokesman for Del Webb's Sun City Grand, agreed Sun Citians are loyal to their neighborhood stores,

and as a result, few of those stores are closing.

Peterson said the community needs small stores as well as larger big box businesses.

"We need them to work together," he said.

But a large majority of the population, he said, will shun the larger businesses because they prefer to shop in smaller stores.

"They continue to provide a great service," Peterson said.

If the smaller stores want to keep their customer base, even as the population changes and new people move in, they need to continue focussing on customer service and networking, he said.

Michael Maresch can be reached at mmaresch@aztrib.com or 623-876-2521.

Closings dismay shoppers

EMPTY STORE-FRONT: Loyal ABCO customers in Sun City worry about loss of neighborhood access

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A week ago, ABCO parent Fleming Cos., with offices in Oklahoma and Texas, announced the closure of 12 Arizona stores — adding more empty hulks to shopping centers throughout the Northwest Valley.

"We have three empty grocery stores in the (Peoria) vicinity," said Jeff Fairman, executive director of the Peoria Economic Development Group. "There's an (empty) Fry's at Arrowhead Towne Center, an empty ABCO at 99th Avenue and Union Hills, and two additional empty Fry's at 75th and Peoria and at 83rd and Bell."

Fairman said empty grocery store buildings often are not suited to other leases because their master leases usually prohibit other grocery stores from moving in.

"The owners don't want competition, so then it becomes an eyesore," said Fairman.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Patrons of ABCO in Greenway Terrace in Sun City are keeping their fingers crossed that their neighborhood store won't close.

Fairman indicated that turning empty grocery stores into telemarketing "call centers" isn't always the answer, because there is only so much demand, and the locations aren't always suitable for other employment uses.

"Grocery stores aren't closing because of old-fashioned

reasons — that stores were getting too old or the neighborhood changed," said Fairman. "They're closing because of conglomeration."

The latest chain attempting to bow out is ABCO, which is trying to sell its remaining 41 food stores, including one each in Sun

City, Sun City West and Peoria.

But loyal ABCO customers in the Sun City hope the stores will stay open.

"I shop here periodically — it's our neighborhood grocery store," said Lawrence

See Changes dictate, A5

From A1

Daughters of Sun City. "I'd have to drive a lot farther (if it closes)."

Mum's the word from Fleming Cos. in Lewisville, Texas, owner of the remaining 41 ABCOs seeking new owners. The company did not return calls this week about whether more buyers have come forth, but other sources say the remaining stores might be closing on or about April 1.

"We expect all additional stores to be closing or sold in the next few months, possibly by early May," said Paul Rubin, Southern Arizona director of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local Union 99, which represents grocery store workers.

With the Arizona ABCO stores' fate still up in the air, union members are taking steps to safeguard their own future.

"We've been meeting with the company on an ongoing basis for about six weeks (on the employee severance package), which last night and this morning members of the union voted to accept," said Paul Rubin, UFCW's Southern Arizona director.

Rubin said the only official announcements from corporate headquarters concern those ABCO stores that have already closed.

"They are looking for buyers — but there are no buyers yet," he said.

In the meantime, ABCO competitors say Fleming is doing what it can to make its

stores appealing to new buyers.

John Smirniotis, owner of Sun Foods IGA in Sun City, said he had been approached about possibly buying some of the stores.

"(Fleming) is trying to make some fair deals so that the stores are successful," Smirniotis said. "I don't know a dollar figure, but they're trying to make deals on rent to make them viable locations, which most of them aren't. They've offered (the stores) to all the major chains and independents in the state (but) where that's going, I don't know."

"(Sun Foods hasn't) committed one way or the other," said Simiotes. "We've looked at quite a few locations, as have (other food stores). I don't know what's transpired.

Nothing's gotten to the point of signing deals. To my knowledge, the ABCO stores have been offered to every chain in the Valley."

Some of the customers exiting ABCO at Greenway and 99th Avenue in Sun City expressed dismay at the possibility that store might close if a new buyer isn't found.

"That would be terrible," said Rosalie McKinney of Sun City. "I live up the street, so it would be two to three more miles to Safeway."

Another shopper seemed unfazed.

"I'd shop at Safeway," said Dr. Jo Fletcher of Sun City. "(But) I live close to this store which is why I shop here."

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or by calling 876-2532.

Hometown grocery store stands alone



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Smirnotis has been the owner of the Sun Foods IGA in Sun City for the past 10 years.

