

Get ready to be splashed

For those RCSC Cardholders with visiting children, the RCSC has established pool times at various centers so children can freely swim and play in the pool. These centers and times (Mountain View 11am-1pm, Marinette noon-3pm, Oakmont 1pm-4pm and Lakeview 4pm-close) are provided so that our grandchildren, great nieces and nephews and any children who may be visiting can enjoy themselves and have fun in Sun City! "My first visit, many, many years ago now, was delightful! I loved Sun City and have always had such fond memories of visiting my family here," recalls GM Jan Ek. "It is really important that our young visitors have fun and feel welcome."

A recent visit to a recreation center during children's hours revealed that not necessarily to be

see "SPLASH" on Page 2

Marinette Center's Family Splash Zone!

Daily Noon - 3:00pm

Children's Hours - Ages 4-15



**Jump in & join the family fun at
Marinette Center's Splash Zone!**

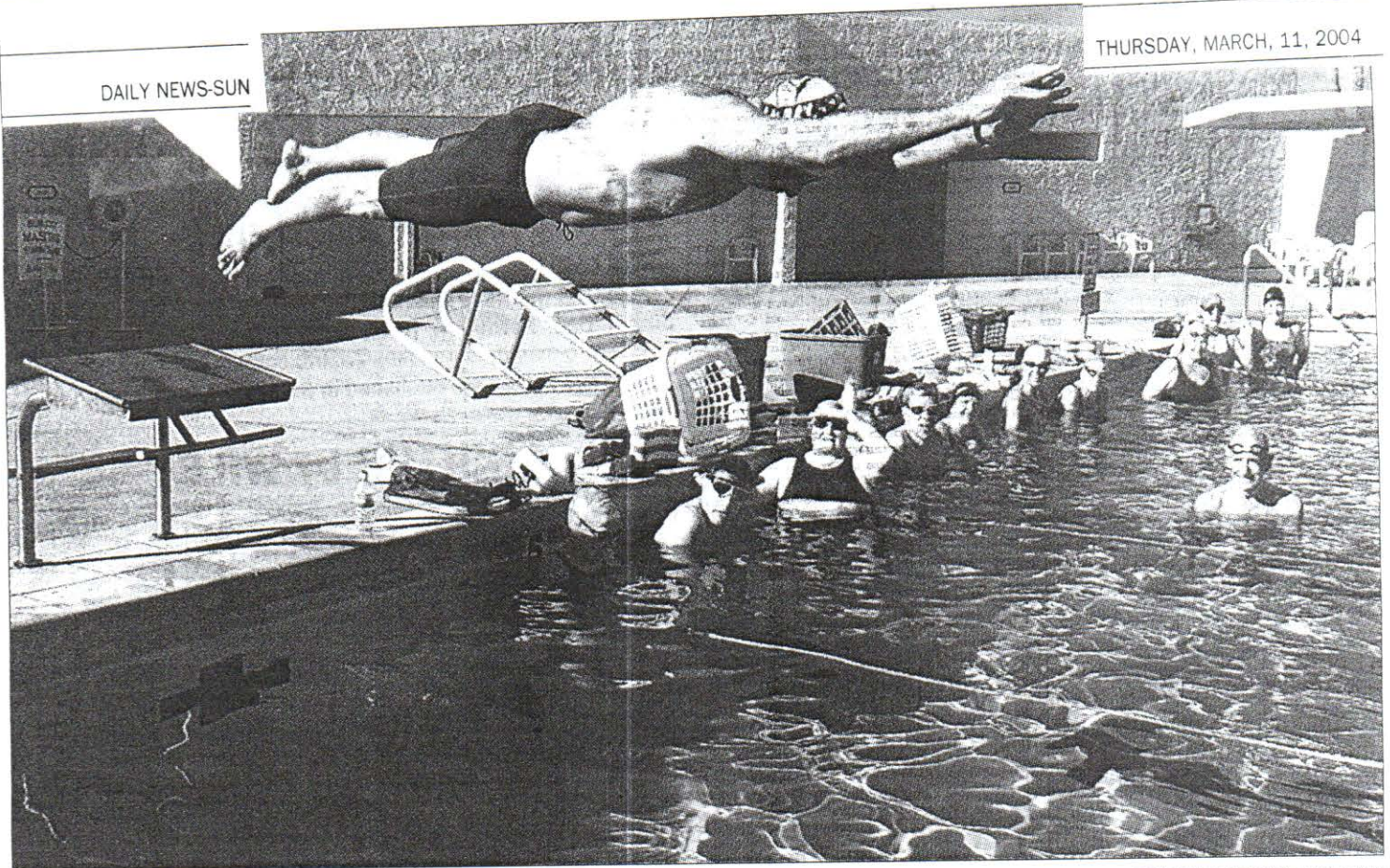
**Don't forget your towel - everybody
gets wet in the Splash Zone!**

SPLASH: Children welcome at RCSC pools

continued from Page 1

the case. Two children visiting their great aunt while their mother was going through some intensive cancer treatments were not made to feel welcome as a cardholder let them know she was glad that they were going home the next day. They were expected to jump into the water without splashing and when in the corner of the pool with their great aunt, they were informed by a cardholder that they were not to get her hair wet. RCSC cardholders, please, this is not how we treat our guests and it is certainly not how we treat our future generation of Sun City residents.

The RCSC Board of Directors asks that if you do not want your hair to get wet, or to be splashed, or you don't like the sound of children playing, please don't come to these pools during children's hours. Children will no longer be asked to jump into the pools without splashing, nor will they be asked to refrain from laughing and "hollering" at one another as they enjoy themselves and each other, nor will they be responsible for getting someone's hair wet. Matter of fact, to help ensure that children have a good time and enjoy their experience while visiting Sun City, the RCSC Board of Directors has requested that children pool toys be purchased that can be used during children hours so kids will be encouraged to have fun in our swimming pools and look forward to coming back again! So if that is not suitable for you, please remember that both Bell and Sundial pools are for adults only.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Sun City Starrs Team watches as Bill Bracken practices his starts at Bell Recreation Center Wednesday.

Seniors practice water wellness

ANNIE KARSTENS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Swimmers in the Sun Cities may have found the fountain of youth. Competitive swimmers and water exercisers alike believe swimming has kept them healthy in body and mind.

"Swimming is a great tool for those with arthritis or joint pain, who enjoy the water and who have difficulty with land exercise," said Marty Welter of the American College of Sports Medicine and manager for Sun Health Community Education. "There's also a strong correlation between those who exercise regularly and good mental health."

Welter said swimming, like all cardiovascular exercise, improves cholesterol levels, reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke, burns calories and is good for self-esteem. Water aerobics and water walking are partial weight-bearing exercises and can contribute to some strength training, whereas swimming laps is more geared to a cardiovascular workout, Welter said.

"Aerobic exercise can increase neuro-transmitters, like serotonin, which give us a sense of well being," he said. "It's a release of endorphins, kind of that peak experience when they feel good."

A proper fitness routine should include brisk cardiovascular workouts for 30 minutes, at least three days a week. The heart rate or breathing rate should be up.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

RC Wilson swims laps during the Sun City Starts Swim Team practice at Bell Recreation Center Wednesday.

An additional strength training regime, like traditional weight lifting, should follow a similar schedule.

Sun City resident Linn Applegate is the first vice president of the Sun City Aquatic Club, a group of more than 1,000, 55- to 94-year-olds that meets at various recreation center pools at different times to do water aerobics and exercise. She has cherished her time in the pools and knows first-hand the benefits of a good water workout.

"It has helped my energy level tremendously," Applegate said. "My joints and muscles are much looser, I'm not stiff or sore."

Many members of the Aquatic Club have arthritis and joint pain, so water aerobics are an ideal workout for them, Applegate said. The

routine of meeting as a group also adds to the convenience of pool exercising.

"I have a hard time maintaining an exercise program on my own, I need to belong to a group," she said.

Applegate believes her stress levels and mental health have improved since she began water aerobics three years ago.

"I do it in the morning and feel better all day," she said. "You can be proud of yourself that you have that get up and go."

Members of the Handi-Capables club of Sun City West that meets at Beardsley Pool take advantage of the comfort of water to exercise and do their physical therapy. Dick Sheets of Sun City West acts as a physical therapist for some members of the club, and his wife,

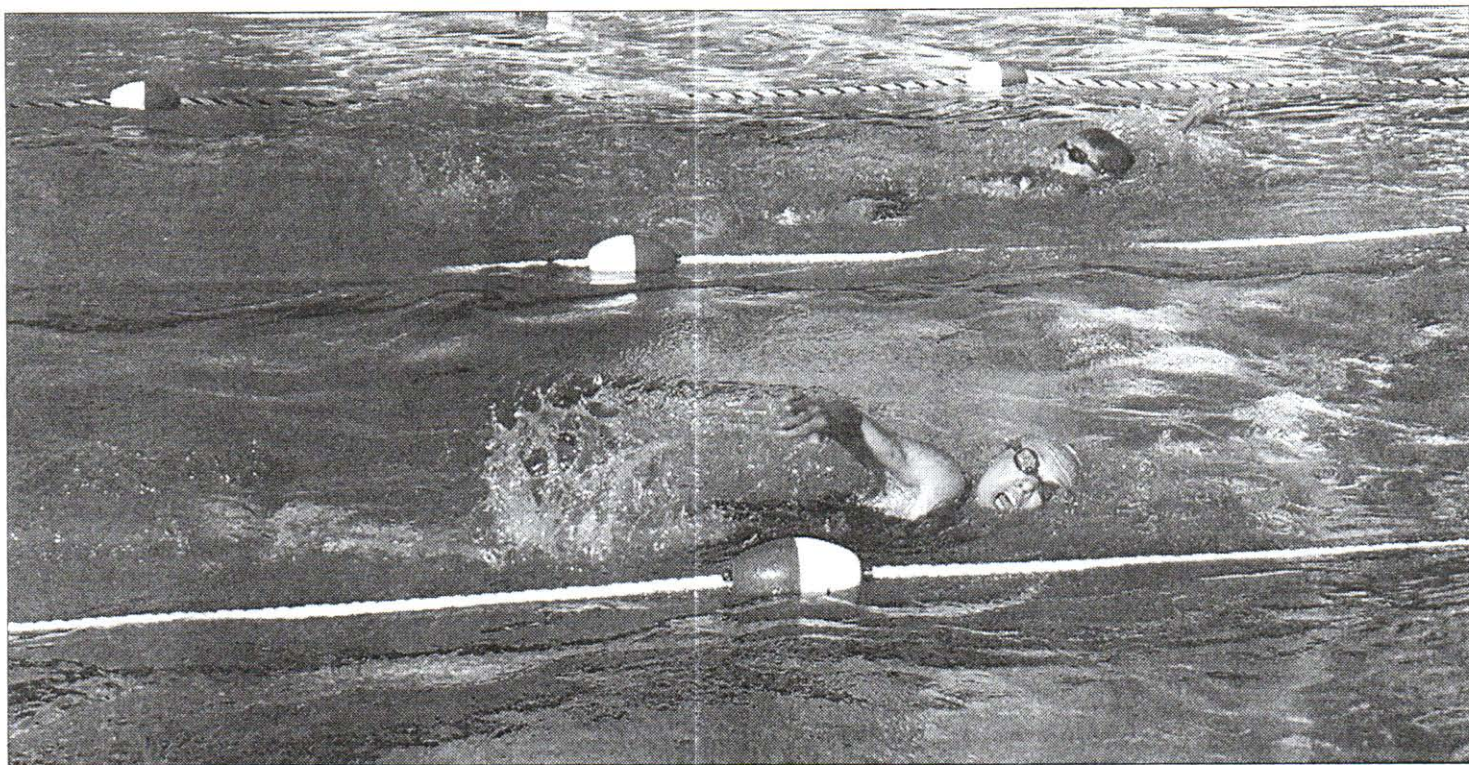
Carolyn, leads an exercise portion of club sessions. The Handi-Capables club, which also has a branch in Sun City, has about 40 members, some of whom have suffered strokes, some are amputees and others who have endured physical impairment.

