

## Pro Shops

The Beat the Pro event held on December 4 matched last year's donation total with \$2,230.88 raised for the Del Web Sun Cities Museum. The pros battled harder than most years, allowing 50% of the field to "Beat the Pros." We truly appreciate the volunteers that assisted with the event, John Dockham and Rich and Lynn Lybolt. Thank you also to Chris Linam and Larry Belt for helping to secure prizes for the event. The biggest thank you goes to all those that participated in making the event fun and successful. Riverview remains the course with the broadest selection of golf merchandise; however, all of our pro shops carry items that are perfect gifts for that special golfer in your life. We have great prices on TaylorMade, Ping and Titleist hats for men and a variety of hats for ladies. We continue to offer custom club fittings through our teaching professionals and have a variety of Ping G400 equipment available for use on the course, allowing you to try before you buy. Golf Courses

The Willowcreek/Willowbrook project continues to move forward, the bidding process is complete and the winning bidder was Wadsworth Golf Construction. We will begin formal construction meetings with the Wadsworth team beginning in February 2018. Installation of the main line will begin March 5, 2018 on the back 9 of Willowcreek, during which time the course will remain open. On March 19, 2018 the back 9 of Willowcreek will close and work will begin on the irrigation lake, the greens renovation and the remainder of the irrigation system. April 9, 2018 is the scheduled date for the front 9 of Willowcreek to close as well as Willowbrook. Plans for the Willowcreek/Willowbrook project are on display in the Willowcreek/Willowbrook pro shop. Both courses will reopen following overseeding in 2018.

Seasonal temperatures are still higher than average, but have dropped enough to push the summer bermuda into dormancy. As temperatures drop, the chance for morning frost increases, we ask for your patience during times of delays and your cooperation during periods of cart path only restrictions. Courses have begun spraying herbicides in rough areas to control weeds. Mowing heights have been lowered and near normal on all courses.

## Grounds/Lawn Bowl

Replacement of lantana that was removed from Marinette is well underway. Plantings are being done with an eye towards having fewer, larger, mature plants, as opposed to many smaller plants. Cat-tails and reeds have been removed from the front of the Lakeview park Lagoons, affording a better view of the lagoons.

We have agreed to a May 15, 2018 start date to begin the process of fraze mowing and laser leveling of the Bell Lawn Bowl greens. Once leveled, the greens will be sprigged in early June 2018 allowing them ample time to grow-in and ready for play in the Fall 2018. Turf Equipment Source has been selected for the fraze mowing and leveling. Sprinklers on the Bell greens have been adjusted so they no longer hit the retractable awnings.

## Snack Shops

Due to increasing costs, snack shop prices will be increasing January 1, 2018. The new menu will be posted on Friday, December 22nd for preview. We thank you for your understanding.



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ball mark damage!**

**Find out how on page 22**

SUN/NEWS • FEBRUARY 2018

VF SC Golf Courses

## Golf-fee increase approved

By **BRET McKEAND**  
Independent Newspapers

Sun City day-fee golfers will be paying higher rates when they take to the links starting this week.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc. board of directors last week approved daily fee increases for resident and nonresident rates, car rentals and range balls. The new rates went into effect Nov. 1.

Starting this month and continuing throughout the winter schedule, residents will pay \$9 for nine holes and \$18 for 18 holes on regulation courses. Executive

course rates will be \$7 for nine holes and \$14 for 18 holes.

Nonresidents will be charged \$20 for nine holes and \$30 for 18 holes on regulation courses; \$15 for nine holes and \$25 for 18 holes on executive courses.

The motion to increase golf rates was made by Director Dick Ohnstad, who said the rates were agreed upon by the Golf Committee after several months of discussion. He says increases are needed to maintain present courses and pay for repairs.

**See ■ GOLF FEES, Page 5**

"The golfing community has said if money is needed then we should increase fees a little at a time each year," says Mr. Ohnstad.

The motion was passed unanimously and only a few Rec Center members expressed objections to the increases.

Gene Zylstra suggested the board develop "special rates" for those who wish to golf when the courses are least crowded.

"I've seen, at least during the summer, a lot of surrounding golf courses who are as cheap as we are," he told the board.

"We seem to be raising fees on everything to meet this deficit we've accumulated over the years,"

he added.

He suggested, rather than increase fees, the board should look at ways to trim expenditures.

Sun Citian Ron Smith fears the continual increase fees will result in fewer rounds played. The new increases, he says, will "hurt the marginal golfers."

Other new winter rates:

- Car rentals (per car): \$9 for nine holes and \$18 for 18 holes on both regulation and executive courses.

- Daily trail fees \$7.50; pull cart \$1.50; club rental \$12.50.

- Range balls: 75 cents for one dozen; \$2.50 for a medium bucket. A 20-punch card will sell for \$12 for one dozen balls, \$40 for a medium bucket.

New summer rates for residents are \$5 for nine holes and \$10 for 18 holes on regulation courses; \$4 for nine holes and \$8 for 18 holes on executive courses.

For nonresidents, summer rates will be \$10 for nine holes and \$15 for 18 holes on regulation courses; \$8 for nine holes and \$12 for 18 holes on executive courses.



## QUAIL RUN

# Golfers celebrate 25 years of event

## Michael helped start tourney

By Diana Graettinger

SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

She is known affectionately as Miss Quail Run, a title that Fran Michael, the catalyst behind the annual Quail Run 9-hole Invitational Golf Tournament, shies away from.

The invitational is 25 years old this year.

As in years past, the two-day event included a continental breakfast each morning and lunch on the last day. There were awards for various golf challenges and Lori Townsend of Lakes West Golf Course, 10433 W. Talisman Road, won the overall event.

Ms. Michael and a small group of volunteers, including fellow golfer D.J. O'Connor, started the tournament 25 years ago and last week the two women talked about that early beginning.

"If you were expecting a song and dance routine, I am here to tell you it ain't going to happen," Ms. Michael told the more than 100 women golfers. "I can't sing and I sure as heck can't dance."

When the initial planning for the tournament began, she was in her 60s and full of energy.

"In 1992, we began with brainstorming ideas," she said.

Back then the Quail Run Ladies 9-hole Golf League had 140 members. Today, the league has nearly 80 members. Ms. O'Connor was president of the league at the time.

After the brainstorming session, women league mem-



Lori Townsend holds the planter she won during the Quail Run Invitational Golf Tournament. [Submitted photo/Diana Graettinger]

bers volunteered to plan the tournament. They worked closely with Recreation Centers of Sun City employees and the tournament was born. Local golf pros offered sand trap and putting clinics for the women between tee times and lunch. Volunteers were presented with white shirts with green lettering identifying Quail Run Golf Course.

"Can you believe it still fits after 25 years?" Ms. Michael said as she proudly showed off her vintage wear.

Ms. O'Connor then talked about how the same group of women raised money to build the outdoor pavilion next to the club house. The women sent a letter in 1994 to the golf committee chairman at the time to request the structure.

The women conducted raf-



Players enjoy lunch following tournament play. [Submitted photo/Diana Graettinger]

fles and raised \$1,200 toward construction. They also decided that two storage units would be needed. The two original cabinets are in existence today.

"They are now used for storage for our tournaments," Ms. Michael said.

Ms. O'Connor then praised her friend Fran Michael.

"She will always be Ms. Quail Run to all of us," she said. "Today, we give a big hand to you."

Women rose to their feet to give Ms. Michael a standing ovation. She also praised Lenora Rector, who organized this year's event.

Editor's Note: Ms. Graettinger is a Sun City resident.



Fran Michael reviews the tournament and makes announcements. [Submitted photo/Diana Graettinger]

VF SC Golf Course



VF SC Golf Courses  
SC Independent  
August 17, 2016



Independent Newsmedia/Rusty Bradshaw

With a pile of sand and some bare grass in the background, Sun City golfers, from left, Barbara Waltz, Steve Williams, David Masters, Bob Feeken and Bobbie Pelligrino discuss their petition to stop renovation at the Willow golf courses.

# Golfers want renovation halted

## RCSC: Willow courses need new greens due to age

**By Rusty Bradshaw**  
Independent Newsmedia

**S**ome Sun City golfers are not happy with the results of course renovations and are taking steps to try to stop major work on another course.

Recreation Centers of Sun City officials spent between \$4 million and \$6 million per course to renovate several golf facilities in recent years, most recently Riverview Golf

Course, 16401 N. Del Webb Blvd. RCSC officials are spending \$565,400 this year for any irrigation pump station installation and lake renovation at Willowbrook Golf Course, 10600 N. Boswell Blvd. That work was described as a lead-in to 2017 when RCSC leadership plans to spend \$6.28 million on renovation efforts at Willowbrook and Willowcreek, just adjacent. RCSC officials also plan to spend in 2017 \$1.39 million for turf

reductions on both courses.

A group of Sun City golfers are circulating petitions to stop the renovations at the Willow courses.

"I have never seen the courses in this condition," said Bob Feeken, a longtime resident. "We want to stop the renovations at Willow because the others have not come back to

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playable condition as fast as was promised."

They also believe the renovations at other courses have been done in a way that makes the courses harder to play for seniors, and presents a physical hazard to older golfers.

"I blew out my knee in a sand trap and I know others who have been injured," said Bobbie Pelligrino.

Brian Duthu, RCSC golf and grounds director, stated in an email RCSC received complaints prior to renovation that the bunkers were causing injury and needed to be updated.

"Bunkers will always be problematic for those with unsure footing," he stated. "The bunkers have all been designed for ease of entry and exit, unfortunately we do have golfers that choose to exit bunkers on the high side, and this provides unsure footing and can lead to slipping and stumbling."

RCSC officials claim the main focus of work at the Willow courses is a new irrigation system, a key point in an agreement with the Arizona Department of Water Resources regarding significant water leakage at Viewpoint Lake. That agreement avoided a \$7 million to \$10 million cost to replace the lake liner, which would also have brought a forceful smell for residents.

"We have been given relief from our yearly water allotment based on our intent to optimize water usage by replacing the irrigation systems on the courses that were under-performing," Mr. Duthu stated in an email.

The Willow projects will also reduce the acreage needing irrigation by converting much of the course perimeter to low water use landscaping, he added.

Mr. Duthu acknowledged that work unrelated to water issues is planned, as all 18 greens at Willowcreek will be redone because of their age.

parts of the irrigation system.

Golfers argue that the Willow courses were renovated several years ago and question why they need that work again. In response, Mr. Duthu only repeated the statements about the greens renovation.

Golfers opposing the renovation also claim work has been done on courses to make them more challenging to attract more younger players, including nonresident players. RCSC officials believe this is an allegation made to create false outrage.

"The focus of the renovations has been to modernize the courses to be attractive to future residents, while remaining playable for current residents," Mr. Duthu stated.

He added RCSC courses, as rated by the Arizona Golf Association, remain on the

ment communities in the area. In addition, each newly renovated course has a set of "Play it Forward" tees, which allow golfers with diminishing skills to play the courses from a much shorter length.

Mr. Duthu stated golf course irrigation can be renovated without the additional renovations. However, combining these efforts are the most cost effective means, he added.

Resident Barbara Waltz believes the courses are harder to play for older players, including problems on the greens.

"They have made them so the ball does not stay on the green, and they don't roll the greens," she said.

Ms. Waltz added course difficulty is affecting even younger players.

"I was playing in a foursome behind a group of younger golfers with 3-4

The United States Golf Association recommends a green renovation on a 25-year basis," Mr. Duthu stated. "After a period of time the amount of effort to keep a green healthy and playable increases. It makes the most sense to renovate the greens at this time, so their design can be tied to the design of the new irrigation system."

He added if RCSC officials chose to not renovate at this time, but chose to 10 years from now, money would need to be spent on redoing



handicaps," she said. "They told me they could not play Riverview."

Golfers opposing the Willow renovation said they have no problem with younger players on Sun City courses, as long as they do not infringe on residents' ability to play.

"It is irritating when outside groups displace resident golfers," said Steve Williams.

While he understands the desire to bring in more outside play to help build revenue for Sun City course, David Masters believes that will come in time.

"Golf is waning in popularity right now, but I think golf will pick up again after the leading edge of the baby boomers comes through," he said.

Ms. Pelligrino also understands RCSC's desire to bring in more golfers.

"We know younger golfers can bring in more golfers," she said.

But she added the golf course deed restrictions established when Sun City was built call only for the courses to be kept in playable condition, not for full renovations.

Mr. Masters said his con-

cern is because Sun City remains a strong draw to potential residents due to golf, it will affect other aspects of living in the community.

"The quality of golf is down so much it will affect the quality of life in Sun City for years," he said. "People are leaving; and we came here to play golf. What it boils down to is a lack of knowledge and management."

***Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com. Continue the discussion at [www.yourwestvalley.com](http://www.yourwestvalley.com).***





Submitted Photo

## Fearsome foursome

The winning foursome of Bill Kulesh, Nick and Joe Roeschley, and Jonathan Jablonski shot 12 under par during the third annual Sun City Rotary Club Golf Classic May 7 at Lakes West Golf Course, 10433 W. Talisman Road.



Submitted Photo

## Hitting the links

The annual Royal Oaks golf tournament was May 7 and more than 60 residents and employees hit the links. The winning foursomes received cash prizes and their names on the trophy. Winners in the men's division: first place — Alex Thompson, Jack Leyse, John Radke (all residents), Jack Sugdinis (friend of Royal Oaks); second place — Dick Jorgenson (resident starting July 1), Dick McConnell, Bill Moffett (residents), Lowell Robinson (staff); third place — Irwin Bell, George Berscheid, Gene Czarny (all residents), Jimmy Alexander (staff). Winners in the women's division: first place — Kitty Yadro, Joan Bragdon (residents), Jan Doornbos (Priority List member), Vicki Ullery (staff); second place — Karen Watson, Karen Bell (residents), Judy Jorgenson (resident starting July 1), Maria Setticase (staff); third place — Joan Groff, Judy Edwards, Betty Grumbling (all residents), Karen Schram (staff).

VF SC Golf



# Golfers face fee hike

By KATE FLEITAS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

10-29-99

Golf fees will increase under the budget approved Thursday by the Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors.

The board approved the following winter fee increases:

- \$15 to \$18 for residents on the 18-hole regulation courses; \$13 to \$14 for residents on the 18-hole executive courses.
- \$6 to \$7.50 for daily trail fees.
- \$8 to \$9 for car rental on the 9-hole regulation course.
- \$15 to \$18 for car rental on the 18-hole regulation course.

The budget includes \$14,256,311 in income, \$12,199,943 in expenses and \$1,780,200 in capital expenditures, which include a number of repairs to recreation center facilities.

During the budgeting process, budget committee members compiled a list of recreation facilities that need repairs, including the main line at the South golf course and the pagoda on Viewpoint Lake at Lakeview.

Golf course repairs should have led to increased golf fees over the years, board president Bob Briscoe

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## From A1

said.

"What worked in the 1960s and 1970s isn't working today. We're going to grab the bull by the horns and make corrections which should have been done over 20 years," he explained.

Rather than increase fees, previous boards dipped into the capital reserve when they needed money for equipment or repairs. Their spending habits caused the capital reserve to drop from more than \$5.5 million in 1993 to its current level of a little more than \$2 million, said Harold Boudrie, board treasurer.

People involved in the golf program requested more than

\$825,000 but were given a little more than \$400,000, according to the budget. Any non-emergency expenses, which exceed the budgeted amount, will have to come from the golfers, Boudrie said.

Boudrie said the board plans to review the budget every three months. If there is additional income, board members could revisit golf or any other expenses.

Dick Ohnstad, the director who presented the motion to raise golf fees, said more money is needed to repair anticipated problems with a main line and pumps at many of the golf courses. He said the golf committee understands the need for fee increases and

asked that the increases be made in small increments.

"We simply have no extra room for cutting," he said.

The golf fees remained constant for 10 years with no increases. Annual golf cards, for no-fee games, were increased from \$640 to \$825 in 1998.

In other business, the board approved matching the first \$500 contributed to the 401K plan by each plan participant in the years 1998 and 1999.

Members of the board met Thursday in Sundial Auditorium for a regular monthly meeting. More than 75 people attended.

## Golf fee changes

- \$1 to \$1.50 for pull cart fees.
- \$10 to \$12.50 for club rentals.
- 65 cents to 75 cents for one dozen balls.
- \$2.30 to \$2.50 for one medium bucket of balls (with the elimination of small and large buckets).
- \$8 to \$9 for car rental on the 9 hole executive course.
- \$12 to \$18 for car rental on the 18 hole executive course.



# Tee fee set

(November 3, 1960)

Establishment of yearly unlimited-play greens fees and a schedule of increased daily fees to become effective when the Sun City golf course's second nine holes open were announced Monday night at the second organizational meeting of a Sun City Men's and Ladies' Golf Club.

Eighty-eight golfers unanimously adopted a constitution and bylaws and empowered their organizing committee to present nominations at election meeting next Monday.

The club established a \$5-per-year dues. Non-owners and non-resi-

dents of Sun City will be eligible for associate memberships with a \$5 initiation fee and the same annual dues.

All members may participate in all of the club's social and golfing activities, but the course will have separate rates for residents and non-residents, course manager Fielding Abbott reported. He announced the following rate structure:

For Sun Citians: yearly family rate (husband and wife), unlimited play, \$165; individual, unlimited play, \$98. For non-residents, \$235 family rates; \$140 individual.

Daily greens fees from Nov. 1 to May 31 (with Sun City residents' rates in parentheses): \$1.75 (\$1.25) for nine holes, \$2.50 (\$1.75) for 18 on weekdays; \$2.50 (\$1.75) for nine and \$3.50 (\$2.45) for 18 on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Daily fees from June 1 to Oct. 31: \$1.50 (\$1.25) for nine and \$2.25 (\$1.60) for 18 on weekdays; \$1.75 (\$1.25) for nine and \$2.50 (\$1.75) for 18 on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Electric carts will remain at the \$3 fee for nine holes and \$5 for 18 during the summer but will be \$3.50 and \$6 in the winter season.

Abbott declared that "rates have been very low and maintenance very high because of our non-adjointing fairways. It takes longer for workers to get around the fairways, they can't mow a common rough between two fairways, and there is no overlapping in watering fairways."



VF SC GOLF COURSES  
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of this story.

SUN CITY

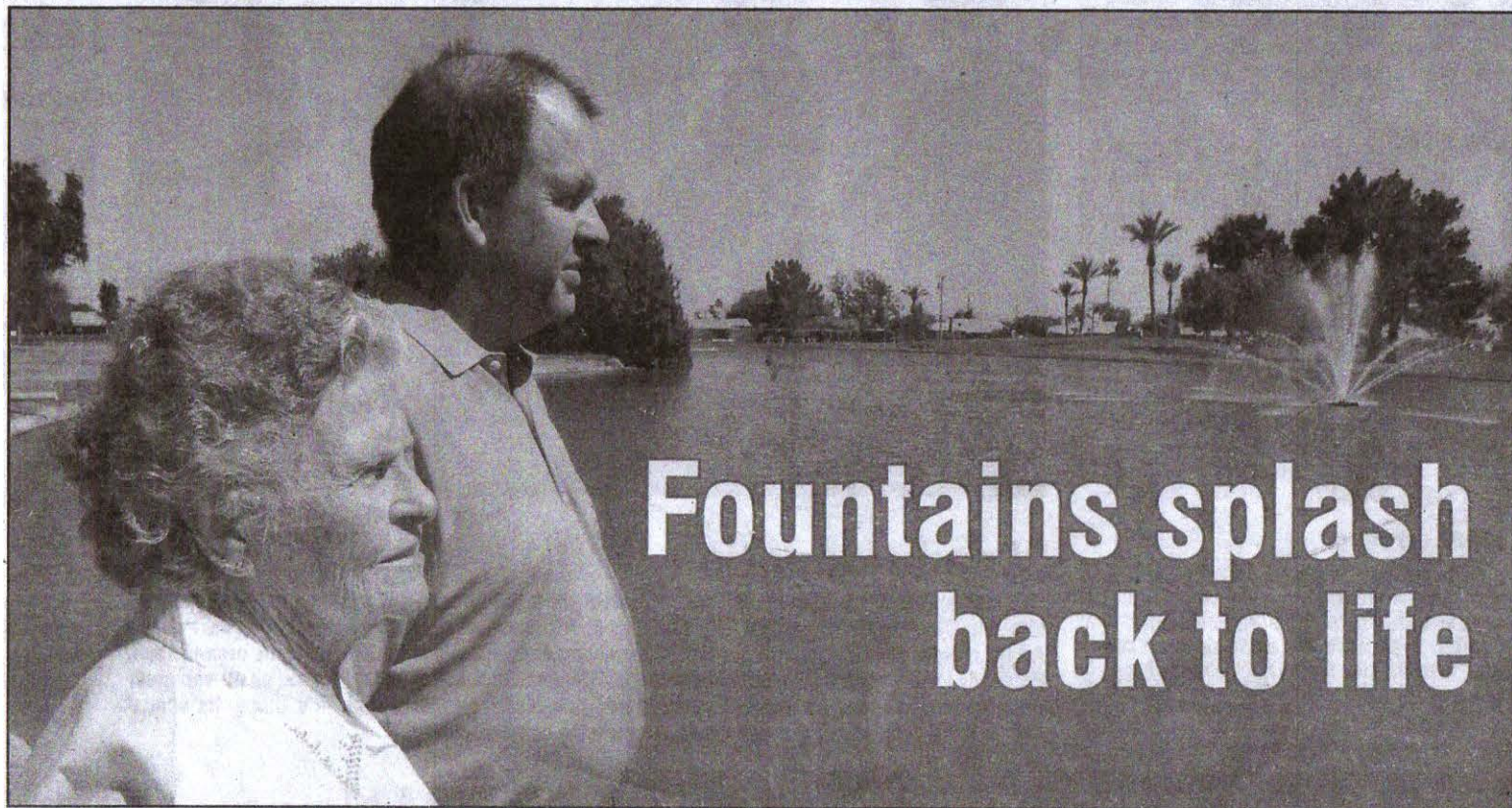


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## Fountains splash back to life

Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Mary Noll, front, and Brian Duthu, Recreation Centers of Sun City golf director, look out over the lake on South Golf Course, 11000 N. 103rd Ave., with the new fountains. Ms. Noll missed the fixtures in the lake and led a neighborhood effort to fund replacing them. See story on Page 2.

## Fountains

Continued From Page 2

Duthu, RCSC golf director, said fountains placed on golf course lakes that have natural or other man-made water circulation. However, the South lake is used for irrigation, so has a drain and a refill spout, making circulation for the water, he explained.

"For that practical reason, they were replaced," Mr. Duthu explained.

But Ms. Noll said the fountains were placed on South in 2001 and that was the reason she bought the home.

"We were without the fountains for five years, and I missed them a lot," she said. "It is really relaxing to watch the water hear it cascading down into the lake."

After the installation of the large fountain south of Ms. Noll's home in October, neighbors continued the effort to replace the other one, just to the east. It was installed in February, according to Mr. Duthu.

"We had to do some electrical work to install a transformer — for the fountain," Mr. Duthu said.

RCSC paid those extra costs, and for all future maintenance and electrical work to operate the fixtures, he added.

"This (the first fountain) is the oldest one in Sun City, as far as I know," Ms. Noll said.

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



# In search of the green



Dave Gerbig, left, a Country Meadows resident on the Glendale and Peoria border near Northern Avenue, watches his partner Jess Fowler of Peoria putt at Sun City Country Club. Mr. Gerbig is an SCCC member.

Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

INDEPENDENT MARCH 13, 2013

## Drive for golfers comes to the fore as courses battle declining rounds

**By Rusty Bradshaw**  
Independent Newspapers

In 1960, Del Webb pioneered the concept of a retirement community built around amenities, golf courses chief among them. The idea caught on, and 53 years later the Valley of the Sun is littered with golf courses.

The links glut has created some difficulties for some courses. With so many to choose from, combined with the economic downturn starting in 2008, play at many courses declined, leaving operators scrambling to find ways to attract more players.

The drop in the number of rounds played is correlated with the increase in golf courses in Maricopa County. According to a National

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Golf Foundation report, courses increased from 153 to 214 between 1990 and 2010, a climb of 30 percent. However, during that same period, the number of golfers increased only 6.5 percent. This translates into a loss of revenue. In Phoenix, it became so bad that last fall officials began researching closing some of the city's six municipal courses.

While that trend continues statewide, Northwest Valley Golf courses are experiencing just the opposite. Most report increased revenue, although some continue to struggle to be self-sufficient.

Leading the way in growth is the Sun City Country Club, 9433 N. 107th Ave. A semi-private facility, the club's revenues boast a 22 percent increase, according to Tom Loegering, who, with his brother, George, is owner and operator.

"The club had about 15,000 rounds played a year when I came here July 17, 2007," Mr. Loegering said. "In 2012 we had 32,337 rounds."

Mr. Loegering said the increase represents a 10 percent growth in member play and 38 percent for guests.

Sun City Country Club is one of 11 courses in Sun City, a retirement community of about 40,000 people, including two private country clubs and eight Recreation Centers of Sun City member courses. Other Northwest Valley communities are similar, including Sun City Grand with three recreation center-operated courses, Sun City West with six rec center-operated

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# Fore

Continued From Page 1

courses, Peoria's Westbrook Village has two semi-private courses and Peoria's Vistancia neighborhood has two country clubs.

Westbrook's two courses are similar to the Sun City Country Club, in that they are semi-private. Owned by members, the courses have seen a 10 percent increase in revenues, according to John McCahan, golf operations director.

"We have a good base of members and we are debt-free," he said. "That helps."

Westbrook has a variety of member packages, including an associate member established last year. While memberships have been dropping, mostly from attrition, Mr. McCahan said Westbrook has seen an influx of younger members.

"Last year we were thinking we might see a decrease because the baby boomers are still working and don't have as much time for golf," he said. "But that kind of turned around on us."

Sun Cities courses are designed for recreation center member play, but were opened to nonmember play about four years ago to attract more golfers during a period of decline in those communities. The effort has paid off, although not to a significant degree, according to Brian Duthu, RCSC golf director.

"We have trended up the last couple of years," he said. "A lot of what has helped here is the short-term privilege card."

That is a measure instituted by RCSC officials to allow more renters and shorter term community visitors a chance to play RCSC courses. Mr. Duthu said RCSC course revenue was up about 4 percent overall. However, Sun City courses remain nonself-sufficient, needing subsidies from the corporation's general fund.

"We have a ways to go, but we are making progress," Mr. Duthu said.

Pat O'Hara, Recreation Centers of Sun City West golf director, said outside play in Sun City West is slowly climbing. But he said, as did Mr. Duthu, that rec centers' priorities are to its member players.

"Our priority is to get more residents playing," Mr. Duthu said.

Golf saturation is working against all courses in Maricopa County, according to Mr. O'Hara.

## Role of maintenance

"Saturation does hurt each course. There is only so much pie to divide," he said.

Mr. Loegering said he is in competition with 40 courses in a 12-mile radius. He said industry officials recognize that some courses need to be shut down.

But in the Sun Cities, that is not an option. Golf courses in those communities have deed restrictions that guarantee their land will be utilized for no other use.

Mr. Loegering believes semi-private status is the "new normal" for country clubs.

"Privates are member-driven, and that means committees," Mr. Loegering said. "Those are the things that build double-humped horses"

Mr. Loegering believes the key to drawing more golfers is to put course maintenance as a priority. Since he has owned the club, his crews have replaced nearly 200 trees, most of which were wiped out by winter storms before he bought the course.

Mr. Duthu agrees.

"RCSC has been willing to invest in redesigns to keep them fresh," he said.

Two years ago RCSC conducted a renovation of Willowcreek. Lakes West and South also got multi-million dollar redos. The RCSC Governing Board last fall approved a \$6 million redesign of the North Golf Course.

"If you don't put money into it, players won't come back," Mr. Loegering said.

While Westbrook plans some minor tweaks, Mr. McCahan said the Vistas and

Lakes courses are in better shape than most Northwest Valley courses.

But it is more than just course renovations, according to Mr. O'Hara.

"You have to be efficient in the way you operate," he said. "And you have to find out what your niche is and play on that."

Outside tournament play also helps increase revenues. Westbrook just finished hosting an NCAA college tourney and Sun City West's Grandview Golf Course hosted the LPGA Legends tour. Mr. Duthu said RCSC is also looking into hosting more tournaments.

"But it also has to work around our resident play," he said.

Mr. Loegering also said marketing is a key. While RCSC is embarking on an overall marketing plan to attract home buyers using golf as a draw, Sun City Country Club staff is conducting heavy marketing. However, they are not as limited as Sun Cities rec center organizations in terms of resident golfers.

"I am marketing to six generations," Mr. Loegering said.

Mr. O'Hara is also working on marketing the Sun City West courses, including creating special events. All Sun Cities golf operations offer golf lessons. In addition, Sun City West has an indoor fitting center and an area for indoor lessons, Mr. O'Hara explained.

Results off the course also indicate Sun City Country Club officials are on the right track. As rated by Golfmix Arizona for 2012, the club was fifth best in the pace of play, ninth in design and sixth in overall experience.



# RCSC to revamp North course

JEFF DEMPSEY  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City's board of directors approved a near-\$6 million overhaul of North Golf Course.

Brian Duthu, RCSC's director of golf, said the project will not begin for almost a year.

"If all goes according to plan, we would close North once all the other courses have reopened after overseeding in November of 2013," he said. "It will have to be closed completely for construction for a year, so it probably would not be open again until fall of 2014."

Duthu said the layout of the course itself is not going to change a whole lot.

"The corridors are set," he said. "And we can't do much within them."

While there will not be many changes, there will be a raft of improvements and replacements. Duthu said North had been troublesome for a while before an incident last year served as the last straw.

"Probably around early spring of last year we had a couple of big breaks," he said. "Big enough to cause water to leave the property, to go out on the road. It was about that time we started thinking about moving forward with North."

The irrigation system, he said, is what jumped North to the top of the list.

"The irrigation system is just way out of

date," he said. "That's primarily why this project got accelerated. Riverview's master plan was done, as well, but North was moved ahead of it. We're fixing a lot of drainage issues to minimize flooding out onto the street."

After the irrigation system, Duthu said the next biggest — and likely most noticeable — change will be to the greens.

"The greens and the green surrounds," he said. "They'll be done to United States Golf Association specifications. We're also planning on replanting the greens with tiff dwarf, a newer type of grass. The blade is a little smaller, so it makes for a smoother, faster surface, and it can also be cut a little more aggressively."

Duthu said the tee boxes will also be redone and enlarged, and the plan for the tees was tweaked thanks to a little help from the golfers.

"Some of our golfers pointed out that in the initial draft the yardage was a little short for the forward tees," Duthu said. "So we went back and closely matched them to our other courses to keep the challenge about the same."

Another thing golfers will notice is the removal and replacement of many of North's trees.

"An arborist came out for a few days and examined every tree on the course," Duthu said. "They identified some to remove, some

eucalyptus. The life span of a eucalyptus is between 50 and 75 years and many of them on the course are into that range now."

The eucalyptus trees were planted when North — Sun City's first golf course — was first built, and their inclusion on the course made sense at the time. Now, however, Duthu said there are better choices.