SUN CITY: Sun Foods IGA Valley's last independent

ERIN SELIGMAN
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The electronic doors swish. The smells of fresh-baked breads and pastries smother the nose.

The smooth sounds of Mel Torme protruding from hidden speakers tickle the ears. Cash registers jingle and the shopping cart, with the one malfunctioning wheel, squeaks as it's pushed up and down the aisle by another savvy shopper.

The last independently-owned grocery store in the Valley, Sun City's Sun Foods IGA, 14820 Del Webb Blvd., maintains the aura of the quaint neighborhood shops of yesteryear.

"We try to make it pleasurable," said store owner John Smirnotis Jr., emphasizing the importance of customer service amidst the slew of big-box grocery chains sweeping the Valley.

Catering specifically to area seniors, Sun Foods replaces today's rock 'n' roll with music from the 1930s, '40s and '50s. Employees have assisted shoppers by unlocking cars and have driven some home to pick up a spare set of keys.

See Store keeps, A4

From A1

Those who have difficulty seeing are assisted as they circulate the aisles, and Smirnotis will attempt to grant every request of shoppers seeking a favorite brand or snack from their hometown.

"This isn't rocket science. The grocery business hasn't changed as long as I've been in it," he said, noting the importance of quality food, appealing prices and friendly service. "(These traits) seem to be a lost art in retail."

Smirnotis, owner of Sun Foods since 1990, comes from a long line of grocers.

"My grandfather used to peddle produce down the streets of Chicago," Smirnotis said, recalling how he began sweeping floors and facing shelves in his father's store by the age of 10.

Ironically, Smirnotis' dad is now a part-time employee at Sun Food, while his nephew is the store manager. One of his two daughters is a cashier.

"I just like the business and we're lucky to have the support of the people," Smirnotis said. "We try to cater to the clientele and that's our niche."

Business at Sun Foods has

only increased for Smirnotis over the last decade, despite the Valley saturated with seven grocery chains. In comparison, Los Angeles has three chains and Chicago has roughly two.

"This Valley's very tough," Smirnotis said, noting that metropolitan Phoenix has more grocery square footage than any other city in the United States. "We've got stores on every corner."

Though independently owned, Sun Foods maintains competitive prices and has the luxury of ordering specific brands or food items at the request of its customers. The only downfall, Smirnotis said, is the inability to advertise as much as the chains do.

The Sun City store, however, has the benefit of being small in size during a time when chains are transforming into super stores and succumbing to society's "bigger is better" mentality.

"They can't shop these big stores," Smirnotis said of his senior clientele. He added that most Sun Citians are self-sufficient and don't want to be patronized by having others run their errands for them.

Sun Citians pledge to continue legacy

COUPLE'S VISION HONORED:

At Penny Wise Thrift Shop, volunteers promise to perpetuate the goodwill of Pauline and Bill Don Carlos

MONICA ALONZO-DUNSMOOR
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Pauline and Bill Don Carlos left behind more than family and friends when, on a return trip from Mexico, their plane lost power and crashed into a vacant field about one mile from the Deer Valley Airport.

The Glendale couple left behind a legacy Sun Citians have vowed to continue.

At the Penny Wise Thrift Shop in Sun City, where proceeds benefit the Mingus Mountain Estate Residential Center in Prescott Valley, founded by the Don Carloses, manager Leta Alvestad talked about the couple's philanthropy.

"Pauline was very busy," Alvestad said, adding that she was inspired by the couple's generosity and humanitarianism. "She never stopped doing for others. I feel like I need to do something. I want to do more. But what we have to do is make a go of this (store) because I know it was her dream."

So she and volunteers at the store at Boswell Boulevard and Bell Road press on.

As customers came and went Tuesday, each sale fortified the Don Carlos' vision.

In August 2000, the average daily sales at Penny Wise, 10050 W. Bell Road, Suite 12, were \$416.45 for a monthly total of more than \$11,200.

"They were saints in the human sense," Alvestad said. "They were always helping children, and adults too. She called me her angel because of my help, but she was such an inspiration to me. It is such a tragic loss. Their work was not finished."

It was Pauline Don Carlos' dream to open a home that would nurture and care for troubled teen-age girls.

She and her husband realized the dream

From A1

to establish the Mingus Mountain Estate Residential Center, a place where 10- to 18-year-old girls received guidance, direction, support and love.