"These people are up, they are just happy and tickled to death to be there," Dick Sheets said. "There's none of them that feel sorry for themselves."

Carolyn Sheets said the water exercises she leads are relaxing and a type of escape for club members who are regularly in pain.

"The water makes things about 10 times easier," she said. "It feels so good to be able to move without hurting."

DVER See SWIM, A11



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

RC Wilson and Sumie Anderson swim laps during a Sun City Starrs Swim Team practice Wednesday at Bell Recreation Center.

SWIM: Activity helps maintain physical, mental health

From A1

Even members who are afraid of water end up enjoying their workout and making physical progress, Carolyn Sheets said.

"If they make themselves get it in, they find how comfortable the water is," Sheets said. "Then, they never want to get out."

Bob Oakeson, a physical therapist at the Sports Medicine Institute of Glendale, said there are two ways water is used in workouts.

"First, the buoyancy of the water is good for joints because you don't have the weight of your body or gravity to pull your body down," Oakeson said. "Secondly, resistance of water is used as a means of weight training."

Walking briskly through water offers significant resistance to the trunk and leg muscles, which allows for the strengthening and building of muscles in those areas, Oakeson said.

"Arthritic joints that can't tolerate speed walking on land can often get in the water and do some great workouts," he said.

Sun City resident Diane Lewis is a member of the United States Masters Swimmer Organization and so are all 15 of her fellow members of the Sun City Starrs Swim Team, coached by John Jorgensen. Lewis, who's been swimming competitively for six years, won four gold medals in the Arizona Senior Olympics in February.

"When you have pride in what you accomplish, it



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Jorgensen coaches the Sun City Starrs Swim Team Wednesday at Bell Recreation Center.

makes you feel good, which is something I didn't expect to accomplish as a senior," Lewis said, adding that she feels that swimming is one of the best forms of exercise, especially for seniors.

"Swimming is a non-contact sport and a gentler way to exercise," Lewis said. "Since I've been swimming, I feel better, I'm more flexible and don't worry about my cholesterol as much."

Lewis has learned that swimming sprints is a good cardiovascular workout and distance swimming helps to stretch muscles and build flexibility. On a whole, she and her fellow Starrs have had very few colds, are rarely ill and revel in the fact that

risk of injury while swimming is minimal. After tearing a shoulder tendon in a fall, Lewis credits the motivation to swim for her speedy recovery.

"Between physical therapy and swimming, I'm back to having full range of motion in my shoulder," she said. "Wanting to get back into the water was a great impetus to work at the physical therapy."

The swimming regime Lewis keeps helps her maintain an active lifestyle and gives her proof that her physical condition improves.

"Competing gives us a measure of how we're doing."

Fyi

- Handi-Capables of Sun City, 933-1234.
- Handi-Capables of Sun City West, 546-1342.
- Sun City Aquatic Club, 974-0648.
- Sun City Starrs Swim Team, 972-5466.
- Sun City Swim Club, 977-9755.

she said. "Because we have a set time to swim, we don't skip workouts."

Lewis thinks of her swimming regimen as a time to free her mind and she values the adrenaline rush she gets during a competition.

"You're relaxed, you're in another zone," she said. "When you're healthy, you have a more positive attitude."

Dr. Joel Stager, director of the Councilman Center for the Science of Swimming at Indiana University, reported that Master Swimmers, like members of the Starrs, score high on composite scores for general health as well as physical and mental functioning.

Stager reported that the oldest Master Swimmers present the greatest health differences in comparison to the general population.

"Physical activity is, perhaps, the single mechanism that has been shown in humans to extend significantly 'good life,'" Stager wrote. "(Master Swimmers) might just be swimming in the fountain of youth."

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Membership booming in swim club

By Lindsey Remington
Independent Newspapers

Staying active during the summer in Arizona is tough; however, some Sun City residents have figured out that heading to the pool is a great way to stay fit and keep cool.

The Sun City Swim Club this summer has the highest number of members it has ever had, said Joanie Skewes head instructor of the club.

Ms. Skewes credits the club's record 112 members to the new instructors she hired.

"I've gotten new teachers who are really energetic and raring to go," she said.

"Swimming is the best exercise someone can do. It exercises every muscle in the body, arms, legs, hips," she said. "Everybody just loves it."

Shirley Guth, who has been a member of the club for about six weeks, said she didn't know how to swim when she joined the club.

"I had never learned to swim. My husband and my sons could, and I feel like I missed out a little," she said.

After six lessons, Ms. Guth said she can float on her back and her stomach, among other things, and has already been moved up from the beginner's group to the intermediate.

"It's fun exercise. I'm enjoying it so much," she said. "It's the kind of class that when it ends, everyone is like, 'Awwwh.'"

Ms. Skewes said that the sport is especially good exercise for people who are recovering from knee surgeries and people who have trouble walking.

Ms. Skewes, who has been an instructor at the club for three years, said seniors sometimes are fearful of water because something scared them while in the water as a child and they never overcame their related fear.



Photo by Lindsey Remington/Independent Newspapers

Sun City Swim Club instructor Joanie Skewes helps Roxanne Felix practice taking a breath while swimming the freestyle stroke Aug. 6 at Lakeview Recreation Center. The swim club meets every Wednesday from 9 to 10 a.m.

"I don't push anybody. I let them go at their own pace," she noted.

Lucy Kusz said she used to be terrified of water before joining the swim club nine years ago. She is now in the advanced group.

She said she learned to swim because her husband installed a pool in their backyard and it helps her maintain her weight.

"And I'm a Pisces," she said. "You can't be a Pisces and not know how to swim."

All three class levels meet from 9 to 10 a.m. Wednesdays at Lakeview Recreation Center, 10626 W. Thunderbird Road, but each group has a different instructor.

Instructors teach swimming strokes such as freestyle, back stroke and breast stroke, but also make time for a little competition.

"We'll have one-on-one races sometimes," Ms. Skewes said. "We scream and yell like



Photo by Lindsey Remington/Independent Newspapers

Sun City Swim Club member Mary Lou Vail gets a lesson on floating on her back from instructor Joanie Skewes Aug. 6 at Lakeview Recreation Center.

kids to cheer them on."

The club also includes a 29-member Aqua Suns group, which practices and performs synchronized water ballet.

Mary McBain, a member of the Aqua Suns, is looking forward to traveling to Italy for a competition next year.

"I just love it," she said. "It works your whole body and also increases your lung capacity."

Not only does the club swim, but it holds a breakfast once a month and a holiday party every year for its members.

The club will meet at Lakeview through Nov. 1 and then at Sundial Recreation Center, 14801 N. 103rd Ave., through April 1.

Membership is \$3 a year.

For more information, call 977-9755 or 933-5808.

DAILY NEWS-SUN • WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2002

Sun City swimmers strike gold

STAFF REPORT

Two Sun City residents won multiple medals during swimming competition at the Grand Canyon State Games, completed Sunday at Arizona State University.

Kathleen O'Brien-Lawrence won four medals. The 58-year-old won gold for her first-place finishes in the 50-yard

backstroke and 50 freestyle. O'Brien-Lawrence received two silver medals for second-place finishes in the 50 butterfly and 50 breaststroke.

Bob Bracken won three medals. The 67-year-old won a gold medal for his first-place finish in the 50 freestyle. Bracken received two silver medals for his second-place finishes in the 50 backstroke and 50

breaststroke.

Both swimmers are members of the Sun City Starrs and coached by **John Jorgensen**.

Both Sun Citians have proven to be quick studies as Master swimmers. O'Brien-Lawrence started Masters swimming three months ago while Bracken began swimming with the Sun City Starrs six weeks ago.

AGING GRACEFULLY

Resident still teaches swimming at age of 95

By Jeremy Pearlman
Independent Newspapers

Time has been very kind to Sun City resident John Golden. At 95, he looks not a day over 70 and has maintained a trim athletic physique despite his age.

Mr. Golden did not locate the fabled fountain of youth sought by Juan Ponce de León to maintain his looks.

He discovered, instead, the pools of Sun City.

Renewing his interest in swimming shortly after retiring to the community with his wife, Helen, in 1972, he has been with the Sun City Swim Club for the last 30 years.

Swimming several times a week, Mr. Golden partially credits his youthful appearance to his time in the pool.

"I still get out to swim. That's one of the reasons," Mr. Golden said.

Not long after joining the Sun City Swim Club, the club shifted its focus from being simply a club for swimmers to becoming an instructional and synchronized swimming club.

But while many male club members departed after the shift, looking for a more competitive swimming venue, Mr. Golden remained. He even became the club's president in 1974 and 1975.

Deciding to take on an activity relatively new to him, he began swimming with the club's synchronized swim team, the Aqua Suns.

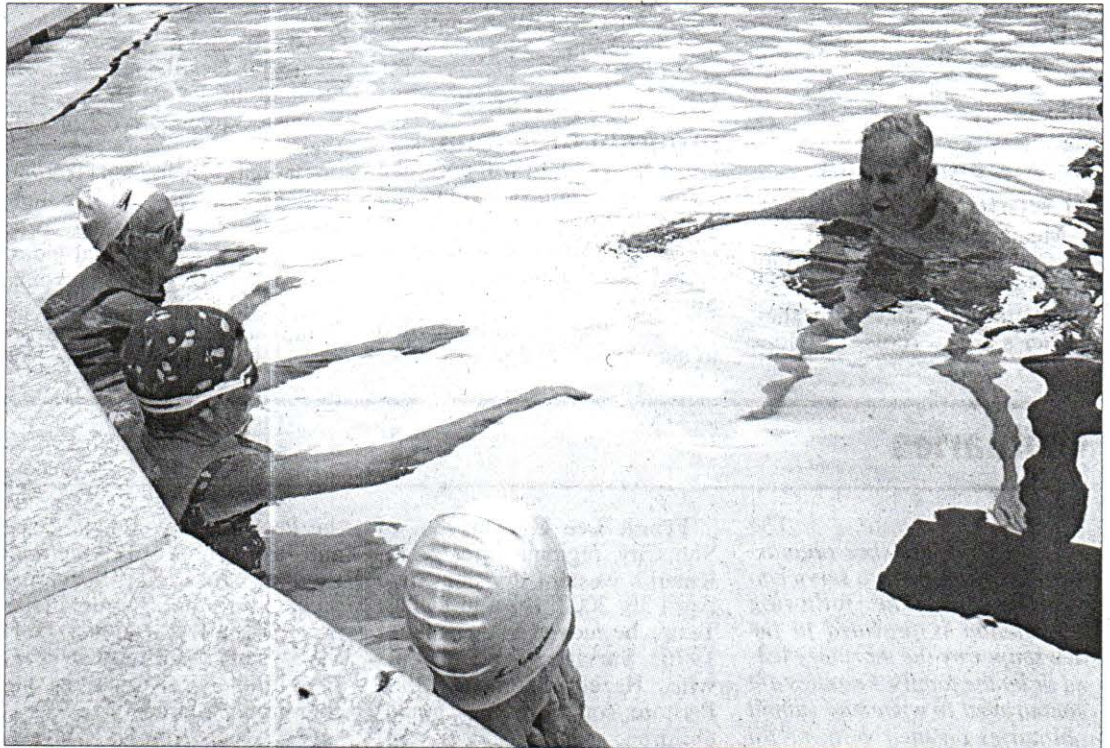


Photo by Jeremy Pearlman/Independent Newspapers
At 95, Sun Citian John Golden, right, still gives swimming lessons to new members of the Sun City Swim Club.