"One of the reasons eucalyptus was a popular tree for courses in the 60's was because they grow so fast and get so big," Duthu said. "But they also suck up a lot of water, and they make for a mess to clean up after monsoon storms."

Duthu said some trees will not be replaced but those that are important to the course will be.

"If a tree clearly defines a hole or has an impact on the way the hole is played, that tree will be replaced," he said. "And it will be replaced with a more mature tree than would normally be planted, to ensure it has an immediate impact. We don't want to change a hole too significantly."

The cart paths might see some rerouting to minimize impact on play but Duthu said they will not be altered to the degree of what was done at South Golf Course in 2010.

"When South was done they took out some areas of the cart path," Duthu said. "We decided here to leave the cart paths intact throughout, and that was mostly based on input from the golfers."



# Board tees up North overhaul

JEFF DEMPSEY  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When the Recreation Centers of Sun City's Board of Directors approved a long-range plan in October, one of the major projects outlined was a \$6 million overhaul of North Golf Course, tentatively planned for 2013.

Evidently that plan is going ahead,

as the board added a motion to approve the project to its regular board meeting Thursday.

Cord Angier, the board's treasurer and chairman of the Golf Advisory Committee, said North was the clear front-runner of the courses still in need of a makeover.

"This was the first course built by Del

Webb," Angier said. "So obviously it is the oldest. Because of that age there have been a lot of problems with the main water lines and irrigation system, the bunkers are in need of repair, a number of eucalyptus trees are under consideration for removal. Basically, everything

SEE OLDEST, A5

## OLDEST

FROM A1

there has just been used and used and used."

Brian Duthu, RCSC's director of golf, said at November's Golf Advisory Committee meeting that North, 12650 N. 107th Ave., was chosen because the cost of frequent repairs was getting too high. Angier said the money going into North was not worth the results.

"It's constantly under repair," he

said. "And having it in the condition it's in even after you put money into it, it became clear North was the one we needed to focus on."

Among the improvements planned for North are: \$256,000 for tree removal and pruning; \$175,000 for earthwork and shaping; \$124,700 in drainage improvements; \$2.2 million devoted to the irrigation system alone; \$206,238 in bunker construction; \$482,942 in greens construction; \$173,987 for cart paths; \$311,254 to planting; and \$354,230 in landscaping.

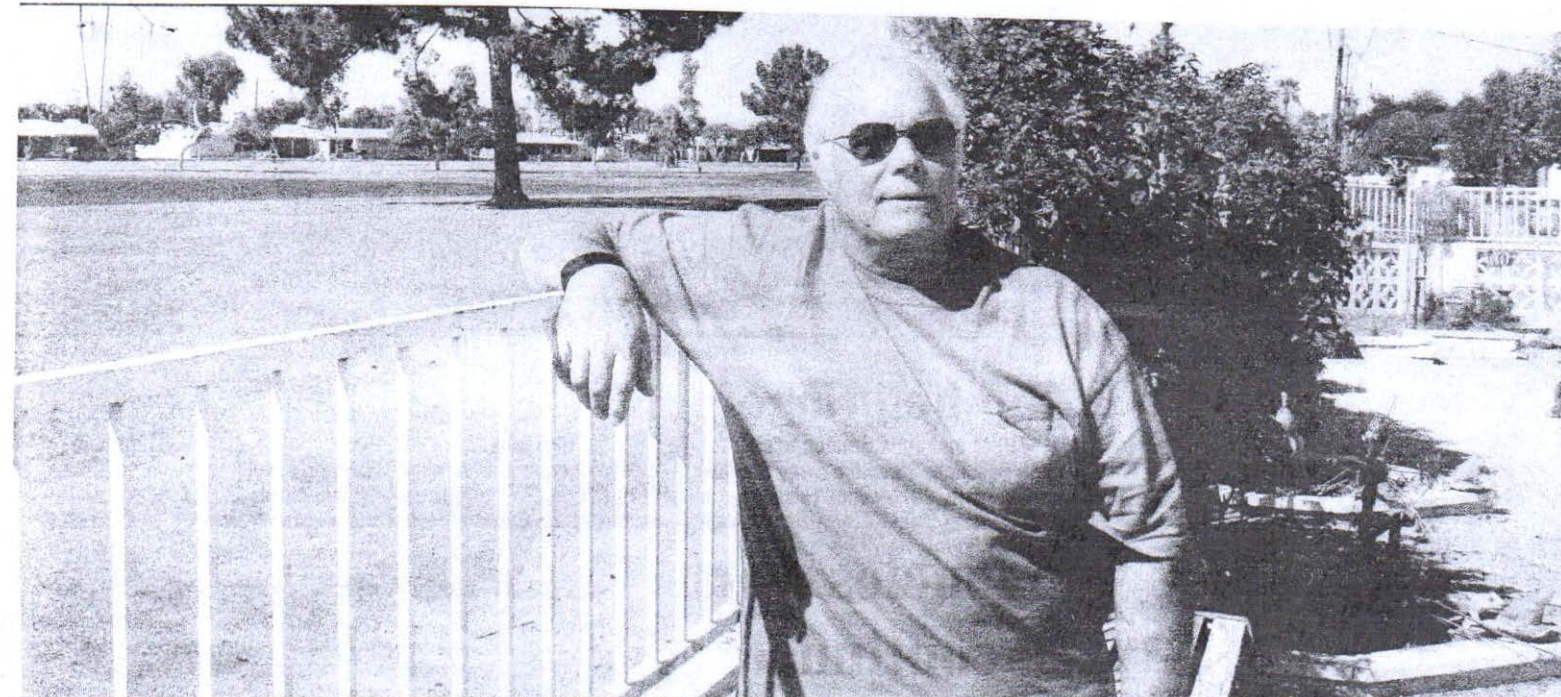
The total cost of reconstruction is

\$5,489,014. Add in \$380,000 in consulting fees and other costs and the total price tag on the overhaul is estimated to be \$5,889,014.

The board will meet at 9 a.m. Thursday at Sundial Auditorium, 14801 N. 103rd Ave. In addition to the North Golf Course project the board will also be voting on the issue of guest fees as well as minor increases to assessment fees. For information or to view the agenda visit [www.sunaz.com](http://www.sunaz.com).

Jeff Dempsey may be reached at 623-876-2531 or [jdempsey@yourwestvalley.com](mailto:jdempsey@yourwestvalley.com).





Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Rich Warnick believes the good of living adjacent to a golf course outweighs the bad, despite having a window and skylight broken, pool tile chipped and many other balls landing on his property.

# Fore! Backyards under assault

Some residents can live with errant balls on their property

**By Rusty Bradshaw**  
Independent Newspapers

Errant golf balls landing on his property irritated one Sun City resident enough to take his case to the Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors.

The resident, whose name was unclear and RCSC officials declined to provide it citing confidentiality, took a bucket of golf balls to the March 5 member/director exchange meeting to illustrate how many had landed on his property since the beginning of the year. He also complained that some balls caused damage to his home and provided several photos showing the damage.

"There are divots on the side of my house, and I was even hit in the head by a ball once," the resident explained. "Now if I'm out on the patio I move back when I see a group teeing

## Related Link

[www.sunaz.com](http://www.sunaz.com)

off."

He also said some golfers come into his yard to retrieve their errant balls, even though he posted a "no-trespassing" sign. He lives adjacent to Willowcreek Golf Course's No. 13. Willowcreek was redesigned last year, and the resident insists more balls are landing on his property since the change.

RCSC board members and management acknowledged balls sometimes leave the courses and land on residents' properties. Jan Ek, RCSC general manager, said it would be investigated to determine if there is a remedy. Cord Angier, RCSC board member, said moving the tee box back is an option, but that would only create the same problem for another homeowner.

Some Sun City residents believe homeowners adjacent to golf courses accept the risks. Ray Ulmer used to own two properties on golf

courses and said errant balls are not the only consequence.

"You are also subject to maintenance equipment in the early morning and some strong language from some golfers," he stated in an e-mail.

Mr. Ulmer does not believe RCSC should get involved in finding solutions for homeowners.

"You would open up a can of worms as to whether or not you provided adequate protection," he stated.

Roger Yadiro agreed.

"RCSC certainly has no responsibility to minimize any of these 'problems,' which are really not problems," he stated in an e-mail.

Steve Zeitler believes homeowners should know the consequences of buying property next to a golf course.

"Errant shots do occur — always have and always will," he stated in an e-mail.

He added that in 15 years living next to a golf

See Golf — Page 6



# Golf

Continued From Page 1

course, he only had the glass on a tabletop broken.

Ms. Ek said in the exchange meeting RCSC officials will step up golfer education about errant balls, including encouraging golfers to be responsible for off target shots and any damage they cause.

"(This is) something that most golfers are quite aware of, (but) reminders never hurt," she stated in an e-mail.

RCSC golf etiquette education will be accomplished through press releases, reminders at the pro shops and before golfers tee off, she explained. Nonresident golfers would be educated at the pro shops and before teeing off. Ms. Ek stated reminders could also be placed in rental golf cars.

Ms. Ek also stated the golf ranger program could be utilized to minimize problems by having individual rangers address the issue with golfers when they see it happen on the courses, and by assisting in identifying violators.

RCSC is not responsible to repair damage caused by errant golf shots, Ms. Ek stated.

Some golf courses have netting installed near residences and commercial areas for protection. However, Sun City CC&Rs prohibit netting under height and structure

provisions, according to Bill Szentmiklosi, Sun City Home Owners Association general manager.

In the end, it comes down to courtesy, which is what the game is about, according to resident Mary Gill.

"My personal opinion is that any ball played that lands on private property should not be retrieved," she stated in an e-mail.

Resident Clyde Tooman believes it is the player's responsibility, not the homeowner's, if a ball hits a house, window or a person.

"It is not smart to purchase a home on a golf course and not expect an errant ball on occasion," he stated in an e-mail.

Resident Rich Warnick has had a window and skylight broken, tiles chipped on his pool and dents in the siding. A Sun City resident broke the window and refused to replace it. The skylight was broken by a nonresident who did pay for the repair.

"The good outweighs the bad," Mr. Warnick stated about living next to a golf course.

However, he believes more damage is done now that Sun City courses are open to non-resident play.

"Until they opened up the courses to outside play most resident golfers could not have hit the ball far enough and errant enough to get to my roof," he stated.

**News Editor Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or [rbradshaw@newszap.com](mailto:rbradshaw@newszap.com).**



Monday, December 12, 2011

www.yourwestvalley.com

DAILY NEWS-SUN

# New SCW bylaw would close 2 courses

## STAFF REPORT

Two Sun City West golf courses would close and a variety of other cuts totaling \$1 million would have to be made if a bylaw change proposed by a group of residents makes it to the ballot and is approved, RCSCW officials said.

Recreation Centers of Sun City West officials announced their plan Friday afternoon

and informed employees who may be affected if the resident-proposed bylaw change is successful.

Petitioners, who need to obtain at least 1,000 signatures, have until Jan. 15 to put the issue on the March 27 ballot.

"Because the governing board must approve the annual financial plan by May 31 of each year, staff will be

gin preparing two alternative budgets should the bylaw pass," RCSCW officials stated in a release.

The bylaw change is one of three being circulated by residents on a petition.

Ernie Prindle, a Sun City West resident and former chief financial officer for RCSCW, is heading up the petition drive and said he believes he'll gather enough signa-

tures to put it on the ballot.

Prindle said the rising cost in membership dues is a key reason why the bylaws need to be changed.

"They're throwing more and more burden on the membership dues," said Prindle, who also is running for the RCSCW governing board in the spring.

**SEE BYLAW, A5**

## BYLAW

### FROM A1

The one bylaw change eliciting the most concern would replace the "Duties and Responsibilities of the Governing

Board" with language that would require the golf and bowling divisions to be self-supporting. The change reads in part: "No member dues shall be used to support Bowling and Golf direct operational costs."

RCSCW officials

estimate that \$1 million would have to be cut and that would include closing two courses and eliminating fall overseeding, aerification, weed control, fertilizer applications and the Special Events division.



# Sun City South course back in swing

## Golfers cheer renovations at Wednesday reopening

**NORA AVERY-PAGE**

DAILY NEWS-SUN

South Golf Course reopened Wednesday after being closed since May for renovations.

The project on Sun City's second-oldest course included reshaping and repositioning several bunkers, new tee boxes, and new cart paths.

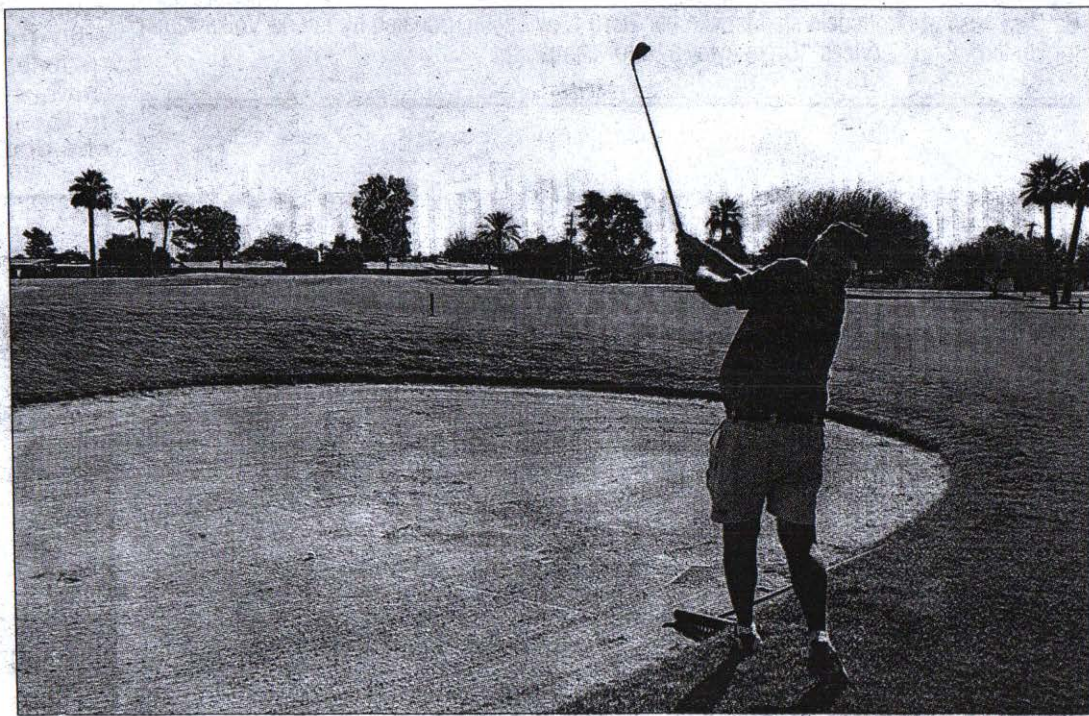
"I like it a lot," said Elliott Engberg, who played a round of golf on Wednesday with three of his friends. "I think the changes are real nice."

"We're having fun this morning," said Rich Lybolt, Engberg's friend, as the group started play on the back nine.

While some commented that the course was playing slow because of recent overseeding, feedback about the new course was positive.

Engberg said his favorite parts of the revamped course are the expanded tees and the placement of

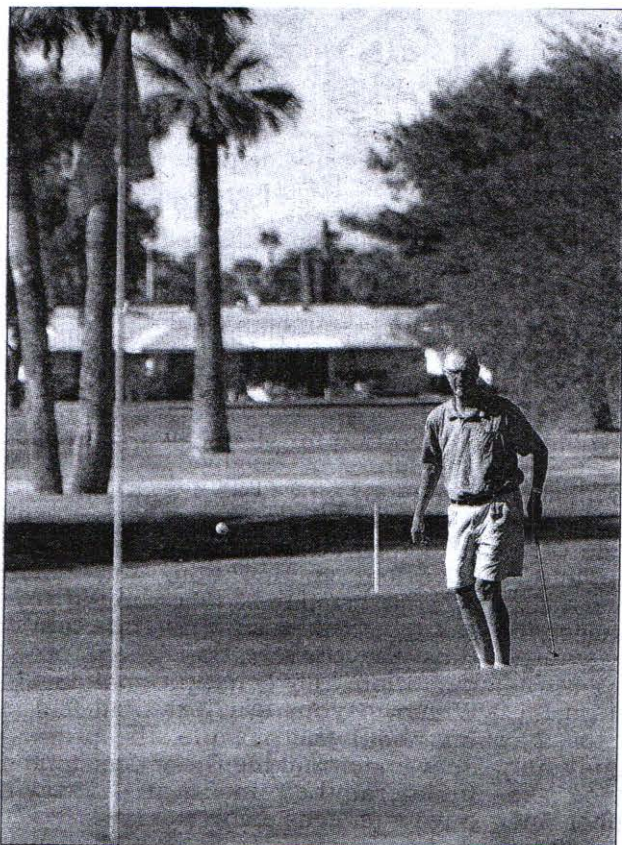
**SEE SOUTH COURSE, A5**



**DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN**

Rich Lybolt chips his ball from near the ninth hole's sand trap Wednesday. Lybolt and his group agreed that the renovations to South Golf Course looked and played well.





DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Elliott Engberg works his way onto the ninth green at South Golf Course. South Golf Course reopened Wednesday morning after renovations. The course is at 11000 N. 103rd Ave.

## SOUTH COURSE

FROM A1

the bunkers. The Recreation Centers of Sun City hopes that other golfers will agree with Engberg.

RCSC spokesman Tim Gallen said golfers will probably most appreciate the new bunkers.

"It will probably be different, but we're hoping it will draw more people," Gallen said. "We try to keep everything unique."

The RCSC renovated Lakes West last year, but wanted to offer golfers other options with South.

"I think it's great," said Mark Goudy, who was the first golfer on the new South course. "The sand traps I used to get stuck in, I don't get stuck in anymore."

Goudy said he appreciates that the tee boxes are now lower since it makes it easier for him to walk up. Goudy lives near South. He said he was happy the course reopened because he doesn't golf anywhere else.

Bill Jones was also among the early golfers. He joked with friends after stopping at the pro shop before crossing the street to play the back nine.

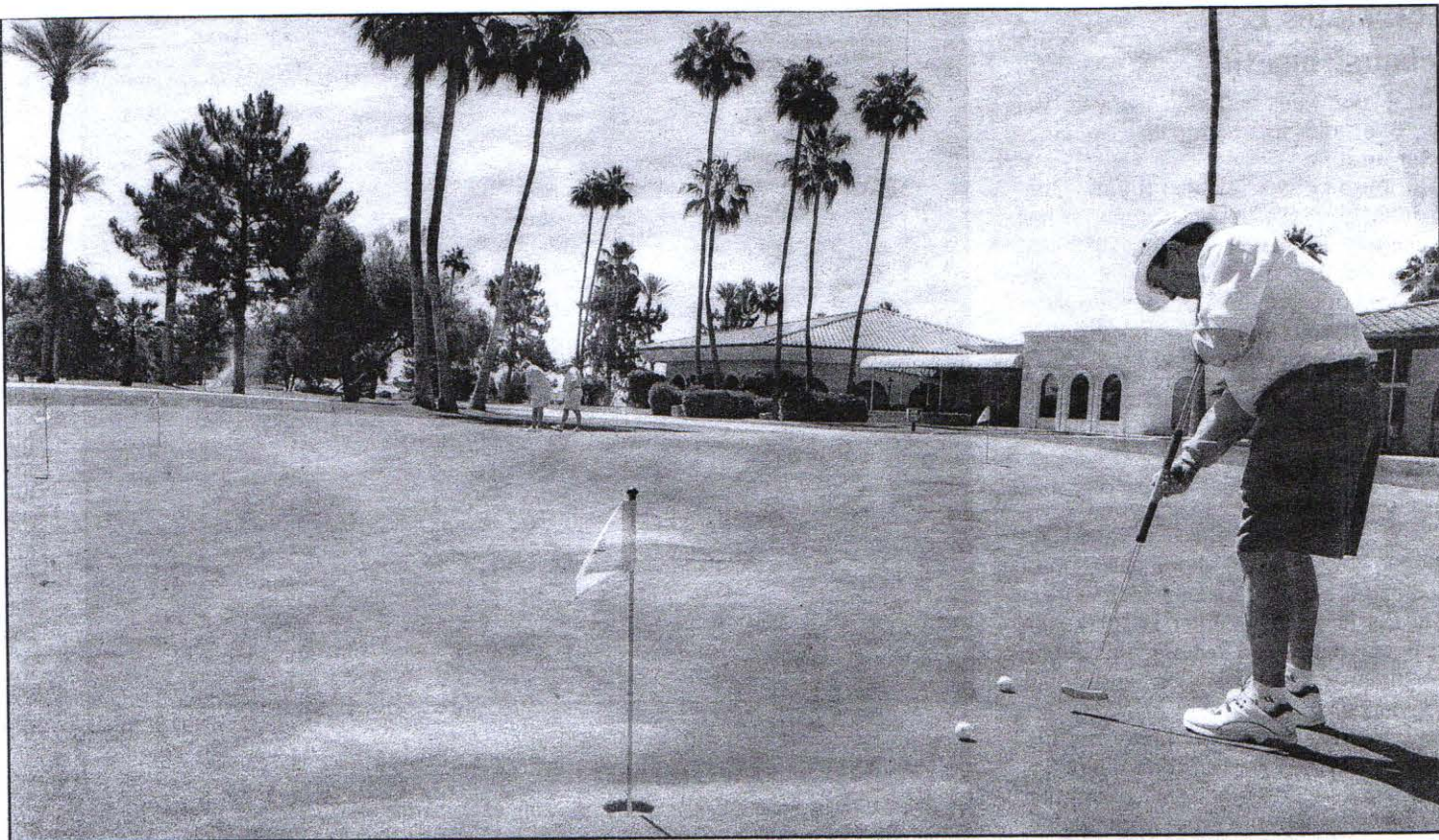
"It's fun, it's great so far," Jones said. "The sand traps are very much improved. There's a smaller bunker and the sand is excellent."

Jones also said he liked that there are lots of new trees on the course, but noted that some of the holes seemed shorter.

Gallen said the RCSC wanted to shorten parts of the course because it heard comments that it was too long. Some of the changes were made to make South more attractive to women golfers.

Hopefully, the course will be welcoming to new golfers as well as experienced ones looking for a challenge, Gallen said.





Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Westbrook Village resident Jim Mendenhall practices his putting at Union Hills Country Club, 9860 W. Lindgren Ave. The planned new clubhouse will be located in an area on the far side of the putting green to the left of the center of this photo. The new facility is dependent on the sale of land.

# Country club land sale in process

Officials want waiver for golf course restriction

By Rusty Bradshaw

Independent Newspapers

Efforts to sell a portion of Union Hills Country Club land for housing development continues, but created some confusion in some residents' minds about the intent of the project.

Several residents called Sun City Home Owners Association officials complaining country club representatives were trying to get them to sign documents that would eliminate the deed restrictions on their property, according to Bill Szentmiklosi, SCHOA compliance manager. It was discovered this was not the case, he added.

"When we got clarification from our legal counsel, we found that property owners cannot sign away their deed restrictions," he said in a telephone interview May 26.

## Related Link

[www.maricopa.gov](http://www.maricopa.gov)

[www.unionhillscs.com](http://www.unionhillscs.com)

However, he told SCHOA board members during their meeting May 25 that he was given information there was a group of about 25 homeowners opposing the country club's efforts and they had retained an attorney.

If that has taken place, Union Hills Country Club officials have not heard about it, according to Linda Wolf, country club spokeswoman.

"We have had no contact with any group of homeowners or an attorney," she said.

Country club officials are gathering signatures from 185 property owners bordering the golf course south of Union Hills Drive. But the signatures are to remove the parking lot area from the golf course property so a sale of the land can proceed, according to Nate Oberhofer, Union Hills Country Club general

manager.

"Right now there is no development, there are steps and processes to go through before we even decide to go forward with that," he said.

In July 2009 country club officials announced they planned to sell about seven acres at the southwest corner of Lindgren Avenue and Conestoga Drive for housing development. The move is designed to pave the way for a new clubhouse, according to George Bradner, country club board president at the time of the announcement.

"The members voted overwhelmingly to sell the land and build a new clubhouse," he said.

But excluding the targeted land for sale from the golf course property is the first step in securing a buyer for the land, according to Ms. Wolf. A title search turned up a restriction that called for the country club property to always remain a golf course, she explained.



# Golf

## Continued From Page 1

"The area in question is in the definitions (of being a golf course)," said Mr. Oberhofer. "The way the restriction is set up, that portion of land needs to be removed from the restriction to always be a golf course."

He emphasized country club officials have no intention of removing Sun City deed restrictions, including the 55 and older age overlay, for a housing development on the land if it is sold.

"That age overlay is what makes this land attractive to developers," he said. "They want to build here because of the age overlay."

Country club officials have received inquiries from about 12 developers for the land they have for sale, and one has expressed a particular interest, according to Mr. Oberhofer.

"But no one wants to touch it until the golf course restriction is removed from the particular portion of land we want to sell," he said.

Ms. Wolf said there was an attempt several years ago to get an amendment to exempt the clubhouse, parking lots and golf car garage from the golf course restriction. But club officials at that time believed they did not want to do that without homeowner approval, she added.

Ms. Wolf reiterated that club officials have no intention of removing the age restriction

for the land up for sale.

"We did remove the age restriction for club membership because we had people from the northern neighborhoods outside of Sun City who wanted to join," she said. "But there has never been any intention to remove the age restriction for housing."

Mr. Oberhofer said gathering signatures from property owners bordering the golf course is the first step in a process that runs through Maricopa County Planning and Zoning to have the land up for sale removed from the golf course restriction. He said country club officials have about 93 percent of the 185 homeowner signatures. He did not specify how many signatures were needed.

"We just trying to get as many as we can," he said.

The process through Maricopa County to remove the seven-acre piece from the golf course restriction will include public hearings, according to Mr. Oberhofer.

## Poppy project starts

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Arizona wants veterans to aid in their endeavor of poppies donations. This work will entail the making of poppies with supplies from the auxiliary department. Veterans will be compensated. The poppy donations can only be used by veterans and their families. To volunteer, call Betty Schneider, poppy making chairman, at 623-977-0588.



# Directors stress course safety, upkeep

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Keeping golfers safe and courses in shape were stressed at the Recreation Centers of Sun City's monthly meeting Thursday.

Director Beverly Davis said bids have gone out to several companies to rework the golf car paths at Willowcreek Golf Course to make crossing Union Hills Drive a bit easier.

Golfers have two places to cross the busy road to play on the course. That is going to be limited to one, Davis said. Meanwhile, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation is working on plans to install a raised median on Union Hills Drive.

"Maricopa County will also install a turning lane in the center of Union Hills to keep traffic to one lane (in either direction)," Davis said.

Besides the danger of crossing Union Hills while golfing on Willowcreek, Davis said all community courses have completed overseeding and have been re-opened for play.

"We need for each golfer to carry sand and seed with them at all times to fill divots on the tee boxes and fairways," she said. "Due to the record temperatures, we had during the seeding of the first four courses, the rye grass is very thin."

Additional fertilizer is being added to the thin areas to make for lush courses.

Even with the setbacks with overseeding, several winter-resident golfers spoke at the meeting and commended the work of the golf course crews for the condition of the grass.

"I've lived here for four years, and this is the best I've seen the golf courses yet," one resident said. "It is a monumental deference than how the course looked last year at this time."

Beginning today, annual golf cards will not be increased, but a \$3 surcharge will be collected each day a resident plays 18 holes. The charge is effective until June 30, 2003.

Golfers who would like to make some comments or complaints can attend the Teed-Off Corner, which takes place on the first and third Fridays of each month at 11 a.m. Today the corner meets at Quail Run and on Nov. 15, it will meet at Lakes East/Lakes West Golf Course.

"We encourage golfers to come to these sessions to voice their opinions, concerns, questions, complaints, and we'll even listen to compliments on golf," Davis said.

John Sokolich can be reached at 876-2526 or [jsokolich@aztrib.com](mailto:jsokolich@aztrib.com).

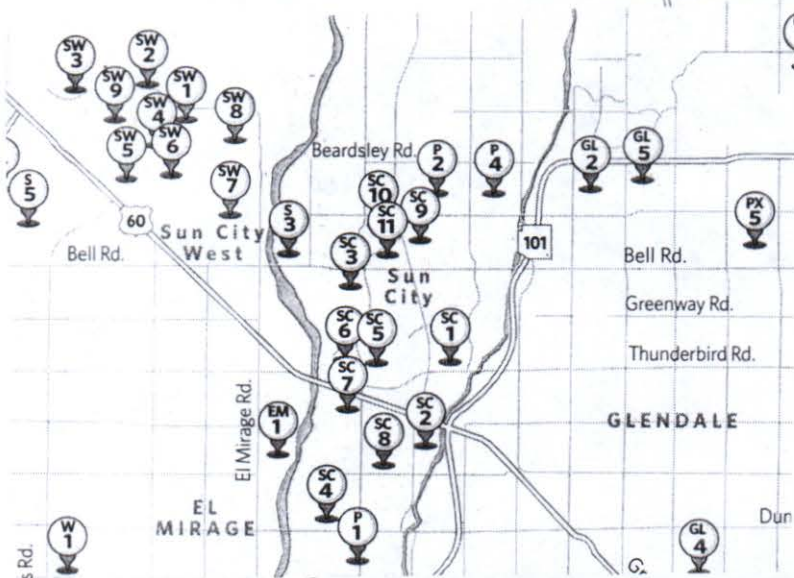


# G VALLEY Golf COURSES

Research by Dave Lumia

Map by Mark Waters

The Arizona Republic



## KEY TO COURSE LISTING

Course type	Price
PUB Public	\$ \$0 - \$50
PVT Private	\$\$ \$51 - \$100
SP Semi-private	\$\$\$ Over \$100
R Resort	N/A Not available
E Executive	
M Military	

Miles 2

COURSE	ADDRESS (Map location)	PHONE NUMBER	TYPE	HOLES	COST
<b>SD27</b> The Golf Club of Scottsdale	28490 N. 122nd St. (B7)	(480) 443-8868	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SD28</b> TPC of Scottsdale, Desert Course	17020 N. Hayden Road (C6)	(480) 585-4334	PUB	18	\$\$
<b>SD29</b> TPC of Scottsdale, Stadium Course	17020 N. Hayden Road (C6)	(480) 585-4334	PUB	18	\$\$\$
<b>SD30</b> Troon Golf & C.C.	25000 N. Windy Walk Drive (C6)	(480) 585-0540	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SD31</b> Troon North Golf Club	10320 E. Dynamite Blvd. (B6)	(480) 585-5300	P	36	\$\$\$
<b>SD32</b> Whisper Rock Golf Course	32002 N. Old Bridge (B6)	(480) 575-8700	PVT	36	NA
<b>SUN CITY</b>					
<b>SC1</b> Palmbrook C.C.	9350 W. Greenway Road (C3)	(623) 977-8383	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC2</b> Quail Run Golf Course	9774 Alabama Ave. (D3)	(623) 876-3035	E/PVT	9	N/A
<b>SC3</b> Riverview Golf Course	16401 N. Del Webb Blvd. (C3)	(623) 876-3025	SP	18	N/A
<b>SC4</b> Sun City C.C.	9433 N. 107th Ave. (D3)	(623) 933-1353	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC5</b> Lakes East	10433 Talisman Road (C3)	(623) 876-3023	E/PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC6</b> Lakes West	10433 Talisman Road (C3)	(623) 876-3020	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC7</b> Sun City North Golf Course	12650 N. 107th Ave. (D3)	(623) 876-3010	SP	18	N/A
<b>SC8</b> Sun City South Golf Course	11000 N. 103rd Ave. (D3)	(623) 876-3015	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC9</b> Union Hills C.C.	9860 Lindgren Ave. (C3)	(623) 977-4281	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC10</b> Willowbrook Golf Club	10600 Boswell Blvd. (C3)	(623) 876-3033	E/PVT	18	N/A
<b>SC11</b> Willowcreek Golf Course	10600 Boswell Blvd. (C3)	(623) 876-3030	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SUN CITY WEST</b>					
<b>SW1</b> Briarwood C.C.	20800 135th Ave. (C3)	(623) 584-5301	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW2</b> Deer Valley Golf Course	13975 W. Deer Valley Drive (C3)	(623) 544-6016	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW3</b> Desert Trails Golf Club	22525 N. Executive Way (C2)	(623) 544-6017	E/PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW4</b> Echo Mesa	20349 Echo Mesa Drive (C3)	(623) 544-6014	E/PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW5</b> Grandview Golf Course	14260 Meeker Blvd. (C2)	(623) 544-6013	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW6</b> Hillcrest Golf Course	20002 Star Ridge Drive (C3)	(623) 584-1500	PUB	18	\$
<b>SW7</b> Pebblebrook Golf Course	18836 N. 128th Ave. (C3)	(623) 544-6010	PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW8</b> Stardust Golf Course	12702 Stardust Blvd. (C3)	(623) 544-6012	E/PVT	18	N/A
<b>SW9</b> Trail Ridge Golf Course	21021 N. 151st Ave. (C2)	(623) 544-6015	PVT	18	N/A



# Neighbors chide golf course revision

**ANNIE KARSTENS**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Norm Beitler wants to conserve water, and believes the proposed renovation of Lakes East Golf Course to include partial desert landscaping isn't enough.

