

# Keep open mind on Sun Cities incorporation question

VF INCORPORATION

If you want to start a riot in Sun City or Sun City West, just ask residents if their community is "broken," and if incorporation is the right way to "fix it."

Then stand back. The "I" word has joined politics and religion as a subject guaranteed to fire up a conversation in the two retirement enclaves, and turn otherwise reasonable people into raving maniacs.

Recently the Sun City Homeowners Association and the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association got into the act with a co-sponsored "informational" symposium on alternative forms of government.

About 600 of the 70,000 residents of the two communities attended the meeting at the Sundome, where representatives of two incorporated municipalities, a former chairman of the Maricopa Association of Governments and an ASU urban planning professor spoke.

I can sympathize with the woman who told the panel after the presentations that she was "thoroughly confused." It is confusing when an organization (PORA) that just publicly strengthened its opposition to incorporation claims to sponsor an unbiased look at the subject.



**ELEANOR NELSON**  
Special for The Republic

It's even more confusing when PORA President Phil Garner uses the podium to tear apart the report of the Alternative Forms of Government subcommittee that his group helped to originate.

That report, compiled after a year-and-a-half study involving more than 1,500 hours of work, strongly recommended incorporation as the best way to preserve the Sun City West lifestyle.

The symposium speakers, while varied in their opinions, reinforced that study's conclusions that an incorporated city would have two major benefits: increased local control and a stronger voice with

*Bottom line: The Sun Cities are unique, and no generalizations apply. Residents need more facts. They'll be getting some of them from a newly energized Westers for Self-Government group that's planning meetings, fliers and home coffees.*

county and state officials.

Zoning issues such as the location of a Walgreens store in the middle of Sun City West would be decided by the city, rather than the county. Also enforcement of building codes would be a city, not a county, decision. Sun City was recently unable to act against a homeowner who had allowed his property to deteriorate, and the county dragged its feet before enforcing compliance.

"Why would you want someone 50 miles away to decide your local issues?" asked Scott Anderson, Gilbert planning director.

Perhaps the most important benefit of incorporation would be a stronger presence outside the community. The Sun Cities now have no legal voice in county or state affairs, and instead are represented at regional planning tables, like

MAG, by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors.

"The county is growing, and the 70,000 people in the Sun Cities will become an increasingly smaller portion of the county," thus wielding less clout with county officials, cautioned ASU urban planning Professor Ignacio San Martin.

While Garner pointed out that PORA has excellent rapport with District 4 Supervisor Jan Brewer, the fact is that Brewer might not always be there. All five positions on the county board will be up for grabs in the November 2000 election.

The panelists also raised some red flags. "Incorporation will probably cost 10 to 20 percent more than you anticipate," warned Gary Brown, Tempe city manager. Most incorporated cities need a sales tax to supplement the state "turn-back" funds, he said.

San Martin said national studies have shown that unless a community has a substantial commercial and industrial base, it can't survive as an incorporated entity.

Bottom line: The Sun Cities are unique, and no generalizations apply. Residents need more facts. They'll be getting some of them from a newly energized Westers for Self-Government group that's planning meetings, fliers and home coffees.

The incorporation question won't appear on the ballot until March 2001. Ask questions. Insist on answers.

Above all, let's approach the question with open minds. Let's get rid of preconceived opinions, many of which have no basis in fact, such as: the pro-incorporationists all want to be mayor of the new city; municipal government is inherently corrupt; doing nothing is always better than doing something; and "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

No less than the future of our communities is riding on our decisions.

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# Sun Cities in no rush to incorporate

## 1,500 attend forum on incorporation

By Lori Baker

The Arizona Republic

SUN CITIES — Who speaks for Sun City and Sun City West?

No one. Everyone.

Both answers are technically correct.

Because the two retirement communities are not cities, they do not have legal voices with county, state and federal agencies. Residents are represented by only one member of the county Board of Supervisors.

Yet Sun Citians are far from quiet and wield much political clout. Their voter turnouts are among the highest in Maricopa County — 60 to 70 percent cast ballots.

As growth envelops the Sun Cities, some residents say they want a way to have a greater voice in preserving their lifestyles.

There are no official drives to incorporate Sun City or Sun City West at present. But Phil Garner, president of the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association, said two pro-incorporation meetings have been held in Sun City West the past six months.

"We felt it would be a disservice to our residents if we just idly stood by and did not call into question some of the assumptions that formed the basis for their conclusion," Garner said.

That's why PORA and the Sun City Home Owners Association co-sponsored a forum Monday at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City West. County Supervisor Jan Brewer, who represents the Sun Cities, arranged for the county to host the event. The PORA board recently voted to oppose incorporation, and HOA is neutral on the subject. Brewer told the crowd of about 1,500 Monday that she has no opinion on incorporation.

A panel of experts at the forum provided insight about how different forms of governments could serve Sun City and Sun City West in the future.

Incorporation of the two communities as separate cities was one of the options explored during the discussion. Other alternatives proposed were for keeping things

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as they are, annexation by a neighboring city and merging the homeowners associations and recreation centers boards to create community associations. None of the proposals would have any effect on school districts in the area.

The two Sun Cities, representing more than 70,000 residents, are primarily residential with fixed boundaries under the jurisdiction of the county. Both are known for their volunteers, especially the posse, which helps the Sheriff's Office, and the Prides, which maintain the landscaped street medians.

Although the retirement communities make up a small amount of the county's population, their residents have tremendous power because of their large voting blocs, said Jack DeBolske, former executive director of the Arizona League of Cities and Towns.

"Gilbert might have twice the population as Sun City, but it doesn't have the voter turnout that you have," DeBolske told the audience.

Besides DeBolske, other panel members were Tempe City Manager Gary Brown and Gilbert planning director Scott Anderson.

its 21,281 residents, according to the Arizona League of Cities and Towns. Sun City West's revenues actually would be higher because it has about 31,000 residents now.

Panelists said cities can't operate their governments on state-shared revenues alone. Most Arizona cities have sales taxes, and many also have property taxes.

As cities, Sun City and Sun City West would be responsible for maintaining streets and streetlights, which now are the county's responsibility.

The communities could contract with the Sheriff's Office for police protection. Both communities already have fire districts, a private garbage service and a private water and sewer service. But they could decide to provide all those services, as many cities do.

Some residents attending the forum believe things are going well and shouldn't be changed. They said the Sun Cities already have a good relationship with Maricopa County government.

"I do not want incorporation. I don't think we'd get more service than we're getting now," said Bonnie Naftalin, a Sun City West resident. "We're very happy with the way things are."

"I don't see the point of incorpo-

Ignacio San Martin, professor of urban planning at Arizona State University's College of Architecture and Environmental Design, led the forum.

Panelists explained that annexation could not occur unless a majority of voters in Sun City or Sun City West agreed to be swallowed up by an adjacent city. Community associations would not provide a legal voice, nor would they entitle the communities to state-shared revenues that cities receive.

Incorporation monopolized the 2½-hour discussion.

"There are many subjective factors that go into this (incorporation)," Brown said. "It's an emotional decision. It's difficult to create something new and different. You have to look ahead 20 years."

Anderson said incorporation gives residents local control rather than having decisions about land uses or upkeep of property made by a government body dozens of miles away.

If incorporated, the Sun Cities would receive state-shared revenues to operate their governments. Based on 1995 census figures, Sun City would get \$11.2 million for its 38,037 residents, and Sun City West would receive \$6.3 million for

ration," Bernard Naftalin said. "The services would cost more than the income."

Castenio Baroni of Sun City agreed.

"People are quite happy the way they are," he said. "We don't need more taxes and another layer of government."

Incorporating Sun City and Sun City West has been tried before.

In 1989, Sun City West voters rejected incorporation, 6,333 to 4,745. At the time, Del Webb Corp. was still building homes and providing financial support for the community's operation. Today, Webb is gone, and the future of Sun City West rests on the shoulders of its 31,000 residents.

About 500 attended an Oct. 19 meeting in Sun City West to discuss the possibility of incorporation. Residents Greg Seguin and Tom Young were among the organizers of the meeting. No formal group has been formed.

In Sun City in 1964, voters rejected a proposal to make Sun City a city. In late 1992, Citizens for Self-Government failed to get enough signatures to put the issue on the ballot.

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# PROS and CONS

## Panel addresses incorporation of Sun Cities

By BRUCE ELLISON  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A decision to incorporate as a city "is often based on how you feel, on the emotions" rather than cold raw data and neat and tidy budgets, Tempe City Manager Gary Brown said Monday.

Brown was one of five panelists who spoke to about 600 residents of Sun City and Sun City West in a three-hour Sundome program that explained the benefits and drawbacks of incorporation for both Sun Cities.

"When emotions come into

play, the easiest thing is to go with inertia, to make no changes," Brown said.

"That works until you have a serious problem and are forced to take some action."

To some extent, the questions to the panel afterward proved his point.

"What can we get that we don't have now except more taxes, a school district and a bureaucracy?" asked one man. "Why are you here to cause trouble?" he demanded of Brown.

"This place runs very well, God bless Del Webb," said

another man. "Why change it?"

For more local control, panelists said.

Scott Anderson, city planner in Gilbert, noted that "taking control of your destiny is what's important. Looking ahead 20 years, there may be things you want to do."

And as a part of Maricopa County, he said, that control is in Phoenix, with supervisors, not with a local council.

"What about empty stores 20 years down the road?" Anderson asked. "Decrepit

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E.B. McGovern/Daily News-Sun

Tempe City Manager Gary Brown, center, talks to a large audience at the Sundome Monday about the idea of incorporating Sun City and Sun City West. The group of panelists, from left, Byron Healy of the Sun City Home Owners Association, Jack DeBolske of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, Brown, Scott Anderson of the Gilbert planning commission and Ignacio San Martin, an Arizona State University professor, was brought together to answer questions from residents.

# Panelists discuss pros, cons of incorporation

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buildings?"

Local laws enacted by a city could deal with those.

On the panel with the two city officials were Jack DeBolske, retired executive director of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, and Ignacio San Martin, a professor at Arizona State University who has studied incorporation and city

development.

While both DeBolske and San Martin had numbers for potential revenues that a city such as Sun City or Sun City West would receive, neither promised that it would be enough, with San Martin arguing that costs tend to outrun revenue projections.

He encouraged a long-range look at costs, not just a brief three-year projection.

Anderson said having a general plan would give a municipality a better chance to influence development in areas next to it.

But host Phil Garner, president of the Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association, strongly defended the status quo of county governing, noting the helpfulness of District 4 Supervisor Jan Brewer, who was in

the audience along with District 3 Supervisor Andy Kunesek, whose constituents in New River also are considering incorporation.

Garner said that residents of the Sun Cities vote in large numbers, and their voice "definitely is heard."

"You can't compare the Sun Cities with anyplace else," said Gilbert's Anderson. "Ninety-nine and 44 one-hundredths of

the people here vote."

In Gilbert, by contrast, "there are 3.4 people per household and not all of them register. Here it's 1.1 per household, and you all are registered."

"You have three times the impact" per 1,000 population, Anderson pointed out.

Tempe manager Brown added that "if we get a 10 percent turnout in Tempe

elections, it's a lot."

Brewer noted that while she represents all the residents of District 4, the county provides almost all local services only to the Sun Cities.

But Anderson observed that "Jan Brewer is one of five supervisors. There are competing interests on that board, and your interests could suffer if the Southeast Valley wins a battle."

# HOA, PORA to conduct incorporation symposium

## Forum would present facts — pro and con

By MIKE RUSSO  
Independent Newspapers

With the incorporation issue heating up again in the Sun Cities, the Sun Cities Home Owners Association and Sun City West's Property Owners are jointly planning a public symposium to present the pros and cons of self-government.

HOA and PORA directors last week voted to proceed with plans for such a symposium in late October or early November, when winter residents return. The organizations will attempt to secure the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts for the meeting.

"We continue to hear more and more about incorporation of Sun City and Sun City West," said Byron Healy, HOA president. "This

is to take some of the emotionalism out of the issue.

"With the growth in the northwest Valley, groups need to put aside their differences and work for the common good," Mr. Healy said of HOA's and PORA's joint venture.

HOA Director Bob Kortright noted, "There is no subject that evokes more passion and less logic than incorporation." He mentioned the attitude of many people is "don't bother me with the facts, I've already made up my mind."

Mr. Healy mentioned that HOA and PORA officials recently met



KORTRIGHT

with Arizona State University professor Ignacio San Martin to discuss incorporation.

"He has studied the costs of self-government by category for several communities," Mr. Healy said. "He has come to a number of unusual conclusions he had not expected to find."

Mr. Healy said the professor would be willing to moderate the symposium and would arrange for the appearance of four city managers of communities comparable in size to Sun City and Sun City West.

"They would have problems similar to Sun City and Sun City West," Mr. Healy said.

He further noted that the Sun Cities are similar in that they are both built out, are primarily residen-

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tial, have little commercial property and have no industry.

"The issues of incorporation seem to be the same for both communities and the residents of both communities should benefit from such a symposium," both organizations declared in a statement issued last week.

While HOA and PORA agree that an unbiased discussion of incorporation is necessary, they differ in their opinions on the subject.

HOA is neutral on the matter. "It is part of our charter," Mr. Healy said.

However, PORA does not "support a move to incorporate Sun City West primarily because of its belief that sufficient and unbiased hard facts are not yet available."

A recent PORA survey indicates 84.2 percent of respondents agree with that stance.

Obtaining and disseminating those unbiased hard facts is the purpose of the symposium.

"We felt it was important that

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*We felt it was important that both factions hear outside experts discuss the feasibility and potential problems (of incorporation).*

**Byron Healy**  
HOA President

both factions hear outside experts discuss the feasibility and potential problems (of incorporation)," Mr. Healy said.

There would be no cost to HOA for this symposium, according to Mr. Healy.

# Peoria not interested in annexing Sun City

## Residents voice objection to incorporation

By MIKE RUSSO  
Independent Newspapers

The suspense was over early.

The majority of the meeting was anticlimactic.

No sooner had many people settled into their seats than they heard the welcome news — Peoria is not contemplating annexing any portion of Sun City.

More than 100 people packed the east meeting room at Sundial Recreation Center Thursday afternoon to hear a presentation by two Peoria officials — Debra Stark, community development director, and Steve Kemp, city attorney. The

city of Peoria has been very aggressive of late in annexing adjacent areas.

They had been invited by Citizens for Self-Government, the meeting sponsors, to speak on the subject of annexation.

Prior to the meeting's start, audience members uttered comments such as "They are setting us up," "They are getting us ready for incorporation," "They are trying to scare us into incorporation."

However, some of their fears were allayed quickly when Ms. Stark announced, "We have no interest, at this time, in annexing Sun City."

That pronouncement was met with resounding applause.

Ms. Stark said the purpose of the meeting was not to frighten Sun Citizens, but to inform them of the possible advantages of being part of a city— whether through annexation or incorporation.

Benefits of being annexed into Peoria include improved infrastructure, zoning enforcement, police and fire protection, according to Ms. Stark.

"We have well-maintained streets," she said.

"We have a dependable water and sewer system, which is a real goal; to enjoy an urban lifestyle,"

Ms. Stark continued.

She further noted the city can more easily enforce yard maintenance ordinances than the county.

"A lot of time, people come to us because they want a voice in government," she added. "Maricopa County is so vast."

Sun City, being unincorporated, is presently governed by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, and in the nation's fastest-growing county, Sun City's cries for assistance are not always heard, she noted.

In discussing annexation, Ms. Stark mentioned Peoria has a general plan, which includes the city's plan for annexation. "If you could see it, our planning does not include Sun City," she said,

"You have been good neighbors to the city of Peoria," Ms. Stark continued. "We are grateful you are our neighbors."

She noted Peoria has an annexation policy. "The things we are interested in is county islands. We think they would be better off being part of Peoria," Ms. Stark explained.

Mr. Stark explained, even if Peoria were interested in annexing any portion of Sun City, the action would also have to meet with the approval of "a majority of the property owners, by number ... and a majority of property owners by assessed valuation."

Areas to be annexed must be contiguous to the annexing city, Mr. Kemp said. Therefore, only four municipalities could possibly annex Sun City, or any portion of the community, Peoria, Glendale, Surprise or El Mirage, he noted.

Peoria has annexed the area around Lake Pleasant and it is interested in annexing an area northwest of the city, according to Mr. Kemp.

While Ms. Stark's announcement assuaged many in attendance, Mary Charlesworth, president of the Sun City Taxpayers Association, was not placated.

"This sounds like not a sales pitch for Peoria to annex us but a sales pitch for incorporation," she accused.

"We are not advocating incorporation. But we are proponents of city government," Ms. Stark responded. "You have a lot more ability to be heard in a city."

"We are here to provoke some thought among Sun City residents, she added."

In explaining the reason Citizens for Self-Government scheduled the meeting and invited the Peoria officials, Ray Smith said, "The leaders

here have done a pretty good job of advancing the interest of Sun City. The fact is, things change. We have to change with them. Change is inevitable.

"The question is, what form will the change take and how will we respond?" he continued. "The bottom line is things are changing rapidly and we need to be on top of them to keep from being swept up by another city or being ignored by the county."

The organization has two goals according to Mr. Smith — "educate people about the advantages of incorporation, as well as inform them of disadvantages, so when the time comes, people of Sun City can make an informed decision."

He said the group is currently preparing a potential budget that could be used by an incorporated Sun City.

"Roughly \$9 million would be received from the state," he said. "We think that would more than cover the costs (of operating a city)."