"In my high school and college days I did competitive swimming but this was something new and challenging," Mr. Golden said. "It's not only challenging to synchronize swim, but it was also challenging being the only man."

For two years he was the club's only male member. After some time, however, other men joined.

Part of the Aqua Suns team for 12 years, Mr. Golden per-

formed solos, duets and patterns. During that time he won three gold medals at the Arizona Senior Olympics.

In the late '80s he chose to retire from the Aqua Suns. Remaining with the club as an instructor for new swimmers, he still teaches at the Lakeview Recreation Center Pool in Sun City twice a week.

"About half of the Aqua Suns started out learning to swim," Mr. Golden said, grinning with

pride.

"He's a big asset to the club and he's been here for years," said Phyllis Ilten, current president of the Sun City Swim Club. "He's very devoted to swimming."

In addition to swimming, Mr. Golden has been active in the United Church of Sun City and with his condominium association board.

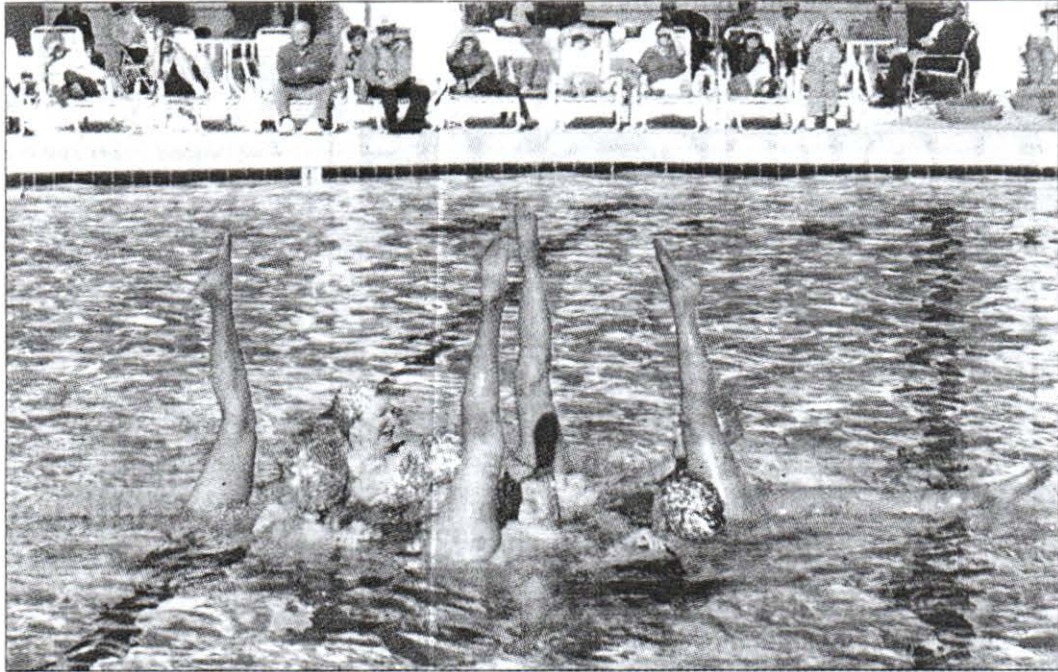


Photo by Jeremy Pearlman/Independent Newspapers

The Lakeview Recreation Center pool reopened during a Dec. 17 ceremony with a synchronized swimming performance by the Sun City Aqua Suns. The pool had been closed since August for renovations.

Lakeview pool reopens

Pool had been closed for 100 days

By **Jeremy Pearlman**
Independent Newspapers

Steel-drum and synchronized swimming performances helped reopen the Lakeview Recreation Center pool during a Dec. 17 ceremony.

The pool was closed for nearly 100 days for renovations to the pool decks, pool lining, pool skimmers, piping and spa drainage.

The project was originally designed to renovate the hazardous cracks in the pool decks. But once the concrete was removed, other problems surfaced, according to Jerry Swintek, president of the Recreation Centers of Sun City board of directors.

"It became a giant project because we found lines collapsed and broken," Mr. Swintek said. "It turned into something much more than anticipated."

The decision was made by the board to fix all of the problems at once while the pool

deck had already been excavated and eliminate future concern, according to Mr. Swintek.

Costing approximately \$125,000, the renovation program was paid entirely from the association's capital preservation fund, which is a fee charged to first time homebuyers in Sun City.

The capital preservation fund can only be used for major facility restoration projects costing over \$100,000.

Renovations were also made to the facility's spa, locker room, rest rooms, showers and pool decorum.

The spas renovation are not yet complete. Mr. Swintek anticipates the spas to be up and running by early January.

One group much affected by the pool closure was the Sun City Aqua Suns.

The synchronized-swimming arm of the greater Sun City Swim Club, the Sun City Aqua Suns were displaced from their traditional practice

facility since the renovations began in August.

Typically meeting at Lakeview 8-10 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, the group was moved to the pool at Bell Recreation Center.

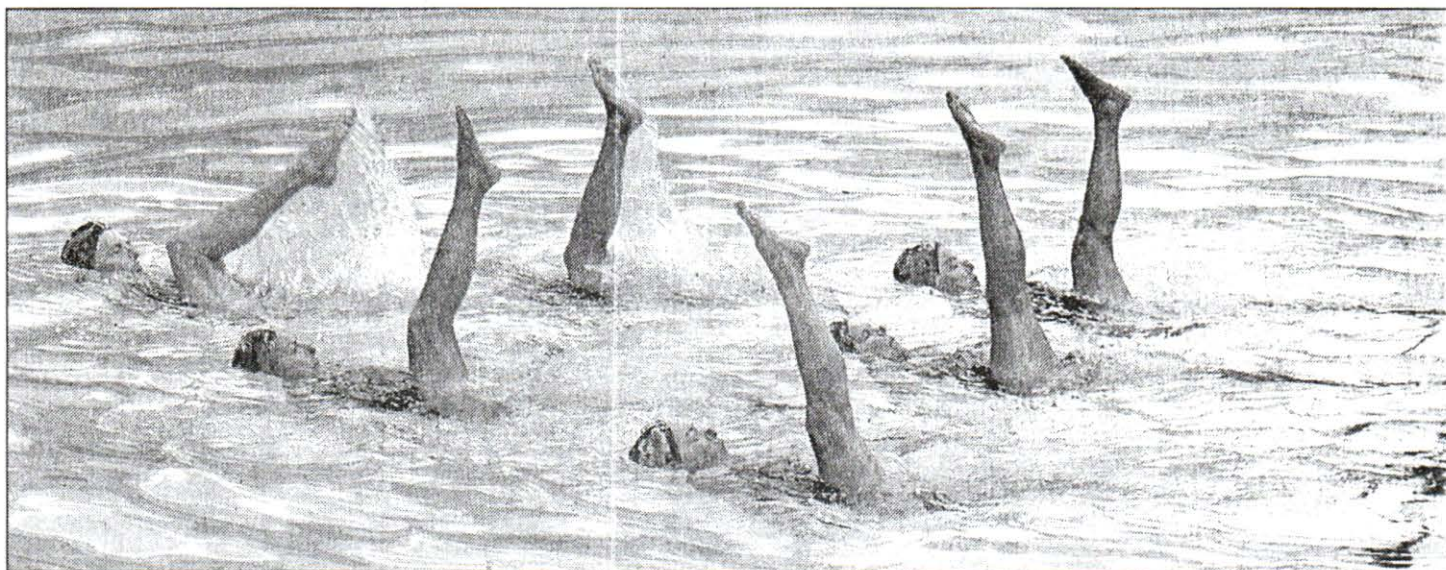
But the facilities were not available during its normal practice time.

The group was forced to meet 6-8 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

"It was very chilly, so they practiced as long as we could and then headed for the spa or showers," said Evelyn King, the Sun City Swim Club publicist and former Aqua Sun.

Practicing before sunrise, the group needed to use flashlights to hook up sound equipment and find the correct music.

Excited to be back at the newly renovated facility, the group helped to celebrate Lakeview pool's reopening by performing.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS

Members of the Aqua Suns swim team work in the Lakeview pool to refine their moves during a practice of their "Ro O'Grady" routine.

Swimming in rhythm

AQUA SUNS:
Members swim
for fun and
exercise

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Some swim for recreation, some for exercise, and some, as in the case of the Sun City Aqua Suns, some swim for design.

The Aqua Suns, a community synchronized swimming team, practices four days a week throughout the year despite cool weather in the winter. The 26 dedicated individuals who make up the team will show off their talents in March during two shows at community recreation centers.

"It's a very difficult sport that requires a lot of practice," assistant coach Evie King said. "There are three parts to the swim club: beginner, intermediate and advanced. The Aqua Suns are the advanced group."

The group is under the umbrella of the Sun City Swim Club, which was founded in 1963. When the club started, it was primarily aimed at lap swimming until 1970, when additional focus was aimed toward synchronized swimming.

"In 1983, the Aqua Suns was formed with 24 ladies and four men," King said. "Today, it has 26 ladies in it, with 50 total members in the swim club."

Shirley Muise, president of the swim club, said the Aqua

Suns members have been a welcome addition to the club because they show the final product of hard work and dedication to the sport.

"We welcome all ability levels into the club from beginners to experts," Muise said. "And we are just thrilled when someone moves along through the club and wants to join the Aqua Suns. It's very advanced and it's a lot more exciting than just doing laps."

For most of the members on the advanced team, training starts in the fall with the arrival of the snowbirds. But for a handful of full-time residents, training takes place throughout the year.

This year, with temperatures colder than normal at times, swim team members faced unusual problems when practicing.

"Some days were so cold that the warm water in the pool caused steam to rise like an ocean fog," King said. "It made it difficult for the

swimmers to make each other out from across the pool, but it kept everyone's rapt attention to be in the right place."

This year the Aqua Suns' theme is the beautiful, romantic rose. Routines and patterns are synchronized to tunes such as "La Vie En Rose" and "Everything's Coming Up Roses."

"We have costumes and props all on the theme of the rose," King said, "and it's quite a sight to see."

The Aqua Suns have been featured on television shows and in magazines, and in March the team will be featured on the Discovery Channel. To date, no broadcast date has been set.

"Synchronized swimmers do patterns consisting of all different figures, and it's a very mentally and physically challenging sport," King said. "But they sure put on a really good show for the audiences."

One of the most basic swim techniques for Aqua Sun members is the ability to

float on their backs or stomachs and move backwards forwards using only the motion of their hands.

"Their hands are kept out of view under the water," King said. "But that is a basic technique. From there the patterns and strokes become more complex."

The team has participated in the Senior Olympics in past years and walked away with several medals. This year the team is not competing, but will hold two shows for locals in March.

The first show will be 10 a.m. Saturday in the Lakeview Recreation Center pool and the second will be 1 p.m. March 17 in the Fairway Recreation Center pool.

Anyone interested in joining the swim club, regardless of ability, is asked to meet 10 a.m. Wednesdays at the Sun City dial pool.

John Sokolich can be reached at jsokolich@aztrib.com or at 876-2526.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS

Members of the Aqua Suns swim team practice their "La Vie En Rose" routine in the Lakeview pool.

Pool repairs top rec board list

IMPROVEMENTS:

New phone system will link all centers sites

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Improvements and repairs to recreation centers in Sun City West next year will tap reserve funds for at least \$465,000.

That's the sum governing board members approved for pool renovations and equipment replacement at both Johnson and Kuentz centers.

In addition, the centers will spend about \$175,000 early in January for a completely new telephone system, one that was recommended after months of intense study and about two years of fretting.

Approval came at the last governing board session of the year, one which also featured many compliments to outgoing members and to committee workers for their help.