Beitler, who lives on the 13th hole of Lakes East, said he's not alone in his opinion. In a study he and his wife, Beverly, conducted of residents in 147 homes on the perimeter of Lakes East, 47 residents signed a petition agreeing with Beitler's suggestion for altering

the renovation plans developed by Recreation Centers of Sun City board of directors.

Jim Frederick, RCSC director and golf advisory committee chairman, said the research compiled by a Lakes East Greens Committee approved of the plans submitted by golf course architect Gary Panks. Committee members are golfers, non-golfing homeowners who live on the course, the budget and finance committee and the golf advisory committee.

Frederick said residents who live around Lakes East expressed

concern about losing the grass behind their homes, so the committee responded by promising at least 25 feet of grass will remain intact on the borders of the course where homes sit. Desert landscaping will be concentrated around the tee boxes instead of along property lines.

But Beitler said he and the 47 residents who agree with him believe the border and areas on the green should have desert landscaping. The grassy perimeters, he said, are brown in many areas because

they're not overseeded or well maintained. Desert rocks would be more aesthetic, would save water and would be more maintenance-friendly, he said.

Frederick said there isn't enough money in the budget to do more than the proposed amount of desert landscaping. The proposal, he said, is a compromise with the 110 residents and golfers he surveyed.

"It's nice to be able to do more desert landscaping than we

**See GREENS, A5**

OVER



anticipated, but funding is the big problem," Frederick said. "I appreciate his efforts, and a lot of people want to do that, but it would add about \$300,000."

The RCSC's proposal calls for a \$750,000 overhaul of the 56-acre course, including nearly \$200,000 to convert 9 acres to desert landscaping. The remaining funds will be used to upgrade the irrigation system, improve bunkers and tees and bring in new sand.

Overseeding and better maintaining the borders of the course are planned in the renovations, Frederick said.

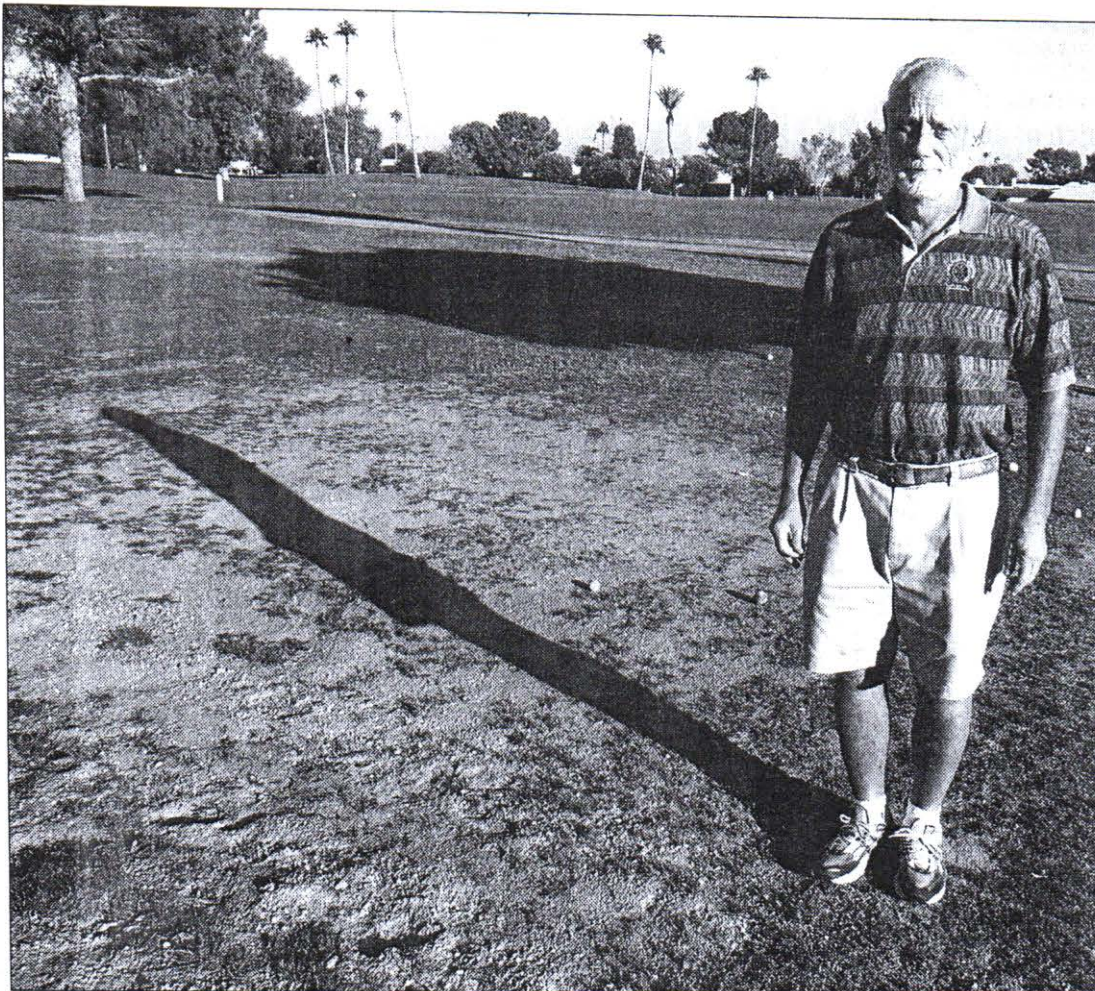
John Snyder, RCSC director of golf operations, estimated the renovation of Lakes East will save 14.5 million gallons of water every year. The project will take about three to four months to complete and is slated to begin in late spring. Snyder also said golf courses in Sun City Grand and in Sun City West incorporate desert landscaping.

Beitler is worried that the RCSC directors will complete the renovations and a few years down the road when water is even more scarce, residents will question why they didn't convert more of the course to desert landscaping. If the project is not done in the best possible way, with the most desert conversion possible, then the renovation shouldn't happen at all, he said.

In a letter to Beitler, Frederick expressed a sense of urgency to accomplish the renovations.

"I believe that if we did not proceed at this time, we would not be able to do the project in the near future because of the other large projects to be started shortly, namely the Bell Recreation Center project and the Fairway Recreation Center renovation," Frederick wrote.

Gene Zylstra, RCSC director, is hesitant to endorse the \$750,000 project because the



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Norm Beitler owns a home along the 13th hole of Lakes East Golf Course in Sun City. He and some of his neighbors are urging the directors of the Recreation Centers of Sun City to reconsider renovation plans for the course that are scheduled to begin next spring. Among their complaints are the bare patches of ground around the perimeter of the course that abut residential property.

2005 RCSC budget needs to be trimmed to accommodate more than \$3 million required for the Bell Recreation Center renovations.

"It's a large sum of money to finish Bell, so this is a little touchy," Zylstra said. "I'm all for (the desert landscaping), but this may not be the time we can afford it."

Anne Stewart of Sun City lives on the ninth hole of Lakes East and is a proponent of keeping grass on the perimeter of the course that makes up part of the community's "green belt."

She also agrees with Zylstra that the RCSC has more important projects to tackle before spending \$750,000 on a golf course.

"I moved to Sun City because of the greenbelt. It's been here a long time," Stewart said. "It's a quality of life, and one more thing to attract people to Sun City. This is what's appealing to people here — we have choices."

The Lakes East renovations are the result of a desert landscaping study done in 1990 when the RCSC hired experts to perform a golf course water conservation master plan. The study was submitted to the Arizona Department of Water Resources where specific suggestions were developed and relayed to the centers.

One of the state's suggestions for reducing water use on grass was to do exactly

what is planned for Lakes East, said Jack Lavelle, Arizona Department of Water Resources public information officer.

The state calls for turf removal in areas that don't affect golf play by installing alternatives to grass, such as desert vegetation, drought-tolerant ornamental plants, desert and range grasses and desert flowers.

To contact Norm Beitler for information about his proposal for Lakes East, e-mail him at [nbbeitler@msn.com](mailto:nbbeitler@msn.com).

To express your opinion to the RCSC board about the proposed plans for Lakes East, call 876-3000.

Annie Karstens can be reached at 876-3000 or [akarstens@aztrib.com](mailto:akarstens@aztrib.com).



# Golf-fee hike looms in Sun City

## Board will decide in December

ANNIE KARSTENS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The RCSC board of directors will decide in December on a strategy to revive the cash-strapped golf budget with help from two committees whose recommendations propose different ways to increase greens fees.

Sun City golfers may see a hike in their golf fees to help offset a looming deficit of \$200,000. The Golf Advisory Committee, chaired by Jim Frederick, RCSC board secretary, made a recommendation to the board on how they think revenues can be boosted. The Budget and Finance Committee, chaired by Bud

### RCSC WINTER RATES EFFECTIVE NOV. 1

- 18-hole regulation: resident, \$20; guest, \$32.
- 18-hole executive: resident, \$15.75; guest, \$26.50.
- 9-hole regulation: resident, \$10; guest, \$16.
- 9-hole executive: resident, \$8; guest, \$13.25.
- Twilight regulation: resident, \$13; guest, \$20.
- Twilight executive: resident, \$9.50; guest, \$16.
- Trail Fee without a Trail Pass: \$8.
- Golf Car rental: \$19 for 18-holes, \$9.50 for 9-holes.
- Golf Club rental: \$13 for 18-holes, \$7 for 9-holes.
- Surcharge for 620 golf card: \$3.
- Surcharge for 1,186 golf card: \$0.
- Trail Pass: \$170.

Hantke, RCSC board treasurer, made a different

recommendation to the board, one they think is more financially beneficial.

The RCSC budgeted a loss of \$89,000, but Frederick is confident that with the installation of revenue sources, the nearly \$200,000 deficit can almost be eliminated and the RCSC will just about break even.

"The golf advisory and budget and finance committees saw some difficult decisions," Hantke said. "(The recommendations) weren't passed for unanimously, but they won the majority."

The fee raises wouldn't affect the winter rates, as the recommendations proposed changes to the summer surcharge, the trail pass and the golf cards. The RCSC board will vote on the fees in December during the overall budget vote, and the new fees would be enacted Jan. 1.

According to Hantke, the Budget and Finance Committee proposes the RCSC board is to increase the summer golf surcharge from zero to \$1

and to increase the trail pass from \$170 to \$200. They also recommend not overseeding Willowcreek golf course next fall, which means players would play on brown grass while Bermuda grass is given a chance to grow.

The Golf Advisory Committee isn't in favor of the \$1 summer surcharge. Committee members voted to recommend a one percent increase on annual golf cards — the most popular currently costs \$620 while the other option costs \$1,186.

"That won't realize the same increase that the summer surcharge would bring," Hantke said.

Frederick estimates that the one percent increase would bring in less than \$10 per golfer per year. The Golf Advisory Committee felt that the \$1 summer surcharge would annoy golfers who are used to no surcharge during the hot season, Frederick said. Not overseeding

Willowcreek, however, is a good idea and he expects a savings of \$24,000.

"We've been talking about doing this every year as a chance to reduce the budget," he said, adding that not overseeding one course every year isn't a new strategy and has worked in the past.

Frederick expects the RCSC board to accept the increase to the Trail Pass and agree not to oversee Willowcreek this year. He isn't sure how they will vote on the golf card increase or on changes to the summer surcharge.

"We're trying to reduce the deficit we expect in the budget, which was approaching \$200,000," Frederick said. "To make up the difference, we'd actually have to increase golf cards by 5 percent, and we don't want to do that. We're always considering ways to save money."

The RCSC reported that although 2003 golf operations remained in the red, the shortfall was 96 percent less

than in 2002 — and not at the expense of the greens.

In 2002, golf expenses generated a loss of approximately \$400,000 from the RCSC budget. In 2003, losses were reduced to \$18,000, significantly lower than the previous year.

"Golf courses need to pay for themselves, and if we want good courses, we need to pay for it," said Frederick, an avid golfer.

Golf costs are rising, just as inflation patterns in America, he added. Prices for seed, fertilizer, chemicals and sand aren't what they used to be.

"It all totals \$200,000 of a cost increase," Frederick said. "We can't just ignore and think it will go away, it's not going to go away."

Golfers and residents are welcome to share their opinions on the recommendations between now and the RCSC board vote, Hantke said.

Annie Karstens may be reached at 876-2532 or [akarstens@aztrib.com](mailto:akarstens@aztrib.com).



DAILY NEWS-SUN

TUESDAY, SEPT. 21, 2004

# Lakes East irons out renovation plan

## Project will transform 9 acres, take 3 to 4 months

**ANNIE KARSTENS**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Lakes East Golf Course will save 14.5 million gallons of water every year once the course undergoes a desert landscaping remodel proposed for spring.

The project will take about three to four months to complete and will consist of converting nine acres of Lakes East's 56 acres to desert landscaping, with possible

upgrades to the irrigation system, improving bunkers and tees and bringing in new sand at the same time.

"If we're going to close and fix the golf course, let's fix the whole golf course," said John Snyder, RCSC director of golf, adding the cost could reach approximately \$750,000 if the entire renovation occurs.

The desert landscaping wouldn't affect the playing areas of the golf course, Snyder said.

"Only the most errant of golf shots would land in the landscaped areas," he said while presenting the plans at Monday's RCSC member/director exchange meeting.

Lakes East renovations are the result of a desert landscaping study done in 1990 when the Recreation Centers of Sun City hired experts to perform a golf course water conservation master plan. The study was submitted to the Arizona Department of Water Resources where specific suggestions were developed and relayed to the RCSC.

One of the ADWR's suggestions for reducing water usage on turfs is to do exactly what is planned for Lakes East, according to Jack Lavelle, ADWR public information officer.

The ADWR calls for turf removal in areas that don't affect golf play by installing alternatives to grass, such as desert vegetation, drought tolerant ornamental plants, desert and range grasses and desert flowers.

The RCSC has already checked several other items off the list of water conservation instructions handed to it

by the ADWR, including the North and South irrigation projects, the lining of the irrigation lake at the North golf course and putting concrete in the creek at the Lakes West Golf Course.

About five years ago, Quail Run's 9-hole course was converted to desert landscape, though not to the extent planned for Lakes East, according to Jim Frederick, RCSC director and chair of the golf advisory committee.

The proposed plan for Lakes East was done by golf course architect Gary Pranks

**See GOLF, A5**

### From A1

who walked and analyzed the course.

"I wish we could do one golf course a year," Frederick said. "I'm excited about it. We'll be one of the first around to start this."

According to Frederick, the project doesn't need a membership vote, but is a managerial decision to be made by the RCSC board based on residents' comments and professional recommendations.

A Lakes East Greens Committee has been formed with golfers, non-golfing homeowners who live on the course, the budget and finance committee and the golf advisory committee. So far, the prospect of saving the millions of gallons of water has appealed to the committee.

"There have been positive comments

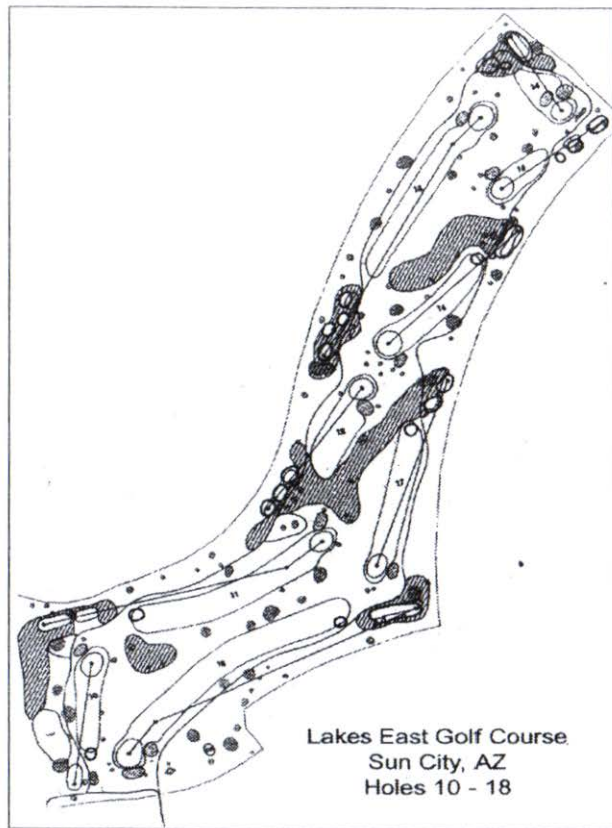
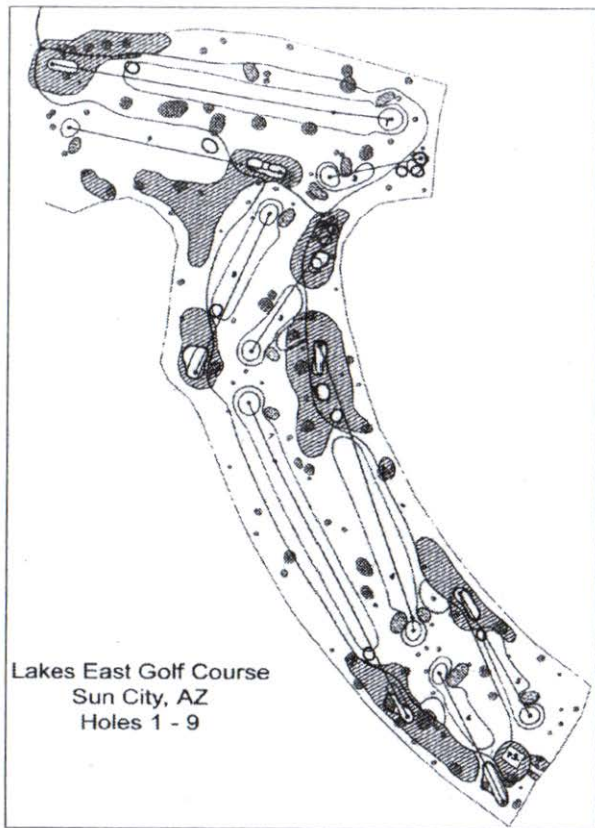
from all of the groups," said Jim Kuchler, RCSC president. "This is our initial effort to landscape all of the golf courses. Lakes East is a smaller one we can use as a test run to learn from."

Residents who live on Lakes East expressed concern over possibly losing the scenic grass behind their homes. Frederick said the committee responded by promising at least 25 feet of grass remain in tact on the borders of the course where homes sit. The desert landscaping will be concentrated around the tee boxes instead of along property lines.

During the decision process, all of the residents along Lakes East will be notified of the proposal and given an opportunity to comment.

For information on the proposed landscaping plan for Lakes East, call 876-3000.







# Infractions drop at courses

## RCSC wedges in new rules and fines

By Cecilia Chan

Independent Newspapers

More marshals and new fines mean fewer law breakers on the eight golf courses at the Recreation Centers of Sun City.

The RCSC Board of Directors in May amended the golf policy to reflect new rules and penalty fees for offenses such as driving or hitting in areas under repair or ignoring cart path-only rules.

"I support them 100 percent," said Russ Morgan, who prepared to tee off at the Quail Run Golf Course. "Unless you have discipline, people get casual and loose. You need some guidelines."

Category 1 offenses such as improperly displaying cart permits and hitting range balls outside the practice area use to

come with just a warning, said Jim Frederick, RCSC board member and Golf Advisory Committee chairman.

Now first-time offenders can expect both a \$10 fine and a warning ticket. Repeat offenders will see the fine increase by \$10. A third-time offender will pay \$30 and face board action.

The board also approved expanding the list of violations to include rules banning abusive language or aggressive action toward golf employees or other golfers and misuse and illegal transfers of golf receipts.

Most of the new rules were added to the more serious Category II offenses, which carry a \$25 per infraction and removal from the course for the first offense and \$50 per infraction and one month suspension for

the second offense. A third offense requires board action.

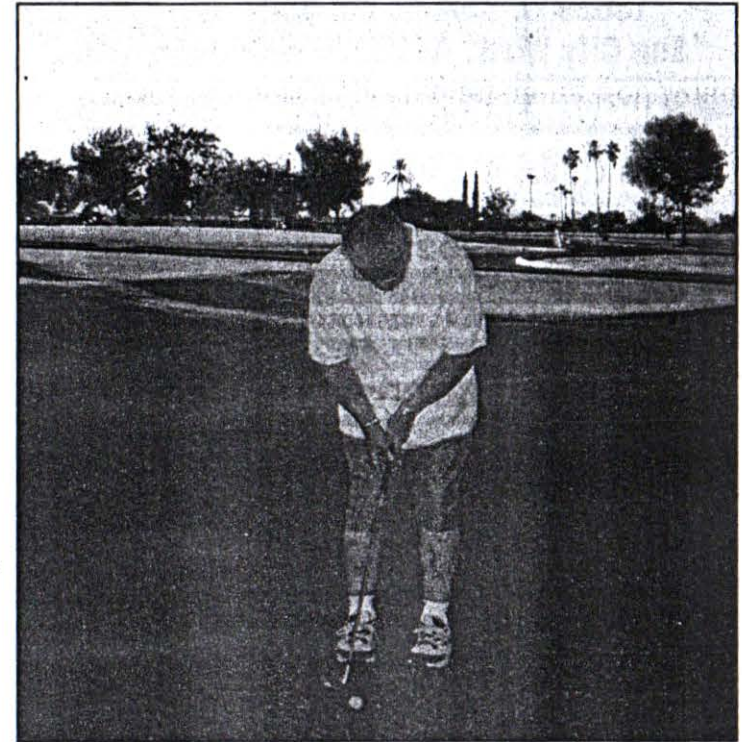
Mr. Frederick said the fines for Category II offenses were already on the books but were not enforced.

"We made these changes back in May and we had quite a few violators the first two weeks," said John Snyder, director of golf operations. "But since then we've only had one or two."

The amended policy is posted on the RCSC Web site and at all the courses.

Directors several months ago also approved hiring two more part-time marshals for a total of four to patrol the courses for non-paying players and rule-breakers.

See Policy — Page 7



Independent Newspapers/Cecilia Chan

**Golfer Jim Baker said the amended policy is fine with him as he putts at the Willowcreek Golf Course.**

## Policy

Continued From Page 1

In the first two months of regularly patrolling the courses, 45 new trail passes were purchased. Each trail pass is \$170.

Mr. Snyder said despite a drop in residents, most violations — people playing without paying — come during the summer months because the pro shops close at 5 p.m. The violators included both Sun City residents and non-residents, he said.

Pro shops in June began offering an "After 5 p.m. Card" for resi-

dents and golf card holders who are unable to check into the pro shop before 5 p.m. for a receipt.

"Since we got the additional courtesy patrol, there are barely any violations," Mr. Synder said.

Golfer Jim Baker said the amended penalties and rules are fine by him.

"It doesn't make any difference to me," he said as he practiced hitting a few balls. "I'll observe the rules and I'll abide by them."

Mr. Frederick said the changes were needed.

"There was a lot of cheating going on," he said. "It was getting to be a problem on a rampant sit-

uation. They would go on the course in the afternoon and don't pay, don't sign in. We put on several more marshals and it has worked out rather well. We don't have people doing nasty things out there."

Mr. Frederick, who wrote the language for the amended changes, said there were incidents where golfers mouthed off to employees. That by the way is considered a Category II offense and carries a \$25 fine for a first offense.

Despite the new regulations, there are still some scofflaws, Mr. Frederick said.

"We still catch people out

there, he said. "We catch people going out, playing on the South Course (which is closed for renovations). They come out with their golf cars and start playing."

Golfer Albert Stevens, however, thought hiring additional marshals unnecessary.

"I think it's a waste of money for the rangers," he said. "There isn't that many infractions."

*Post your comments on this issue at [newsblog.info/0302](http://newsblog.info/0302)*

*News editor Cecilia Chan can be reached at 972-6101 or [cchan@newszap.com](mailto:cchan@newszap.com)*



# Riverview superintendent keeps course out of rough

ANNIE KARSTENS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Greg Bailey has joined the elite ranks of Certified Golf Course Superintendents.

Bailey, superintendent at Riverview golf course in Sun City, is one of only 1,900 people worldwide who have the distinction of being certified golf course superintendents. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America deemed Bailey worthy of the title after years of hard work proving his abilities.

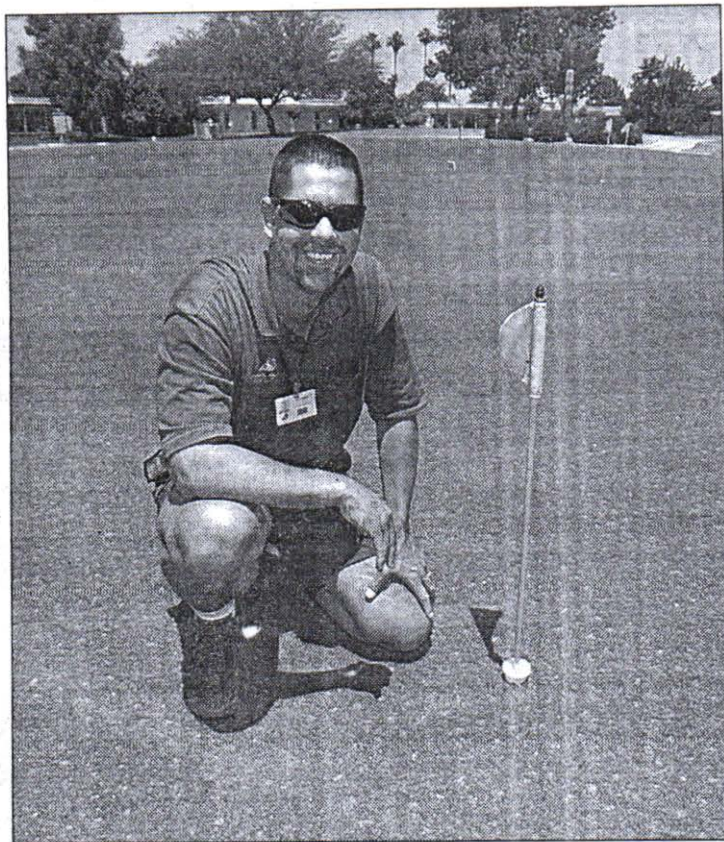
"It's always been a personal goal of mine to become certified because it first shows to myself that I'm willing to put in the extra effort to better myself in my career," Bailey said. "It also shows others that I'm willing to make the extra effort to reach this level."

It's taken him 12 years to get to this point in his career and getting here was no easy feat.

The certification program was instituted in 1971 by the GCSAA, a Kansas-based professional organization that since 1926 has served men and women who manage golf courses in the U.S. and worldwide.

According to a GCSAA document, to become certified a candidate must have at least three years experience as a golf course superintendent, be employed in that capacity and meet specific post secondary educational requirements and/or continuing education points.

After completing those requirements, a candidate must pass a six hour examination covering knowledge of GCSAA and its certification program, rules of golf, turf-grass management, pest control, safety and compliance, and financial and human resource management.



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Riverview golf superintendent Greg Bailey recently earned his certification from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

"Finally everything has come together to take the test and qualify," Bailey said, adding that he's ready to meet the challenge of raising the bar at Riverview. "This definitely puts me at a level where there will be more expected of me."

An inspection of Riverview was also necessary before Bailey could become a CGCS. His golf course operations were inspected by two area certified golf course superintendents: Patrick Burgess with Vistal Golf Club in Phoenix and Donald Courtney with Wigwam Golf and Country Club.

Riverview obviously passed the test. Bailey was honored at the regular board meeting of the Recreation Centers of Sun City, when John Snyder, RCSC golf director, made a

presentation to announce the accomplishment.

"To become certified, it takes a lot of work and absolute dedication," Snyder said. "This reflects on his character and his dedication to the industry as well as to Sun City."

Bailey, a father of three, has been superintendent at Riverview since October of 2002. He said working for the RCSC has been extremely rewarding.

"I've really enjoyed working for them. They're really trying to upgrade every aspect of their program," he said. "I'm also happy that the Recreation Centers of Sun City appreciates and recognizes the GCSAA."

Annie Karstens can be reached at 876-2532 or [akarstens@aztrib.com](mailto:akarstens@aztrib.com)



# SUMMER BREAK



Golfers gather for a morning round at South Golf Course Wednesday. The course will be closed for four months beginning June 1.

OVER

STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

## South Golf Course set to close for repairs on June 1



Betty Welch and an old friend are getting ready to part ways for the next four months.

"I'll probably play a couple more times and that will be it," the Sun City woman said of South Golf Course. "After that, I'll have to play all over town."

South Golf Course will be closed for four months beginning June 1 to allow workers to install a new irrigation system on the championship course. The course is scheduled to reopen on Oct. 4.

"This is the same project that we had to close North for last year," said John Snyder, director of golf for the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc. "South is the last of our golf

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## AERIFICATION DATES

Willowbrook	May 13
Willowcreek	May 14
Riverview	May 17
Quail Run	May 20
North	May 21
Lakes West	May 24
Lakes East	May 27
South	June 1

• • •

Willowcreek	Aug. 2
Willowbrook	Aug. 5
Riverview	Aug. 6
North	Aug. 9
Quail Run	Aug. 12
Lakes West	Aug. 13
Lakes East	Aug. 16
South (closed)	Aug. 18

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courses to undergo this project."

