

## At a glance

### **Del Webb Sun Cities Museum**

10801 Oakmont Drive  
Sun City, AZ 85351  
623-974-2568

[delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org)

### **Annual memberships**

Copper Level \$15; Turquoise Level  
\$25; Silver Circle \$50, Gold Circle \$100

### **Annual meeting Nov. 6**

Sun City's hospital bears the name of Walter O. Boswell.

Jim Boswell owned the land on which Sun City was built, and partnered with Del Webb in developing the new community. Yet, little more is known about the Boswell family.

Few realize that Jim Boswell was the largest farmer in America, or that the Boswell Empire stretched from vast holdings in California to Arizona to Oregon to Colorado to the outback of Australia.

Ed Allen from the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum will tell the story of the family, and of James Boswell II - a man who bent nature, government agencies, and politicians to his will - yet never forgot his humble roots - referring to himself as "just a cowboy."

Mr. Allen will present "The Boswell Connection" at the annual meeting of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. The meeting will be held 1 p.m. Nov. 6 at the Heritage Palmeras, 10101 W. Palmeras Drive, Sun City. Admission is free.



Jane Freeman, known by many as "The First Lady of Sun City," died

# Museum honors 'First Lady'

By Bret McKeand  
Independent Newspapers

Throughout Sun City's 53-year history, there have been many who have gone above and beyond the call of duty when it came time to giving back to the community.

There have been few, if any, whose contributions will ever equal those made by Jane Freeman.

Referred to by many as "The First Lady of Sun City," Jane Freeman passed away May 17 in Sun City.

As one of the founders of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society – operators of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum – Jane was one of the first to appreciate the role Sun City played in changing the way Americans viewed retirement. Preserving Sun City's history became an obsession for Jane, and thanks to her efforts, the community's past is well preserved for future generations.

The SCAHS will pay tribute to Ms. Freeman at its annual meeting planned for 1 p.m. Nov. 6 at the Heritage Palmeras, 10101 W. Palmeras Drive, Sun City.

The meeting is free and open to the public. Call (623) 974-2568 for information.

Other than a room named in her honor at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, there are few monuments that recognize her contribution to Sun City. Yet, her work, her passion and her love for Sun City can be seen and felt throughout the entire community.

Jane moved to Sun City in 1970 and quickly embraced the lifestyle – and volunteer spirit – that was already prevalent in Del Webb's "experiment" of a community. Few knew at the time that Jane would not only perpetuate that spirit, but take it to a level few would ever match.

One of the first to recognize the significance of Sun City's title as the nation's first active adult retirement community, in 1985 Jane spearheaded the first in-depth history of the community. The result was

celebration. The book is still popular among history buffs and a popular item at the museum.

Jane earned the title of "Dumpster Diving Diva" around this same time when she climbed into a large trash bin to rescue old Sun City photographs, brochures and other memorabilia discarded by the Del Webb Development Company after it closed its Sun City office and shifted its focus on the newly created community of Sun City West.

Jane's efforts saved over 3,000 historic photographs dating back to the very beginning of Sun City. Those photographs and archives served as the foundation for the beginning of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, an organization Jane helped create and operate.

Those photographs today are housed in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, which is located in one of the very first model homes ever constructed in Sun City. The home became available in 1989 and it was Jane who convinced James Boswell II – Del Webb's early partner in the development of Sun City – to donate the \$50,000 needed for the society to purchase the house.

During the SCAHS's annual meeting, friends and fellow residents will share their recollections and memories of working with Ms. Freeman.

Amanda Durand, a Sun City resident who also lived in the community of Marinette, which preceded Sun City, was contacted in the early 1980s by Jane after Amanda had been featured in a news story about the first talk she had given about Marinette.

Amanda remembers Jane as a "really, hard working lady," because she worked with her and Glenn Sanberg on the Marinette chapter of "Jubilee, the 25th Anniversary of Sun City."

"So much material had been gathered for that history book, and for a while Jane had to store it under her bed," she recalls.

Marcia Case, a longtime museum docent, misses Jane because she was always two-



Photo by Bret McKeand  
Jane Freeman and Bill Pearson prepare to take part in the Sun City 50th Anniversary Parade in 2010. Mr. Pearson was president of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Board of Trustees.

"Jane was there rain or shine. The museum was her baby! She was incredible - nice and helpful, never grumpy, and a delight to be around. If you had a question, boy, could she answer it!" she said.

Pris Fenner, board member and guide, remembers when Jane "twisted her arm years ago" to join and community board at Boswell Hospital. And later she joined the museum just in time to be considered a charter member, because of Jane's enthusiasm.

"Even after Jane left the museum, we would take materials over to her. One summer she searched through all the "Webb Spinners," the Del E. Webb Corp. newsletters, and made lists of the company's construction projects. This information is now incorporated in a large U.S. map showing where these projects were. And museum visitors can search a printed directory by state to find these projects also. All

reminisced about the Sun Cities Area Historical Society founder by reminding us that Jane was a "wee tiny little thing, at least in stature."

"I, on the other hand am stout, known to be abrasive to a fault and willing to get into it with almost anyone," said Bill. He adds that his fondest memory of Jane is just how "darned intimidated" he was by her mere presence.

"No matter how comfortable I was hanging around the museum, when she walked through those back doors I near on trembled." He added that she was never mean, but that he just knew what she expected when handling pictures, filing or working around her museum.

"She was fussy and meticulous, while I was ... well, a guy who could barely get those goofy rubber gloves on my hands. All this is said with nothing but love for the little lady who helped us all be better for having known

# History in the Making

## Del Webb Sun Cities Museum: Bringing the past to life

By Bret McKeand  
Board Member

When Sun City first opened in 1960, the concept of creating a master-planned community specifically for retirees was a novel idea that few felt had

much chance of long-term success.

Fifty-three years later the community that gave birth to an idea that would eventually spread and spawn numerous other active-adult concepts and communities is alive and well, and as healthy and

successful as ever. Sun City was the world's first active-adult retirement community, yet many of its residents have little or no knowledge of the town's past or its place in history.

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### About



This photo, from the archives of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, shows the birth of Sun City in 1959. Just months prior to the official opening of the community on Jan. 1, 1960, workers prepare the golf course, recreation center and the first five model homes (the first one is home to the museum). The first buildings in Sun City were located at 107<sup>th</sup> and Oakmont Drive, just south of Grand Avenue. The last remains of the Town of Marinette can be seen at the top of this photograph. Within months after Sun City opened, Marinette was but a memory.



### Outside of museum/sign

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is located in one of the first of five model homes constructed in Sun City. Located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, the public is invited to tour the home and view memorabilia related to the history of Sun City and Sun City West. Admission is free.

For those seeking to learn more about the community, the best place to start is where it all began. In a small, 53-year-old house on Oakmont Drive in Sun City sits the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum and it is here that one can become familiar with the history of Sun City and Sun City West, and see the past come to life right before their eyes.



**Bret McKeand**

"We're really the best kept secret in the Sun Cities," says Ed Cirillo, president of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

"We have a great story to tell. We're trying hard to attract more visitors to the museum and, in doing so, encourage more of our residents to join the museum and support its efforts to preserve the history of our communities."

The museum, located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, is owned and operated by

the nonprofit Sun Cities Area Historical Society. The building itself boasts historical significance: It was one of the first of five model homes ever built in Sun City and available for curious buyers to inspect on opening day, Jan. 1, 1960.

The historical society was organized soon after Sun City celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and one of its first moves was to purchase the building that now serves as its headquarters and home to the museum.

The museum houses a vast collection of Sun City and Sun City West artifacts and literally thousands of historical photographs donated to the museum by the Del E. Webb Development Corp., the company that created both Sun City and Sun City West. Admission is free and the museum is open 1-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or by appointment June through August.

The home's interior design

reflects the typical early-1960's motif, and among the exhibits on display:

- The history of the Sun Cities and Marinette (the town which once existed where Sun City now sits);
- The story of Del E. Webb and his success as a builder and sports enthusiast (he once owned the New York Yankees).

- A snapshot of past print and video advertisements used to promote the Sun Cities.

- A look back at sports in the retirement communities, with a special look professional baseball's Cactus League involvement in Sun City and a national championship women's softball team that once called Sun City home.

Since it was first organized three decades ago, the historical society has always funded itself entirely by membership dues, grants and community donations. The society is managed by a volunteer board of directors

and staffed by volunteer guides. The only paid employee is a part-time executive director.

"The museum is very fortunate in that it has a small, but very devoted group of supporters and volunteers," says long-time SCAHS Trustee Edson Allen of Sun City West. "We simply wouldn't exist without their efforts and dedication."

Mr. Allen is the author of "Sun City West Silver Celebration," a book detailing the first 25 years of Sun City West and published in 2003 by the historical society. The book is one of several published by the historical society to help the organization raise additional funds.

"Membership dues, grants, book sales, corporate sponsorships and the creation of a new endowment fund are all vital tools to keeping the museum open and serving our residents."

The museum is this year conducting its first-ever community-wide membership drive. The drive is primarily targeting residents in Sun City and Sun City West, but museum officials hope the campaign appeals to everyone interested in preserving and promoting the history of

the Sun Cities.

At the beginning of this year, the museum had 150 members. Museum officials are hoping the newly launched campaign will bring in 500 or more new members.

Annual memberships range in price from \$15 to \$100. Those who join at the Gold Level (\$100) receive a copy of the newly published "Images of America: Sun City" book that features a history of the community as told through photographs from the museum's archives.

Membership is also open to clubs and organizations, as well as local businesses.

In addition, the museum recently started an endowment fund for those who would like their support of the museum to continue long after they're gone. Museum speakers are available to discuss the concept with local clubs, organizations and financial attorneys and planners.

"We're very proud of our history and the role the Sun Cities played in the history and evolution of the active-adult retirement community concept. We think it's a history worth sharing – and saving,"

adds Mr. Cirillo.

For additional information or to schedule a tour of the museum, call (623) 974-2568 or email [scahsm@gmail.com](mailto:scahsm@gmail.com).



**Del Webb in the museum**

Visitors to the museum will be able to meet the community's developer – and museum namesake – Del Webb via a life-size portrait of the builder, complete with a rare, actual recording of Mr. Webb sharing his fond recollections of the birth and development of Sun City.

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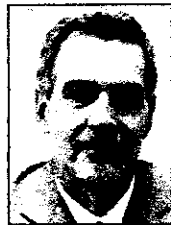
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SUN CITY

# Museum reveals expanded Marinette display

STAFF REPORT

Visitors entering the small 1960s model home that contains the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum can now walk first past images of the early community located on land which was to become Sun City.

The museum, at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, unveils "Where It All Began - Marinette," an expanded exhibit covering the years from 1896 to 1959. The new display fills the living room of the smallest model home to open Jan. 1, 1960.

The wall display is di-

vided into three time periods and is illustrated with old photos, many of which were provided by Amanda Durand, who grew up in Marinette and still lives in the Sun Cities. The last panel describes the area in which her parents ran the General Store, and many family photos add a personal touch to the display. A grant from the Arizona Historical Society made the display possible.

Museum hours will be 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday until enough volunteers are available

to provide guides five afternoons weekly. Please allow at least 45 minutes to tour the historical displays, which include a short promotional film from the 1960s.

Volunteers with computer experience are needed to assist Office Manager Julie Glass with the archives in the morning. Others will be trained to become museum guides/docents, who serve when the museum is open to the public. To volunteer, call 623-974-2568 between 8 a.m. and noon.

IN MEMORIAL

# Community pays tribute to 'First Lady of Sun City'

By Tina Gamez  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jane Freeman, one of the founders of Meals on Wheels, Sunshine Service and the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, was fondly remembered at her memorial service Thursday at Faith Presbyterian Church.

Called "The First Lady of Sun City," Freeman died May 17 at the age of 93.

She grew up in Erie, Pa., earned a degree from the University of Virginia and was the dean of students at Rockland Community College in Suffern, N.Y.

After retiring, she and her husband, Leslie "Gordon," moved to Sun City in 1970. He died in 1977.

Freeman was a member of Faith Presbyterian in Sun City for 34 years and her ashes were buried in the church's prayer garden.

The Rev. Don Houdeshell said at her Celebration of Life service that she was called "The First Lady of Sun City" because of her "huge com-



Jane Freeman, a contributor to the book, Jubilee, which is about the 25th anniversary of Sun City, is photographed with the book. [File photo]

mitment as a volunteer" in the first active adult community in the nation.

She co-authored, with Glenn Sanberg, the book, "Jubilee," the 25th anniversary of Sun City.

Houdeshell said she was "small diminutive woman who was a human dynamo."

Freeman "rescued over



Lee Peterson, left, retired Sun Health CEO, eulogizes Jane Freeman at her memorial service in Faith Presbyterian Church in Sun City Thursday. [Tina Gamez/Daily News-Sun]

3,000 photos and pieces of memorabilia that were thrown in the Dumpster," thereafter being called "Dumpster diva."

The photos and memorabilia found their way into the Del Webb Sun Cities Muse-

um. She talked James Boswell II into purchasing the house where the museum is located for \$50,000.

An advocate of the elderly through Sun Health, she also served on the board. Freeman delivered food to people

with Meals on Wheels, was active in Interfaith, now Benévilla, served on many other boards and was active in other organizations, he said.

Her awards included being named Woman of the

» See Jane on page A5



Jane Freeman holds a bat from the Sun City Saints, a women's softball team, at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society in the late 1980s. [Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun file photo]

## Jane

» From page A1

Year by the Daily News-Sun in 1981, Outstanding Citizen of Sun City in 1988, the Hon Kachina Award in 1990, and the Interfaith Mini Harlow Humanitarian Award in 2003.

"One person can start a movement, one person can make a difference," Houdeshell said.

Community members had an opportunity to speak about

Freeman at the service.

"Jane was brilliant," said Bill Pearson, president of the Sun City Foundation, a Recreation Centers of Sun City board member and former president of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. "She didn't need the accolades that some of us have to have. she did it because she loved Sun City."

Pearson mentioned L.C. Jacobson, Tom Green, J.R. Ashton, Bob Johnson, John Meeker, Del Webb and Jim

Boswell, and called them "enormous names of great success" who built Sun City; but without Freeman, they would be a "footnote in some historical archive of a builder's journal that no one would ever see."

Pearson said she lived her life giving back.

"Jane's legacy of the museum will live on forever," he said.

Calling Freeman a "change agent" for Sun Health, Lee Peterson, retired CEO of Sun

Health, said she was always advocating for others and "brought out the best in all of us."

Maryanne Leyshon, retired Daily News-Sun editor, talked about Freeman after the service.

"She was so generous with her information and her assistance," Leyshon said. She said Freeman "came to everybody's assistance. No matter what I would ask her, she would take the time to explain it to me."

## Service set Thursday for community leader

STAFF REPORT

There will be a memorial service for Sun City community leader Jane J. Freeman at 10 a.m. Thursday in Faith Presbyterian Church, 16000 N. Del Webb Blvd., Sun City.

Freeman died May 17. She was born and raised in Erie, Pa., and moved to Sun City in the early 1970s.

Among her many accomplishments, Freeman served as the president of Sun City Meals on Wheels and was a member of the Sun City Library board of directors. She was a founding member and president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

During the 25th silver anniversary of Sun City, Freeman co-authored a book, "Jubilee," which highlighted the development and growth of Sun City.

