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TRANSIT

Some riders still stranded

Paratransit services still failing; leaders seek solutions

By Matt Roy
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

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Officials apprised leaders last week on ongoing challenges to delivering transit services to vulnerable populations in parts of the West Valley, which lack regular mass transit service.

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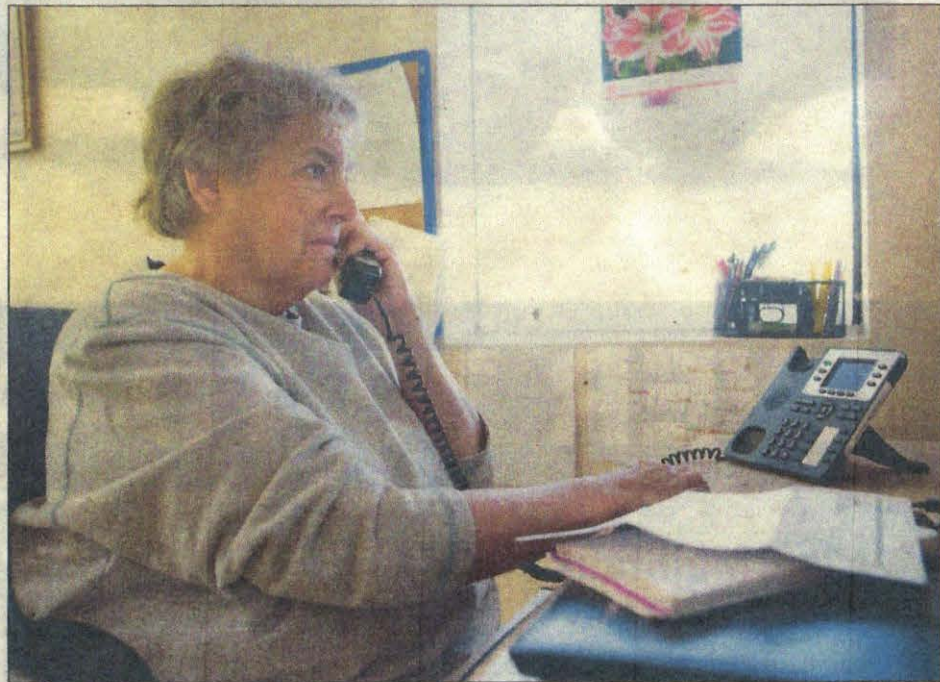
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are your opinions on this issue?
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Both programs have faced a backlash from dissatisfied clients. Since Valley Metro contracted Transdev, a France-based international transportation operator, to take over the program last February, riders have issued a litany of complaints about difficulty booking trips, late pickups, missed appointments and poor customer service.

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Northwest Valley Connect Volunteer Pat Detert speaks with a client about a scheduled ride at the Northwest Valley Connect call center, 9154 N. 99th Ave., Peoria. [Jacob Stanek/Independent Newsmedia]

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summer to dispatch vans from West Valley and improve response times. But many clients claim the problems persist.

Northwest Valley Connect, a non-profit, volunteer-driven agency serving Surprise, the Sun Cities and Peoria, is helping fill the service gaps by providing free and reduced-fare rides.

Kathy Chandler, Northwest Valley Connect executive director, stated despite improvements, problems still persist and many of those in need remain underserved.

"We are hearing fewer complaints and we haven't heard a complaint about anyone not being able to get through to the reservationist at Transdev in more than a month. But we are still hearing of service issues, such as long waits and being left stranded," Ms. Chandler stated by email. "We have a number of clients who refuse to try Paratransit again because they had such a bad experience."

Ms. Chandler said her agency is working with county officials, West Valley leaders and legislators to push to

expand regular bus service for the entire region.

"We are leading a regional effort at bringing public transportation to the Northwest Valley. Our efforts now are in putting together the Northwest Valley Consortium that is called for in the MAG 2013 Transit Study," Ms. Chandler explained. "The consortium will include the cities and county along with Rick Gray from Sun City Home Owners Association's board, representatives (Kevin) Payne and (Ben) Toma and Bonnie Boyce-Wilson and Sharon Hettick from the Northwest Valley Connect board."

Continuing problems

Surprise officials are trying to address the issue, mostly for riders in their community but also to correct the entire system for Northwest Valley riders.

"We're here tonight to give you an update based on our last work session," said Surprise Public Works Manager David Kohlbeck during a Dec. 19 council meeting.

Claiming improvements while facing a barrage of questions from the panel, Mr. Kohlbeck and Valley Metro Chief Operating Officer Rob Antoniak shared performance data and sur-

vey results.

Mr. Kohlbeck acknowledge the failures, but reported service has improved during the first quarter of fiscal year 2017-18.

"We did have a bit of a rocky start, but on-time performance did increase every month," he said. "We are still not up to the contract standard."

Per Transdev's contract, vans should arrive on time for 93 percent of bookings. The on-time percentage for July, August and September were 57, 68 and 71 percent, respectively, for riders coming from Surprise, while the regional on-time average is 82 percent. With the rollout of new dispatch software, performance should continue to improve, Mr. Kohlbeck said.

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patch — similar to the app used by popular ride-share companies — but he offered no specific date for when that might happen.

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Despite claims of improved service, Vice Mayor Todd Tande suggested the numbers may not have improved, in part because some clients have given up or found other ways to get around.

"Some of this tells me a story that maybe of that increased on-time percentage might be because maybe some of the riders have gotten frustrated and they're dropping out," Mr. Tande suggested. "I would expect it to go up, the percentage on time, if we have fewer riders."

Councilman Skip Hall confirmed that assertion and said Valley Metro needs to

do more.

"I've talked to people that have actually stopped using the service," Mr. Hall said. "And they ought to be using the service. We need to win them back somehow."

Ms. Chandler also related an example of one bad client experience, which occurred the week prior.

"I spoke to a mom of a 19-year-old girl, who is disabled and takes Paratransit from Surprise to employment in Glendale and was pretty unhappy with the service," Ms. Chandler said. "She said her daughter is left waiting at the end of her work day for up to three hours and has been left there without a ride home also."

Surprise resident Linda Carolyn spoke at the Dec. 19 Surprise council meeting to recount her own difficulties with the transit program.

"I've had several — and I mean maybe 6, 7, 8 — not good experiences with RideChoice and I've documented and reported most of them," Ms. Carolyn said. "But this last one that I've run into I think was beyond the pale."

She said she booked a RideChoice trip the week prior to get from Northwestern University in Glendale back home. Though she carefully

explained during the hearing she would be using RideChoice card for the driver demanded full fair and behaved civilly when she refused, Carolyn said.

"That's not the works. I owe \$3 in addition to that, I don't get you anything because fare is not over \$21. I'm responsible for an over \$21," she said to the driver. "He was happy with me. I wasn't with him."

As she went to the van, the side door slid too soon, trapping her doorway momentarily, she said.

"He closed his door on me in the back and trapped between the post and the door," Carolyn said. "It scared me. I thought I was dragged down the stairs a second. It was so scary. He told me he was cheating him out of me. I was stealing his property."

A day later she filed a report over the incident asserting the driver prior constituted assault. She said he was too inexperienced to operate the door mechanism.

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intended her harm, she asserted.

"I'm pretty unhappy about the whole thing and I think RideChoice needs to be terminated," Ms. Carolyn added. "The caliber of the drivers has been down, down, down."

A road forward

Councilman Roland J. Winters Jr., who regularly uses Paratransit services in

Surprise, suggested Transdev needs to localize its management to fix the problems.

"Among a couple of things that I may suggest is to get somebody here in Surprise to oversee this," Mr. Winters said. "I don't feel somebody in the East Valley sees what we in the West Valley are up against. It's a Surprise program. It's for Surprise residents. They should be right here in Surprise to keep a handle on what's happening."

He said using the service

requires long hold times on the phone and drivers routinely arrive 30 minutes late or worse. Customer service complaints routed to call centers in foreign countries just add to his frustration, Mr. Winters said.

"The whole thing is just a complete nightmare, it really is," Mr. Winters added. "I'm right in the thick of it every day and I see it every day. And you really got to get some improvement."

Mr. Tande suggested the

contractor's additional of the West Valley staging lot was a good first step, but located near the intersection of 99th and Olive avenues it was still too far from Surprise to provide appropriate response times.

"I want to applaud the thought that you're staging vehicles closer," Mr. Tande said. "It can take a half an hour just to drive from one end of our city to the other. So, I'd like to see some consideration at least for may-

be a better staging place."

A centrally located dispatch lot would serve Surprise better, he said.

"I think because we are the size we are, we deserve some service where maybe the staging comes right out of the center of the city somewhere," Mr. Tande said.

Mr. Antoniak assured the panel that improvements realized so far will continue and Valley Metro remains committed to fixing the problems, though he believes

solutions will take time.

"I'm sure when we back with October-November-December numbers then into the first half of the year, that you will see those arrows trending in the right direction," Mr. Antoniak said. "Trying that as we come to visit next year, that will be a much more pleasurable experience."

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Matt Roy can be reached at 623-876-2528 or mroy@newszap.com. Visit www.yourvalley.net.

CONSTRUCTION

Collaboration results in roadway repair

By Bryan Pahia

SUBMITTED TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A recent collaboration between the Maricopa County Department of Transportation, the Sun City Homeowners Association and a private property owner resulted in roadway repairs that will positively impact roadway users near 103rd Avenue and Santa Fe Drive in Sun City.

“This is a great example of the teamwork between Maricopa County, its businesses and its residents,” said Maricopa County Supervisor Clint Hickman. “By working together, we were able to address an issue and improve conditions for those in the area.”

The roadway had previously experienced pooling water on the northwest corner of the intersection causing damage to the sidewalk and roadway, which are frequently used by pedestrians, drivers and tran-

sit. SCHOA representatives brought the situation to the attention of MCDOT, who then collaborated with the private property owner to make repairs.

“Because of our close relationship with SCHOA and the private property owner, we were able to assess the situation and come up with a solution that met the needs of everyone involved, especially those who use the road and sidewalk regularly,” said Alfred Erives, division manager for the MCDOT Permitting, Construction and Inspections Division.

MCDOT crews repaired the sidewalk, updated the sidewalk ramp to meet new ADA standards and addressed the water drainage concern. The private property owner contributed by clearing out the drainage channel on the property to prevent future ponding.

Editor's note: Mr. Pahia is a public information officer for MCDOT.



Maricopa County Department of Transportation crews recently made roadway repairs near 103rd Avenue and Santa Fe Drive in Sun City, thanks to collaboration between that organization, the Sun City Homeowners Association and a private property owner. [Submitted photo]

TRANSPORTATION



A group of friends from Royal Oaks Retirement Community in Sun City uses the Envoy America ride program to enjoy lunch together in Scottsdale. [Submitted photo]

Ride program keeps seniors mobile

Envoy America, a ride program offering door-to-door accompanied transportation services for seniors, entered into a partnership with Royal Oaks Retirement Community, 10015 W. Royal Oaks Road, Sun City, to augment the transportation program provided by Royal Oaks.

“For many seniors, preserving their independence is vital to living a full, active

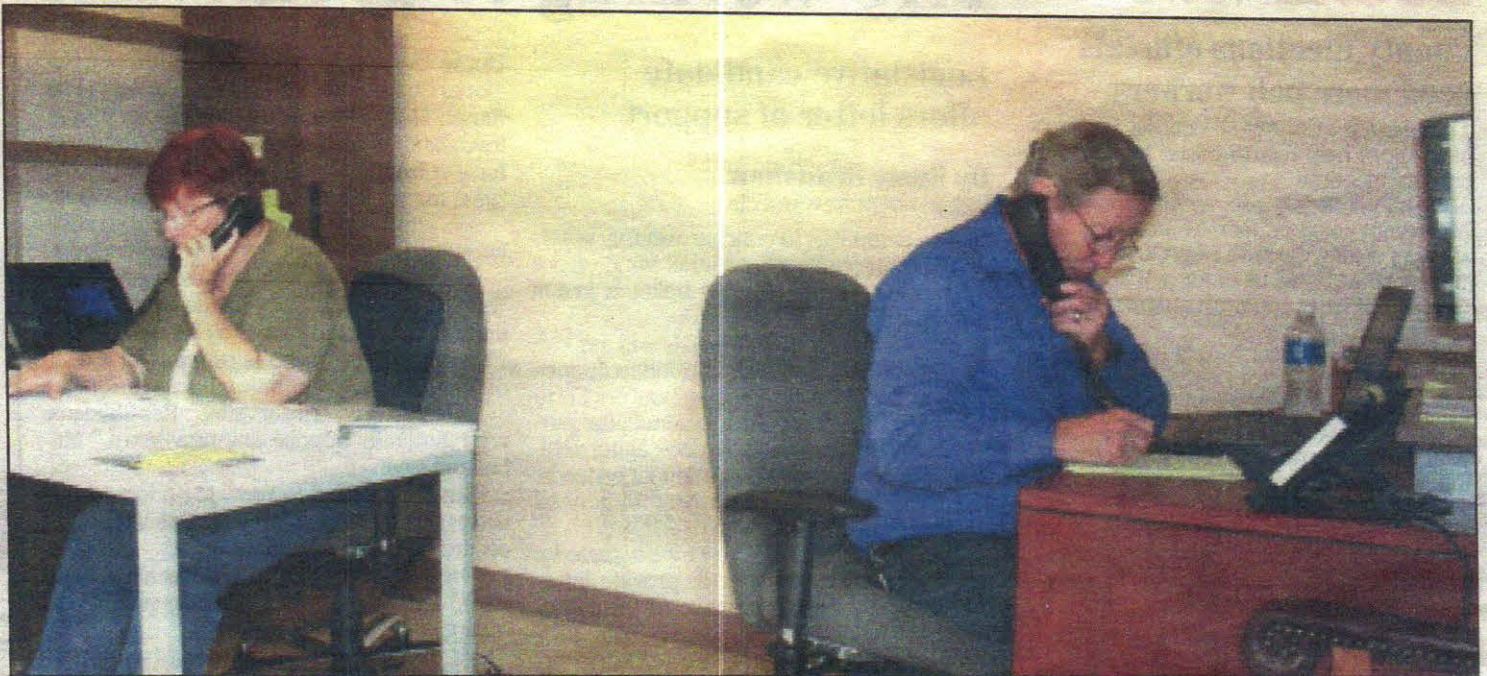
and healthy life,” said Vicki Ullery, Royal Oaks marketing director. “Most of our residents still drive. But when the time arrives to let someone else take the wheel, Envoy has been an excellent source for residents.”

Doris Yock, a resident of Royal Oaks who used Envoy’s services to go with a group of friends to Scottsdale for lunch, was very im-

pressed with the Envoy driver and how considerate she was.

“Envoy’s service is terrific,” said Ms. Yock. “I no longer drive and have only one friend who still drives. So we were happy to hear about Envoy’s service.”

Visit www.royaloaks.com or www.envoyamerica.com.



Independent Newsmedia/Rusty Bradshaw

Northwest Valley Connect volunteers Mickey Dorothy, left, and Mark Chandler answer calls for service at the new office location.

NEW TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR NORTHWEST VALLEY

Uber, Lyft give residents more options for travel

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newsmedia

Public transportation has been lacking in the Northwest Valley, but is improving slowly with the advent of some innovative approaches.

Established in March 2014 by Benevilla and Sun Health, Northwest Valley Connect began services for area residents in September of that year. The agency initially operated a call center to refer residents to transportation resources, but later added a program of volunteer drivers to help fill gaps.

In addition to agencies with a long history in the Northwest Valley, including Sun City Express, Discount Cab and Dial-A-Ride programs, Northwest Valley residents are finding new resources from two resources — Uber and Lyft — beginning to reach into the area.