In addition to the installation of the irrigation system, workers also will aerify the greens in June and

overseed the course in October.

"We're replacing all sprinkler heads, control boxes and computer systems," Snyder said.

The system in use at the course has four to seven sprinklers on each valve, an inefficient use of water, Snyder said. Some sprinkler heads distribute more water than others, leaving dry spots on some parts of the course and wet areas on others.

The new system will have a sprinkler on each valve, and can be controlled by computer.

The new sprinkler valves will be modern swing-joints, a new type more flexible when run over by lawn mowers or golf cars, Snyder said. Inside the joints are rubber gaskets that help prevent leakage.

The grounds crew will be able to control the sprinkler system by the

touch of a button, using a hand-held device.

"The new system will be more efficient," Snyder said. "It also will save water."

Last year's irrigation project at North cost \$612,000 and the South project should mirror that expense, Snyder said.

Welch doesn't plan to golf any less this summer despite having no access to her home course.

She said she'll use the opportunity to play more rounds at the other championship courses operated by the Recreation Centers of Sun City.

"It's just one of those things that has to get done," Welch said of the upcoming project. "I trust John Snyder and if he says the work needs to be done to improve the course, I believe him."



# RCSC cracks down on course violations

## Increased penalties may be imposed

ANNIE KARSTENS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Beverly Davis of Sun City is tired of sharing local golf courses with trespassers and rule-breakers.

At a member/director information-exchange meeting of the Recreation Centers of Sun City earlier this week, Davis stood at the podium and pleaded with the board of directors to hire more marshals to monitor the centers' eight golf courses. She presented an extensive list of violations that she said occur far too often and could be curbed by utilizing more marshals to uphold more stringent consequences.

"It's got to be done. We're getting too many people taking advantage of our courses and abusing them," said

Davis, a former RCSC board member and former chairperson of the golf committee. "They are why many of us came to Sun City; it's our main attraction here."

Hiring additional marshals to join the two on the RCSC payroll would be worth the investment, Davis said, adding that until the board does, responsible golfers will suffer.

"We are out there to enjoy the day, the sport and the weather, and not to have to police the courses," Davis said.

Davis, secretary for the Willowcreek Women's Golf Club, said the situation is the same at all of Sun City's golf courses. Offenders are golfing without checking in, allowing children to drive golf cars and holding up other golfers — among a slew of other things, Davis said, adding that she is most upset with people who treat the courses like parks by walking and biking on greens during golf hours.

Jim Frederick, RCSC director and chairman of the golf committee, confirmed that Davis' accusations were not unfounded.

"We are aware of the problems, and they were discussed at the golf advisory meeting," he said. "We know we've got to put some teeth into the penalties to make them work."

One marshal monitors the five golf courses north of Grand Avenue and the other marshal oversees the three courses south of Grand. For the past few months, the RCSC had only one marshal on duty, which could account for the problems seeming more prevalent, Frederick said. A new marshal was hired last week, so improvements should start, he added.

Ideally, Frederick would like to hire two more marshals to further alleviate the problems and crack down on violators. Frederick is proposing to change the RCSC bylaws to include

## OFFENSES

- Bicycles during golf hours.
- Dogs with owners on courses during golf hours and in the evenings without a bag or scoop.
- Walkers on courses during golf hours.
- Golf cars — coming off the streets to the clubhouse and underage children and young-adult drivers joy riding on courses.
- Trespassers mouthing back when told they aren't allowed on the courses, stating they pay their recreation fees and are entitled to do as they please.
- Golf cars driving between bunkers and greens with no handicapped flags displayed.
- Dress code not being enforced. Men players with no shirts on and women with tube tops.
- Two players using one golf bag.
- Golf cars parking in front of greens.
- Golfers hitting more than one ball while on the course and holding up groups.
- Nonmembers advancing toward coyotes with golf clubs.
- Grandparents on the course with underage children, one of them driving a golf car.
- Golfers not checking in before golfing and coming in right off the street.

Source: Beverly Davis of Sun City, secretary of the the Willowcreek Women's Golf Club

OVER



## From A1

increased penalties for those who violate golf-course restrictions.

"It will be a 'no-more-warnings' system," he said.

Should his proposal become a reality, violators would have to answer to the following consequences: first offense, the violator will be removed from the course and fined \$25; second offense, the violator will be removed from the course and fined \$50; third offense will result in action taken by the board of directors.

Currently, on the first violation, a warning is issued, and on the second violation, the offender is contacted for board action, when the RCSC directors decide to fine or suspend the violator, said Jon Snyder, RCSC director of golf.

According to Jerry Billodeau, Recreation Centers of Sun City West golf operations manager, the RCSCW has had no incidences on its seven golf courses such as those reported in Sun City. Currently, the RCSCW doesn't have golf marshals, but Billodeau anticipates they will have them come July.

Each of the four golf courses in Sun City Grand is monitored by about 10 paid employees called rangers, said Josh Beisner, a first assistant at the Desert Springs golf course. The most common violation

reported is golf cars driving too close to the greens, Beisner said. The penalties range from a warning for first-time offenders to a 30-day suspension from golf for a second offense, and repeat offenders can be banned from the courses permanently, he said.

Beisner said rangers are important for good customer service, general maintenance and upkeep of the courses. Sun City Grand has plenty of rangers and has no intention of hiring more, he added.

Sun City resident Wanda Parks asked the RCSC board if volunteer marshals were an option.

Frederick said that unfortunately, because marshals were paid in the past, the federal Fair Labor Standards Act prohibits converting the position to unpaid.

Paul Santoro, an avid Sun City golfer who plays every course, has witnessed firsthand some of the violations Davis pointed out. He suggested that the RCSC hire temporary, on-call marshals to work only in peak seasons.

"The problems always seem to be when visitors are in town. We should have temporary marshals for vacation periods," Santoro said. "They should only be engaged when it's necessary and they catch enough violators to justify their costs."

Nancy Cook of Sun City

## RCSC GOLF COURSE REGULATIONS

### Dress code:

Proper golf attire is required at all times for men and women.

- Shorts must be hemmed.
- No bathing attire.
- Men must wear shirts with sleeves.
- No shirts with offensive language.
- Shoes must be golf turf-type or athletic style.

### Restrictions:

- No cars are allowed in between bunkers and greens.
- No people can walk or bicycle on the courses during golf hours, which are 7 a.m. until dark.
- No sharing golf bags — each player must have a bag.
- Golfers can play only one ball.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City recognizes two categories of golf course violations, each punishable under the same terms:

### Category-one offenses:

- Golf cars or pull carts too close to the green.
- Driving in areas that are under repair, like desert landscape or wet area.
- Underage drivers.
- Cars permit not properly displayed.
- Ignoring cart-path-only rules (like if it rains, we don't allow cars onto fairways, must stay on path).
- Range baskets being taken out of practice area.
- Nongolfers on course during hours of play.

### Category-two offenses:

- No car permit or expired permit.
- Playing without checking in.
- Practicing on golf course.
- Abusive language toward golfers or employees.

Source: John Snyder, RCSC director of golf.

is a member of the Willowcreek Women's Golf Club. She said it's not only visitors that break the rules.

"A lot of the times, it's the golfers here that are making these problems," Cook said. "We definitely need more marshals here."

Sun City resident Patty George, also a member of the Willowcreek club, said the RCSC board has a

responsibility to ensure golf-course safety.

"Violations happen a lot more often than they should," George said. "People walking and biking during golf hours is especially concerning, because we could hurt them — hitting them with a ball could kill them."

Annie Karstens may be reached at 876-2532 or [akarstens@aztrib.com](mailto:akarstens@aztrib.com).



# RCSC restricts fiscal bleeding of golf operations

**ANNIE KARSTENS**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City reports that although 2003 golf operations remained in the red, the shortfall was 96 percent less than in 2002 — and not at the expense of the greens.

In 2002, golf expenses generated a loss of approximately \$400,000 from the RCSC budget. In 2003, losses were reduced to \$18,000, significantly lower than the previous year.

Bud Hantke, treasurer of the RCSC board, is thrilled about the improvement and retention of funds.

"We can thank a good

golf director, courses that are in good shape and our competitive prices," Hantke said, adding that the number of man-hours for the whole corporation has also dropped, a good sign that the courses are running smoothly, he said.

RCSC board President Jim Kuchler also credits Director of Golf Operations John Snyder for the monetary improvement.

"He is able to go out and get better prices for items like seed and equipment," Kuchler said. "Also, his management of personnel made a big difference."

A \$3 surcharge was implemented during May

and June in an effort to increase revenue, a move that Snyder said definitely worked without ruffling any feathers.

"Generally, golfers accepted the fee, because it accompanies better course conditions," he said.

The electrical costs to run the courses' irrigation-pump stations had been high in the past, Snyder said. In 2003, those costs came in approximately \$95,000 less than in 2002 because of improved efficiency of the pumps, he said, adding that the amount of energy used was reduced by about 100,000 kilowatts.

All of the pump stations were renovated with new software to better regulate irrigation, and a new pump was installed at Willowcreek. New pump installations are slated for Quail Run and Lakes East within the year, he said.

"The superintendents have been doing a very good job at water conservation as well," Snyder said, explaining how crucial it is that greens keepers monitor watering very closely.

Bill Loslo, Sun City resident and avid golfer, said he noticed the courses improved in 2003.

"The courses are in excellent shape," Loslo

said. "I think the workmen have been doing a much better job this past year than in other years."

Loslo appreciated corrections made to course water systems and is glad there's no more puddling on the fairways because of faulty sprinklers. The greens and sandtraps have been especially well-groomed in recent months, he added.

When Snyder was hired, Loslo heard of his big plans, and he now is grateful Snyder followed them through.

"He's done a wonderful job — brought in some innovative ideas, saved money and improved the

courses, you can't ask for much better than that," Loslo said.

Snyder, who's been director about a year and a half, attributes much of last year's success to the greens superintendents.

"The superintendents that run the golf courses have done an excellent job of improving green conditions," he said. "Our rounds have increased significantly, and members are bringing more of their friends to play because of better of conditions."

Snyder said improvements will continue and costs will remain low in 2004.



# Weather plays havoc on courses

## Conditions hamper some overseeding in Sun City

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

High temperatures and wet weather have caused problems on Recreation Centers of Sun City golf courses.

Unusually hot weather has brought insects and introduced plant diseases on the courses, said John Snyder, director of golf for the RCSC, in his report to the board at the informational exchange between members and directors Monday morning in Sun City.

The courses have shown damage to the root structure of the grass because of grubs this fall, Snyder said. Grubs are normally found farther down, below the grass and under its root structure. With

### IF YOU GO

- **WHAT:** Recreation Centers of Sun City board meeting
- **WHEN:** 9 a.m. Oct. 30
- **WHERE:** Sundial Auditorium, 14801 N. 103rd Ave.

the high temperatures and wet soil, the grubs are rising closer to the surface and eating the roots, he said. This had caused the grass to die in certain areas. The grubs were treated with insecticide, Snyder said.

The North Course has shown damage symptomatic of a disease called "rapid blight," which is caused by wet weather combined with high temperatures. The disease was treated with a fungicide, Snyder said.

Rain on Oct. 10 caused some overseeding problems at the South, Quail Run, Lakes West and Willowcreek golf courses, Snyder said. Saturated ground led to

See **WEATHER**, A5

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

A golfer tees off on the North Golf Course in Sun City this morning. Tee tops at North were overseeded with rye grass, but the warm weather has kept the Bermuda grass active.



## From A1

equipment breakdowns, mainly while scalping.

Scalping is the process in which green blades are removed from the grass to prepare the ground for overseeding, Snyder said. On the above mentioned courses, the staff has had to scalp twice this fall; scalping is easier when the grass is dry, he said.

At this point, RCSC is not able to determine what the outcome will be on those courses, Snyder said. Higher temperatures cause the Bermuda grass to compete with the rye grass, he said.

When asked if there will likely be brown patches or dry areas, Snyder said, "We really won't know until the Bermuda grass goes dormant."

The golf staff put a growth regulator on the courses that slows down the Bermuda grass and doesn't slow the rye, Snyder said. Additionally the staff fertilizes the rye grass. The courses will not be overseeded again, he said.

Overseeding has been successfully completed at Lakes East, Willowbrook, Riverview and North courses, Snyder said. Golf cars are restricted to the paths.

Because the ground was saturated and water

accumulated on the grass, the mowers had to work too hard and broke down, Snyder said.

In other RCSC news:

● The RCSC board approved including a motion on the agenda of the next board meeting on Oct. 30 which would allow RCSC board members to serve two consecutive terms on the board. The board will discuss the issue and vote on it at that meeting.

Five candidates running for the 2004 board will be introduced at the meeting, said Gayle Schmidt, election-committee chairwoman.

● Jerry Swintek, golf-committee chairman, reported that the RCSC board has found that Quail Run golf course has a covenant governing it already in place.

The board had not been able to find a recorded deed restriction following the expiration of Quail Run's deed restriction in 1998, Swintek said. The board just found a copy of a deed restriction for Quail Run that went into effect on May 5, 1998. The document is effective for 10 years, plus an additional year for review of the deed before it must be renewed or changed, Swintek said.

● The RCSC long-range planning committee is looking into beefing up security at

rec centers in the next year, said Norm Dickson, chairman. Concern over vandalism and access to facilities by nonresidents are two factors in the focus on security, he said.

● The RCSC has added two Pilates classes, bringing the total number to 10, said Centers Operations Director Earl Feierabend. He said that use of the Sundial Recreation Center has increased 70 percent compared to the same period last year.

● The men's restroom remodeling project at the Sun Bowl is almost complete, and should be finished soon, Feierabend said.

Work on the replacement of a concrete fascia on the front of the Sun Bowl with a stucco one is also nearing completion, he said.

● The RCSC plans to once again offer free, promotional massage therapy beginning in November, Feierabend said. The schedule with times and locations will be published in next month's edition of the Sunviews, the RCSC newsletter.

● Three architects have submitted line drawings for a proposed remodeling project at Bell Center, Feierabend said. The areas to be remodeled include the pool and locker room area.

● Windmills used on Sun

City golf courses to keep Canada geese away from golfers last year are no longer effective, Snyder said.

"The geese have gotten used to it" and are no longer scared off, he said.

RCSC golf is now testing the "Goose Buster," a new contraption that emits sounds resembling that of a wounded goose, repelling other geese. If it is effective, the courses will purchase the device.

● Snyder and RCSC member Beryl Cropley of the Swan Club reported there is no new information on what caused the death of two swans at the 12th-hole water hazard at Riverview. Snyder said he has met twice with water specialists from Aquatics Testing Laboratory of Tempe regarding the death of two swans last month. To date, the water is normal, and nothing has been found that could have killed the swans, Snyder said.

● Maricopa County officials recently tested the irrigation ditches at Willowcreek and Riverview courses for mosquito larvae, Snyder said. The irrigation ditches' constant flow of water prevents mosquito larvae in the ditches, Snyder said.

*Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or ereep@aztrib.com.*



# RCSC approves new increase in golf fees

## All SC courses to open Oct. 27

By Tom Barry

Independent Newspapers

Golfers in Sun City will shell out an average of 5 percent more in golf fees when overseeding is completed and all eight of the community's courses open for play Oct. 27.

The board of directors of the Recreation Centers of Sun City unanimously approved across-the-board increases in fees as were recommended in September by the association's Golf Advisory Committee.

The new fee schedule — the third in as many years — went into effect Oct. 1. It was sought in an effort to reduce the RCSC Golf Operations deficit, explained Director Jerry Swintek.

In approving the increases at its Sept. 25 membership meeting, the board rejected arguments by critics who claimed the fees were unnecessary. Anne Stewart, a long-time critic of the board, said not enough had been done to reduce costs before considering the fee hikes.

However, Mr. Swintek, a member of the Golf Advisory Committee, said, "The increases are long overdue and will help ensure the

future viability of Sun City's eight courses, including our five championship courses."

The increases mean an average of \$20-\$30 a year more for most RCSC members.

In 2002 alone, RCSC's golf operations lost approximately \$400,000, according to board Treasurer Bud Hantke. The newly instituted fee schedule is projected to reduce the deficit to about \$178,000.

Director Norm Dixon credited John Snyder, director of Golf Operations, for cost-effective management and maintenance of Sun City's aging courses.

"He has done a wonderful job of reducing costs while maintaining the courses to the standards that our members have come to enjoy and expect," he said.

In other Golf Operations news, Mr. Snyder said North Golf Course improvements are continuing.

"The opportunity to continue to make significant improvements," he said.

With the installation of new sprinkler heads and a control system the decision was made to renovate the fairways this

See Golf — Page 7

## Golf

Continued From Page 1

summer. This means the course will be closed a little longer and the fairways will not be overseeded for the winter months.

Mr. Snyder said North Golf Course has experienced a poorer transition than the other courses over the last couple of years due to the older irrigation system, the relining of the irrigation lake and the high salt content of the soils.

"We feel that now is the time to help remedy this by renovat-

ing the fairways and planting an improved variety of Bermuda grass, which is now available from seed," he said.

Due to the immaturity of the new grass, the fairways will not be overseeded this winter allowing for the proper growing time to establish a base that will be more tolerant of overseeding in years to come, Mr. Snyder explained.

Overseeding will begin Thursday, Oct. 9, on the Quail Run, Willowcreek, South and Lakes West golf courses. They will open for play on Oct. 27.

Overseeding began Sept.

### SC Annual Golf Fees

Among the changes in the fee schedule:

- The annual prepaid greens fee and trail fee on all courses (no per round fee) rose from \$1,130 to \$1,186.
- The annual prepaid greens fee and trail fee on all courses (plus per round fee Nov. 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004) increased from \$590 to \$620.
- The annual prepaid greens fee and trail fee on all three executive courses (no per round fee) increased from \$1,000 to \$1,050.
- The annual prepaid greens fee and trail fee on all three executive courses (plus per round fee) Nov. 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004) increased from \$1,000 to \$1,050.
- The annual trail fee rose from \$160 to \$170.

18 on the North, Lakes East, Willowbrook, and Riverview courses. Those four courses opened for play Oct. 6.



# RCSC hikes golf fees

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City board unanimously approved an increase in some golf fees of approximately 5 percent.

The board voted Thursday morning at its regular meeting at Sundial Auditorium, preceded by a quarterly membership meeting with 125 members present.

The rate hike will go into effect Wednesday. Among the changes:

- The annual prepaid greens fee for courses is proposed to be raised from \$590 to \$620.

- The trail fee is proposed to be raised \$10 to \$170.

Some RCSC members spoke out in favor of the fee increase and in support of the board during the quarterly meeting.

"I rise to support the golf increases," said Doug Caravaggio.

Discouraged by many negative comments he has heard in membership meetings, he said he didn't want to be "against everything."

"This has been a peaceful, wonderful city," he said. "Let's be together."

Caravaggio's comments drew applause.

Avid golfer and member Mary Stuckenschneider thanked the board for maintaining RCSC courses well. As she coordinates and books golf tournaments, wherever she has gone, she said, "every single one of the superintendents I've met has said wonderful things about Sun City's courses and the great way they're maintained."

In other RCSC board news:

- Member Bill Gill asked for a membership vote at the next quarterly membership meeting in November to amend the articles of incorporation to allow directors to run for a second consecutive term. Board members said they would consider it, and have an answer at the October board meeting.

- Board President Dorothy Hirtzel discussed recent reported acts of vandalism in the Bell Recreation Center parking lot. The center has allocated three parking spaces for the recently relocated Sun City Visitors Center, she said. Last Tuesday night, "someone removed the signs and bent over the sign posts," she said. Hirtzel said the board is concerned "there are people out there who think it's OK to destroy (RCSC) property."

- Monthly income for August was higher than budgeted, reported Treasurer Bud Hantke. However, the year-to-date figure is slightly lower than budgeted. Total income for August was \$944,850, compared to the budget's \$941,073. Year-to-date income was \$9.825 million, versus the budgeted \$9.903 million.

"We are within \$77,217 of budget, or less than 1 percent of the total," Hantke said.

At the same time, August operating expenses were lower than budgeted. Actual expenses for the month were \$1.067 million, compared to the budgeted \$1.135 million — a difference of about \$68,400. Year-to-date operating expenses were \$8.785 million, \$638,233 more than budgeted.

"We have our directors of centers and golf to thank for their efficient use of funds provided for their operations," Hantke said.

- The bid committee approved bids for two budgeted projects and one major purchase, totaling approximately \$45,553. The major purchase was a new Canon 5020 digital copier for the administrative offices at a cost of \$11,464, said board Secretary Jim Kuchler, chairman. The vendor was Ikon Office Solutions of Tempe.

One bid accepted was for the global-positioning system mapping of South Golf Course for \$24,980, Kuchler said.

"This is the first phase of a larger project to upgrade the irrigation system on South Golf

Course," Kuchler said. "It is similar to the GPS-mapping phase of the upgrade of the irrigation system on the North Golf Course completed earlier this year."

The contractor is Coates Irrigation Consultants Inc. of Scottsdale.

The second bid is for replacement of screens on the tennis courts at Lakeview Center for \$9,109 by Arizona Rain Gutters of Phoenix.

The copier and GPS-mapping are among six projects paid with capital-improvement funds. The 2003 capital budget has \$430,893 remaining, because some projects were deferred for a variety of reasons and others were cancelled, Hantke said.

In addition, the board approved eight treadmills at \$16,000, renovations for the Camera Guild and RV Club at \$30,000, and architectural line drawings for the Fairway project and possible remodeling of the Bell exercise room and pool area at \$30,000 each.

- Member Robert Buck, standing bowling-committee member, expressed concern over the temperature at the bowling lanes in Bell Recreation Center.

At a recent club function where 80 men were bowling, conditions were uncomfortable.

"The lanes were so sticky and the approaches were so sticky, they could hardly bowl," he said.

Buck said he has been a bowler since 1956, and in all his years of bowling, has never used a facility where the lanes were not air-conditioned.

Hantke said the board is aware of the problem, and the long-range planning committee has discussed it. Feierabend also has looked into installing air at the center, Hantke said.

Due to the roofing system, installing air conditioning would require modification or replacement of the roof, he said. The present cooling system is a convoluted evaporative system that sits on the ground, Hantke said. Complicating the issue, directors and long-range planning committee members foresee that eventually, some of the community's lanes will have to close, Hantke said.

"Someday, Sun City will only be able to support one bowling (facility). We know that," he said.

Hantke added that is years away.

"These are things that are not going to happen overnight," he said.

- The board unanimously approved granting a charter to the "Happy Days are Here Again" Dance Club. The club will feature dances with music from the 1950s through the 1970s, including music from Elvis Presley, Perry Como, Roy Orbison and Dean Martin.



# RCSC board poised for vote on golf-fee hike

Committee recommends 5% increase

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City board will decide later this month whether to approve raising golf fees.

A 5 percent increase has been recommended by the golf advisory committee as a way to bring in added revenue.

About 60 corporation members filled the Social Hall at Lakeview Center Monday morning to learn more about the increases and voice their opinions.

Board members say the increase is necessary to keep Sun City an attractive golfing community where golfers get the most for their money.

"Basically, the golf operation is losing money," said Director Jerry Swintek, chairman of the golf committee. As golf continues to lose money, "we have to look at how to improve that situation."

According to board Treasurer Bud Hantke, golf expenses exceeded revenue by \$400,000 in 2002. By the end of 2003, RCSC directors expect the deficit to be reduced to \$178,000, he said.

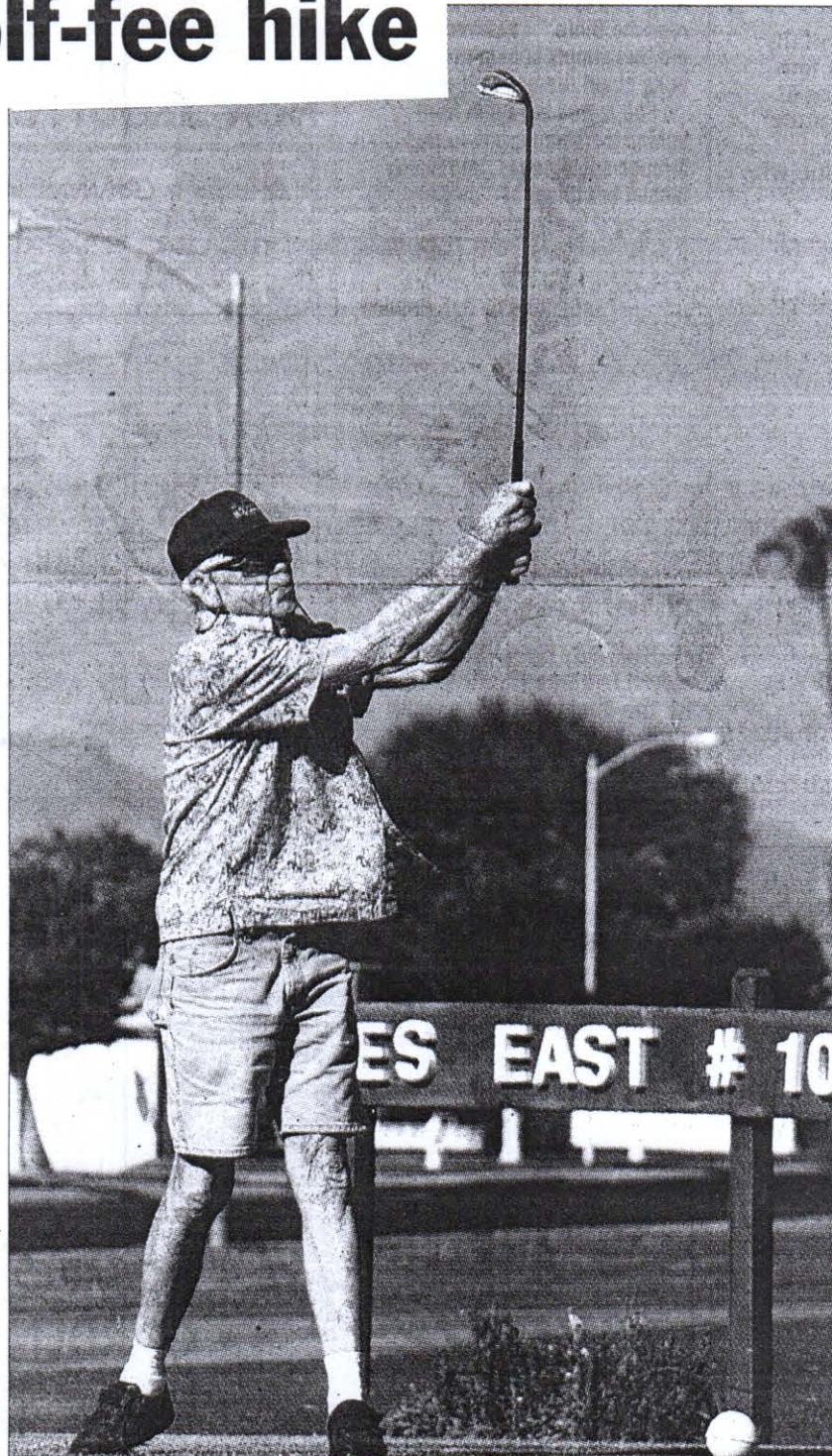
"It's obvious we need to increase prices without decreasing play," he said.

The golf committee told the board last year a fee increase would be necessary this year, Hantke said.

If approved at the Sept. 25 board meeting, the increases would go into effect Oct. 1.

"It works well with the budget cycle, and it also works into the current year," Hantke said.

Some RCSC members are strongly opposed to any fee increases. Community activist Anne Stewart said her



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bill Wasden tees off on the 10th hole at Lakes East in Sun City this morning. Overseeding begins Thursday on four Sun City courses: Lakes East, Riverview, Willowbrook and the greens at the North Course. The courses will be closed until Oct. 6; the remaining Recreation Centers of Sun City courses will be closed for overseeding Oct. 9.

Sun City Formula Registry would not support such increases.

"We come here today to protest any golf-fee increases," she said.

Stewart said she is

concerned golf-fee increases will price people out of the game in Sun City.

"We want them to cost-cut and lower the prices, because we want people in Sun City to be able to play," she said.

RCSC members Bill Gill and Bill Loslo said they support the increases. Gill has golfed for more than 65 years and said he enjoys being able to golf three to four times a week in Sun City at an

OVER



affordable rate. Loslo pointed out the increases per round would amount to less than the cost of a postage stamp.

Swintek said four directors on the RCSC board are golfers, and they will feel the impact of golf-fee increases as much as anyone.

"So we certainly look with a close eye when there's going to be a golf increase," Swintek said.

The committee considers increases that would be "reasonable and appropriate," he said.

The board had a facts sheet available for general members at the meeting. It listed sample surcharge rates for year-round residents who play three rounds per week at \$3 per game. Figuring the surcharge for 34 weeks of the year, the golfer would pay \$306, with no surcharge during the 18 weeks of summer.

The annual prepaid greens fee for courses is proposed to be raised from \$590 to \$620. The trail fee is proposed to be raised \$10 to \$170. Adding the figures and dividing by the number of rounds, golfers would pay \$7.03 per round instead of \$6.77 per round — a difference of 26 cents per game.

Directors pointed out such an increase is less than the cost of a cup of coffee.

"So you skip a cup of coffee that morning," Swintek said. "Bring a cup from home."

In other RCSC news:

● Earl Feierabend, director of centers operations, updated members and

## From A1

directors on recent improvements and repairs.

The Sun City Visitors Center relocated to the Bell Recreation Center. The new location once housed the rec-center supervisor's office and a conference room. The cost of remodeling was \$5,800; total cost of the relocation (including the supervisor's office) was \$16,974, Feierabend said.

Tennis-court screens were replaced at the Marinette and Lakeview centers. The repairs were necessary due to damage from winds during recent storms. Repair costs were \$2,245 and \$4,189, respectively.

Replacement of a stainless-steel oven hood at

the Riverview snack shop cost \$8,225. The hood needed to be replaced because the fans and vents were no longer working and could not be repaired.

A leaking wastewater pipe discovered two weeks ago in the men's restroom at the Sunbowl caused damage to the wooden studs and dry-wall in the building. It will cost \$2,615 to replace the floor tile and wall, and \$4,285 for the rough plumbing, including replacing water and drain lines. Replacing the fixtures will cost \$3,776.

Shows scheduled for Sept. 28 and Oct. 5 at the Sun Bowl have been relocated to the Sundial Auditorium, 14801 N. 103rd Ave.

● John Snyder, director of golf, updated members on work on Sun City courses. The North Golf Course will reopen Oct. 6 following installation of a new irrigation system.

The new Willowcreek pump station is to begin operation Wednesday, he said. In the process of installing the new station, a gate valve needed to be replaced. The gate valve prevents water from re-entering the pump station while workers are installing or repairing it, Snyder said.

The area on which the old pump station was built had sand in its base, causing the walls to cave in as the new station was installed. The cave-in damaged the electrical service, which then had to be replaced, Snyder said. The new wiring was required by

Maricopa County, as the old electrical panels were outdated, he said. An electrical contractor was retained to do the replacement and obtain the necessary county permits to do so.