In 1981, Freeman was named Woman of the Year in Sun City.

## Del Webb Sun Cities Museum: Where history comes alive!



You should've been here on Opening Day!



*Membership drive, endowment fund launched to help raise operating funds*

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For more information on the museum and the historical society, or to become a member, visit [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

## 4/11 THURSDAY

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING:** Not all of Del Webb's dreams came to fruition - most notably the size, shape and some of the features of his first Sun City West of the Agua Fria River. Ed Allen, who wrote the history of Sun City West for the community's 25th anniversary, will share little known stories from the past at the annual Spring Membership Meeting of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society at 1:30 p.m. Thursday April 11. The meeting will be held in the Heritage Traditions in Sun City West. Ed will present a look back at what Sun City West might have been had all the original plans, schemes and dreams been realized. The meeting is open to the public, and refreshments will be served. It will be in the main meeting room in Heritage Traditions at 19303 N. New Tradition Road, Sun City West.

# Pieces of local history go on block



Vintage buttons and postcards were part of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum yard sale Saturday. **NICK COTE/DAILY NEWS-SUN**

**JEFF DEMPSEY**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Elaine Rice is a Sun City resident who chose to live in the community in large part because of its history.

"I'm really into the '50s and '60s, and in particular I'm awed by Sun City and how it came to be," she said. "I just love the history of it."

So when Rice heard the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum was going to have a yard sale on Saturday, with a lot of rare and interesting items up for grabs, she

had no doubts about what she would do.

"I knew I had to be here," she said.

From 8-5 Saturday at the museum, located at 10801 Oakmont Drive west of Oakmont Recreation Center, museum staffers set up tables and sold off a variety of items and collectibles. Julie Glass, office manager for the museum, said this is not their first yard sale.

"We've had one before," she said. "It's not a regular thing, but we did some cleaning up and

realized we had items we could sell."

There were old postcards from the early days of Sun City and magazines from the same period, many of them donated by Sun City residents. There were framed photos used in the model homes in Sun City West. The real eye catcher of the sale, though, was a 4-foot by 6-foot photo.

"It was a photo of a Lawrence Welk concert held at the Sun Bowl and it was the first thing we

**SEE GOODS, A5**

## GOODS

**FROM A1**

sold," said Loretta Allen, another of the museum's staffers. "It was the very first thing to go. The man walked up first thing and went straight to it."

Rice said those kinds of things are what drew her to the yard sale.

"I collect memorabilia," she said. "Here I got a photo from back when they opened the first model home. It's

amazing, not just for the significance of the photo but to see how people looked then, how they dressed, how the area looked. It's all so fascinating."

Rice had a stack of magazines, too, and that was not all.

"Oh, I have more stuff in the car," she said. "This is my second trip. And when I get home I'll have all these magazines to look through and I'll get to see even more of what things were like during this period. I can't wait."

Glass said in addition to selling off some surplus items and bringing in some much-needed money for the museum, part of the reasoning for the yard sale was to bring them some attention.

"We just really want to get the word out about us, because we find that many people do not even know we exist," she said. "This is fun for us. We do a little cleanup and we get to spend the day talking to people about the museum."

Allen, who lives in Sun City West, said she and her husband, Ed, who sets up the displays in the museum, consider the place a precious resource.

"It's a treasure. We all like to call it a gem," she said. "But nobody knows we're here. We're doing our best to change that."

Information: [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

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

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"We're really the best kept secret in the Sun Cities," says Ed Cirillo, president of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

"We have a great story to tell. We're trying hard to attract more visitors to the museum and, in doing so, encourage more of

our residents to join the museum and support its efforts to preserve the history of our communities."

The museum, located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, is owned and operated by the nonprofit Sun Cities Area Historical Society. The building itself boasts historical significance: It was one of the first of five model homes ever built in Sun City and available for curious buyers to inspect on opening day, Jan. 1, 1960.

The historical society was organized soon after Sun City celebrated its 25th anniversary, and one of its first moves was to purchase the building that now serves as its headquarters and home to the museum.

The museum houses a vast collection of Sun City and Sun City West artifacts and literally thousands of historical photographs donated to the museum by the Del E. Webb Development Corp., the company that created both Sun City and Sun City West. Admission is free and the museum is open 1-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or by appointment June through August.

The home's interior design reflects the typical early-1960's motif, and among the exhibits on display:

- The history of the Sun Cities and Marinette (the town which once existed where Sun City now sits);

- The story of Del E. Webb and his success as a builder and sports enthusiast (he once owned the New York Yankees).



**The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive in Sun City, includes a number of rotating exhibits and displays to provide visitors a snapshot of the history of the Sun Cities as well as what life may have been like in the early days of the community. The museum's kitchen is outfitted with mid-1960's appliances. One of the newest displays is a history of Sun City West -- from its early "Lizard Acres" days to present times.**

- A snapshot of past print and video advertisements used to promote the Sun Cities.

- A look back at sports in the retirement communities, with a special look professional baseball's Cactus League involvement in Sun City and a national championship women's softball team that once called Sun City home.

Since it was first organized three decades ago, the historical society has always funded itself entirely by membership dues, grants and community donations. The society is managed by a volunteer board of directors and staffed by volunteer guides. The only paid employee is a part-time executive director.

**See Museum — Page 24**



## Museum

Continued From Page 16

"The museum is very fortunate in that it has a small, but very devoted group of supporters and volunteers," says long-time SCAHS Trustee Edson Allen of Sun City West. "We simply wouldn't exist without their efforts and dedication."

Mr. Allen is the author of "Sun City West Silver Celebration," a book detailing the first 25 years of Sun City West and published in 2003 by the historical society. The book is one of several published by the historical society to help the organization raise additional funds.

"Membership dues, grants, book sales, corporate sponsorships and the creation of a new endowment fund are all vital tools to keeping the museum open and serving our residents."

The museum is this year conducting its first-ever community-wide membership drive. The drive is primarily targeting residents in Sun City and Sun City West, but museum officials hope the campaign appeals to everyone interested in preserving and promoting the history of the Sun Cities.

At the beginning of this year, the museum had 150 members. Museum officials are hoping the newly launched campaign will bring in 500 or more new members.

Annual memberships range in price from \$15 to \$100. Those who join at the Gold Level (\$100) receive a copy of the newly published "Images of America: Sun City"



Submitted Photo

## Beaders share art

Visit the Sun City West Beaders section at the March 23 Sun City West Craft Fair. The Beaders, including member Judy Applebaum, above, are artisans who will display created and unique beaded jewelry and gifts for purchase.

book that features a history of the community as told through photographs from the museum's archives.

Membership is also open to clubs and organizations, as well as local businesses.

In addition, the museum recently started an endowment fund for those who would like their support of the museum to continue long after they're gone. Museum speakers are available to discuss the concept with local clubs, organizations and financial attorneys and planners.

"We're very proud of our history and the role the Sun Cities played in the history and evolution of the active-adult retirement community concept. We think it's a history worth sharing – and saving," adds Mr. Cirillo.

For additional information or to schedule a tour of the museum, call 623-974-2568 or e-mail [scahsm@gmail.com](mailto:scahsm@gmail.com).

For information on the museum and the historical society, or to become a member, visit [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

# Del Webb Sun Cities Museum: Where history comes alive

## Drive, endowment fund launched to raise operating funds

When Sun City first opened in 1960, the concept of creating a master-planned community specifically for retirees was a novel idea that few felt had much chance of long-term success.

Fifty-three years later the community that gave birth to an idea that would eventually spread and spawn numerous other active-adult concepts and communities is alive and well, and as healthy and successful as ever.

Sun City was the world's first active-adult retirement community, yet many of its residents have little or no knowledge of the town's past or its place in history.

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Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

"We have a great story to tell. We're trying hard to attract more visitors to the museum and, in doing so, encourage more of our residents to join the museum and support its efforts to preserve the history of our communities."

The museum, located at 10801 W. Oak-

See Museum — Page 22

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VF IC HISTORICAL SOCIETY INDEPENDENT MARCH 13, 2013

## Museum

Continued From Page 21

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Continued From Page 16

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## **Museum sells, auctions materials**

STAFF REPORT

A different kind of carport sale will take place Saturday in Sun City.

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum will be selling and auctioning off some museum material and donated items during the sale, which begins at 8 a.m. at 10801 Oakmont Drive, behind the Oakmont Center in Sun City.

Among the biggest items in the sale is the 4-by-6-foot mounted photo of the Sun Bowl taken during the 1974 appearance of the Lawrence Welk band, when almost 7,000 people were jammed into the Bowl, and some danced on the concrete dance floor. The photo hung for years at Sundial Center.

Other items include 40th anniversary mugs, a pair of new size-11 golf shoes, printed golf memorabilia, a glitzy holiday wreath and scads of picture frames, plus local maps, postcards and more.

Most items will be sold on site, but some will be sold by silent auction. Only cash will be accepted.

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## Museum Mysteries



Who are these people? Can you help the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum identify these people and the event that resulted in this group photo? The photo has no date, which could have provided a clue. If you know who these people are, please call the museum at 623-974-2568. The museum has about 3,000 identified photos of the early days of Sun City and Sun City West. These have been scanned and can be reviewed on the museum's website: [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org). Visit the museum to see exhibits on Del Webb, Marquette, Sun City, Sun City West, and more. The museum is located at 10801 Oakmont, just west of the Oakmont Rec Center in one of the five original 1960 model homes. Hours are 1-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Admission is free.

## FURNITURE DISPLAY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Yucca Chapter of the Questers gave the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum a grant for a credenza and four modern storage cabinets. Sun Cities Area Historical Society President Ed Cirillo, right, stands with Essie Allbritton, state president of Questers, as they admire the cherry-finished custom credenza installed in the museum living room. At left are Yucca Questers Alice Bradshaw and Neva Simon. The museum is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday in a 1960 Sun City model home at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.



Submitted Photo

## **Questers donation**

The Yucca Chapter of the Questers gave the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum a grant for a credenza and four modern storage cabinets. Sun Cities Area Historical Society president Ed Cirillo stands with Essie Allbritton, state president of Questers, as they admire the cherry finished custom credenza recently installed in the museum living room. At right are Yucca Questers Neva Simon and Alice Bradshaw. The museum is open 1-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday in a 1960 model home at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

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## RETRO CHRISTMAS



NICK COTE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Del Webb Sun Cities Museum guides Marcia Case, left, and Gail Warmath decorate a vintage aluminum Christmas tree that adorns the museum during the holidays. The museum is located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive and is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.



NICK COTE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

## New hours begin Dec. 3 at Sun Cities museum

### STAFF REPORT

Beginning Dec. 3, the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Groups of six or more may phone ahead for morning or afternoon tours any weekday September through May.

Guides will soon be assembling the vintage aluminum Christmas tree, which is always placed in the window of the smallest of the first five model homes in Sun City during December.

The museum at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive also includes some interactive and audio visual displays and materials on the life of Del E. Webb, his company and his projects nationwide.

One former bedroom displays material

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### IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** Del Webb Sun Cities Museum

**WHERE:** 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City

**HOURS BEGINNING**  
DEC. 3: 1 to 4 p.m.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday

**INFO:** 623-974-2568

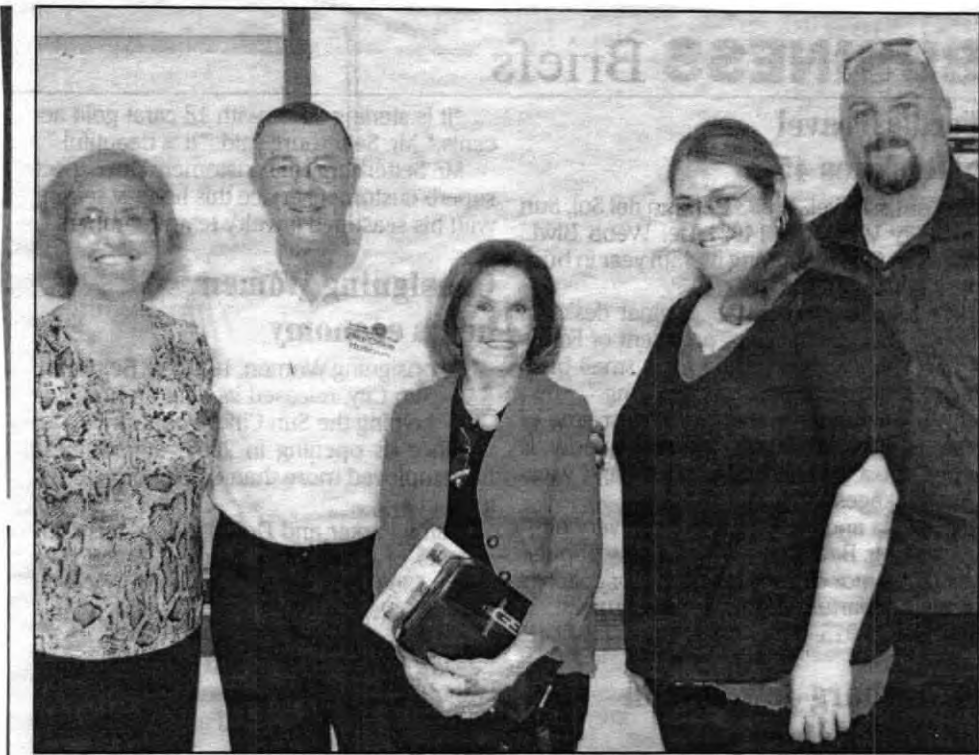
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on the baseball teams, female and male, that practiced and played here, as well as the role of golf to residents.

There are also photos of some of the celebrities who joined Webb on the courses here.

New displays on the performing arts groups of Sun City and Sun City West will replace this exhibit early next year.

For information, and to book a tour, phone 623-974-2568.



Submitted Photo

## Members meet with Meeker family

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society hosted its fall membership meeting Nov. 3 at the Oakmont Recreation Center. The story of John Meeker, the Del E. Webb Development Co. president who led the development of Sun City during the 1960s, was highlighted during the meeting. Members of John Meeker's family attended the meeting. From left, his daughter, Suzanne; Ed Allen of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society Board of Trustees; Mr. Meeker's wife, Yvonne; granddaughter, Elisabeth Bergt and her husband, John. For more photos of the event, visit [arizona.newszap.com](http://arizona.newszap.com).

# Museum needs guides

**A**re you looking for something different to do this winter?

If you're a people lover, and the least little bit curious about how Sun City came to be, you might enjoy being a guide in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum run by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

You could liken it to visiting your grandparent's home with its two-bedrooms and one bath after they have given up their larger home somewhere else and retired to the new Sun City, touted as being for "active adult living" ... because that is exactly what you would be doing when you guide visitors to the Museum, at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive. It is a model home shown to the public for the first time on Jan. 1, 1960. It is the smallest of the first five models. After all, it cost only \$8,500 plus \$1250 for being on the first golf course and \$600 extra for the air conditioning.

Guides greet visitors and chat with them in the living room with walls lined with giant photos (made from professional 4 by 5 inch negatives used by the Del Webb Corp. publicists). The front or original master bedroom now houses bound corporation newsletters, a complete set of Sun City phone directories, related books on Sun City and photos of the construction of the Hi Way House and the Coffee Brake restaurant later called the King's Inn and King's Inn Restaurant. The focus of the room, however, is the exhibit of Del E. Webb - the boy, the carpenter, the owner of a construction company which built all over the USA, and part-owner of the New York Yankees for a few years.