“We have made a few referrals to Uber, but not a lot because most residents have other needs,” said Kathy Chandler, Northwest Valley Connect executive director. “Mostly, the people who have the technology will call for

New location

Northwest Valley Connect
9445 N. 99th Ave., Peoria
623-282-9300

Uber rides themselves.”

What started in 2008 with two men having trouble hailing a cab in Paris turned into the worldwide Uber business after they got the idea for a smart phone application to arrange a ride, according to the company’s website, uber.com.

Lyft, established in 2012, has a similar premise, but is limited to U.S. cities.

Just how much the companies have reached into the Northwest Valley is unclear, as representatives of both Uber and Lyft did not respond to Independent’s request for information.

However, a Sun City West resident is work-

ing with Uber to expand its services to senior citizens faced with the prospect of giving up their personal mobility.

Keith Morrow became an Uber driver to see what it was about. Once he saw what it was capable of, he wanted to find a way to incorporate it into the community in a way to help those residents who do not own smart phones, or are not competent with them.

“It is feasible to have residents sign with for Uber for rides by fax, text or email,” Mr. Morrow said. “They just need to have a basic computer and non-complicated smart phone.”

He is working to encourage churches and other organizations to have their members without their own transportation to sign up.

“We are also working with the Sun City Foundation to provide space for training,” he added.

Mr. Morrow emphasized this program is in its infancy, but hoped to have something

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Resources

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up and running within a few months.

"It is pretty traumatic when people have to give up their cars," Mr. Morrow said.

Uber's and Lyft's reach into the Northwest Valley appears to be slowly catching on, but few residents who responded to Independent's inquiries on the subject had used the program.

"I have never used Uber, and didn't know they were in the West Valley," Sun City resident Jacque Rose stated in an email. "I think a safe Uber would be a good resource for people who cannot drive. It would also be good for those too sick, inebriated or going to a medical appointment where they shouldn't drive afterward."

Former Surprise resident Laurie Graham, now living in Austin, Texas, has used Uber services, and also likes what Lyft has to offer.

"I 100 percent believe these services would greatly benefit the West Valley, she stated in an email. "I find that they are not only cost effective and timely, but a great and safe way to go meet friends for dinner and or a

few drinks and know I don't have to drive after drinking. Many elderly would benefit from these services for running errands etc."

Another Uber user, Sun City resident Alice Staples, said she likes the service because riders know the fee before they get in an Uber vehicle and there is no tipping as it is included in the charge.

"The meters on cabs are running when you are caught in traffic, this does not happen with Uber," she stated in an email.

She also likes it because there are no credit cards or paperwork to deal with if the rider has an account with them. In addition, vehicles used by Uber drivers are newer and more comfortable. Riders are also notified how long they must wait for their driver to arrive, she added.

"Riders are offered bottles of water," she stated. "If you have more than three to four riders, you can request an SUV or larger vehicle. I think Uber is great."

Ms. Staples said she has not yet used Uber in Arizona.

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— **Jacque Rose**
Sun City resident

Surprise resident Ken Wright does not agree the new services are needed.

"It seems to me that a service such as Uber might be a good thing in a densely populated area," he said. "Because most people in Surprise are used to driving to their destination and the city provides subsidized trips, Uber would not be needed."

He believes if there is a market for Uber, the company will arrive on the scene.

Ms. Chandler said Northwest Valley Connect, which moved into offices (9445 N. 99th Avenue, on the east side in Peoria) in early August, will continue to direct those in need of transportation to all options available, including Uber, Lyft and any other services out there.

"For us, it is about getting people where they need to go," she said.

Rusty Bradshaw can be reached at 623-445-2725 or rbradshaw@newszap.com. Continue the discussion at www.yourwestvalley.com.



Submitted photo

A paid driver through Envoy America assists a client by not only driving her but helping her shop and more.

Unique ride sharing program focuses on seniors

Envoy America, an innovative ride service for seniors, announced that it is expanding its coverage area to include Surprise and other Northwest Valley areas.

Envoy America is a ride service offering an alternative to taxi and rideshares for seniors and others who cannot drive. Instead of the standard curbside service of other transportation companies, Envoy America offers a door-to-door service where drivers are companions for their clients and remain with them until they are back home.

Drivers will walk with their clients through a grocery store and even assist by taking items from the upper and lower shelves and placing them in the basket. En-

voy America is able to do this because clients are purchasing a block of time, not by the mile where drivers are quick to move on to the next passenger.

Northwest Valley locations include Surprise, Sun City, Sun City West, El Mirage, Peoria and Glendale. These areas mark Envoy America's latest service area expansion.

The company, which began operating in May 2015, currently serves clients in the Scottsdale, Fountain Hills, Paradise Valley and North Phoenix areas and expanded to the East Valley (Mesa, Gilbert, Chandler, Tempe) in September. Clients can call Envoy America at 606-687-6345 to schedule service or check on availability in their area.

"We designed Envoy America to assist seniors who cannot drive or are uncomfortable with driving to retain their independence and conduct their daily chores such as physician visits and shopping," Envoy America co-founder K.C. Kanaan said. "As word spread, we immediately heard from prospective clients in the Northwest Valley asking when we would start serving the area. We are pleased to say we listened and are now offering service to the Northwest Valley."

Cofounder Andy Beran added that Envoy America is looking at opening new coverage zones in the Phoenix metro area. Eventually, the company plans to expand the company nationwide to cities with similar senior bas-

day travel needs such as errands, medical appointments and social outings.

Clients schedule their appointment and many will request specific drivers. Drivers are carefully chosen, background checked, drug tested and trained to provide the highest levels of customer service. No cash is required and drivers are not allowed to accept tips.

Ride

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es.

Envoy America (www.envoyamerica.com) is a subscription-based service. Each subscription includes a guaranteed number of pre-paid hours each month to meet every

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Grant

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idents of the Northwest Valley find rides to doctor's appointments, grocery stores and even mall shopping trips. Seniors need only call the mobility center to be connected with volunteers who can help solve transportation problems.

"The Call-Click-Connect mobility call center is important because it is the heart of our operation," Ms. Chandler explained. "This grant provides the funds to keep our call center open so we may continue to provide a service that this area desperately needs."

The grant will also support NVC's Ride-Connect volunteer driver program. When connections between other transportation agencies cannot be made, it is volunteer drivers who assist with providing transportation to seniors in need.

Connect gets city grant

Northwest Valley Connect was approved to receive an \$8,000 city of Surprise Community Outreach program grant to fund transportation efforts in the Northwest Valley.

The funds will support NVC's various programs, including the Call-Click-Connect mobility call center and the RideConnect volunteer driver program.

This is the second year NVC received funding from the city's program, receiving the same amount last year.

"We are grateful to the city of Surprise Community Outreach Program for funding our programs for another year," said NVC Executive Director Kathy Chandler.

Since 2014, NVC's Call-Click-Connect mobility call center has helped res-

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VF SE Transportation November 25, 2015

FREEDOM



RubyRide driver Mike Holder helps Jerry Torrey as he picks him up at his home in Sun City Thursday. The transportation service has allowed Torrey and his wife to save money while still meeting their transportation needs. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

Sun City couple find gem in RubyRide

By Jeff Dempsey
DAILY NEWS-SUN

It was about three years ago at age 80 that Jerry Torrey made the decision many seniors eventually do: Torrey gave up driving. He felt it was time, he said, and he believed he and his wife, Virginia, could get along OK without a vehicle.

"But I really had no idea," he said. "Until after, then it hit me."

The Torreys, who live in Sun City, found themselves in a difficult situation. Without

transportation of their own, they had to rely on neighbors and family for assistance.

"We were housebound," Torrey said. "We depended on neighbors, but they had lives of their own, and so we came in second for them."

Virginia's three dialysis appointments per week made their circumstances all the more stressful, until last summer, when Torrey said

he stumbled across a ride-share program called RubyRide.

"We've gone from housebound to unbound."

Jerry Torrey
Sun City

"The manager of the community here stopped me in the office and gave me their card," Torrey said. "I called RubyRide, they came out to tell us about the program, and we signed up that day."

RubyRide is a rideshare program and the way it works is pretty simple: RubyRide maintains a fleet

of vehicles and drivers and anyone subscribed to the service can call at least a day ahead of time to schedule a trip. Essentially, the RubyRide subscribers are pooling their money to have vehicles and drivers they all get to share.

For eight months, the Torreys were using RubyRide on a 15-trips-per-month plan, which they said worked very well for them. Twelve were used on Virginia's dialysis appointments, which left three

» See Ride on page A7

VF SC Transportation Daily News Sun April 14, 2015

Ride

» From page A1

for other errands. Now, the Torreys are taking advantage of a new program from RubyRide they say has made all the difference in their lives.

RubyRide's new Passport program is a monthly subscription of \$150 per month, and it offers unlimited rides within the Sun City service area (roughly Olive Avenue to Beardsley Road and the Agua Fria River to the Loop 101). Now, the Torreys can make all their doctors appointments and even make a trip to go out to lunch or just for fun, without worrying about going over their monthly allotment.

"We've gone from housebound to unbound," Torrey said. "We went from having no transportation to what feels like having our own personal car and driver. All we have to do is call a day ahead to schedule the trip."

RubyRide CEO and Founder Jeff Ericson said the Torreys are a perfect example of what RubyRide is intended to do. The company started in 2013 and expanded to the West Valley in 2014, he said, and since they started operating in Sun City the response has been strong.

"Sun City is a great fit," he said. "When we talked to people there, we found a lot of people who drive because there aren't reliable or affordable transportation options. We provide great service very efficiently — we make it easy, affordable, and fun to not deal



RubyRide driver Mike Holder helps Virginia Torrey as he picks her up at her home in Sun City. The transportation service has allowed Torrey and her husband to save money while still meeting their transportation needs. [Nick Cote/Daily News-Sun]

WATCH THE VIDEO:



with owning a car."

The passport program was tested in Phoenix before rolling out in Sun City, and Ericson said the passport program is now expanding to Sun City West, with Phoenix and Scottsdale plans rolling out in the next two months and Tempe and Chandler passport plans coming in the fall.

"(The passport program) feels much more like owning," he said. "You know what it costs, who the drivers will be, what kind of service to expect — no surprises — we listen to our customers and make sure we provide them a safe, reliable, affordable service."

Ericson is already getting a lot of help in that regard from the Torreys, who said they are telling everyone they know about RubyRide. They even arranged for a company representative to come and give a presentation at their apartment complex.

"I think of myself as an ambassador for them," Torrey said. "I'm sure there are others who were housebound like we were and they could sure use RubyRide."

For information on RubyRide and its coverage areas, visit RubyRide.co or call 480-725-RUBY.

Check us out and like YourWestValley.com on Facebook.

Jeff Dempsey may be reached at 623-876-2531 or jdempsey@yourwestvalley.com.



TOM TINGLE/THE REPUBLIC

Mike Bunker, owner of Discount Golf Cars of Arizona, stands with some of the latest E-Z-Go RXV golf carts in Sun City West. He followed high demand for the vehicles from Colorado.

Golf-cart life rolls on in Sun Cities' streets

SHARI ROSE
THE REPUBLIC • AZCENTRAL.COM

Some come with pinstripes. Others have nearly everything custom-made. And still others have a battery life that rivals cars made in Detroit.

Golf carts give a new kind of mobility and independence to many people in Maricopa County — and they also create a unique culture. Nowhere is that more clear than on the streets and golf courses of Sun City, where as many as half of the nearly 28,000 households own them.

The epicenter could be along Camino del Sol a few miles from Sun City in Sun City West, where there are four dealerships within six blocks.

Mike Bunker, owner of Discount Golf Cars of Arizona, said he moved his business from Colorado because there was a larger market in the region.

Driving golf carts is a way of life for many in the "active adult" communities in the area. These vehicles are commonly used for golfing, but they also serve as a way for people to get around town.

Bunker said customers come in to buy a vehicle for both golfing purposes and to drive on major roads. Couples often share one golf cart and one normal car, so both can be out in the community at the same time.

Golf-cart seating options range from two up to six.

To personalize the vehicles, Discount Golf Cars sells a selection of upgraded tires, high-speed gears, new paint jobs

and artwork, such as custom-made pinstripe designs. As technology in golf carts has upgraded from gas to electric, the shop now sells a special type of AC motor that Bunker said can go about about 40 miles on a single charge.

"There's been a huge swing from gas to electric golf carts," he said. "This is really because of the new technology that's out there now."

While the personalization potential and technological advancement for golf carts has improved over the years, the true culture of golf-cart ownership comes from the people who drive them.

Marshall Reese has owned his golf cart for six years. He bought it used when he moved to Sun City and hasn't added extra features to it. He uses it for errands around town, but does not drive it out of Sun City.

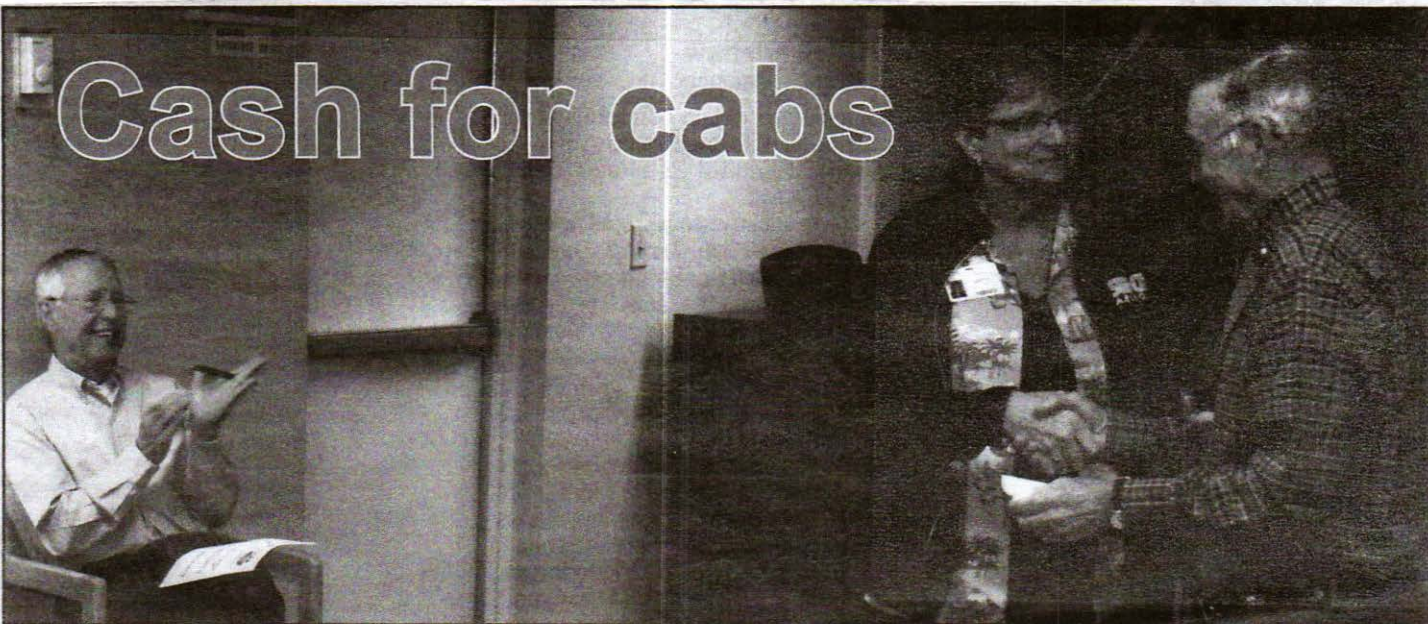
Drivers like Reese recently celebrated a change in state law that allows for carts to be driven on the shoulder of the road in age-restricted communities in unincorporated parts of Maricopa County. Residents called for the law after a handful of golf-cart drivers received traffic violations.