Overseeding begins Thursday on four Sun City courses: Lakes East, Riverview, Willowbrook and the greens at the North Course. The courses will be closed until Oct. 6; the remaining courses will be closed for overseeding Oct. 9.

The well motor at Riverview and the 50-horsepower drive at the South Course were struck by lightning during a recent storm and will need to be rebuilt or replaced, Snyder said.

Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or ereep@aztrib.com.

**See RCSC, A5**



SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

September 3, 2003

# RCSC mulls 5% golf fee increase

**By Anne Brady**

Independent Newspapers

A 5 percent increase in the annual fee paid for a golf pass is being considered by the Recreation Centers of Sun City Governing Board.

The board's golf committee voted unanimously last week to recommend the hike, which would increase the cost of an annual golf pass from \$590 to \$620, effective Oct. 1. The full board will take up the issue at its regular meeting Sept. 25.

The existing \$3 surcharge per round would remain the same.

The cost of a trail pass would rise to \$170 from \$160.

The cost per round of golf for an individual golfing three rounds per week for 34 weeks (eight months) of the year, would go from \$6.77 to \$7.03. That same golfer in Sun City West would pay \$12 per round, under a new rate schedule set to go into effect Oct. 1.

The cost per round for those who don't buy an annual pass would go from \$19 to \$20. The fee for a pass to all RCSC golf courses with no surcharge would go from \$1,130 to \$1,185.

Board Treasurer Bud Hantke said the Budget & Finance Committee also had approved including the proposed hike when it prepares

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## Golf

Continued From Page 1  
the budget for the coming year.

"Golf is still not breaking even," he said. "The Budget & Finance Committee basically agrees with the director of golf.

"It is the opinion of the committee that as we improve the courses, we slowly raise prices. We don't want to price ourselves so high that people won't golf.

Director of Golf Operations John Snyder said the golf division is projected to break even in 2005 if necessary rate hikes are implemented.

The golf division has a projected deficit of \$200,000 next year without the golf fee increase, which is expected to generate \$100,000.

The committee also discussed the possibility of hiring a consultant to research possible ways the golf division could cut costs.



# Panel proposes hike in golf fees in Sun City

## Increases range from 3½% to 5%

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City's Golf Committee has voted to recommend an increase in fees for the coming year.

Chairman Jim Frederick informed the board and membership about the proposal at the meeting Thursday morning in Sundial Auditorium.

Frederick said the committee had recently discussed fee hikes, and approved recommending to the board an initial increase of 3.5 percent to 5 percent. (See chart on Page A5.)

Other fee increases were voted on at a committee meeting Thursday afternoon.

The recommendations must now be adopted by the board before taking effect Oct. 1, Frederick said.

The meeting was the first regular session after the summer break. Vice President Norm Dickson led the meeting in Dorothy Hirtzel's absence; all other board directors were present.

In other Recreation Centers of Sun City news:

● In July and August, the

bids committee approved six bids for budgeted items and one for a nonbudgeted item, said Chairman Jim Kuchler. The bids totaled \$166,550.

The budgeted items include \$9,663 for 38½ tons of fertilizer for the golf courses to UAP Timberland of Chandler, \$21,725 for coating the Bell Recreation Center parking lot by Ace Asphalt of Arizona, \$30,968 for upgrading fixtures in the west parking lot of the Marinette Recreation Center to begin in mid-September by Hatfield-Reynolds Electric Co. of Phoenix, \$10,320 for an annual contract with Western Pump Service to maintain the distribution pumps on the golf courses and \$4,560 to the same firm for annual maintenance of pump stations and \$33,189 for trimming palm trees by Arizona Tree Care of Glendale.

The nonbudgeted item was \$56,125 to Kenneth L. McIntyre of Glendale for repairs to the Sun Bowl. Earlier work not included in the bid involved removing the precast-concrete fascia; the concrete rim will be replaced with lighter, safer stucco fascia. The work is scheduled to begin next Tuesday and should be complete by mid-September, in time for the fall shows, Kuchler said.

● Treasurer Bud Hantke

### From A1

updated members on the budget. In particular, he noted that food and liquor sales were down in July by about \$4,000 from budget, but overall, the centers' income was up \$7,000 because of the sale of golf equipment and added revenue from massages offered at the Sundial Recreation Center.

Hantke said the food service continues to run at a deficit but it's down year to date \$89,655 from \$136,000.

● In a report on the insurance committee, Frederick noted that insurance rates have been locked in with Cincinnati Insurance Co. for the next three years. The rates have increased by \$20,445 from last year, however, because the assessed value of the centers has been updated, Frederick said. The increase is much less than the committee expected, he said.

● Wilbur Smith of the Sun City PRIDES presented a program on the volunteer organization. The acronym stands for "Private Residents Individually Donating Essential Services." More than 300 individuals donate about 200 hours per week to keep the city clean.

Sun City PRIDES spend

## DAILY CASH GREEN FEES

Winter Rates	current	proposed	current	proposed	current	proposed
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>Twilight</b>	<b>Twilight</b>
Resident	\$9.50	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$12.00	\$13.00
Guest	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$32.00	\$32.00	\$20.00	\$20.00
Summer Rates	current	proposed	current	proposed	current	proposed
<b>Executive</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>Twilight</b>	<b>Twilight</b>
Resident	\$7.50	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$15.75	\$9.00	\$9.50
Guest	\$13.50	\$13.50	\$26.50	\$26.50	\$16.00	\$16.00
per round fee	\$1.50		\$3.00			
Summer Rates	current	proposed	current	proposed	current	proposed
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>Twilight</b>	<b>Twilight</b>
Resident	\$5.25	\$5.50	\$10.50	\$11.00	\$6.00	\$6.30
Guest	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Summer Rates	current	proposed	current	proposed	current	proposed
<b>Executive</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>9 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>18 Hole</b>	<b>Twilight</b>	<b>Twilight</b>
Resident	\$4.25	\$4.50	\$8.50	\$9.00	\$5.00	\$5.25
Guest	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$8.00	\$8.00
per round fee	\$0		\$0			

## ANNUAL PREPAID GREEN FEE PERMIT

	current	proposed
All courses (no per round fee)	\$1130.00	\$1185.00
All Courses (plus per round fee Nov. 1 – June 30)	\$590.00	\$620.00
All Executive Courses (no per round fee)	\$1000.00	\$1050.00
All (three) Executive Courses (plus per round fee Nov. 1 – June 30)	\$460.00	\$483.00

SOURCE: RECREATION CENTERS OF SUN CITY

CHARLES WADE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

time gathering trash along the roadways and cleaning out the canals of the community, Smith explained.

"We keep the roadways ... neat and clean," he said.

They also pick oranges and nurture the more than 3,000 trees in the community, he said.

Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or ereep@aztrib.com.

See RCSC, A5





Photo by Lindsey Remington/Independent Newspapers

North Golf Course in Sun City is closed for improvements until Oct. 6.

# TOUGH CHOICES

## Drought affects course decisions

By Lindsey Remington  
Independent Newspapers

North Golf Course in Sun City will be closed longer than previously anticipated for improvements to the course's irrigation system and greens.

The course, which has been closed since June 2 for installation of new sprinkler heads and a new computerized control system, earlier was expected to reopen in early August, but is now scheduled to reopen Oct. 6, said John Snyder director of golf.

The delay will allow for an improved variety of bermuda grass to be planted this summer, he said.

"We want to let it set and get a good base before people start driving on it," he said.

Every year, golf directors grapple with choices regarding how much overseeding to do on courses to keep them green. With recent drought condition, never have the choices been more difficult than they are this summer, with record-breaking temperatures hitting the area as well.

One of the reasons for the improvements at North Golf Course is the drought over

the last two years, Mr. Snyder said. The new sprinkler heads are more efficient so that not as much water is used, and the control system, which, among other things, controls how much water is distributed through the heads for each area of the course, is more advanced, he said.

He said that the city's other courses, except for South, had also received improvements to their irrigation systems.

"Everybody (residents) seems thrilled to death and excited that we're making these improvements," he said.

### SCW cuts back

In response to the drought, Sun City West has decided not to fully overseed all seven of its golf courses this year, said Cher Petersen chairwoman of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West Golf Committee.

Trail Ridge, Grandview and Pebblebrook golf courses will be completely overseeded, but only the par-four holes, tees and putting greens will be overseeded at Deer Valley, Echo Mesa, Desert Trails and Stardust.

"We're cutting back on the

areas we're overseeding due to the drought conditions," she said.

The city saved \$50,000 this year by not fully overseeding all the courses, she said.

The cost for the year for labor and seed is estimated at \$140,000.

Ms. Petersen added that as part of a five-year plan, the committee intends to install zeroscape on its courses, which would replace the grass on the non-playable areas of the courses with desert landscape, so that no water is necessary.

She said a few areas on Echo Canyon golf course have the new landscape.

Deer Valley, Desert Trails, Stardust and Trail Ridge will be closed Sept. 29 to Oct. 20 for overseeding and Echo Mesa, Grandview and Pebblebrook will be closed Oct. 20 to Nov. 9.

### SCG upgrades

Some Sun City Grand courses' irrigation systems are being updated in response to drought conditions, said Ken Davidson, director of golf operations.

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# Courses

Continued From Page 1

Improvements include relocating sprinkler heads, replacing sprinkler head nozzles, changing the spray range of the nozzles and upgrading the computer system for maximum efficiency.

"We're spending a lot of time on water management," he said. "We want to use the bare minimum that the turf requires."

However, Sun City Grand's four golf courses will be overseeded the same as last year, Mr. Davidson said.

"We shop around every year for a good price on good quality blends of grass seed," he said.

Granite Falls North and Cimarron will be closed for overseeding from Sept. 15 to Oct. 9. Granite Falls South and Desert Springs will be closed from Oct. 13 to Nov. 6.

The price of the winter rye grass seed increased from about 50 cents per pound to 66 cents a pound



Photo by Lindsey Remington/Independent Newspapers

**Riverview Golf Course in Sun City will be closed Oct. 9 to Oct. 27 for overseeding, to help it remain lush and green.**

this year from last year, he said. Each course needs about 60,000 lbs. of seed, which will cost about \$158,400 this year.

Sun City Grand golf courses get their water from the Maricopa Irrigation District, which is a combination of water from the canal system and groundwater

from wells.

Sun City estimated it would spend \$103,699 for winter rye grass seed this year.

Due to the immaturity of the new grass at the North Golf Course, the fairways there will not be overseeded with rye grass this fall, said Mr. Snyder. Some of the

common bermuda grass will still exist on the fairways.

Lakes West, Willowbrook, and Riverview golf courses in Sun City will be closed for overseeding from Sept. 15 through Oct. 6, and Quail Run, Willowcreek, Lakes West, and South will be closed from Oct. 9 through Oct. 27.



# Pocket caddie gives hi-tech tips to golfers

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bill Loslo has never had a gift quite like this.

His new, personal electronic golf caddie gives him detailed information to help improve his golf game, such as distances between Loslo and the hole, locations of sand traps and water hazards on the course, and dot-plotted mini-maps of the green.

The SkyGolf Global Positioning System made an impact on Loslo's golf game last week as he began using it.

"It makes a big difference in how you play the game," Loslo said. "It does so many things. It's really something."

Sun City golfers looking to improve their game may consider buying one of the GPS hand-held devices, now available at the Riverview Golf Course Pro Shop. The courses just acquired the devices last

week.

The hand-held GPS device, which is the size of a small cellular phone, gives the distance in yards between where the golfer stands and a number of set points on the hole.

Sun City golf director John Snyder stood at Riverview's first hole Thursday morning, GPS in hand, demonstrating how the model worked.

Within minutes, the device had connected to its GPS satellite and reported the number of yards between Snyder and the hole. A mini-graph of the green popped up, with three distances numerically displayed.

"We're 410 yards from the green," he said.

Snyder made a quick adjustment, and the numbers appeared larger, making them easier to read for those with poor eyesight.

The GPS tells the handicap

**See TRACK, A5**



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Snyder, director of golf operations for the Recreation Centers of Sun City, holds the SkyGolf Global Positioning System receiver that displays information about the first hole at Riverview Golf Course in Sun City.

OVER



## From A1

and par of the hole and measurements over hills, trees and other obstructions.

"It tells you how far the bunker on the right side of the green is," Snyder said.

The electronic caddie gives golfers something of an advantage on Sun City courses because there are not a lot of markings on the course, Snyder said. Distances from the front, side and back of the course are measured, "so you can choose your club a little bit better," he said.

The golf division acquired 10 of the GPS devices at no cost to the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Snyder said. Residents can buy the devices at the Riverview Pro Shop through SkyGolf GPS

for \$325. In addition, golfers must subscribe to the company's satellite service annually. For \$29.95 the golfer can use the GPS on any course in Arizona that uses the SkyGolf system. For \$49.95, it can be used on any course in the nation that's tied in with SkyGolf. Nationally, there are more than 3,000 courses equipped for GPS use.

Loslo's wife, Roxanne, bought the SkyGolf GPS for her husband as a combined birthday, Christmas and Father's Day gift, he said.

"I was really kind of surprised," he said.

Whereas Loslo used to rely on the course markings for gauging which club to use, now he can use the GPS.

"It actually made a difference in the club I used," he said. "It was a better club selection than what I was

supposed to be using."

The GPS allows Loslo to mark his ball and track distances he has hit the ball. "So it tells you what you did," he said.

Loslo said the GPS does not do miracles for the golfer.

"It doesn't hit the ball for you," he joked.

It does make a difference in Loslo's game, however.

The hand-held device plots a small map of where water is standing on the course, and will tell a golfer, for example, it is 150 yards to the left of the hole, so the golfer must account for 200 yards to clear it.

Traditionally, caddies would look up the distances for golfers, Loslo said.

"The everyday golfer doesn't have one of those, but this GPS does it for you," he said.

SkyGolf GPS has sold about 500 units in Arizona this year, and more than 10,000 nationally, said Dan Krones, sales director for Arizona.

"We have 150 golf courses that have been enabled for use in Arizona," he said.

The flexibility of the product has led to its popularity among retirees, Krones said. This may be because retirees travel more frequently, and the GPS is small and portable, and can be used throughout the country.

However, they are prohibited for use in tournaments.

"In a way, that sort of shows how good it is," said Jeff Haub, a Riverview Pro Shop employee.

*Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or at ereep@aztrib.com.*



# Sun City courses to get GPS system

By Chris Seggerman  
Independent Newspapers

A new technology is coming to Sun City Recreation Center golf courses — the optional use of a global positioning satellite system for golfers at no cost to the RCSC, governing board member Jim Frederick announced last week.

"We will have far fewer lost golfers out there," joked board member Norm Dickson at the June 26 board meeting.

The RCSC is registering its courses with a company called SkyGolf to become part of an Internet-based directory of what are being called Skycourses.

SkyGolf sells specialized global positioning satellite devices designed for golfers. Those wishing to avail themselves of the GPS technology

would need to purchase such a device.

Like a GPS used for navigation, the device taps into satellites used to determine distance. However, the SkyGolf device features distances and calculations specifically useful to golfers.

"It's basically a yardage marker," Mr. Frederick said.

Mr. Frederick said he had seen the device in Florida mounted on golf carts several years ago, but development of the hand-held version is fairly recent. He tried the hand-held system out recently.

"When you're on the tee, it tells you how far to go," Mr. Frederick said, "how many yards you are from a trap, how many yards you have to go away from a trap."

"It even has a clock," he added.

**See Golf — Page 7**

## Golf

Continued From Page 1

He said SkyGolf had contacted RCSC about entering the courses into their system.

The company's website, [www.skygolfgps.com](http://www.skygolfgps.com), has a list of sites registered as SkyCourses, which have specific target locations recorded for use in playing a round of golf with the system.

Measurements are accurate within one to three yards, depending on the strength of the GPS satellite signal.

The devices also keep track of scoring and statistics, allowing golfers to list each shot, to help determine the strengths and weaknesses of their game.

All of the Sun City locations listed on the sight also come with the 'IntelliGreen' service, which means the yardage at various locations on the courses have been measured by professionals.

Course information may also be downloaded into personal digital assistants such as Palm Pilots, if they have the correct hardware.

The SkyGolf SG2 Digital

Caddie, as well as the appropriate cables for computer hookup and charging, costs \$395 on the company's website. Attachments and upgrades to PDAs can cost upwards of \$199.

A subscription to the Web site service, which allows golfers access to information on all registered golf courses in Arizona, costs \$29.95 per year. The cost for all registered courses in the U.S. is \$49.95 per year.

Golfers also may manually enter information on a course not listed with the service into the device.



# SC courses get caddies

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Caddies are making a comeback — in Sun City.

Golfers will have an opportunity to purchase a personal digital caddie, SkyGolf GPS, or Global Positioning System, through the Recreation Centers of Sun City.

At Thursday morning's board meeting, the last until September, golf committee Chairman Jim Frederick explained that the GPS tracks distances from where the golfer stands to the hole or a set target on the hole. The system tells the golfer exact distances in yards through a satellite system that sends information to a hand-held device smaller than a cell phone.

The golf centers will acquire the devices and then sell them to individual golfers, so it costs the RCSC board nothing, Frederick said. The devices cost approximately \$325 apiece. Additionally, the golfer must subscribe to the company's satellite service annually. For \$29.95 a year, the golfer can use the system on any course in Arizona on the SkyGolf system; for \$49.95, the golfer can use it on SkyGolf courses in the United States. All eight Sun City courses are set up for the system, said John Snyder, RCSC golf director.

**See RCSC, A3**

## From A1

The devices cannot be used in tournaments, Frederick said.

The courses have ordered 10 of the systems, and may order more if there is a demand, Frederick said. The devices should arrive in about two weeks.

Brochures will be available in each of the pro shops, Snyder said. The devices will be sold in the Riverview pro shop.

In other RCSC board news: ● In her report, President Dorothy Hirtzel said she was aware of solicitation of funds and distribution of solicitation fliers by a member occurring at the June 16 formal members/directors exchange at the Social Hall at Lakeview Recreation Center.

According to board policy No. 11, solicitation of funds on centers property by any group other than the RCSC is prohibited, she said.

"This board will not be put in a liability situation, which we would be if we allowed solicitation on RCSC property," she said.

● In his report on the budget, Treasurer Bud Hantke said golf is down for the first time this year, with a deficit of \$48,109. However, golf is still up \$278,656 over last year to date, at \$763,694. Food service experienced a deficit of \$17,353 but was up approximately \$40,000 for the year-to-date over last

year. The 2002 year-to-date deficit was about \$76,000; so far in 2003, the deficit was \$36,251.

Journal entries recording investment income during the month of May were in error, Hantke said. "The financial officer is correcting those errors and they will be reported at a future date," he said.

● Historical figure "Betsy Ross" made a special appearance at the meeting — portrayed by Sun City resident Betty Mills of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Phoenix chapter.

Mills explained the educational purpose of the foundation, adding that the local chapter presents 24 "Living History" programs to local schools and organizations.

Ross, who is credited with creating the first United States flag, sewed the first flag at age 24. Mills acted out the character of Ross and explained flag-flying protocol.

The Freedoms Foundation sends teachers on educational trips to historical sites, and promotes history programs in local schools. She said the local chapter is working closely with Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne to implement teaching classic literature and the foundations of democracy in schools.

"If we don't teach it, they won't learn it. If they don't learn it, they won't defend it," she said.

● Secretary Jim Kuchler,



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

chair of the bids committee, said the committee had reviewed and approved bids on two projects. The first was for approximately \$5,800 for carpeting the walls of the Sundial Auditorium, scheduled to be completed in July.

The second bid was for \$6,300 to replace the cooler by the exercise room in Sundial center. "It's an old cooler," Kuchler said. The existing cooler can no longer keep pace with the heat generated by new exercise machines.

● Repair and resurfacing of the Bell parking lot should be completed in early August, at an approximate cost of \$26,000, Kuchler said.

● Golf has seen an increase in rounds — up about 1,300 rounds in May from the same period last year, Fredericks said.

● Director Gayle Schmidt of the clubs committee said she is overseeing the "clean-up" of board policy No. 12. Currently the policy applies evenly to all clubs but needs to be updated, as some rules are out of date, she said. Also, the diversity of clubs means some guidelines are too broad to apply to all, she said. Schmidt is also reviewing the RCSC food service to examine where the service is losing money at its two restaurants, five snack shops and catering service.

● Because of numerous requests from members, a Pilates class will be offered at Sundial center, said Director Tom Whiston. The class will begin on July 8 and "has already been filled," he said. If more requests come in, more classes may be added.

● New indoor pickleball courts have been put in Mountain View Auditorium. Former RCSC board member and pickle ball enthusiast Chuck Chadbourne will teach classes at 1 p.m. Mondays and 6 p.m. Tuesdays on the courts.

Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or at ereep@aztrib.com.

Betty Mills of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, as Betsy Ross, speaks about the American flag at the last regular board meeting of the Recreation Centers of Sun City for the summer at Sundial Auditorium Thursday.



# RCSC golf-course covenants foment discord

**KATY O'GRADY**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Recreation Centers of Sun City directors and members agree they'd like to see the community's golf courses remain golf courses.

They just can't agree on verbiage to accomplish that.

The board on Monday heard concerns from a few residents upset with a proposal to revoke restrictive covenants drafted by Del Webb for seven of the community's eight golf courses.

The covenants, with the exception of those for Quail Run, start expiring in August and will automatically renew if the board doesn't act. Quail Run's expired in October 1999.

Board members have proposed replacing the covenants with new ones that will leave future boards with more discretion should the need arise. The new ones would encompass Quail Run.

Specifically, the board is concerned with a current provision in Webb's restrictions allowing a single homeowner with a golf-course lot to sue the board if he or she doesn't like the way the courses are

maintained.

"Why should all the other 42,000 people be held hostage by one who doesn't like something," said Director Jim Kuchler.

Board members said their intention is to maintain the golf courses as they have been, but they do not want to bind future boards to the same actions, particularly if there is a water shortage.

"We don't know what the future's going to bring. We anticipate there's going to be some problems that future boards — not us, but future boards — are going to have to deal with," Kuchler said.

If the board doesn't deal with the expiring covenants, they renew for periods of 10 years each.

A specific problem the board mentioned was drought. If the state restricted Sun City's water use and a future board decided to allow one course to go dry, the current board doesn't want one homeowner to have the ability to file an injunction under the covenants. Homeowners could still try to sue under state laws.

Most of the handful of residents who spoke at Monday's exchange

between directors and members weren't satisfied with the board's justification.

"Most people don't live on golf courses, and in fact, most residents don't play golf," said resident Richard Parry. "If you went by majority rule, you'd get rid of the courses altogether."

Kuchler said keeping the provision in that allows one homeowner to sue would in essence be allowing that person to force the rest of the community to subsidize his or her golf-course living by paying higher water rates, should the drought scenario arise.

"When I bought my property, it was with the assumption that there would always be a golf course behind me, and I believe that's in the agreement for my property," Parry said.

Parry said if the board approves its proposed 2003 Declaration of Restrictions, it's tantamount to an "arbitrary and capricious act that would (reduce) my property values without any vote."

Frequent board critic Anne Stewart, in an angry tirade threatened a possible recall, class-action lawsuit

and injunction if the board approved the new restrictions.

"If we could get back to a rational discussion of the issues ... the board is made up of people who live in Sun City," said Director Norm Dickson. "It is not an occupying army."

Stewart later returned to the microphone, saying, "I've calmed down," and requested a copy of the current restrictions.

Others were concerned the board waited until the winter visitors left to bring up this divisive issue.

"This seems like another stealth move to me," said Harry Cook. "You knew this was coming up. You knew the covenants were up for review ... but you chose to do it either consciously or subconsciously when the Snowbirds left. This kind of thing just rattles me to no end."

"If you're going to do some kind of radical change to the way we live here, let the bulk of us be here. Frankly, this stinks."

Kuchler pointed out that three board members were installed in January, and it took a while for all the directors to read and understand the restrictions. They also requested a legal opinion and held

committee meetings to discuss the matter — all of which took time.

"This just ended recently," he said. "We did not try to hide this from people. We had to come up to speed first."

Resident Nancy Nieman said she's lived in Sun City since 1987 and believes the community could be a lot further along in addressing water issues if residents would trust their elected officials more.

"We've had a lot of problems brought on by our own Sun City people," she said. "We hold ourselves down."

Nieman requested the board consider adding a provision that no matter what happens to the golf courses, the land remain as some kind of open space with grass or rock landscaping, not to be developed.

Kuchler said the decision isn't finalized and residents' comments are welcome. In addition, he invited residents to offer suggestions for revisions to the current restrictions if they don't like the idea of a total overhaul.

Katy O'Grady can be reached at 876-2514 or kogrady@aztrib.com.

OVER





JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bob Lawson, a Grandview golf marshal who will lose his job July 1 when marshals are discontinued, hits balls on the driving range Monday.



# Riverview lives up to reputation

MARC BUCKHOUT  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After beating us so soundly at Lakes West last week, Rich Ott decided that to keep things interesting he'd sit out the fourth stop on the Triple Bogeys tour.

After all, if he had continued to improve at his rate during the first three rounds he would have posted a score somewhere in the 90s Thursday:

Once we found out that Lakes East, our planned fourth stop on the Sun City tour, was closed in order to aerate the greens Michael Melissa and I decided to give Riverview (16401 Del Webb Blvd.) a shot this week.

To complete our group Melissa and I added Patrick O'Grady, the editor for Surprise Today and the Northwest Valley News, our two weekly publications.

He gave us a scouting report on his game.

"I hit it long, but I don't know where it's going most of the time," he said.

## RIVERVIEW SCORECARD

Patrick O'Grady	61-47	-108
Marc Buckhout	74-58	-132
Michael Melissa	70-67	-137

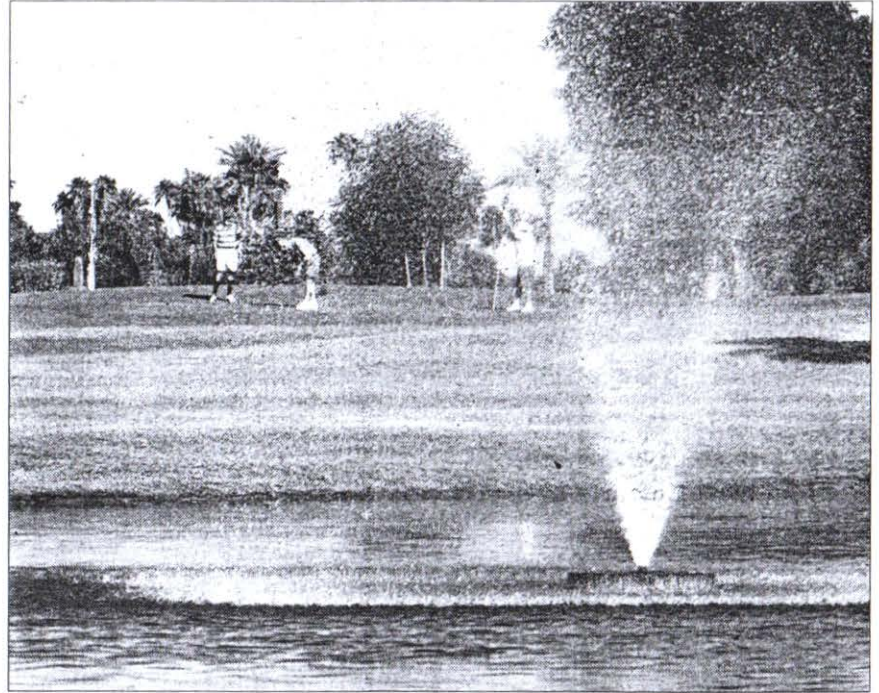
On Thursday we arrived on the first tee of the 6,053-yard par-72 course on a cool, crisp 108 degree Arizona day. Heading into the round I had been told by more people than I can count that Riverview, which opened in November 1970, is the toughest course in Sun City especially when it comes to the greens.

Ralph Lutz, a starter at Riverview for the past 17 years, explained the importance of a good approach shot into Riverview's undulating greens.

"You better play them below the pin otherwise your second putt will be longer than your first," he said.

Unfortunately with our games, where we hit the ball on the green is the least of our concern. Simply hitting the green is a victory.

If nothing else Melissa and I made O'Grady a little uneasy at the



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Marc Buckhout of the Triple Bogeys found the water on several occasions at Riverview Thursday. Guest Triple Bogey member Patrick O'Grady dubbed the lake on No. 5, Buckhout Memorial Lake after Buckhout hit five balls into it. More accomplished golfers putt out in this 2002 file photo.

**See Triple Bogeys sink, B2**

OVER



## From B1

beginning of our round. The two of us smashed our drives down the middle of the fairway and long while he duffed his first attempt barely beyond the ladies tee and then hit his second into the driving range.

"Don't worry, those will be the two best shots we'll hit all day," I said encouragingly to our newest Triple Bogey.

Little did I know how prophetic that statement would be.

I try to set realistic goals on the golf course. For novices like myself 100 is the main milestone. Unfortunately finding my way into the 90s seems highly unlikely. In Sun City the top golfers are able to shoot their age. At 25 the only way I see myself shooting my age is if I can maintain my current game for the next 100 years.

So my goal is to someday shoot the temperature. And I live in the perfect locale to do it. Instead of hibernating when the mercury rises into the triple digits, I think of it as an opportunity.

Unfortunately on Thursday it would have taken a record setting heat wave for me to reach my goal. Through the first three rounds of our Sun City tour I had recorded exactly one double digit hole. On Thursday though I had three of them on the first six holes.

On what Melissa agreed was the toughest nine hole stretch we've played to this point, our scores ballooned to obscene levels.

While O'Grady turned in, what for Triple Bogey standards is, a respectable 61 for the first nine holes Melissa made the turn at 70 while I found myself in last at 74.

My unraveling came mainly on two holes. On the par-4, 372-yard fifth hole my second shot was a low liner that rolled into the lake on the right side of the fairway. Unfazed, I was counting on hitting my drop shot from 100 yards out on the green and two putting for a double bogey six.

Looking back on it, why I had that kind of confidence is beyond me. On my first attempt over the water I topped the ball with barely

enough steam to roll into the water again. I retrieved it from the lake dropped it down and in case Melissa and O'Grady had missed it the first time did pretty much the exact same thing, hitting into the lake a third time.

At that point I asked Melissa to run me over with the golf cart if I hit another ball in the water.

On my fourth attempt I hit my shot off the toe of the club into the lake for the fourth time causing O'Grady to dub it Buckhout Memorial Lake.

Apparently the tire tracks across my back brought good luck as my fifth attempt landed on the fringe of the green. From there I two-putted for a 14.

My drive on No. 6 added insult to injury. For some reason I added a new problem to my arsenal Thursday, a nasty habit of hitting shots off the heel of my club, resulting in ugly low liners pretty much straight left. This one careened off a wall protecting the homes on the left side of the fairway and ricocheted across the fairway into the lake yet again. I ended that hole with an 11

for an amazing two hole total of 25, or 69 percent of what my total for the first nine should have been.

Greg Bailey, the superintendent at Riverview who's crew is working on reshaping the greens and tees along the course and is aerating the rough at Riverview this summer, said he does his best to remember the good shots he hits during a round.