The Kuentz work is up considerably in cost from when General Manager R.G. Andersen-Wyckoff first mentioned it two months ago.

"Originally, we were talking

about fiberglass liners," he said in response to a question from Pat Lyons.

"Since then, the entire decking has heaved and buckled, and we will need an entirely new filtration system to replace one that's quite old."

Andersen-Wyckoff said lumping all three items into one project would result in the least downtime for the pool.

Outgoing board president Carole Hubbs explained that the phone system would be of immediate and substantial benefit.

"We can't transfer calls from one line to another the way things are now," she said.

And, with the new system, "the governing board will have its own line."

Andersen-Wyckoff said the new phone system should substantially cut what the Centers pay US WEST for lines, saving as much as \$3,000 a month, and paying back the entire project cost in about three years.

The new system will allow transfers of calls among all centers sites, and provide data circuits to each location for book-keeping and other uses.

A lengthy study by Hal Lind and the Properties Committee found that there were 24 separate buildings on 14 identifiable

lots served by the existing phone system, almost all independent of each other, the general manager said.

Board members also heard from a disgruntled group of lawn bowlers, who were confused by what seemed to be a new policy that allows non-members of the lawn bowls club to use the greens.

But efforts by spokesman Jim Clark to explain the situation were rebuffed by Hubbs, who suggested it was best for him to speak with clubs committee chair John Firestone, Recreation Manager Sam Graziano or Andersen-Wyckoff before approaching the board.

But Clark warned that an unclear policy on use of what he thought was the club's facility would endanger dozens of other clubs which also make facilities available only to members.

But board member Dee Hjermstad noted that many sports club operate in Centers facilities part of the time, with facilities used by non-club members at other times. She cited tennis as one, but there also are golf clubs, bowling leagues and several other examples.

"We do hear you," Hubbs and outgoing board member Jerry Medford said. "It won't be ignored."

SCW pools deteriorating

BUDGET: Repair costs not planned, pools may close for repairs during busy season

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Deteriorating swimming pools, leaky pipes and collapsed walls at Sun City West recreation centers will cost more than \$200,000 to fix — money that's not available in the current budget.

Pool liners at the R.H. Johnson and

Kuentz recreation centers have failed and both will need to be replaced quickly, general manager R.G. Andersen-Wyckoff told the rec centers governing board Thursday. The unbudgeted costs could be more than \$220,000.

That wasn't the extent of the bad news.

A wall collapsed between the men's and women's locker rooms at the Johnson pool, the spa filtration system at Johnson broke down, "spewing sand and dirt into the spa," and the sprinklers in several centers and buildings are beginning to cause problems.

While no sprinkler woe has yet been major — \$5,000 at the most — bigger problems may lurk in the ceilings at Johnson, Kuentz and Beardsley centers, the general manager warned.

If leaks are found there, "this will be a considerably more expensive repair process" and will mean that the affected areas will have to be closed while work goes on.

Properties Committee Chairman Hal Lind said his committee and Centers managers "are becoming much more aware of the in-depth problems" of

See SCW pools, A5

From A1

deferred maintenance and, in some cases, substandard construction.

"We have a maintenance manager and a general manager who are turning over all the rocks" and sometimes finding unpleasant surprises underneath, Lind said.

He said the board may need to craft some new mechanism for paying for unexpected major repairs.

Richard Catlin, chairman of the Human Resources Committee, observed that the Centers is operating with the same number of maintenance staffers as it had in 1991, despite the addition of two golf courses, a rec center complex and additional buildings.

After the meeting, board member Dee Hjermstad said maintenance workers "have a long list of things to do" and that repairs are put off for some work for months.

Andersen-Wyckoff said the Johnson pool failure is leaving

sharp edges on the fiberglass liner that could cut feet. Scuba divers have been applying waterproof putty to allow the pool's continued use, he said.

He said the efforts would continue to see if the pool would survive the holiday heavy-use season before being closed for repair. The Johnson pool is nearly 20 years old.

And he said he hoped the Kuentz pool and its weak filtration system would hold up a few months longer, so that only one of the centers' four pools would need to be shut during the height of the season.

He also said that pool decking, formerly Pebble Tech, might be replaced with a newer and less abrasive substance called Diamond Brite as funds are available.

Andersen-Wyckoff said he and the staff would get prices and evaluate the work needed, and likely would have data for the board within a few weeks.

Money would have to come from the reserve fund, he said.

Friday, Oct. 1, 1999

Bye-bye boards

Regulations say pools too shallow for diving

By JEFF OWENS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

If diving boards keep disappearing from swimming pools at Sun City's recreation centers, it isn't because RCSC directors have gone off the deep end — it's because the pools are no longer deep enough.

Last July, the diving board was removed from the pool at the Mountain View Recreation Center while repairs were made to the decks.

Others may follow, since rec center pools do not conform to new standards for diving boards set by the Maricopa County Health Department, RCSC's insurance company may deny claims for swimming pool injuries.

"The problem is with our insurance carrier," said Dick Ohnstad, RCSC director. "They may decline coverage. We could be liable as an organization to who knows what kind of claims?"

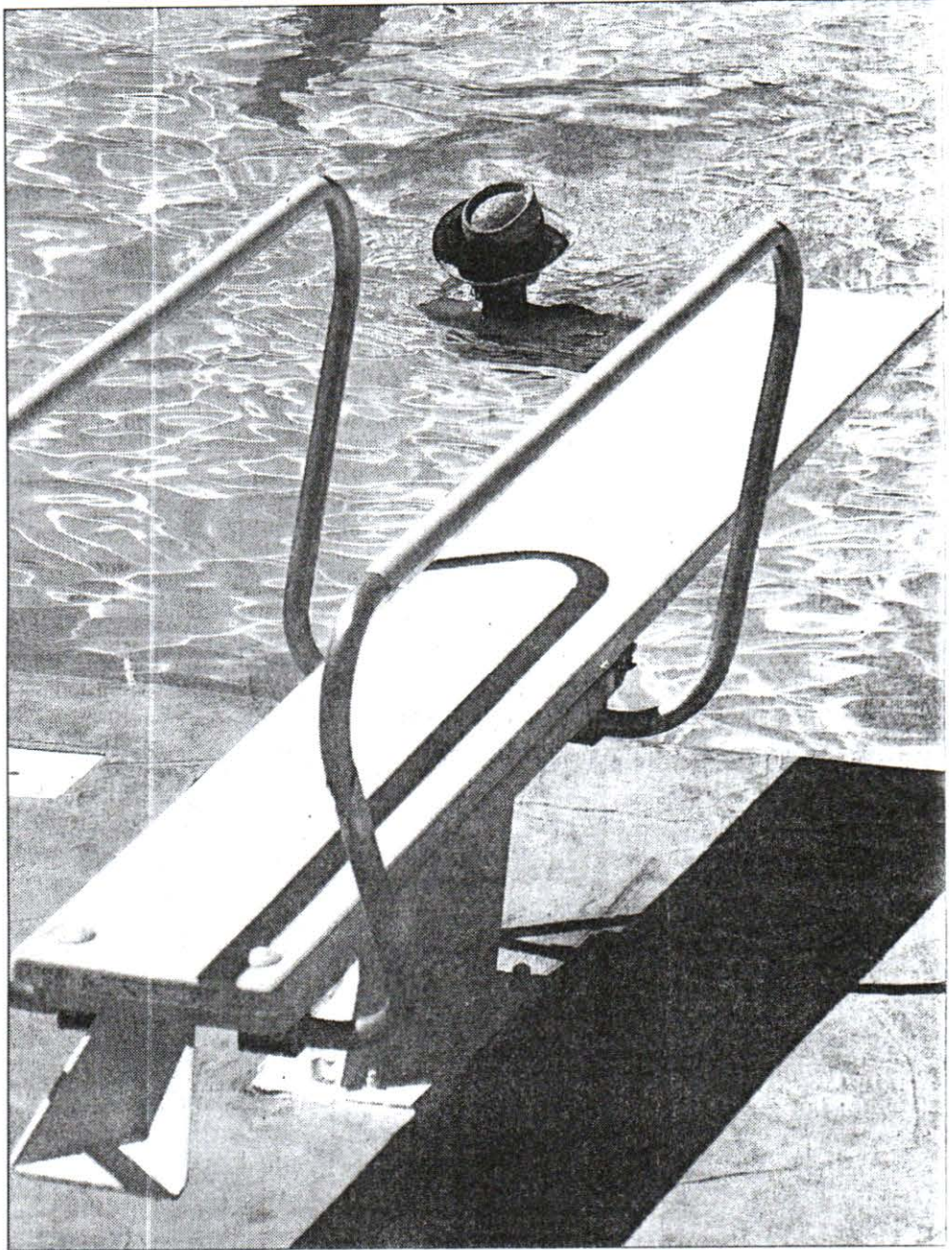
RCSC's October issue of "Board Talk" states "the Board cannot accept the risk of potential lawsuits and is reluctantly considering the removal of all diving boards inasmuch as most of RCSC pools do not meet the standard regarding pool depth at the diving board and distance from the end of the diving board to other pool use areas."

The county's new rules say the depth under the front end of a diving board at a public or semi-public pool must be 9 feet.

Recreation Center pools are 8 1/2 feet deep, in compliance with the previous county regulations.

Sun City's public pools are grandfathered — the diving boards don't have to be removed according to Maricopa County. It's the insurance company that insists on the new standards.

"They were approved based on



Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

Diving boards at Sun City rec center pools, such as this one at Lakeview Recreation Center, may be removed because they do not meet Maricopa County Health Department regulations.

existing codes at the time," said Joe Jason of the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department.

But because of liability issues, Jason added, diving boards at public and semi-public pools "are quite rare now."

Ohnstad added that few objections

to removal are expected.

"You don't see Sun City residents using a diving board but very, very rarely," he said.

Ohnstad added that a decision on the remaining diving boards may come later in October.

PHOTO BY STEVE CHEREK

Water therapy

Hundreds in Sun Cities benefit from club classes

Sun Cities

By Jim Gintonio
The Arizona Republic

Two years ago, Jack Ward, then 73, suffered a stroke. He wasn't sure if he'd ever be able to walk again without the aid of two canes. Then he rediscovered water.

"It's amazing how far I've advanced," said Ward, who came bounding out of the pool and walked briskly to a table. "I stayed with it, and I think it's all because of this group."

Ward's group, the Sun City West Turf and Surf Club, caters to almost 500 members year-round at three locations.

In Sun City Grand, hundreds of residents, including the handicapped, who can enter pools on ramps built for wheelchairs, participate in programs at the Adobe Spa.

The largest of the programs, however, is in Sun City. The Aquatic Club, which at times gets upward of 70 men and women in a class, has about 1,000 members who can take classes at one of three recreation centers.

For the most part, the clubs engage in water aerobics, and instructors and participants alike extol the benefits. Classes usually last an hour.

"Water is great therapy," said Ward, one of the few

— AQUATIC, from Page 1

men who venture into the classes. "And the ladies are inspiring."

The president of the Sun City West group, Shirley Scolastico, has been an instructor for four years.

"In water exercise, you use every joint in the body," she said. "It's a real good experience for everybody. Some people can't get around, but everyone can move around in the water."

One of the instructors in Sun City, Pat Reidy, credits Verona Hiland, the founder of the Aquatic Club a number of years ago, with generating the interest through the routines she developed. Hiland choreographed the exercise to the music for programs designed specifically for seniors. Those movements are unique to Sun City, Reidy said.

"We hear and get letters all the time about how much these exercises help people," she said. "People can't lift an arm when they first come here, and a month later they're able to lift that arm, and they feel much better."