"If that \$9 million doesn't cover the cost, it is time to throw in the towel; at least in that score."



## Peoria: 'We have no intention at this time of annexing Sun City'

Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

Debra Stark, a Peoria community planner, and Steve Kemp, Peoria city attorney, speak at a Citizens for Self-Government meeting in Sun City Thursday.



Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

About 150 people attend a Citizens for Self-Government meeting in Sundial Recreation Center.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Friday, April 23, 1999

# Incorporationists want dialogue, but draw criticism at public forum

By JEFF OWENS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A public meeting on annexation presented by a Sun City pro-incorporation group devolved into a shouting match Thursday afternoon as Sun Citians loudly demanded to know why Peoria is trying to annex their community.

Peoria has no intention of attempting to annex Sun City, Peoria officials said at the forum in the Sundial Recreation Center.

Any municipality that wanted to annex Sun City would need approval from Sun City property owners in an election.

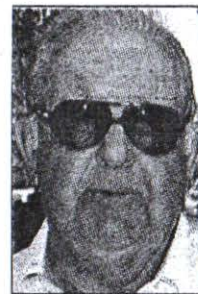
About 150 people attended the meeting, which featured guest speakers from City Hall in Peoria and was sponsored by Citizens For Self-Government, a Sun City group which has long advocated incorporation.

Controversy erupted earlier this week when advance press for the meeting led many to believe that Peoria was indeed attempting to begin an annexation of Sun City.

Peoria Community Devel-



**Bob Briscoe bristled at advance press: "That ad said to me, 'Wow, Peoria is thinking about annexation.'"**



**Jerry Robinson opposes annexation and incorporation: 'We've already got our facilities in place.'**

## What it takes to incorporate:

Peoria City Attorney Steve Kemp said three things must happen in order for an Arizona community to incorporate:

- The community to be annexed must have a majority of property owners approve the annexation by petition.
- The community must also have a majority of those owning more than half of the community's assessed value approve the annexation by petition.
- The area must be contiguous with the city to which it will be annexed.

opment Director Debra Stark received loud applause for her opening remark: "We have no intention at this time of annexing Sun City."

Peoria City Attorney Steve Kemp told the audience "There has never been any discussion" at city hall in

Peoria about adding Sun City to Peoria.

Stark and Kemp had been invited to the session to explain how the annexation process works. Stark is a former Maricopa County planning official.

With Peoria's City Hall

flooded with telephone calls earlier this week, Mayor John Keegan immediately fired off a letter to the Daily News-Sun in which he balked at the Cities."

"The issue of self-government or incorporation is one for the citizens of Sun City to decide. We in Peoria wish the people of the Sun Cities good luck in meeting the needs of their community."

Don Coleman, president of the board of directors for Citizens for Self-Government, said that while he didn't "intend to sell incorporation" during the meeting, his group only wanted to get Sun Citians

► See Group's goal, A5

◀ From A1

thinking about incorporation.

"In brainstorming for a theme," Coleman said, "someone said 'Why not use the threat of annexation as an prospect of annexation."

Advertisements for the meeting by Citizens For Self-Government "may have misled some to believe that the City of Peoria is interested in annexing the Sun Cities," Keegan said.

He added that Peoria City Attorney Steve Kemp and Stark spoke at the forum "simply to provide the viewpoint of those familiar with the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation or annexation."

While Peoria does annex

topic only to illustrate "one of the things that could happen if we don't incorporate."

Smith said at the meeting Thursday that the purpose of the forum was to "educate the public on the advantages of incorporation," not annexation.

Sun City resident Bob Briscoe bristled at advance press for the meeting which he said looked misleading.

"I'm against incorporation," he said. "And that ad said to me, 'Wow, Peoria is thinking about annexation,' and they're not. I think that's wrong." Briscoe is president of the Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc.

Sun City Taxpayers Association President Mary Elaine

adjacent areas, Keegan said it does so only to "protect undeveloped areas around the city from substantial development. Certainly, this is not the case in the area of the Sun incentive for thinking about incorporation?"

"We're just trying to get the blood going around here. There's so much inertia out here — people don't realize the world is growing up around them."

Coleman said Peoria was approached to speak at the meeting because Sun City abuts more of Peoria than any other community.

Citizens For Self-Government Director Ray Smith said Wednesday that annexation was chosen as the

Charlesworth drew applause when she stood and said "It sounds like a sales pitch for incorporation, and I don't like it."

Stark added that Peoria is not advocating either annexation or incorporation for Sun City. She said she and Kemp were there only to provide a perspective on a city system of self-government.

"From our side, we think cities work very well," she said. "We're here to inform."

Sun Citian Jerry Robinson said he found the meeting informative but unruly, but added that he opposes annexation and incorporation because, in Sun City, "We've already got our facilities in place."

OVER

83-5-5



**HERB WHITNEY**  
Republic Columnist

## Government issue returns to Sun City

**T**he mere mention of the word "incorporation" is enough to cause a stampede of diametrically opposed emotions in Sun City.

Residents there either hate or love the idea, depending on their opinion of Sun City's future needs.

Incorporation would bring municipal government to the retirement community, which now relies on Maricopa County to furnish such essentials as police and fire protection and street maintenance.

Supporters say incorporation would give Sun City millions of dollars a year in state taxes, more than needed to run the community. Opponents argue that all politicians eventually turn to taxation as a way to fund their pet projects, wiping out both the surplus and the citizens' trust.

"I don't know of any town that can live on revenue sharing alone," Sun City resident Jim Groundwater said.

"Incorporation is a very emotional issue. Most people who moved here were happy to get out from under local government."

A Sun City group called Citizens for Self-Government, which favors incorporation, held a public meeting April 15 to listen to residents' views on the subject. Another meeting will be held May 18.

### 'Their own conclusions'

"There's little middle ground on this issue, but we don't intend to shove our ideas down people's throats," said Don Coleman, president of Citizens for Self-Government. "That just hasn't worked in the past. We want people to come to their own conclusions."

On April 15, two obvious opponents of incorporation left in a huff before the meeting was over, Coleman said.

"Their faces were real stern, like that painting of the farmer with the pitchfork standing with his wife (*American Gothic* by Grant Wood)," Coleman said. "They weren't happy with us at all."

According to Coleman, some of the 30 residents who attended the meeting were worried about crime, saying they might support incorporation if it could provide more resources to fight crime than the county does.

Raymond Smith, who moderated the meeting, said incorporation also might help fund the financially strapped Sun City libraries as well as give residents a voice in the state Legislature.

Of course, Sun City's governmental needs are largely offset by volunteers, whose sheer numbers and energy form a quasi-government of their own. And if volunteers keep pitching in, will incorporation be necessary?

George Hartman doesn't think so.

"As long as volunteerism prevails, incorporation won't be realized," said Hartman, who has volunteered for a number of civic groups, including two tours of duty with the Sun City Homeowners Association.

"I think Sun City is doing well. If we had a municipal government, a bureaucracy of younger, outside people would probably run the city. Sun City residents wouldn't be in charge anymore."

### 0-for-3 on attempts

Three formal incorporation attempts have occurred since Sun City opened in 1960, and all have failed.

In 1964, the issue was defeated by a ratio of more than 2 to 1, the only time incorporation has ever been placed on a ballot.

In 1985, circulated petitions were never submitted to the county, and in 1992, the initiative fell 120 signatures short of being placed on the ballot.

Coleman said his group is hoping to get incorporation onto the ballot in 2000, during the next presidential election.

That is, if a majority of Sun Citizens agree it's a good idea.

Groundwater isn't convinced it is.

"I can see incorporation happening in a new community that needs controls," he said. "But Del Webb left everything in place, and there is no room for expansion."

"As long as civic responsibilities are taken care of by volunteers, I'm not sure incorporation has anything to offer."



# CSG weighs future

## Members debate incorporation question

By DAN BURNETTE  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — You'd think a debate on the pros and cons of incorporation by two members of a pro-incorporation group might be a bit one-sided.

But some of the 35 people attending the annual meeting Tuesday of Citizens for Self Government thought Ray Smith was convincing in arguing the case for keeping Sun City unincorporated.

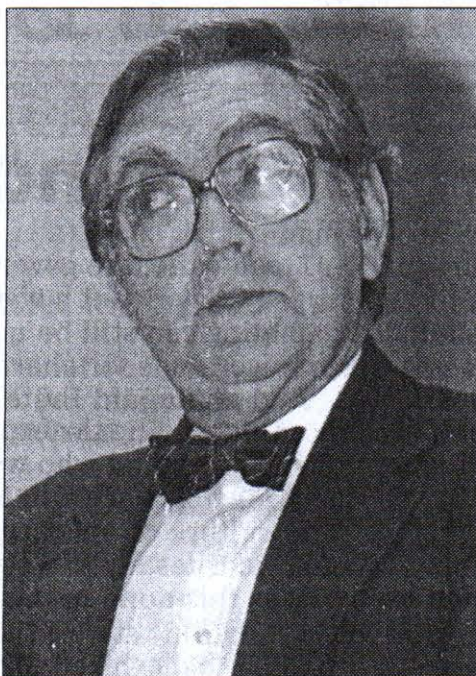
"One person came up and said, 'I almost said if it ain't broke, don't fix it, and walked out,'" Smith said following the debate between him and Sid Menk, who argued in favor of incorporation.

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it," has been the rallying cry of those who want to keep Sun City unincorporated since the retirement community was founded 33 years ago. In that time, Sun City has seen one vote on the issue go down by a 3-1 margin and two petition drives fail.

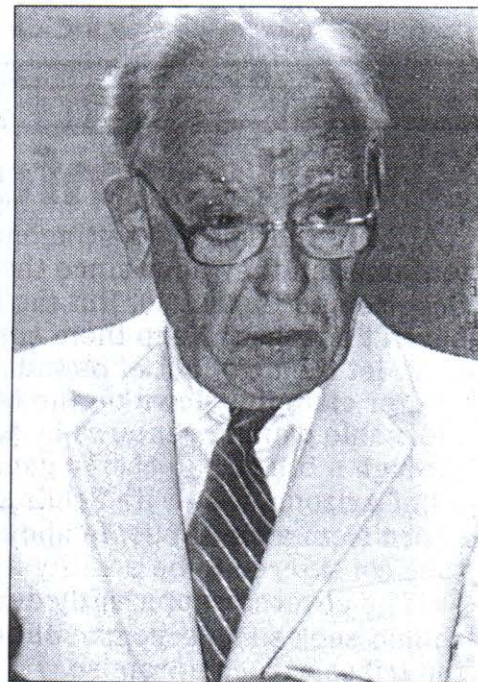
In August, members of Citizens for Self Government turned in what appeared to be sufficient numbers of petition signatures to have an election on the issue in November, only to have a decisive number of signatures thrown out because one of the people collecting petitions was not properly registered as a voter.

Tuesday's debate was an attempt to "inject a little humor into a subject that raises people's blood pressure," said Doris Foster, who turned over the presidency to William Thompson following the meeting.

The debate covered familiar ground for many long-time residents, but introduced the issues to some relative newcomers.



Ray Smith



Sid Menk

Smith argued that Sun City is well served by county government and that municipal government would be an unnecessary, costly and possibly corrupt additional layer of government.

Menk stated that municipal government would give Sun Citizens more control over zoning matters and local ordinances that they do not have, and that Sun City has no makings for a corrupt political machine among its senior citizen population.

Before and after the debate, the audience spent more than an hour discussing how, or whether, to ever again take out a petition to put incorporation before Sun City voters.

Thompson suggested that Citizens

for Self Government continue to educate the public about the merits of incorporation, but not get involved in a petition drive because of the difficulties of dealing with reporting of contributions and expenditures. He said the group ran into problems with requirements for very detailed reports with the Secretary of State's office in the last petition drive.

In other business, members elected four directors: Gloria Russell to a one-year term; Ruth Guidotti, two-year term; and Menk and Smith, three-year terms.

New officers are Thompson, president; William Davies, vice president; Steve Kozica, secretary; and Deborah Smith, treasurer.

Daily News-Sun

Wednesday, March 26, 1997

# Group pushes incorporation vote in Sun City

By ANGELA MULL  
Staff writer

The incorporation of Sun City would provide the retirement community with self-determination at its best, said a League of Arizona Cities and Towns official on Tuesday.

"This community will decide the type, kind and level of services it wants to provide," said John DeBolske, the league's executive director, at a Citizens for Self-Government meeting.

Incorporation could also give people more regulations to follow, DeBolske said.

"But when you live in an urban environment, there have to be some rules, and who better to decide those rules than you?"

DeBolske spoke to a group of about 75 people at the meeting of the self-government group that wants to stick incorporation on the November 1998 ballot. In order to do so, it must secure the signatures of 10 percent of Sun City's roughly 38,000 residents.

Incorporation is a word that's been heard in Sun City for decades. It was put on the ballot in 1964, but voters defeated it by a 3-1 margin. Since then, two petition drives to place

incorporation on the ballot have failed.

If Sun City were incorporated, it would no longer be under the county's jurisdiction. It could have its own city council and police department. Citizens for Self Government has long advocated incorporation for several reasons. One of those reasons is that incorporation would allow Sun City to contract with independent companies to provide street maintenance. Sun City would not have to leave it up to the county.

If incorporation goes on the 1998 ballot and voters approve it, a local

sales tax could be adopted, DeBolske said. Sun City officials might want one if Sun City's portion of the state's shared revenue — \$9.4 million — were not enough to run the city's own government. While some people are against this, DeBolske said he looks at taxes as an investment.

"The question is, are you going to get value received?" he asked. "Most Americans don't object to taxes if they know they're going to a good purpose."

The key to successful incorporation, he said, is for the community's citizens to be active if Sun City is incorporated.

"If you don't take an interest in this city after incorporation, you can have the worst government in the world," he said.

Audience members were mostly supportive of incorporation. One man said he'd like to see Sun City use incorporation as a way to increase the number of police officers in the residential community. He cited the recent string of bank robberies as a reason Sun City needs to have the area patrolled by its own police officers who are not as limited in their powers as the Sun City Posse.

If incorporation passed, the county would appoint the first city council.

# Community involvement suits her

Woman heads crusade to incorporate Sun City

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

9 SEPT. 1992  
ARIZONA REPUBLIC

SUN CITY — When Doris Foster moved to Sun City in 1984, she didn't pay much attention to the talk about incorporating the retirement community.

Doris and her husband, Hal Dawson, who was dying from cancer, moved in with her sister and brother-in-law because they, too, needed her to care for them.

"My sister had cancer and my brother-in-law had Alzheimer's disease. My husband was sick then, too, so I decided to move to my sister's home in Sun City so I could take care of all three," Doris said.

She had recently retired from a 27-year career as a clerk for Burlington-Northern Railroad in Seattle, Wash., where she raised her four children.

After her loved ones died within 1½ years of each other, Foster inherited the Sun City condominium and sold her Seattle home.

It was not until 1986, when she considered marrying Sun City resident Albert Foster, that Doris — who today is president of Citizens for Self-Government — became interested in incorporation.

"Albert wanted me to read a lot of literature he had about how our transportation and many other things could be better funded if Sun City was incorporated," Doris said.

See FOSTER, Page 4

## FOSTER

From Page 1

She said she resisted reading anything about incorporation. In 1985 when a citizens group tried unsuccessfully to get signatures to force an election, she was not eligible to vote because she was a Washington resident, but she helped her brother-in-law show he was against it.

One night when she was unable to sleep, Doris decided to read the incorporation pamphlets that Albert had given her.

"I thought reading it would make me fall asleep. To my surprise, I became very interested and highly incensed when I read how a noisy group had been able to break up a homeowners (association) meeting where board members had studied the issue for a year and wanted to recommend incorporation," Doris said.

Doris, who has been a secretary for her church and various groups for several years, said she never intended to be anything but a "helpful backup" for Citizens for Self-Government.

But in November, Les Merydith talked her into taking over his job as president, because at 88 years old, he was experiencing hearing problems.

"I had never been in politics before except for my involvement in the railroad union, but the public-service example had some

roots in my family," Doris said. "My grandfather was a town marshal and my father was a justice of the peace."

Once she was at the helm of CSG, the 76-year-old grandmother of four made incorporation a full-time job.

She manned the campaign headquarters phone, researched what might be the benefits of incorporation, compiled brochures and newsletters, and encouraged people to write letters to the editor. She also oversaw the petition drive that came 120 signatures short of meeting the 3,242-signature requirement.

"It was difficult to collect signatures because many people were afraid to trust us. They thought we were crooked," Doris said.

She said the campaign headquarters is likely to close, but she is not quitting her battle. She hopes a new petition drive would start next year and the 1,500 CSG members would work from their homes.

"Because our busiest circulator had not re-registered to vote at his new address, the 150 signatures he gathered were thrown out," Doris said. "We really had enough signatures. All we have to do is go back to those same people and get their signatures again."

# Incorporationists won't challenge

## Attempt to recertify petition would cost group \$30,000

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — No more talk of city government. No more letters to the editor. No more efforts to incorporate Sun City — at least for a while.

Members of Citizens for Self Government have decided not to appeal the petition signatures ruled invalid that they collected in an effort to get the incorporation issue on the November ballot.

The Maricopa County Election Department verified the signatures last month and determined that the group came up 120 signatures short.

"We could pick it up and do it all over again, but I don't think

the people are ready for it," said Doris Foster, CSG president. "The people are pretty resistant. They feel any city government will be crooked. I think incorporation is something people don't want to think about now."

Under Arizona state law, CSG has until Friday to challenge the verification of signatures in Superior Court.