Maricopa County has nearly 30,500 registered golf carts, about 81 percent of all such registrations statewide.

Locals expect golf-cart ownership to continue to remain popular. Robert Forsythe, regional manager of Desert Golf Cars, said the shop has sold an average of 1,000 golf carts every year since opening more than 40 years ago in 1971.

VF SC Transportation AZ. Republic Nov 26, 2014

Cash for cabs



Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Jan Ek, center, presents Hugh Duncan a check for more than \$8,000. The funds were gathered throughout 2013 during various Recreation Centers of Sun City fundraising efforts.

Sun City CAN gets funds for new program to provide residents Dial-A-Ride tickets

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

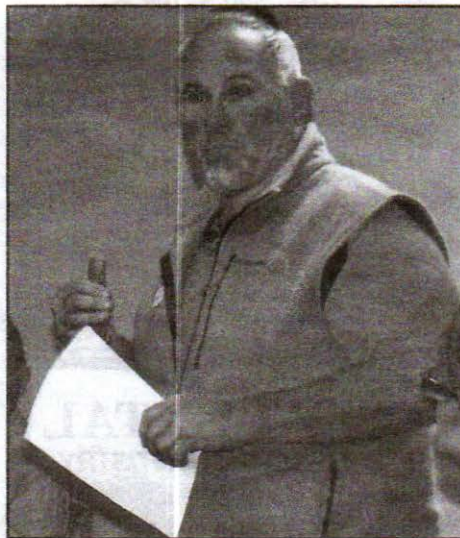
The Sun City Community Assistance Network received a huge infusion of cash to fund a new program to address transportation needs in the community.

The all-volunteer human services agency was presented a check for \$8,231.52 by Jan Ek, Recreation Centers of Sun City general manager, during the Sun City CAN board meeting Jan. 14. Immediately thereafter, Hugh Duncan, Sun City CAN board president, said every cent of the donation would be used in the agency's new Dial-A-Ride ticket program.

"It warms our hearts that this is where the money is going, because we hear this all the time," Ms. Ek said as she teared up.

Bill Pearson, Sun City Foundation board president, then announced the foundation would contribute \$10,000 to the Dial-A-Ride ticket program.

"I have found you get more done when you work together in partnerships," he said. "We are proud and delighted to partner with

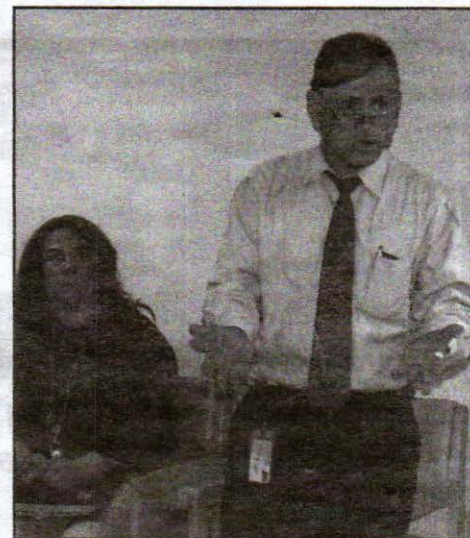


Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Bill Pearson explains the Sun City Foundation's contribution to the Dial-A-Ride ticket program.

you."

Sun City CAN officials have discussed since November creating the new program to help alleviate a public transportation void in Sun City since Sun City Area Transit dissolved in 2010. At that time Valley Metro, through the regional transportation group,



Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

APS representatives Kathy Chang and Jerry Mendoza explain the utility's Crisis Bill 200 program.

created the Dial-A-Ride program for qualified Americans with Disabilities Act riders in Sun City, who could get a ride for \$4 one way through Discount Cab, the Dial-A-Ride vendor. However, in the beginning it was

Cabs

Continued From Page 1

limited to those living within three-quarters of a mile of Valley Metro's bus Route 106, that runs along Peoria and 111th avenues to Thunderbird Boulevard, ending at Banner Boswell Medical Center, 10401 W. Thunderbird Blvd.

Since then, the Dial-A-Ride was expanded to include all senior residents.

"Anyone over 65 can call Discount Cab and get a ride for \$4 one way," Mr. Duncan explained. "It took me a long time to find information about this."

The Sun City CAN ticket program, coordinated by board member Kay Stark, will purchase and distribute \$25 worth of Dial-A-Ride tickets per quarter to qualified residents. Requirements to qualify include being a full-time Sun City resident 65 or older, not owning a vehicle and having an income less than \$1,361 per month for single individuals or \$1,839 for couples.

"According to Valley Metro, there are 90 Sun City people who use the cabs regularly," Mr. Duncan said.

However, he believes there are more residents who would qualify for the Sun City CAN ticket program.

Utility connection

The organization has an opportunity to increase its revenue further by joining APS as an area administrator for the utility company's Crisis Bill 200 and E3 programs. APS representatives Kathy Chang and Jerry Mendoza made a plea for Sun City CAN to get involved during last week's board meeting.

APS officials set aside \$5 million five years ago to assist customers who, because of unexpected crisis circumstances, cannot pay their utility bills. Less than \$1 million of those funds have been distributed to date, according to Mr. Mendoza.

"Believe it or not, it has been a challenge to get the money out there," he said.

APS officials are unaware of all the community assistance groups and some have a measure of pride and do not come forward requesting funds, according to Mr. Mendoza.

"They just want to do it themselves," he added.

By administering the APS programs locally, Sun City CAN will receive a 20 percent administration fee for each bill paid through the Crisis Bill 200 program, Mr. Mendoza explained. Being an administrator will also help Sun City residents in need, he added. In addition to administering Crisis Bill 200, Sun City CAN officials would be urged to encourage qualifying residents to sign up for the E3 utility discount program, Mr. Mendoza said. E3 gives bill discounts depending on the amount of energy used.

"We are very impressed; this is a good group and you obviously have strong community support," Mr. Mendoza said. "We hope you'll do things with us."

Other CAN programs

The Dial-A-Ride ticket program and, if the CAN board approves, the APS Crisis Bill 200 will join a wide variety of other programs administered by the agency. These include property-tax freeze, widow/widowers tax breaks, Medicare savings, water and gas bill discounts, food stamp qualification, increased excise tax credit, property tax credits, condo water rebates, legal assistance and the annual AARP Tax-Aide.

Through its programs, Sun City CAN officials help residents access the resources that provide the benefits provided by the programs. Those efforts inspired a new tag line for the agency, according to Mr. Duncan.

"Our new tag line is, 'Connecting People with Resources,'" he said.

Call 623-933-7530 or visit www.suncity-can.org. The Sun City CAN office is located at 10195 W. Coggins Drive, Sun City.

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



Construction crews install a "High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk," also known as HAWK, Tuesday afternoon outside the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center. The HAWK, resembling a beacon much like a traffic signal, stops traffic only when it's necessary for pedestrians to cross the roadway. [Jarod Opperman/Daily News-Sun]

Drivers keep eye out for HAWK

STAFF REPORT

The Maricopa County of Department of Transportation is installing High-Intensity Activated crosswalk beacons in Sun City West.

Known as HAWK, the beacon resembles a traffic signal light but is pedestrian-activated and traffic is only stopped when necessary to allow pedestrians to cross the roadway at 138th Avenue and R.H. Johnson and 138th Avenue and Camino Del Sol.

MCDOT officials said additional improvements include new crosswalks, ADA-compliant sidewalk

ramps, new roadway signage and striping.

Construction is expected for completion in June.

Traffic lane closures and restrictions are anticipated, and county officials urge motorists to be alert to changes in the temporary construction signs and flag persons when driving through the construction zones.

Drivers should allow extra time when driving through the areas, as there may be traffic delays, officials said. Access will be maintained for residents, businesses and emergency

vehicles at all times.

In addition, a HAWK beacon will be installed at Granite Valley Drive and Mantor Lane in the vicinity of the Banner Del Webb Medical Center campus.

Meantime, roadway maintenance activities will be performed on Granite Valley Drive between Meeker Boulevard and White Rock Drive as part of the current construction work. Work includes removal of the existing top layer of pavement and the installation of a "roadway quieting" rubber asphalt overlay, which uses recycled pulverized tires

from waste management and landfill sites throughout the Southwest. Project completion is scheduled for late June.

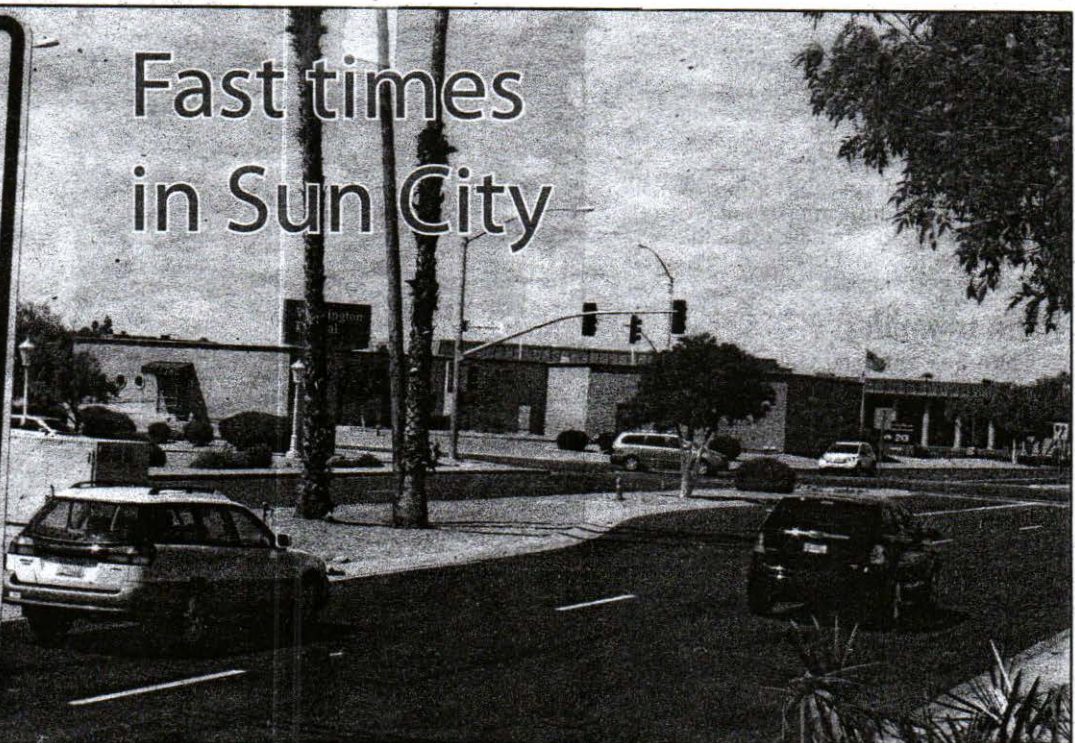
On-street parking in the construction area will not be permitted during work hours.

In an effort to expedite the project schedule and minimize impact to the adjacent community and the traveling public, officials said work will be performed days, nights and weekends, weather permitting.

For information, call the MCDOT hotline at 480-350-9288.



Fast times in Sun City



Independent Newspapers/Rusty Bradshaw

Sun City speed limits vary from street to street depending on a number of criteria. Some residents believe limits should be changed in some areas, while others are satisfied with them the way they are. However, most agree the community needs more traffic enforcement.

Residents differ on speed limit effectiveness, agree community needs more enforcement

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

Sun City residents continue to be concerned about traffic within the community.

As it prepares to begin meeting again after the summer break, the Sun City Home Owners Association transportation committee will renew its ongoing discussion of transportation issues, including speed limits and enforcement. The group has brought some inconsistencies to the attention of Maricopa County Department of Transportation officials, who attend the committee's monthly meetings.

SCHOA's transportation committee will meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 26 at the SCHOA office, 10401 W. Coggins Drive.

Speeders top the list of resident concerns. In previous transportation committee discussions, members have asked MCDOT officials about varied speed limits throughout the community. Jim Powell, committee chairman, on several occasions pointed out speed limits on 103rd Avenue are different north of Grand Avenue from those south of the cross street.

"I do believe the limit is too low from Grand north to where 103rd intersects with 99th," he said.

MCDOT officials are aware speed limits vary within the community, but there are reasons for



Roberta Crowe

that. Roberta Crowe, MCDOT spokeswoman, said speed limits are set based on a variety of criteria.

"Speed zones shall only be determined and established on the basis of an engineering study that has been performed in accordance with national traffic engineering practices," she stated in an e-mail. "The engineering study shall include an analysis of the current speed distribution of free-flowing vehicles."

She explained the 103rd Avenue speed limit between Grand and 99th avenues was lowered based on an engineering study conducted when MCDOT installed a middle left-turn lane and "No Parking" signs on the roadway.



Jim Powell

"The residential driveways on this section of road directly access 103rd Avenue, and when residents back out of their driveways they are immediately in a through lane," she stated. "The lowering of the speed limit is warranted from a traffic safety perspective."

According to Ms. Crowe, some of the criteria used in engineering studies to determine speed limits include road characteristics, shoulder condition, grade, alignment, and sight distance, design speed of roadway, roadway classification (urban, rural, residential, etc); traffic pace; road-

If You Go

Sun City Home Owners Association transportation committee

10 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 26

SCHOA office, 10401 W. Coggins Drive

side development and environment, including number of roadway access points; arking practices and pedestrian activity; and reported crash experience for at least a 12-month period.

Some residents believe speed limits are useless in the community because there is little or no traffic enforcement.

"Speed limits are definitely not followed in Sun City," Wes Perry-Fiske stated in an e-mail. "Even when the speed control devices are placed in the medians there is not much difference."

He stated when he moved to Sun City in 2001 he worked with SCHOA and Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to increase treaffic enforcement, but to no avail.

"Speeding will continue unless ticketing is implemented," he stated.

John Todd believes MCSO officials should assign 3-4 officers a few hours per month for radar spot checks, especially on streets that carry traffic traveling through Sun City to get to other locations. He also believes these spot checks should be publicized so cut-through drivers are aware

Speed

Continued From Page 1

and can adjust their speed accordingly.

However, MCSO's District 3 has only one deputy assigned to traffic patrol to cover an area stretching from 67th Avenue to as far west as Wickenburg, and from Northern Avenue to Happy Valley Road. In addition to traffic enforcement, that deputy also handles other calls while on duty. Other deputies can engage in traffic issues while on patrol, but they are also stretched across the same large coverage area.

Resident Hal Richards acknowledged that enforcement resources are limited, and commended MCSO for its efforts.

"I really respect the work that the MCSO officers do with such limited resources," he stated in an e-mail.

Mr. Powell agreed.

"Our district 3 guys are doing the best they can with limited resources," he said.

Mr. Richards does believe much of the problem of speeders comes from nonresidents. He also believes there could be some relief with alterations of exit signs directing drivers from Loop 101 to Youngtown. At one time there were multiple exits for the small community bordering Sun City to the west. But Arizona Department of Transportation limited it to one exit sign directing drivers off at Peoria Avenue.

"The County Supervisor Board needs to be the driving force by requesting that the DOT change some "Exit signs" for Youngtown on Loop 101," he stated. "It (single exit) puts a very large amount of traffic driving through Sun City residential areas with speed limits posted at 25 mph."

He also suggested speed bumps on high profile streets, such as Peoria, 99th and Alabama avenues and Thunderbird Boulevard.

Donald Wade is not concerned about changing any speed limit, with the possible

exception of 103rd Avenue's 25 mph stretch. He believes that limit to be too slow.