"If they've had knee or hip surgery, exercise in the water is so much easier than doing it on land. You help your balance, flexibility, coordination and strength."

A member of the Sun City

group, Fran Michaels, has been participating in the exercises for two years.

"It's a lot of fun, and it's something I hope I can do for a long time," she said. "We do things in the water that I couldn't do on land."

At the Adobe Spa and Fitness Center in Sun City Grand, dozen participate in aquatic therapy classes that are geared toward those with special needs, including those who are in wheelchairs or suffer from arthritis. The special-needs classes are conducted in partnership with Sun Health.

In the other classes, according to Amber Dentz, the center's fitness director, there are between 30 and 50 participants.

"We also have an aqua power circuit class that has a toning aspect to it where they use water barbells," she said.

In all locations, women far outnumber men.

Scolastico thinks "it's because men are afraid of us because we live longer."

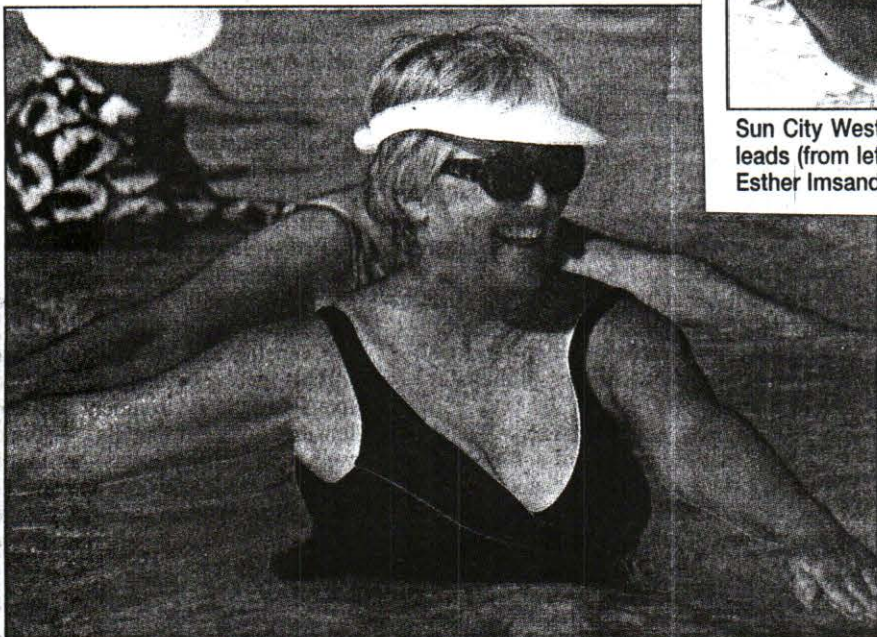
Reidy, however, sees the trend changing.

"Men used to think this was wimpy, but now we see more of them in the classes," she said.

Jim Gintonio can be reached at (602) 444-7125 or at jim.gintonio@pni.com e-mail.

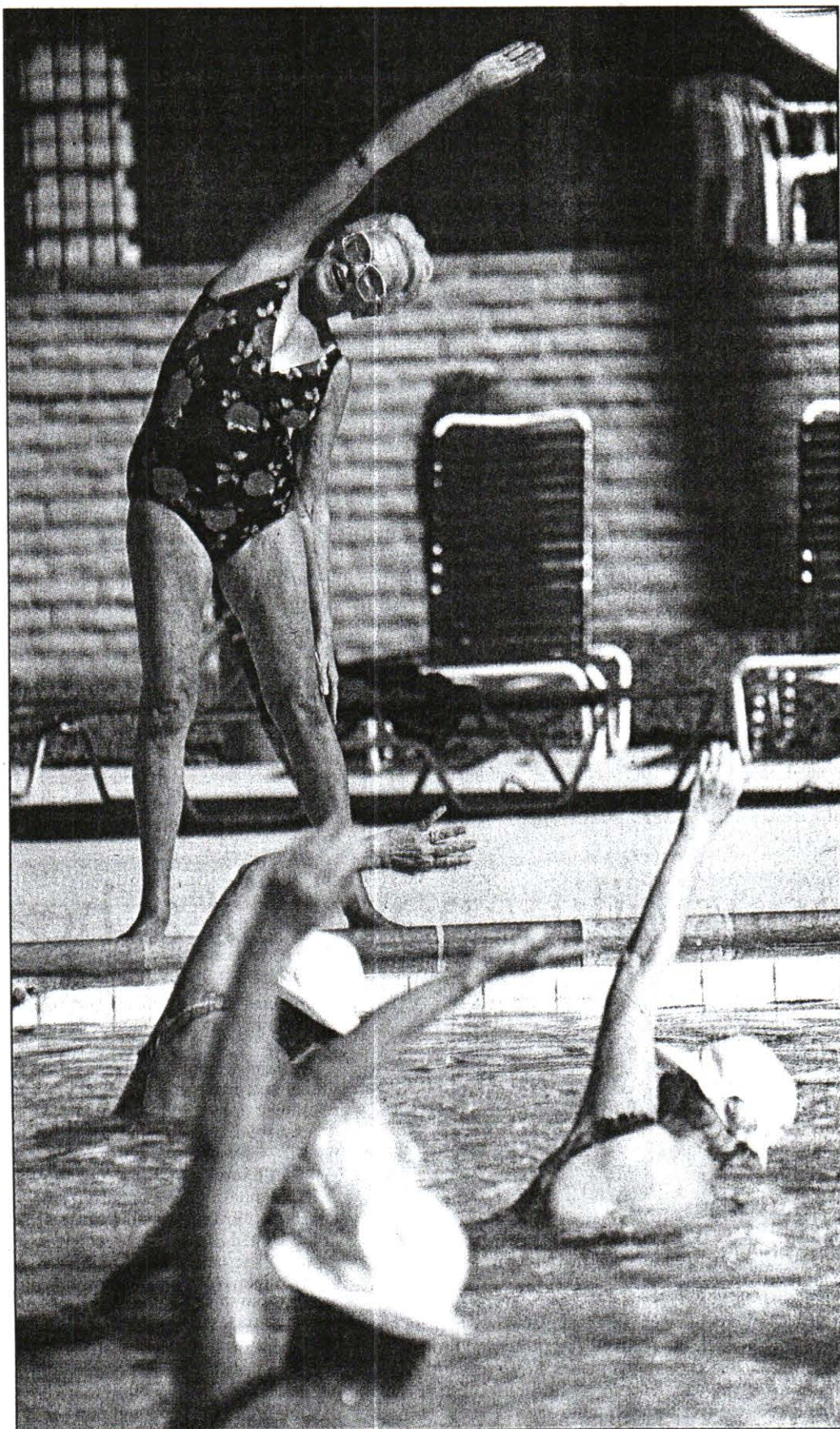


Sun City West Turf and Surf Club President Shirley Scolastico (foreground) leads (from left) Marge Robinson, Phyllis Shadday, Wanda Auchenbach and Esther Imsande in a class at R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.



Fran Michaels, an Aquatic Club member, has been participating in exercises for two years. "It's a lot of fun, and it's something I hope I can do for a long time," she says.

OVER



Photos by Russell Gates/The Arizona Republic

Instructor Pat Reidy leads a group of Aquatic Club women in a water aerobics class at the Mountain View Recreation Center in Sun City. The Aquatic Club has about 1,000 members.

By CHRIS RASMUSSEN
Independent Newspapers

As Lee Starr stepped onto the starting platform at Arizona State University's pool for this year's state Senior Olympics, he stood alone in front of the sparkling blue waters.

Just nine days before the competitions were set to begin, Lee turned 90, pushing him into an age bracket no one else occupies.

A pioneering Sun City swimmer for the past 28 years, Lee's competitive days are almost over, but he was determined to compete in one more Olympic event.

Senior Olympic officials allowed Lee to swim in the 50-meter backstroke against four other men from three lower age groups: 89-85, 84-80 and 75-79.

Most wouldn't bet a dime on Lee's chances to take the gold medal against men several years his junior. But when the starting gun blasted, so did Lee, as he uncoiled from the platform into the water.

"I told those guys I would beat the pants off them, and I did," Lee joked, with a broad smile.

Lee was presented by Olympic officials with a Medal of Honor for his age-defying feat.

The victory, Lee said, may have been his last, culminating a senior swimming career in Sun City that placed him among the top 10 United States Master Swimmers since 1972.

"There are lots of people in their 90s," Lee said. "But not many are swimming and breaking records. There are really eight or nine of us across the country."

Lee's love for the sport began when he was in high school where he was a member of the swim team. He progressed so well, he

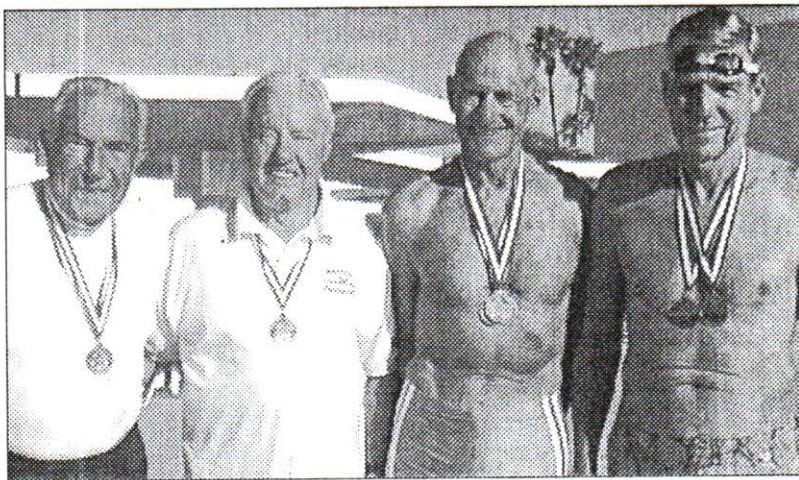


Photo by CHRIS RASMUSSEN/Independent Newspapers

Sun City Master Swimmers brought home plenty of gold and silver from this year's Arizona Senior Olympics. From left, Lee Starr (gold medal in 50-meter backstroke), Darrell Baker (silver in the 400m freestyle and bronze in 50m backstroke) Wally Sawhill (three golds in the 200m, 100m and 50m backstroke and a silver in 100m freestyle); Tom Rigley (gold in 50m backstroke and silver in 50m freestyle). The four Sun Citians competed Jan. 21 at Arizona State University.

was offered a swimming scholarship to Fordham University.

Following his successful collegiate career, Lee decided to study law at the University of Missouri. Realizing he didn't want to be a lawyer he switched his attention to physical fitness and pursued a degree in physical education.

His degree led to a 28-year career as director of Parks and Recreation for the city of New York.

In 1971, Lee and his wife, Hazel, decided to come out west and retire in Sun City.

Lee found plenty of pools at the recreation centers and formed a Master Swimmers team, an organization which holds national and international competitions for swimmers of all ages.

The Sun City team flourished under Lee's direction. His coaching and encouragement turned retirees moving to Sun City into world-

3-99

class swimmers.

Members of the team recently renamed themselves the "Sun City Starrs" in his honor.

"He is such a nice man," said champion swimmer Estelle Shuer, who won four gold medals in the 70-74 age group during women's Senior Olympic competition.

"If it weren't for Lee, we wouldn't have a team. He got us the pool time from the recreation centers. He has always been there encouraging us," said Shuer, who won two Medals of Honor for beating younger competitors."

With this victory, Lee said he feels satisfied to hang up his swimming trunks and goggles and enjoy more time with his wife.

Currently serving as coach of the Sun City Starrs, Lee is looking for someone to take over his duties. However, the search hasn't been easy.

Lee said he wasn't worried about the competition being years younger than he. In fact, when sizing up the men he would go against, the one who stood out was a swimmer from southern Arizona whom Lee coached 30 years ago in New York.