The second bedroom currently features the sport teams that have headquartered or played pre-season ball here, the facilities built for them and the role that golf has played in the Sun Cities with its celebrity visitors. This room will soon house a series of exhibits of the performing arts beginning with the many dance groups in the Sun Cities.

Basically, the guides offer information which is also in the graphics under the visual materials on display. A short training session shows them how to turn on lights and the audio-visual equipment used in the above displays and that of Sun City West, and in the tiny theater housed in the first permanent building (a 10 by 10 ft. frame building) which was the original sales room for the Del

Webb homes. Some visitors prefer to wander by themselves through a museum rather than be escorted by a guide. Materials are available for guides to check out if they wish to absorb the information more quickly.

Other volunteers are needed to assist office manager Julie Glass. She needs people with computer experience to scan, copy and input archival information into the museum software. Hours are flexible, usually a two or three-hour shift, a couple of times a month, or weekly if they choose. Perks include a real 1960s vintage refrigerator in which to store snacks and a bathroom just like your grandmother had if she lived here in the same decade. There is a luncheon on the McMillin Terrace for guides and volunteers in the spring, and you never know who you will meet while "working" in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

If this sounds like fun, call the museum at 623-974-2568.

## Arizona Eye Institute hosts food drive

Emilio M. Justo, M.D., the Arizona Eye Institute & Cosmetic Laser Center, and the St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance have joined forces to hopefully provide some relief to families in need this holiday season.

For every two non-perishable items brought into the offices, individuals will receive 1 percent off cosmetic services, products and surgeries. Persons may donate enough items to earn up to 15 percent off cosmetic non-surgical procedures, services and products; and up to 10 percent off cosmetic surgical procedures.

Food will be collected throughout November. The donation discount can be applied to cosmetic surgical procedures or any cosmetic non-surgical procedure, service, or product; any such procedures can be performed through May 31, 2013.

Donations can be made at any of the Arizona Eye Institute & Cosmetic Laser Center's locations in Sun City or Sun City West. Each office is staffed 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Call 623-975-2020 or visit [www.JustoMD.com](http://www.JustoMD.com).

**Sun Cities Area  
Historical Society (SCAHS)**

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society/Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the records and artifacts for Sun City and Sun City West. The society's headquarters are in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, in one of the five original Sun City model homes, 19891 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

**Museum hours:** 1-3 p.m. Monday-Friday (September-May), or by appointment for six or more people, 623-974-2568. Group tours available. July and August by appointment only. There is also a board of trustee meeting at 3 p.m. the first Monday each month in the museum.

**Special events:** 1-3 p.m. Nov. 3, fall

membership meeting. Speakers: Don Tuffs and Edson Allen. Refreshments served.

**Officers:** Ed Cirillo, president; Don Tuffs, vice president.

**Information:** Julie Glass, 623-974-2568.

## History professor pens book tracing roots of age-restricted communities

**NORA AVERY-PAGE**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Today, there are hundreds of age-restricted communities around the country, but their history starts in the West Valley with the growth of Youngtown and Sun City.

Judith Ann Trolander, a history professor at the University of Minnesota, Duluth and author of "From Sun Cities to The Villages: A History of Active Adult, Age-Restricted Communities," delivered a lecture at the Fairway Branch Library Wednesday on that same subject, with an emphasis on Del Webb's Sun City, Arizona.

"When I was teaching my students, I had to explain to them what an age-restricted community was," Trolander joked.

There are conflicting numbers about how many retirees are interested in living in age-restricted communities. Del Webb studies estimate it to be about 30 percent, while AARP studies show that the number is about 10 percent. Trolander said she thinks that number is probably squarely in the middle at about 20 percent.

"Americans tend to be workaholics, but you could justify a vacation if it was for your health," Trolander said, explaining the birth of such retirement and leisure communities.

This led to the popularity of mineral springs and health resorts, which were often in the Southern states, making the idea of "wintering" in the South trendy for many rich and famous names.

But the trend did filter down to the masses as the so-called "tin can tourists" flocked to areas around Tampa, Fla. to free campgrounds and trailer parks that encouraged those lower-income families to get involved in state societies, similar to the Sun City's own Wisconsin Club, or other similar groups.

In 1954, Ben Schleifer created Youngtown as an alternative to nursing homes, and there, the idea of a retirement community was born, Trolander said.

"He wanted to make Youngtown affordable," Trolander said of Schleifer, who built small homes ideal for retirees, and he banned children for the same reason that they are rarely allowed in nursing homes: Kids are too noisy.

Sun City was sparked into creation after Del Webb associates L.C. Jacobson and Tom Breen visited similar communities in Florida; James Boswell provided the Arizona land, and the project was off, starting with a golf course community concept.

"It was a pretty general concept of active retirement," Trolander



PHOTOS BY DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Judith Ann Trolander speaks to an audience at the Fairway Recreation Center on Wednesday. Trolander wrote a book about the history and development of age-restricted communities.



Trolander shows a slide of the original Sun City model home during her presentation on Wednesday.

said. The Del Webb community, which opened in 1960, added the amenities that Youngtown lacked — elaborate recreation centers with activities like woodworking and other crafts, grassy medians, a shopping center and a motel.

Del Webb sold a "new way of life" to retirees, Trolander said, adding that he employed an extensive marketing program.

"It's something of an oxymoron," Trolander said of the active retirement idea.

Ross Cortese, a competitor to Del Webb, opened his Leisure World community in the Los Angeles area in 1961, although Tro-

lander explained that it and the other Leisure Worlds to follow were different from Sun City since they were smaller, and often gated; Del Webb later expanded to open Sun City Center, Fla. and Sun City, Calif. in 1962, although they were later taken over by other developers.

Del Webb standardized the floor plans, community lay-outs, recreation centers, and even the street names to make each community more affordable, and Trolander pointed out that pictures of Sun City Center look very similar to Sun City, Ariz.

"The Sun City concept just keeps going and going," Trolander

said.

While the Sun Cities and similar communities have had battles over school taxes and possible discrimination issues involved in having age-restricted communities, culminating in the Fair Housing Act of 1988, Trolander said the way to move forward for these communities is by continuing to adapt, and attract new retirees, like the Baby Boomer generation.

Trolander's book is available at the Fairway Branch Library located in Fairway Recreation Center, as well as via mail-order by calling 800-226-3822, on sale at a special discount of \$42 until May 4.

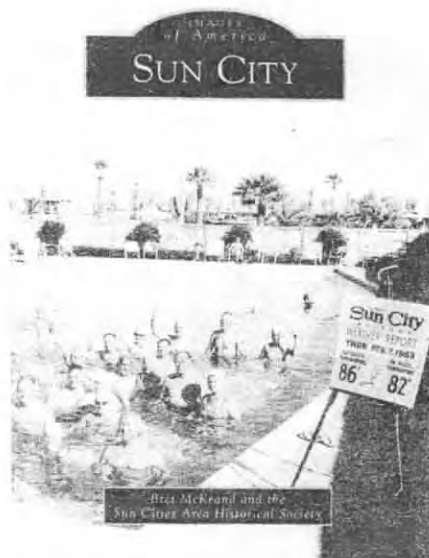
## SCW History hits the big time



"Sun City West Silver Celebration the First Twenty-five Years," the history book detailing the first 25 years of Sun City West, is now available at Wagner Books in the Promenade Shopping Center, 99th Avenue & Bell Road in Sun City. The book also is available at the Sun City West Visitors Center, 13823 Camino del Sol, and at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive in Sun City. Edson Allen, book editor and Society president, sets up a display of the books with Denise Keane, Wagner Books manager. Photo, Loretta Allen



## Book sales to benefit historical society, museum



The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will be selling copies of its book, "Images of America: Sun City," during a special book-signing event planned 1-3 p.m. April 7 at the Costco store, 17550 N. 79th Ave., Glendale.

Co-author Bret McKeand will be available to autograph copies. All proceeds from the book benefit the historical society and the operation of its Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

The book, published in 2011, tells the history of Sun City from its conception, construction and growth over five decades. Photographs featured in the book are from the archives of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society and the Sun City Independent newspaper, or taken by Mr. McKeand himself.

The museum is located at 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City, in the first of five model homes constructed in Sun City when it first opened in 1960. The museum is open to the public and admission is free.

Call 623-974-2568 for information.

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# Library

**AUTHOR VISIT—JUDITH ANN TROLANDER:**

1-3 p.m. Wednesday, April 18. Professor Trolander discusses "Age 55 or Better: A History of Active Adult Communities" with an emphasis on Sun City, Arizona. From her book "From Sun Cities to the Villages." Professor Trolander researched the role of the Del Webb Communities. Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, run by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society (SCAHS), maintains extensive archives on Sun City and Sun City West. The museum, co-

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sponsor of the event with Fairway Branch Library, will display and distribute material on the history of the Sun City libraries. Program in the Fairway Recreation Center, Arizona Room.

## Sun City Area Historical Society hosts meeting in Sun City West

As the community prepares to say farewell to the Sundome Center for Performing Arts, the Sun Cities Area Historical Society will pay tribute to the Sun City West landmark at its spring membership meeting April 20.

The meeting takes place 1:30 p.m. April 20 at the Sun City West Heritage Tradition, 19303 New Tradition Road.

Guest speakers will be Ed Allen and Don Tuffs, both of whom are members of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society Board of Trustees. The SCAHS operates the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, a museum showcasing the history of the Sun Cities and located in one of the first model homes built in Sun City.

The speakers will present a program focusing on the history of Sun City West with special emphasis on the life and times of the Sundome Center for Performing Arts. The title of the talk is "From Feed Lot to Sundome Fans."

When it first opened, the Sundome Center was the largest single-level performing arts center in the nation. World-renowned artists, world statesmen and former presidents as well as local clubs and organizations are among the performers who have stood on its stage. The facility was originally owned by the Del E. Webb Corporation but sold many years ago to Arizona State Uni-

versity.

The theater was recently sold to private owners who plan to demolish the facility to make way for a proposed retail shopping center.

Ed Allen and his wife Loretta have been wintering in Arizona since Ed's retirement in 1996. Ed's career was in advertising and sales promotion. He soon became active in the Sun City West Visitors Center. He later was enlisted by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society to write the history of Sun City West. Two years later, with the help of a committee of researchers, the book was published in time for the community's 25th Anniversary.

Don Tuffs has spent career in the Sun Cities. In 1978, as a member of the Del Webb Development Company's public relations department, he photographed the groundbreaking of Sun City West. He later started a number of clubs and organizations prior to the opening of the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center and became the first manager of the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts.

The April 20 is open to the public. Admission is free.

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City. Call 623-974-2568.

## Video editor needed for new performing arts exhibit

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is planning a major new exhibit on the performing arts in the Sun Cities. "Let Us Entertain You — Residents performing for residents for 50 years" will feature music, drama, and dance in Sun City and Sun City West.

From a 1961 Minstrel Show to the beginnings of the Sun City (now West Valley) Symphony in 1968 to the Poms beginning as cheer leaders for the Sun City Saints in 1979 to 27 variety shows in the Sundome beginning in 1980 to SCW Rhythm Tappers traveling to Japan, Russia, and other countries, residents of the Sun Cities have enjoyed a wide variety of outlets for their talent and energy.

Their stories are exciting and inspiring, and should be preserved for future audiences. As a result, the Del Webb Sun Cities

Museum is gathering material for an exhibit saluting these performing artists, and is finding that various clubs have video footage of many performances. Clubs are asked to identify key events and performances, but the museum will need help excerpting material from the tapes they are providing. The goal is to create 5-10 minute "highlight" programs — one on music, one on drama, and one on dance — for visitors to view on monitors at the museum.

Anyone with video editing skills and an interest in helping preserve this exciting, talent-packed part of local history, can contact the museum at 623-974-2568. Several months are available in which to complete the work as the "grand opening" of the new exhibit is tentatively planned for January 2013.

## LOCAL HISTORY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The 2012 board of trustees for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, from left, front row: James McGreevy; Arlene Macy; Ed Cirillo, president; and Priscilla Fenner. Back row, from left: Hal Lind; Ed Allen; Don Tuffs, vice president; and Bret McKeand. Not pictured is Norm Dickson, treasurer. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society runs the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

# History on Display

As the nation's very first active-adult retirement community – and arguably still the world's most popular – Sun City has a long and rich heritage.

Like the mythical Phoenix Bird rising from the ashes, Sun City sprouted from the cotton fields of Marinette to give birth to an entire new retirement industry that continues to thrive today, 51 years later.

Many residents are familiar with their adopted hometown's most visible and famous images – namely the abundance of golf courses and recreation centers that continue to make Sun City a magnet for new retirees.

But for those who want to know more about the community's past, a trip to the Sun Cities Del Webb Museum may be in order. Located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, the museum is home to historical memorabilia and archival photos that offer visitors a first-hand look at the successful growth over the past five decades of both Sun City and Sun City West.

The house is living history in itself: The museum occupies the first of five model homes ever built in Sun City. The home was unveiled on opening day, Jan. 1, 1960. Outside, the home appears today much the same as it looked on that cold January morning 51 years ago. But step inside and you'll be transformed into a virtual time machine.

The museum has painstakingly restored the living room and kitchen to an early 1960's appearance. Throughout the house are numerous exhibits telling the story of Sun City and its sister city, Sun City West, which opened in 1978.

Photographs and mementos line the walls and fill the rooms. Among the rotating exhibits:

- The life and times of Del E. Webb, the builder of Sun City and Sun City West. The exhibit features unique, one-of-a-kind personal items on loan from the R.H. Johnson Foundation and the Del Webb Foundation, including many artifacts from his days as owner of the World Champion New York Yankees.

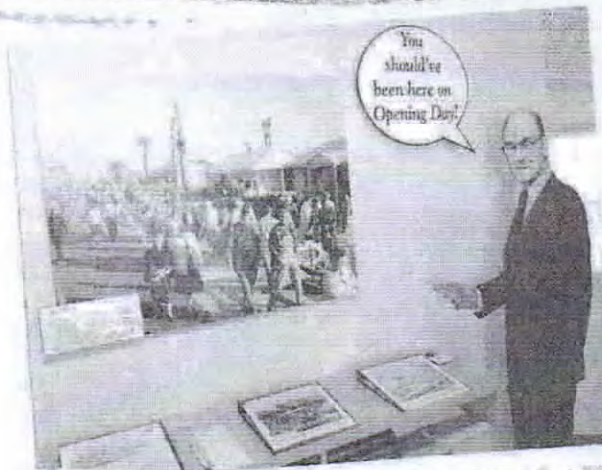
- Marinette: The cotton-farming community that once existed where Sun City now sits.

- A look at the advertisements and promotions created by the Webb Company over the years to market Sun City to the rest of the world.

- The story of professional sports in Sun City, including spring training and a world champion women's softball team.

- The history of Sun City West, from Lizard Acres to the second largest retirement community in the nation (next to Sun City!).

In addition to exhibits and displays, the museum



## Del Webb Museum protects, preserves and showcases history of Sun Cities

offers a perfect setting for clubs and organizations looking for a small meeting room. The newly opened McMillin Terrace, which faces North Golf Course, can seat up to 25 people and is perfect for small parties, receptions or other gatherings.

And for clubs looking for an entertaining talk on the history of the Sun Cities, the museum's speakers' bureau provides a variety of talks on different topics.