"One deterrent could be setting up those roadside signs that tell you how fast you are travelling, similar to what they have on Bell Road just east of Burns," he stated in an e-mail.

Residents can request a change in speed limits by contacting MCDOT's Traffic Management Division, according to Ms. Crowe. That will trigger an evaluation, she added.

Local transit group close to choosing consultant



DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Rep. Rick Gray, of Sun City, R-District 9, speaks during a meeting on Northwest Valley transportation on Thursday. The meeting, hosted by Benevilla in Surprise, brings together city governments, county officials, private sector groups and concerned citizens to discuss planning.

JEFF DEMPSEY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A comprehensive study of the Northwest Valley's transit system, which had its start in a Benevilla board room, will take a major step forward by April.

"We hope to have a consultant chosen by the end of March at the latest," said Marc Pearsall, planner for the Maricopa Association of Governments. "It will be a long, one-year study, but the next time the regional transportation plan comes up for renewal we are hoping the studies we are doing can all be included."

Pearsall delivered that news Thursday morning at Benevilla in Surprise, where dozens of people from organizations and cities around the West Valley met as community transportation stakeholders. The group was formed to identify and try to solve transportation issues, said Benevilla President and CEO Michelle Dionisio.

"We've been meeting for about a year now," she said. "We're trying to come up with short-term and long-term solutions to our transportation issues. We felt it was important to get all the stakeholders together to address those concerns and come up with something that will be meaningful."

SEE TRANSPORTATION.

TRANSPORTATION

FROM A1

than just a Band-Aid." In attendance at the meeting were representatives from the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Sun City Home Owners Association, the cities of Glendale and Peoria and the town of Youngtown, Valley Metro and the Maricopa Association of Governments, among others.

The biggest project in the works with the group is a comprehensive study of the Northwest Valley's transit system, which Pearsall said is coming along nicely.

"It was actually approved by committee process in September,"

he said. "Welcome to working in government, right? But we hope to have it posted and out for bids by the end of the month."

The goal of the study, he said, is to identify opportunities to improve existing transit services and to develop plans for when funding is available.

Pearsall was quick to give credit to the parties present at Thursday's meeting for the progress MAG has been able to make.

"The idea for the study was born right here in this room," he said. "Because you all came together and re-

quested it."

After a consultant is chosen Pearsall said MAG will host a kick-off event, followed by three or four public meetings in the next year to gather input from residents.

"At that point we start drawing lines on maps, essentially, and start really looking at OK, how are we going to implement these plans?"

The community transportation stakeholders will meet again at 9 a.m. Feb. 17 at Birt's Bistro, 16752 N. Greasewood St. in Surprise. Interested residents are encouraged to attend.

Jeff Dempsey may be reached at 623-871-2531 or jdempsey@yourwestvalley.com.

Post your News

News items and photos can be submitted to the newspaper at suncitynews@newszap.com and posted online in the Post Your News section at www.newszap.com.

Del E. Webb Center one of America's top

By Candace Hoffmann
Special to the Independent

Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center, 14502 W. Meeker Blvd., Sun City West, is again ranked among the top 50 hospitals in the United States and is one of only two Arizona hospitals with this distinction, announced the Advisory Board (www.advisory.com) in a recent news article.

The article adds the ranking, determined by HealthGrades, places the nonprofit hospital in the top 5 percent in the nation.

HealthGrades, an independent health care ratings company, "analyzed more than 130 million Medicare hospitalization records from 1999 through

Related Link

www.bannerhealth.com

2008 from 5,000 non-federal U.S. hospitals for 26 procedures and diagnoses, including myocardial infarction, pulmonary embolism, stroke, total knee replacement and pneumonia, among others. Researchers then risk-adjusted the data to account for differences in patient populations that could increase the risk of mortality or developing complications, such as age, gender and underlying medical conditions," The Advisory Board article continued.

Mortality rates at Banner Del E. Webb and the other 49 hospitals on the list were, on average, 27 percent lower than other hospitals.

"This augments our previous distinction of being in the top 5 percent of hospitals in the U.S. for preventing mortality and complications," said Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center CEO John Harrington, Jr. "Our latest

Center

Continued From Page 18

ranking and being one of just two hospitals in the state to receive it underscores our commitment to excellent patient care. This commitment is more than words as we constantly are collecting and measuring data and comparing our performance against national standards as part of our Care Management program to improve patient care. All 22 Banner Health hospitals do this."

Mr. Harrington added that the employees, volunteers and physicians at Banner Del E. Webb continually work to raise the level of clinical care and customer service. "Strict adherence to quality control and

patient safety measures are a crucial part of the care we provide here at Banner Del E. Webb," he said. "Moreover, rankings such as this, which are available to the public, show the importance of transparency among hospitals so that patients can make informed choices when deciding who will provide their care."

Banner Del E. Webb is a 404-bed, acute-care hospital offering heart care, emergency care, general surgery, orthopedic surgery, cancer care, obstetrics and gynecology, outpatient services, rehabilitation and behavioral care. Banner Del E. Webb is part of Banner Health, a nonprofit health care system with 22 hospitals throughout the West.

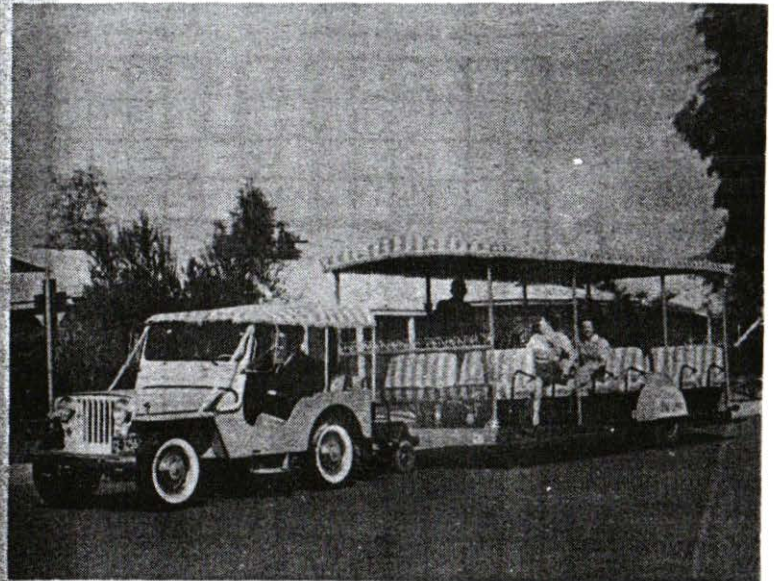
Editor's Note: Ms. Hoffmann is PR specialist for Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center.

Shop Lifter Begins Run

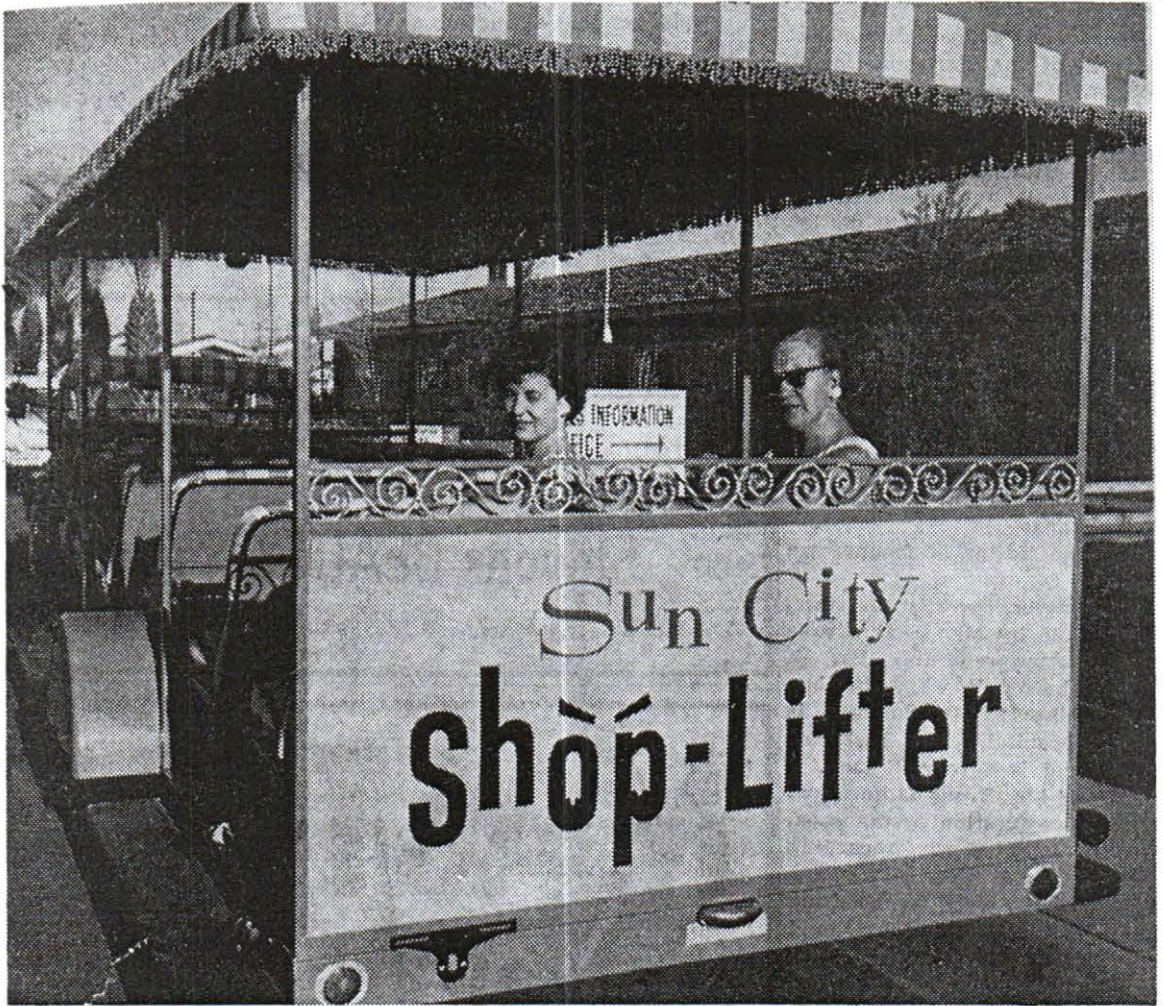
The Sun City Shop Lifter, a jeep-pulled open bus, is now being used by the Del Webb Information office to transport visitors to and from the Town Hall recreational facilities and to their cars.

According to Sales Manager Chet Swanson, the new service has become a necessity due to relocation of the Information Office across the street and east of the Hall.

Swanson says the "lifter" will later offer visitors a tour guide of the community.



Sun City's "Shop Lifter."



AS MAGNETIC AS a wet-paint sign is Sun City's new open-air bus service, dubbed the "Shop-Lifter." Unable to resist testing its comfort are Mrs. Lester Parry (left) and Mrs. George Millard, both Sun City residents.

'Shop-Lifter' To Provide Local Transit Service

A new community service, transportation throughout the Sun City area, was inaugurated this week, as the "Shop-Lifter", a 25 seat capacity open trailer, began making the rounds, picking up passengers

Designed to provide easy transportation for persons who do not drive or have no other means available, the Shop-Lifter, furnished by the Del E. Webb Development Co., is pulled by a jeep.

Routes and scheduled times for stops are being worked out, reports Tom Austin, Sun City activities director, and will be made available to residents as soon as possible.

"Because of the large area to be covered, we will be unable to give house to house service," Austin said. "Routes will be worked out along key points, to the best advantage of all residents."

The Shop-Lifter, custom built, is patterned after similar conveyances seen at such places as Disneyland. It is equipped with seats covered in all-weather washable plastic and roofed over completely with a colorfully striped canvas canopy to afford passengers protection from the elements. The conveyance is equipped with passengers signals to indicate stops.

SC Jul 1969



HELPING FIRST PASSENGER, Mrs. Margaret Steffek, to board Sun City's new bus are (l-r) property manager Gaylen Bartlett and project manager for the Del E. Webb

Development Co., Owen Childress. Driver Tony Fay stands in doorway.

City Gets Big New Bus

The Sun City Bus Line has acquired a new bus with larger seating capacity, more head room, plush 34-inch wide seats, and stainless steel handrails.

The new vehicle, freshly painted; in Sun City colors and sunburst, was put into service Dec. 15 during a regular run, according to Gaylen Bartlett, property manager for the Del E. Webb Development Co.

Mrs. Margaret Steffek of 11020 Cumberland Dr., the only passenger in the regular bus at the time, was transferred at the Sun City Professional Building to become the first passenger on the new transportation unit.

To commemorate the occasion, the Webb Company issued Mrs. Steffek a lifetime pass on the Sun City Bus Lines.

The new equipment was

bought in preparation for future expansion of bus routes in the community.

The new bus is a Blue Bird and features tinted glass throughout and a chime system for passengers signaling their stops.

"This fine new equipment is part of our policy to provide Sun City residents with the best possible transportation service," Bartlett said.

Builder wants to drop Sun City buses

By JOHN J. HARRIGAN

SUN CITY — Sun City bus customers may find themselves thumbing for a ride in the near future.

Del E. Webb Development Co., does not want to continue to operate what it says is an expensive, unprofitable service. But many residents say they bought homes, in part, because the service was promised.

Webb Development (DEVCO) President John W. Meeker said last week that the company will finish up its building program here by the end of the year.

In conjunction with that, it has been divesting itself of golf courses, recreation centers and soon DEVCO officials hope to unload the bus service and costly road medians.

The grassy medians will be converted to desert vegetation to eliminate the high cost of maintenance and then turned over to the county.

Meeker could give no exact date when the company would give up the bus service but noted, "We're getting out of the community by the end of the year with our building program. We'll still be running our shopping centers, though," he said.

Meeker said the development company was spending \$90,000 a year to subsidize the buses. Passengers pay 35 cents a ride.

Most Sun City bus riders are single, widowed women or people unable to drive because of physical handicaps. In a city where wheelchairs are common, no bus is equipped with wheelchair lifts.

Discontinuance of the franchise, or the transfer to another franchise, would require Arizona Corporation Commission approval, commission officials said.

The commission has not been approached by DEVCO for discontinuance of Sun City routes, but it has been asked by DEVCO for a franchise on bus routes in Sun City West.

Recreation centers will operate the buses in Sun City West and the costs will be subsidized through annual recreation center fees.

Meeker said he would like to see recreation centers in Sun City operate the existing system. "They own all the facilities and they are the only ones that collect money," he said.

The three bus routes are served by three, 25-passenger, non-air conditioned school buses which carry an average of 1,000 passengers monthly in a city of 50,000 people. A fourth bus is kept in reserve. Service drops off in summer, along with passenger use.

Mike Britt, Devco's vice president in charge of property management, estimated that it would cost the 12,000

annual passengers \$3 to \$4 per trip if all costs came from their own pockets.

"There is a possibility of a discontinuance of service," said Britt, "It depends on what we find the needs are, and what the people are willing to pay for."

The bus line, as it exists, could only survive with a large subsidy. "But we can't expect a service organization to come up with \$90,000 a year," he said. Some of the local service organizations are being sounded out quietly to see if any are interested in operating the buses, he added.

DEVCO's phasing out in Sun City already has begun. Presumably its withdrawal from bus operation will be smooth. "Our history has shown we have always done everything we can to make a smooth transition," Britt said, adding that the buses probably will be sold for a "nominal fee."

The four buses date from the early to mid-1970s, and have been driven an average of 150,000 miles each and need replacement, he said.

Britt said there would be no problem finding local talent to operate the service. "We're sitting on one of the largest resources of talent and experience in the world," he said.