In a brochure describing the residential center, Pauline predicted it would be hard work.

"We had successfully raised four sons, but wondered if we were ready to raise many teenage daughters!" she wrote in the brochure. "Our dream became just that. We, with help, could live to make a difference in their young lives."

And even though a plane crash Monday ended their lives, they did live to see more than 2,500 girls benefit from the center.

Though their dreams and plans for expansion were cut

short, Chris Banken, executive director of Mingus Mountain Estate, said he and staff members would "continue and even grow."

"We're going to keep the dream alive, very much so," he said. "We're going to increase and continue on day by day just as they wanted."

The mood is somber at the center, many of the girls feeling like they lost a mother.

"She was 'mom' to the girls and the staff, for all of us," he said.

Banken, who traveled to Mexico this weekend with the Don Carloses, said even in Rocky Point, the couple spoke of helping others.

"They have a vacation home in Mexico and when we were in Rocky Point, we were looking at building because they said

the kids there didn't have anything to do. They needed a park, a bowling alley and a place to get counseling," Banken said. "Wherever they are, they want to help people. They gave their lives to helping people."

"We'll never let these two be forgotten."

The couple is survived by their four sons, William II and Michael E. Don Carlos, and A. David and Mathew A. Bianco. Bill is also survived by his sister, Dottie Gene Van Werden. Pauline is survived by her mother, Winifred Hughes, and a sister, Valerie Purvis.

Plans for the funeral service will be announced.

Monica Alonzo-Dunsmoor can be reached at malonzo-dunsmoor@aztrib.com or by calling 876-2531.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Penny Wise Thrift Shop in Sun City benefits the Mingus Mountain Estate Residential Center, founded by Pauline and Bill Don Carlos, who died Monday in a plane crash in north Phoenix.

Cupboard goes bare

DINING MEMORIES: Original owners recall days of Country Cupboard

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When it opened in Peoria almost 20 years ago, the Country Cupboard restaurant was filled with good smells and good memories.

Founded by a couple with Amish roots who moved from small-town Hartsville, Ohio, to Arizona, its recipes were the kind of food mother used to make, but now preferred to have cooked for her.

Within days, the old fashioned family restaurant near 87th Avenue and Thunderbird Road had Sun Citians lined up outside waiting for lunch and dinner.

The 130-seat restaurant, owned and operated by Al and Martha Beachy, soon became known for its pies and for its apple butter.

In 1982, in its second year, it copped the top award from Phoenix magazine in the pie category, ahead of such well-known places as Marie Callander's and Oscar Taylor's, said Martha Beachy, whose peanut butter fudge pie recipe was the big winner.

With long lines most days, the Beachys began looking for another spot for a bigger restaurant, and, in 1985, moved to the Greenway Terrace Shopping Plaza at 99th Avenue and Greenway Road in Sun City.

The spot had been occupied by chain restaurants that didn't succeed, including Duff's, and

earlier by something called the Greenbrier Cafe, said Malcolm Jones, a long time but now retired merchant in the Greenway Terrace center.

"The move to Greenway gave us about 300 seats, a banquet room and a gift shop and a bigger bakery," Martha Beachy said Friday as she looked through old photos of the place and reviewed stories from the Daily News-Sun about the restaurant.

"We had 90 employees then. At times it was quite pleasant and at times quite a bit of work," she said.

Thanksgiving was a massive undertaking, with as many as 800 pies being sold a day or two before the holiday for carry out use.

"After we moved to Sun City, we sold as many as 16,000 to 18,000 pies a year," Beachy said. That's about 50 homemade pies a day, each made the old-fashioned way, with lard in the crust and real apples peeled at the table for the pies, she pointed out.

It was that homemade food, including potatoes peeled and mashed on site and real gravy, plus personal relationships with the customers, that made the Country Cupboard so popular, she said.

"We had families who ate three meals a day with us, and others who ate twice each day," Beachy said.

"I still see some of those folks occasionally, and they recall dining with us."

Among the pleasures of running the Cupboard were watching seniors help spouses in failing health, "seeing how lovingly they would dress on Sunday and come in and take care of one another.

"It was wonderful to watch."

But "though we enjoyed knowing our customers, it was hard at times because they were older people. You wouldn't see a regular and learn a week or so later that he or she had died."