First-time visitors to the museum are often amazed at what they find and quickly become "hooked" on the exciting history that Sun City has to offer.

"There's so much to see and learn about Sun City," says Bill Pearson, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's Board of Trustees. "A lot of people just don't realize the pivotal role this community played during the 1960s and '70s as the popularity of the active-adult community evolved. Without Sun City, that concept just wouldn't be what it is today," he adds.

The museum is operated by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, which was created in 1985 after it acquired thousands of Sun City photographs from the files of the Del E. Webb Corporation. The museum remains a depository for historic archives – both written and photographic – and a valuable reference for educators, writers and sociologists from all over the world.

The museum is a non-profit organization that operates on contributions and membership fees. Other than a part-time office manager, the museum relies entirely on volunteers to serve as docents, catalog materials and promote the museum as one of the true hidden "gems" in Sun City.

Annual memberships start as low as \$15 and are available to everyone. The museum's current membership is comprised not just of Sun City and Sun City West residents, but also includes a large number of businesses, historians and other non-Sun City residents who appreciate and value the community's significance in the history of active-adult living.

Members receive a quarterly newsletter and advance notice of special events, as well as discounts on all museum publications.

"The museum has a wealth of material in its collection," says Mr. Pearson. "It's really neat stuff and once you see it, you'll want to keep coming back for more. We invite everyone to come on down and get to know their community."

The museum is open 1:30-3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, September through May, or by appointment. Hours are limited and vary during the summer.

Call (623) 974-2568, or visit the museum's web site at [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).



# Museum charts history of active retirement communities

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is sponsoring an interesting speaking opportunity at 1 p.m. Wednesday, April 18, in the Arizona Room at the Fairway Center, 107th and Peoria avenues in Sun City. Judith Ann Trolander, a professor in the University of Minnesota, Duluth, History Department, will discuss her book "From Sun Cities to the Villages." She researched the role of the Del Webb communities in the Sun Cities Museum, which is operated by the Sun Cities Historical Society.

History of Active Adult Communities with an Emphasis on Sun City, Ariz." She wrote a 289-page textbook that looks at the challenges communities such as Sun City and Sun City West face, the expectations for them, and how they will change as the Boomer population ages. The book also details how these age-restricted communities have redefined the sense of self-identity among the senior population, thus challenging a popular opinion of retirees.

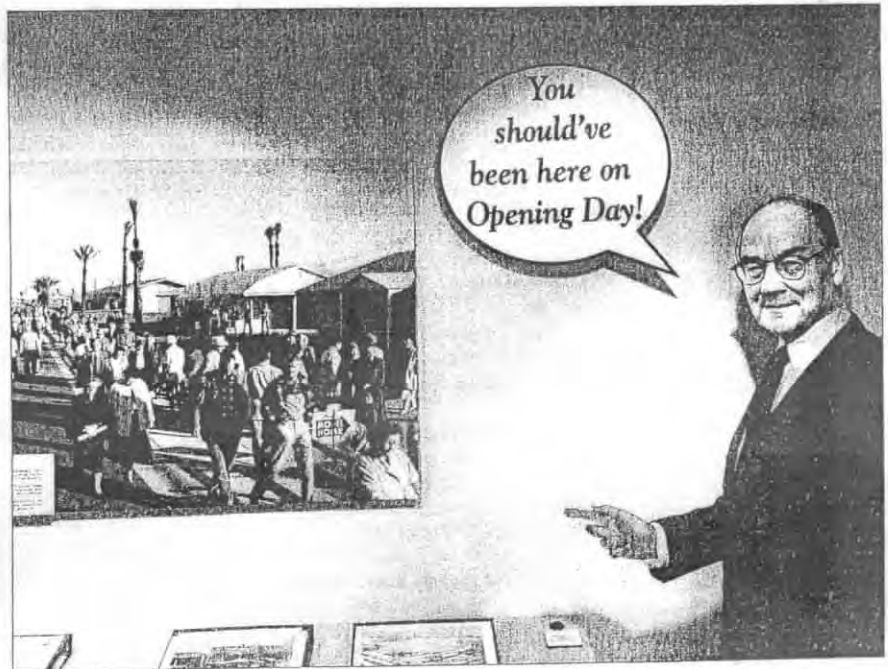
The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, co-sponsor of the event with Maricopa County Library, will display

and distribute material on the history of the Sun City libraries.

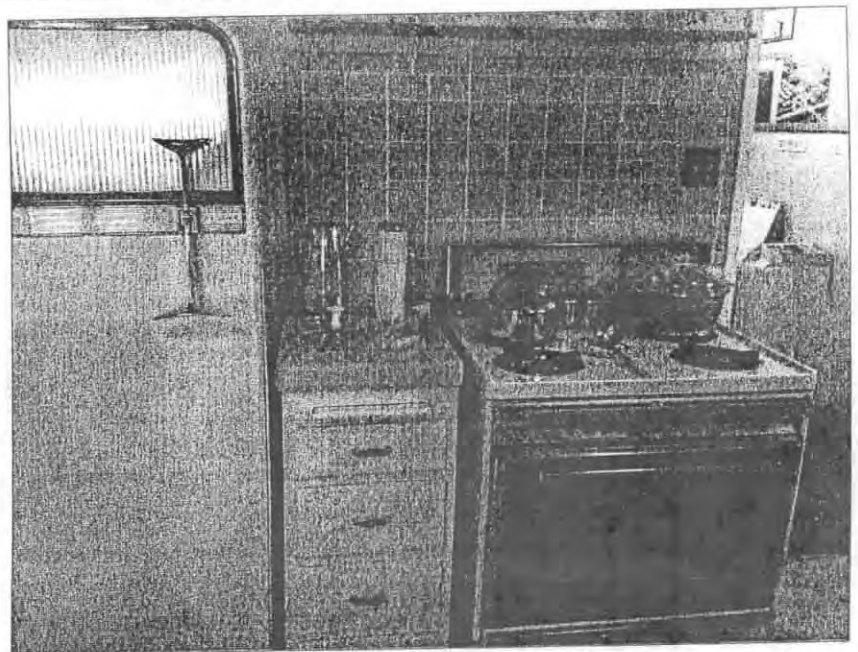
The museum is based in the first house Del Webb built in Sun City, at 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City. The museum is open 1 to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, or by appointment for clubs and other groups wanting a tour.

For information, call 623-974-2568 or email scahsm@gmail.com. More information can be found on the museum's website at [www.delwebbsuncities-museum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncities-museum.org).

Trolander's lecture is titled "Age 55 or Better: A



Photos taken in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum show clockwise from top left, a display about Lizard Acres, which refers to both the railroad marker along Grand Avenue and a quote from one person about how the land wasn't fit for anything but lizards; a lifesize cutout of developer Del Webb, whose vision of an active retirement community gave birth to both Sun City and Sun City West; and the kitchen in the first house built in Sun City, now the home of the museum.





Wednesday, November 2, 2011

www.yourwestvalley.com

DAILY NEWS-SUN

# SCW resident portrays Sharlot Hall for historical society

STAFF REPORT

Sun City West resident Barbara Dienes will bring history to life when she portrays Sharlot Hall, the first Arizona woman to hold public office and founder of one of the state's prestigious museums in Prescott.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will present Dienes' performance between 1 and 3 p.m. Saturday during the fall membership meeting in Oakmont Auditorium, 10725 W. Oakmont Drive.

Dienes represents the Phoenix Chapter of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. The Sun City West woman will dress in character as she becomes Sharlot Hall,

who was a rancher, poet and travel writer.

Ed Cirillo, the incoming society board president, will chair the event, which includes light refreshments and is open to the public.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is located in, and runs, the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, which is located next door to the Oakmont Center. Museum hours are 1 to 3 p.m. weekdays.

There also will be other festivities on Saturday.

Society board member Bret McKeand will autograph copies of his recent publication, "Sun City." Board member Edson Allen will sign copies of his publication, "Sun City



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sun City West resident Barbara Dienes will portray famous Arizonan Sharlot Hall during the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's fall membership meeting Saturday.

West - Silver Celebration."

Memberships in the Sun Cities Area Historical Society will also be on sale starting at \$15.

A commemorative Sun City coin will be given to those who join at the Saturday meeting.

For information, call 623-974-2568.

October 26, 2011

SUN CITY INDE

# Arizona history comes to life

## Con SCAHS membership meeting

er G  
Suite was a rancher, poet, travel writer,  
The first Arizona woman to hold public  
p. office and founder of one of the state's  
sicst prestigious museums.

t And residents can meet Sharlot Hall as  
Sought to life by Barbara Dienes at the fall  
conership meeting of the Sun Cities Area  
Janrycal Society 1-3 p.m. Nov. 5 at the Oak-  
font Recreation Center.

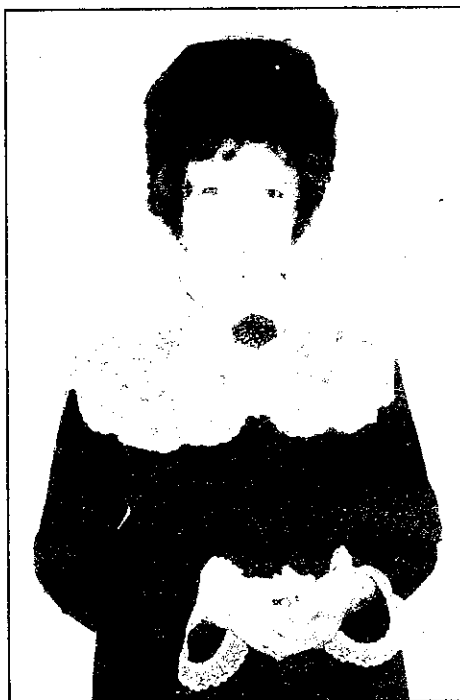
ticRepresenting the Phoenix Chapter of the  
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enes dresses in character as she portrays  
harlot Hall and tells the story of her life. Ms.  
dienes is a resident of Sun City West.

Incoming SCAHS board president Ed  
Cirillo is chairman of the Nov. 5 event, which  
includes light refreshments. The meeting is  
open to members and the public.

Board member Bret McKeand will auto-  
graph copies of his recent publication "Sun  
City," one of a series of Images of America  
by Arcadia Publishing Co., and Ed Allen, also  
a board member, will autograph copies of  
his publication, "Sun City West - Silver Cel-  
ebration."

Memberships in the Sun Cities Area His-  
torical Society will also be on sale starting  
at \$15. A commemorative Sun City coin will  
be given to all persons who join that after-  
noon.

The organization is located in the Del



Webb Sun Cities Museum, next door at the  
west side of the Oakmont Recreation Center,  
10801 W. Oakmont Drive. Museum hours  
are 10 a.m. Monday-Friday.  
Call 623-974-2568.

## Own A Piece of Sun City History!

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society has teamed up with Arcadia Publishing to create "Sun City," as part of Arcadia's popular "Images of America" series. The book traces the history of the nation's most famous retirement community through photographs from the archives of the historical society and Independent Newspapers.

**On Sale Now for \$21.99!**

Purchase at your favorite bookstore or online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)  
*All proceeds benefit the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.*



## Meet author of Sun City photo history book at reception this afternoon

STAFF REPORT

It's not often that a reporter's on-the-job photos turn up in a book, but former Sun City reporter/editor Bret McKeand has written a small format picture history book for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

McKeand will talk about the book and sign copies from 2 to 5 p.m. today at a wine and cheese reception in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum at 10801 W. Oakmont Ave.

The book is the latest addition to Arcadia Publishing's popular "Images of America" series, and is their first of a retirement community.

It has a sepia tone cover, like the others in the series, and includes more than 200 historic photographs. The soft-covered book illustrates the pre-Sun City area, the building of Sun City, and continues through events of the recent 50th Anniversary year.

"Many of the photos in the book haven't been seen in years, and they reflect the joy and excitement felt by those who built the community and of those early residents responsible for its success," said Bill Pearson, president of the SCAHS Board of Trustees, of which McKeand is a member.

The book sells for \$21.99, and all author royalties benefit the Sun Cities Area Historical Society located in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, one of the city's first five model homes. The museum is open 1-4 p.m. weekdays, and preserves and displays the history of Sun City and Sun City West.

Speakers are available and tours may be scheduled when the museum is open or not open. For information, call 623-974-2568.

# New book highlights history of Sun City

**F**ormer Sun City Independent editor and publisher Bret McKeand has teamed up with the Sun Cities Historical Society to create "Sun City," the newest addition to Arcadia Publishing's popular "Images of America" series.

The book provides a pictorial history of the nation's very first active-adult retirement community, and includes over 200 historic photographs culled from the archives of the Sun Cities Historical Society and Independent Newspapers.

The publication details the history of the community, from its pre-Sun City days to its recent golden anniversary celebration. Photographs originally taken by the Del E. Webb Company — developer of Sun City — shows the early development of Sun City and its growth throughout the 1960s and '70s.

Photographs from the archives of the Sun City Independent, which has been serving the community since 1960, continue the history of the community throughout the 1980s, '90s and well into its fifth decade. Sun City celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2010.

The project was supervised by Bret McKeand, who also served as the author of the book. Mr. McKeand joined the Sun City Independent as a reporter in 1983, and later served as editor and publisher. Many of the photographs in the book were taken by Mr.

McKeand or reporters at the Independent. Mr. McKeand is vice president of Arizona operations for Independent Newspapers.

"Many of the photographs in the book haven't been seen in years," says Bill Pearson, president of the SCAHS Board of Trustees.

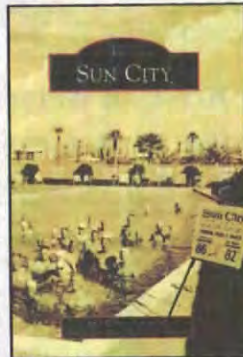
"These photographs are priceless in that they really do a great job at reflecting the joy and excitement felt by those involved in building the community, as well as those early residents responsible for its growth and success," added Mr. Pearson.

The book is published by Arcadia Publishing, the leading publisher of local and regional history in the United States. The book sells for \$21.99 and all author royalties benefit the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

The Sun Cities Historical Society was created to collect, preserve and promote the history of Sun City and Sun City West. The society operates the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, located at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City, in one of the first of five model homes opened in 1960 by the Del E. Webb Company.

A special publication launch and book signing will be conducted 2-5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. Mr. McKeand and members of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society Board of Trustees will be available to discuss the book, and provide free tours of the museum.

The book is available at area bookstores, independent retailers and online retailers (including amazon.com). The book may also be purchased directly from Arcadia Publishing at [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com), or by calling 1-888-313-2665.





Submitted Photo

Pat Forsythe, treasurer of the AZ Questers Yucca Chapter, presents a check to Priscilla Fenner, member of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Board of Trustees. Also attending the presentation were, from left, in front, Ruthie Clark, Alice Bradshaw, and Neva Simon, Questers, and, from left, in back, Karen West, Questers Yucca Chapter president, Bill Pearson, Del Webb Sun Cities Museum president, Forsythe, Fenner, and Essie Mae Allbritton, AZ State – 1st vice president.

## Questers donate to museum

**A**Z Questers Yucca Chapter presented a check for \$450 to the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum at a ceremony at the museum attended by Questers and members of the museum Board of Trustees.

The donation will allow the museum to purchase a high resolution flat-screen television and associated software to bring to life the "Ads that Attracted a Nation."