But Foster said the group consulted a lawyer who told them it would cost \$30,000 to attempt to recertify any of the signatures that were ruled invalid.

"It would have been a full-blown court case," Foster said. "Many qualified signatures were

See Board to, A5

# Board to determine future plans of CSG

—From A1  
thrown out, but we can't carry this on."

CSG submitted 3,510 signatures for verification; 388 were ruled invalid, said Karen Osborne, assistant elections director. CSG needed 3,242 valid signatures to get the issue on the November ballot.

Osborne said that about 90 percent of 159 signatures thrown out were valid, but that they could not be accepted because they were obtained by circulators who were not registered voters.

"I hate for them to have to lose it that way, but it's one of the real gotchas of the world. It's a very common mistake and we try to counsel groups to make sure their circulators are registered at the right address," Osborne said.

In CSG's case, one member who collected 150 signatures forgot to re-register at his new address.

"It was a technicality. One person who worked very hard for us forgot to change their address in time," Foster said.

The other signatures thrown out were 110 for people who were not registered; 23 for people who didn't register to vote until after they signed the petitions; one signature was duplicated; and 28 were people who lived out of the district.

Joe Sentes, president of the Retirement Community Association, which opposes incorporation, said his group would not have gotten involved in a court case if CSG appealed the signatures.

"In this case I can't imagine that they would have a chance on an appeal because they would have had to ask the judge to break the law. I'm glad this is all over," Sentes said.

"We hope that nobody else starts it (a drive to incorporate Sun City) in the near future because it causes a lot of disruption in the community."

As for the future plans of CSG, Foster said the board will meet later this month to decide if they should disband or elect new officers.

# SC incorporation bid short of signatures

## Local drive 120 signatures shy of requirement; CSG may appeal county ruling

By **BRET McKEAND**  
Sun Cities Independent

The drive to incorporate Sun City has come up short by a mere 120 votes and backers are uncertain whether they will legally challenge the vote count, begin a new drive or drop the issue entirely.

Citizens for Self-Government began its petition drive last fall in an effort to have the question put

before Sun City voters in this year's general election. On July 31, CSG officials turned over 3,651 signatures to the county and, at the time, thought they had 409 more than the amount required by the county.

Last week, however, county officials announced that only 3,122 signatures were validated — exactly 120 signatures shy of the amount needed for a November

election on incorporation.

"We were shocked," says Doris Foster, president of CSG. "We knew they would throw out some signatures, but we were confident that we had at least a 10 percent cushion."

A number of signatures were ruled invalid because those who signed gave incorrect addresses, were not registered voters or did not live in Sun City. An additional 157

signatures, however, were tossed out because the circulators of the petitions had failed to re-register to vote when they changed addresses in Sun City.

"There are 150 good signatures there," says Mrs. Foster, "but we're not able to use them."

In one case, one of the circulators apparently moved from one home to another in Sun City but did not reregister under his new address

until July 7. The county invalidated all signatures he collected before July 7.

The circulator, says the CSG president, collected more signatures than any other member during the campaign. In all, he had gathered 178 signatures — but only 28 collected after July 7 and only those were counted by county

See ■ RULING, Page 3

## ■ RULING

From Page 1

officials.

"It's really too bad," says Mrs. Foster. "He was by far our hardest working member and he collected almost all of his signatures before July 7."

She says her organization is looking into the possibility of challenging the ruling.

"If we could get the circulator OK'd, then we'd be OK and we would have the needed signatures. But it doesn't look good; the law's pretty clear on that point," she adds.

Mrs. Foster says there was a "mysterious" disappearance of an additional 145 signatures. She says CSG believed they handed over 3,651 signatures to the county in

July, but the county officials say they only received 3,506.

The CSG president says she's not sure if the signatures were lost or stolen.

CSG officials will meet this week to decide their next course of action. Mrs. Foster says a legal challenge would not only be costly, but it is doubtful such a challenge could be resolved before the November general election.

She says it will be up to CSG directors whether or not a new drive is started from scratch or if the issue is temporarily shelved.

"We did the best we could," she says. "Maybe it just wasn't meant to be."

"We did the best we could. Maybe it just wasn't meant to be."

— Doris Foster, president,  
Citizens for Self-Government

CSG conducted a similar drive in 1985 but was unable to come up with the signatures needed to place the issue before the voters. The only time Sun City has voted on the issue was in 1964 and voters rejected incorporation by a more than two-to-one margin.

# CSG event attracts 140

## Fountain Hills officials tout incorporation

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — The mayor and city manager of Fountain Hills came to Sun City Tuesday to tout the benefits of incorporation to their community.

Fountain Hills, a city of 10,500 in the East Valley, voted in 1989 to incorporate.

Mayor John Cutillo and City Manager Paul Nordin were featured speakers at the Citizens for Self Government annual meeting.

CSG has launched a petition drive to put the incorporation issue to a vote by Sun City residents in November. Members say they have 2,000 of the 3,400 signatures needed by Aug. 3.

"I strongly believe in your effort and what you're trying to do. It was a tough and sometimes bitter struggle (for Fountain Hills) and it took a lot of work. The opposition was very, very, very forceful against what we were trying to do," Cutillo said.

"But their concerns came from a fear of change, fear of taxes, of not knowing what to do. ... After 2½ years of incorporation, I'm positive that we did the right thing."

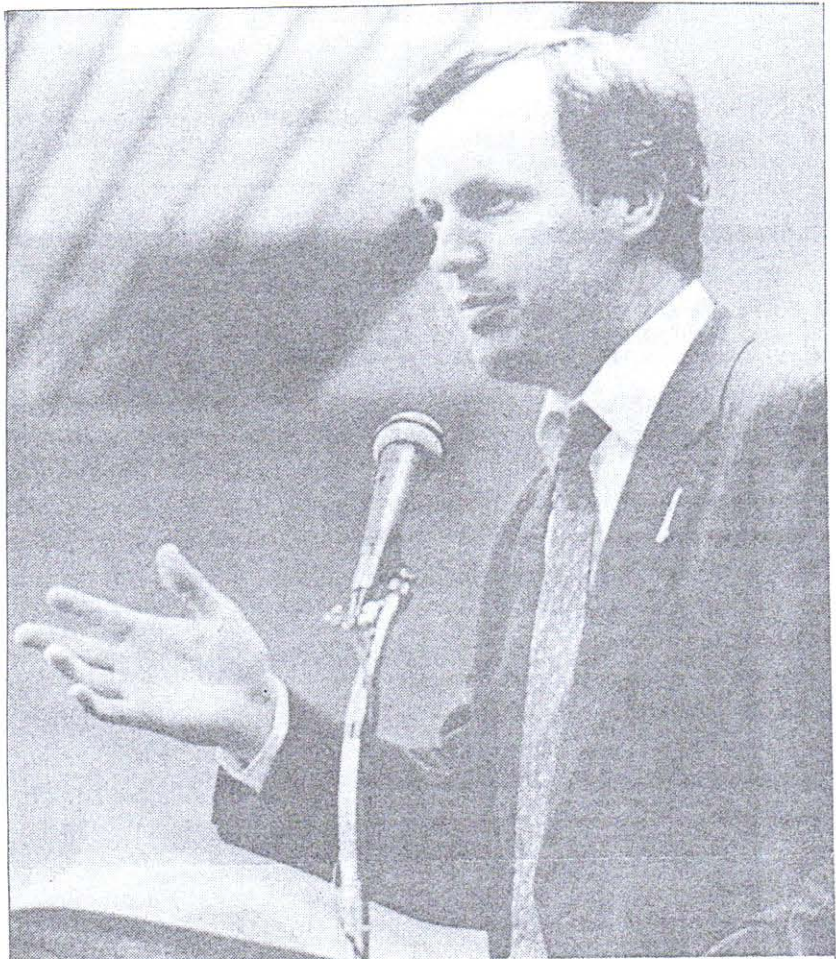
About 140 CSG members and other residents attended the meeting, which lasted about 90 minutes.

A few people in the audience were avid opponents of the incorporation movement, including Nat Jampel, who said comparing Fountain Hills to Sun City is "like comparing apples and oranges."

"We are a retirement community and they are a community of 10,000 much younger people with 1,400 children," Jampel said.

Nevertheless, Fountain Hills officials said they are convinced that local government "is the most democratic way to lower your taxes."

Since Fountain Hills residents voted to incorporate in December 1989, the city has not had a property tax or sales taxes increase and has accumulated



Fountain Hills City Manager Paul Nordin addresses 140 people on hand for the Citizens for Self Government meeting.

\$900,000 in reserves, Nordin said.

Fountain Hills adopted a budget in the 1991-92 fiscal year of \$1.38 million in revenue, \$1.19 million in expenses with a net savings of \$183,181, Nordin said. The fiscal year is from July 1 to June 30.

"That net savings is in addition to \$728,931 in reserves we already have and by the end of this year I expect we will have nearly \$1 million in reserves," Nordin said. "And I think you could do the same in Sun City with effective leadership."

Nordin said incorporation allowed Fountain Hills residents to have a local magistrate and building department rather than "going into Phoenix to pay fines and do other business."

He said the reserve money is allowing the city to fund a \$2.9 million street paving project, which came to a halt in 1985 when complications arose with a developer.

"If we were still part of the

county this kind of paving project would have never happened so soon," Nordin said. "We have done too much with too little to believe. There are still a lot of people in town who do not believe what we've done."

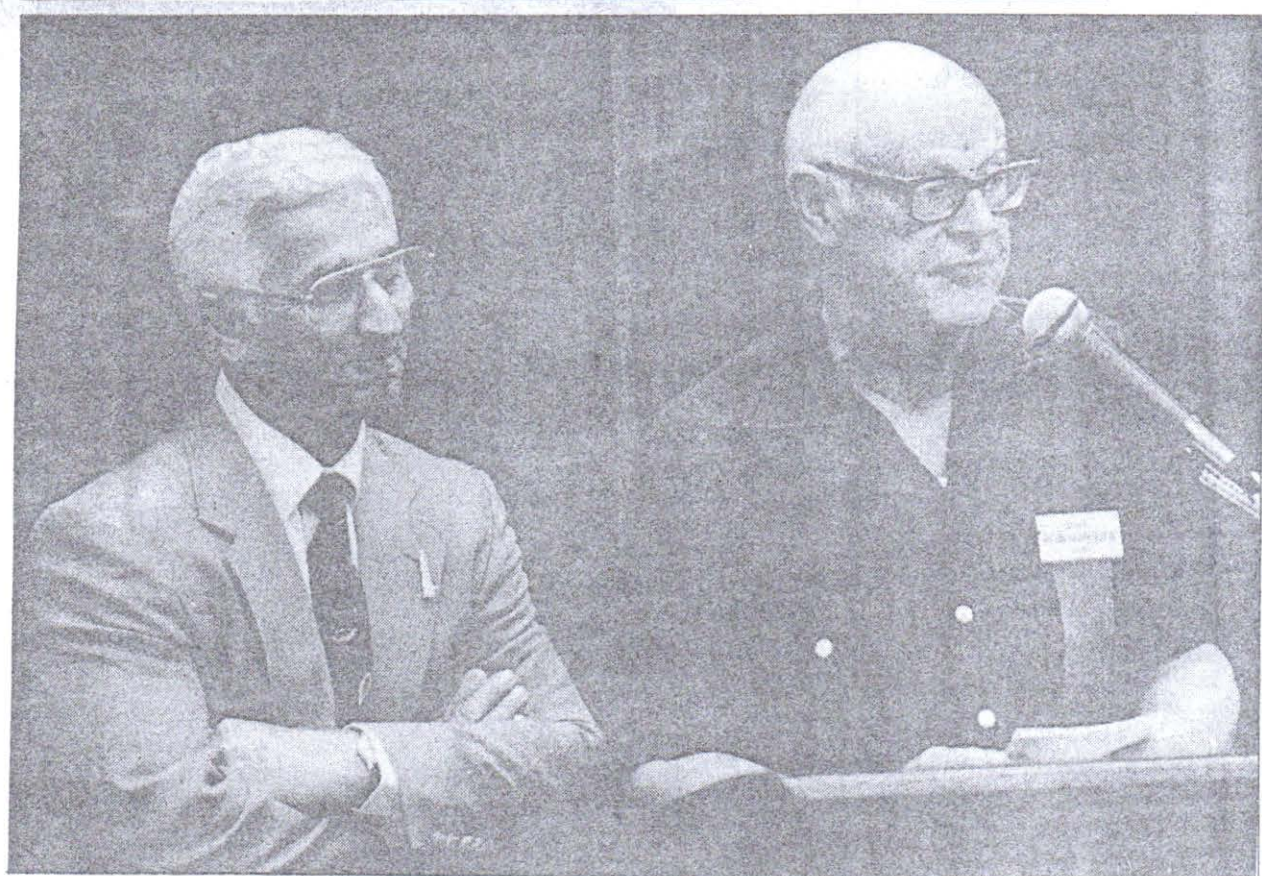
Nordin said he believes the city can continue to operate on a surplus budget if it froze the services it now provides.

But additions, such as a new civic center, major improvements and other projects could result in an increase in property taxes and sales taxes if Fountain Hills voters so choose, he said.

Sun Citian Bill Bearman said at the meeting that the Citizens for Self Government needs at least 1,000 more signatures.

"The question is to get this out of the way for Sun City because it's creating a lot of dissension. If a vote is taken, then at least it can be taken one way or another," Bearman said. "People our age need peace and quiet and not the battles we've had."

OVER



Stephen Cherek/Daily News-Sun

Dave Berninghausen, right, with Mayor John Cutillo of Fountain Hills entertain questions at the annual meeting of Citizens for Self Government.

## INCORPORATION OF SUN CITY

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

As recorded by Les Merydith

Feb. 6, 1992

1/1/60 - First house sold in Sun City.

3/1/62 - Del Webb Corp. sells Sunburst Water Co. to Sun City Water Co., a wholly owned subsidiary of Citizens Utilities. 1,790 customers. Price \$95,000.

12/1/64 - Incorporation election. 3000 voters, 6000 population. Two to one opposed. Del Webb offered to donate city hall site.

12/74 - The Board of Directors of the Home Owners Association released a report of a year long study which concluded that a charter form of government in Sun City operating on a contract basis could provide the existing levels of service financed by state shared revenues and have a substantial surplus left over with no new taxes required.

12/74 - A special study committee submitted to the Board of Directors of the Taxpayers Association a report of a year long study which concluded that a charter form of government in Sun City, operating on a contract basis, could provide the existing levels of service financed by state shared revenues and have a substantial surplus left over with no new taxes required.

12/12/77 - Maricopa County orders destruction of grassy medians along Thunderbird and Del Webb boulevards.

April 78 - Geo. Rodocker forms "Committee of Eight" to promote incorporation. Only Maurice Ambers and Joe Ryan survive in Sun City.

Nov. 78 - Jack deWard calls on Les Merydith and recruits him for the incorporation movement.

Dec. 78 - The Farrell Report released by Del Webb Development Co. A study of "Alternate Forms of Government for Sun City" which concluded that a charter form of government operating on a contract basis could provide the existing levels of service and have a substantial surplus left over with no new taxes required.

Feb. 79 - Organization meeting of 24 people at Western Savings - La Ronde.



Jack deWard elected president of the Charter Government Association. Les Merydith elected director.

1979 - Charter Government Association incorporated.

1980 - CGA opens headquarters in office building owned by Del Webb at 103rd and Coggins.

1981 - Office closed due to lack of funds.

Oct. 82 - Les Merydith elected president succeeding Jack DeWard.

Dec. 83 - The League of Women Voters of Sun City released a seven month's study which concluded that a charter form of government, operating on a contract basis, could provide existing levels of service financed by state shared revenues and have a substantial surplus left over with no new taxes.

Jan. 85 - Charter Government Association changes name to Citizens for Self-Government . Dr. Edwin Martin, retired military officer and former college president, elected president.

March 85 - Petitions to call for an incorporation election started circulating.

June 85 - Petition drive fails when summer doldrums set in.

Sept. 85 - Dr. Martin resigns and Les Merydith reelected president.

Jan 86 - Sun City Water Co. files Statement of Claimants forms with the Superior Court of Arizona claiming ownership of the groundwater rights within its service area which includes all of Sun City.

1986 - Les Merydith delivered a wheelbarrow load of requests to the Recreation Centers that the Rec. Centers file Statements of Claimant forms with the Superior Court of Arizona in behalf of all Sun City property owners.. The Rec. Centers complied.

Spring 86 - CSG launches publicity campaign in opposition to a California developer's (Pacific Scene) plan to put 200 high rise apartments on three acres of land adjacent to Bell and 99th. Supervisors denied request Apr. 21, 86.

Jan. 88 - Vol 1 - No. 1 Sun City OUTLOOK delivered to 24,000 Sun City homes as "Independent" supplement.

Apr. 88 - Vol 1 - NO. 2 OUTLOOK delivered to 24,000 Sun City homes as "Independent" supplement.

May 88 - Vol 1 - No. 3 OUTLOOK delivered to 27,000 Sun City homes by bulk mail

Dec. 88 - Vol 1 - No. 4 OUTLOOK published but not delivered as demanded by Phoenix Newspapers, Inc.

Dec. 88 - Vol 1 - No. 5 OUTLOOK published and delivered to 27,000 Sun City homes by bulk mail.

Feb. 89 - Vol 1 - No. 6 OUTLOOK published and delivered to 27,000 Sun City homes by bulk mail. "SUN CITY PEOPLE CAN LICK THE SCHOOL TAX". Also mailings to legislators. Successful.