However, Harry Liber became ill shortly before the event and was forced to withdraw from the race.

"I'm glad he wasn't there because he would have beaten me" Lee says.

Despite his age, Lee's tanned and muscular body is holding up quite well. However, last year after sustaining an injury during the Grand Canyon Games, he had to have the joints taken out of his toes.

The lack of joints in two of his toes has not deterred him or impedes his ability to swim away from the competition.

Starr power

SC swimmers credit coach for success

Staff report

Exercise, companionship and swimming victories are the ties four Sun City women have in common.

They accounted for 13 first-place awards and 25 total medals at the Arizona Masters Long Course State Championship.

"I like the friends and the exercise," said 77-year-old Dorothy Kimmel. "I get a little nervous with the meets, but it keeps the adrenalin going."

"I started taking lessons in 1981. I always liked the water. I was never afraid of it so I decided to take swimming lessons."

Kimmel set records with five of her six victories and received a special award from meet organizers for finishing tops in her age group.

She won the 800-meter freestyle in 21 minutes, 15.9 seconds; the 50-meter butterfly in 1:27.9; the 200-meter medley in 6:10.6; the 200-meter butterfly in 6:55.2; the 400-meter freestyle in 10:45.09; and the 100-meter butterfly in 3:13.7.

Dorothea Winniford returned home with eight medals. She won three events, placed second in three others and finished in third place in two other categories.

Winniford's winning times: 100-meter freestyle in 2:03.71; the 400-meter freestyle in 9:07; and the 50-meter breaststroke in 57.64.

The women work out weekdays between 8 and 9 a.m. at the Bell Recreation Center pool. They compete in meets about a half a dozen times a year.

The man who brought all these women together in competition is Lee Starr. To honor his efforts, the team is called the Sun City Starrs.

"I started coaching about 20 years ago. We have a small team but we will go and knock the pants off of the other team. I get a kick out of it," the 89-year-old Starr said.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Joan Hornyan, left, Estelle Shuer, Dorothea Winniford and Dorothy Kimmel accounted for 13 first-place performances at the Arizona Masters Long Course State Championship.

Estelle Shuer began swimming as a child in England. She won four events and place second in two others at the Arizona meet.

Shuer placed first in the 100-meter breaststroke in 2:26; 50-meter breaststroke in 1:04.86; the

100-meter backstroke in 2:09.77; and the 200-meter breaststroke in 5:06.89.

Joan Hornyan, the other member of the team, placed second in one event and third in another.

Retiring as a champion

- SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT - FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 3, 1998

Founder and coach of Master Swimmers ready to call it quits

By CHRIS RASMUSSEN
Independent Newspapers

Lee Starr got more than a piece of cake for his 89th birthday.

The legendary swimmer was honored during a recent surprise party to announce the renaming of the Sun City Masters to the Sun City Starrs.

Founding the competitive swimming club in 1976, Mr. Starr has done more than teach 2,500 Sun Citians to swim, he has changed the face of senior participatory sports in Arizona.

Mr. Starr is turning over his coaching duties due to an accident during a swimming meet three months ago which resulted in the amputation of one of his toes.

Sun City resident Jon Jorgenson will be the club's new coach.

"That is out of this world," Mr. Starr said of the club being named for him. "They just surprised the hell out of me.

"My wife is sick and had to stay at home during the party," Mr. Starr said. "When I got home and told her about my party, she cried."

"I don't dare say that I'll come back from retirement, because I did it once and they wouldn't let me quit," he added.

The Sun City Masters has enabled seniors of all ages to compete in tournaments throughout the state and the world, including Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South America. Its members range in age from 61 to 89.

Currently, the Sun City Starrs are preparing to compete in the Arizona Senior Olympics.



Photo by CHRIS RASMUSSEN/Independent Newspapers

Although Lee Starr is well known in Sun City as an excellent swimming coach, he has also garnered his share of medals as a competitor. So many blue ribbons and gold and silver medals fill the sides of his garage walls, the 89-year-old Sun City man has trouble keeping up with all of his awards. He has recently decided to call it quits resigning his coaching duties.

"He has done an awful lot teaching us to swim, securing pool times and encouraging us to give our all," said Dorothy Kimmel, one of Mr. Starr's first Sun City students. "He taught students all morning long, five days a week.

"I hate to see him bow out but I guess there comes a time," she added.

Although Mr. Starr is widely known for his coaching abilities, he is also a champion swimmer. He



Showing support for the efforts of swimming legend Lee Starr (center), the Sun City Masters have been renamed the Sun City Starrs. Mr. Starr founded the swimming club in 1976 and is retiring from his coaching duties at the age of 89.

holds several world records for his age group and placed first during the 1986 World Championships in Japan. At the age of 80, Mr. Starr received four All-American titles.

"If it hadn't been for Lee, we wouldn't have a club," said Lisa Bogatko, Sun City's first Master Swimmer, who helped start the club. "Nobody else would have fought so hard to keep it going."

Anyone visiting Mr. Starr's home would have a hard time not noticing the hundreds of medals he has won throughout the years.

"I wouldn't dare ask my wife to let me put up anymore medals, she would kick me out of the house," he said. "People come up and ask me how many medals I have but I don't know. One day I started counting and I got to 117, then I quit. What difference does it make how many you get?"

Mr. Starr's passion for the water began at an early age when he was a member of his championship high school team. He then went on to swim at Fordham University in New York city, where he also studied law.

After deciding not to become a lawyer, Mr. Starr transferred to the University of Missouri where he earned his bachelor of science degree in physical education.

"I always loved swimming," Mr. Starr said. "My father had built a concrete pool for us that was fed by a spring on one side and drained out on the other."

"Swimming has certainly kept me in good physical condition over the years," he said.

While Mr. Starr is proficient in every stroke, his favorite is the backstroke, an event that has enabled him to beat competitors almost half his age.

"Beating young players is what I get a charge out of. People say we are old, but we were champions when we were younger," he said.

SC Masters Swimmers place first in 21 events at short course meet

Eight Masters Swimmers from Sun City won a combined 21 events at the 1997 Arizona Short Course State Masters Championships held April 4-6 at Cactus Pool.

Swimming in the 60-64 age group, Jack Gibb placed first in the 100- and 200-meter backstroke and 500-meter freestyle.

In the 70-74 age group, Estelle Shuer was first in the 50-, 100- and 200-meter backstroke and won the 50-, 100- and 200-meter breaststroke. She was also on the winning mixed medley (65-plus) relay team.

Chuck Thomson (70-74) won the 100- and 200-meter breaststroke, 50- and 200-meter freestyle. He also was on the winning mixed medley (65-plus) relay team. Dorothea Winniford (70-74) won the 100-meter freestyle and was on the winning mixed medley (65-plus) relay team.

Wally Sawhill (75-79) won the 50-meter backstroke and was on the winning mixed medley (65-plus) relay team.

Clare Sawhill (75-79) won the



Photo By GEORGE WITKOWSKI/Independent Newspapers

Mastering the water

Sun City Masters Swimmers who competed at the Arizona State Championship April 3-6 at Cactus Pool, hosted by the Scottsdale Aquatic Club, included, from left, Estelle Shuer, Clare Sawhill, Dorothea Winniford, Wally Sawhill, Darrell Baker, Jack Gibb, Lee Starr, Chuck Thomson.

100- and 200-meter backstroke and Lee Starr (85-89) was first in the 50- and 100-meter freestyle and 50- and 100-meter backstroke.

Shuer, Thomson and Darrell Baker were second in the 100-meter freestyle.

Other second-place finishes

went to Baker in the 50-meter freestyle; Wally Sawhill in the 50-meter breaststroke, 50-meter butterfly, 100-meter butterfly and individual medley; Clare Sawhill in the 100-meter backstroke.

Baker took third in the 50-meter backstroke.

Six Sun City swimmers set state records

At the annual Short Course Meters State Championship held recently at the Arizona State University Swimming Complex in Tempe, six Sun City Masters swimmers set state records while winning a total of 14 events.

In the 75-79 age group, Esther Grafrath competed in four events, winning each event and setting a record in the 50-meter breaststroke.

Dorothea Winniford, competing in the 65-69 age group, competed in three events, setting a record in the 50-meter backstroke; won the 100-meter backstroke and took second place in the 50-meter freestyle.

In the 70-74 age group competition, Dorothy Kimmel participated in three events, setting new records in all three.

Sun City Wester Edna Laflin, competing in the 70-74 age group, swam in three events, winning the 400-meter freestyle and the 100-meter backstroke as well as placing second in the 100-meter individual medley.

Lee Starr, in the 80-84 age group, competed in three events, beating his entry time in the 100-meter backstroke by 5.2 seconds, breaking the record in the 50-meter freestyle and winning the 50-meter backstroke.

Age groups in U.S. Masters swimming range from 19-24-year-old up to 90-94 year-old.

Seniors dive in

Sun City swimmers run around world, come back champs

By Keith Ridler
Special to Community

Take four Sun City swimmers: one who hadn't swam competitively for 47 years, one who never swam competitively, one who started swimming after being told she would never walk again and one who was coaching swimming for fun.

Sign them up for the Arizona Swim Masters and send them around the country and world to compete in meets recognized by the Masters Swimming International, with competitors in 33 countries, and what do you get?

Champions.

Lee Starr, Dick Westerfield, Lisa Bogatko and Edna Laflin turned in top-10 times in the world for events ranging from the 1,500-meter freestyle to the 50 backstroke.

"I'm really proud of the people here," said coach and swimmer Starr, 81. "They give it all they've got."

Starr, competing in the 80-85 age group, had the fourth-best time in the 100 backstroke, 2:11.86; fourth-best in the 200

backstroke, 3:53.75; and 10-best in the 50 backstroke, 57.59.

In high school Starr competed on a team that won the New York City championship three years running. He returned to competitive swimming in 1979.

"Sure enough, the first meet I went to I met my old high school captain," he said.

Westerfield had a similar experience. He swam for the University of Iowa team that won the Big Ten championship in 1936. He qualified for the Olympic trials that year, only to be edged out by three other swimmers for the Olympics.

Now some of the swimmers he raced against then, he is racing now.

"A dozen at least," said Westerfield, 76, who, competing in the 75-79 age group, posted the best time in the world in 1990 in the 400 individual medley with a time of 8:53. "It's a delight, and it's fun to renew all those friendships and rivalries."

Besides his top finish, Westerfield also was second in the 200 IM, 4:01; second in the 200 backstroke, 3:36.67; fifth in the 50 backstroke, 45.01; and seventh in the 100 backstroke, 1:43.79.

"I had a lot of work to do when I started up again because I was in very bad shape," said Westerfield, who took a 47-year hiatus before returning to competitive swimming.

Laflin, 71, never swam competitively, only entering the water after a bicycle accident put her in a wheelchair where doctors told her she would spend the rest of her life.

"I got in the water just to walk," Laflin said, "and found I could swim pretty good."

Laflin walked away from the wheelchair but stuck with the swimming, posting the eighth-best time in the world for the 70-74 age group for the 1,500 freestyle with a time of 35:09, and ninth-best for the 800 freestyle with a time of 18:29.82.

A former marathon runner, Laflin found she liked the longer swims.

"I found out that I'm better swimming longer distances," she said. "And then I found out that I'm a better swimmer than I am a runner."

Bogatko, 61, has five national championships to her name in 20 years of swimming. Her children learning to swim was her inspiration.

"I chauffeured my youngsters to swimming, and I promised myself I would learn to swim," she said.

From there she worked in the pool with handicapped children through the Red Cross and volunteered time to the YMCA, which gave her pool time in return and a coach.