When Sun City was in its infancy, the Del Webb Corporation created a marketing campaign second to none. The museum owns volumes of the large ad slicks which have been tucked away because of their size and fragility. The ads will now be digitized and displayed in a continuing loop in the Museum's sales theater.

Trustees, gave the Questers a tour of the facilities and related the story of how the ads came to be in the Museum's collection.

Questers is an international organization formed in 1944. There are more than 500 members in the 34 chapters in Arizona. Questers' aims are to stimulate the appreciation of antiques through study and collection, and to encourage and accomplish the preservation and restoration of historical landmarks. The Questers motto is "This Place Matters."

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is housed in one of the first model homes in Sun City. Located at 10801 W. Oakmont, the museum is open 1-4 p.m. Monday-Friday

## Questers

Continued From Page 18

and at other times by special arrangement. The museum also has a speaker's bureau, which can make presentations before civic and social groups. Call 623-974-2568 for further information or visit [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Thursday, March 1, 2012

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## Sun City museum opens doors Saturday for fun day

STAFF REPORT

Sun City's only museum will be open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in conjunction with the Oakmont Center's Fun Day next door.

An exhibit inside with a live video presentation will point the way to the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, just west of the center's parking lot at

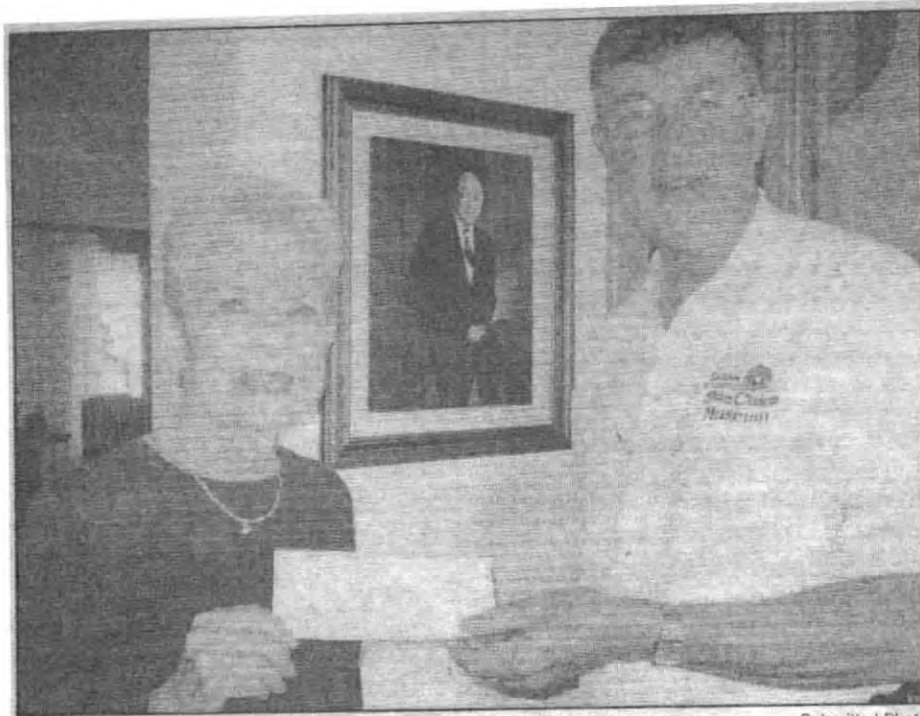
10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

Guides will be available to show visitors through the two-bedroom, one-bath model home, which opened to the public Jan. 1, 1960. It now houses Del Webb (the man and his company) memorabilia and archives, and displays of the founding of Sun City, Sun City West and the pre-

vious agricultural community of Marinette.

The regular winter hours of the museum are from 1 to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday and for small tour groups by appointment in the mornings. The building is owned by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. There is no admission charge. Information: 623-974-2568.

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Submitted Photo

## Gift helps preserve Del E. Webb legacy

Mrs. Robert H. Johnson presented a check for \$2,500 to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society to accelerate the conversion of paper records to digital computer files. Accepting the gift from the Robert H. Johnson Trust was Edson Allen, trustee for the Historical Society. As Sun City and Sun City West were completed, the Del E. Webb Corporation gave the Society thousands of pages of documents having to do with the development of these two communities. All of this one-of-a-kind information is paper-based, and subject to deterioration, fire, and other damage. Digitizing the data will not only protect it, but make it more readily available to scholars, authors, reporters, and researchers through the organization's website. The gift of these funds will allow the Society to use an outside source that specializes in large-volume scanning and digital conversion, helping speed the preservation of these documents.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Beverley Thom, a museum volunteer, rests on the new McMillin Terrace of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. The terrace is available for use for free by groups in the Sun Cities.

## Museum offers free terrace for use by local groups

### STAFF REPORT

The new McMillin Terrace of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum has been officially "broken in" by receptions, a book signing and an awards picnic. It is now available for free use by groups in the Sun Cities.

At the recent awards picnic, top volunteer awards went to Julie Glass, Marcia Case and Kathy Schymanski. The terrace also played host to a museum guide training session provided by Acquisition Chair Dorothy Rucker and Sun Cities Historical Society founder Jane Freeman.

Summer hours go into effect Friday, and the museum will be open from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Volunteer coordinator Karen Bunsness said she hopes to find

more volunteers to guide visitors, do computer work or help with the gardening.

"Help is needed now that some of our volunteers are headed home to cooler places for the summer," Bunsness said.

The museum, 10801 Oakmont Drive, will be closed during June, July and August. Tours will be available upon request.

Groups may book the McMillin Terrace for their events; the area seats 25 people at tables, has ceiling fans and faces the North Golf Course.

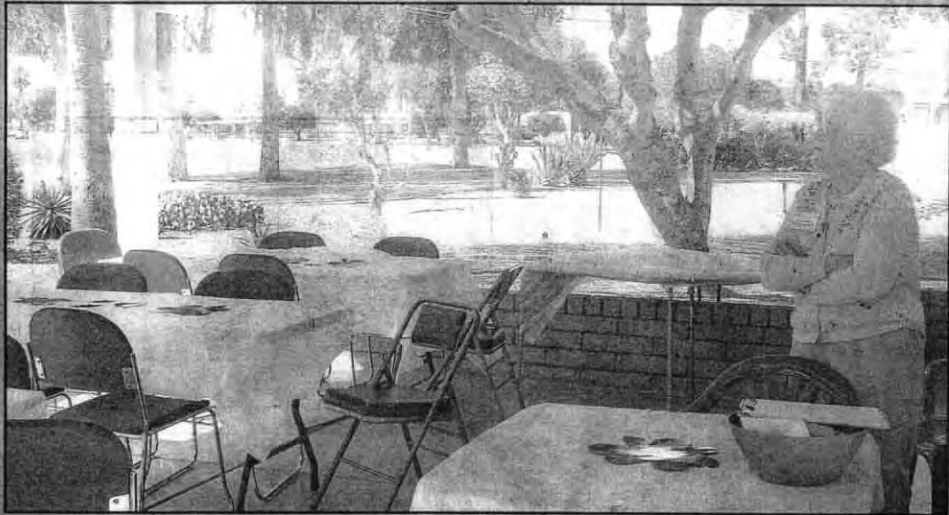
For information on becoming a volunteer, booking a summer tour or the McMillin Terrace, inquire at the museum by calling 623-974-2568.



## Museum's McMillin Terrace hosts receptions, picnics, clubs

Sun Cities Historical Society Trustee Arlene Macy enjoys the view from the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Terrace before the recent Volunteer Awards picnic. The McMillin Terrace, which seats 25 at tables, has ceiling fans and faces the North Golf Course, is available to groups for special events at no charge. It is located at the back of the Museum at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

As summer hours go into effect, the new McMillin Terrace of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, officially "broken in" by receptions, a book signing and an awards picnic, is now available for free use by groups in the Sun Cities. Summer hours are now in effect: 1-3 p.m. Monday-Friday. Volunteer coordinator Karen Bunsness hopes to find more volunteers to guide visitors, do computer work or help with the gardening. "Help is needed now that some of our volunteers are headed home to cooler places for the summer," she said. The Museum will be closed during June, July and August. Tours will be available upon request. At the recent awards picnic, top Volunteer Awards



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tables, has ceiling fans and faces the North Golf Course. Restrooms are available at the adjacent Oakmont Center. For information on becoming a volunteer, booking a summer tour or the McMillin Terrace, inquire at the Museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive: 623-974-2568.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Pat Forsythe, treasurer of the AZ Questers Yucca Chapter, presents a check to Priscilla Fenner, member of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Board of Trustees. Also pictured (left to right front row) Questers Ruthie Clark, Alice Bradshaw, and Neva Simon, and in the back row Karen West, Questers Yucca Chapter president; Bill Pearson, Del Webb Sun Cities Museum president; Forsythe, Fenner, and Essie Mae Allbritton, AZ State – 1st vice president.

## Museum donation gives life to old advertising campaign

### STAFF REPORT

Del Webb Sun Cities Museum recently received \$450 from the AZ Questers Yucca Chapter at a ceremony at the Museum attended by Questers and members of the museum board of trustees.

The donation will be used to purchase a high resolution flat-screen television and associated software to display the "Ads that Attracted a Nation."

The museum owns the large ad slicks of the Del Webb marketing campaign which have been tucked away because of their size and fragility. The ads will now be digitized and displayed in a continuing loop in the Museum's sales theater.

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The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is housed in one of the first model homes in Sun City at 10801 W. Oakmont. The museum is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and by special arrangement.

For information, call 623-974-2568, or visit [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

### **Museum unveils book depicting Sun City history**

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will celebrate the release of "Images of America: Sun City," with a special book-signing program 2-5 p.m. Feb. 8 at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, 10808 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

The book, published by Arcadia Publishing, offers a look at the history of the nation's first active-adult retirement community.

Photographs from the society's archives, complimented by photographs from the files of the Sun City Independent, are used to tell the story of Sun City from the pre-Sun City days of Marinette to the recent 50th anniversary celebration.

The book was written by Bret McKeand, vice president of operations for Independent Newspapers and a member of the SCAHS Board of Trustees. All author royalties benefit the society and the operation of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

The book will be available for purchase at the event. The museum is located in one of the first five model homes built in Sun City. Call 623-974-2568.

## New book highlights history of Sun City

Former Sun City Independent editor and publisher Bret McKeand teamed up with the Sun Cities Historical Society to create "Sun City," the newest addition to Arcadia Publishing's popular "Images of America" series.

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The project was supervised by Bret McK-

eand, who also served as the author of the book. Mr. McKeand joined the Sun City In-



dependent as a reporter in 1983, and later served as editor and publisher. Many of the photographs in the book were taken by Mr. McKeand or reporters at the Independent. Mr. McKeand is vice president of Arizona Operations at Independent

Newspapers.

"Many of the photographs in the book haven't been seen in years," says Bill Pearson, president of the SCAHS Board of Trustees.

"These photographs are priceless in that they really do a great job at reflecting the joy and excitement felt by those involved in building the community, as well as those early residents responsible for its growth and success," added Mr. Pearson.

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The book is available at area bookstores, independent retailers and online retailers (including amazon.com). The book may also be purchased directly from Arcadia Publishing at [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com), or by calling 1-888-313-2665.



Submitted Photo

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## Museum needs more volunteers

**By Rusty Bradshaw**  
Independent Newspapers

Sun Cities Historical Society Museum officials are looking for help as they prepare for the winter season.

Docents are needed to help staff the museum on a daily basis, but volunteers have been scarce for a while, according to Bill Pearson, museum board member. So much so that museum officials decided to maintain the summer hours — 9 a.m.-noon Thursdays and Saturdays and 5-8 p.m. Fridays — through the end of September.

"We needed to do this basically because we did not have enough docents,"

he said. "I've worked every shift for a while."

However, winter hours are expected to begin in October and more volunteers are needed by then to staff all shifts, he added. Winter hours are 1-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

"We are trying to get away from the way it used to be run, being open inconsistent hours only when people were available," Mr. Pearson explained.

Volunteer docents can pick the shift they serve and can work more than one day. Mr. Pearson said the target was for each docent to work at least 12 hours per month. Docents' main duty will be to

See **Volunteers** — Page 3

## Volunteers

Continued From Page 2

greet people as they enter the facility, 10801 Oakmont Drive, and guide them on a tour of the displays if requested, Mr. Pearson explained.

"A lot of it is self explanatory, with information on the displays," he said. "A lot of people who come in just want to read the displays."

Docents do not need an extensive history of the Sun Cities to serve.

"Nearly all the information you need is on the displays," Mr. Pearson said.

In addition to greeting visitors, docents will be involved in cataloging information in the work room. Mr. Pearson explained museum and historical society officials are working to scan all the photos and other visual information available to include on the museum Web site.

"We got a high speed scanner just for this purpose," he said. "We are trying to put as much online as we can."

The museum's revamped Web site, [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.com](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.com), was

launched during the summer. It includes a number of interactive features that were not available on the previous version.

"The old site was very static and got very little activity," Mr. Pearson said. In addition to photos and stories that can be accessed, the site includes a blog, <http://delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.com/blognews.php>, where people can share their experiences and concerns about the community.

Mr. Pearson regularly contributes to the blog with stories and commentary relating to Sun City and Sun City West.

"We are still working on how best to make the Web site work for us," he said.

The museum is drawing attention outside the community. Representatives from 55 Places were in Sun City at the end of August to film for a short video about the community. When it is available museum officials plan to post the video on the Web site, according to Mr. Pearson.

The museum is located in one of the first model homes for Sun City when the community opened in 1960.

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



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

More than 100,000 people came to opening day of Sun City on Jan. 1, 1960, to see the first five model homes. Lot 1 is now the home of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

## Send us photos of Sun City's past

**By Sherry Anne Rubiano**  
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

*The Arizona Republic* is on the hunt for photos of Sun City through the years for a special project, and we need your help. Read the frequently asked questions below for more information.

**1** What type of photos is *The Arizona Republic* seeking? We are looking for all kinds of photos taken in Sun City, from its opening day on Jan. 1, 1960, to present day, that illustrates life in Sun City. Some examples include photos of club activities, parades, neighborhood gatherings, and family pictures.

**2** How will the photos be used? The photos will be featured in a slide show on *The Arizona Republic's* website, [www.azcentral.com](http://www.azcentral.com).

**3** How do I send in photos? There are four ways to submit your photos: upload them online, send them via e-mail or regular mail, or visit *The Arizona Republic's* Glendale office.

» Upload your photos online at [suncityphotos.azcentral.com](http://suncityphotos.azcentral.com).

» E-mail photos to [sky.schautd@arizonarepu-](mailto:sky.schautd@arizonarepu-)



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This photograph shows Sun City's original houses in the fall of 1959 before the yards and roads were finished.

blic.com. Please write "Sun City photos" in the subject line.

» Mail photos to *The Arizona Republic*, Attention "Sun City photos," 17235 N. 75th Ave., Suite A-100, Glendale, AZ 85308. All photos will be returned. You do not need to include a self-addressed stamped return envelope.

» Drop off your photos in person at 17235 N. 75th Ave., Suite A-100, in Glendale, which is near 75th Avenue and Bell Road. We will scan the photos and return them to you.