Sun City's potential market of 50,000 residents has not been overlooked by private enter-

Handi-Car Inc., a private bus service operating 16 Dial-A-Ride-type vans in Tucson, has surveyed the Sun City area, according to Stephen Spitzer, manager-owner. "We're awaiting a decision from Del E. Webb Development Co., and the citizens before making any direct moves," he said.

Handi-Car transports people with "mobility limitations" but operates under contract to large agencies such as Veterans Administration hospitals, which reimburse the company at the rate of \$2.50 per trip plus 50 cents a mile.

Federal subsidies, for some communities, are the solution to mass transportation problems. Glendale offsets half of its \$179,000 annual bus operating costs with federal subsidy. Federal funds also paid for 80 percent of the \$100,615 cost of the buses. Senior citizens pay 25 cents and regular passengers pay 50 cents.

Are transportation experts agreed the pathway to federal funds would be smoother if Sun City incorporated.

Robert Thake, public transit planning coordinator for the State Department of Transportation, estimated that a workable bus system for Sun City probably would require a grant of \$200,000.

New bus costs range from \$12,000 to \$65,000, depending on passenger size. Smaller buses are favored by Sun City riders.

Thake said the public has become accustomed to getting cheap bus service and expects it to continue. "They are going to pay one way or the other," he said, indicating it would come either through local taxation, federal taxes or the fare box.

The answer to the entire bus problem, he said, would be a regional bus transit system rather than a number of independent systems. (One cannot transfer from a Sun City bus to a Phoenix Transit bus).

Ellis Danner, presi-

dent of the Homeowners Association of Sun City and former member of an Illinois Transportation Study Commission said homeowners here could subsidize the system with a \$2 per person annual assessment added to the \$40 annual recreation center fee. "The question is, will everyone pay \$2 a year to subsidize a bus service that only a few of them use?"

Thake said free rides could be provided to everyone for a flat fee of \$36 per year per household. But he said a nominal fare of even 10 cents was important to discourage riders from abusing the system, as they did when free bus service was tried for the elderly in Tucson.

Trolley Sponsors

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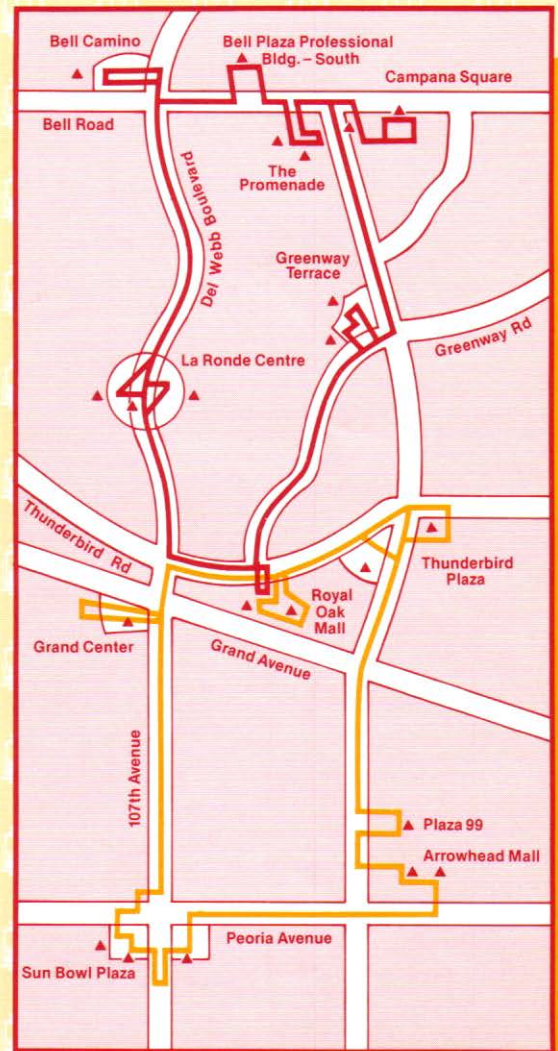
Trolleys depart from Royal Oak Shopping Mall every 45 minutes. One North route and one South route. Sun City's Trolleys run a North-South route stopping at major shopping malls.

Stops - South

- 1) Royal Oak Mall
- 2) First Federal Savings at Grand Center
- 3) Grand Center
- 4) Sun Bowl Plaza West
- 5) First Federal Savings at Sun Bowl Plaza East
- 6) Arrowhead Mall, East entrance
- 7) Arrowhead Mall, West entrance
- 8) Plaza 99, near tower
- 9) Thunderbird Plaza, near Western Savings
- 10) First Federal Savings near Thunderbird Plaza
- 11) The Carillons

Stops - North

- 1) Royal Oak Mall
- 2) Greenway Terrace Shopping Center at Walgreens
- 3) First Federal Savings at Greenway Terrace Shopping Center
- 4) First Federal Savings, 99th Ave. & Bell Road
- 5) Campana Square
- 6) The Promenade (2 stops)
- 7) Bell Plaza Professional Building South
- 8) Bell Camino Shopping Center
- 9) La Ronde Shopping Centre West
- 10) First Federal Savings at La Ronde Shopping Centre East
- 11) La Ronde Shopping Centre, Central Area



Legend

-  Trolley Stop
-  Shopping Center
-  North Route
-  South Route

TRANSIT

FROM A1

Total Transit to provide service in the West Valley, including the Sun Cities.

Total Transit, the parent company for Discount Cab, took over the rides for disabled passengers in January. Trips for those passengers are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Total Transit also transports passengers who need trips for medical reasons such as chemotherapy and dialysis.

Pitt rode with Discount Cab in January, and has three trips scheduled for this month.

She said the drivers were nice although she gave them mixed reviews for punctuality. Some drivers arrived early while others were late picking her up for her appointments.

"It's just a matter of getting used to this service," she said.

Pitt is concerned with the area the new service covers — the Valley Metro program covers trips only in Sun City and

Youngtown, but does not go into Sun City West, Surprise or Peoria. Pitt's dentist maintains an office in Peoria.

Valley Metro spokeswoman Susan Tierney said funding for transportation services to those areas will likely be up to individual cities.

Tierney said Valley Metro has not heard any concerns from customers.

The program averaged about 46 weekday trips, and 68 percent of those were covered by ADA, Tierney said. The other trips were either life-sustaining trips covered by the program or non-medical trips available because of space availability.

Wayne Haye, a Discount Cab driver who picked Pitt up for a Monday morning doctor's appointment, said the biggest downside he's heard from passengers is they miss meeting friends on the SCAT buses.

"For the most part, people like it," Haye said.

Pitt has also had to find alternate transportation for grocery visits or other errands, asking friends, fellow church members or her landlord for

rides.

"I don't like to ask my neighbors," she said.

Pitt suggested the president of her church council put together a program to help members get around.

"I just hope that something can be resolved that's fair to everyone," she said.

Benevilla has also stepped up to fill the gap left by SCAT when volunteers are available but one of the most important things a passenger can do is become ADA-certified, said president Michelle Dionisio.

Dionisio said Benevilla and other groups are working on both a short-term and long-term plan for transportation in the area.

Those interested in becoming ADA-certified can request an application from the Valley Metro ADA-certification office by calling 602-534-3157 or by downloading the ADA Application for Persons with Disabilities at www.valleymetro.org.

For more information, including service times and reservations go to yourwestvalley.com.

Timetable set for Grand widening

ADOT updates Sun City
Home Owners
Association

JEFF DEMPSEY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Arizona Department of Transportation paid a visit to the Sun City Home Owners Association Tuesday morning, where the board and the people in attendance were given another update on the Grand Avenue widening project. The project calls for widening Grand Avenue to three lanes in both directions between 83rd Avenue and Loop 303 and is set to begin in late summer or early fall. The project will be done in two phases — 83rd Avenue to 99th Avenue and 99th Avenue to Loop 303 — and should take about 18 months to complete.

SEE GRAND, A3

GRAND

FROM A1

"We will probably start the 83rd to 99th phase first, with the 99th to 303 phase beginning soon after," said ADOT spokesman Brock Barnhart. "You will see six lanes with a raised median in between. Also, there will be room for a bicycle lane on the right, but it will be up to individual jurisdictions to make that designation."

One notable change to the project since the last update, Barnhart said, is the funding.

"This is now entirely funded by federal money, due to the stimulus plan," Barnhart said.

Still, the money is not there for some of the changes Sun City residents want to see — grade separations such as the tunnel at the intersection of Grand, 59th and Glendale Avenues, for example.

"I think we need to have more patience than I have seen with this project," said SCHOA Director Paul Barnes. "A few years back they said grade separation at Grand and Glendale would be impossible, but look at it

now. We have a tunnel."

Barnhart said the decision to implement grade separations is being discussed, although those decisions are not made by ADOT.

"The Maricopa Association of Governments is the agency responsible for those decisions," Barnhart said. "They decide how the money is spent. We're the implementers, not the decision-makers."

Barnhart added, however, ADOT takes all public comments to heart, that suggestions from the community are relayed to MAG.

"We need to hear this criticism, we need all the feedback we can get. That's why we have these meetings," Barnhart said.

From 2011-2015, Barnhart said there is about \$64 million available for improvements, which could include grade separations at intersections such as Grand and 103rd avenues, Grand and 107th avenues or Grand Avenue and Bell Road.

"Unfortunately, \$64 million doesn't go very far, but that is why it is so important that we hear from the community," Barnhart said. "There is always more need than there is money

to spend. Again, MAG will decide what to do with that \$64-million. We have to wait for direction from them."

For those concerned about the impact construction will have, Barnhart said ADOT is taking steps to minimize the inconvenience. Noise-mitigating walls measuring 12 feet will be set up around construction areas, and all construction will be done at night. Barnhart added that ADOT also has to meet federal standards of environmental impact, so the construction should not pose any health hazards as far as dust or other pollutants are concerned.

Barnhart concluded by asking anyone with questions or concerns, especially once construction begins, to contact ADOT immediately.

"We want to hear those comments," Barnhart said. "We're very big on public involvement."

To contact Barnhart, call 602-712-8147 or e-mail him at bbarnhart@azdot.gov. For information, visit www.valleyfreeways.com.

Jeff Dempsey may be reached at 623-876-2531 or jdempsey@yourwestvalley.com.

Residents review proposals

By Rusty Bradshaw
Independent Newspapers

Work could begin less than a year away on the Grand Avenue widening project and Arizona Department of Transportation officials continue to gather public input to shape the project.

While the general purpose of the effort is clear — add a third traffic lane in each direction — ADOT officials want to hear from people about specific details of their area project. The widening is planned from 83rd Avenue to Loop 303 and will be done in four phases, with the majority of the actual roadway widening coming in the first phase of construction, according to Brock Barnhart, ADOT spokesman. Work is expected to start in the fall of 2009 with project completion projected 18 months later, he added.

"We are confident we will move forward with this project despite the downturn in the economy," Mr. Barnhart said.

Related Link

www.dot.state.az.us

Northwest Valley residents got another chance to express their ideas and concerns during open house presentations Dec. 2 in Sun City and El Mirage.

Much of the concern in the Sun City area revolves around pedestrian safety. Youngtown Councilwoman Margaret Chittenden urged ADOT officials to revisit their plans for crosswalks painted on the roadways at major intersections. She suggested they further study pedestrian patterns. ADOT maps at the open house showed a crosswalk across Grand Avenue on the east side at 111th Avenue. However, Ms. Chittenden argued it should be on the west side of the intersection.

"People use that to go to Jack In the Box," she said. "People aren't going to walk across Grand to get to the car wash."

Other residents are worried

they will not have enough time to cross Grand Avenue in crosswalks because of the timing of walk signals and traffic lights. Mr. Barnhart said pedestrian signals in the Sun City corridor will be timed slower than at other intersections in the Valley specifically to address the older population. He also said countdown timers on the pedestrian signals will tell walkers how long they have before the signal changes.

Medians will also include Americans with Disabilities Act compliant waiting areas for pedestrian and wheelchair traffic not able to get across all six lanes at once, according to Bob Hansman, ADOT representative.

Other residents expressed concerns about vehicle traffic issues. Some were concerned about train and emergency vehicle access at intersections and how that would affect traffic. Dennis Ecker, ADOT repre-

See Grand — Page 3

Grand

Continued From Page 1

sentative, said all signals will include preemption devices to halt traffic when trains or emergency vehicles use the intersections. In response to one resident's question, he also said right turns on a red light from the far right west-bound lane of Grand Avenue will be allowed unless preempted by a passing train.

Funding for the project comes from the Regional Transportation Project with a half-cent sales tax increase approved by voters in 2004. Mr. Barnhart said there are also federal highway dollars available.

The roadway is targeted for widening because it is a primary urban arterial and a link to Wick-

enburg and destinations beyond, including Las Vegas, Mr. Barnhart said. ADOT officials project 25,000 vehicles daily will use Grand Avenue by 2010 and that is expected to nearly double — to 46,100 — by 2025, he added.

Much of the widening will occur in the existing medians to preserve the rights-of way on either side of the roadway, according to Mr. Hansman. He said the finished project will include raised medians with extra turn pockets.

"We will also be synchronizing the (traffic) lights to try and diminish stoppage," he said. "We are still working on just how this will be done."

ADOT will install rubberized asphalt to help reduce tire noise, Mr. Hansman said. In addition, a section of Grand Avenue between 99th and 111th avenues will get pavement reconstruction, includ-

ing rubberized asphalt.

"We found the pavement in that area was in such shape that we could not just repair it, it had to be replaced," he said.

ADOT crews will install sound walls on the south side of Grand Avenue between 105th Avenue and Coggins Drive and between 108th and 111th avenues to further reduce noise for condominium owners adjacent to Grand Avenue in those locations. ADOT officials, following some confusion over the ownership of common walls during a presentation to Sun City Homeowners Association in April, talked with condo association officials to determine owners preferences.

"They had three choices — leave it as is, replace their walls with ours or have our wall built parallel to theirs," Mr. Barnhart said. "Their preference was to have ours built parallel to theirs."

Most of the construction work will be conducted at night to minimize traffic interruption, according to Mr. Barnhart. However, two lanes of travel in both directions will be maintained at all times, he added.

Mr. Barnhart said ADOT officials are also mindful of Sun City's year-long 50th anniversary celebration being planned for 2010.

"We will do everything we can to minimize the impact on that celebration," he said.