But in 1989, needing cash for debts connected with another business, the Beachys sold the Country Cupboard. For a year or so, it was operated by a man named Andy, "McCredis, I think was his last name," said Al Beachy.

Then it was sold to Nancy and Raj Dogra, and picked up the name Nancy's Country Cupboard, Al Beachy said.

"We've been away from it for a decade now."

See Cupboard closes, A5

From A1

Still, it was sad for the Beachys to see that Nancy's Country Cupboard, which got new owners two years ago, had closed, apparently for good.

"The restaurant business is a tough one," Martha Beachy said. "You don't make a lot of money. Employee turnover can be high. There are a lot of young people as busboys or dishwashers who come and go as the school years change.

"And I know that up on Bell Road these days, with all the chain restaurants, they offer higher wages and health benefits, which it's hard for an independent restaurant to do."

Besides, Sun City diners often like discounts and coupon specials to entice them, a tactic that can lead to lower quality food in order to produce lower prices.

"We never wanted to cut corners like that," Martha Beachy said. "We used good quality all the time, bought the best meats, and made so many of our own things."

In addition to the customers, the Beachys remember the employees, who at one time totaled 90, but whose total number is in the hundreds.

They still see some of those folks, and there's been talk of an employee reunion, though it's unlikely, Martha Beachy said.

"I know I remember the employee Christmas parties which were so much fun. We'd close the restaurant and Al and I would work with a couple of cooks to serve all our staff Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, serve the employees and their spouses, maybe 200 people in all.

"It is one of my fondest memories."

Although Nancy's Country Cupboard in the Greenway Terrace Shopping Center now is closed, the two other business that occupied the same building with it remain open.

Chum's Lounge and the Oxford Retirement and Estate Planning Inc. offices are unaffected by the restaurant's departure.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Al Beachy, left, his wife, Martha and their son Brian study photos and news clippings of their original Country Cupboard restaurant, which opened in Peoria almost 20 years ago. Below, the staff at Country Cupboard make old-fashioned homemade pies in this family photo.



Walgreens plans new store

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

By early next year shoppers in the oldest part of Sun City will have a new Walgreens store to patronize, across the street from the current store at 107th and Peoria avenues.

Walgreen officials confirmed they'll have a 16,200-square-foot store in January on the intersection's southwest corner in the same Sun Bowl Plaza. They'll close the existing store next to where Safeway closed a month ago.

Residents of the area, many of them using only golf cars, lamented Safeway's move to 107th and Olive avenues, as did the Sun City Home Owners Association, whose officials still are working to find another grocer to open in the area.

But the new Walgreens will have an expanded convenience-food section, said spokeswoman Carol

Hively in Deerfield, Ill.

"We will retain the full liquor department that people out there like and add a new and larger food section that will include packaged meats and some frozen items," she said.

The new store also will have a two-lane drive-through pharmacy and a one-hour photo service, Hively said.

Walgreens has operated in its current location for about 25 years, as had Safeway until it relocated.

Area residents fretted when word of the Safeway move was made public that Walgreens might desert the area as well.

"This change will be good for the area," said Blaine Donaldson, president of the Sun City Home Owners Association. "It's a real plus for residents there that Walgreens will expand its food offerings, though we'd still like to see a real grocery store move in."

6-28-00

Economic might: Retirees fuel business boon

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When Del Webb planned Sun City in the late 1950s, he foresaw a retirement community, not an economic powerhouse.

But the idea he created 40 years ago nowadays does have considerable economic might.

Consider:

- Sun Citians have about \$1.5 billion in the bank, an average of \$40,500 for each resident, and a figure that's far above the national or even state average per person.

- Social Security checks poured \$24 million into Sun City alone in December 1998, the latest month for which data are available. With two benefit hikes, the total is higher now, and likely comes to more than about \$300 million a year.

- Medicare estimates that it pays about \$6,000 a year on behalf of the average recipient, much more in the final year of life. So the estimated 38,000 people in Sun City are getting about \$225 million in Medicare