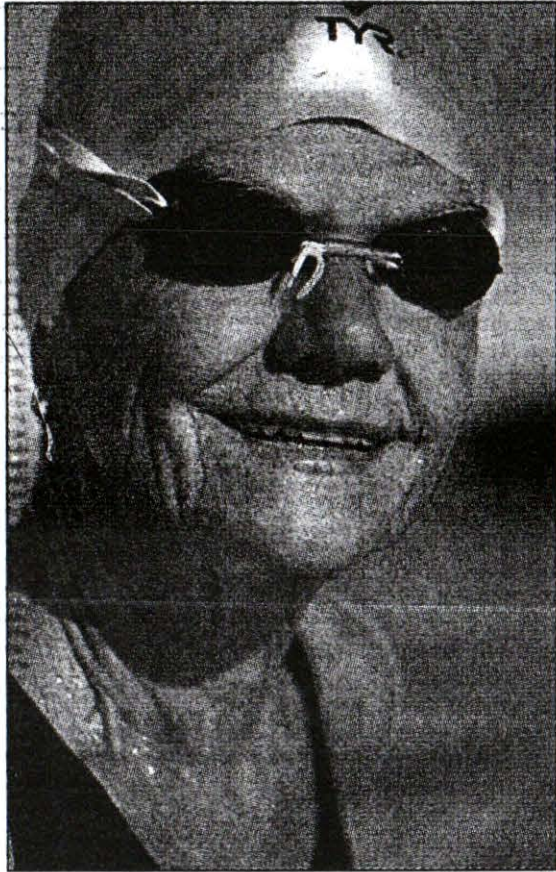
In 1990, her time in the 200 breaststroke, 3:53.75, was fifth-best in the world for the 60-64 age group. She was sixth in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:48.70.

She remembered her first competition.

"I was awestruck," she said. "Here were former Olympians and college swimmers. Now I have beaten them occasionally, and my times are competitive."

The swimmers log about 2,500 to 3,000 yards of swimming five days a week, practicing at the Bell Recreation Center early in the mornings.

"You know what you're capable of, and you try to get in the best possible shape," said Starr, sitting beside the 30-meter pool while the other three did laps. "I know I can't stop the aging process, but I can slow it down."



Community
 Edna Laflin, 71, had never been involved in competitive swimming until an accident left her in a wheelchair.

“I found out that I’m better swimming longer distances. And then I found out that I’m a better swimmer than I am a runner.”

Edna Laflin
 Swimmer



Lee Starr, (from left) Lisa Bogatko, Edna Laflin and Dick Westerfield get ready for practice at the Bell Recreation Center in Sun City. All four hold times in the top 10 of world competition recognized by Masters Swimming International, which holds competitions in 33 countries.

Mark Henle / Staff photographer

A dip in the pool improves mobility

By JACQUE PAPPAS
News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — For the past six months, Arthur Vander Wagen has been confined to a wheelchair.

While he is unable to move the left side of his body, Vander Wagen now walks three times a week, thanks to a summer swimming program at Fairway Recreation Center pool.

"I am suffering the effects of a stroke I had about 22 years ago, but moving around in this pool makes me feel so much better," said Vander Wagen, who as recently as five years ago was a regular bowler. "I love coming here because I am outside in the fresh air. It really doesn't get hot because I'm in the water and I wear a hat."

During the summer months, a swimming program is available from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the handicapped and people with arthritis or similar afflictions.

Fairway, 10600 W. Peoria Ave., has a wheelchair lift that helps those unable to move on

their own in and out of the outdoor swimming pool.

Sundial Recreation Center, 14801 N. 103rd Ave., which has indoor pools that are handicapped accessible, offers a variety of programs year-round.

Sundial summer hours are 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

The swimming programs are sponsored by the Sun City Handicapped Club along with the Arthritis Foundation.

Sun Citian Ada Koller is a volunteer for the club and has been certified by the foundation as a swimming program instructor.

Koller, who has worked as program assistant for two years, said attendance for the summer program at Fairway is low because many residents do not know it is available.

"A lot of doctors here in Sun City don't even know about the program and I think they are missing the boat," Koller said. "Even people who don't live in Sun City have called and asked

if they can take part. Of course we can't let them, but it shows how much a program like this benefits people."

Recreation centers facilities may be used only by recreation centers members and their guests.

Koller said interested members can come to the pool any time during the program hours. A volunteer will help them with special exercises or they can just work on their own.

"Many times we work with people who have had strokes and help them move their arms and legs. Water is the best therapy," Koller said. "You can do so much in the water that you can't do out of it."

Koller said some people may shy away from the Fairway pool in the summer months because of the heat.

But the sun can easily be avoided by wearing shirts, hats and sunglasses in the water, she said.

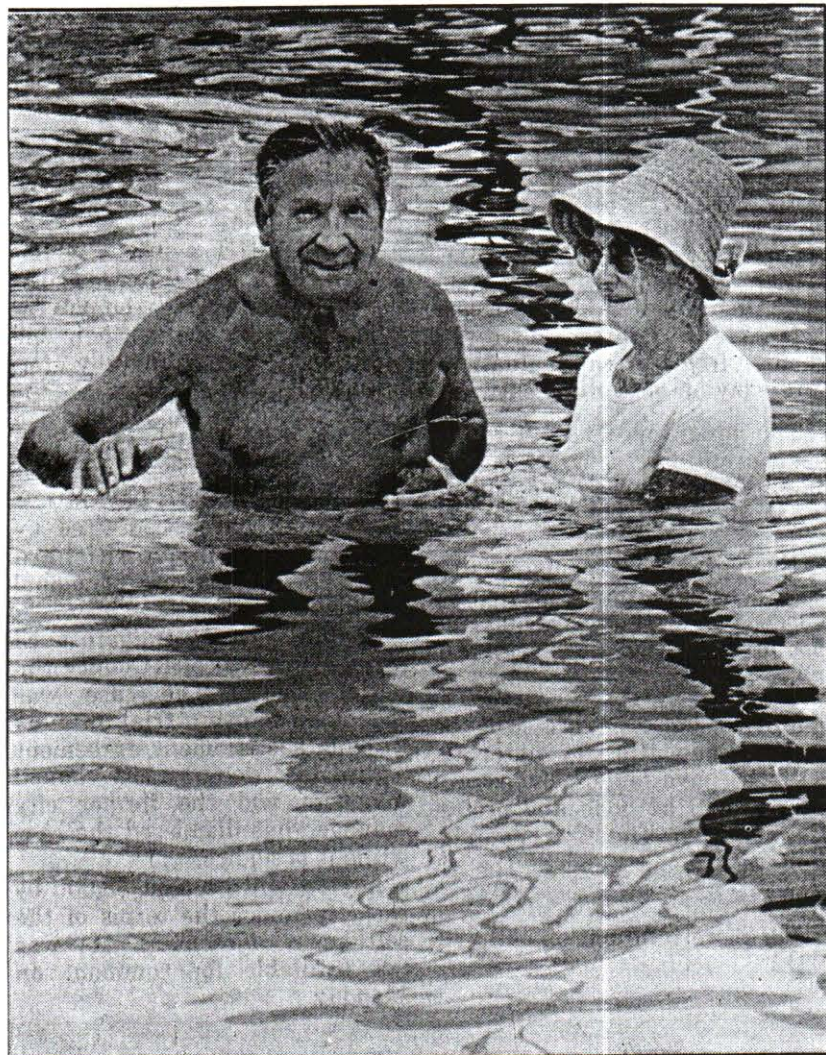
Koller, a retired nurse, used to teach swimming classes in Ohio. She and other volunteers took an eight-hour class and are now authorized to help by the Arthritis Foundation.

"This is very rewarding. It's a fantastic feeling to see people who cannot even stand by themselves be able to walk in the water," Koller said. "It's a big lift to think that we are doing something to help."

Although the summer program is sponsored by the Handicapped Club, people need only be members of the recreation centers to participate.

Sun Citian Bill Mower, 13-year member and former president of the Handicapped Club, said the club has about 175 members and volunteers.

"The club was organized to provide a means of socializing and assistance for handicapped people. Our aim is to do anything we can to upgrade the handicapped person's way of life," Mower said. "We are happy to provide programs like these for the members. It seems we have done a lot of good for some people and I guess if we help a few along the road it goes to your credit." OVER



News-Sun photo by Mollie J. Hoppes

WATER WORKOUT — Volunteer Verna Bowers helps Art Vander Wagen walk the length of the Fairway Pool Monday.



News-Sun photo by Mollie J. Hoppes

IN THE SWIM OF THINGS — Sun Citians Ada Kotler, left, and Carol Campbell demonstrate stretching exercises that

help the handicapped. Both are volunteers with the Sun City Handicapped's summer swimming program.

Sun Citians floating to the top of Masters swimming



Ed Deuss (left top), Lee Starr (right top), Dick Westerfield (bottom left) and Lisa Bogatko (bottom right) are four Sun Citians setting records in swimming. Each swimmer specializes in a different swimming event. (News-Sun photo)

By KATHY GILLESPIE
Sports Editor

SUN CITY — Once upon a time, there was a school of thought that said athletes were washed up or past their prime by the time they reached 20 years of age.

But now, athletes of all kinds and ages are realizing that activity doesn't have to stop at any age nor does the level of performance necessarily diminish.

Chris Evert Lloyd came on the tennis scene when she was in her teens and had won her first U.S. Open title at the ripe old age of 21, yet she remains a formidable opponent at 32.

Al Oetter, the great discus thrower, won four consecutive gold medals in the 1956, 1960, 1964 and 1968 Olympics. When he won his last gold he was 32. In 1980, he was a member of the Olympic team but did not compete because of the U.S. boycott.

Locally, the "you're never too old to begin" way of thinking is practiced every day by athletes and fitness buffs.

In fact, four local swimmers, all over 50 years of age, are not only there competing, but are setting world records and winning national championships.

Recently released National Top Ten Masters Swimming rankings for the short-course season, published in Swim Master magazine, show four Sun Citians are among the top swimmers in the nation.

— Lisa Bogatko (55-59 age-group) ranked sixth in the 50, 100, and 200-yard breaststroke

Locally, the "you're never too old to begin" way of thinking is practiced every day by athletes and fitness buffs.

and ranked ninth in the 400-yard individual medley.

— Dick Westerfield (70-74 age-group) is ranked 10th in the 50-yard backstroke, fifth in the 100-yard backstroke, fourth in the 200-yard backstroke and seventh in the 200-yard individual medley.

— Lee Starr (75-79 age-group) is ranked third in the 50-yard backstroke, fourth in the 100-yard backstroke and fourth in the 200-yard backstroke.

— Ed Deuss (80-84 age-group) is ranked eighth in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle.

Bogatko, 56, began her illustrious swimming career in 1978 with the Glendale Swimming Gauchos, a United States Swimming amateur team that trains at Glendale Community College.

"I had chauffeured my kids to swimming class for so many years that I finally decided that's what I would like to do myself. I had no idea there was such a thing as master's swimming," she said.

Bogatko sat out the short-course season this year due to a torn rotator cuff and she plans to remain out of competition through the long-course season in the fall.

"I enjoy it," she said of her 1½-2 hour daily workouts. "It's the best part of the day. The most important thing is to keep physically fit, but I do look forward to the competition and I enjoy meeting so many people from all over the country and the world."

Bogatko has won four national championships in the breaststroke.

Westerfield, 70, began his swimming career in the 1930s when he swam in high school and in college with the University of Iowa, Big 10 champions in 1935.

He said he wishes the current training methods were available when he was training, such as weight-training and dryland exercises.

"A good girls high school team will beat our times from back then. It was unheard of to do weight work and dryland training. Like I always say, I wish I was doing all of this work with one of those bodies," he said.

After college, Westerfield had neither the time nor the facilities to train until three years ago when he came to Sun City and began training.