SUN CITY BUS LINE ROUTES

Bus No. 11 — North/South (Counterclockwise/Yellow Line) — 103rd/107th

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:00 | 10:15 | 11:30 | 12:45 | 2:00 | 3:15 |
| Sun Dial Rec Center | 9:05 | 10:20 | 11:35 | 12:50 | 2:05 | 3:20 |
| Greenway Terrace SC | 9:08 | 10:23 | 11:38 | 12:53 | 2:08 | 3:23 |
| Sales Complex/Model Homes | 9:15 | 10:30 | 11:45 | 1:00 | 2:15 | 3:30 |
| La Ronde Centre (west side) | 9:22 | 10:37 | 11:52 | 1:07 | 2:22 | 3:37 |
| Thunderbird Blvd./Del Webb | 9:27 | 10:42 | 11:57 | 1:12 | 2:27 | 3:42 |
| Boswell Hospital | 9:30 | 10:45 | 12:00 | 1:15 | 2:30 | 3:45 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:35 | 10:50 | 12:05 | 1:20 | 2:35 | 3:50 |
| Post Office:SC Prof. Bldg. | 9:40 | 10:55 | 12:10 | 1:25 | 2:40 | 3:55 |
| Grand Center | 9:45 | 11:00 | 12:15 | 1:30 | 2:45 | 4:00 |
| Sun Bowl Plaza Center | 9:50 | 11:05 | 12:20 | 1:35 | 2:50 | 4:05 |
| Mountain View Rec Center | 9:52 | 11:07 | 12:22 | 1:37 | 2:52 | 4:07 |
| Kelso & 110th Ave. | 9:55 | 11:10 | 12:25 | 1:40 | 2:55 | 4:10 |
| 103rd & Peoria | 9:58 | 11:13 | 12:28 | 1:43 | 2:58 | 4:13 |
| Sun Valley Lodge/Post Office | 10:00 | 11:15 | 12:30 | 1:45 | 3:00 | 4:15 |
| Kings Inn/Grand Center | 10:04 | 11:19 | 12:34 | 1:49 | 3:04 | 4:19 |
| Boswell Hospital | 10:10 | 11:25 | 12:40 | 1:55 | 3:10 | 4:25 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 10:12 | 11:27 | 12:42 | 1:57 | 3:12 | 4:30 |

Bus No. 21 — North/South (Clockwise/Red Line) — 107th/103rd

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:00 | 10:15 | 11:30 | 12:45 | 2:00 | 3:15 |
| Lakeview Lanes/Rec Center | 9:05 | 10:20 | 11:35 | 12:50 | 2:05 | 3:20 |
| Grand Center | 9:10 | 10:25 | 11:40 | 12:55 | 2:10 | 3:25 |
| 107th & Oakmont | 9:12 | 10:27 | 11:42 | 12:57 | 2:12 | 3:27 |
| Oakmont & 103rd (Sun Valley Lodge) | 9:15 | 10:30 | 11:45 | 1:00 | 2:15 | 3:30 |
| Peoria & 103rd | 9:20 | 10:35 | 11:50 | 1:05 | 2:20 | 3:35 |
| Kelso & 111th Ave. | 9:22 | 10:37 | 11:52 | 1:07 | 2:22 | 3:37 |
| 107th & Kelso | 9:27 | 10:42 | 11:57 | 1:12 | 2:27 | 3:42 |
| Plaza del Sol Shopping Center | 9:30 | 10:45 | 12:00 | 1:15 | 2:30 | 3:45 |
| 107th & Oakmont | 9:34 | 10:49 | 12:04 | 1:19 | 2:34 | 3:49 |
| Oakmont & 103rd | 9:36 | 10:51 | 12:06 | 1:21 | 2:36 | 3:51 |
| Post Office/Sun Valley Lodge | 9:37 | 10:52 | 12:07 | 1:22 | 2:37 | 3:52 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:40 | 10:55 | 12:10 | 1:25 | 2:40 | 3:55 |
| Lakeview Lanes/Rec Center | 9:43 | 10:58 | 12:13 | 1:28 | 2:43 | 3:58 |
| La Ronde Centre (east side) | 9:45 | 11:00 | 12:15 | 1:30 | 2:45 | 4:00 |
| Sales Office/Model Homes | 9:50 | 11:05 | 12:20 | 1:35 | 2:50 | 4:05 |
| Greenway Terrace SC | 9:57 | 11:12 | 12:27 | 1:42 | 2:57 | 4:12 |
| Sun Dial Rec Center | 10:03 | 11:18 | 12:33 | 1:48 | 3:03 | 4:18 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 10:10 | 11:25 | 12:40 | 1:55 | 3:10 | 4:30 |

Bus No. 31 — (Peripheral/Blue Line) (Same schedule every hour On Hour)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | |
| East on Thunderbird Blvd. to | |
| Royal Oak/100th Ave. to Lancaster | |
| Thunderbird Plaza SC | 00:05 |
| Cross 99th to Royal Ridge to 98th | |
| To Thunderbird (Chalet Apts) | 00:07 |
| Bolivar & Boswell Blvd. | 00:10 |
| Sun Dial Rec Center | 00:13 |
| Greenway Terrace SC | 00:18 |
| Greenway Rd. & Bowling Green | 00:20 |
| Hutton & 99th | 00:25 |
| Hutton & Del Webb Blvd. | 00:30 |
| Mead & Agua Fria | 00:35 |
| La Ronde Centre | 00:37 |
| Thunderbird Blvd. & Del Webb Blvd. | 00:40 |
| Grant Center | 00:42 |
| Boswell Hospital | 00:45 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 00:52 |

(Repeats route every hour)

SUN CITY BUS LINE

Schedules run continuously Monday through Saturday beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bus No. 11 and No. 21 end at 4:30 p.m. and Bus No. 31 ends at 4:00 p.m. daily. All times listed are approximate and could vary a few minutes either way.

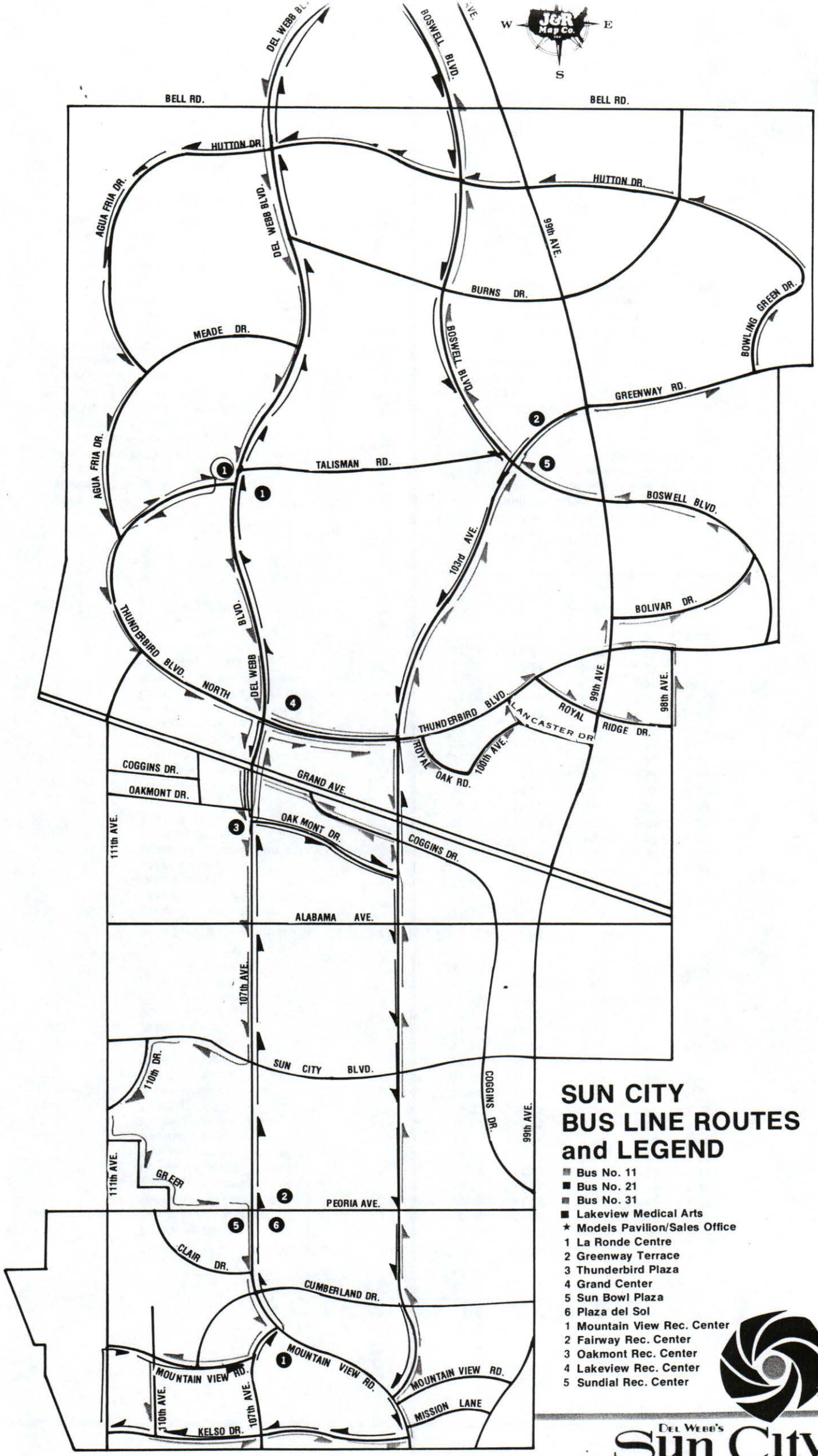
Fare: 25 cents
Tickets:
10 rides — \$1.75
20 rides — \$3.00

Transfers are free, good between Peripheral (No. 31) and either North/South (No. 11 & 21). Transfers cannot be used between North/South buses.

Effective Date:
October, 1974

Information: 974-7516





SUN CITY BUS LINE ROUTES and LEGEND

- Bus No. 11
- Bus No. 21
- Bus No. 31
- Lakeview Medical Arts
- ★ Models Pavilion/Sales Office
- 1 La Ronde Centre
- 2 Greenway Terrace
- 3 Thunderbird Plaza
- 4 Grand Center
- 5 Sun Bowl Plaza
- 6 Plaza del Sol
- 1 Mountain View Rec. Center
- 2 Fairway Rec. Center
- 3 Oakmont Rec. Center
- 4 Lakeview Rec. Center
- 5 Sundial Rec. Center



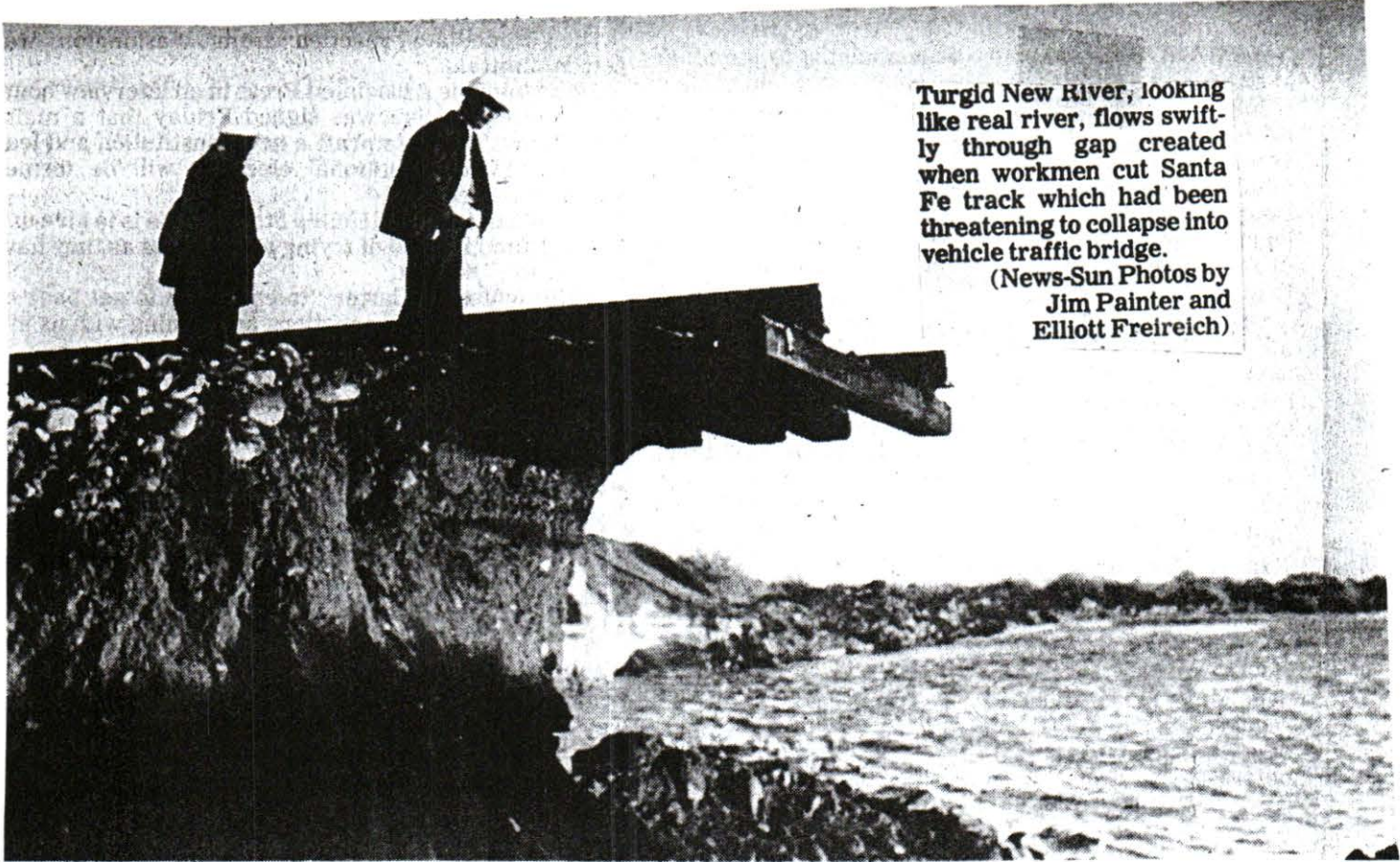
DEL WEBB'S
Sun City

Washout fouls Santa Fe line

Junk cars find final use as fill for eroded roadbed

Fast-moving water eroded earth under trestle until by Thursday before noon it was evident something would have to be done. Railroad construction crew, at right, ponders action.





Turgid New River, looking like real river, flows swiftly through gap created when workmen cut Santa Fe track which had been threatening to collapse into vehicle traffic bridge.

(News-Sun Photos by Jim Painter and Elliott Freireich)



Workmen sever ties to let sagging track fall into water. First attempts at filling gap with cars failed when they floated away instead of sinking. Later, when track was

cut, about 3 p.m., crews were able to embed cars in rapidly growing channel.

Republic - May 29, '82

Webb Co. to end bus service in Sun City area

By Steve Yozwiak
Northwest Valley Bureau

SUN CITY — The Del E. Webb Development Co. announced Friday that it will end its bus service in Sun City and Sun City West effective June 30.

The announcement made official what many here have speculated for months — that Webb would end the bus services when deregulation of transportation, approved by state voters in 1980, takes effect July 1.

“We have operated the service as efficiently as possible through the years,” said Michael Britt, vice president and property manager for Webb.

“But due to increased operational and maintenance costs and current economic conditions, we can no longer support such a system,” he said.

Earlier this month, a group of Sun City and Youngtown residents began organizing a non-

profit corporation to create a door-to-door bus service for the two retirement communities.

Charles McKinnis, acting head of the group, said Friday’s announcement makes the need for an alternate bus service even greater.

Additional bus service was needed to supplement Webb’s fixed-route service anyway, McKinnis said.

“It just makes it more crucial now that we get it going,” he said.

However, the proposed corporation needs the same item Webb lacked to run the system — money.

McKinnis said the greatest need his group has is for someone experienced in fund raising and management.

“I hope they have 100 percent success with it,” Britt said. “I think they can (do it) if the community can get behind them, which is what it’s going to take.”

McKinnis said he planned to invite Britt to one of the group’s steering committee meetings next week.

“We would be willing to offer them out experience along the lines of organization,” Britt said.

Webb has operated buses in Sun City since 1966 and in Sun City West since 1978.

A study conducted by Webb in 1981 showed the cost of operating the bus services, which serves 2 percent of the 45,000 population here, was nearly \$6 per person per ride.

Webb applied with the Arizona Corporation Commission last year to raise fares in Sun City to \$1.50 from 35 cents each ride but was turned down in November.

“The fare increase needed to maintain the system would have been (too costly) to almost

Do not have → Bus, B2

County to Sun City: live with floods



Traffic snarled as rain flooded area streets last week. (News-Sun photo)

By HELEN ALLEN
Staff Writer

Sun Citians will have to live with occasional street flooding, say two Maricopa County officials.

"There's not a whole lot we can really do about it except to rebuild," remarked Wayne Collins, deputy county engineer.

And the cost of rebuilding, he commented, would "boggle the mind."