Oct. 89 - Vol. 1 - No. 1 Sun City West DECISION '89 published for Westers for Self Government and delivered by bulk mail to all Sun City West homes.

June 91 - Les Merydith elected Ch. of the Bd. Doris Foster elected President.

Sept. 91 - CSG moves into its new headquarters.

Oct. 91 - Grand Opening ceremonies.

Oct. 91 - Les Merydith retires as Chairman and member of the CSG Board of Directors. Continues as consultant and Chairman of Water Resources Committee.

Dec. 91 - Vol. 1 - No. 9 OUTLOOK delivered to 24,000 Sun City homes as "Independent" supplement.

9/21/92

# Sun City petition drive over

## Incorporation effort won't restart in '93

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

SUN CITY — The incorporation drive in Sun City is officially over.

Citizens for Self-Government board members who led the recent unsuccessful drive to place the incorporation question on the ballot decided Wednesday not to begin circulating petitions again in 1993.

In the recent drive, the group was 120 signatures short of the number required to place an incorporation question on the Nov. 3 ballot. After county officials broke the news to the CSG in August, President Doris Foster said she thought that CSG would try to get a petition drive going again "after the holidays."

But board members decided that Sun City was not ready for incorporation.

The group will not disband, however.

"We will continue on a limited basis and will educate people about the benefits of incorporation, and we will continue to do research," Foster said.

The campaign headquarters will close in November, after its lease expires. In the interim, Foster said

See **DRIVE**, Page 3

she will no longer keep regular office hours.

CSG has about 1,500 members who will work out of their homes, Foster said.

The group had filed petitions with 3,651 signatures July 31, but county officials discounted 141 signatures because of legal technicalities.

Another 157 signatures were ruled invalid because two circulators had not re-registered to vote when they moved from one home to another in Sun City. The county validated 3,122 signatures, 120 short of the requirement.

Foster initially said her group would fight the county's ruling in court, arguing that signatures

thrown out because of the problem with the circulators were valid nevertheless.

However, the estimated \$30,000 legal cost to fight the case discouraged CSG board members from pursuing the case, Foster said.

Besides, Foster said, the legal challenge probably would not have been resolved in time to put the incorporation question on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Foster said it is possible that her group will try again to put incorporation before Sun City voters, but she said she had no timetable. The last failed attempt to get enough signatures to force an election was in 1985. The only time that Sun Citians voted on incorporation was in 1964, when it was defeated by a vote of 2,558 to 1,036.

Nat Jampel, president of the Sun City Town Meeting Association and a longtime incorporation opponent, said he hopes that it will be a long time before the incorporation issue comes up again in Sun City. He said he believes that the fact that CSG failed to obtain enough signatures shows that the majority of residents do not favor incorporation.

"I'm hoping that they simply stop this nonsense," Jampel said. "We're not the type of community that should be incorporated. We're all retirees, and our community has been very successful."

# Merydith eases off city fight

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — After 10 years as the head of an organization pushing to incorporate Sun City, Lester Merydith is stepping out of the limelight.

Merydith, 88, has led Citizens for Self Government, once called Charter Government Association, in two unsuccessful tries to incorporate Sun City.

Now, during the group's third attempt to turn the retirement community into a municipality, Merydith said he will be working on the sidelines instead of center stage.

"I felt it was better for me to get to the sidelines and let the organization carry on without me being responsible for all the deadlines and details," Merydith said. "I was basically running out of steam. It was taking too much time and interfering with my home life because people were coming in and out all day, every day."

Merydith said he was recruited by Jack deWard, now deceased, to be a part of a movement to incorporate Sun City.

The two were among 24 Sun City residents who met in 1979 and organized the Charter Government Association, a group in favor of incorporation.

By 1982, Merydith succeeded deWard as president of the group, which changed its name to Citizens for Self Government in January 1985.

Since then, Merydith has been active in challenging Sun City water rate increases, zoning changes and publishing volumes of a tabloid-sized newsletter CSG sends to all residents in the community.

But attempts to incorporate Sun City have been unsuccessful in the retirement community's 32-year history.

In 1964, an election on incorporation was

defeated 3-1. Since then the battle of whether Sun City should become a municipality has raged between individuals.

In 1985, CSG failed to collect enough signatures to put the incorporation issue up for a vote.

Voters rejected a proposal to incorporate in Sun City West in November 1989, with  
**See Incorporation, A5**

## Incorporation booster moves to sidelines

—From A1

57 percent of the 11,078 voting against the measure.

Now CSG has launched its third official drive to put the measure up for a vote in Sun City.

The group, led by Sun Citian Doris Foster, needs to collect an estimated 3,700 petition signatures by April to put the measure on the November 1992 ballot.

Foster said the group plans to start circulating petitions this week. She said CSG had hoped to get the petitions out sooner, but had to revise them at the last minute.

Nevertheless Merydith said he feels CSG is in competent hands.

"Doris Foster is such a stimulus and organizer that I decided to step aside and let her run it," Merydith said. "These people are working together and I think they will accomplish their goal."

Merydith said he decided to step aside as the group's presi-

dent when CSG opened an office in September 1991.

"My home served as the office for too many years. I had two phones that were ringing day and night. We had no interaction with the members on a large scale," said Merydith, who lives with his wife, Reba. "That's one of the reasons we progressed too slowly. We had no way to communicate with each other."

Merydith said the group had a headquarters for about six months in 1981 but had to close it because of a lack of funds.

Merydith worked his way through college graduating cum laude in mathematics from Marietta College in Ohio. He worked for 37 years for Standard Oil Co., retiring as a regional marketing manager.

Since he moved to Sun City in 1969, much of his time and finances have been spent on activities sponsored by CSG.

"The most satisfaction I've got

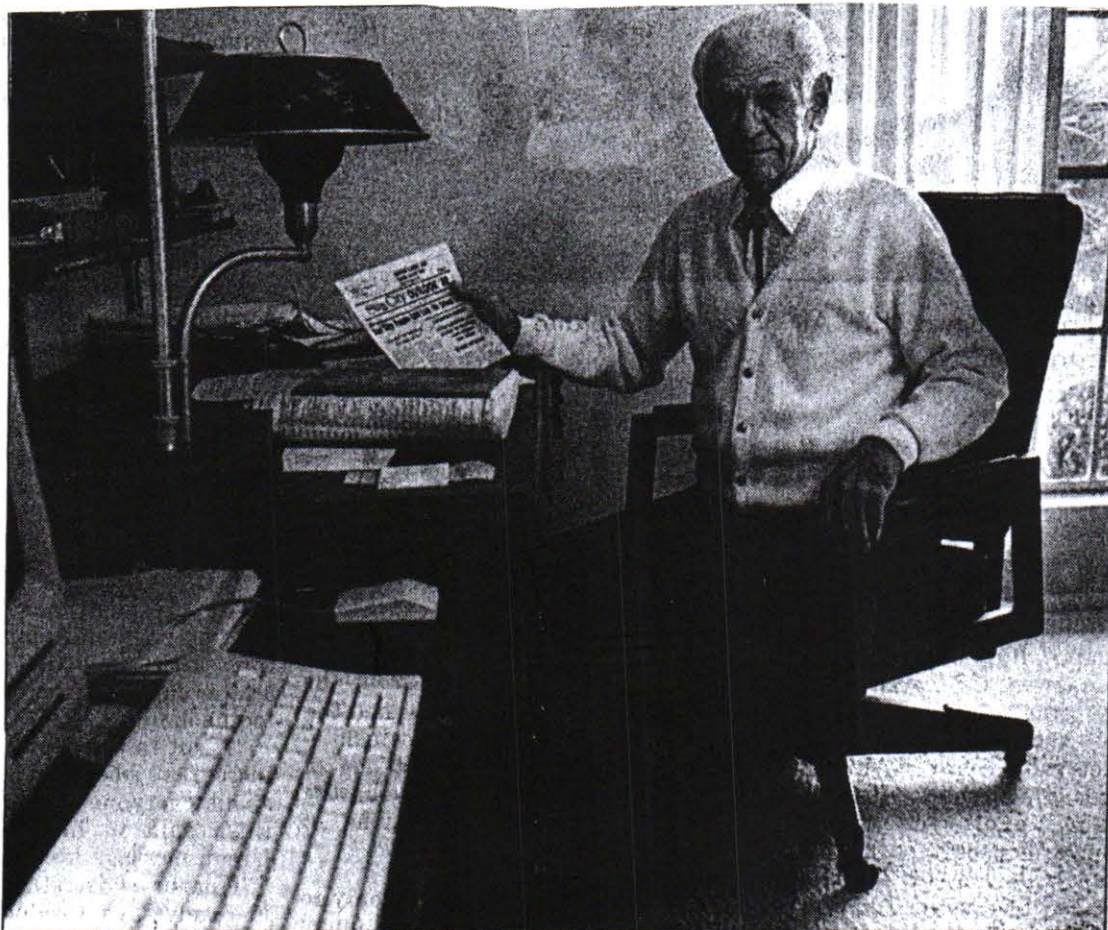
is right now to see the organization on its own. It took years of effort to build it up," he said, adding that CSG has 2,500 dues-paying members.

"The most unpleasant thing is the vilification I've been subject to. Hate mail, distortions, rocks through windows, accusations that we are in it for the money."

Although Merydith will not be at the head of CSG activities, he said he is continuing to work for the group by analyzing water issues, studying state budgets and making a time line of historical events in Sun City.

"I'm working just as hard as I did before, but just behind the scenes."

Nat Jampel, who has worked just as fervently against incorporation as Merydith has for it, said in a written statement that Merydith may have decided to "retire" because "far fewer people are aware of the need for incorporation."



Wanda Pippet/Daily News-Sun

Les Merydith sits in his home, which has served in the past, as the headquarters for Citizens for Self Government, a pro-incorporation group in Sun City.

# Incorporation backers dedicate headquarters

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Citizens for Self-Government Monday hosted a grand opening and dedication Monday of its new campaign headquarters.

Residents who attended, most of them CSG members, signed up to help the group in its drive to put the incorporation issue up for a vote by Sun City residents in November 1992.

Henry Fokens, who has been a CSG member for nearly 12 years, gave a short dedication speech before residents toured the new headquarters.

Fokens said "it is not considered socially acceptable to discuss" incorporation in Sun City.

"Even the oppressed people in the Soviet Union are now allowed to talk about what kind of government they should have. However, here in Sun City, that is one subject that is considered taboo," Fokens said. "How could the right of local citizens to manage their civic affairs, elect their own leaders and decide how their tax dollars will be

spent come to the Soviet Union before it comes to the people of Sun City. ... Hopefully 13 months from now the people of Sun City will decide whether or not they will accept the responsibility for managing their own civic affairs and deciding how their tax dollars will be spent."

In August, CSG signed a 15-month lease on a building at 10820 W. Oakmont Drive. The four-room building, which was vacant for four years, was a former radio station and original office of Del Webb.

While many CSG members touted the reasons they think incorporation would benefit the community, some people who attended did the opposite.

Kay Sentes, a member of Retirement Community Association, an anti-incorporation group, said she attended the open house "to see what's going on."

"Our group is dedicated to maintain Sun City as an adult retirement community and unincorporated. We will continue to steer toward that aim," Sentes

said. "We have nothing planned (to counter the incorporation drive) because it's been all talk so far. But we don't want a big war here. Not like in Sun City West where the community was just torn apart."

CSG members plan to start collecting petition signatures in January to get the measure on the November 1992 ballot, said Doris Mellaney, group secretary.

About 3,700 petition signatures need to be collected.

Mellaney said she anticipates the group will have no problem doing so since there are 2,600 members on the roster.

The headquarters will be open to the public in coming months from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

Attempts to incorporate Sun City have been unsuccessful in the retirement community's 31-year history.

In 1964, an election on incorporation was defeated 3-1. Since then, the battle of whether Sun City should become a municipality has raged between individuals in the community.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Henry Fokens, a member of Citizens for Self-Government, addresses the crowd gathered for the opening and dedication of CSG's headquarters, 10820 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

In 1985, the Citizens for Self-Government failed to collect enough signatures to put the incorporation issue up for a vote. Most recently in Sun City West, 57 percent of the voters cast ballots against incorporation in a November 1989 election.

# CITIZENS

From Page 1

## Incorporation group opens headquarters

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

10/25/91

SUN CITY — The oppressed people in the Soviet Union are now allowed to talk about what kind of government they should have, but in Sun City the subject continues to be taboo, Henry Fokens said during the dedication of the Citizens for Self-Government's headquarters building Monday.

Fokens, a former Citizens board member who has been a proponent of incorporation for Sun City for more than a decade, said:

"It is not considered socially acceptable to discuss what kind of government Sun City should have. The mere mention of the word 'incorporation' brings an instant chill to most any gathering. This is ridiculous."

The Sun City Home Owners Association, which has taken a "neutral" stand on incorporation,

has forbidden board members from expressing their personal opinions on the matter.

Citizens for Self-Government, which claims a membership of 2,600, has launched a campaign to incorporate Sun City. The group expects to begin circulating petitions Feb. 1. If the requisite 3,600 signatures are obtained, the incorporation vote would be in November 1992.

Incorporation would create a municipal government allowing residents to manage their civic affairs, elect their own leaders and decide how their tax dollars would be spent, like residents in 86 other Arizona communities, Fokens said.

At the new campaign headquarters at 10820 W. Oakmont St., Fokens said a "flood of documented information" is available detailing why incorporation of Sun

See CITIZENS, Page 3

City would be beneficial.

The biggest argument for incorporation is that some of the taxes Sun City's 38,000 residents pay to the state would be returned directly to their community instead of being distributed to the state's cities and towns, said Les Merydith, chairman of the board of Citizens for Self-Government.

Based on Sun City's population, the community's share of state money would have been \$9.1 million for the 1990-91 fiscal year. The money is generated from state sales, income and gasoline taxes, vehicle license fees and lottery funds, Merydith said.

Merydith said the cost of operating a government for Sun City would be about \$3.1 million, leaving a \$6 million surplus from the state-shared revenues.

Besides the money, Sun City also would gain some clout if it was incorporated, Merydith said.

The 86 incorporated cities and towns in Arizona belong to the League of Arizona Cities and Towns, which Merydith said is the "most powerful lobbying organization in Arizona."

"It is practically impossible to pass a law in Arizona without the approval of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns," Merydith said.

Opposition to incorporation remains strong.

Nat Jampel, president of the Town Meeting Association and a longtime opponent of incorporation, said he does not believe Sun Citizens want a "municipal bureaucracy" to replace the county government that has served Sun City for 31 years.

Citizens for Self-Government campaign headquarters is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Information is available by calling 974-4064.

# Incorporation fray soiled by intimidation

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Members of Citizens for Self Government said they are being threatened by the opposition because they support an effort to incorporate Sun City.

At an annual meeting Monday, CSG board chairman Les Merydith said his car has been vandalized, he has received threatening phone calls and has been sent letters with human excrement in them.

"We have been told for years that the best way to handle the opposition is to ignore it. But we have received some ominous and disturbing communication

with the opposition that amounts to politics by intimidation," Merydith said.

Several weeks ago, the paint on Merydith's wife's car was scratched for the second time, he said. Merydith, who has put out a \$1,000 reward for information on the incident, said he thinks the vandalism occurred because there was an incorporation bumper sticker on the car.

"There are many people who have given up participating because they do not want to subject their lives to late-night phone calls and filthy letters," Merydith said. "I have two letters that were sent to me that actually had human excrement in them. We got letters

from other people who made threats of violence."

One such letter, received about a week ago, read, "We should bomb the place," Merydith said.

CGS members have launched a campaign to put the incorporation issue up for a vote by Sun City residents in November 1992. The group has opened a campaign headquarters at 10820 W. Oakmont Drive.

Merydith said the group will most likely contact the Maricopa County Sheriff's Department and U.S. Postal Service about the letters and phone calls.

Nat Jampel, president of Town Hall

Meeting Association, an anti-incorporation group, said the accusations by CSG members are unfounded.

"That is a lot of crap. It's utterly silly. I have no idea if people are doing these things. They (CSG members) are doing it themselves. It's a crock," Jampel said.

But CSG members maintain that residents are being pressured not to vocalize their support for incorporation.

"Groups like the HOA (Sun City Home Owners Association) say they are neutral but they are really censored and intimidated to take a stand," Merydith said. "Even if you write a letter to the editor the opposition will make personal attacks. It's vicious."

Doris Foster, CSG president, said she was once "tailgated and tortured" by a motorist when they saw her incorporation bumper stickers.

"We would like to get the personalities out of it and concentrate on the issues. People are tired of hearing the names Les Merydith and Nat Jampel," Foster said. "People are afraid to put stickers on their cars because they are afraid how they will be treated."

Also at the meeting Foster announced that the group had 2,630 members who had paid dues or made contributions to CSG as of May. The membership chairman rolled out a 30-foot long list with all the names on it while the 50 residents there cheered.



# Incorporation issue is talk of Sun City

By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — That controversial 13-letter word has got the Sun Cities buzzing again.

Incorporation has resurfaced as the hot topic in the retirement communities in the wake of an announcement by Citizens For Self Government to put the issue up for a vote in Sun City.

While the announcement to launch an incorporation campaign has the attention of many Sun City residents, people in Sun City West are keeping a close watch.

Nearly two years ago, voters in Sun City West rejected a proposal to incorporate.

The election was highlighted with spirited debate on the benefits and downfalls of incorporating the community.

Sun City West residents who were active in pro and anti-incorporation groups during the election said Friday that they expect the same in Sun City.