"I used to get mad all the time when I was playing, but I don't play often enough to take it seriously," he said. "I just think about my good shots during a round. As long as you have fun that's all that matters."

Amen.

Still it was hard to muster much enthusiasm when I putted in from off the green on No. 8 for a triple bogey. Just moments later Melissa chipped in from 42 feet out for a double bogey six.

Heading into the final nine holes with a nine stroke lead O'Grady had little to worry about.

While he had warned us he was a long hitter, it was demoralizing to watch his

four iron shots off the tee be equal or better than my 3-wood efforts. And as far as the wildness which he had spoken of, we rarely saw it. His short game wasn't the greatest, though Melissa and myself found ourselves hopelessly outclassed.

Fortunately the backside at Riverview proved more forgiving.

On No. 11 both O'Grady and Melissa carded their first pars of the day on the 311-yard par 4. After sliding in a quick downhill 12-footer for his first par of the Sun City tour Melissa broke into his best imitation of Chi Chi Rodriguez, executing the sabre dance to near perfection.

At that point I had fallen behind Melissa by seven strokes and was pretty much resigned to finishing last.

For whatever reason my problem heeling shots left me on the backside though and my scores came back down to acceptable levels. I exchanged 10, 14 and 11 for a bunch of 7s, 5s and one magical par.

When Melissa played hopscotch with the green on No. 15 and three putted for a 12, I had tied him heading into

the final three holes.

After O'Grady hit what we deemed the shot of the day, on the 179-yard par-3 16th, landing his drive just short of the flag before rolling 10 feet past, I hit a line drive 5-wood that sizzled over the green. My chip attempt from behind the green rolled just off the front edge, however I nailed an 16 footer from off the green for my first par of the day. O'Grady also recorded a par, however Melissa triple bogeyed to give me a three stroke lead with two to play.

On No. 17 I gave back one of those strokes to Melissa, though with a bogey five on the final hole I was able to hold on for second place.

O'Grady completed a back nine 47 with a 38-foot putt from the fringe for a par on No. 18 to accomplish my dream of recording a 108, on a 108 degree day.

Clearly he's too good to be a Triple Bogey. In fact his score puts him in the elite class of being a Double Bogey. As for myself I either need to look into some lessons or find a job in Death Valley.



# Board reviews golf lot deeds

**SUN CITY:**  
RCSC renews commitment to golf courses

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City board has drafted a new declaration on golf course deed restrictions, updating its policy on the use and maintenance of the golf courses.

The new draft restrictive covenant will maintain RCSC's commitment to use the courses only as golf courses, said RCSC Secretary Jim Kuchler, who is overseeing the project. At the same time, it removes a provision under current restrictions that allows individual homeowners — particularly those who own property on the courses — to bring legal action against RCSC regarding the golf courses.

The proposed 2003 Declaration of Restrictions will be considered by members in the next month, and a vote to adopt it will be taken at the next regular board meeting on June 26, said RCSC Secretary Jim Kuchler.

The board is inviting members to comment on the issue in the next two directors'/members exchanges.

Del E. Webb Development Corporation (DEVCO) transferred ownership of the eight Sun City golf courses to RCSC with restrictive covenants and a transfer agreement attached, according to Kuchler.

The covenants stipulated what the courses were to be used for.

"The restrictive covenant basically says the golf

From A1

courses are to be used as golf courses only," Kuchler said.

RCSC is looking to the future, and trying to give future boards the "maximum flexibility" to address challenges, he said.

A potential challenge the board foresees is the shortage of water in Arizona, he said. In a hypothetical scenario, Kuchler said it is possible that a state agency controlling water allocation could restrict water allocation to RCSC. If RCSC use more water than allowed, it could be charged significantly higher rates for that water, in the scenario.

If this type of situation occurred, the RCSC board might see fit to restrict water usage on one of the courses, Kuchler explained.

In the hypothetical case, a homeowner on the course could take legal action against the RCSC board, under the current provisions of the restrictive covenants.

"The new covenants would

Courses — had initial 30-year periods of duration, according to an initial Declaration of Restrictions established on Aug. 2, 1973.

The RCSC board and its Legal Affairs Committee have been reviewing the documents over the past several months and met most recently with the board's attorney, James Hinton, on May 6 to discuss the situation, Kuchler said.

"It's taken us months to go through this with our attorney," he said.

Hinton recommended the board revoke all existing restrictive covenants on the golf courses and replace them with new covenants.

"We want to affirm our commitment to the golf courses, that our courses will remain golf courses in the future," Kuchler said.

The draft declaration states that "the real property shall be used for the operation of a golf course, with facilities and improvements related thereto, and for well sites, underground utilities, drainage and for similar

not include that provision," Kuchler said. "By not including that provision, it puts the governance into the hands of all the recreation centers members, not just in the hands of one group," he said.

Instead, "all the members would exercise that power, through their election of, and ability to recall, board members," he said.

The new covenant allows "future boards of directors the maximum flexibility to address unknown but expected challenges to managing the golf courses in a fiscally responsible manner for the best interest of all RCSC members," according to information from the board.

Based on the provisions of the covenants, the RCSC board has until July 31 to take action to revoke, amend or leave the current restrictive covenants unchanged for five of the courses. If left unchanged, the current restrictive covenants will continue for the next 10 years.

The five courses — River-view, Lakes East and West, and South and North Golf

purposes."

Two other courses — Willowcreek and Willowbrook — had varying periods of restriction, including 30-year and 18-year periods, according to established Declarations of Restrictions in 1974 and 1986. The review period for those covenants will occur in three separate months in 2004.

Quail Run Golf Course was transferred to RCSC with deed restrictions in 1979, with a 20-year duration period, according to RCSC information. The covenant expired in 1999 with no provision for extension, Kuchler said. RCSC has continued to maintain the course in spite of the expiration, he said.

Members are urged to attend upcoming members'/directors exchanges to hear discussion of the issue and voice their opinions. Dates for the next members'/directors exchanges are at 9 a.m. on June 2 and June 9, in the Board Room at Lakeview Recreation Center.

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MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Snyder, director of golf operations, and Jim Frederick of the Sun City Recreation Center's board talk about the improvements to be made at the Willowcreek Golf Course, including a new water pumping station.

## Willowcreek pumps funds, buys new station

**WATER:** Golf course to replace dying system with \$150,000 station

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The green turf is well-watered and groomed on Willowcreek Golf Course.

"This is the pump station," Snyder said, pointing to a system of tanks and pumps, locked behind red wooden doors. The station pumps water from the lake and distributes it onto the golf course through an irrigation system.

The antiquated water-pump station is about to be replaced with a new, prefabricated unit costing approximately \$150,000, said Jim Frederick of the Recreation Centers of Sun City board. The board unanimously approved funding for the project at its April regular meeting.

There are 146 acres of turf irrigated by the current system, Snyder said, pointing to the fairway.

The current pump station, which was installed in 1973, consists of a 5,000-gallon pressure tank that houses a steel liner that has rusted, and water has begun to leak out, Snyder explained.

"Once that begins to rust through, it leaks water out of the tank and pretty much renders it useless," he said.

Water is pumped from the lake through a pipe, into the rusted tanks that contain three pumps. Water is drawn through the pumps up through shafts; it is then transferred out onto the course.

The new system will include installation of a concrete wet well, 19-feet deep, which will house four pumps, Snyder said. A vertical shaft runs upward from each pump, sending water through a new filter, and through pipes onto the course, he explained. The water filter sifts out rocks, dirt, debris, snails and clams.

Each pump has a control panel called a variable frequency drive, a computer-controlled device regulating the pressure and flow of water. There are 120 pounds of pressure put on the pipes pumping water onto the course, Snyder said.

To illustrate the current system's inefficiency, Snyder used an analogy. When the current pump system is turned on, it operates full-force, and when flow needs to be reduced in one area, it is difficult and must be done manually, he said. This is similar to driving a car at 130 miles an hour, keeping your foot on the gas pedal, then braking at the same time to slow the car to 75. It is inefficient and wastes energy, Snyder said.

Willowcreek

superintendent Justin Ruiz often goes to the course at night to make the manual adjustments, Snyder said.

The new system will operate more like a car on the freeway set on cruise control at 65, Snyder said. If you drive up- or downhill, the car adjusts its speed and stays at the same speed.

"It stays at 65, and you never have to put your foot on the brake," Snyder said. Similarly, the computerized water-pump station will make adjustments for flow pressure

OVER



and stay constant, at the same time, conserving water and energy.

Because it is computerized, adjustments will be made from the office, Snyder said. Ruiz sets up the amount of time and amount of water he deems appropriate on the course, and the computer builds the program around his settings. For example, if there are dry patches on the course, Ruiz can set the computer system for that.

The system is also ready for CAP water use, Snyder said.

When the new water-pump station is installed, a special video camera will record the condition of the rusted aluminium tanks, Snyder said. Riverview Golf Course had a well pump replaced two months ago, and a similar camera was sent down 1,000 feet into the ground to record conditions.

Using such a camera will give directors an idea of future needs at other courses, including Willowbrook, which will likely be replaced next.

"By doing that, we'll know what we're looking at with Willowbrook," Snyder said.

The RCSC board estimates it will need to replace all the water-pump stations eventually, probably at a rate of two a year, Frederick said. Cost of replacing the other stations is estimated at \$70,000 each, he said.

"This one is the most expensive," Frederick said. The Willowcreek station requires a new wet well; the other stations already have them, Snyder said.

The estimated savings on electricity by replacing the pump stations are 10 to 15 percent at each station, he said.

"I think, for the most part, the greens committee is pretty happy with it," Snyder said.

Currently there are bids out to several contractors to build the new station, Snyder said.

"The bids are supposed to be back to us on May 16," he said. "As soon as we award the contract to the successful bidder, they will begin construction of the pump station."

It will take six to eight weeks to build, and eight to 10 days to install, Snyder said.

*Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or at ereep@aztrib.com*



# News-Sun staffers prepare for tour of Sun City golf courses

**MARC BUCKHOUT**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

As the summer approaches and the whirlwind of Sun City golf tournaments have drawn to a close, we at the Daily News-Sun are switching gears.

After covering a host of events during the big run of tournaments from January to April — including the Sun City Men's and Women's Championships, the Men's and Women's Octogenarian Tournaments and the Daily News-Sun Cities Classic — we in the newsroom want to experience the courses first hand.

Fellow sports reporter Rich Ott and I have covered these events for a number of years. I even followed around the last group at Riverview during the final round of the 2000 Sun City Men's Championship event, but neither Ott nor I have experienced any of the courses as players.

Beginning May 1 the eight Sun City golf courses opened themselves to non-residents with rates of \$10 after twilight, which is 3 p.m. in May and 10:45 a.m. beginning in June.

Since the price is right the two of us decided that we will dedicate Thursday afternoons, the one day we escape the office before dark, to playing Sun City's eight courses this summer. It might get a little toasty come June and July, though for the sake of our readers we figure it's best only to unleash our brand of golf when the courses are all but deserted.

Along with giving a little history on the courses, we'll present to you our observations on the lay of the land, as well as our travails in navi-

## Our Sun City Tour

- North, 12650 N. 107th Ave.
- South, 11000 N. 103rd Ave.
- Lakes West, 10433 W. Talisman Road
- Lakes East, 10433 W. Talisman Road
- Willowbrook, 10600 N. Boswell Blvd.
- Willowcreek, 10600 N. Boswell Blvd.
- Riverview, 16401 N. Del Webb Blvd.
- Quail Run, 9774 W. Alabama Ave.

gating our way through 18 holes.

While Ott has never played the game of golf and will take his first swing on the first tee Thursday, I have a long but dubious golfing history.

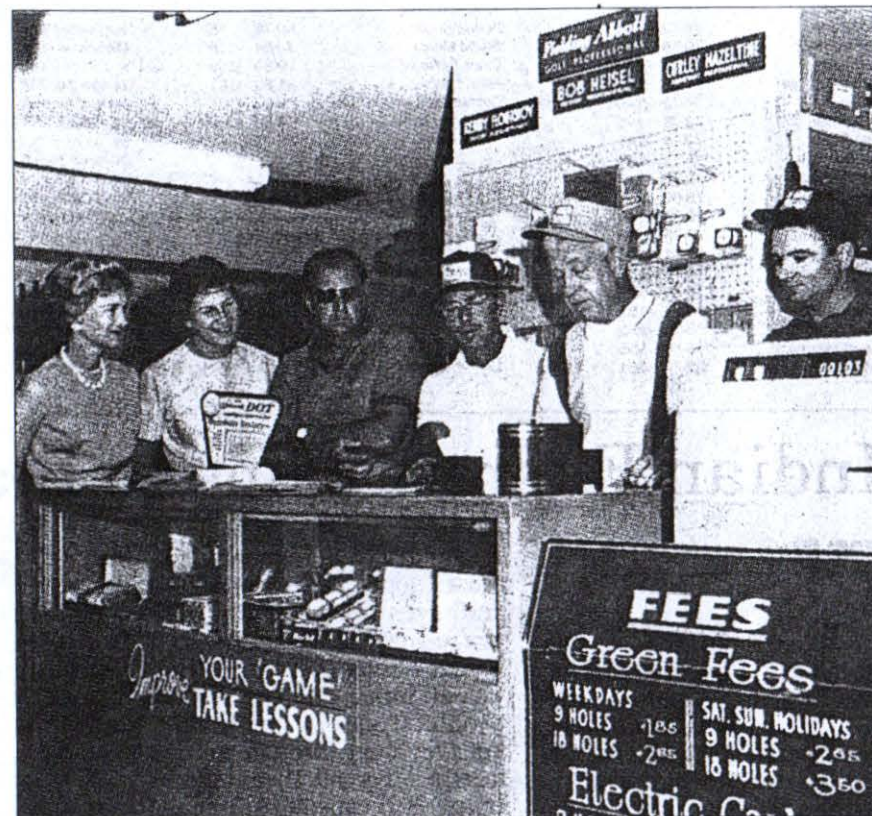
Those that are baseball fans have seen major leaguers foul balls of their legs and feet during games. They've probably never seen a golfer do it though. Unfortunately I've accomplished that feat not once, but twice in my time on the golf course. And yes it does hurt quite a bit, thanks for asking.

Another crowning achievement was falling into a water hazard while attempting to retrieve a golf ball. As embarrassing as those moments were, the top honor goes to the time I hit my drive on the final hole in a lake and had to call it a day when I discovered I was out of golf balls.

Rounding out our threesome will be copy editor Michael Melissa. The fact that he volunteered to golf with someone as talented as myself and a first-timer such as Ott made us feel at ease about his talents, or lack there of.

Melissa was more than willing to offer Ott advice about club selection.

"The one with a seven on it, you use that one for your seventh shot



Courtesy of Sun City Historical Society

Sun City residents inside North Golf Course's pro shop in May, 1963. Notice the green fees were only \$2.65 for 18 holes.

on a hole," he advised.

The only question remaining was where to start our tour. The answer quite naturally is at the beginning. North Golf Course, 12650 N. 107th Ave., was the first golf course in Sun City, opening to play in August of 1960, two years before South became the second course in 1962. That first year Del Webb welcomed Bob Hope to North for a round of golf. In a picture from *Jubilee*, a

book chronicling the first 25 years of Sun City, green fees for 18 holes cost \$2.65 in May of 1963.

For our weekly adventures yours truly we'll attempt to seek out historians for each course, rank the easiest and hardest holes and seek advice to fix our lousy swings.

We hope you'll find these pieces informative, or at the very least, make you feel better about your golf game.

OVER



# THE TRIPLE BOGEYS



Del Webb, right, and Bob Hope take in a round of golf in August of 1960 as Sun City residents look on at North Golf Course.

Courtesy of Sun City Historical Society



# Willowcreek fixes to cost \$150,000

By **Mike Russo**

Independent Newspapers

Spending \$150,000 from the capital preservation budget for improvements at Willowcreek Golf Course was unanimously approved by the Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc. Board of Directors during its April 24 meeting.

The aging pump station at Willowcreek has experienced problems in recent months, according to Jim Frederick, board member.

Improvements include installation of a new pump station, wet wells, new pumps and motors.

"Pump station 2 at Willowcreek is 30 years old," Mr. Frederick explained. It had a 20-year life expectancy, he noted.

"It's way beyond its time," Mr. Frederick said. "We feel we have to replace it at this point."

This was the last pump installed by Del Webb, Mr. Frederick remarked.

"They did it on the cheap," he said. "They did not put in wet wells on the courses, and the pump used steel canisters that could rust through at any time."

Coats Irrigation did an analysis of the pump station at Willowcreek and recommended the improvements, according to Mr. Frederick.

"We heard from Coats this is becoming a safety hazard and has to be done," commented Tom Whiston, board member.

Replacement of the pump will result in a substantial savings on electricity, according to director Jerry Swintek.

"We would save approximately 15 percent," he said.

Bud Hantke, board treasurer, said it was essential to perform the improvements.

"If the pump station were to go down, say this summer, and we hadn't acted on this, it would take six to eight weeks to replace," Mr. Hantke said. "That would wreak havoc on the course's condition. We don't want to lose this course."

Mr. Frederick cautioned the board will also have to keep an eye on the pump station at Willowbrook Golf Course, since it is the same age as Willowcreek's.

During the board's April 21 work session, Mr. Frederick recommended the Willowbrook pump station also be replaced, at a cost of \$150,000.

"Golf is the lifeblood of Sun City and, right now, Willowbrook is in need of a transfusion," Mr. Frederick.

However, Mr. Hantke pointed out the finance and budget committee rejected that idea because there was no proof the

Willowbrook pump station was in as an advanced state of deterioration as Willowcreek.

If the Willowbrook pump should fail, Mr. Hantke said the new Willowcreek pump could be used to provide water to Willowbrook until a new pump could be installed.

Mr. Hantke said the committee would continue to monitor the situation.

In other action:

■ Unanimous approval was given to spend \$15,000 for a heater for the swimming pool at Fairway Recreation Center.

"The heater is more than 40 years old," said James Kuchler, board member. "It is the same age as the heater recently replaced at Lakeview."

The heater's original life expectancy was 17 to 20 years, according to Mr. Kuchler.

"We have gotten our money's worth out of the heater," he added. "It is a preventive action."

■ The board unanimously approved a \$15,000 expenditure to replace the roof on the Willowcreek Golf Course maintenance building.

■ Unanimous approval was granted to purchase a new software program at a cost of \$8,000 to operate the Willowbrook pump station.



April 23, 2003

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

# SC golf courses open to the public

The Recreation Centers of Sun City is inviting the public to play its golf courses for summer play from May 1 through Nov. 1.

Any adult of any age is welcome to try the RCSC's eight golf courses.

Individuals age 8 to 16 must be accompanied by an adult, and children under 8 are not permitted.

RCSC has five regulation courses and three executive courses to choose from.

Reservations may be made in person or by phone, five days in advance, at 7 a.m. for regulation courses and 7:20 a.m. for executive courses.

Those present at course pro shops draw by chance by 6:50 a.m. for regulation courses and 7:20 a.m. for executive courses.

Effective May 1, Sun City residents' daily cash golf fees for play on regulation courses will be \$5.25 for nine holes, \$10.50 for 18 holes and \$6 for twilight.

Sun City residents' daily cash golf fees for play on executive courses will be \$4.25 for nine holes, \$8.50 for 18 holes and \$5 for twilight.

Public daily cash golf fees for play on regulation courses

will be \$8 for nine holes, \$16 for 18 holes and \$10 for twilight.

Public daily cash golf fees for play on executive courses will be \$6.50 for nine holes, \$13 for 18 holes and \$8 for twilight.

The RCSC's regulation courses are:

■ North, 12650 N. 107th Ave. Call 876-3010.

■ South, 11000 N. 103rd Ave. Call 876-3015.

■ Lakes West, 10433 Talisman Rd. Call 876-3020.

■ Riverview, 16401 Del Webb Blvd. Call 876-3025.

■ Willowcreek, 10600 Boswell Blvd. Call 876-3030

The RCSC's executive courses are:

■ Lakes East, 10433 Talisman Rd. Call 876-3023.

■ Willowbrook, 10600 Boswell Blvd. Call 876-3033.

■ Quail Run, 9744 Alabama Ave. Call 876-3035.

Rental sets for those needing clubs are available in course pro shops.

Spikeless golf shoes or tennis shoes are required.

For more information, call 876-3000.





MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Golfers on Willowcreek Golf Course now have a safer way to cross Union Hills Road with a raised median.

# Raised median aids golfers

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A newly completed median on Union Hills Drive is getting the thumbs up from golfers trying to cross the busy road.

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation installed the raised median on the road to aid golfers crossing the road from Willowcreek Golf Course. The road construction came following a suggestion by the Recreation Centers of Sun City last summer to come up with a solution to the golf crossing on Union Hills. All construction efforts were completed Tuesday afternoon.

"It's a raised median, so golfers only have to cross one lane of traffic at a time when going across the road," said John Snyder, RCSC golf operations manager. "There is also a turning lane down the center of Union Hills basically turning the road into a two-lane road rather than basically a four-lane road."

Golfers using Willowcreek Golf Course need to cross Union Hills to get from the 17th to the 18th hole. Always striped as a two-lane road, the width of the travel lanes sometimes turned the street into a

four-lane thoroughfare as increased traffic made its way through the community.

MCDOT's upgrades, however, are intended to make the road safer for golfers, while limiting travel to a sole lane in either direction.

"I think it's great," Snyder said. "The county did a really good job on it, and it is making it safer for the golfers. I think it is going to work out really well."

Golfers on the course Wednesday said they were pleased with the crossing area, but some said a permanent solution might be needed.

"It's working out very fine," said Gordon Smith of Sun City. "I crossed it twice today without any problems. I think that people know this is a crossing now so cars and golfers are more aware."

In addition to making improvements to Union Hills Drive, the county also cut down on the number of places golfers can cross the main road. With the road improvements, all golfers will cross at one section rather than two like before.

"It seems to work well," said Ken Hanson of Sun City. "It used to be a real pain to get across, but now it's

just crossing one lane at a time."

His golf partner Mike Garrett agreed that the crossing is much safer than before, but said he thinks that a stop light somewhere near the crossing will be the best solution.

"More and more people are using (Union Hills) so something has to be done," he said. "I think the median helps, but (crossing problems) will be back to what it was in a couple of months."

Golf crossing has been hindered by high amounts of traffic on Union Hills. The median, similar to those on Del Webb Boulevard separating Lakes East and Lakes West golf courses are expected to ease some of the crossing burden.

A median was thought to help golf traffic crossing the road by allowing golf cars to stop half way across the road rather than having to cross all lanes — with traffic coming in both directions — in one mad dash to the other side.

There are no plans to add a stop light to Union Hills Drive.

The major east-west roads through Sun City, including Union Hills and Bell Road, are facing increased traffic.



# Golf

Continued From Page 1  
Swintek said.

The plan was initiated by a Ventana Lakes resident, according to Mr. Swintek. The Peoria retirement community does not have its own golf course.

The agreement will allow a combined total of up to 20 residents from Ventana Lakes and Paradise RV Park, at least 55 years of age, to purchase annual golf cards for \$2,000 for unlimited play at Sun City courses. Sun City residents pay \$1,130 for the same privilege. Annual trail passes may be purchased by

the Peoria residents for \$250. Sun Citians pay \$160, Mr. Swintek noted.

"They can purchase an annual pass only, no daily fees will be allowed," Mr. Swintek said.

The non-residents will not be given priority for tee times, Mr. Swintek noted.

"Reservations for tee times have not been worked out yet," Mr. Swintek said. "Our residents have five-day advanced tee times. Their's would be somewhat less than that."

Mr. Swintek said he had no idea how many Ventana Lakes residents would be interested in golfing on Sun City courses.

The Rec Centers is hoping the possible infusion of new golfers will generate needed golfing revenues.

Total golf rounds have dropped precipitously over the last five years, noted John Schneider, RCSC director of golf operations.

Total rounds played through September 2002 amounted to 285,474, down 16.64 percent from September 1997, when rounds totaled 342,442, according to Mr. Schneider.

While the RCSC Board thought it was worthwhile to pursue the experiment, Anne Randall Stewart, who earlier this year spearheaded an unsuccessful attempt to

## Ventana Lakes residents to use Sun City courses Play limited to 20 people

By **Mike Russo**  
Independent Newspapers

In an effort to boost sagging golf revenues, the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc. Board of Directors has agreed to allow a limited number of Ventana Lakes and Paradise RV Park residents to play Sun City courses.

"We have approved allowing a maximum of 20 people

to purchase annual golf cards to play on our courses," said RCSC Board President Jerry Swintek. The decision was made during the board's Dec. 9 formal study session. "It is was approved as a one-year trial," Mr. Swintek said. It was effective immediately.

"In no way will this affect any of our players," Mr.

See **Golf** — Page 7

recall the entire board, was opposed.

"That goes against Del Webb's principles (allowing outsiders in to play Sun City courses)," she said.

"They (the board) would be enhancing the property values of neighboring communities," Mrs. Stewart continued. "Ventana Lakes will be able to attract golfers into its community."

Mrs. Stewart believes the agreement places Sun City residents at a disadvantage.

"They (non-residents) don't have to sign a facilities agreements to use our courses," she said. "We will have no exclusivity."

Rather than going out and

enticing golfers from neighboring communities, Mrs. Stewart feels Sun City should be doing a better job of marketing its amenities.

"We need to market Sun City to golfers and keep the courses in tip-top shape," she observed. "We won't attract golfers if we have ugly golf courses and high fees. We should have rock-bottom rates and beautiful courses."

While Mrs. Stewart opposes the agreement, other Sun Citians are not so inclined.

Alva Melhouse, a golfer, did not see the harm, as long as strict limitations are enforced.

"It's nice if we could fill the courses with sun City resi-

dents," Mr. Melhouse said, but if that was not the case, he was not opposed to allowing a few outsiders in to play.

Golfer June Volero favored the idea. "They (RCSC) need the money," she remarked.

Ozella Morris also favored the plan. It would be neighborly, she said.

"Perhaps there could be some reciprocal agreement," said Mrs. Morris, who does not golf, but her husband does.

Mr. Schneider was supposed to notify Ventana Lakes leaders of the decision.



# Directors stress course safety, upkeep

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Keeping golfers safe and courses in shape were stressed at the Recreation Centers of Sun City's monthly meeting Thursday.

Director, Beverly Davis said bids have gone out to several companies to rework the golf car paths at Willowcreek Golf Course to make crossing Union Hills Drive a bit easier.

Golfers have two places to cross the busy road to play on the course. That is going to be limited to one, Davis said. Meanwhile, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation is working on plans to install a raised median on Union Hills Drive.

"Maricopa County will also install a turning lane in the center of Union Hills to keep traffic to one lane (in either direction)," Davis said.

Besides the danger of crossing Union Hills while golfing on Willowcreek, Davis said all community courses have completed overseeding and have been re-opened for play.

"We need for each golfer to carry sand and seed with them at all times to fill divots on the tee boxes and fairways," she said. "Due to the record temperatures, we had during the seeding of the first four courses, the rye grass is very thin."

Additional fertilizer is being added to the thin areas to make for lush courses.

Even with the setbacks with overseeding, several winter-resident golfers spoke at the meeting and commended the work of the golf course crews for the condition of the grass.

"I've lived here for four years, and this is the best I've seen the golf courses yet," one resident said. "It is a monumental deference than how the course looked last year at this time."

Beginning today, annual golf cards will not be increased, but a \$3 surcharge will be collected each day a resident plays 18 holes. The charge is effective until June 30, 2003.

Golfers who would like to make some comments or complaints can attend the Teed-Off Corner, which takes place on the first and third Fridays of each month at 11 a.m. Today the corner meets at Quail Run and on Nov. 15, it will meet at Lakes East/Lakes West Golf Course.

"We encourage golfers to come to these sessions to voice their opinions, concerns, questions, complaints, and we'll even listen to compliments on golf," Davis said.

John Sokolich can be reached at 876-2526 or [jsokolich@aztrib.com](mailto:jsokolich@aztrib.com).



WEDNESDAY, OCT. 9, 2002

# Sun City tower talks fall out of favor

**AT&T:** Communication giant fails to meet rec-centers terms

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

There will not be another communications tower in Sun City after all.

In a statement released by the Recreation Centers of Sun City Tuesday afternoon, Earl Feierabend, director of centers operations, said talks between the community and AT&T about a proposed monopole at Willowcreek Golf Course have been stopped.

"There will be no communications tower erected at the Willowcreek Golf Course maintenance yard," Feierabend said in the statement. "We would not allow AT&T to erect the tower if they were not agreeable to our terms."

The terms, according to Feierabend, were agreements on height, placement and aesthetics.

RCSC board member Gene Zylstra said because AT&T didn't agree with the

restrictions the community put in the agreement to build the tower, the talks were stopped because the the rec-centers board was not willing to budge.

"We wanted everything to be conducive with the community," he said. "They didn't agree with our terms, and the talks were stopped. We had various restrictions, and they couldn't meet those restrictions, apparently."

In June, AT&T obtained a permit from the county to construct the monopole at Willowcreek, which was

contingent on approval from the RCSC board. Despite an outcry from several community activists against having such a monopole in the area, the RCSC board gave the thumbs up for the construction.

Annie Stewart, founder of the Sun City Formula Registry, an anonymous activist group, said although the stop in talks "is an answer to many prayers," she is not stopping her recall petition against the eight remaining RCSC board members who approved allowing such a pole to be considered in the

community.

"There was a ban in place to keep these types of towers out of Sun City for good," she said Tuesday. "We want that ban again, and we will not stop until we get that ban again."

Earlier this year, the RCSC board unanimously approved lifting a ban on communications towers on community property that had been in place for about four years. That ban came in response to the erection of a 120-foot Qwest communications tower at the Marinette Recreation

Center. That pole was put up without board approval.

The ban was lifted in an effort to raise money for the RCSC as well as to increase the signal strength for cellular phones in the community. If a new communications tower were to be erected on RCSC land, rent would average about \$1,000 a month.

Feierabend was not available for comment about the fallout the RCSC had with AT&T or whether other communications companies are seeking to build towers in the area.





MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Golf-car drivers have a tough time crossing Union Hills Drive from Willowcreek Golf Course in Sun City.

## Golf-car drivers fight Union Hills traffic

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After stopping his golf car on the edge of Union Hills Drive Wednesday morning, Bill Mero of Sun City got out to look for cars.

"It's sort of a tradition now that I had a close call here about three months ago," he said.

Mero was trying to drive his golf car across Union Hills Drive to get to the 18th hole on Willowcreek Golf Course. He is leery of the crossing since he almost got hit by a car on the road three months ago. He said there is so much traffic in the area that crossing is sometimes next to impossible.

"Not too many cars really watch out for golfers, but on this road it's even worse," Mero said. "If someone doesn't drive this road all the time, then they aren't going to realize that there is a lot of traffic from the golf course

trying to get by here."

The Recreation Centers of Sun City has been working with the Maricopa County Department of Transportation to make the golf car crossing on Union Hills safer, but there is still no date set for any type of upgrades.

Even more, MCDOT officials report that they are not sure what the upgrades will entail when work gets started.