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## EVENT Briefs

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### Donations add historical details to Del Webb Museum

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, will be open 8 a.m.-noon Saturday, March 20. (Regular hours are 1-4 p.m. weekdays)

New displays and a fresh coat of interior paint, donated by Albrecht and Son, have been added in time to coax visitors to the next door Oakmont Fair to stop in March 20.

There is a newly restored three-wheeled Cushman golf cart, which joined the blue one in the carport. They are labeled "his" and "hers." The white one was donated by a neighbor on the block whose dad had used it in Sun City before it was taken back to the farm in Iowa to rust away.

An exhibit on baseball is now mounted in the new changing gallery, the second bedroom of the museum in a two-bedroom, one bath model home, one of five, which opened Jan. 1, 1960.

Joining the recently installed Del Webb exhibit is a series of photos, donated by Kopy's Body Shop, of the early Del Webb's Hiway House Motor Hotel and restaurant. It later was called The King's Inn. They show the construction of the motel with its swimming pool, once located in what is now the parking lot and the Fry's Market at 107th and Grand avenues.

Featured on the menu of Webb's Coffee Brake Restaurant are 10 cent coffee, 25 cent pie, a 75 cent BLT sandwich and \$2.45 broiled choice filet mignon. The only indication that the menu was meant for senior citizens were the 15 cent stewed prunes, Postum and Sanka.

Call 623-974-2568.

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*Glendale Star 3-11-16*  
**Sun City historian talks about  
'Cotton Bolls to Golf Balls'**

2 p.m. March 22, Glendale Historical Society will host a speaker on the evolution from cotton and cattle to today's Sun City. The event will take place at Manistee Ranch, 51st and Northern avenues. Fifty years ago, the sleepy town of Marinette was the center of a large cotton plantation. Few imagined then the curving streets, thousands of houses, and an attractive, vibrant adult community.

Ed Allen's talk is titled, "Cotton Bolls to Golf Balls." For more information, call Rosemary Lynch, 623-933-9556.

**Send calendar items to  
[jhernandez@star-times.com](mailto:jhernandez@star-times.com)**

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## 3/22 MONDAY

•The Desert Brass perform 7 p.m. at Willowbrook United Methodist Church. Tickets are \$5 and may be purchased at the door.

•Ed Allen, a trustee and past president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society will speak 2 p.m. March 22 at the Glendale Historical Society meeting at Manistee Ranch, at 51st and Northern avenues. His talk, "Cotton Bolls to Golf Balls," will trace the evolution of Sun City. Many have heard of the exploits of Del Webb, and Mr. Allen will describe how he went against "expert" opinion to open a community catering to adults.

*Independent*

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### **GOLF CART DONATED TO MUSEUM**

Sun City resident Marie Bartenhagen recently donated a restored three-wheel Cushman golf cart to the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. Marie and her late husband Henry first moved to Sun City in 1967 and purchased the cart shortly thereafter. Mr. Bartenhagen never played golf, and eventually moved the golf cart back to his summer farm in Iowa – where it sat behind a barn until last year. Marie's son, Forrest, spent last year restoring the cart and last month brought it back to Sun City and donated it to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. Marie and Forrest, shown here with a photo of Henry Bartenhagen, sit in the cart that will be on display at the museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive. ☼



# Del Webb Sun Cities Museum draws attention

STAFF REPORT

The newest exhibit at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum celebrates the life of Del Webb, the founder of the Sun Cities.

"Del Webb: The Man. The Company" features a variety of items once belonging to Webb and loaned to the museum by Marjorie Johnson, widow of R.H. Johnson, who was president of Del Webb Corp.

In attendance at the opening Dec. 9 were Ed Allen, past president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, as well as Marjorie Johnson; Bill Pearson, president-elect; and SCAHS President David Verble.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ed Allen, left, Marjorie Johnson, Bill Pearson and David Verble attend the opening of the new Del Webb exhibit at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Dec. 9.

The museum is at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, in the first model home built in Sun City. It is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For information, call 623-974-2568, or visit [www.scazhistory.org](http://www.scazhistory.org).



ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Judy Dunlap, left, speaks to docent Dorothy Rucker in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum kitchen during an open house in Sun City Friday. The open house drew 400 attendees.



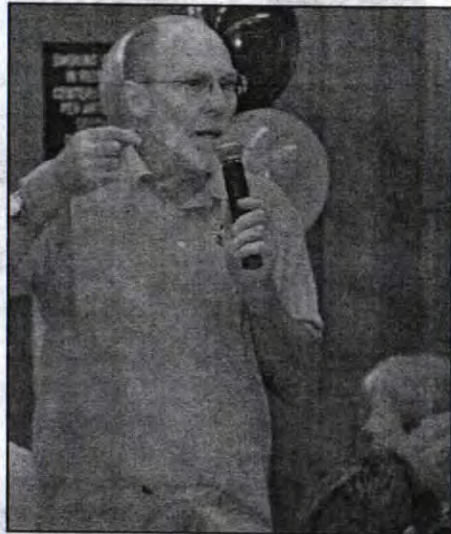
ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Linda Wilson, left, and Ron Toel look at furniture in the living room of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum during the open house in Sun City Friday.

# Kicking off 50 years

SUN CITY INDEPENDENT

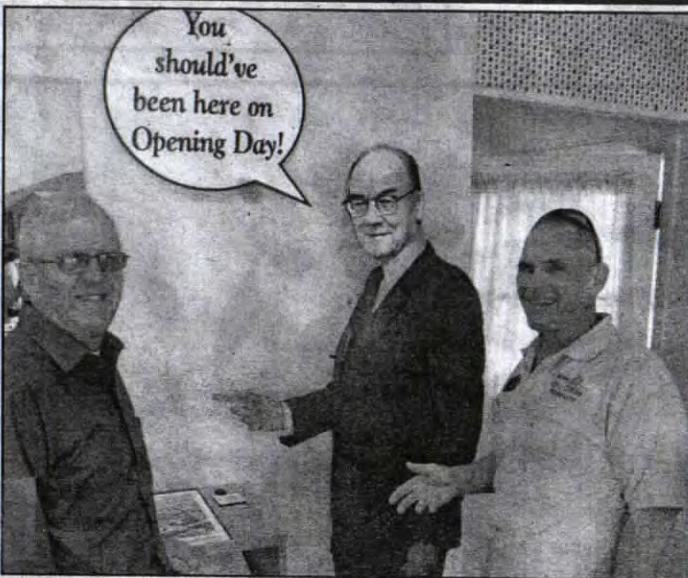
January 13, 2010



Photos by Bret McKeand

## A golden celebration begins!

A special 50th anniversary party was Jan. 1 at Bell Recreation Center, 16820 N. 99th Ave., to mark the official golden anniversary of Sun City. The community first opened to the public Jan. 1, 1960. The event attracted several hundred residents who were treated to birthday cake and refreshments, speeches and music by a barbershop quartet. Paul Herrmann, executive director of the Sun City Visitors Center, left, welcomed attendees. Volunteers serving anniversary cake were, above right, from left, Jolene Wolzen, Nancy Grubb and Charlene Ewen. The Sun Cities School Board Quartet performed several numbers in front of a slide show depicting the life of Sun City Founder Del Webb. Quartet members, below right, from left, were Dave Tague, Ken Corns, Doug Campbell and Bud Heterman.



Photos by Bret McKeand

## Museum marks anniversary

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum opened its doors Jan. 1 to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of Sun City. The museum, located at 10801 Oakmont Drive, is located in one of the model homes first visited by curious buyers on Jan. 1, 1960. The home has been restored to its original condition and today includes exhibits and artifacts showcasing the history of the Sun Cities. A crowd of nearly 400 attended the open house. Bill Pearson, left, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, welcomes Dwight Lockhart to the event. The Vintage Voices, above, right, provided barbershop-harmony entertainment. Incredibly, quartet member Joe Salz, second from left, also performed at the house on opening day in 1960.

# Docent shares Webb stories

**JEFF DEMPSEY**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

When it comes to the history of the Del Webb Corp. and the Sun Cities, few people are as learned as Marjorie Johnson. After all, she lived it.

"I've been in the Del Webb business for most of my life," she said. "I was with Del Webb at the corporation from 1961 until about 1985 and then with the Webb Foundation after that. I've spent the best years of my life at Del Webb."

It is fitting, then, that Johnson serves as a docent at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum in Sun City. Twice a month on Mondays, Johnson gives tours in the first model home in Webb's first retirement community.

"I just started recently, but it's been very fun," she said. "I donated several items and pieces of memorabilia to be on display and was asked if I would like to give tours. So



ASHLEY LOWERY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Marjorie Johnson, widow of R.H. Johnson, works as a docent at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum in Sun City.

here I am."

Johnson, 83, is the widow of R.H. Johnson, president of the Del Webb Corp. from

1967-81 and a famous man in his own right. It is no

**SEE DOCENT, A5**

## DOCENT

FROM A1

surprise that, when tourists find out who Johnson is, they get stars in their eyes.

"I've had a few people ask to take pictures with me," she said. "They want to hear stories about Del Webb. I believe it is very unusual now to meet someone who actually knew Mr. Webb. Talking to me about him makes him actually exist somehow, like he's no longer a figment of their imaginations."

Johnson and her husband, who died in 2008 at the age of 92, were instrumental in the growth and involvement of the Del Webb Foundation, which has contributed primarily to health-care oriented organizations. DEWF has given more than \$65 million for medical research, medical facilities and education.

The foundation has contributed millions of dollars to the Sun Health Foundation for expansion of both Del Webb and Boswell medical centers.

The foundation provided the \$1.6 million needed to fund the Sun Health Del E. Webb Health Center of Wickenburg.

The Johnsons also were involved in the development and continuing support of the Del Webb Center for the Performing Arts in Wickenburg.

Johnson said she will be at the museum from 1 to 4 p.m. May 24. The museum is at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

For information, call 623-974-2568, or visit [www.scazhistory.org](http://www.scazhistory.org).

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

# Film crew captures changing image of SC

**NORA AVERY-PAGE**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City stopped formal advertising years ago, said Bill Pearson, publicity chairman for the community's 50th Anniversary committee, but it's about time to start again.

Pearson has partnered with the anniversary committee with the website, [www.55places.com](http://www.55places.com), which analyzes age-restricted communities throughout the country. Sun City will be the first community to have a video on the website, Pearson said.

"We were the first age-restricted community

**SEE IMAGE, A5**



**MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN**

A crew films Jane and Dick Fortier in the Bell Recreation Center Fitness Center Wednesday. Bill Pearson, center, says they were filming for a website named [www.55places.com](http://www.55places.com). Sun City will be the first community featured in video on the website.

## IMAGE

**FROM A1**

in the country, now we'll be the first one with a video," Pearson said of the website. "It's great. We want to invite Boomers to check out the area as a place to live."

Pearson secured funding for the video through the 50th Anniversary committee and started filming all over Sun City on Wednesday, including footage of the original city signage, the Bell Recreation Center, golf courses and Pearson's own home.

"We're trying to show people the (past) and how we've evolved into what you see now," he said.

Pearson and the film crew interviewed Dick and Jane Fortier, a personal trainer couple in the Bell Recreation fitness center, about the active seniors they work with and their own enjoyment of the community.

"I think a lot of people have a wrong impression of Sun City," Jane Fortier said on camera. "They think it's a holding tank, so to speak."

"I think the old line is 'God's waiting room,'" Pearson said.

It's not about growing old, the Fortiers said, but instead about active aging, the same message Pearson wants the video to portray.

"I like to see people becoming involved," Dick Fortier said.

The Fortiers have lived in Sun City for eight years and love both their work at the fitness center and their free time, when they go tandem biking, hiking and dancing.

"Weekends are playtime and we take full advantage of that. There are lots of options out here," Jane Fortier said.

Pearson said the video should be completed in about a month, and should be on the website after that.



# Life Within These White Walls...How It All Began

**By Bill Pearson**

Arizona has always been synonymous with the Grand Canyon. Whenever anyone said Phoenix, the first thought that came to mind was Scottsdale. The East Valley was where it was at. The reality is, Arizona is so much more, and over the weeks and months ahead we will explore an area that helped define the state as a primary destination for retirees.

There was one event that stands out,

perhaps so much so that Morris Massey may even consider it a SEE (Significant Emotional Event). The date was January 1, 1960 and it was so significant, it changed the way an entire nation viewed retirement.

Del Webb's vision of a more active way of life for those in their golden years was scoffed at by experts. They said no one would leave their families, uproot thousands of miles away and become nomads stuck in the middle of the desert. They said it was laughable. Little did they know: The success of the opening day weekend is legend; 100,000 visitors poured through the models over a three day weekend; 237 homes sold; thousands of others giving rave reviews. It was nothing short of remarkable and even the Webb employees were stunned.

The original Sun City was by no means the first community built expressly for retirees. Youngtown began in 1954, catering to those who were looking for an inexpensive place to live and had quit working. There were a number of enclaves in Florida dedicated to retirees. When Webb employees Tom Breen and J.R. Ashton visited them, they found them lacking any amenities. Builders promised, but never delivered.

See **Blog** — Page 14

# Blog

Continued From Page 7

The word was out that Webb was looking for land in the West Valley. The Boswell family-owned vast cotton fields around the valley and Jim Boswell approached Webb employee L. C. Jacobson about buying them. A partnership was formed and the Del E. Webb Development Company (DEV-

CO) was born.

By the middle of 1959 a decision was made; if they were going to build this, it must be different. The community must have the amenities in place. A basic infrastructure with a shopping center, golf course, recreation center and restaurant all needed to be in place. Within 6 months, it all happened. They started in July of 1959 and by year's end, it was good to go.

It took 18 years for Sun City to build out. 27,000 homes, 43,000 residents, 11 golf courses, 7 recreation centers, 2 man-made

lakes, a state of the art hospital, 16 shopping centers, 31 churches, and the list goes on and on. We were self-contained, self-sufficient and self-governing; we still are. After 50 years, the community is unique unto itself (the closest thing to us is our sister city Sun City West).

Let's be honest, not everyone loves what was once dubbed "the great social experiment." Some communities around us bemoan our existence. Younger visitors sometimes feel unwelcome. Occasionally authors write with disdain over age-restricted, selfish old people who have withdrawn from the human race.

On the other hand are the hundreds of thousands of people who have moved, lived and died in a community that became home, that they fell in love with. The stories are legion of folks who visited friends and within days bought a place. These were the same people who agonized for weeks

over spending \$99 on a new suit and tie, yet shocked loved ones by purchasing a place in the middle of nowhere.

Back in the 70's a phrase was penned about life Within These White Walls. This blog will explore the past, the present and the future of Sun City. We will look at it from the inside. We will also invite those from outside to join in this discussion.

There has been volumes written; the community has been dissected by some of the most brilliant minds and experts regarding aging and whether age restricted settings are good or bad. Our goal is to break it down to layman terms and approach it from a more practical discourse. My apologies for being so wordy, hopefully in future blog posts I will condense it down to more chewable bites. By the time we are done, the goal is for readers to have a better understanding of life Within These White Walls.



Independent Newspapers/Bret McKeand

### Museum unveils new exhibit, terrace

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum celebrated the opening of its new Sun City West historical exhibit Nov. 18, as well as the dedication of its new McMillin Terrace. Edson Allen, a member of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society Board of Trustees, unveiled the new Sun City West exhibit before visitors were shown the newly renovated backyard patio terrace. The terrace was the result of a gift from Sun City resident and former SCAHS President Connie McMillin. From left, Ms. McMillin, SCAHS Co-Founder Jane Freeman, and current President Bill Pearson.