And although they still sit on opposite sides of the fence when it comes to incorporation, members of both factions in Sun City West said they expect enough signatures will be collected to put the issue on the November 1992 ballot.

"I think they are going to get the signatures they need in Sun

City, but I'm not saying that they will be successful at election time. We are rooting very hard for groups against them," said Marvin Goldberg, who was chairman of Sun City West Residents United Against Incorporation.

"There's a lot at stake here. Sun City has not had a vote for a long time and you can bet that this drive will result in another one in Sun City West before too long."

The only official election on incorporation in Sun City was in 1964. The proposal was defeated by a margin of 3-1. In 1985 Citizens For Self Government failed to collect enough signatures to put the incorporation issue up for a vote.

CSG has to collect about 3,700 petition signatures to get an incorporation question on the ballot next year.

"If it passed it would be the beginning of the end of the Sun City lifestyle," Goldberg said.

If the issue were to be successful in Sun City, the vote would pave the way for incorporating Sun City West, said Ernie Edison, who was involved in Westers for Self-Government.

"I don't think there is any question about it at all. It's overdue. Sun City should have

See Sun City, A5

# Sun City debates incorporation

—From A1

been incorporated a long time ago," Edison said. "Isn't it ironic that when we have all these Baltic states fighting for a vote to control their own destiny that we have a community of 45,000 people who want the county and state to do it for them."

Edison said he sees no reason why CSG, with a professed membership of 2,600, should have any trouble obtaining 3,700 signatures to get incorporation up for a vote.

"The question is, will the people in Sun City listen. If they do, then they will vote for it. If they just treat it lightly and look at the headlines, they won't vote intelligently," Edison said.

Wally Fox, who was a member of two groups in Sun City West opposed to incorporation, said a vote in Sun City was inevitable.

"I think it's been an on-going effort on the part of Citizens for Self Government. I think that it's either now or never for them. It's also a matter of pride because they said they were going to do this before and failed

to even get enough petition signatures for a vote," Fox said.

Fox said much of the incorporationists support is based on "misinformation, fictitious budgets, inflated income statements and deflated expenses of running a town."

Pro-incorporationists have said Sun City would benefit as a municipality by receiving taxes paid by local residents.

Alvin Driscoll, who was a member of Westers For Self-Government, said CSG has to do more than inform the residents, they have to get the vote.

"This is politics at its best on a local basis. As in the past, it's up to leaders to carry the ball. You need experienced people who know how to get the vote. You can't take anything for granted," Driscoll said.

Phil Vision, who was actively involved with anti-incorporation groups in Sun City West, said residents should not compare the two retirement communities when talking about incorporation.

# Drive to incorporate Sun City begins

## Organizers open local headquarters; plan petition campaign to begin in February, '92

A group supporting incorporation has announced plans to begin a campaign this fall that will, supporters hope, eventually lead to an incorporation election next November.

Citizens for Self-Government announced last week that it plans to begin a petition drive next February in an effort to collect enough signatures for a fall election.

The group has established campaign headquarters in Sun City, plans a membership rally Sept. 23 and will begin distributing later this month the first of several pro-incorporation newsletters.

The last official campaign to incorporate Sun City was held in 1986. Organizers failed to secure enough signatures and no election was held.

The only time an election was held in Sun City on the matter was in 1964. Residents defeated incorporation at that time by a more than 2-1 margin.

"We're much better organized to accomplish this now than we were in 1986," says Les Merydith, chairman of Citizens for Self-Government, the group that also

spearheaded the 1986 campaign.

"It (the last campaign) was a disaster and set us back several years," he adds.

According to Mr. Merydith, CSG presently has 2,600 members. He says 3,600 signatures are needed before the county will schedule an election on the issue.

"That means we'll only need to get an additional 1,000 signatures. We don't anticipate any problems," he adds.

The group recently moved into official headquarters located on Oakmont Drive, directly behind the Grand Shopping Center.

CSG has spent the last several years planning for the upcoming campaign and has prepared a detailed schedule of activities leading up to next year's petition campaign. Among its plans:

- A membership rally is planned Sept. 23 at Nancy's Country Cupboard Restaurant.
- Several pro-incorporation newsletters will be prepared and mailed to Sun City residents between September and next November.
- Begin its petition campaign

Feb. 1, 1992.

• Propose that an objective, impartial study of the incorporation issue be completed.

• Sponsor several public meetings on various issues.

An incorporation election was held in Sun City West in 1989 and the issue was soundly defeated. Mr. Merydith says his group has learned from that failed attempt.

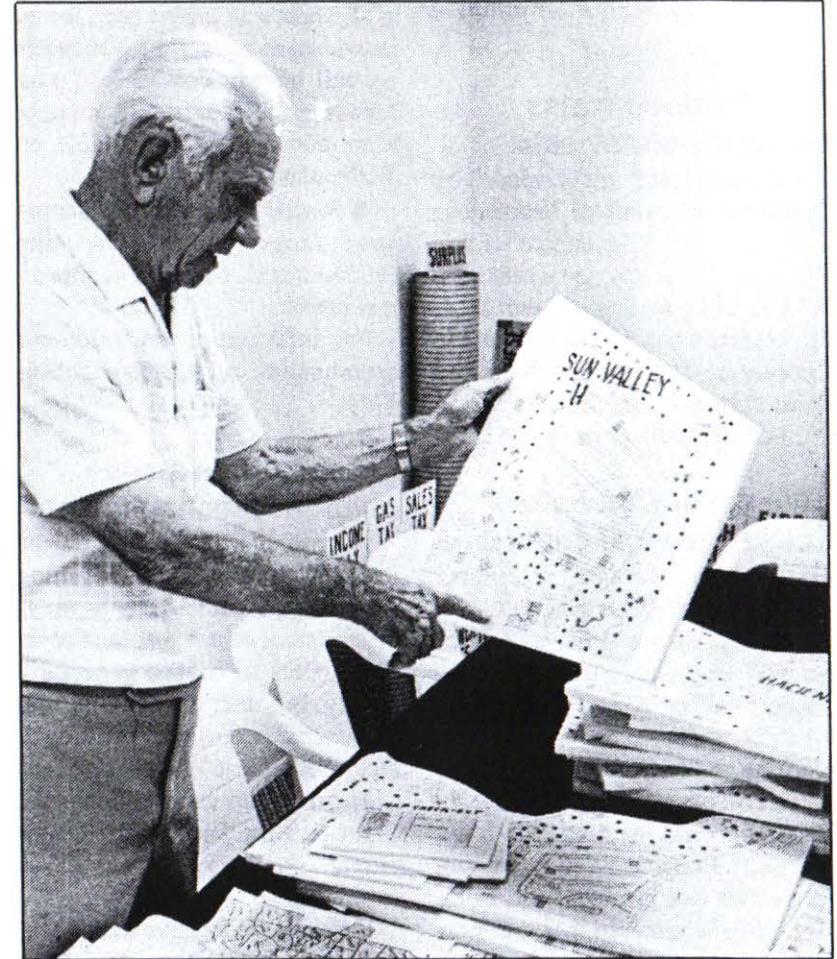
"They (pro-incorporationists in Sun City West) were overconfident and they didn't organize in the precincts," says Mr. Merydith.

At CSG headquarters are detailed maps of all 47 precincts in Sun City. Mr. Merydith says his organization will use the maps to plot an aggressive, door-to-door "grassroots" campaign.

Although he is confident CSG will gain enough signatures in order to secure an election, persuading the entire community to support incorporation will be "long, tough battle."

Nat Jampel, president of Town Meeting Association and the community's leading opponent of incor-

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OVER



Les Merydith, chairman of Citizens for Self-Government, reviews precinct maps of Sun City at the organization's new headquarters on Oakmont Drive. CSG plans a grassroots door-to-door campaign through each precinct in hopes of gaining the signatures needed to schedule an election on incorporation in Sun City.

## ■ CAMPAIGN

From Page 1

poration, is confident residents of Sun City will once again turn incorporation.

"They (incorporationists) have tried since 1964, but have always failed," says Mr. Jampel.

Mr. Jampel contends the reason Sun City has remained popular for 31 years is because it has remained unincorporated and free of bureaucrats and excess taxation.

Since incorporationists have

failed in their past attempts, Mr. Jampel believes their strategy this time will be to go after newer residents.

"His (Mr. Merydith's) drive is directed to new residents who may not be aware of his purpose, or the serious consequences that municipal bureaucracy could bring to Sun City," he says.

In the past, he says, incorporation leaders have spread "misin-

formation" and played upon the fears of residents.

Les Merydith says his organization has operated in "virtual secrecy" the past few years.

"We've been growing and growing but nobody knows about us," he says.

"We've been meeting here and there, but now we're going to be out in the open about everything," adds Mr. Merydith.

# Sun City incorporation drive initiated

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

SUN CITY — A citizens group claiming 2,600 members has launched a campaign to incorporate Sun City.

"We're well organized, and we're going to get this passed," said Les Merydith, chairman of the board of Citizens for Self-Government.

Merydith said when Sun Citians are educated about the advantages of incorporation — creating a municipal govern-

ment — they will support it. If the requisite 3,600 signatures are gathered, an election would be held in November 1992.

The biggest argument for incorporation, Merydith said, is that some of the state taxes that Sun City's 38,000 residents pay would be returned directly to their community, instead of being distributed to all the state's cities and towns.

For the 1990-91 fiscal year, that would have meant \$9.198 million for Sun City from state sales, income and gasoline

taxes, vehicle license fees and lottery funds, Merydith said.

"Because Sun City is not incorporated, our \$9 million share of these revenues will go back into the pot and be divided up among those communities that are incorporated," Merydith said.

But opposition to incorporation is looming.

Nat Jampel, president of the Sun City Town Meeting Association and a longtime opponent of incorporation, charged that

Citizens for Self-Government is "spreading misinformation."

He said he believes that Sun Citians do not want their community incorporated and have a "municipal bureaucracy" replace the county government that has served Sun City for 31 years.

"Incorporation leaders repeat the same old misinformation that they've been using unsuccessfully over the years," said Jampel, who has lived in Sun City for 18

See INCORPORATE, Page 9

OVER

years. "The fact that Sun Citians have rejected incorporation for 31 years in spite of everything shows that they don't want it."

However, Doris Foster, president of Citizens for Self-Government, said it's the Sun City Town Meeting Association members who are "providing misleading information."

"People against incorporation are saying that residents will have to pay more taxes if Sun City is incorporated. That is not true," Foster said. "They also are telling people that the posse would be done away with, and that isn't true either."

Foster and Merydith said they decided that their organization would be more effective if it had a campaign headquarters. The headquarters is at 10820 W. Oakmont Drive, across the street from the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

"We've been operating as a secret organization because we weren't even listed in the phone book. We will be in the next book," Foster said. The number is 974-4064.

The controversy over incorporation of Sun City will be aired on Tom Brokaw's NBC Nightly News this week as part of a series on controversies in retirement communities, an NBC official said. Merydith and Jampel were interviewed separately for the show.

## Issue failed in past

Incorporation for Sun City was defeated in a 1964 election — three years after the retirement community was founded. The vote was 2,558 to 1,036.

In 1985, there was a failed attempt by the Citizens for Self-Government to gather signatures to put an incorporation question on the ballot.

But Merydith said he's confident that enough signatures will be gathered for a November 1992 election.

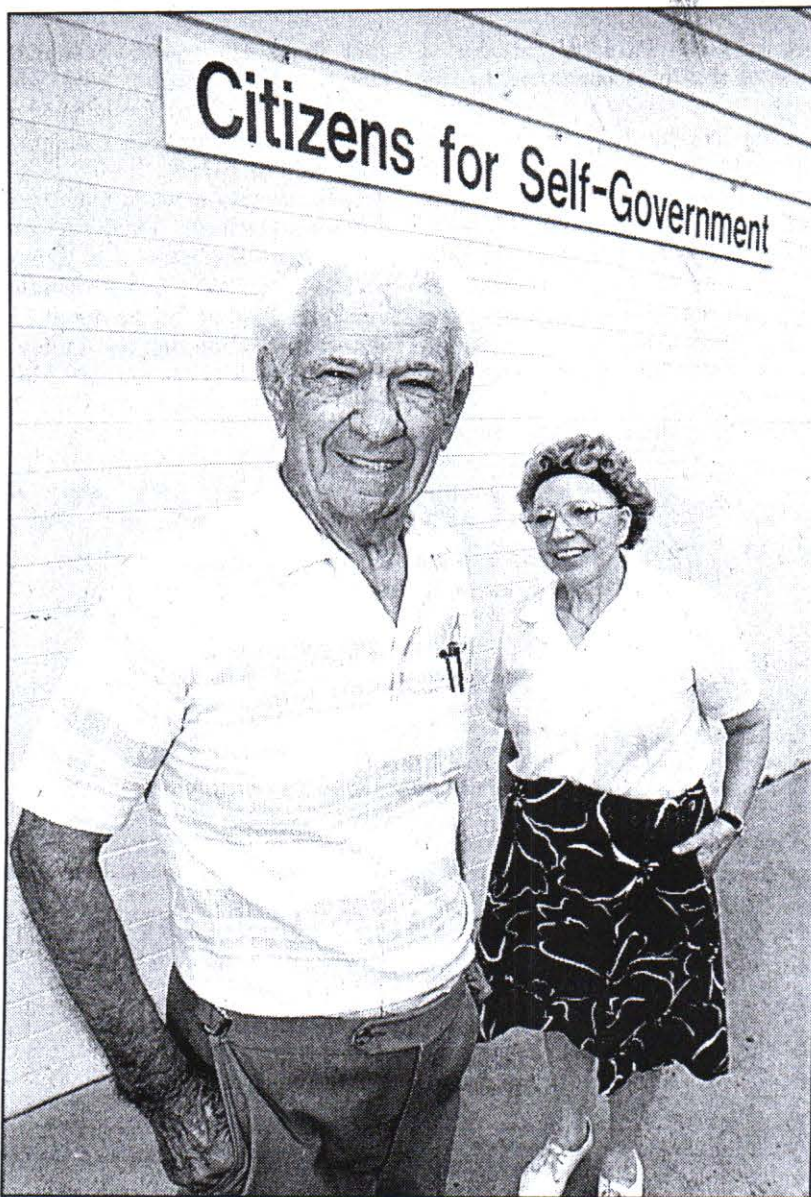
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The reason the 1985 petition drive failed, Merydith said, was that the effort started too close to the summer when many Sun Citians left.

This time, the citizens group plans to begin circulating petitions Feb. 1 and expects to file the needed signatures with the county Elections Department by July 15.

Citizens for Self-Government proposes to have a "contract" city.

Sun City would contract for services with other governmental units such as the county or private contractors. Street maintenance, police protection, trash collection, sewer and water are some of the services that would be contracted.



Tom Tingle / Staff photographer

**Les Merydith, chairman of the board, and Doris Foster, president of Citizens for Self-Government, stand outside the headquarters for their drive to incorporate Sun City.**

There would be a city council and a mayor who would serve without compensation. There would be 12 paid employees, including a city manager, city clerk, city magistrate, city attorney, finance manager, city engineer and six secretaries or clerks.

The cost to operate such a government would be about \$3.1 million. With state-shared revenues expected to be \$9.1 million, there would be a \$6 million surplus, Merydith said.

Besides allowing the community to receive a share of state revenues, incorporation of Sun City would mean that residents would have a stronger voice in how their community is operated on issues such as ground-water rights, zoning and building regulations, and control of public nuisances, Merydith said.

Sun City's election would come three years after a similar attempt failed in neighboring Sun City West. The 1989 vote was 6,333 to 4,745 against the proposal.

# Incorporation campaign launched

## Supporters gearing up for '92 vote

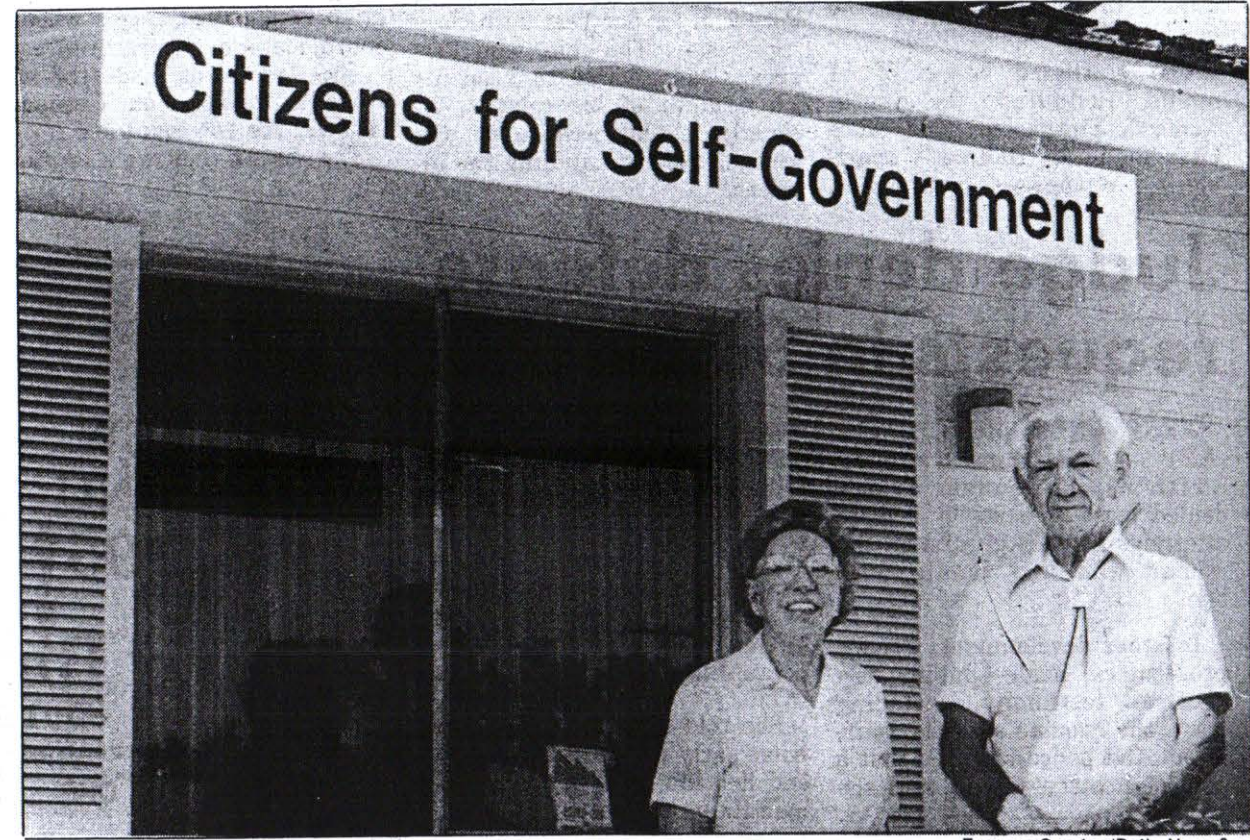
By JACQUE PAPPAS  
Daily News-Sun staff  
SUN CITY — Citizens For Self Government is launching a campaign to put the incorporation issue up for a vote by Sun City residents in November 1992.