"IF WE PUT in storm channels and storm ditches," said county Board of Supervisors Chairman Hawley Atkinson, a Sun Citian, "someone will pay for it and that will be the homeowner."

Besides, he added, "it's too late to correct what we have."

The supervisor conceded that "nobody" was equipped to handle

the type of storm which hit the Sun Cities area last Thursday.

"WHEN GOD dumps 2.25 inches of rain on a community, there's nothing you can do about it," he declared.

"The only way to handle that kind of rain is with underground storm ditches, but they're expensive to build.

"You build in a reasonable and prudent manner and that is what was done here."

Drainage systems in Sun City are good up to a point, Atkinson said, but added he was unhappy that streets were designed to take water run-offs.

"BUT THE county accepted it, and that's the way it is," he commented.

Both Atkinson and Collins suggested that run-offs have to be

expected when farm lands give way to pavement, house roofs and plastic ground coverings.

"It all adds up to a run-off as the water can't go into the ground," said Atkinson.

Plastic ground covers, Collins remarked, do make a difference: "They make an area that is naturally dirt and absorbent impervious."

The deputy engineer said one project being considered for Sun City is adding more holes in the curbing along the 99th Avenue drainage ditch.

He said this is expected to be done in the near future.

INCREASING THE size of the ditch, which overflowed in Thursday's storm, the engineer said, "would be a huge job and not cost-effective."

As for future development in the area, Collins said the county is thinking of requesting more on-site drainage to keep rainwater from spilling into the streets.

Recommendations, according to the deputy engineer, may include such things as a golf course lake to retain the water or depressions which would help minimize the run-off.

Del E. Webb Development Co. officials, meanwhile, maintain that drainage systems are more adequate in the Sun Cities than other areas of the county.

"In comparison to the rest of Maricopa County," said Tom Ryan, senior vice president and land manager for Devco, right after last week's storm, "we probably had less of a problem in flooding conditions."

Trolleys begin SC schedule

Molly Trolley commenced its free services at 9 a.m. Wednesday in Sun City.

Schedules will be available next week at each store that participated in providing the free service

to Sun Citians. Both trolleys will stop every 45 minutes at the following locations:

Royal Oak Mall, the Carrillons, Thunderbird Plaza, First Federal at Greenway Terrace, Cam-

pana Square, the Promenade, Bell Plaza Professional Center, First Federal at Bell Camino, First Federal at La Ronde Centre, First Federal at Grand Center, First Federal at Sun Bowl Plaza; Arrowhead Mall, Plaza 99 and back to Royal Oak Mall.

Trolleys will be leaving from Royal Oak at these times:

9 a.m., 9:45, 10:30, 11:15, 12 noon, 12:45 p.m., 1:30, 2:15, 3, 3:45, 4:30, 5:15.

The last trolley finishes its run at 6 p.m.

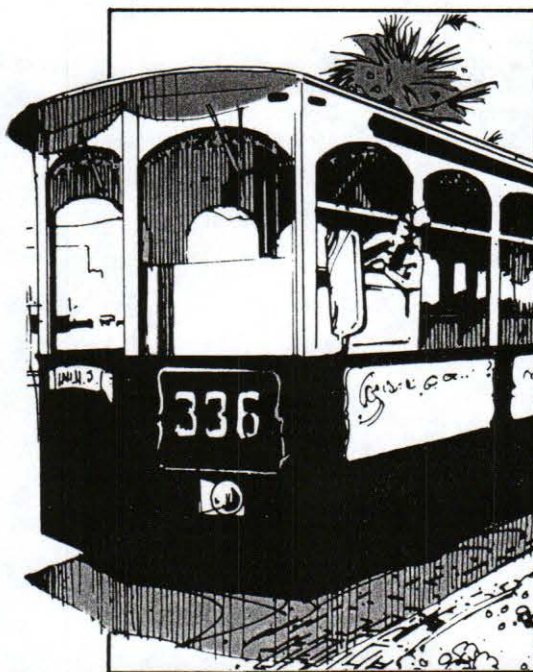
Sun City sales manager Joan McCarthy (972-6851) says only nine signs are left open for potential advertisers.

Trolley Sponsors

Arlene Wigs & Sculptured Nails
World of Fabrics
Booktraders
Arizona Video Cassettes
Gold Rush Men's Wear
Boutique 99
Marnel's
Fritz's Coins & Antiques
Plaza 99 Merchants Association
The House of Stewart
Heritage House
Plaza Del Sol Cleaners
Phil Carr Travel
Alexander's Sun Bowl
Restaurant
Custom Lingerie Faye's No. 1
Sun Bowl Plaza Merchants Assn.
Beall's Sportswear
First Federal Savings and Loan
Lakeside Florist
Union 76
Upholstery Decorator's Service
Stripping Workshop
Western Savings
Alice Rae Shops
Value Discount Drug Center
Thunderbird Plaza Merchants
Association
Valley Travel
Maharani Creations
Harris Trust of Arizona
Colbert Insurance Agency
Cash, Sullivan and Cross
Prudential Insurance Company
Zahona Gift Shop
Van's Golf Pro Shop
Mehagian's TV-Stereo
Bert's Shoes
Ann's Beauty Salon
Bakatar Imports
Frankal's Fashions
Earl's Restaurant and Cocktails
Lisa K's Party Shop
Senior Insurance
Sunburst Fashions
Westree Art Gallery
Heddy's House of Wigs
Der Kaffee Kuchen Pastrys
Grandma's Bakery & Restaurant

Lady Marden's - Fashions for
Fuller Figure
New Man Hair
Al Zuni - Turquoise of Arizona
Grand Center Merchants Assn.
Mail Boxes, Etc.
Royal Oak Fashions
Royal Oak Hair Studio
Design Expressions
Village Inn Pancake House
SupeRx Drugs
Kathy's Kids
Arizona Coin Exchange
Yogurt Affaire
Diet Center
Off the Wall Beds
Ria's Fashion Carousel
Daisy Patch
Tres Arcos
Wild Daisy
Paul Johnson's Jewelers
La Ronde Centre Merchants Assn.
Fashions Continental Dress Salon
Bell Camino Center Merchants
Association
Campana Fashions
D'Alesio Dry Cleaners
Video Land
Red Lobster
Jean's Sportogs
Lou Register
Rutherford's
Kaptive Korner
Glencora
Angela's Hair Studio
The Atrium Florist
Vitamin House
Merle Norman Cosmetics
Setterberg Jewelers
Jarrett's Travel Service
Greenway Terrace Center
Merchants Association
Sun City Silvercraft
Sun Beauty Coiffures
The Promenade Merchants
Association
Hickory Farms
The Carrillons

RIDE THE SUN CITY TROLLEY



Charter Information

Extend your fun on Molly 1 and Dolly 11 by chartering a trolley for your special events. Charters are available evenings Mondays-Saturday and all day Sunday. Please call the Molly Corporation at (602) 941-2957 for information.



The Molly Corporation
Farmer's Market
7223 Second Street
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251
(602) 941-2957

It's your free
shopping trolley,
go-to-lunch trolley,
sight-seeing trolley,
here-to there trolley,
fun-to-ride trolley!

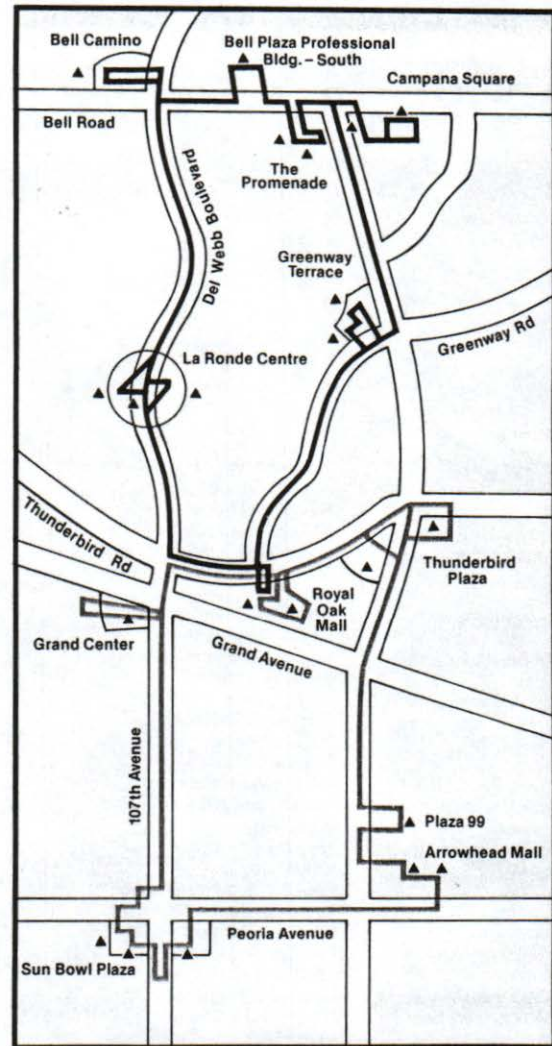
Trolleys depart from Royal Oak Shopping Mall every 45 minutes. One North route and one South route. Sun City's Trolleys run a North-South route stopping at major shopping malls.

Stops - South





- 1) Royal Oak Mall
- 2) First Federal Savings at Grand Center
- 3) Grand Center
- 4) Sun Bowl Plaza West
- 5) First Federal Savings at Sun Bowl Plaza East
- 6) Arrowhead Mall, East entrance
- 7) Arrowhead Mall, West entrance
- 8) Plaza 99, near tower
- 9) Thunderbird Plaza, near Western Savings
- 10) First Federal Savings near Thunderbird Plaza
- 11) The Carillons

Stops - North

- 1) Royal Oak Mall
- 2) Greenway Terrace Shopping Center at Walgreens
- 3) First Federal Savings at Greenway Terrace Shopping Center
- 4) First Federal Savings, 99th Ave. & Bell Road
- 5) Campana Square
- 6) The Promenade (2 stops)
- 7) Bell Plaza Professional Building South
- 8) Bell Camino Shopping Center
- 9) La Ronde Shopping Centre West
- 10) First Federal Savings at La Ronde Shopping Centre East
- 11) La Ronde Shopping Centre, Central Area



Legend

-  Trolley Stop
-  Shopping Center
-  North Route
-  South Route

Molley trolleys to quit for summer

By MIKE GARRETT
Financial Editor

Saturday will be the last day the two Molly trolleys will be carrying passengers in the Sun City area.

The service will shut down until Oct. 15, according to Craig Van Zee, operations manager for the Molly Corp. "We hope to have three trolleys next year and increase our Sun City coverage to include some of the residential areas."

Van Zee said prior commitments to run the two trolleys in Kansas City this summer and the fact it's too hot here to run unair-conditioned trolleys in the summer were the chief reasons for discontinuing service.

ANOTHER REASON, according to A.W. Brooks, the Del E. Webb Realty & Management Co. leasing representative instrumental in bringing the trol-

leys to Sun City, was a concern by area merchants that since summer traffic here is greatly reduced, it wouldn't merit the expense of advertising on the trolleys.

"I am tremendously pleased at the amount of ridership and that the trolley is doing what it was meant to do and that is providing a quick way to get around the retail community," said Brooks.

Merchant revenues supported the trolleys during its initial five-month season, allowing passengers to ride free.

VAN ZEE SAID the Molly Corp. was also impressed with overall response from Sun Citians, particularly those who are stuck at home with no other means of transportation.

He said it may become necessary to charge a quarter a ride in the fall, an expense which

Sun Citians have indicated to the company they will pay.

Sun Citian Leonard Kist, who was one of the trolley drivers the five months they were in operation here, said he is also exploring the possibility of having his own trolley service to operate during the summer months or to replace the Molly trolleys in the fall if advertising revenue fails to support them.

"I TALKED TO people riding the trolley and almost 100 percent of Sun Citians were in favor of it and they want it to continue through the summer," said Kist.

According to an informal survey, Kist said 80 percent of Phase I residents and 60 percent in Phase II stay in Sun City year-round while in Phase III almost everyone leaves.

"I noticed the trolleys were used mostly by Phase I people

and some had cars but still used the trolley."

KIST THOUGHT it was feasible to expand the trolley service into Peoria, Youngtown, El Mirage and surrounding areas with possible transfers into Phoenix for a nominal fee.

"It's really the most economical way to move people in volume," said Kist, noting that it costs about \$250 a day to operate each trolley and insurance runs about \$15,000 a year. "I think people will pay a reasonable amount to ride it."

Kist thought that if the merchants don't continue support, perhaps he could obtain a grant or backing of some kind to keep the service going.

Kist also thought it was feasible to build more comfortable trolleys with air conditioning and or heaters, than those provided by the Molly Corp.

*Newspaper
4-13-84 P.1*

SC shoppers to get trolley service Nov. 1

Sun Citians will be able to shop via trolley and leave their cars and golf cars at home starting around Nov. 1.

"Molly Trolley" will commence free service around that date. The route calls for traveling from Peoria Avenue north on 99th Avenue to Bell Road, west on Bell to 107th Avenue, south on 107th to Peoria and east on Peoria back to 99th Avenue.

Two trolleys, "Molly" and "Dolly" will stop at each of Sun City's major shopping centers and busi-

nesses along the way about every 30 minutes. The system will eventually include four trolleys with more frequent stops.

A.W. Brooks, leasing manager for Del Webb Realty and Management Co., first thought of the idea to bring a trolley system into Sun City as public transportation to and from the area's shopping centers and businesses.

Del Webb then contracted the Molly Corp. in Scottsdale to implement the system for a five-month period.

Brooks said he hopes the trolleys will increase business from 35 percent of Sun Citians to 45 percent or more by making shopping in Sun City so much more convenient and fun.

"We want to try and keep more Sun Citians shopping in Sun City," said Brooks, who added the trolleys may eventually be used to transport Sun Citians to special events.

The Sun City area merchants and businesses are paying to install and oper-

ate the trolley system, free to all passengers. Each trolley costs about \$40,000.

To date, the following businesses are financing the trolleys by purchasing advertising space on one or more trolleys: Alexander's Sun Bowl Restaurant and delicatessen; Alice Rae Apparel, Arrowhead Shopping Center; Bell Camino Shopping Center; Bell Plaza Professional Building; Campana Fashions; Campana Square; Cash, Sullivan & Cross Insurance; Custom Lingerie Faye's No. 1;

First Federal Savings; Gary Colbert Insurance Agency; Grand Center; Greenway Terrace; Harris Trust; Heritage House; Lakeside Florist; La Ronde Centre; Maharani Creations; New Man's Hair Barber Shop; Paul Johnson Jewelers; Phil Carr Travel Service; Plaza del Sol Cleaners; Prudential; Royal Oak Mall; Senior Insurance; Sun Bowl Plaza; Super RX Drugs; The Promenade; Thunderbird Plaza; Union 76; Upholstery Decorators; Valley Travel; Valerie Drug Center; Western

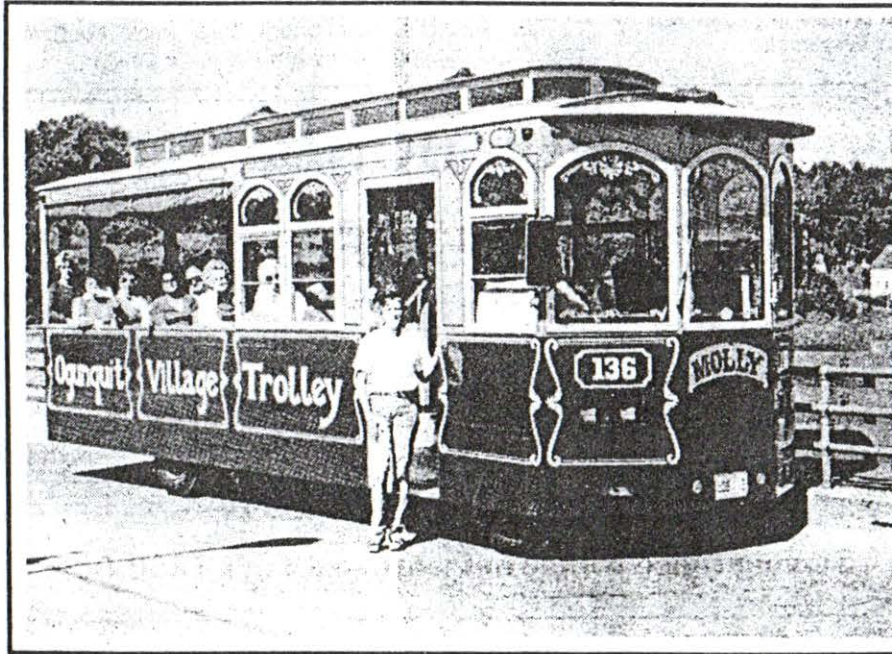
Savings and Woodstriping Workshop.