## SCAHS/Del Webb Museum hosts historical jaunt

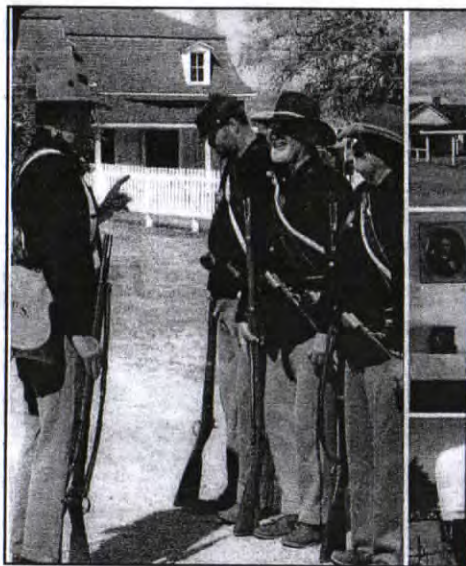
By **Pris Fenner**

Special to the Independent

It's all aboard a luxury bus Thursday, Nov. 4 for a jaunt north to visit an historic fort and museum in Camp Verde and a former apple packing barn and Heritage Museum in Sedona.

The day trip, sponsored by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society/Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, will raise funds for the three sites visited and the Sun City organization.

Sun City West resident and author, Ruth Jordan Van Epps, will guide the trip, which includes a visit to the apple ranch once operated by her family in Sedona. A sandwich lunch will be served in the Red Rock Historic Landmark apple packing shed. The adjacent brick home is the former Jordan family farmstead and is now the Sedona Heritage Museum featuring Sedona pioneers.



See **Museum** — Page 18

## Museum

Continued From Page 16

The first destination is Fort Verde State Historic Park with enactors on hand to bring fort activities to life, where General Crook and his soldiers tried to prevent Native uprisings in the late 1800s. Some of the fort buildings still remain.

Just around the corner is the Camp Verde Historical Society Museum and Research Center in an old "grammer" school built in 1904. Here guests are welcomed with information and light refreshments as they tour the small facility.

Cost includes the guide, transportation, admission fees, donations, lunch, snack, water and driver gratuity. Fee is \$75 for SCAHS members and \$85 for non-members. \$40 is tax deductible.

Payment is due by Oct. 7 to Pickard Travel Service, PO Box 5168, Sun City West, 85376. There will be pick-ups in Sun City West and Sun City. Call 623-974-2568.

*Editor's Note: Pris Fenner is a spokesperson for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society/Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.*

## Sun City's history clicks on website

JEFF DEMPSEY  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society has committed to sharing Sun City's past with residents and outsiders alike, but it always comes back to the same issue.

"We have all these amazing things to share, but getting people to come out to the museum — that's the problem," said Judy Baerg, office manager. "So that's why we cre-

SEE MUSEUM, A5

## MUSEUM

FROM A1

ated the website."

She conceded it was "not very good."

When the society decided to put more of its focus and effort into the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, Baerg said they knew they needed a more effective online presence.

"Our goal is to share Sun City's history, and the museum is our most effective tool. But we weren't doing everything we could," she said.

"I think what we realized was that we were doing a very good job of cataloging all this information but not a very good job of sharing it. And like Bill (Pearson, president) always says, "What is the use of having all these great pieces of history if nobody knows about them?"

As a result, what used to be a website with contact information and little

else has been transformed into an online archive, a database of much of the museum's pieces with more added every day. The new site went live about six weeks ago, and Baerg said it is already drawing many more visits.

"We have hundreds of ads, brochures, all kinds of things from the beginning of Sun City, all available to view on the site," she said. "We're not finished yet. We have about 600 items in there now, with probably thousands more still to be added, but it's a good start."

The site also includes a blog written by Pearson, called Sun Cities Today. The intention of the blog will be to focus more on present-day Sun City and what lessons from its history can apply today. Pearson wrote in an introductory post that he envisions the blog as a meeting place of sorts for people interested in Sun Cities history to have meaningful discussions.

On top of all that, Baerg said the

society is preparing a new display for the museum, one dedicated to Sun City West.

"We're planning to finish it sometime in November. We'll have a big gala opening to celebrate," she said.

The goal, she said, is simple: get people in the door.

"Our whole focus here is on getting people to the museum. Once they get here, it is so easy for them to get lost in all the history."

The museum is located at 10801 Oakmont Drive in Sun City. Summer hours through November are 9 a.m. to noon on Thursday and Saturday as well as 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday.

Beginning in October, the museum will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays.

For information, visit [www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org](http://www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org).

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

# Historian, author shares tales Nov. 6

Residents may only know a few Arizona-born folks, but those who attend the Saturday Nov. 6 Sun Cities Area Historical Society membership meeting can add Ruth Jordan Van Epps to their lists.

Ms. Van Epps, of Sun City West, will share her early life in Sedona, and on the Hopi Reservation with members and guests 1-3 p.m. Nov. 6 in the Oakmont Recreation Center auditorium at Del Webb Boulevard and Oakmont Drive.

Her pioneering great-grandparents came by covered wagon in 1875 to settle in the fertile Verde Valley. Their grandson Walter Jordan relocated to Sedona as a large orchard grower and raised his daughter Ruth there. She earned a degree in education at the University of Redlands and masters degrees in education and counseling at Arizona State University.

She and her first husband lived on the Hopi reservation in Northern Arizona, and she used her social work skills with both the Hopi and Navajo tribes. Later she formed Tsegi Tours offering customized tours featuring Arizona history, ancient cultures and the Navajo and Hopi reservations. Other programs included contemporary SW Native American cultures and crafts and Early Arizona.

In addition, Ms. Van Epps was an educator at many levels and conducted seminars and training classes. She helped to develop the MesaFirst Offender Shoplifting Program, which was used in Gilbert and Mesa public schools, Maricopa County head start and at Patricia Stevens Career College.

As she grew up listening to stories of the early days in the west, she became interested in preserving history. She collected stories told by her father to add to those of other old timers and used her great-grandfather's journal of his 1875 wagon trip as the basis for her book Following Their Westward

See Tales — Page 15

## Tales

Continued From Page 14

Star. It is illustrated by an aunt, and Marshall Trimble, Arizona's state historian, wrote the foreword.

"The title of her program is 'Early Arizona,' said Ed Cirillo, chairman of the membership event. "And of course we will have refreshments," he added. The public is welcome.

The Nov. 6 meeting is one of two featured annually. A new historical display of Sun City West will be unveiled Nov. 18 at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

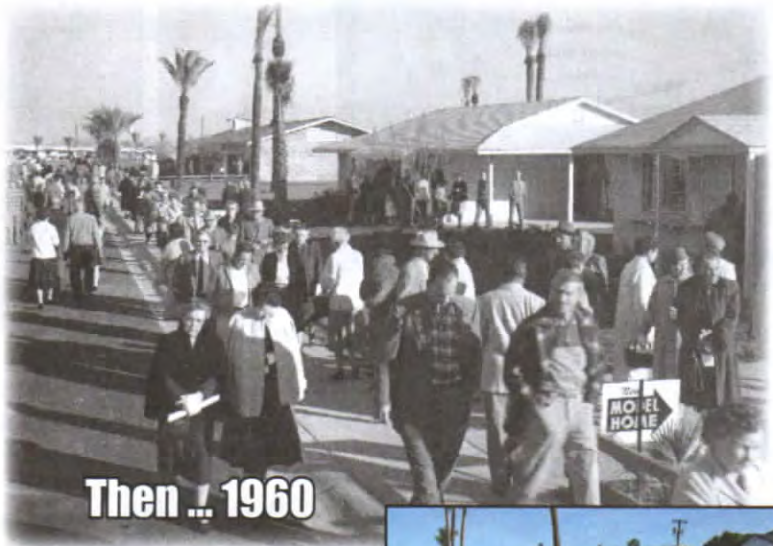
# Happy Birthday Sun City!

## Crowds visit museum to mark community's 50th anniversary

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum open house on Jan. 1, 2010 attracted the largest crowd ever to visit the facility in one day. Visitors were treated to music, refreshments and new exhibits (including a new display of personal artifacts once owned by Sun City founder Del E. Webb). The museum is located in one of the first five model homes built in Sun City -- and one of the first homes viewed by curious visitors the day Sun City first opened to the public, Jan. 1, 1960.



Fifty years to the day after it first opened, the home that now houses the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum once again drew a crowd of curious onlookers. The month of January saw the most visitors ever to the museum -- over 610!



Then ... 1960



Now ... 2010

Bill Pearson, right, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, welcomes a guest to the open house and points out a special exhibit featuring the voice of Sun City Founder Del Webb.

Oakmont Avenue as it appeared Jan. 1, 1960 (top photo), and as it appeared Jan. 1, 2010 (bottom).

## Resident donates 1960-era cart to museum

The Del E. Webb Sun Cities Museum recently received a fully-restored 1960-era three-wheel Cushman golf cart thanks to the generous donation of Sun City resident Marie Bartenhagen and her son, Forrest.

Marie and her late husband, Henry, purchased a winter home in Sun City in the summer of 1967. Henry bought the golf cart in anticipation of his winters in Sun City, although an injury prevented him from pursuing the hobby seriously. He eventually brought the cart back to use on his farm in Wapello, Iowa, where it was finally retired from service in 1990 -- and parked behind a barn.



**Henry Bartenhagen**

During a visit to Sun City in 2008, Forrest visited a golf cart display sponsored by the Historical Society. He noticed there were no three-wheelers on display.

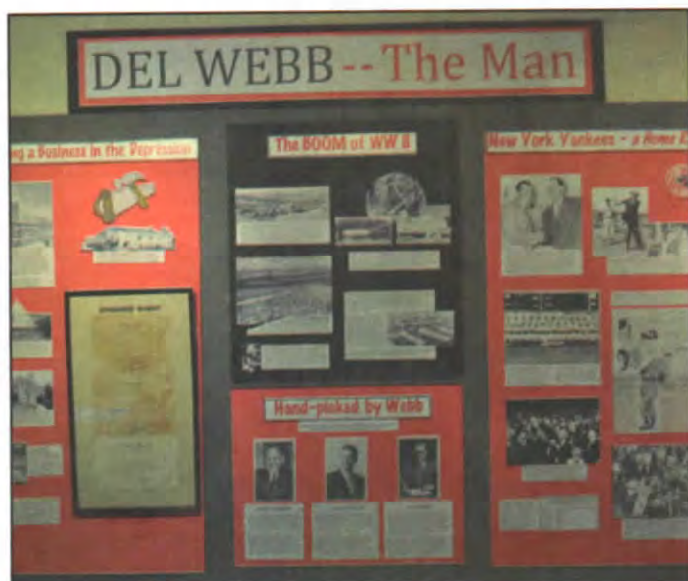
After speaking with his mother, Forrest and his brother, Clarence, decided to restore the cart to its original condition, bring it back to Sun City -- and donate it to the museum. The cart was presented to the museum by Forrest and his mother on Feb. 2, 2010.



Marie Bartenhagen, a resident of Sun City since 1967, poses with her son, Forrest, and the golf cart her family restored and recently donated to the museum.



## Exhibit depicts life and times of Sun City founder



The new Del Webb Sun Cities Museum opened Dec. 9 with a major exhibit, "Del Webb – The Man. The Company." Mrs. Robert H. Johnson has loaned the museum many items that originally belonged to Del Webb, and came to preview the items displayed. She also brought the museum a Bible given to the young Del Webb by his parents, and two signed baseballs, which will be added to the items on display. Joining her from left to right were, Ed Allen, past president; Bill Pearson, 2010 president; and David Verble, 2009 president.

The exhibit is divided into two major sections. The part dealing with Webb -- the man, features his youth, building a business in the 1930s, the war years, the New York Yankees, and his involvement in Las Vegas. The second part features the company Webb built, and the many different types of construction projects. A large map shows the 25 states where there is evidence of the Webb company's involvement. There no doubt are many more projects, but no complete list exists.



## New sales theater opens at museum

The 10' x 10' building that served as the original Sun City sales office now showcases the advertising and promotional tools used to attract America's attention in the early 1960s.

The centerpiece of the Sales Theater is the movie shown to prospective purchasers nearly 50 years ago. It's a heartwarming and entertaining look at a stereotypical retiree who after getting his gold watch, tackles his list of projects around the house and runs out of things to do just as cold weather sets in.

His wife comes to his rescue, suggesting they visit friends who recently moved to a place in Arizona (guess where?).

The building housing the sales theater is the oldest existing structure in Sun City. It was built in the fall of 1959 to house a salesperson to answer questions of those passing by who wondered what all the construction was about.

Too small for sales use once the community opened, the building served as a refreshment stand for the second series of model houses.

In 1965, it was moved to the new ballpark to serve as a dressing room for the Saints – a women's fast-pitch softball team sponsored by the Sun City merchants. It served other uses over the years, and in 1990 was offered to the Historical Society.



The Sales Theater exhibit is entitled, "CREATING THE PERFECT RETIREMENT – How America was Sold on Sun City." Beneath the header are displays of the first sales brochure, magazine and newspaper ads, and the popular "Vacation Special" that allowed visitors to sample Sun City. It was estimated that 50% of all purchasers took advantage of this special.

# Happy Birthday Sun City!

## Crowds visit museum to mark community's 50th anniversary

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum open house on Jan. 1, 2010 attracted the largest crowd ever to visit the facility in one day. Visitors were treated to music, refreshments and new exhibits (including a new display of personal artifacts once owned by Sun City founder Del E. Webb). The museum is located in one of the first five model homes built in Sun City -- and one of the first homes viewed by curious visitors the day Sun City first opened to the public, Jan. 1, 1960.



Fifty years to the day after it first opened, the home that now houses the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum once again drew a crowd of curious onlookers. The month of January saw the most visitors ever to the museum -- over 610!



Bill Pearson, right, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, welcomes a guest to the open house and points out a special exhibit featuring the voice of Sun City Founder Del Webb.



Oakmont Avenue as it appeared Jan. 1, 1960 (top photo), and as it appeared Jan. 1, 2010 (bottom).

# Del Webb Sun Cities Museum Open House Jan. 1, 2010

Photos by Bret McKeand



The Vintage Voices, a quartet from the Desert Aires Barbershop Chorus, entertained those who attended the open house. The appearance was a homecoming for Joe Salz, second from left. Mr. Salz also performed with a different quartet at the community's original first-day opening ceremony 50 years ago!



1. Trustee Arlene Macy. 2. A new Del E. Webb exhibit highlights the history of the company that constructed the Sun Cities. 3. Trustee Edison Allen supervised the development of the new Del Webb exhibit. 4. Trustee Priscilla Fenner, right, greets visitors. 5. Trustee Norm Dickson with his wife, Jean. 6. Trustee Ed Cirillo serves up hot cider. 7. A 1960's-era Cushman golf cart is on display at the museum.

## United Church of Sun City: Sun City's first church

vices

\* Share their campus with the Banner Olive Branch Senior Center

\* Support the Valley View Community Food Bank

Grace Havlik, a second generation resident who retired as a primary school principal in Oak Forest, Ill and moved to the family home in 1987, keeps busy at the church and volunteering as a literacy teacher or at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

As chair of the United Church Diocese, she is active with household duties, memorial services, setting up for Communion and as Care Minister. She is also chairman of the 2010 Committee and planning the church's 10-

10-10 celebration as the first church founded in Sun City.

