

S.C. GOLF COURSES--HISTORY

In September, 1975, the DEVCO offered the then 7 public golf courses to the Recreation Centers. The Webb Company said it definitely "wants out" and if the Recreation Center wouldn't accept responsibility for the courses, they would be offered to Maricopa County or to private interests. The directors of the Recreation Centers were faced with a significant decision. Recognizing the responsibility, the board appointed a committee in January, 1975, to study all angles. Members of the committee were Wm. Lloyd, Carl Simon, John "Red" Uldrich, Gene Heberling, Par Porter, Frank Ashenfelder, and Jim Wormley, Chairman.

This Committee examined all facets of the operation and recommended the Rec Centers, the Pro Shops, and Snack Shops as well as the golf courses. The Centers offered to buy all Pro Shop equipment from Fielding Abbot, the golf professional who had been operating the shops and ranges, and tendered an offer to the family operating the snack shops for all their equipment and inventory. Both offers were eventually accepted.

The Committee recommended a non-profit subsidiary corporation to the Rec Centers Corp. to be set up to manage the golf course facilities, pro, and snack shops. On April 20, 1977, Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws were signed by the Board and Sun City Golf Courses, Inc. became a reality with John "Red" Ulrich as general manager until June 1, 1977.

When DEVCO made the transfer it was made to the RCSC, so the subsidiary Corporation was dissolved and now operates as the Golf Division of the Recreation Centers.

On May 31, 1977, what may have been the greatest deal since the Dutch got Manhattan Island for \$24.00 worth of trinkets, the Recreation Centers assumed ownership of 7 golf courses. For \$10.00 and a cup of coffee the Recreation Centers now owned in excess of \$12 million golf courses, accompanying paying wells, a water district system, and 194 pieces of equipment such as lawn mowers, seeders, etc. Ownership of the courses was assumed June 1, 1977, with Fritz Clymer serving as general manager of the now private courses. The DEVCO subsequently built a 9-hole golf course (Quail Run) and deeded that to the Recreation Centers in 1978 bringing the total number of courses

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to 8. In addition to the Recreation Centers courses, there were private courses: Sun City Country Club, Palmbrook Country Club, and Union Hills Country Club.

The area north of Bell Road was rapidly developing and a very vocal controversy began to grow in that an announcement was made there would be no Rec. Center as the proposed site at Union Hills & 99th Ave.--as shown on the plot map. The Webb Co. said Bell was built to accommodate all living north of Bell. However, a modest center (Marinette) opened in 1979 and was deeded to the centers on March 4, 1980. The residents felt cheated in that it consisted of a small hall, a small meeting room and a swimming pool. Ultimately, the Rec. Centers expanded the facility in 1983-4 to include a therapy pool, exercise room, jogging track.

The SUNBOWL, the outdoor amphitheater and hub of Sun City's entertainment and concerts was leased to the Recreation Centers on Sept. 1, 1981, and assumed ownership Sept. 1, 1984.

Many will remember Heading Ranch, located several miles north of 99th Avenue. It was here that the S.C. trap and skeet range was located as well as a rifle and pistol range. Picnic ramadas made it a popular place for family and club outings. Severe flooding destroyed the entire area before the Recreation Centers had assumed ownership. Unfortunate that a popular spot was lost, but fortunate in that the Recreation Centers incurred no financial loss.

Any history of the Recreation Centers would be incomplete if recognition was not given to three dedicated long-time employees. First, Jay Titus, who served as general manager from 1967-1978. Bill Abrisch, who served as member of the Board of Directors of the then THCC and then as general assistant to Jay Titus and succeeding general managers until 1980(?). Pearl Sherman was a dedicated secretary to the General Manager and Board of Directors.

As the population of Sun City increased, so did the Recreation Center problems, which might account for the general manager turnover. Upon the retirement of Jay Titus, Fritz Clymer was General Manager from June, 1978 to December, 1980.; Al Thorgerson Jan. 81-Oct. 81; Ed Haddas Oct. 81-Nov. 82; Steve Tritz, who was appointed in Dec. 1982.

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With the exception of Tritz, who worked his way up to the job, all former General Managers were retired people.



Officials of the Del E. Webb Development Co. and Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc. signed an agreement to convey the deed of Sun City's 7 public golf courses to the Recreation Centers. Ownership of the courses will be transferred June 1, 1977.

1 Myron & Bill Brooks 3 Phil & Bill Hunt 5 M. Gardner 6 Bill
 7 Dorothy Allen Jones 8 Snyder 9 & 10 [unclear]