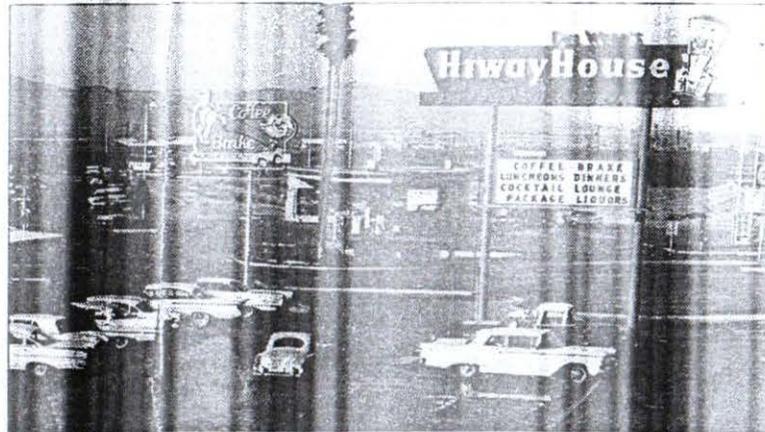
benefits, most of it going to local doctors, hospitals and other health care providers.

- The homes that the Del Webb Corp. built are worth far more today than what residents originally paid for them. Phase I homes went for \$9,000 or so, while the typical models in Phases II and III rose into the \$30s and \$60s.

Today, typical condos and homes condos sell for \$50,000 to \$85,000, and values have been rising rapidly in the last few years.

The age-restricted population, seniors all, soon led to the rapid development of a medical complex to serve it. Today, Sun Health Corp. is the major player, and with its operations in Sun City West, Surprise, Litchfield Park and Wickenburg, is a \$250-million a year powerhouse operating its own Medicare HMO.

It has attracted more than a hundred medical practitioners to its Sun Health Properties office complexes, and operates a nationally recognized research institute, nursing



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Business boomed at Del Webb's Hiway House when it opened New Year's Day 1960.

homes, two retirement complexes and specialized Alzheimer's and even special-needs care centers.

An offshoot of the aging population has been the development of apartment, independent living and assisted living complexes in Sun City, or near it, to serve residents who no longer can, or want to, live in their own single family homes.

The Webb company initially provided many commercial ser-

vices for Sun City residents in the early years, building a sewer and water system and treatment plants — later sold to Citizens Utilities Co. — putting in a cemetery and funeral home (Sunland), now part of a national chain; and developing shopping areas and using them to lure in new grocery, drug and other stores to an area that then was far from the populated areas of Phoenix.

The growth in Sun City also

spurred commercial construction in Youngtown, where lower rents and less restrictive use rules allowed golf car and other repair-related services to flourish.

But one service Webb once provided in Sun City — temporary lodgings for visitors — disappeared completely when the Kings Inn at 107th and Grand avenues, a motel that accommodated visitors who might want to buy a home, was torn down and replaced by a supermarket.

There are no motels or hotels in Sun City, though many are close by and some call themselves Sun City hostels.

Today the Sun City shopping areas have been sold, in some cases more than once, and have different owners.

While Sun Citians may not have much current income, they do have wealth, one reason why a state study found retirees are able to spend more than their reported income for many years.

Wild Birds store to sponsor the '2000 Great Backyard Bird Count'

Anne and Bob Blood, owners of the Sun City Wild Birds Unlimited store, announce that Wild Birds Unlimited is a major sponsor of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society 3rd Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. The count provides valuable information and can further enhance the awareness people have about birds and their conservation.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is the first count that invites the public to count birds at birdfeeders and in backyards, local parks or other outdoor locations, and then report the findings on-line through the BirdSource Web site. Participants can spend as much or as little time as they like counting the birds. The Great Backyard Bird Count will take place Feb. 18-21.

"We are very excited to be able to bring the Great Backyard Bird Count to area residents, stated Anne Blood. "The count is fun, easy and educational. And, it's a great way for Cornell and Audubon to learn more about the abundance and distribution of bird species."

The BirdSource Web site is a revolutionary partnership between citizens and scientists. Designed and managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, BirdSource scientists offer the public an opportunity to "bird with a purpose." The data submitted to BirdSource from the Great Backyard Bird Count helps to define bird ranges, populations, migration pathways and

habitat needs.

Through the BirdSource site, located at <http://birdsource.cornell.edu/gbbc>, participants will receive almost instantaneous feedback to Great Backyard Bird Count through graphics, animated maps and regularly-updated information. "With a click of your mouse, you can see which birds other participants across North America have seen," explained the Blood's.

Over 42,000 people participated in the 1999 2nd Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. The goal for the 2000 count is to increase the number of participants.

For more information about the Great Backyard Bird Count, call 623-977-7677 or stop by the Wild Birds Unlimited store located at 99th Avenue and Bell Road.