Les Merydith, chairman of the CSG board of directors, told the Daily News-Sun Friday that the group hopes to collect 3,700 petition signatures by April to get an incorporation issue on the ballot.

"We've been working on this thing since last spring. We're optimistic because we feel we are organized to get the job done," Merydith said.

Nat Jampel, president of Town Meeting Association, a group opposed to incorporation, said Friday the effort will fail.

See Opposition, A5



Frances Guarino/Daily News-Sun

Citizens for Self Government hope to put an incorporation issue on the ballot for Sun City voters in November 1992. Pictured are Doris Foster, CSG president, and Les Merydith, chairman of CSG's board of directors.

## Issue catches eye of national media

News-Sun staff  
SUN CITY — A long-time feud on the issue of incorporation has vaulted two community leaders in the national spotlight.

Comments made by Les Merydith and Nat Jampel on why Sun City should and should not incorporate have been sought by television networks, newspaper reporters and mentioned in Paul Harvey's radio newscast.

An NBC correspondent interviewed both Jampel and Merydith this week on their views. Their comments are expected to be part of a story on senior issues the network is compiling.

In an article about senior communities in The Wall Street Journal last month,

references were made to the incorporation issue in the Sun Cities.

"Emotions are such that the leader of the anti-cityhood forces admits he keeps a hopeful eye on the obituary column in the local paper for the name of the man spearheading the incorporation movement," the article stated.

"That's really a stupid remark," Jampel said. "The deed is everything, the glory (of national media coverage) is nothing."

NBC Nightly News anchor Tom Brokaw will join 12 News anchor Kent Dana Sept. 11 for an open air forum on the media. The town hall will feature Arizona-related stories and may cover the incorporation issue and senior issues.

# Opposition leader predicts failure

—From A1

"There is no reason for it. Sun City has more than 31 years of national and international success," Jampel said. "The feelings against incorporation are deep-rooted in this community."

Attempts to incorporate Sun City have been unsuccessful in the retirement community's 31-year history.

In 1964, an election on incorporation was defeated 3-1. Since then, the battle of whether Sun City should become a municipality has raged between individuals in the community.

In 1985, the Citizens for Self Government failed to collect enough signatures to put the incorporation issue up for a vote.

Voters rejected a proposal to incorporate Sun City West in November 1989. Of the 11,078 ballots cast, 57 percent voted against incorporating.

"We failed in our efforts to incorporate in 1985 because we only worked on it for a few months. Now we have more than a year to get the job done," Merydith said. "We learned from the election in Sun City West. We are ready to go."

On Aug. 28, the CSG signed a 15-month lease on campaign headquarters at 10820 W. Oakmont Drive. The four-room building, which has been vacant for years, was a former radio station and original office of Del Webb.

Merydith said the group moved into the office Friday and is planning a grand opening later this year.

"We were not getting anything done so we found the answer was to get a place where we could all meet and put our volunteers to work," Merydith said. "We were talking to each other about incorporation instead of talking to the public."

Doris Foster, CSG president, said she has mailed a booklet

printed by the group to more than 500 new homeowners in Sun City since April.

"We have 2,600 members who are ready to collect petition signatures and do what it takes to incorporate Sun City," Foster said.

Sun City is under the taxing authority of Maricopa County as are other unincorporated communities like Sun City West, Sun Lakes, Green Valley.

Supporters of the incorporation movement say Sun City would prosper if it were a municipality by getting state-shared revenues such as lottery funds, sales tax and gasoline tax that the county now receives.

They say incorporating will give Sun City more clout in the state with city representatives and provide municipal services such as street maintenance, law enforcement, street lighting and trash collection.

But Jampel maintains that incorporation will increase taxes and eliminate volunteer organizations such as the Prides and Posse.

"The need to support the kind of bureaucracy that the incorporationists want would result, in my opinion, in a financial catastrophe for Sun City residents," Jampel said. "He (Merydith) doesn't give a tinker's damn for people like myself and the 40,000 others in Sun City who no longer are in the work force and are on fixed limited incomes."

"I don't care if they are opening 20 offices. It makes no difference because they will fail as they have for the past 31 years in Sun City. We have no problems here. But the Citizens for Self Government and Mr. Merydith create a non-existent problems and scare tactics to make people think we need to incorporate."

September 7, 1991

To: Members of Citizens for Self Government  
From: Doris Foster, President

**WE HAVE A HOME!** CSG has signed a 15 month lease on the former Radio Station Office under the radio tower at 10820 Oakmont Drive. It is across the street from the Historical Society and has good visibility and plenty of parking. Almost 800 square feet of space will provide a large display and reception area, an administrative office, a meeting room, a lounge and plenty of storage space.

We plan to have a **GRAND OPENING** October 14th (11:00 AM) to dedicate our new headquarters. There will be refreshments, music, souvenirs, displays and handouts. It is important for us to have a good turnout to help us get media attention for this important happening. We want everyone in Sun City to know that a sleeping giant has awakened!

The bylaws require that five directors be elected each year. Enclosed are ballots so you may vote to fill the existing vacancies.

We have arranged to have our annual meeting of the corporation on Monday, September 23rd at 11:30 AM at Nancy's Country Cupboard at 15400 N. 99th (Greenway Shopping Center). Cost of the luncheon will be \$6.00. CSG will pay for guests who are prospective members. There will be a brief mandatory corporate business session. The program will be primarily a concise outline of our overall campaign strategy leading to a successful election in November 1992.

People all over the world are now clamoring for self-government and we believe Sun Citizens will also demand it for themselves at this point in our history if we can get the issues clarified after so much muddying of the waters.

**DON'T MISS THE CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF LUNCHEON**

**MONDAY - SEPT. 23RD - 11:30 AM**

**NANCY'S COUNTRY CUPBOARD - GREENWAY SHOPPING CENTER**

Call in your reservations to our new headquarters between 9AM and 3PM Monday thru Friday or better yet bring in your reservation and look over our new facilities. **974-4064**



# Northwest COMMUNITY

THE  
PHOENIX  
GAZETTE

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

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## Sun City incorporation drive initiated

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

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See INCORPORATE, Page 9

# INCORPORATE

From Page 1

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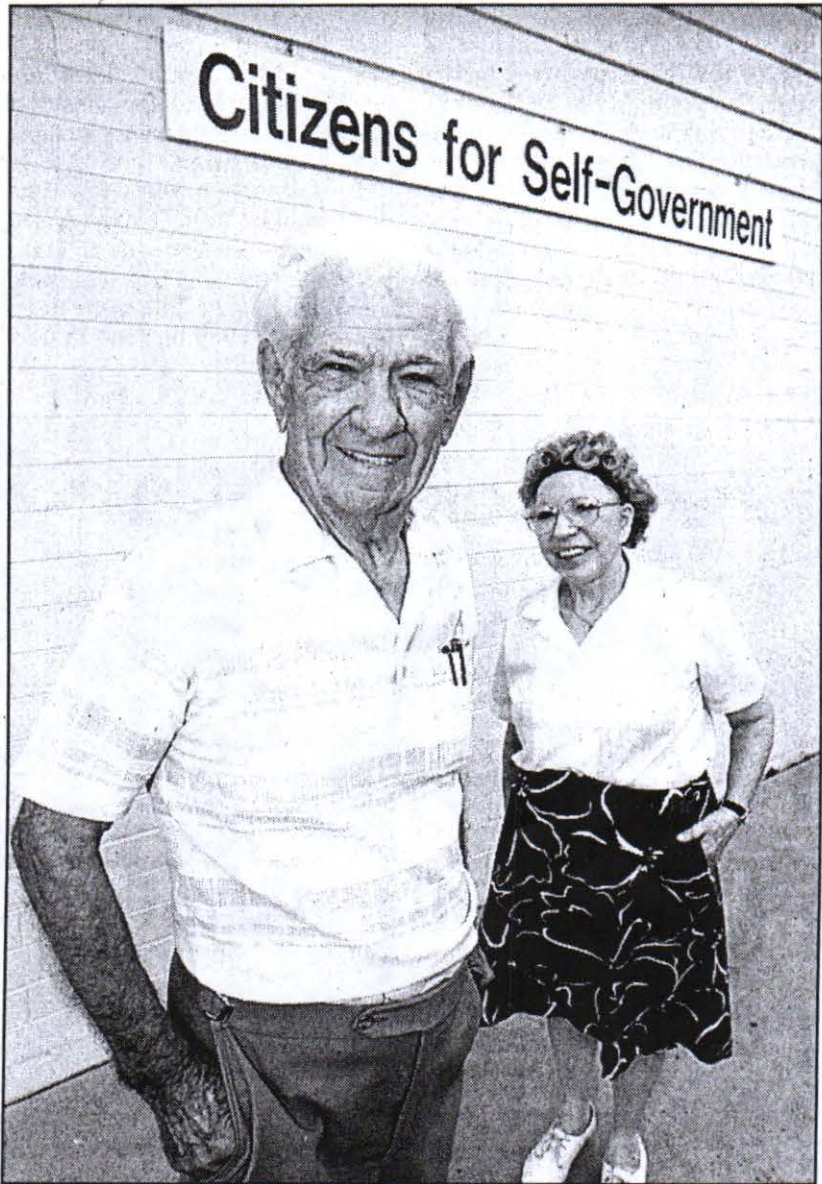
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## Sun City group to elect officers

SUN CITY — Citizens for Self Government, a group leading a drive for the incorporation of Sun City, will hold its annual membership meeting and election of officers at 11:30 a.m. Sept. 23 at Nancy's Country Cupboard, 99th Avenue and Greenway Road. Reservations should be made by Sept. 16, by calling 974-4064.

Brochures favoring incorporation are being distributed by Citizens for Self Government. On Oct. 9, the group plans to mail its newspaper, *Sun City Outlook*, to 27,000 Sun City households. The newspaper has been published periodically since 1988.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - CSG CAMPAIGN PLAN**  
DATED: September, 1991

- Aug. 28 Sign 15 month lease on TV Station property on Oakmont for CSG Campaign Headquarters.- Sept 1, 1991 to Nov. 30, 1992.
- Aug. 28 Letter to Board of Directors announcing lease signing and outline of campaign strategy.  
Enclosures: Up-dated "Sun City is Wonderful" booklet and "Major League" brochure. (Extra copies to in-towners)
- Sept. 6 Move into new headquarters
- Sept. 10 Letter to 1600 CSG families announcing new home and plans for petition and election in 1992.  
Invitation to Annual Meeting -Membership Rally & Luncheon - Nancy's Country Cupboard - Greenway Plaza
- Sept. 12 Prepare and print additional bumper stickers, handouts and mailing pieces. "Remember Ahwatukee", "Why are Water Laws Stacked Against Sun City?", "Wallet Notes on Incorporation", "Cartoon Booklet".
- Sept. 13 Council Resolution Committee starts work contacting neighboring incorporated cities and towns.
- Sept. 23 Membership Rally and Annual meeting of the corporation.  
Members elect five directors. Board of Directors elects officers.
- Sept. 30 27,000 "Sun City is Wonderful" booklets ready for mailing.
- Oct. 9 Booklets delivered by mail to 27,000 homes.
- Oct. 14 GRAND OPENING. Dedication of headquarters. Large signs and banner - refreshments - music - souvenirs - displays - handouts - greeters.
- Oct. 15 Precinct meetings at headquarters start. First assignment - Deliver extra copies of handouts requested by CSG members in each precinct.
- Nov. 20 OUTLOOK delivered to 27,000 homes by mail. Front page story - "Sun City's Unconstitutional Water Tax."

- Dec. 16 Council Resolutions from neighboring cities obtained and on file. Petition form submitted to County Election Department.
- Jan. 6 Petition form approved by County Election Department.
- Jan. 31 One petition form delivered to each of 1,600 CSG homes by 47 precinct committees.
- Feb. 1 2,600 CSG members sign petitions delivered to their homes - need 1,000 more signatures.
- Mar. 1 1,000 additional signatures secured from friends and neighbors.
- Mar. 15 1,600 petitions with 3,600 signatures notarized and returned to headquarters by precinct committees.
- Mar. 16 Election Campaign officially starts. OUTLOOK announces successful petition drive. Propose that the Del E. Webb Foundation sponsor an impartial, objective study of the incorporation issue by the American Graduate School of International Management.
- Apr. 6 Precinct committees start scheduling coffees at headquarters and in CSG homes.
- July 15 File notarized petitions with County Election Department.
- Sept. 1 Announce Nov. 3, 1992 as election day.
- Sept. 3 27,000 copies of Sept. OUTLOOK delivered to headquarters. Possible subjects: "Sun City's Water Crisis." - "Sun City's Unfair Taxation." "Sun City's Public Image."
- Announce public meeting Sept 14.
- Oct. 23 Nov. OUTLOOK delivered to headquarters. "CAST YOUR VOTE FOR SUN CITY'S FUTURE."
- Nov. 1 Delivery to 27,000 homes completed.
- Nov. 3 ELECTION DAY - WE WIN !

## Sun Citians want no part of incorporation

Citizens for Self-Government will once again campaign for incorporation in 1991-92.

The drive will no doubt be directed to new residents who may not be aware of the group's purpose or the serious consequences that municipal bureaucracy could bring to the unincorporated community of Sun City.

On July 15, 1991, I obtained a copy of a 13-page booklet signed by Mr. Merydith, chairman of CSG. It included an unctuous letter signed by Mr. Merydith and a card offering free membership in Citizens for Self-Government for 1991 to all who would sign and return the card.

The disarming cover title read "Sun City is Wonderful, Let's Keep It That Way." Between the booklet's cover, however, are 13 pages of the same misinformation and distortion of the truth used unsuccessfully over the years by pro-incorporation

### By Nat Jampel

leaders.

His letter states, "Citizens for Self-Government is dedicated to the preservation of Sun City's superb facilities and its world-famous retirement style."

Preservation? Nonsense.

It is their purpose to replace our legal government — Maricopa County — with a municipality, unending taxes, a bureaucracy that grows like "topsy," municipal problems and the inevitable demagogues that grow like weeds in a favorable bureaucratic atmosphere.

We would still pay county taxes for all the services no longer furnished by the county but now the responsibility of the new municipality. All this would add up to a financial catastrophe for retirees no longer in the active work force and living on fixed limited incomes.

Four incorporation studies are cited by CSG in their booklet as being valid. Not so — in fact all were rejected in one way or another.

It is my opinion that the inoculation of the incorporation virus into the lifeblood of the unincorporated community of Sun City, as proposed by CSG, would be financially fatal for retirees no longer in the active work force and living on fixed limited income.

Sun City Town Meeting Association wants all new residents to enjoy all the advantages retirees have enjoyed for over 31 years with Maricopa County as our legal government.

There is no need for anyone to sign anything to maintain those advantages.

*Editor's note: Nat Jampel is president of Town Meeting Association, an organization opposed to incorporation of Sun City.*

## Facts support need for self-government

It is understandable why there is resentment and mistrust between Sun City residents who favor incorporation of the city and those who do not when so much misinformation prevails.

I am convinced that both groups love the city and think they know what form of government is best. Most of us understand the world will never be perfect and it is better to tolerate differences or else we cut the fragile tendrils of communion.

Four studies have been made by unbiased sources and all came up with the conclusion that it would not be necessary to tax the populace and that indeed, taxes may be reduced.

The only election on the subject was held in 1964 when Del Webb was still providing us with its government. It never occurred to the Webb Corporation that this city would refuse to govern itself when they moved on to other developments.

They paid \$50,000 for a study to help Sun Citians see that it would

### By Doris Foster

be to their advantage to incorporate, but an anti-incorporation group was able to convince Sun Citians to go against this advice by calling incorporation another layer of government and claiming it would cost more.

Some of my best friends feel an incorporated city would have to support schools. They don't understand we are already supporting schools and the only savings we have by being in an unorganized school district is that we are not subject to bond issues. Being incorporated would not change that status one whit.

When Del Webb was still in charge and promoting Sun City, you could not lose money by investing in Sun City property. But many who bought a few years ago are now losing plenty when they want to sell.