Lee Starr, the proud recipient of 17 national titles and one

world championship, also began his career in high school and college.

His motto is: in master's swimming you stop thinking about age and start thinking about speed.

For the past three years, Starr has swept the 50, 100 and 200 backstroke events at Nationals and this year was selected to appear in the 1987 Master's Swimming Calendar.

Starr said Bogatko talked him into becoming a master's swimmer seven years ago but now, with all he has accomplished, he is considering focusing on coaching rather than competing.

"I got my first swimming championship in 1981, two years after I started swimming. After that, all I wanted was to win one gold as national champion. Then it got to be habit-forming and all that and then I won the world championship, so where do I go from here?" he said.

"Now my ambition is to coach a master's team in Sun City and really make a name for ourselves. Now I feel like I am tapering off. What I do now depends on my physical condition."

Starr said he sees great potential for a solid master's program and he dreams of uniting with master swimmers in Sun City West to provide a larger age-span on the team — but he said the bitter rivalry that exists between the sister cities may prevent that from ever happening.

World champion Competitive Sun City swimmer realizes dreams in Tokyo

By ROBERT BARRETT
The Arizona Republic

SUN CITY — At age 77, Lee Starr was determined to become a world champion.

During his career as a competitive swimmer, Starr had won 17 Masters Swimming International U.S. national championships for his age division.

But never a world championship.

Last month, Starr went to Tokyo to compete with 3,600 swimmers from 19 countries in the World Masters Swimming International Championship.

Starr was entered in five individual competitions.

"The backstroke has always been my event," Starr said. "I was entered in the 50-, 100- and 200-meter events and thought I had a good chance."

Starr also was entered in the 50- and 100-meter freestyle events. He was pleased that he placed fourth in his age group in those events.

However, he became concerned when he finished second in the 50- and 200-meter backstroke events.

"I had a chance at winning the 200 back (200-meter backstroke) but I blew it," he said. "I was swimming against someone with a slow qualifying time and relaxed. He passed me in the last 10 yards."

The 100-meter backstroke event was Starr's last chance at an individual world championship.

"I decided if I didn't win that, I wasn't coming home," he said.

Starr is home, and he's a world champion.

"It's a great feeling," he said. "The Masters is a great program."

The only requirement for joining Masters Swimming International is a minimum age requirement of 25, Starr said.

The organization is designed to keep swimmers

active and in competition. All competitions are divided into age groups.

The organization is divided into zones and each zone bids on becoming the site of the world championships, held every other year. Australia will be host of the 1988 meet.

In the United States, the group holds two national meets each year and there are many area and regional meets, Starr said.

"There are over 300 members in Arizona," he said. "A lot of the members never competed before joining."

For Starr, joining the organization in 1979 was a return to competition.

"I was on a high school championship swimming team," said Starr, who was born in New York City. "I was on my college swimming team, too."

In 1933, Starr was attending Fordham University in New York when he had the opportunity to participate in the national championships. The swimming meet was held in Chicago, at the World's Fair.

Buster Crabbe, who later would become a film star, was the man to beat.

"I lost," Starr said. "But we became friends and I got Buster to come out and speak at a couple of the Fitness Fairs here in Sun City. He died a couple of years ago."

Before returning to New York, Starr drove to Columbia, Mo., to visit friends.

"They talked me into going to the University of Missouri," he said. "They didn't have a swim team, and I convinced the director of athletics we should. So I wound up being the captain and first coach of the Missouri swimming team."

Starr married his wife, Hazel, and after receiving his degree in physical education, the couple moved

to New York where he was the manager of the Park Central Hotel Pool and Health Club for a year until he became the supervisor of park operations for New York in 1936.

"I retired as director of Parks and Recreation for New York City in 1965 and we moved out here in 1971," Starr said.

During his career, Starr didn't have time to swim competitively. When he first moved to Sun City, he began giving free swimming lessons to residents.

"I did it to get back in shape," he said. "I've probably taught about 5,000 people here. First I taught them how to swim, then I taught them how to swim properly."

Starr stopped giving lessons last year.

"I've been concentrating on coaching the Masters," he said.

Starr is hoping to persuade more residents to join the organization.

"There were only five of us from Arizona in Tokyo," he said. "If we had had four more from my age group, we'd have had a chance to run away with the whole thing."

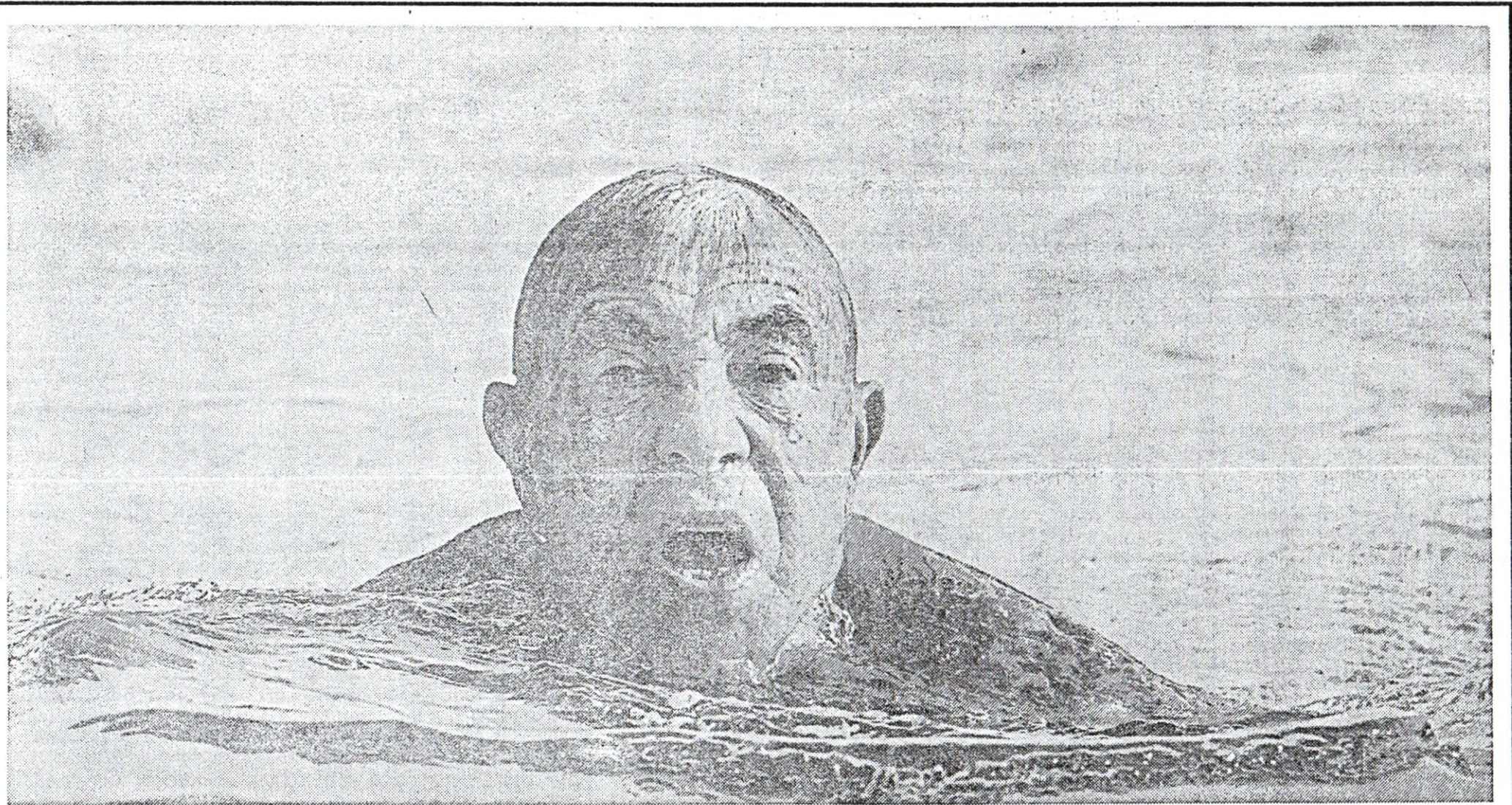
The other members, Dan and Edie Gruendner of Phoenix, Rose Steward of Tempe, and Barbara Goldseth of Tucson, all are younger than Starr.

For the 1988 World Championships in Australia, Starr said he would like to see more residents participate. Any member is eligible but each person must pay his own way.

"Meanwhile, some of the people I coach are getting ready for a meet in Oregon, and I'll go with them," he said.

He grinned and shook his head.

"I just can't get excited about it. Not after Japan."



Doyle Sanders/Republic

Lee Starr participated in the World Masters Swimming International Championship last month in Tokyo. The

Sun City swimmer returned a world champion. The 77-year-old Starr previously had won 17 Masters

Swimming International U.S. national championships for his age division. He trains around the Valley.

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DAILY News Sun

Aquarobics

Sun Citians keep coming back for water exercises

By STEVEN SEXTON
Sports Editor

Since 1974, Verona Hiland has been helping Sun City residents build muscle tone, strength and endurance through water exercise.

Some people like Barney Gallagher and his wife keep coming back every year for her classes.

"I feel so relaxed," said Gallagher as he stepped out of the pool at Fairway one morning last week. "You sleep good after the class and you feel like a new person."

Responses like Gallagher's are common place.

"They love it," said Hiland about the Sun Citians' outlook on water exercise. "I have had some repeat classes for eight years—that speaks for itself. Many of them have lost in inches and new ones say 'I wish I knew about it sooner.'"

When Hiland first started teaching water exercise or "aquarobics" 11 years ago, she taught a handful of people. The Sun Citian says the class didn't take off until she put the exercises to music—the big band sound.

"I put it to music and it has been go, go go," Hiland said.

Now, Hiland uses four different recreation center pools and has five instructors. Overall, she estimates 295 people are enrolled in the classes.

Since the water exercises are so popular, Hiland also formed the Aquatic Club which allows members to take swimming lessons taught by Mary Herbst.

Hiland, who moved to Sun City from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, taught swimming and water exercise in that city for the YMCA and YWCA. She also competed in water ballet for a group called the Aquarelles.

"I was in the group for 10 years and was one of the charter members," Hiland said.

After the group received three Class 1 honors from the International Academy of Aquatic Art (IAAA), they were inducted into the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"We were the first group admitted to the Swimming Hall of Fame," Hiland recalled. She says the women's group traveled coast to coast and performed intricate water patterns and movements, some underwater for the IAAA judges.

Hiland says to master water ballet one must have breath control and good muscle coordination.

"Your breathing gives out long before the muscles do," Hiland explained.

For six years, Hiland had a water ballet group in Sun City. She says a lot of the members had just started to learn how to swim.

"I started with six, then 10 and then 22," Hiland said about the growth of the Sun City ballet troupe. "We put on shows in Sun City two or three times a year."

Since the water displaces 90 percent of a person's weight, Hiland says performing exercises in the water is much easier than on land.

"You are exercising with very little resistance," she explained. "You don't overwork in the water like you would on land."

Hiland says she designed her exercises around big band music because it was familiar to Sun Citians.

"I try to gear the exercises so it is not too strenuous," Hiland said.

Hiland says aquarobics works various muscles in the body, ranging from the shoulder and pectoral area to the waist, abdomen and thighs.

"I try to have exercises for all parts of the body," Hiland said.

During a class, Hiland will take the Sun Citians through different routines in both the shallow and deep ends of the pool. In the deep end, participants brace themselves along the pool's edge. Many of the deep-end exercises are designed to work the back muscles.

Hiland's aquarobic classes meet twice a week for 10 weeks. The next session will be July 22 to Sept. 27. Each class runs for 45 minutes. Hiland says those interested in water exercise can reach her at 977-0236.