"After 50 years we still see our place in the community as proclaiming that God is still speaking to each of us..." she says describing the programs listed above and the Salute to Vets program which began in 2008 and includes a wall of photos of members then and now who served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

To accommodate the needs of the senior center, the church restructured the Narthex and sanctuary, adding two beautiful and moveable altars and a new sound and light system. Restrooms were updated and redecorated.

The library was moved to the Friend-

ship Center so the old space could become the new chapel. Seniors from the Banner Olive Branch Center attend a Monday morning service there.

"Finding new ways to be in service to the community has always been the focus of this church," says Susan Aurich, director of Care Ministries.

Recently the church featured a WWII movie series followed by discussions. Currently the contemporary series is titled "Faith and Films."

And hand cleaner is available in each pew in the Sanctuary as well as to those who do the meeting and greeting at services.



Grace Havlik explains the Veteran's Wall of United Church of Sun City members of WWII, Korea and Vietnam wars. Only a portion is shown here; others are included on the back side.



Director of Care Ministries Susan Aurich shows off The Beehive, the potluck serving area carved from the Narthex. Diners then carry their plates into the Friendship Center at the back of the Sanctuary, only a few yards away.



Seniors enter the Banner Olive Branch Senior Center through the main entrance on the south side of the building, the former Witt Hall of the United Church of Sun City. The original entrance on 107th Avenue is now the back door to the kitchen. The church rents the building to the BOBSC and has remodeled the main church building to accommodate the social events of church members.

*Story and photos by  
by P. Atwood Fenner*

# Play Ball!!

## Museum exhibit offers look at baseball presence in the Sun Cities

It's time for spring training, and thoughts of baseball. Make sure you stop at the museum to view the exhibit on the history of the sport in the Sun Cities. Titled "Fields of Dreams," the exhibit shows the progression of playing fields from weed-strewn lots with a handmade backstop to a major league park, and eventually to today's attractive softball fields in Sun City and Sun City West.

The exhibit highlights the history of Sun City Stadium, a professional baseball complex once located on the northwest corner of 111th and Grand avenues. The stadium once served as the spring training home to the Milwaukee Brewers.

You'll also meet the Saints – a young women's fast-pitch softball team that made its home in Sun City in 1965.

The team went on to win a national championship in 1979 and enjoyed strong local support all along the way. (Their most popular fund-raiser was



A major league park was built on the northwest corner of 111th and Grand avenues – the site of today's Fountains of Sun City apartments. The Brewers were a big draw during spring training for the 13 years they spent at this park.



One of the early fields was located along Grand Avenue (behind the white fence). Note the backstop built by the players.



The Sun City Saints, a professional women's softball team, were a popular draw for many years at Sun City Stadium. The team won the national championship in 1979. A popular fundraiser: Selling kisses for \$1,

selling kisses for \$1!)

Did you know that Del Webb tried to persuade the Kansas City Royals to move their training camp to Sun City in 1968? He offered to build them a training facility south of Grand Avenue between 99th and the New River – the area now known as Quail Run. But, they decided on Florida, and it wouldn't be until 1973 that a big league team would find a spring home in Sun City – the Milwaukee Brewers.

You'll also learn about a league for retired major league players 35 and over. It had a short run, but for one season, the Sun City Rays brought the likes of Rollie Fingers, Fergie Jenkins, and Pete LaCock to the local ballpark.



## History of Rancho Estates

# Sun City ranchos offer wide-open spaces to buyers

By P. Atwood Fenner

In the early 60s, secretary Lucy Krug complained to her boss that she was tired of boarding her horse and wished she could build a home and have her horse there, too.

Lucy's boss was John Meeker, president of DEVCO, since 1960 builder of modest homes, recreation centers and golf courses for retirees interested in an active lifestyle on former cotton fields just south of Grand Avenue.

By 1965, says John Meeker in his memoirs, the concept was approved for one-acre or larger lots with horse privileges and bridle paths instead of alleys. Soon land south of Peoria Avenue on 111th Avenue was purchased for Rancho Estates.

The utilities were put underground, and the builder would build any single residence home of the buyer's choice from the Sun City model homes. An acre lot here cost \$10,990.

By 1970 Lucy and her husband Richard Shields had moved onto an acre lot and built a modest ranch home and a small half-story building for her horse and feed storage.

Later, she moved to a larger lot on the same street, built the same ranch style home again and another small building for her horse.

They named this property Rancho Ventura, and along the back of her lot, Lucy built a cat cemetery for herself. She continued to work for DEVCO and ride



Rancho Estates is home to acre lots, sprawling homes and horse property. The area was the brain-child of Lucy Krug, secretary to DEVCO president John Meeker. She was the original owner of Rancho Ventura, a property now up for sale.

her horse.

Meanwhile other Rancho Estates residents occupied sprawling homes with

large garages; some added hipped roof barns for horses and sheds for antique cars, dog runs and antique farm

equipment, recreational vehicles and boats.

After the Shields were gone, a two-story workshop and office were built on their lot, and her small building was converted to a nine-vehicle outbuilding. The house was remodeled to include 1,728 square feet with two bedrooms, two baths and a two-car garage.

The next owner of Rancho Ventura wanted to repair, display and sell recreational vehicles, but the neighbors fought this project successfully.

Today a sign "Ranch for sale" can be found on 111th Avenue at Rancho Estates.

A short drive brings you to Rancho Ventura's arched entrance and a grouping of cactus, a horse and an Indian.

The asking price for the 5.635 acre parcel and its buildings is \$890,000.



### Sign of the times

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum continues to see improvements and enhancements. Following an official name change in November, the museum saw a new sign erected earlier this year. Visitors to the museum are also greeted at the entrance by a new placard, right, that explains the historical significance of the house.





"Did Del Webb import rabbits to help Midwesterners feel more at home?"

That's one example of the kinds of questions asked of speakers from the museum. In this case, before the question could be answered, the man continued, "And then did he bring in coyotes to control the rabbits?"

Our speakers never know what bit of folklore they may encounter in giving a talk.

Last year, our Speakers Bureau gave talks to 32 different clubs and organizations – Lions, Kiwanis, and Rotary Clubs; church groups; PEO and Quester chapters; state clubs; and others. More than 2,365 individuals learned something new about the history of Sun City, Sun City West, or Del Webb. These talks are provided at no charge as a service to the community

## Questions about Sun Cities history? Speakers Bureau available to help



The museum was represented at the Dec. 9 kick-off of Sun City's 50th anniversary activities by Ed Allen who gave a PowerPoint presentation at Sundial about the life of the remarkable Del Webb.

and as a means of publicizing the museum. We do suggest that the organization make a donation or take out a membership in the Society.

Activity has been strong this year as a result of Sun City's

50th anniversary. Already, the Speakers Bureau has given two-hour programs on Sun City history and the life of Del Webb at Rio Salado Institute for Senior Education (RISE), and the Sun City Lifelong

Learning Club.

Among the most popular talks are:

"Cotton Bolls to Golf Balls" – the events leading up to Sun City, the nation's first active adult community.

"From Lizard Acres to Lush Oasis" – the sequel to Sun City, Sun City West

"Del Webb – The Man and the Company He Built" – the remarkable story of a wannabe baseball player who went on to build one of America's largest construction firms.

"Fields of Dreams" – the history of baseball in the Sun Cities.

If you belong to a group that uses outside speakers, suggest the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum to the person in charge of programs. Have him or her call the museum at 974-2568, or Ed Allen at 975-1815.

## Historical books, DVDs available at Del Webb Sun Cities Museum

A soon to be out-of-print book is among those for sale in the Museum. *Along the Old Vulture Road*, by Albert F. "Al" Tudor will no longer be published since his recent death.

It includes cattle tales and trails from Wickenburg to Phoenix along Grand Avenue, aka U.S. 60. Cost is \$10.

Two years ago the Historical Society, thanks to a grant from the Constance W. McMillin trust, was able to reprint *Del Webb: A Man/A Company*, by Margaret Finnerty.

It was written in 1991 and revised for the second time by Tara Blanc and Jessica McCann in 1999. A second

printing came in 2000, and Pulte Homes gave the Society permission to reprint in a dark blue soft cover in 2008. Cost is \$20.

The fledgling Sun Cities Area Historical Society entered the publishing world the year after it was formed in 1987 with *Churches of the Sun Cities*, by Emil C. Fisher, who carefully penned ink drawings to go with short stories about all the area churches built up to that time. Cost is \$1.

The first major history of Sun City was the bright red soft covered *Jubilee, the 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona*, written in 1984 by Jane

Freeman and Glenn Sanberg. The book is available for \$20.

In 2003 the Society sponsored Edson Allen's soft cover *Sun City West Silver Celebration*. The book covers the journey from Lizard Acres to lush oasis in its 289 pages. Cost is \$5.

And the most recent publishing effort is *Reshaping Retirement in America, Sun City, Arizona*. It was published this year with Society members Edson Allen, Jo Ruck and David Verble as consulting editors. It summarizes how the nation's first active adult community pioneered a lifestyle that created a model for generations of

retirees to come.

The salient events of history are capsulized in a journal format. (Cost \$5, or free with Museum membership).

The Society also sells the DVD, *The Beginnings*, a film shown in potential retiree communities touting the lifestyle of the Sun City pioneers enjoying life in the Arizona desert.

It is shown to visitors of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum in what may be the smallest theater in the U.S.A. – the former sales building/refreshment shack/Sun City Saints dressing room. Cost is \$10.

## Sun City anniversary attracts worldwide attention

Fifty-year follow-up printed in the Milwaukee newspaper

A week after Sun City's grand opening on Jan. 1, 1960, the Webb Corporation partnered with TWA on a special promotion to fly newspaper reporters in for a "Quickie Vacation" and a tour of America's first active adult community.

The *Milwaukee Journal* was one of the early newspapers to cover this story in 1960. Fifty years later, they sent Bill Glauber to report on how the community has fared.

Bill's starting point was the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, and he got an enthusiastic appraisal from Society President, Bill Pearson! The two Bills (Glauber left, Pearson, right, in the photo above) couldn't help but involve Del Webb in their discussion! Arrangements were made for Glauber to meet Paul Herrmann at the Visitors Center, the president of the Wisconsin



SCAHS President Bill Pearson introduces Milwaukee reporter Bill Glauber to Mr. Webb.



### BBC salutes Sun City

The Washington correspondent for the BBC and a senior broadcast journalist for BBC Radio visits the museum and interviews Edson Allen of the Historical Society and Paul Herrmann (shown above) of the Sun City Visitors Center. The interviews will be used for a special 50th anniversary salute to Sun City prepared by the BBC and broadcast in Britain as well as on National Public Radio here in the United States.

Club, and other Wisconsinites during his two-day visit.

The end result was front-page treatment in the Jan. 1, 2010 edition of the *Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel*, which continued over to a full page inside.

The headline reads, "Seniors still having fun in the sun." A slide show of the article is available at [www.jsonline.com/photos](http://www.jsonline.com/photos).

## Palm Ridge on site of 1911 homestead

Almost 100 years ago, Orval Robertson filed for a homestead permit for 160 acres in the vicinity of what is now Tom Ryan Drive Road and Deer Valley Drive. The land had a market value of \$1.24 per acre, and could be obtained free provided the homesteader occupied and cultivated the land over a five-year period.

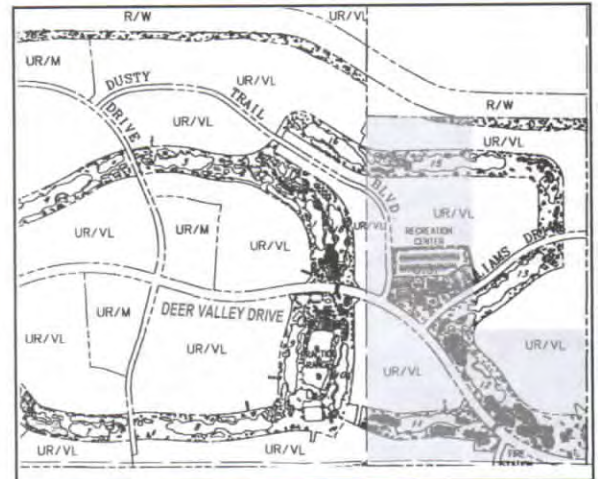
Robertson and his wife lived in a tent until they completed a home that October. Without the benefit of a tractor or other machinery, Orval and his wife had to rely on horsepower and their own strong backs to break and cultivate the soil.

Within a year, they had 20 acres under cultivation. By 1915, they had 80 acres of maize, sorghum, millet, pumpkins and more. Robertson created an irrigation system that used well water, along with runoff from the Bradshaw Mountains to the north. In 1917, the Robertsons fulfilled the pro-

**Join us for our  
spring meeting!**  
**When: 1-3 p.m. March 26**  
**Where: Palm Ridge Rec Ctr.**  
**13800 W. Deer Valley Drive**  
**Sun City West**

visions of the homestead law and were granted title to the land.

As the area under cultivation grew, so did the demand for water. Unfortunately for the Robertsons, the Agua Fria Water and Land Company dammed the water of the Agua Fria River in order to divert it to canals that would deliver the water to farmers. But no water was planned for section 15, the location of the Robertson homestead. The Robertsons' dream dried up before their eyes.



They abandoned the property sometime before 1930, and it reverted to the state in 1939. Archeologists hired by the Del Webb Corporation found several artifacts left by the Robertsons: a small pot-bellied stove, a 1913 penny, coffeepot lid, mule shoe, and more.



# Museum opens SCW exhibit

**NORA AVERY-PAGE**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The catchy phrase "From Lizard Acres to Lush Oasis" not only describes the area that is now Sun City West, but it now also headlines the new Del Webb Sun Cities Museum exhibit



Jane Willis, Howard Jones and Jane's husband Noel, left to right, look at an exhibit describing Sun City West's early roots.

DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

SEE EXHIBIT, A5

## EXHIBIT

FROM A1

about the community.

The enlarged exhibit opened Friday in the newly remodeled Jane Freeman Room after a kick-off event for some Sun City West residents Thursday evening.

Museum president Bill Pearson said the 6-foot-tall replica of the original Lizard Acres, forged by the Sun City West Metal Club, is a great addition — the original Lizard Acres

sign now stands along the railroad track along Grand Avenue at the site of the old loading pens that were once home to as many as 40,000 head of cattle.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society removed a large window providing a larger wall for the exhibit, which features the architect of Sun City West, John Meeker, and his vision for the "new sun rising in the West" that built on the success of Sun City.

The new Sun City West exhibit was designed by Ed Allen,

SCAHS past-president.

Thursday's opening event allowed museum board members to greet the visitors, who could take pictures with the matching his and hers golf cars that sit outside the museum.

"Last night was interesting," Pearson said.

The idea of the opening night event was to introduce the new exhibit and garner possible donations from the guests.

The evening also marked the dedication

of the new McMillin Terrace, named after donor and Sun City West resident Connie McMillin.

Pearson hopes the idea of having their name on one of the rooms will encourage future possible donors so the museum can cover some of its expenses and projects.

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, is open from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays. Guests wishing to book group tours or speakers for club programs may call 623-974-2578.