It's good in a way that people are getting such bargains, but many

of the people buying here now are not going to be able to contribute much to the community.

It is a constant source of pain to me that close to \$400,000 per year (our share of lottery funds) goes to other cities that are incorporated while our SCAT gets inadequate amounts from passing the hat.

Residents worry about another layer of government and its cost and ability to tax.

A charter form of government could prohibit any tax being levied without the consent of the governed. Police protection and other services could be purchased by contract.

It is also conceivable that with some of these improvements, our property values may rise again and people who can afford to help the community financially may move here.

*Editor's note: Doris Foster is president of Citizens for Self-Government, a group in favor of incorporation of Sun City.*

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK  
480 MILLION GALLONS EXPORTED  
MUNICIPALITY DEFINED

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# Sun City OUTLOOK '90

Vol. 1 No. 8

November 5, 1990

Sun City, Arizona

## Sun City's Water Rights Are Slipping Away

### Del Webb Died Too Soon



Del E. Webb 1899 - 1974

There is one thing that practically every resident of Sun City agrees upon and that is that Sun City is the best place in the world for a retired person to live. Del Webb set out to build a city designed specifically for retired people and he succeeded beyond his fondest dreams. But if Del Webb were alive today he would be disappointed at the way certain aspects of his creation turned out.

He would be disappointed when he looked around the other cities in the valley and found that these other cities were all receiving a number of essential municipal services that Sun City people were doing without. Here are some of the municipal services that would be on Mr. Webb's list of missing essential services:

... Sun City has no corporate identity. It has no corporate office — no one running the business. Anyone wanting to communicate or do business with the people of Sun City is out of luck. Sun City has no mailing address or telephone number.

... Sun City people have no legal mechanism for making decisions and taking concerted action on local

See Del Webb Page 3

### CSG President Recounts History of Fight Over Water Rights

*The following article is taken from a talk delivered before the Agua Fria Kiwanis Club by LES MERYDITH, President of Citizens for Self-Government, on July 17, 1990.*

Sun City people are in the process of frittering away the most plentiful supply of excellent quality groundwater in the Salt River Valley.

Del Webb chose the Boswell cotton farms as the site for Sun City because it was situated between two rivers over an aquifer capable of supplying a community twice the size of Sun City. The water as it comes from the wells is as pure as any bottled water and needs no expensive treatment.

Because Boswell's cotton fields used 2 1/2 times as much water as Sun City uses now the water level in Sun City wells has been rising steadily as our homes replaced the cotton fields.

It would appear that because of Del Webb's foresight, the people of Sun City should not have a care in

the world as far as water is concerned.

The first signal of water trouble ahead came six years ago when an engineer friend of mine called to tell me that three 12 inch diameter pipelines were being extended from Sun City's water system into new developments in the City of Peoria and the Town of Surprise.

I alerted friends in the various organizations around town including the Home Owners Assoc., the Taxpayers Assoc., and the Rec. Centers and we formed an ad hoc committee which we named Water Watch of Sun City.

The purpose of Water Watch is to gather information and keep the community informed on matters related to Sun City's present and future water supply.

Water Watch made written requests to Bill Raymo, the local manager of Sun City Water Co. at the time, for specific information regarding the oversized pipelines and he refused to even discuss their existence.

Four years later in January 1988 Water Watch finally found out why those high volume pipelines were installed. We learned that Citizens Utilities, the parent company of Sun City Water Co. was planning to sell off large quantities of our high quality, low cost Sun City well water to developers of desert land in the North West Valley and to bring into Sun City large quantities of poor quality and expensive Central Arizona Project (CAP water) to replace it.

Details of this plan were revealed in testimony at a series of hearings before the Arizona Corporation Commission in early 1988.

On April 24, 1987, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors granted a franchise to the Sun City Water Co. to provide water service to a large residential and commercial development north of Sun City West. Rancho Cabrillo Norte is about three fourths the area of Sun City located on desert land in the foothills of the Bradshaw Mountains. There is practically no groundwater underlying the Cabrillo development but it is only a half mile from the Cen-

tral Arizona Project (CAP) Canal.

No one in Sun City was notified of the water company's franchise application or of the two hearings that were held by the Board of Supervisors. The problem down at the county building was and still is: How do you get in touch with Sun City? Sun City doesn't have a city manager or a water commissioner. In fact Sun City doesn't have mailing address or telephone number.

So it took us eight months to find out that Maricopa County had approved Sun City Water Company's application to provide water service to 8,500 acres of arid desert land on the other side of the Agua Fria River.

The water company must also have a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity from the Arizona Corporation Commission to serve Rancho Cabrillo so Water Watch first learned of the county franchise when we secured a copy of the Sun



Les Merydith

City Water Company's application to the Corporation Commission.

With only a few weeks notice, three Water Watch spokesmen, Gene Jensen, Mary Holt and myself qualified as intervenors and participated in the Corporation Commission Cabrillo hearings.

The Sun City Water Company's application proposed that one or more pipelines be constructed to link Sun

See Water Rights Page 3

### Sun City is already incorporated

Sun City is incorporated up to its ears. Every group of Sun Citizens who ever wanted to accomplish anything worth while incorporated. The Home Owners, the Rec. Centers, the Posse, the Prides all incorporated.

The only group of Sun Citizens who are impotent, leaderless, incapable of taking any concerted action and perpetually broke are all the people of Sun City. We can't even raise enough money to defend our water rights.

(Incidentally the two groups who oppose incorporation for all Sun City people were themselves incorporated shortly after they were taken over by a slick, slogan shouting, big city politician from Philadelphia back in 1977.)

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Almost three thousand CSG members are actively supporting the cause of bringing local self-government to Sun City.

None of the officers or directors listed above seek any political or financial gain from their efforts. All have stated they will not seek or accept any paid position in Sun City's future municipal government.

**From The Editor's Desk**

It came as something of a shock two years ago, when my wife and I moved to Sun City to attend my mother in the last few months of her life and to care for my father thereafter, to discover that Sun City was an unincorporated area of Maricopa County. Somehow, in the years that we had been bringing our children here to see their grandparents, it hadn't registered on our consciousness that Sun City was not a city at all but was, instead, merely a collection of some 40,000 good hearted, generous and trusting souls, most of whom seemed willing to entrust their civic destinies and the values of their real property to the questionable mercies of a county government. They appeared to be unwilling to exercise their own control over these things.

It came as an even greater shock to discover later that if Sun City were to choose to become incorporated, it could collect from Arizona's state government over nine million dollars every year, but that because it isn't incorporated, it gives away that nine million to those cities and towns in Arizona that have incorporated. We were struck by such generosity, especially when it isn't even tax deductible!

We were, of course, aware of but confused by the nature and number of boards, associations, committees, and other civic groups, each of which seemed to oversee some segment of civic enterprise. The Home Owners Association, the Sun City Taxpayers Association, the Sun City Town Meeting Association, the Water Watch Committee, the Rec. Boards, the Sheriff's Posse, the Prides. Here were all these civic organizations,

and no government to coordinate them; no government to prevent their duplicating their efforts; no civic agency to put an end to the waste of both physical and psychic energies expended in squabbling with one another or in unnecessarily protecting their respective turfs.

It was, therefore, refreshing to learn of Citizens for Self-Government, whose sole purpose was to encourage the incorporation of Sun City and reap the benefits attendant thereon. My wife and I quickly joined, and I was as quickly put to work on this publication.

In the months to come, CSG will be putting out more issues of OUTLOOK. Each issue is to be devoted to a different theme or civic concern. The nature of change, the changes that have occurred in Sun City since its inception, and the effects of those changes on those affected by them; zoning as it was intended to be and as it has evolved under County supervision; credibility, its nature, its source, and its absence when authority is scattered. These are a few of the topics or themes to be explored.

This issue has been devoted to Sun City's water problem, a problem which doesn't exist according to at least one Sun Citian. We invite you to read the contents of this issue and then decide for yourself whether or not the problem is real and whether or not incorporation is not only a viable way of dealing with the problem but is also the best way of dealing with it.

Since it is our hope that OUTLOOK will be seen as more than just a propaganda sheet for encouraging incorporation, we invite our readers, regardless of their stand on incorporation, to contribute factual articles, letters, etc. that will increase our information and knowledge. We ask only that contributions be couched in language which encourages honest, civil debate rather than emotional and blind reaction.

**What's In A Name?**

Invariably, when I need to refer to the place where I live now, I stumble a little. Never before have the expressions, "our city," "city water," "city park," "city bus" sounded not-quite-right.

According to Webster, we really should not call our (what should we call it?) a city. Webster's definition of a city is: "in the U.S., an incorporated municipality whose boundaries and powers of self-government are defined by a charter from the state in which it is located."

Referring to our (what should we call it?) as a "town" is no better. Webster says a town is: "a more or less concentrated group of houses and private and public buildings, larger than a village but smaller than a city."

Roget's Thesaurus suggests:

**DEL WEBB**

Continued from Page 1

issues. We can't call an election to decide anything.

... Sun City has no official spokesman to speak up for us before legislative committees, before the Department of Water Resources, before the Corporation Commission or when a cartoonist or a newspaper publisher derides and ridicules us. No one in Sun City is authorized to write a letter or make a phone call stating Sun City's position on anything.

... Legally and politically Sun City does not even exist. County officials and bureaucrats are not even sure where Sun City boundaries are. Sun City is ineligible for membership in the powerful League of Arizona Cities and Towns which represents the 86 incorporated cities and towns where 75% of Arizona's people live. The league provides legal, statistical, and research services for the cities and towns and is the most powerful lobby in the state. Farmers, ranchers, mining interests and real estate developers all have their lobbies. There is no league or lobby to serve unincorporated Sun City, Shungopavi, Pirtleville or Polacca.

... Sun City people have no voice in intergovernmental affairs. Sun City has no official representation on the various boards and councils dealing with freeways, water resources, flood control, waste management, crime prevention and the like. Sun City is unable to cooperate or compete with neighboring cities. We are not even invited to their conferences.

... Sun City people have no legislative powers. We can't pass an ordinance to control such nuisances as parked vehicles and unkempt premises or zoning ordinances to control high-density, multi-story, substandard housing and land use.

... Sun City people have no authorized agent to negotiate for us, contract with our suppliers and oversee the delivery of such services as trash collection and street lighting.

... Sun City is probably the only

"hamlet, village, thorp, dorp, ham, kraal, borough, burg, town, county seat, city, capital, metropolis, suburb, quarter, parish, ghetto." We don't get much help from that list either.

To solve the problem, I have fallen back on the all-inclusive term, "community." We cannot be excluded from that appellation. Roget's entire list could also be called "communities," but since "community" seems to fit our (whatever?) community, I guess it will have to do. Do you have a better idea?

We have another problem and that is what other people call us.

community of 40,000 people in the country that has no treasury — no public funds to plant and care for lawns, flowers and trees and enhance the beauty of our community — no public funds to celebrate or decorate or support sports or cultural activities — no public funds to publicize the matchless quality of our facilities and lifestyle and thus sustain our property values — no public funds to finance a first class public transportation system — no public funds to purchase strategic real estate at the opportune time — no public funds to fight off discriminatory taxes and protect our water rights.

... Sun City maintains no corporate records, no documents, no files, no library of municipal reports and literature, no detailed maps and specifications of streets, storm drains and utility installations.

It is obvious that Del Webb knew that Sun City would sooner or later have to have a city government to provide the essential municipal services listed above. When Del Webb chose "Sun City" as the name for his planned development he certainly anticipated that it would become a bona fide city under Arizona law.

Sun City was only four years old when Del Webb offered to donate a site for a city hall if the voters approved incorporation. Again in 1968, six years before Mr. Webb's untimely death, the initial Master Plan for Phase II approved by the county included a 20 acre site for a Civic Center at the corner of Del Webb Blvd. and Thunderbird Blvd. This most valuable piece of property near the geographical center of the town was to be reserved for a city hall, municipal court, police headquarters, fire department, post office, drivers and auto license bureaus and plenty of room for ancillary federal, state, and county offices and community service organizations.

In retrospect, it is probable that, if Mr. Webb were living today, Sun City people would have their own elected city government and be receiving the essential municipal services listed above that they are paying for but not receiving at this time

One disrespectful whipper-snapper once called us a "geriatric ghetto."

At the state house and the county seats we are called "an unincorporated area" or simply "rural."

At the federal level it is even worse. In most federal statistics and listings, Sun City, Arizona, is "Invisible City, Arizona." We are not even mentioned. Sun City's population and other statistics are usually included in a catch-all "rural or semi-rural" category on the report forms and publications coming out of Washington.

We just don't get no respect!

## Water Rights

Continued from Page 1

City's distribution system with Cabrillo's system and to the Central Arizona Project (CAP) Canal. Sun City well water was to be blended with CAP water and the resulting blend sold in both communities at the same rate per gallon. The proposed uniform rate structure would mean that Sun City rate payers would be subsidizing Cabrillo's much higher water costs and also be helping pay for the Cabrillo distribution system and the connecting pipelines.

Testimony revealed that CAP water is highly mineralized and requires expensive treatment to make it suitable for domestic use. The projected cost of treated CAP water delivered to Sun City would be three times the current cost of Sun City well water.

It was also revealed that the Sun City Water Co., without the knowledge and consent of anyone in Sun City, had signed a contract in 1985 to buy 5.1 billion gallons a year of CAP water without a single customer committed to buy any of the inferior and expensive water. The CAP contract is a "take or pay" contract which means that when the CAP canal is completed in a year or two, the Sun City Water Co. is committed to pay for 5.1 billion gallons of CAP water every year whether it is used or not.

Sun City customers currently use only 3.9 billion gallons of water a year and our population is static. We will never need more than 3.9 billion gallons because of water conservation requirements in the law. This means that if every well in Sun City was shut down and we started using CAP water exclusively there would still be 1.2 billion gallons a year of the CAP allocation left over for the Sun City Water Co. to pay for.

The Sun City Water Co. has been trying without success ever since 1984 to convince the Corporation Commission that the cost of its unsold CAP allocation should be added to the water bills of its Sun City customers whether they use the CAP water or not.\*

Over the strenuous objections of Water Watch, the Corporation Commission did finally grant a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity to Sun City Water Co. to serve Cabrillo.

Water Watch did gain two significant, at least temporary, victories. Approval of the pipeline connections to Cabrillo and the CAP Canal was withheld and the provision for uniform rates between the two communities was also deleted.

But this could change. Citizens Utilities, the parent company of Sun City Water Co. is noted for its per-

sistence and ability to get its way in the long run so don't be surprised if Water Watch's two small victories are overturned the next time around and Sun City water customers will end up being Citizens Utilities "cash cow" to help finance the utility's expansion plans in places like Rancho Cabrillo Norte.

So it became increasingly evident as the hearings progressed that Citizens Utilities Co., through its subsidiary the Sun City Water Co. is determined to take complete possession of Sun City's more than ample supply of good, pure, easily produced groundwater, blend it with 5 billion gallons of CAP water and sell the resulting mixture to all comers in the Northwest Valley including its Sun City customers. This means our water rates will at least double and we will face the same kind of problems our California neighbors have with using highly mineralized Colorado River water for household use. Water heaters, dishwashers, toilet fixtures, evaporative coolers, pipes, valves, and fittings must be replaced much more frequently when Colorado River Water is used, even after treating and blending.

Now how can a private water company like Sun City Water Co. take possession of Sun City's precious underground water resources? It's easy. If Sun City people don't get together and take possession of their water resources, the Sun City Water Co. will. In fact, as things stand right now, the Sun City Water Company is free pump all the water it can sell from Sun City wells and has been doing so since 1984.

Water Watch has known for several years that the Sun City Water Co. has been pumping considerable quantities of water from Sun City wells to real estate developments in Surprise and Peoria. A couple of months ago, I went down to the Corporation Commission and obtained copies of these reports\* submitted by the Sun City Water Co. to the Arizona Corporation Commission for the last five years. Page 11 of these reports reveals that the Sun City Water Co. sold almost a half a billion gallons of Sun City well water to public authorities in neighboring communities in the five years covered by these reports.

Last month, Bill Plummer, Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources, spoke to a group in Sun City and during the question period following his talk I asked him this question:

"Mr. Plummer, in the last five years the Sun City Water Company reported to the Arizona Corporation Commission that it has sold 480,000,000 gallons of Sun City groundwater to public authorities outside Sun City at prices approximately half those paid by Sun City residents.

My question is: Does the Depart-



This temporary line delivered thousands of gallons a day of Sun City well water to a proposed multi-million dollar housing development under construction in the Town of Surprise. This line was subsequently replaced with a 12 inch water main which has the capacity to deliver 3,000,000 gallons a day to developments to the west of Sun City. 3,000,000 gallons is about one third of Sun City's total domestic consumption per day.

ment of Water Resources condone the sale at cut prices of almost a half a billion gallons of Sun City well water to customers outside their certificated and franchised territory?"

Mr. Plummer's reply was, "The Sun City Water Co. is regulated by the Arizona Corporation Commission. I suggest that your question could be better answered by Corporation Commission authorities."

This reply is just an illustration of the confused situation that Sun City people are facing. The fact is, nobody, including the Dept. of Water Resources, the Corp. Commission, or the State Legislature knows for sure who should control the grandfathered groundwater rights appurtenant to Sun City real estate.

The Groundwater Management Act of 1980 is specific in regard to individual well owners, small farmers, large farmers, ranchers, mining companies, industrial users, and owners of retired irrigation land. If you used a certain quantity of groundwater in the five years preceding 1980 you were entitled to continue to use that quantity under the new law.

