



Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

The Civitan Club of the Sun Cities has been trying to be a builder of good citizenship in the retirement communities for 25 years. Among club leaders are from left, Dr. David Chase, Hazel McManus-Johnson and Betty Coby.

Civitan club lends helping hands

By DEBBIE L. SKLAR
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — The Civitan Club of Sun Cities has been a fixture in the city since 1970, and their motto — "Builders of Good Citizenship" — still sticks.

"We're a very determined group," said Civitan President Hazel Johnson.

She said the Civitan Club members are people who work together to help others in their communities. They are devoted to helping the physically handicapped and the mentally retarded, internationally as well as locally.

The Civitan Club was chartered in 1970 with 27 members. The club, with over 100 members, meets on Tuesdays at noon at Nancy's Country Cupboard in the Greenway Shopping Center.

The club has a summer camp near the Grand Canyon, and a group home

in Phoenix to help rehabilitate the handicapped. It is also a premier sponsor of the International Special Olympics.

She said the group staffs the stations for the Feed the Needy program each year at Thanksgiving time and operate the the Sun Cities Youngtown Special Activities Center, for local handicapped and retarded citizens.

The Civitan Club is a national organization, founded in Birmingham, Ala., in 1917. The founder and first president was Dr. Courtney W. Shropshire, a prominent Birmingham physician.

The group's purpose is to provide opportunities for personal and professional development while improving communities through community service.

The main emphasis of the group is helping people with mental retarda-

tion and other developmental disabilities.

Johnson said the group is known for their Civitan Candy Box Project.

They also raise funds for activities through the sale of fruitcakes and American flags.

Other accomplishments of the club include the sponsorship of the Sun City West club, the Marinette Civitan Club of Sun City, chartered in 1975.

In the formation of the new club, a large number of members from the Sun City club transferred to become charter members of the Marinette chapter.

Fellowship among the members has been stimulated in many diverse ways during their meetings, Johnson said.

A hand-shaking greeting with each member is a continuing custom.

For information, call 977-9821.

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Civitan helps the disabled

By ROSA De SIMONE
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Two little-known Northwest Valley groups gather twice a week to sing, dance and just enjoy one another's company.

SCYSAC, Sun City Youngtown Special Activities Center, brings together some of the area's developmentally disabled residents and members of the Civitan Club of the Sun Cities.

"SCYSAC gives them interaction with their peers. It's a happy situation for them, and they aren't vegetating," said Sun Citian Betty Coby, whose daughter, Carol Anne, has Down's syndrome and is a seven-year SCYSAC member.

Carol and about 25 other developmentally disabled adults attend SCYSAC, a Civitan-sponsored program. Most participants are past age 40, and are adult children of residents of the Sun Cities area.

It's all smiles at SCYSAC meetings. Chase, SCYSAC chairman Roy Natvig and other Civitan members mingle and dance with participants to such tunes as "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "For Me and My Gal."

"Ray — he's fantastic," Coby said. "The only time he misses it is when he's sick, otherwise he's always here."

SCYSAC has enabled participants to network and establish friendships.

"They do things together on the outside," Coby said.

SCYSAC participants meet "outside" to bowl and play shuffleboard. Some also train together for the Special Olympics.

Carol Anne, Robert Landry and Neil Gallagher will compete in the International Summer Special Olympics in St. Paul, Minn. in July.

During this week's Civitan Awareness Week observance, members of Civitan International are attempting to draw attention to the low-



Daily News-Sun photo by Rosa De Simone

PALS — Sun City Youngtown Special Activities Center participants Cindy Graf, left, and Carol Anne Campbell spend two days a week with Civitan Club of the Sun Cities members like David Chase.

profile service organization, said 20-year member Milton Rex.

"Awareness Week is an effort to publicize what we do. We are not as large or as well-known as some other groups, but we do some useful projects and we want people to know about us," Rex said.

SCYSAC is just one of their "useful projects." The 34-member Civitan Club of the Sun Cities is involved in a number of projects in and out of Arizona.

- **Southwest Indian School** is a principal youth project for the club. It sponsors four American Indian youths, paying their tuition and room and board, as well as helping raise money for athletic equipment and gather grocery store receipts for computers. The club also donates funds to Junior Civitan, an Arizona organization consisting of high school students.

- **Special Olympics** draws not only funds for local, state and international competition from Civitan, but also volunteers and competitors from SCYSAC.

- **Salvation Army** receives non-perishable foods and cash

collected by the club during the Thanksgiving season — an 18-year-old Civitan project.

- **Camp Civitan**, a facility near Williams, Ariz. that provides camping experiences for retarded and handicapped children and adults, receives annual financial support from Civitan.

The Civitan Club of the Sun Cities also makes annual donations to the Sun Cities Area Ministerial Association, Interfaith Services and other organizations serving developmentally disabled adults.

"There is a certain amount of satisfaction that we aren't large. We're a small group doing our thing — we don't need to be big to do those things," Rex said.

In 1988, the Civitan Club of the Sun Cities widened their horizons when they made Civitan International Research Center a major project. CIRC is a mental retardation and developmental disabilities research center now under development at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Locally, members are committed to helping Civitan International in its \$20-million commitment to the center.

"We call it the 'Mayo Clinic of MRDD (Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities)," said Rex, who is chairman of the international CIRC committee.

"I'm personally excited about the research center. It's my life now," he said.

The international club retains its down-home image in their fundraising, selling Claxton Fruit Cake, maintaining candy boxes throughout the community and selling American flags.

"We couldn't operate without volunteers," admitted member David Chase. Helping out are groups such as the Knights of Columbus and members of Lakeview United Methodist Church in Sun City, the site of SCYSAC gatherings.

The group hopes its awareness week attracts new members, who are always welcome. Many of Civitan's current members joined after participating in programs such as SCYSAC.

"We have a handicapped son of our own," said Chase, who met Civitan members while he and his 41-year-old son attended a SCYSAC program.