Leading the county's work on the road is Bill Grimes of MCDOT, who was unavailable for comment Wednesday. RCSC officials report that Grimes is supposed to contact them when plans for the road work are finalized.

The problem with the golf car crossing at the golf course is the angle at which cars approach where the golf cars cross and the fact that there are four lanes of busy traffic to navigate through. When cars approach the

crossing, there isn't a lot of room to maneuver, nor is there a clear indicator that golf cars cross in the area.

"Union Hills is becoming a busier and busier road all the time," said John Snyder, RCSC golf operation manager. "What we would like to do is have a median there in the road to allow the golf carts to cross just half the road at a time."

By having a median, golf cars heading from one end of the course to another would only have to drive through two lanes of traffic at a time, rather than the four.

At the RCSC regular monthly meeting in September, director Beverly Davis, chairwoman of the golf committee, reported that there is progress being made on the upgrades, but it will take some time before anything is complete.

"It is a very busy and dangerous road right now," Davis

said. "And there will be more traffic during the winter months."

She urged golfers crossing Union Hills from Willowcreek Golf Course to be careful of cross traffic when making the trek across the four lanes of Union Hills Drive.

Accidents in the area have been relatively low, but the number of close calls outweighs the statistics. Actual numbers of accidents were not available from the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, but several golfers making the pass of Union Hills Drive reported they had close calls in the past.

"Just about every time I come up here, I see a car slamming on its brakes," said golfer Phillip Porter of Sun City. "I've come close to getting hit. I really hope something is done about the crossing before it gets too late."

John Sokolich can be reached at 876-2526 or [jsokolich@aztrib.com](mailto:jsokolich@aztrib.com).



# Colorful pro shop adds flair to links

**MICHAEL MARESH**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Golf starter Chuck Carter had a vision on how the Quail Run Golf Pro Shop should ultimately look, and that vision is now a reality.

Carter, who works at Quail Run, in April decided to try to bring out some of the pro shop's colors as a way to give something back to the members who usually golf exclusively at the 9-hole course, located on Alabama Avenue, just west of 99th Avenue in Sun City.

"I wanted to bring out the colors of the merchandise," he said. "I started doing little things like building bonzai trees."

Carter said Quail Run is unlike other Sun City courses because the average golfer is older than 75, and in most instances is no longer able to play 18 holes.

These golfers, Carter said, want two things — sunshine and color, and that is what he is trying to provide them.

"Both of these things lighten things up," he said. "I will continue to decorate depending on what we get in."

Carter said he is trying to showcase what the Quail Run Golf Pro Shop has to offer.

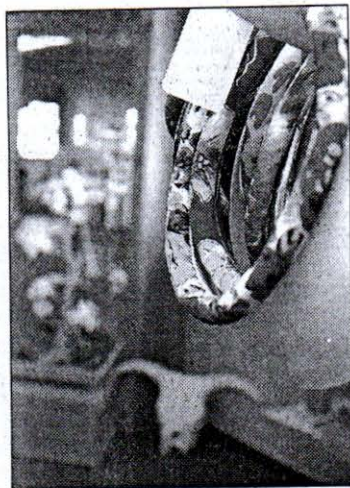
"It's just a way of merchandising the products we have here," he said.

Carter, a former firefighter, said in his spare time he started working on developing bonzai trees, which he once sold for hundreds of dollars each.

The pro shop now has several bonzai trees — at no cost — on display.

Carter has also painted several golf clubs, placing them strategically on the walls of the pro shop.

He said he always wanted to add some flair to the pro shop, where he has worked for more than a year, and the



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Colorful headbands rest on a wall inside the Quail Run Pro Shop. Chuck Carter, a golf starter, takes the colors from items on sale and adds more color to the surrounding area of the shop.

summer months afforded him the time to do so.

"Since it is the summer time, it gives me the opportunity to do things like this," he said, adding very few golfers come out in the afternoon because of the high temperatures.

Carter said he started by working on small sections, and the ultimate goal was making the entire shop color coordinated.

"You have to tie in things that blend," he said. "You have got to have a vision, and you lay it out in your mind on how you want it to look."

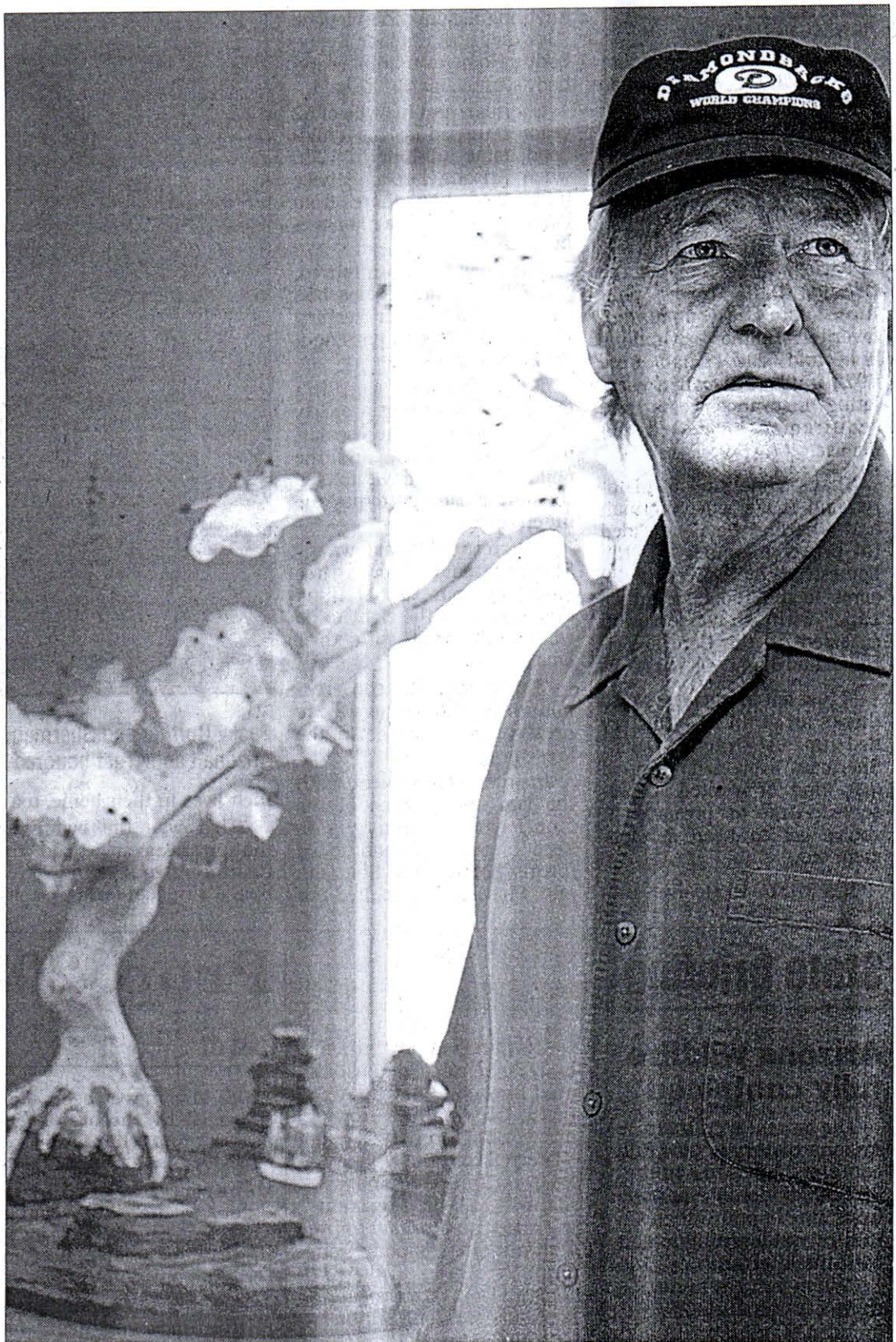
Once he began working on redesigning the pro shop, Carter's emphasis focused on its members and what he felt they wanted.

"I have just tried to liven this room up and make people happy," he said, adding he knows the name of every person who comes out to play regularly at the Quail Run Golf Course.

Michael Maresch can be reached at 876-2513 or [mmaresch@aztrib.com](mailto:mmaresch@aztrib.com).

OVER





JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Carter brighten up the pro shop at Quail Run in Sun City by placing handmade bonzai trees throughout, and using vibrant-colored walls as a backdrop.



# Golf operations manager tees off

STAFF REPORT

New golf operations manager for the Recreation Centers of Sun City, John Snyder, started his job today, after a three-month vacancy in the position.

Snyder comes to Sun City with a degree in turf-grass management and experience managing championship golf courses within the United States and abroad. Most recently, Snyder worked at the Ahwatukee Country Club.

RCSC officials report that most of Snyder's first day on the job will be touring the facilities, and sitting in on meetings. After that, Snyder is expected to have full control over golf operations.

With the job, Snyder will be responsible for maintaining all of Sun City's community courses, with an annual budget of about \$5 million.

John Snyder begins his first day on the job as the new golf operations manager for the Recreation Centers of Sun City. Snyder fills a spot that has been vacant for three months.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN



# RCSC hire new golf mgr.

By **Jeremy Pearlman**  
Independent Newspapers

In searching for a replacement golf division manager for its eight community golf courses, the Recreation Centers of Sun City found an individual who already had extensive experience overseeing golf course operations in Sun City — Sun City, South Africa that is.

John Snyder has been selected by the Rec Centers Board of Directors as the new golf division manager and will take office June 3.

In addition to being the head superintendent for both the Gary Player Country Club and the Lost City Golf Course in Sun City, South Africa, Mr. Snyder has worked as assistant superintendent and superintendent of the Professional Golf Association's National Golf Club in Florida and currently works as superintendent of the Ahwatukee Country Club and the Lakes Golf Course in Phoenix.

From 1989-91, Mr. Snyder was responsible for preparing the National Golf Club's Championship Course for the PGA Seniors Championship golf tournaments.

Mr. Snyder graduated from Ohio State University's Agricultural Institute for turf grass management.

The opportunity to work in a community with such high standards for its golf courses enticed Mr. Snyder to take the job.

"I'm really looking forward to getting out there," Mr. Snyder said. "I think I bring a

lot of experience in golf courses from the places that I have been."

One of his goals in the new position is to give residents golf courses they can really enjoy.

The golf division manager position has been available since Feb. 25 following the resignation of Steve Ravencamp.

The Rec Centers conducted a national search for the position, interviewing four of the 30 candidates applying for the posi-

tion. Mr. Snyder was interviewed multiple times prior to being hired.

"We never anticipated (finding) anyone with this quality of a background," said Art Little, RCSC director. "He is extremely talented, with qualifications that include a recommendation from Gary Player (longtime PGA golfer)."

The golf division manager position's salary range is \$65,000 to \$90,000, according

to Jerry Swintek, RCSC board president.

"Mr. Snyder was very impressive with his knowledge of golf course operations from one end to the other," Mr. Swintek said. "We had a criteria what this candidate needed to be. We are absolutely, positively delighted to find a person with a background and qualifications he has.

"We're really looking forward to June 3 when he comes on

board and takes over our golf operation," Mr. Swintek said.

The Rec Centers governing board approved the hiring of Mr. Snyder by a majority vote, according to Mr. Swintek.

Chuck Manning, superintendent of the North and South courses, served as the interim golf division manager while a replacement was being sought.



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Daily News-Sun • Tuesday, May 28, 2002

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# RCSC hires new golf chief

**OPERATIONS MANAGER:** John Snyder comes to Sun City courses from Ahwatukee Country Club

**JOHN SOKOLICH**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City has hired a golf-operations manager who will take the helm Monday morning.

The RCSC hired John Snyder, golf superintendent of the Ahwatukee Country Club, for the position that has remained vacant for the last three months. Snyder has a background in golf management and has received honors for his upkeep of courses in Florida and Virginia.

"We are expecting some very good things from him," said RCSC

President Jerry Swintek. "He comes to us with a tremendous background, and definitely has the qualifications for the job."

Snyder attended The Ohio State University Agricultural Institute for turf-grass management and worked at the PGA National Golf Club in Florida. He has worked on several championship golf courses throughout his career, including two in South Africa.

According to Swintek, Snyder was up for the position along with about 40 others who responded to the RCSC nationwide search. The position was advertised to pay between \$65,000 and \$95,000 a year, depending on experience, but

RCSC would not divulge exact figures offered Snyder.

Swintek said he doesn't expect there to be any major changes at the golf course, but that he expects some upgrades in the turf throughout the summer and next few years.

"He's the expert — that's why we hired him," Swintek said. "We are leaving everything up to him, but we don't expect to have anything major happening right away. We want him to get his feet on the ground here before anything is thrown at him."

Snyder comes on board three months after former RCSC golf-operations manager Steve Ravenkamp resigned from the post for personal reasons. Ravenkamp came under fire from golfers in Sun

City for the poor golf conditions. He came under fire from the RCSC board for overextending the golf budget.

Specifics of Ravenkamp's departure remain undisclosed. The RCSC has declined to release his personnel records.

After Ravenkamp's departure, some Sun City golfers urged the RCSC board to hire someone with more knowledge in groundskeeping. An unsuccessful campaign was undertaken by the Sun City Formula Registry to appoint a Sun City resident to the golf operations post.

Nevertheless, Swintek said this morning that he and the rest of the RCSC board is pleased with Snyder's qualifications and the amount of experience he will bring to the community's golf courses.

Snyder will be in charge of all the RCSC courses and manage an annual budget of about \$5 million.



Daily News-Sun • Monday, May 6, 2002

# Single-rider cars make golf more accessible to disabled



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The 1-PASS golf car for disabled golfers is shown at the TPC Sawgrass Golf Course in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

**NO LOCAL DEMAND:** Dealers are keeping a watch, but so far there have been no requests for the 1-PASS

STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

The single-rider car looks like a jet ski on wheels — handle bars instead of a steering wheel, a rack to hold the clubs in front, a seat that rotates 360 degrees.

Known as "1-PASS," it is available at places such as Pebble Beach, Disney, Doral and all 21 golf courses in the TPC Network, including Sawgrass, home of the PGA Tour.

So far, there's been no demand for it locally.

Although the benefits of 1-PASS are touted, Jennifer Hill of Pohle NV Center in Sun City said the demand for the vehicles locally does not warrant dealers to stock them yet.

"We've heard about them, but we are not planning on getting any," she said. "Right now not enough people know about it, so there really isn't the demand for them. Maybe once people start to know about them, we'll reconsider."

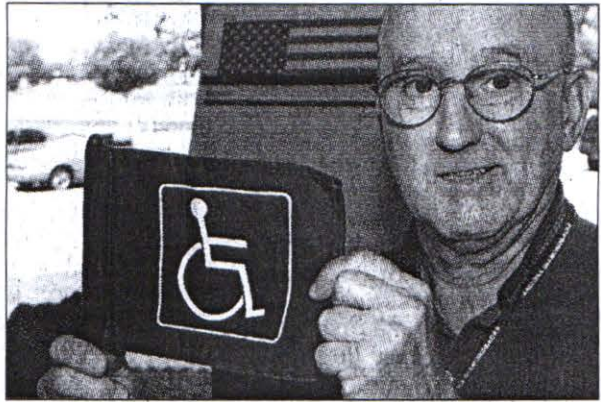
Jim Poole, head professional at Sawgrass, said it's worth it if it's used once a year: "It gives handicapped people an opportunity to play."

That's what the PGA Tour had in mind when it agreed to put a 1-PASS car at all of its TPC courses, a small irony, considering the tour only last year lost its U.S. Supreme Court case against Casey Martin over his right to use a standard car in PGA Tour events.

"There is no direct correlation with Casey Martin," said Bill Reid, regional director of operations for the TPC Network. "Casey's situation brought awareness to handicapped golfers. We looked at disabled-golfer programs around the country and felt it was important to extend the opportunity for handicap golfers to play our courses."

"It sends a message relative to our efforts of growing the game."

The tour is not exactly making money off 1-PASS. The cost of one car is about \$7,000, more than double that of a standard car, and yet golf



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Slocumb of Glendale, left, tees off on the third hole at Lakes West in Sun City Saturday. He has a golf attachment on his prosthetic arm. Above, starter Brownie Gary displays a flag that golfers can get for their cars for special access on the course.



OVER



courses charge the same fee for both. Reid says hardly any of the 1-PASS cars have been used at the TPC courses.

However, Roger Pretekin, president of Colorado-based SoloRider Industries, which builds the cars, says it's worth having a 1-PASS car for no other reason than to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Less than a month ago, the Justice Department reached an agreement with a Las Vegas retirement community in which the Summerlin Sun City Community Association must make its three courses accessible to golfers with disabilities.

Summerlin Sun City, with about 14,000 residents, was organized by Del Webb Corp. in 1990.

Sun City and Sun City West golf courses, like others built before 1990, do not fall under ADA requirements.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 took effect July 26, 1992.

Saturday morning, Glendale resident John Slocumb was taking advantage of open golf at Lakes West Golf Course in Sun City. He was playing with a couple of his high school friends, but was working his swing with one hand and one prosthetic hand.

He said he thinks having handicapped-accessible golf cars is a good idea for some, but for him, playing the regular way is more of a challenge.

"I think it's more fun this way because it is harder," Slocumb said. "A car is good for people, because it gets too hot, but I think I'd rather just play like everyone else."

Brownie Gray, who works at Lakes West, said he gets quite a few people playing golf who are handicapped, but said they don't ask for any special treatment.

"We have a flag we can give them to put on their car so they can get closer to the greens," he said. "I don't think the people coming in here though need a lot of assistance when they play."

Even though the Sun City course do not have to accommodate golfers under the ADA law, they try to do so anyway.

In Sun City, interim golf operations manager Chuck Manning said if members come in with a doctor's note explaining they are disabled, they will be accommodated.

He said flags will be attached to their golf cars, allowing them to drive up near the greens and tees, but no golf car is allowed on the actual greens.

"They have to stay 15 or 20 feet away from the fringe of the greens," said Jerry Swintek, president of the Recreation Centers of Sun City.

Swintek said handicapped golfers can drive to their ball on other parts of the golf courses, but near the greens and the tees, their cars must stay on the paved areas.

Sun City West Golf Director Todd Patty said while nothing is in place for handicapped golfers on the recreation centers' courses, they are looking

at golf cars in which handicapped residents can play rounds from the vehicles.

Patty said it is his understanding the vehicle centers is looking at is either built by Easy Go or Augusta, Ga.-based Club Car.

A 1-PASS or a car designed specifically for disabled golfers is not required to be in compliance, although Pretekin believes that will be an issue in the future.

"How is a person who doesn't walk going to use a golf car?" he said.

Built by SoloRider and distributed by Club Car, the 1-PASS car has become a vehicle for disabled golfers to enjoy a game they might not otherwise be able to play.

For those without use of their legs, the 1-PASS allows them to play without leaving their seats.

One of those golfers is Bob Schmonsees, paralyzed from the waist down after a skiing accident in 1984. A marketing consultant who lives in Potomac, Md., Schmonsees became skilled at wheelchair tennis and continued to ski using special devices.

"I always wondered whether anybody would come up with something for golf," said the 54-year-old Schmonsees, who played occasionally before his accident. "I had seen a few attempts to take

motor scooters and turn them into golf cars, but I didn't think they were robust enough to handle the golf course."

Having seen an early design of SoloRider's car, Schmonsees was invited to take part in the development of 1-PASS. He now owns two of the cars and plays a couple of times a week on the TPC at Avenel. He has a home just off the 16th fairway.

"The initial reaction is raised eyebrows," Schmonsees said. "Then, everyone is all for it when they see me hit."

Equally impressive is the car, and the places it is designed to go — tee boxes, greens, bunkers, sidehill lies.

The 1-PASS car has a 6-inch clearance for greater access around the course, and a low center of gravity and equal weight distribution for stability, even on hills.

Perhaps its most important feature is the four-wheel suspension that allows the car to be driven on greens without doing any damage to the putting surface. It transfers only six to seven pounds of pressure per square inch, half the pressure applied by an average man and significantly less than standard cars.

"Every sale we made early on to Pebble Beach and Doral and high-end private clubs,

they were all very concerned about the integrity of their greens," said Pretekin. "Every one of them, after an evaluation, scratched their head and said, 'I guess it's fine.'"

Schmonsees plays off a 26 handicap index. His best score on the TPC at Avenel, home course of the Kemper Open, is a 94; his best round ever is an 87 on a course in Virginia. Using only his upper body to generate power, Schmonsees said he hits his driver about 170 yards, and his 7-iron goes about 100 yards.

But this is not about scoring or long driving contests. It's about an opportunity.

"The time is right for this," he said.

Pretekin built the first prototype of 1-PASS nearly eight years ago. He then joined forces with Club Car, which made several technical changes to improve the performance and added an emergency "stop" button.

"We thought it was the right thing to do," said Chris Plummer, vice president of marketing for Club Car. "We know disabled golfers want access. And most of our customers are smart enough to know that if they want to deal with ADA issues, we have a solution for them."

*Staff writers Michael Maresh and John Sokolich contributed to this story from The Associated Press.*



# Declining golf revenues weigh on rec centers

**MICHAEL MARESH**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Golf, a longtime staple for the Sun City and Sun City West recreation centers, is drawing less and less interest.

The dwindling numbers of rounds being played on community courses are troubling to the recreation centers in part because of the significant money involved in these amenities.

In Sun City West, 60 percent of the budget is allocated for golf while 17 percent of residents play the sport. In Sun City, almost 35 percent of the budget goes toward golf while 9 percent to 11 percent play the game.

However, both Sun City and Sun City West bring in an immense amount of revenue from golf to offset the expenses; the centers' goals is to make the sport self-sufficient.

Recreation Centers of Sun City West Golf Chairman John Orr said 10 out of 250 members who attended a newcomers meeting last month said they were interested in golf.

Recreation Centers of Sun City Golf Chairwoman Beverly Davis said Sun City West

is not alone. At a recent RCSC newcomers meeting, two out of 50 new residents said they golfed.

Orr said the RCSCW must find ways to get people interested in golf because closing any of the four courses in the retirement community isn't an option.

"We cannot eliminate golf courses," he said. "We have to find a solution, and we do not know what to do."

At a recent budget workshop, Sun City West board members attributed part of the problem to the aging community.

In the 2001-2002 fiscal year, the average age in Sun City West was 73.1. That compares to 72.8 in the 2000-2001 fiscal year.

Sun City West's governing board members said while some of its members stop playing golf because of age and health concerns, the RCSCW in the past has always been able to pick up the slack with new residents. However, the small samplings of new members show they are not as interested in golf, Orr said.

James Parker, a member of the RCSCW golf subcommittee, said there are several

reasons golf play may be dwindling.

"We have physical handicaps that do not allow people to play as much," he said. "People are not just taking the time to play golf."

Parker said in some instances, both spouses are working, which means they have little time to play the sport.

Jon Cannon, senior business manager who will become general manager July 1, said there were 433,000 rounds played in Sun City West in 1998-1999; that number decreased last year to 345,000 rounds.

"It certainly is an issue," Cannon said.

Orr said the issue could be resolved if the centers can convince members to hit the links. "Sun City West is the golf capital for seniors," he said. "That is true for middle-class people. It's a wonderful deal."

The issue may be more significant in Sun City West where operation of the community's four courses accounts for nearly 60 percent of the overall budget, or \$7.9 million of the \$13.2



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Nicholas Haja tees off on the 14th at Desert Trails in Sun City West Wednesday.

See Golf rounds, A5

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million total. In Sun City, the community's 7½ courses require just under 34.5 percent of the centers' budget, or \$5 million of \$14.5 million.

The half course refers to the Quail Run, which is a 9-hole course.

Davis said the sport is not as popular as it once was but the reason isn't easily defined.

"It's decreasing all over the state," she said. "We are doing what we can to build it up."

Davis said part of the problem is courses are being built at a dramatic rate, and now there are 49 courses within 10 miles of Sun City that residents can choose from. Included in those 49 are Sun City West golf courses that residents can now use following the RCSCW's ruling last week to open its courses to Sun City

and Sun City Grand residents on a trial basis in hopes of increasing revenue.

"They are coming here for a retirement," Davis said. "They are saying, 'Been there, done that.' Give them time, and they will come around."

Some residents, she said, move into Sun City for the golf courses, though there is a large percentage who move to the retirement community for other amenities such as bowling.

Sun City West, according to Orr, has 5,000 golfers — almost the same as the number of golfers in Sun City, estimated between 4,000 and 5,000, Davis reported.

Davis said the bulk of the golfers are men; Sun City has 800 to 1,000 women golfers. Orr, admitting he is guessing, said 20 to 25 percent of the golfers in Sun City West are women.

While Davis had no concrete numbers, she said golf

rounds in Sun City should be increasing in the current fiscal year.

"It comes and goes," she said. "We have to make the prices more attractive."

Sun City West's Parker said the golf subcommittee is studying the lack of golf play and in the next two to three weeks plans to give the golf committee five possible ways to increase play.

To help generate revenue, Sun City normally allows play to nonmembers from May 1 through Oct. 1, but the ending date has not been determined for this year yet. Sun City also looks to events such as this week's Jaycee tournament at Willowcreek Golf Course that kicks off at 7:30 a.m. Saturday as a way to help fill the golf coffers.

*Michael Maresh can be reached at 876-2513 or [mmaresh@aztrib.com](mailto:mmaresh@aztrib.com).*



SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT MARCH 6-12, 2002

# Golf division manager resigns

## Critics pleased by move

By Mike Russo  
Independent Newspapers

Sun City's golf division manager has moved on to greener pastures.

Steve Ravenkamp, director of golf operations, resigned his post effective Feb. 25. He has held the position since May 8, 2000.

In his letter to the Recreation Centers board of directors, dated Feb. 11, Mr. Ravenkamp indicated he had accepted "a position that provides an opportunity that will better fit his lifestyle and the needs of his family."

Board President Jerry Swintek said, although Mr. Ravenkamp will be missed, the RCSC golf operations will be in capable hands heading into the slower-paced warmer-weather season.

"We have in place Chuck Manning, who is currently the superintendent of North and South courses. He will be the interim manager of golf courses until such time as we replace Steve," Mr. Swintek said.

The Recreation Centers plans to launch a nationwide search for Mr. Ravenkamp's replacement, according to Mr. Swintek.

"It will probably take three to six months," Mr. Swintek said. He said the process could be so lengthy because it is difficult to get a person here from out-of-state for an interview. Also, the board does not want to rush its decision.

"We will not be hiring anyone until we get the right individual," Mr. Swintek said.

Current golf division employees will be considered, Mr. Swintek noted. "Any qualified individual will be considered," he said.

Mr. Ravenkamp was selected in May 2000 to be the RCSC's

first golf division manager, when the board decided to split the duties of the general manager.

He was chosen from a field of approximately 50 applicants, Mr. Swintek noted. A like number of candidates is expected this time, he said.

The salary range for the position remains \$65,000 to \$90,000, according to Mr. Swintek.

Once the board advertises the position, applicants will be brought in for an initial interview, Mr. Swintek noted. "The final three candidates will be brought back to be interviewed by the entire board. We want to get the right person."

While the RCSC was satisfied with Mr. Ravenkamp's performance, there were some detractors in the community.

Nick Salamone and Anne Stewart were among his more vocal critics, and both were pleased by Mr. Ravenkamp's departure.

"I like the move, but I don't want to see another director of golf," Mr. Salamone said. "The job is too big for one person to handle. One man cannot supervise eight courses."

Rather than hire a golf division manager, Mr. Salamone "would rather see them tell the superintendents of the courses that they are in charge of their courses, and their course only."

"All superintendents would make their own budgets and bring them to the board," he continued.

He also suggested paying the superintendents higher salaries, commensurate with their additional responsibilities.

Mr. Salamone also believes the golf operation needs to be streamlined.

"It is top heavy with management," he said. "Right now you have supervisors, assistant supervisors and some courses have foreman. I can't see all that."

Mrs. Stewart wrote on her Web site: "We were pleased to hear ... that this golf manager resigned as of Feb. 25, and now

we urge the board to take advantage of the lifetime experience offered by RCSC member Angelo Zappella. He will improve the condition of our golf courses, slash costs and reduce the deficit."

Mr. Swintek was not certain how soon the search for Mr. Ravenkamp's successor would commence.



Daily News-Sun • Wednesday, Feb. 27, 2002

# RCSC keeps lid on golf manager's resignation

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

It took more than two weeks for the Recreation Centers of Sun City to inform its members that golf operations manager Steve Ravenkamp had resigned.

RCSC President Jerry Swintek said the decision to keep the resignation under wraps was to avoid dissension in its ranks. He said releasing further information about Ravenkamp's departure breaks an RCSC rule of keeping employee files protected from the public.

"He resigned, isn't that enough?" he asked. "We didn't tell anyone about the resignation earlier because we didn't think it would do any good. We didn't want anyone laying down on the job either, knowing that Steve was leaving soon."

According to RCSC, Ravenkamp gave his two-week notice of resignation in a letter dated Feb. 11, stating he accepted a position that "provides an opportunity that is better fit for his lifestyle and family needs."

Attempts to contact Ravenkamp Tuesday and this morning were unsuccessful.

Swintek on Tuesday declined the Daily News-Sun's request of Ravenkamp's personnel records — including his resignation letter — citing the centers does not need to provide information to the press.

"We are a non-profit organization and therefore do not have to release any personnel records," he said. "His letter of resignation is part of his personnel file."

Marion Krell, RCSC human resources manager, said all personnel files are exempt from public view as a way to protect RCSC employees. Although Ravenkamp is no longer an RCSC employee, that does not void the exemption, Krell said.

Dan Barr, an attorney specializing in the Freedom of Information Act, said even though RCSC is a non-profit organization, the act still requires it to release personnel files of its employees. He said there are two reasons why the centers must comply: RCSC membership is mandatory and RCSC receives funding from its residents.

Ravenkamp's personnel records were requested after residents complained that he was inexperienced at running golf courses and allegedly ordered computers for the golf

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## From A1

courses without the board's approval.

Swintek said board approval for the computers was not necessary, but the board canceled the order Tuesday — a day after Ravenkamp's last day as golf operations manager.

"I'm not sure how much the computers were for, but it was less than \$15,000," Swintek said. "The order was placed by Steve, but it was canceled today. There was no ultimatum to make Steve leave because of the order, though. There absolutely was not."

RCSC Director Gene Zylstra said Tuesday he had not heard of an ultimatum discussed with Ravenkamp because of the spending, but said he did know there was a meeting between Swintek and Ravenkamp on Monday.

"Something was discussed about spending, but I'm not sure what," he said. "There has been questions about (Ravenkamp's) spending, but if there was an ultimatum, it was not something I was privy to."

Zylstra said he knew of many complaints about golf course management, but most were made before he came on board as a director this January.

"There were a lot of complaints," he said. "But what went on with his resignation is not something I know a lot about."

Swintek on Tuesday dismissed the complaints about Ravenkamp.

Anne Stewart, founder of

the Sun City Formula Registry, which has been a vocal critic of RCSC, has repeatedly complained to the board about problems on the golf courses and what she believes is bad management.

"The board should be running Sun City, not the management," she said. "But it seems like it's the management making all the decisions and the board rolling over and supporting it."