Similarly, each incorporated city and town was assumed to have title to the collective grandfathered water rights appurtenant to the real estate within its incorporated area and the city council of each municipality is charged with managing its collective water resources in the best interests of citizens of the municipality. The Groundwater Act grants municipalities the right to buy, sell, transfer, or trade water from various sources with other municipalities, persons or organizations.

In 1980, the legislative committees in the house and senate who were writing the Groundwater Act were up against it. Who should be assigned the responsibility for managing Sun City's groundwater resources? Maricopa County couldn't do it because county governments in Arizona are forbidden by law to

provide municipal services such as water, sewer, street lights, fire protection and the like. The Home Owners Association, the Taxpayers Association and the Rec. Centers were deemed legally unqualified to assume the responsibility.

We do not know how much influence Citizens Utilities' high caliber team of water lawyers and lobbyists may have had on the legislative committees but we do know that Sun City's private (for-profit) water company ended up with de facto control of Sun City's water resources with none of the responsibilities municipalities have to their citizens.

A few days ago I went through the 13 articles in the Arizona Revised Statutes pertaining to the Groundwater Act and found 33 instances where private water companies were lumped in with municipalities and given the same authority over the groundwater they pump as the locally elected governments of Arizona cities and towns.

I will read you two paragraphs from Article 45-561 entitled "Definitions".

5. "Municipal use" means all non-irrigation uses of water supplied by a city, town, private water company or irrigation district.

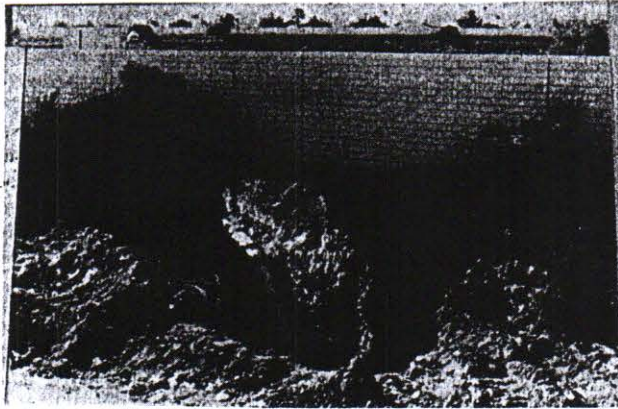
7. "Small municipal provider" means a city, town, private water company, or irrigation district that supplies water for non-irrigation use, serves less than five hundred people and supplies less than one hundred acre feet of water for non-irrigation use during a calendar year.

Curiously, the Groundwater Act does not define or even mention "large municipal providers" such as the Sun City Water Co.

Now what does the word "municipal" mean? Webster defines "municipal" as, "having to do with local government", so there is clearly nothing municipal about the Sun City Water Co.

The Groundwater Act in effect





This 12 inch main running north out of Sun City also has the capacity to deliver 3,000,000 gallons of Sun City Water a day to future developments north of Sun City. A sanitary sewer main adjacent to this line connects the Paradise Travel Trailer Park in the City of Peoria to Sun City's sewer system.

Continued from Page 3  
says the Sun City Water Co. can do what it pleases with Sun City well water but it doesn't come right out and say that the water belongs to the water company. On one hand, the Act seems to say that the grandfathered water rights to the Boswell farmland passed to the present owners of Sun City real estate but on the other hand it renders those rights meaningless when it gives private water companies almost unlimited control over the groundwater it pumps.

As things stand now, unless Sun City people sue and win a prolonged and very costly court battle, the Sun City Water Co. will continue to sell off our groundwater and eventually bring in CAP water to replace it.

Now what must Sun City people do to win these battles with a predatory water company, a bumbling Dept. of Water Resources, a sluggish and unpredictable Superior Court and a preoccupied and understaffed Corporation Commission?

The first thing we must do is to forsake our dependence upon volunteers alone to manage the municipal affairs of over 40,000 people. The dedicated and often talented volunteers at the Home Owners Association, the Taxpayers Association, and the Water Watch Committee are spinning their wheels most of the time because they have no legal authority to take action in behalf of all the people in Sun City or to represent all Sun City people in intergovernmental affairs.

For example, Roy Goodenough, Director of Public Works for the Town of Youngtown showed me his little library of 78 official reports, booklets, brochures, maps, and other publications he receives every year from various municipal, county, state and national departments, bureaus and associations. In contrast, as a concerned citizen and volunteer, in recent years I have made countless trips to downtown Phoenix and spent almost a thou-

sand dollars of my own money to obtain documents and information that comes mostly free and often unsolicited to city officials throughout the state.

Sun City can get along very well with an unpaid elected mayor and city council but we must employ at least four experienced and highly qualified professionals to handle the essential duties of city manager, city engineer, city clerk and city attorney. We must have a modest city hall, about twice the size of the Home Owners Building with a secretarial and clerical force of a half dozen people to handle the communications, files and records that are essential to an enterprise the size of Sun City.

Second, we must forsake our dependence on public donations to finance essential legal and administrative functions that are normally handled by a city government.

For example the Sun City Home Owners Association recently made a public appeal for a legal defense fund to protect our water rights. The response was very gratifying. Over \$50,000 in contribution was received in the first two weeks but the sad news is that \$50,000 could disappear in one week in a critical legal battle.

Not long ago, the little Town of Surprise was involved in a legal battle with the Sun City Water Co. over who should provide water service to that community. I got the same story from the last two town managers of Surprise who told me that the Estes Corporation provided Surprise with \$3,500,000 to pay legal fees which was added to something less than \$100,000 from the Town to fight the case. The Surprise attorneys were inept or bought off and the water company won an 18 million dollar judgement. It is generally believed that the judgement was a fluke and could be overturned on appeal but neither the Estes Company or the Town has the money now to finance an appeal. Water

law litigation is a million dollar game and is no place for amateurs or second rate attorneys.

The stakes in Sun City's water battle are tremendous. It could cost us 5 million or more every year if we let Sun City Water Co. take possession of our groundwater resources. We should have several million dollars in a reserve fund to draw on if we need it.

Sun City is probably the only community of 40,000 people in the United States that does not have public funds available to finance essential or worthwhile community projects. Little Youngtown, next door to us, has a reserve fund of over a million dollars out drawing interest.

How can Sun City people raise that kind of money? It's easy. Do it the same way that Youngtown and Paradise Valley and Phoenix finance their projects and build their reserves. Use State Shared Revenues.

This year \$9.1 million of the income taxes, sales taxes and license fees the state collects from us will go into funds earmarked for incorporated cities and towns. Our share of these funds (called State Shared Revenues) does not come back to us because we are not incorporated. Our \$9.1 million stays in the pot and is distributed to the 86 cities and towns that are incorporated. The

crises from practically every city hall and town hall in the state.

And what happened? Sun City's contribution to State Shared Revenues for incorporated cities and towns went up from \$8.1 million to \$9.1 million starting July 1 of this year.\*

And incorporation would do more than just assure us of adequate funds to fight our water battles.

As soon as we incorporate we can go to the Corporation Commission, the Dept. of Water Resources, the Superior Court and the Legislature and say:

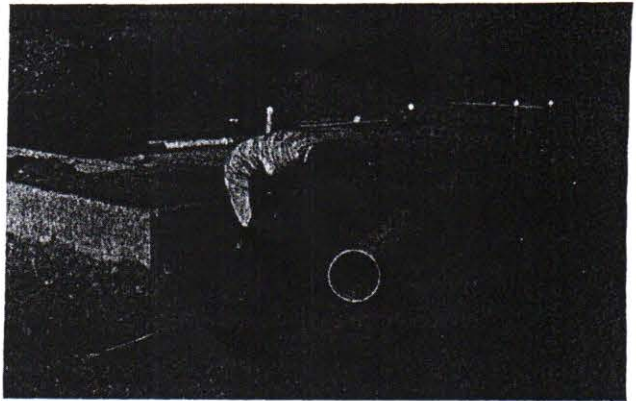
"Sun City is now the City of Sun City. The Groundwater Act of 1980 gives an incorporated city certain rights and responsibilities to manage the collective grandfathered water rights appurtenant to the land within its boundaries for the benefit of the landowners and residents.

Our city government is now ready and able to assume this municipal responsibility.

Any claims the Sun City Water Co. may have to the water rights appurtenant to land not owned by the water company have no validity.

Furthermore, the designation of the Sun City Water Co. as a "municipal provider" is an error and must be corrected.

As of now, there is only one municipality in Sun City and that is our new city government."



Another 12 inch main extending north out of Sun City delivered large quantities of Sun City well water to a nursing home and apartment complex under construction several years ago in Peoria at 99th and Beardsley Road. An extension of this line would have the capacity to bring into Sun City 3,000,000 gallons a day of expensive and poor quality Colorado River water from the CAP canal a few miles to the north of us.

City of Phoenix will get about \$2.7 million of our taxes this year to expand its bus system or care for the landscaping in its public areas.

And don't worry about State Shared Revenues disappearing. Over three fourths of the people in Arizona live in incorporated cities and towns. Early this year, someone proposed that an easy way to balance the state budget would be to cut State Shared Revenues to incorporated cities and towns. Immediately the papers and airwaves and the mailboxes and telephones of the legislators were full of anguished

Copies of the following documents are available upon request.

1 - Page 11, Sun City Water Company's annual reports to the Arizona Corporation Commission, 1984-88.

2 - "Request for Extension" submitted to Central Arizona Project authorities by the Sun City Water Co.

3 - "State Shared Revenues Projections for an Incorporated Sun City." Fiscal year 1990-91. Prepared by the League of Arizona Cities and Towns.

# Incorporation debate continues; citizens vigilant

By PEG KEITH  
Sun Cities Independent

5/23/90

Incorporation of Sun City has been a topic of conversation for years.

One Sun Citian, Lester Merydith, says he's been working on it for 15 years, and the pace is picking up.

"We're probably closer than we ever were," says Mr. Merydith. "It is not going to happen next month or in the next six months. But we're gearing up for a drive ... we're going to keep working. We keep learning more and gaining converts."

The "we" he's speaking about is Citizens for Self Government, an organization that originally was identified as the Charter Government Association.

"We changed the name about five years ago. I have been president of it ever since.

"Membership keeps growing,"

he continues, estimating that the roster stands at about 2,600 at this point.

Citizens for Self Government membership is in Sun City only, says Mr. Merydith. It does not include Sun City West.

"We exchange information. We have no corporate ties, no common funding, no common membership. They don't belong to us, we don't belong to them."

Nat Jampel, president of Town Meeting Association, an organization opposed to incorporation of Sun City, says he is certain residents will turn down any vote to incorporate.

"I doubt it will happen," says Mr. Jampel. "But you can never tell what people are going to do."

"But I have faith in the intelligence of the average Sun City resident. After all, they've already made the decision to come to a place that provides them with the peace and quiet that only an

unincorporated community can give them."

TMA was first organized in 1977 by the late Al Brown. Mr. Jampel has served as its president since Mr. Brown's death.

During previous incorporation campaigns, both sides have employed a variety of methods to push their platforms. Public meetings, letters to local newspapers and paid advertisements are just a few of the methods used.

When it comes to spending money, however, Citizens for Self Government may be at a definite advantage over TMA. Unlike the pro-incorporation organization, TMA does not have "official" dues-paying members and operates entirely on contributions.

"When Al Brown organized TMA, he said every Sun Citian is automatically a member of Sun City Town Meetings Association," says Mr. Jampel.

There are no membership dues and there are no "card-carrying members." TMA operates on the premise that everyone who opposes incorporation is a member.

Mr. Jampel says he will attempt to "educate" voters through letters and columns through the local newspapers.

"Meetings only attract a couple hundred people," he says. "I need both newspapers to tell the truth."

Mr. Jampel has always contended that incorporation would increase taxes in Sun City.

"Incorporation leaders' constant attempt to sell their junk bonds that municipal government represents, particularly in an unincorporated community of retirees no longer in the work force, would result in an overwhelming financial disaster for

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the great majority of Sun City residents."

Mr. Merydith's efforts to see an incorporated Sun City have been impacted by questions concerning the retirement community's water supply.

The organization looks at a current water battle as advantageous to its purpose: incorporation of Sun City, and refers to a previous confrontation.

With the help of Eugene Jensen, now chairman of the Water Resources Committee of the Sun City Home Owners Association, and Walter Bush, then member of Sun City Taxpayers Association, Mr. Merydith developed a project that, in 1986, was dubbed "Water Watch."

In an informational exchange, he says, the three activists at that time contacted other local organizations including the Recreation Centers of Sun City, some of the country clubs and the Fire Board.

"We raised enough money to contest the Sun City Water Company's attempt to walk away with our water rights," says Mr. Merydith.

At that time, he says, the Sun City Water Company said it was filing on behalf of the Water Company — instead of filing on behalf of the property owners.

This was just one round in the water dispute.

A second round came earlier this month when HOA announced it was seeking money to defend Sun City's water rights.

This action came when Sun City Water Company applied for a public service franchise to provide utilities, water and sewer facilities, for a proposed community to be developed near Lake Pleasant in northwest Phoenix.

The third round in the water dispute may be down the road, but it has been delayed.

Sun City's response to the proposed development of the retirement community near Lake Pleasant, a move on the part of HOA to raise money to fight the transfer of water, seems to have stalled the project at least temporarily.

The developer apparently has declined to get into a confrontation with HOA and other opposition in the area.

Mr. Merydith explains that he and Mr. Jensen have "just never quite agreed what should be done with Central Arizona Project wa-

ter.

"I'm not saying our organization is opposed to what HOA is doing," he says. "HOA is doing the best they know. I admire what they are doing (gaining citizen support to challenge the transfer of water, in court if necessary).

"They want to raise some money. But I'm convinced ... they can't raise enough money to win in the courts. It will take millions of dollars to protect our water.

"Anyway, the kind of money that is needed to protect our water rights ... we can't do it by passing the hat, says Mr. Merydith.

He refers to a similar confrontation which resulted in a court battle between the town of Surprise and Citizens Utilities.

"Surprise," Mr. Merydith says, "spent \$1,600,000 in a court proceeding. They did not have that much money but had the Estes Corp. backing. They spent about \$300,000 of their own money and they lost. It should have been appealed, the verdict was ridiculous."

Surprise City Manager Nick Bacon confirmed the expenses. He says that, over a three-year period, for staff, expert witness cost and other charges and fees, the town spent at least \$300,000.

"We dropped the appeal. We couldn't afford to proceed."

Mr. Merydith says incorporation is the answer. "Sun City has to take advantage of shared revenues that we are forfeiting."

He continues, "We are paying about \$8 million in state taxes now, that are being spent by others. If we incorporate, we could bring that \$8 million back."

# Ex-head of Webb:

By **Connie Cone Sexton**  
Staff writer

SUN CITY — Incorporation of Sun City is necessary for its health and welfare, according to a former president of the company that created the community.

"You need a voice in the Legislature," former Del Webb Development chief John Meeker told residents last week in a speech to 200 members of Citizens for Self-Government. The group, which has about 2,600 members, supports incorporation.

Meeker, who helped plan and get Sun City off the ground in the early 1960s, said although the residents have representa-

tion from legislative officials, a more local focus is needed.

"You need a mayor or a single spokesperson to represent you," he said.

"You are an economical factor in this state. You are a big political factor. And you're really not being heard. Your forces are scattered. They are attacking you all the time. Like the school tax. And there are going to be others. They always want to dip into your pocket."

The tax he referred to was levied by the Legislature in 1988 on Sun City residents and others living in areas outside organized school districts. The tax later was found unconstitutional by Maricopa County Superior Court.

A lawsuit challenging the tax had been filed on behalf of several Sun City and Sun City West associations. Getting legislators or the courts to hear the plea was difficult, at first.

Meeker said the challenge might have been easier if the communities had been incorporated. "If you can make yourself heard by a spokesperson such as a mayor, I think they will listen to you much more effectively than they do now."

Although Del Webb officials today will not say whether they support incorporation or not, Meeker said the original intent by the Webb company was to have the community govern itself.

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## Incorporate Sun City



### SUN CITY

having to create its own departments.

"The impression that we got (from the study) was that you could have a city government without all the byproducts: the bad politics, the arguments that were being presented about people making money running for city office," he said.

"It was a vehicle in which you could incorporate and have the best of all worlds," he explained.

Meeker suggested that the study Webb commissioned be updated. "I

said, the Webb company felt incorporation should be weighed.

"As Sun City was nearing completion and plans were made for Sun City West, the Webb Company entered into an agreement . . . to do a study on the pros and cons of incorporation. That question had come up many times during the life of Sun City. It came up early and was vehemently voted down or objected to" by the residents, Meeker said.

"It was felt that after Webb left and went to Sun City West, if you incorporated you could continue on to provide for the needs that you might have in the future. We hoped and tried to push along a vote for incorporation but it never did take

place," he said.

Too many people opposed it, Meeker said, adding that Webb officials never understood why the issue was not supported.

"They shouted it down. We had meetings with them to try to explain it, (but) we just could never get it to a vote," he said.

Meeker said the study on incorporation stated it could be successful by having the community opt for a contract charter form of government. The city would receive its portion of the state shared-revenue fund and could contract out for such services as police, fire or water service without

See SUN CITY, Page 3

think the need is still great" for incorporation, he said.

He encouraged the citizens group to spread the word to promote incorporation to other residents.

"If you can get it to an election and you can get the people to the polls and get your story told — and I think you have to tell it over and over again — incorporation will come to pass. It must come to pass. But you've got to be heard," he said.

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## SUN CITY

From Page 1

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