None of the Formula Registry candidates were elected in last year's board of directors election.

One, Ken Fetha, said, "(Ravenkamp) never denied spending the money frivolously, and by looking at some of the things on the golf courses, I would tend to believe it's true," Fetha said. "But the guy didn't have any experience supervising a golf course. His resignation is the best news I've heard all day."

Before coming on board with RCSC, Ravenkamp worked at the Foothills Golf Course in Ahwatukee, Stone Creek in Paradise Valley, Arizona Country Club in Phoenix and Estrella Mountain Golf Course.

Although golfers have complained that some of the local courses were in the worse shape they'd ever seen, Ravenkamp defended his work, saying improvements were limited because of budgetary concerns.

Ravenkamp's frustration with the budget came to a head Feb. 1 at a golf forum where he answered complaints about the courses from the public. In his responses, Ravenkamp said a larger budget was needed and

he was tired of the complaints on the courses because the budget was not under his control.

The golf operations division has been criticized for not meeting budget for the past year after expenses exceeded income by several hundred thousand dollars. The poor showing in golf, according to RCSC officials, is part of the reason the board is expected to raise annual membership fees by \$20 Thursday. Golf has seen an increase in rounds played in 2001, though, rising .6 percent over 2000 — but it marked the first such increase in six years.

The rise in play didn't help the golf budget get out of the red though, as operations ended with a \$209,761 deficit.

Even with then deficit, however, the golf budget was slashed for 2002, with the expenses down 1.9 percent below 2001 and the capital improvement fund cut by 22 percent below 2001.

Ravenkamp started his post as golf operations manager on May 8, 2000, at an annual salary somewhere between \$62,500 and \$92,000, according to former RCSC President Bob Briscoe. Briscoe had stated that salary range when Ravenkamp first took the post.

The golf operations manager position was created to ease the responsibilities of the job former RCSC Manager Jim Warfield held. Warfield was in charge of all the recreation centers and golf courses in Sun City. In 2000, that position was broken up into two parts: centers operations

and golf operations.

Earl Feierabend holds the position of centers operations manager and was hired after Warfield was fired from the post.

When he was hired, Ravenkamp said he learned his business and management skills through his years in the Navy. He joined the Navy after graduating from high school in Anaheim, Calif., and retired as a chief warrant officer in 1989.



# Sun City woman seeks removal of golf course gutters

By JULI NESSETT  
Independent Newspapers

Usage and popularity of the Internet has rapidly increased over the last decade and one Sun City resident has been traveling the information superhighway to take her case to her fellow Sun Citians. via her own Web site, [www.annereport.com](http://www.annereport.com).

Anne Stewart created her own Web site last fall, [www.annereport.com](http://www.annereport.com), in hopes of gaining support from the community in her effort to convince the Recreation Centers of Sun City's board of directors that the fairly new gunnited culverts on two of the RCSC golf courses are an eyesore and against Del Webb's philosophies.

Mrs. Stewart, moved to Sun City in 1994 shortly after filming a television commercial for Del Webb. She said she fell in love with Webb's idea of a retirement community and after finding a house on a golf course, she and her husband moved to the City of Volunteers.

Mrs. Stewart says she chose her home for one reason and one reason only. Behind the home on Lakes West Golf Course, a small stream with waterfalls gurgled, something Mrs. Stewart had always wanted.

"I went directly from the front door to the back door to see what the view was because that was the only thing I cared about," said Mrs. Stewart.

Mrs. Stewart enjoyed the water feature for several years and after her next door neighbor, a good friend of hers, passed away her neighbors ashes were strewn in the stream.

In September 1999 the stream, which the board purports was only there to move water from course to course for irrigation purposes, was dug up to make way for new lined channels.

"Del Webb did not put them there to beautify the golf courses," said Jerry Swintek, president of the RCSC board of directors. "The reason he put them on top of the ground instead of digging a trench and putting in a pipe is it's a lot cheaper to have a waterway on top of the ground."

These new waterways were to be more efficient both in the transportation of water for irrigation and for maintenance reasons.

According to Mr. Swintek, the former trenches were losing water into the ground and causing erosion of the earth.

"Another reason we did the gunniting was the maintenance cost. The grass grew rapidly alongside of it (the former stream or ditch) because it was nice and damp. We had the problem that we had to have guys out there with weed trimmers going along the edge," explained Mr. Swintek. "With the gunnite going up over the edge, the lawnmowers go right along and mow the grass right next to the waterway and it cut our maintenance time and improved the quality of the golf course, because we didn't have a big batch of weeds growing on each side that we didn't have the time and people to get out there and do it every week."

However, Mrs. Stewart is skeptical the new waterways are more efficient and less costly, she considered them an eyesore. So Mrs. Stewart began to do some research and found a company, Pacific Aquascapes, which the Del Webb Corporation had used in the past for similar waterways or water features.

She believed the "gutters" were against what she refers to on her Web site, as "Del Webb's Successful Tenets for Sun City — affordable housing, a sense of community and unsurpassed amenities."

Mrs. Stewart also contacted John Waldron, director of public and community relations for Del Webb, stating she was doing research on

Sun City. She asked Mr. Waldron whether Del Webb had used Pacific Aquascapes in the past and whether the Sun Cities were based on the three tenets. He responded affirmatively to both questions, she says.

Attractive water features on the golf courses are something she believes to fall under the unsurpassed amenities portion of the tenets.

After compiling data about changing the waterways back to more attractive water features, Mrs. Stewart approached the board.

Mr. Briscoe said he listened to her presentation and told her it was a beautiful idea, but the cost of \$213,000 per course, to remove the paved waterways and put the new ones in, was more than the board could consider. If she could raise the money, however, the board would be happy to do it as long as there was a report stating that the new and more attractive waterways would be as efficient and not double or triple the cost of maintenance.

Mr. Briscoe said this information was never provided.

After giving Mrs. Stewart what the board considered ample time to raise the money, the board told her they could wait no longer, due to the fact that the budget had to be finalized.

Mrs. Stewart alleges that because the board would not allow her to raise money under the umbrella of the Sun City Foundation, she could not do so in a non-profit manner and therefore could not raise the money.

Once she learned of the RCSC's capital preservation fund, which is to be used for one time only, capital improvements costing \$100,000 or more with a life expectancy of 15 or more years, Mrs. Stewart asked the board to use it as a source of funding for the more attractive waterways.

The board refused, saying the water features were a form of beautification and not something which would fall under the rules for using

OVER



the capital preservation fund.

"The bottom line is capital preservation is only to preserve what we have," said Mr. Swintek. "The fund is for maintaining our facilities when they deteriorate. We go to the asset preservation fund to rejuvenate a building, not to rejuvenate waterways."

Close to \$500,000 of the approximately \$1.2 million fund is already earmarked for expenditure in the future.

According to Mr. Swintek and Mr. Briscoe, three of the RCSC's golf facilities have or will have the gunnited waterways in the future and if the capital preservation fund is used to manufacture the new waterways the fund will be virtually exhausted.

Previously on Mrs. Stewart's Web site, a petition for recall of board members who were not in support of the new water features, had existed. Now the Web site asks for supporters to sign in.

Mrs. Stewart says that once she has enough support from members of the community she will institute a recall, but for now it will wait.

Another change to the Web site has also occurred. Prior to Feb. 20

the site had referred to "Del Webb's Successful Tenets for Sun City." As of Feb. 20 several changes had been made. The site now referred to the tenets as the "Secret Formula for Successful Sun Cities."

Her references, which had previously used Mr. Waldron as a source, had also been changed in some ways. Instead of naming him as a source, information given by him was referenced as, "From the research of Anne Randall Stewart."

According to Mr. Waldron, these changes had occurred because he had contacted Mrs. Stewart and told her that he and Del Webb had no interest in being a part of her supporting evidence.

Mr. Waldron said he had initially wanted to assist Mrs. Stewart because she told him she was doing research on Sun City, something with which he is always glad to help. But when he was told how and why the information was being used, he simply asked her to stop.

"She was taking those comments out of context," said Mr. Waldron. "But in no way were we wanting any part of recall efforts."

Both Mr. Briscoe and Mr. Swintek believe Mrs. Stewart's idea is a very good one, but unless she can raise the money it is impossible.

They assert that changing the waterways back to stream-like features will only benefit as many as 100 homeowners and therefore is not in the best interest of the 42,000 residents currently in Sun City.

"I have talked to maybe three people besides Anne who want to

do this. If 24,000 homes send us a check for \$300 we can do what she wants to do," said Mr. Briscoe. "If anyone would object to sending us the money, send a letter or contact her and tell her how you feel."



SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

NOVEMBER 22-28, 2

# RCSC board gives OK to golf fee increase Hike becomes effective Dec. 1

By JULI NESSETT  
Independent Newspapers

Sun City golfers are teed off that rates will be rising Dec. 1 for the second time in just over two years.

The 6 percent fee hike was approved by the Sun City Recreation Centers board of directors during its Nov. 16 meeting. The last increase was instituted Oct. 1, 1998.

The motion was presented by Treasurer Harold Boudrie and after a heated discussion by the directors, which went on for almost an hour, the motion was passed 5-3. Opposing votes were cast by John Powell, Marge Murphy and Jerry Swintek, all of whom thought the motion should be tabled pending further study and input from those who actually play the game.

"I think we've got to involve those who pay and play. It's not just a board decision," said Mr. Swintek.

Board President Bob Briscoe agreed that input from golfers was important. He was also worried another increase could result in the near future.

"Whether it's more or less, let's do it all at once he said," he said.

from 50 cents to \$2. Summer cart rentals will change from \$5 per person to \$13 total (for 18 holes) and from \$5 per person to \$6.50 total (for nine holes). Winter cart rates will increase by \$1 for 18 holes and 50 cents for nine holes. Club rentals will increase by 50 cents, as will trail fees.

Under the new rate structure, a no-fee annual card will rise from \$825 to \$875. The executive-course no-fee card will jump from \$690 to \$730.

The all-course pass will go up from \$650 to \$690. The \$1 per 18-hole round fee will remain the same. A 50 cent fee will be imposed for a nine-hole round.

Executive course annual cards will be available for \$560 plus a \$1 fee for 18 holes and 50 cents for nine holes. That is up from \$530.

The daily fee will rise from \$18 to \$19 for residents playing 18 holes of golf on a regulation course. Guest fees for the same course will escalate from \$30 to \$32 for 18 holes. Residents will experience an increase from \$9 to \$9.50 for nine holes of play and the guest rate will jump from \$15 to \$16.

For executive courses, the daily resident fee will be \$15, up from \$14 for 18 holes of golf. The guest fee will be bumped from \$25 to \$26.50.

Nine holes of golf on an executive course will go to \$7.50. It has been \$7. The nine-hole guest rate will rise 75 cents, going from \$12.50 to \$13.25.

The annual cart permit, which allows golfers to operate their own golf carts on the course, will increase from \$150 to \$160.

The fee increases are expected to help offset increasing deficits incurred in the golf division.

Directors who voted in favor of the motion seemed to believe the longer the decision was delayed the more serious the problem would become.

"The more we delay on this, the more we exacerbate the problem," said Director Dick Ohnstad.

Most board members seemed to agree the fees would have to be raised at some point, it was just an issue of when.

Mr. Powell suggested waiting until the beginning of February, pending input from the golfing community. However, all efforts to table the motion were over once the vote was taken.

Only one audience member spoke after the vote was taken. He stressed that more consideration should be given to community members before any rates are increased.

Almost every fee, with some minor exceptions, will be increased.

Annual permits will rise approximately between \$30 and \$50 depending on the type. Fees for regulation course play and executive course play will increase anywhere



# RCSC hikes golf fees

## MORE TO COME:

Directors expect another increase will be needed

**JOHN SOKOLICH**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City golfers will be paying higher fees in two weeks, with another increase on the horizon.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors voted Thursday morning to increase golf fees by 6 percent Dec. 1 in an effort to raise the revenue of community courses that have been falling into the red.

The increase is expected to net an extra \$20,000 per month, but the additional funds still are not enough to make up for all the course losses. Another increase is expected next September, but an exact amount has not been determined yet.

"There is a lot that has to go into it," RCSC board President Bob Briscoe said. "We have two or three months of study to do, and analyze the fee cards before we can move any further."

At a board study session earlier this week, Briscoe asked whether the board would like to hold off any increase so the situation could be studied more extensively. But the board felt implementing the increase the first of next month would help alleviate some of the debt.

The Centers' golf courses recently went through a series of improvements, but golfers still aren't flocking to play. The board plans to study ways to increase the number of players to help keep prices low.

"We have to get together with the ladies golf association and the mens golf association and see if there is a way to increase golf numbers," Briscoe said. "Maybe it will be decided to drop the price on some of the cards to attract more people."

On regulation courses, the 18-hole fee under the 6 percent increase will rise only \$1 for residents and \$2 for guests. Increases in other services at the courses, such as club rentals, will cost only pennies more, according to data compiled by RCSC.

Briscoe said his primary reason for not wanting a fee increase this December is because another increase is due next September, meaning two increases in less than 12 months.

"But five of the other board members thought the increase was necessary," he said. "Now we will have to study the golf aspects and find ways to attract outsiders, especially during the summer months."

John Sokolich can be reached at [jsokolich@aztrib.com](mailto:jsokolich@aztrib.com) or at 623-876-2526.



Daily News-Sun • Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2000

# Board targets golf-fee increase

**REC CENTERS OF SUN CITY:** Directors consider 6 percent hike now, more later

JOHN SOKOLICH  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City golf fees will be rising, but how much and when are still debatable questions.

Trying to recover from several years of financial loss on community golf courses, the Recreation Centers of Sun City board of directors is increasing golf fees by 6 percent Dec. 1, but another increase is inevitable, board members say.

At an RCSC study session Monday morning, board members debated whether to bring the 6 percent increase to a vote at this Thursday's quarterly meeting or to wait a couple of months until a consensus is reached for an exact fee increase.

Board President Bob Briscoe said a 6 percent increase is not enough to cover golf-course costs, making another rate hike in September necessary.

"I think we should wait until

about our reasoning."

The vote for the increase will be taken Thursday morning during the RCSC's quarterly meeting, where the 6 percent increase is expected to narrowly pass.

But for some residents who frequent the courses, any fee increase is unsubstantiated.

"Maybe if the facilities were good, it might be worth it," Tom Major said while teeing off at North Golf Course Monday. "A 6 percent increase sounds high,

is looking in the wrong place to make up for lost income.

"They spend more money than they can pay back and now they find they can't catch up," he said. "There is going to have to come a day when they realize that they have to modify their spending habits and it is not all the fault of the golf courses."

But Kathy Wagner disagreed.

"It's unfortunate that there is going to be an increase, but it's still such a good buy. I'm not



Barmore



Wagner

we find out exactly how much of an increase is needed before we approve any," he said.

But his argument was met with strong opposition from other board members who said waiting would put the golf courses further in debt. A 6 percent fee increase in December is expected to net an extra \$20,000 per month.

At the same time they're trying to erase some of the courses' debt, board members are struggling to keep golf fees affordable for all income levels.

"The board has to be cognizant of incomes in the community," board Vice President John Powell said. "We need to make golf affordable, while raising

## See Directors attempt, A5

and these facilities are disgusting. They are the worst facilities I have ever played at."

Major, who has lived in Sun City for the past two years, said he thinks most residents don't complain about the grounds because they are afraid of such fee hikes, but Thursday's vote will prove the board will do what it wants anyway.

"People won't complain because they don't want to pay more, but it seems like the board doesn't care what the people

going to complain about it," she said.

Wagner, a five-year resident of Sun City, said residents would like to see golf fees stay stagnant, but with prices as low as they are, a 6 percent increase shouldn't break anyone's bank.

Contradicting Wagner's argument, RCSC candidate Nick Salamone said any type of increase is hurting residents on fixed incomes.

## From A1

prices enough to help the budgets."

Board member Jerry Swintek said golf community members should be part of the decision to raise fees so the board does not take full responsibility for the increase.

"I think we should talk to the golfing community," he said. "Otherwise we will run into the problem of doing something and having a lot of people wonder

want in the first place," he said.

Philip Barmore, a Sun City resident for 22 years, said the board should get out of the golf industry altogether because it doesn't know how to manage its courses.

"They ought to raise the prices like they want, open it for public use, then get out of golf because it's killing them," he said.

Although Barmore said he understands the board is trying to erase a lot of debt, he thinks it



Daily News-Sun • Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2000

## RCSC panel favors hike in golf fees

**GREEN FOR GREENS:** Committee says more money is needed to maintain Sun City courses

**JOHN GUZZON**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Greens fees at Sun City golf courses may increase, according to preliminary discussions Monday by the Recreation Centers of Sun City's Finance and Budget Committee.

"There is no way we cannot act like we don't need a golf fee increase," said Dick Ohnstad.

A 5 percent increase across the board was suggested — perhaps starting Jan. 1 — for green, trail, ball and car fees.

Chuck Chadbourn, a former RCSC board member and current member of the finance committee, said increasing the fees now is the prudent thing to do.

"Every board talks about raising fees and balancing the budget, but they always wimp out," he said.

Golf Operations Manager Steve Ravenkamp said the initial budget he submitted needed to be cut by approximately \$200,000. The majority of the cutbacks came from the repair and maintenance budget — approximately \$150,000. He said maintaining the courses without an increase is possible, but as equipment fails, it needs to be replaced.

"We can maintain what we have. We are not going to get better and they will degrade over the years," Ravenkamp said. "The bottom line is what level we want these courses at. That is the question."

Last year, the RCSC board rejected a resolution that would have increased the winter daily golf fee for residents from \$15 to \$18 for regulation courses and from \$13 to \$14 for the executive courses. The last increase came in 1998, when the annual fee jumped from \$640 to \$825 for annual no-fee play. It was the first increase in 13 years.

The final budget will be determined over the next several weeks. The board must vote on any increase in fees.



Daily News-Sun • Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2000

# Staying connected

**RCSC VOTE:** Board of directors will entertain motion to ban cell phones, pagers and radios on golf courses

**HAYLEY RINGLE**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Linda Brady's cell phone is a link to her paralyzed father, a link she hopes the directors of Recreation Centers of Sun City won't break.

"When he calls, I know it's an emergency," she said. "Don't vote my lifeline away."

The board on Thursday will decide whether to ban cell phones, pagers and radios on the golf courses.

But many Sun Citians appear opposed to such a ban.

If the board approves the motion, all phones, pagers and radios must be deactivated on golf courses and can only be used when reporting a medical emergency, vandalism or unauthorized use of the facilities. Their use will be allowed around the practice areas and club houses. Golf course staff will be exempt of the ban while working.

"People do abuse cell phones, but not on the golf course," said Eileen Nelson, a Sun City resident for six years who golfs at Lakes West. "It hasn't been a problem with us. If they just use it for an emergency, it's fine."

Ed Snyder, a part-time Lakes West Pro Shop employee, said he has never heard of a problem with distracting cell phones, pagers or radios.

"It's beneficial to carry a cell phone for emergency purposes," he said. "People that do have radios within a group will tell the other person to turn it off if it gets too loud."

## IF YOU GO

■ **WHAT:** Recreation Centers of Sun City board meeting

■ **WHEN:** 9 a.m. Thursday

■ **WHERE:** Sundial Recreation Center auditorium, 14801 103rd Ave. at Boswell Boulevard

For information, call 876-3000



MOLLIE J. HOPPE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jerry Dimmick says if you come out to play golf, you shouldn't be doing business on a cell phone. But he does concede that a doctor on call should be allowed to carry one on the course.

Snyder said he has had plenty of people who have called in from the golf courses with emergencies.

Barbara Konstan of Sun City also said she has never been distracted by a ringing cell phone, beeping pager or loud radio, but could see how it would be distracting during a tournament.

"It would distract a lot of people, but other than that, they can have it," she said.

Carol Leech of Sun City carries an SOS phone that allows her to make only emergency calls, and luckily she said she's never had to use it.

Don Foster of Sun City said he hasn't heard a ringing phone in the six years he has golfed in Sun City.

"I think somebody heard it one time and now it's a problem," said Foster, who doesn't carry a cell phone or pager.

Jerry Dimmick of Sun City disagrees.

"If you come out to play golf, you shouldn't be doing business," said Dimmick, who has a cell phone but doesn't carry it. However, he added cell phones should be available for emergency purposes. "I played golf one day with a doctor, and he was on call."

Hayley Ringle can be reached by e-mail at [hringle@aztrib.com](mailto:hringle@aztrib.com) or by calling 876-2519.



# Board mulls phone ban

9-18-20

**SUN CITY:** Ringing disturbs golfers, according to proposal before recreation centers directors

**HAYLEY RINGLE**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors is considering banning cellular phones, pagers and radios from its golf courses.

Except for reporting a medical emergency, vandalism or unauthorized use of golf facilities, the cell phones and pagers will not be allowed if the motion passes. They will only be allowed around the practice and clubhouse facilities. Golf course staff will be exempt while working on the golf courses, the motion reads.

Vice President John Powell presented the proposal Monday. It already has met opposition.

"We keep taking away privileges of the community," Director Ted Haupt said. "I see no problem with the cell phones."

Although most of the board opposes a ban, Powell said he will still bring the motion up for approval at the Sept. 28 meeting because he wants the public to decide.

Powell said virtually every golf course insists cell phones not be used on the course.

"Most cell phones have features that allows you to not miss a call," Powell said. "It's very, very disruptive (when a phone rings while playing golf)."

Director Dick Ohnstad disagreed with Powell, saying most golfers are in groups and will let their friend or family member know when the phone use is bothersome.

Director Marge Murphy suggested putting proper phone etiquette in the board newsletter.

"If we educate people, it might be better," Murphy said.

Many Sun Citians use their cell phone or pager as a lifeline to family members, Ohnstad said.

"That cell phone is the electronic tether that allows some to go out, but still keep in touch with their family," he said.

At its meeting later this month, the board also will decide whether to approve the purchase of a \$45,000 variable frequency device for Riverview Golf Course.

The VFD is a surge protector that will help regulate the surge in the older water pipes in the Sun City golf course.

"We had four breaks in the last two weeks in the water line," said Treasurer Harold Boudrie.



# Sun City Rec Centers hires golf manager

## Steve Ravenskamp assumed duties May 8

By JULIE RIDDLE

Independent Newspapers

Like a golfer who has struck a sand trap, the Recreation Centers of Sun City searched through the rough in its hunt for a golf manager to oversee the community's links, and finally came up with the prize.

Steve Ravenskamp, formerly of the Estrella Golf Course, officially joined the staff as golf manager May 8.

"We have been searching basical-

ly since the first of the year," said Recreation Centers of Sun City President Bob Briscoe.

After narrowing the search to five candidates, the board "almost unanimously" selected Mr. Ravenskamp, Mr. Briscoe said.

"There were a lot of factors. He has a lot of management experience and an exceptionally good education," Mr. Briscoe said. "His personality is very self-confident. The board decided pretty much that he was the most outstanding one of the

group."

As for Mr. Ravenskamp himself, the decision to pursue the job stemmed from experience and interest.

"I thought it was an opportunity and something I could do to help the community," he said. A Ret. Navy Officer, Mr. Ravenskamp brings a glut of experience to Sun City's courses.

"I worked at courses in North Carolina and at Stonecreek, Foothills, Arizona Country Club, and Estrella Mountain, as assistant

superintendent," he said. "I have an extensive management background from my career in the navy and telecommunications.

Mr. Ravenskamp said he does not have specific goals in mind, but a more general one of improving what already exists.

"I want to develop the golf courses into something the community can be proud of, and something to look forward to," he said.

With the new hire in place, current RCSC General Manager Jim Warfield now assumes the title of operations manager for the Recreation Centers, overseeing,

among other things, restaurant, the Sun Bowl, bowling alleys and more.

"It is a new position that was just created," Mr. Briscoe said. "It eliminates the general manager position. Mr. Ravenskamp will handle all golf operations — pretty much everything regarding golf. Mr. Ravenskamp and Mr. Warfield are the two top key people."

Mr. Briscoe said the board's aim was to hire a person with a strong background for the lucratively-paid position.

"We were looking for a back-

**See ■ MANAGER, Page 10**

ground in agronomy and a degree in business. A pretty high-powered guy with management skills, because it is a high-powered job," he said. The position's salary ranges from \$65,000 to 90,000 per year, he said.

"Mr. Ravenskamp has Southwest experience in golf courses, turf management, and strong management and people skills to manage and deal with people," Mr. Briscoe said.

"He is so diversified, as a retired navy officer, he ran a position where he really controlled the Pacific fleet. He is working toward a doctorate. He has a tremendous background — I think he will be the man to make the golf courses something special," he continued.

As for the daunting task of han-

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*It is going to be a real challenge.*

**Steve Ravenskamp**  
New Sun City Golf Manager

dling all the responsibilities of Sun City's favorite pastime, Mr. Ravenskamp said he was ready for the task.

"It is going to be a real challenge," he said. "I am trying to get a team developed. We have good people, now we just need to go in the same direction. I believe way to make things work is get team together."



FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2000

# Golf chief out to save money

By Jim Gintonio  
The Arizona Republic

On the job for less than a week, Sun City's golf operations manager says if he can't come up with ways to save money, "they should fire me."

The selection of Steve Ravenkamp by the Rec Centers' Board of Directors culminated a months-long search both inside and outside Arizona. Ravenkamp's addition allows General Manager Jim Warfield to concentrate on the community's recreation centers.

Ravenkamp's salary is confidential, but it ranges from \$65,500 to \$92,000 per year. He came into the job knowing that the president of the board of directors, Bob Briscoe, had said on numerous occasions that whoever was chosen would be expected to have the business and technical skills to save the rec board at least twice his salary.

Briscoe said it was Ravenkamp's business management skills and experience with golf courses that lifted him above the other candidates.

Ravenkamp, who formerly worked at the Stonecreek, Foothills, Arizona Country Club and Estrella Mountain courses, has a plan in place already as he begins to work with his \$6 million budget to take care of the eight courses.

"We have to develop common goals," he said. "It's important to have all the

superintendents working together. We need to look at some consolidation in areas of purchases and bids. It's a big challenge."

Ravenkamp has a degree in business from New York University and a master's from Troy State. He said that in today's market, golf course managers need to have a vast knowledge of both the maintenance and economic side of the business.

In addition to developing common goals, Ravenkamp said, special attention has to be paid to the problem of keeping a golf course green during the summer, and he wants to ensure that the courses retain their appealing look.

"The courses are in reasonable shape," he said. "But I'm never happy. If you're happy, you get complacent, you go downhill. You don't stop trying to make things better."

He said another factor in a senior community is maintaining a degree of difficulty on the courses, but they can be so tough that they are PGA tournament quality. They must be challenging yet fun, he said.

"If you can't have fun," he said, "why would you play?"

Input from players also will play a part in course maintenance, he said. Common interest, not age, is the key.



MAY 3-9, 2000 — SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

# Summer rates announced for Sun City golf courses

by **JULIE RIDDLE**  
Independent Newspapers

Faced with decreasing activity over the summer months, the Recreation Centers of Sun City board of directors planned for change during its monthly meeting April 27.

"The golf financial situation is less than what the budget people projected for us by about \$31,000," said Director John Howell. "However, we are over the previous year by about \$20,000. We now we are not growing down here as far as people — we are rather limited, so sometimes you have to look at budgets and say we are going to increase our revenue by a certain number of dollars."

Golf cart rental at regulation and executive courses this summer are now \$6 for 9 holes and \$12 for 18 holes, effective May 1 until the end of individual course overseeding.

At the recommendation of the Bowling Standing Committee, punch cards approved for non-residents at the Board's previous meeting, be eliminated for the sum-

mer.

Summer rates for open bowling for residents and nonresidents who bowl in RCSC leagues, effective May 1-Aug. 31, are \$1.25 for an RCSC member (or three games for \$3.50) and a \$1.75 for nonresidents (three games for \$4).

In an effort to deter theft, the board discussed the idea that golf certificate redemptions for the purchase amount of \$5 or more be signed by the redeemer next to the name on the face of the certificate and that the rec card number be noted under the signature by the staff. Purchases involving multiple certificates would require one veri-

fication for every five certificates, and each multiple of five certificates must be stapled together with the staff person's name printed on the first certificate of each group.

"We have had some unfortunate situations where certificates have come up missing, which has prompted this particular action," said Director Dick Ohnstad. "Hopefully we will be able to solve the problem."

Mr. Ohnstad disagreed on several items regarding the certificates, including whether bearer and giver must be present at redemption.

"I do not think this motion is

complete. I think it is short of what we should be doing, and if we are going to close the door to theft permanently, we need to have a motion that says all certificates should only be redeemed by the person they were issued to. That would solve the problem."

The motion was tabled until the next meeting.

Rec board President Bob Briscoe commented on the ongoing search for a golf manager.

"We are in the final stages of interviewing for a golf manager. We should have a decision for the people very soon," he said.



February 12, 2000

# Rec centers' hiring plan criticized

By Jim Gintonio  
The Arizona Republic

The decision to add a general manager to oversee golf at the Recreation Centers of Sun City has raised the ire of some residents.

Bob Briscoe, president of the Rec Centers board, has been targeted by anonymous angry letter writers since announcing that a nationwide search was being launched to fill the position.

The decision to add the position was unanimously supported by the board. Briscoe said the decision was made because general manager Jim Warfield had too much to do.

"I think things are too big for one person to handle," Briscoe said. "Mr. Warfield doesn't agree with that. I feel a new manager of golf operations can save his salary in the first six months. It's just finding things that perhaps are overlooked just by the fact that there's too much to do.

"The bottom line is, you're hiring a professional, and you say, 'You look out there and make us more cost-efficient.'"

Beverly Davis, a board director, said the person hired will have the expertise to know where to make the cuts.

"All the courses are having a little problem with overseeding," she said. "We hope the new person can help correct that."

Warfield, who has been on the job for 14 years, manages all aspects of the recreation centers. He did not want to comment on the situation.

Art Williams, a former board president who was recalled in 1994, thinks it's a waste of money to hire another general manager.

"I see no reason for the number of employees we've got that we need two managers," he said. "We already have an agronomist

From Page 1

who has worked for the board for 10 years. Now we're going to hire someone else, and they want an agronomist. If he's not doing the job, we should replace him, not hire another general manager."

Besides golf, the rec centers have numerous other areas that Warfield oversees, including bowling alleys, restaurants and any other activities that are held there.

Those who are upset think having two managers will not be cost-efficient. Briscoe said they are not seeing the big picture.

"The ones who write letters to the newspaper are the ones who think you're stupid and dumb," Briscoe said. "If you listen to that small minority, you think you're not doing anything right."

Davis said it wasn't a surprise people objected to paying a sec-

ond general manager but added that most people are beginning to realize it's a needed position.

The budget for the recreation centers is \$14 million, with \$6 million of that going to the golf courses.

Briscoe hopes someone can be hired by April 1. The one selected will be an operations manager, sharing that title with Warfield.

The ideal candidate, he said, will have a degree in agronomy or horticulture and have experience in managing a golf course.

The salary range has been set at \$55,000 to \$85,000, but to get the type of person the board wants probably will require a salary of \$70,000 or more, Briscoe said.

Reach the reporter at  
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