Trolley advertising space ranges between \$350 for half of an inside ad to \$2,600 for a full outside ad. Businesses interested in ad space may contact Molly Corp. Sun City sales manager Joan McCarthy at 945-0558.

The Molly Corp. operates several trolley systems throughout the country, including the Scottsdale Trolley which has run during the tourist season for the past four years.

Molly Corp. President Scott Merrill says, "We plan to make the Sun City trolley an on-going transportation system with frequent and convenient stops for residents in all parts of Sun City. Sun City area businesses are proving they are willing to finance the trolleys for use by passengers."

"Its success will also depend upon how much the trolleys are used by Sun City residents during the next five months."



Plaza to show trolley

One of the new Sun City trolleys which will begin to service Sun City around Nov. 1, will be on display from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday at Thunderbird Plaza.

Sun Citians are urged to climb aboard the trolley to see what it's all about as part of Thunderbird Plaza's "Trolley Saleabration" Thursday and Friday.

The trolley is just one of many "Trolley Saleabration" activities. 1,000 bumper stickers reading "We Love the Sun City Trolley to Thunderbird Plaza" will be given away

along with 1,000 free ice cream cones starting at 11 a.m. Thursday.

Nostalgic music of the good old trolley days will be provided by Clancy Wolf from 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Sidewalk sales with old-fashioned prices will also be held both days.

Visitors are invited to attend the "Trolley Saleabration" in costumes reminiscent of the trolley days of the late 1800s and all who come in costume will receive a ticket to the inaugural ride of the trolleys when it begins service.

Molly Trolley schedule

Stops—South

Royal Oak Mall—9:00, 9:45, 10:30, 11:15, 12:00, 12:45, 1:30, 2:15, 3:00, 3:45, 4:30, 5:15.

First Federal Savings Grand Center—9:04, 9:49, 10:34, 11:19, 12:04, 12:49, 1:34, 2:19, 3:04, 3:49, 4:34, 5:19.

Grand Center—9:08, 9:53, 10:38, 11:23, 12:08, 12:53, 1:38, 2:23, 3:08, 3:53, 4:38, 5:23.

Sun Bowl Plaza West—9:15, 10:00, 10:45, 11:30, 12:15, 1:00, 1:45, 2:30, 3:15, 4:00, 4:45, 5:30.

First Federal Savings Sun Bowl Plaza East—9:18, 10:03, 10:48, 11:33, 12:18, 1:03, 1:48, 2:33, 3:18, 4:03, 4:46, 5:33.

Arrowhead Mall, East entrance—9:24, 10:09, 10:54, 11:39, 12:24, 1:09, 1:54, 2:39, 3:24, 4:09, 4:54, 5:39.

Arrowhead Mall, West entrance—9:24, 10:09, 10:54, 11:39, 12:24, 1:09, 1:54, 2:39, 3:24, 4:09, 4:54, 5:39.

Plaza 99, near tower—9:26, 10:13, 10:58, 11:43, 12:28, 1:13, 1:58, 2:43, 3:28, 4:13, 4:58, 5:43.

Thunderbird Plaza, Western Savings—9:36, 10:21, 11:06, 11:51, 12:36, 1:21, 2:06, 2:51, 3:36, 4:21, 5:06, 5:51.

First Federal Savings Thunderbird Plaza—9:33, 10:18, 11:03, 11:48, 12:33, 1:18, 2:03, 2:48, 3:33, 4:18, 5:03, 5:48.

The Carillons—9:41, 10:26, 11:11, 11:56, 12:41, 1:26, 2:11, 2:56, 3:41, 4:26, 5:11, 5:56.

Stops—North

Royal Oak Mall—9:00, 9:45, 10:30, 11:15, 12:00, 12:45, 1:30, 2:15, 3:00, 3:45, 4:30, 5:15.

Greenway Terrace Walgreens—9:07, 9:52, 10:37, 11:22, 12:07, 12:52, 1:37, 2:22, 3:07, 3:52, 4:37, 5:22.

First Federal Savings Greenway Terrace—9:09, 9:54, 10:39, 11:24, 12:09, 12:54, 1:39, 2:24, 3:09, 3:54, 4:39, 5:24.

First Federal Savings, 99th Ave. & Bell Road—9:14, 9:59, 10:44, 11:29, 12:14, 12:59, 1:44, 2:29, 3:14, 3:59, 4:44, 5:29.

Campana Square—9:16, 10:01, 10:46, 11:31, 12:16, 1:01, 1:46, 2:31, 3:16, 4:01, 4:46, 5:31.

The Promenade—(2 stops) 9:21, 10:06, 10:51, 11:36, 12:21, 1:06, 1:51, 2:36, 3:21, 4:06, 4:51, 5:36.

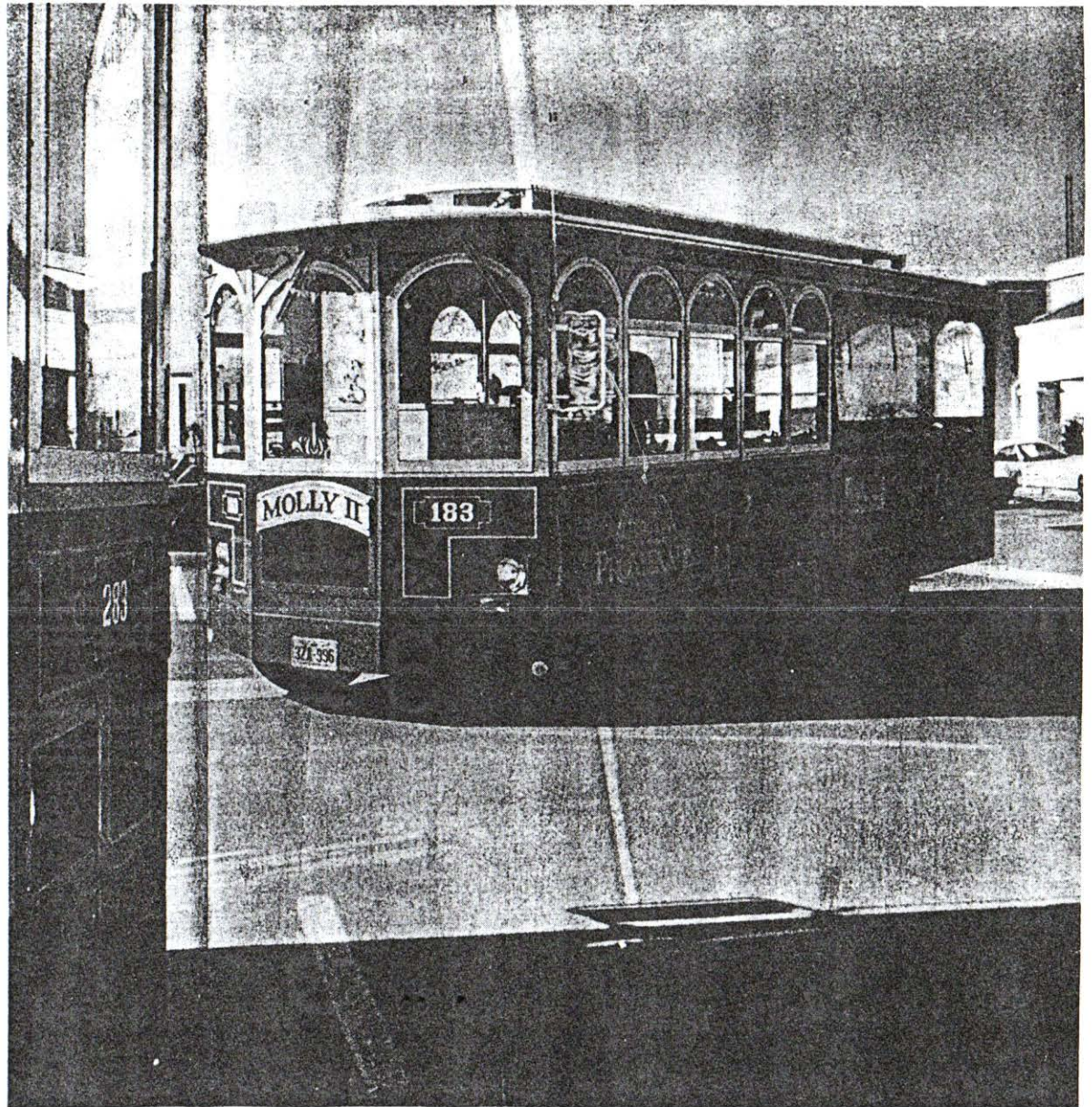
Bell Plaza Professional Building South—9:24, 10:09, 10:54, 11:39, 12:24, 1:09, 1:54, 2:39, 3:24, 4:09, 4:54, 5:39.

Bell Camino Shopping Center—9:29, 10:14, 10:59, 11:44, 12:29, 1:14, 1:59, 2:44, 3:29, 4:14, 4:59, 5:44.

LaRonde Centre West—9:34, 10:19, 11:04, 11:49, 12:34, 1:19, 2:04, 2:49, 3:34, 4:19, 5:04, 5:49.

First Federal Savings LaRonde East—9:36, 10:21, 11:06, 11:51, 12:36, 1:21, 2:06, 2:51, 3:36, 4:21, 5:06, 5:51.

LaRonde Centre Central—9:40, 10:25, 11:10, 11:55, 12:40, 1:25, 2:10, 2:55, 3:40, 4:25, 5:10, 5:55.



Molly II and Dolly II trolleys meet in Royal Oak Mall every 45 minutes to transfer passengers between north and south routes.

News-Sun photos

By M.J. Hoppes

Bus line to connect Sun City, metro area

By GEOFF GORVIN
News-Sun staff

PEORIA — Connecting the Sun City area to the Valley with a public transit system will be one of the first stages of a system that will eventually connect every area of the Valley.

Bus service connecting Sun City, the Paradise Valley Mall and most points between will begin in January as part of the Regional Transit Planning Authority's attempt to create a comprehensive public transit system, said Larry Miller, executive director of the transit authority.

Miller spoke this morning to about 30 area businessmen at Country Meadows during a breakfast meeting sponsored by the Coalition of Westside Chambers of Commerce.

Miller said by the year 2000, the Valley's highway system should be nearly completed and the public will be served by a transit system that will include a bus system, a rail system, Dial-

A-Ride service and a car-pooling system.

People will probably use a combination of those services, with buses an integral part of the transit system, Miller said.

"I feel (bus service) will be improved, both in convenience and energy-wise, and will ultimately be the workhorse in the Valley," Miller said.

Buses are already heavily used in the Central Avenue area where 15,000 people board buses each day, Miller said.

The high demand projected for bus service will lead the transit authority to increase its bus fleet from its current 350 buses to more than 1,000 within a couple years, Miller said.

That will be accomplished with the \$180 million in transit authority funding during the next 20 years, he said.

The transit authority will spend \$8 million during each of the next five years to improve its system and \$5 million a year to

add seating to the system, Miller said.

"Five million dollars adds 1,000 rush-hour seats to the system each day and keeps them going," Miller said. "That's six (bus) routes or 18 to 20 buses."

Increasing the bus fleet by 700 buses will cost the transit authority about \$80 million and about \$100,000 a year to operate and maintain each bus, he said.

Although it appears that the public transit system is intended to increase business to the larger shopping centers in Phoenix, small downtown businesses will also benefit, Miller said.

"We'll have exchange points in such places as downtown Peoria," he said. "Those connections will give people time to stop and shop."

"We have to work on some priority things...to make people see that a transit system is a better way," Miller said.

**CHARTER A
TROLLEY...
JUST FOR THE
FUN OF IT!**

THE TROLLEYS OPERATE MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY ON FOUR SEPARATE ROUTES. TROLLEYS STOP AT THE RESORTS LISTED AND WHERE TROLLEY STOP SIGNS ARE LOCATED IN THE SHOPPING AREAS WE SERVICE. ALL TIMES ARE ARRIVAL TIMES AND MAY VARY SOMEWHAT DUE TO TRAFFIC CONDITIONS.

**RIDE
THE
MOLLY
TROLLEYS**

**FARE: \$1.00 PER RIDE
\$2.00/ ALL DAY PASS**

CHILDREN UNDER 10 RIDE FREE

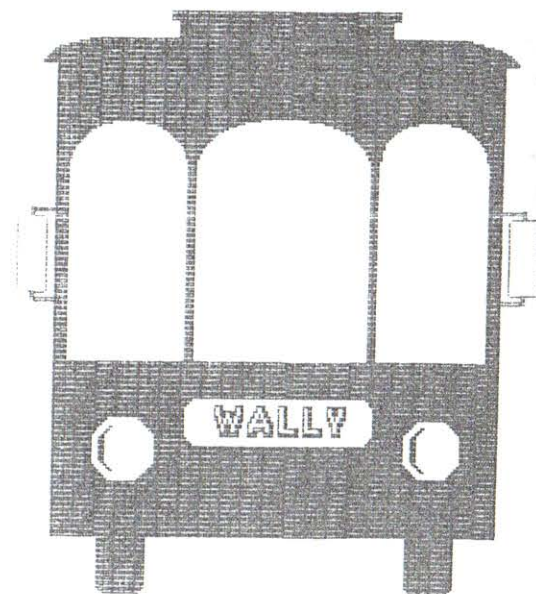
EXACT CHANGE, PLEASE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

MOLLY CORPORATION
7434 E. STETSON DR.
SUITE 145
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA
85251
941-2957

(SEASON PASSES MAY BE PURCHASED BY CALLING 941-2957)

ASK YOUR DRIVER ABOUT THE NEW
NORTH ROUTE !!!



THIS SCHEDULE
EFFECTIVE
OCTOBER 1, 1987

MOLLY TROLLEY SCHEDULE

EAST RESORT TROLLEY

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|------|------|------|
| SCOTTSDALE HILTON | 9:00 | 10:10 | 11:20 | 12:30 | 1:50 | 3:00 | 4:10 |
| SHERATON SCOTTSDALE | 9:04 | 10:14 | 11:24 | 12:34 | 1:54 | 3:04 | 4:14 |
| REGISTRY RESORT | 9:07 | 10:17 | 11:27 | 12:37 | 1:57 | 3:07 | 4:17 |
| INN AT MC CORMICK RANCH | 9:11 | 10:21 | 11:31 | 12:41 | 2:01 | 3:11 | 4:21 |
| HYATT REGENCY SCOTTSDALE | 9:16 | 10:26 | 11:36 | 12:46 | 2:06 | 3:16 | 4:26 |
| EL PUEBLO | 9:21 | 10:31 | 11:41 | 12:51 | 2:11 | 3:21 | 4:31 |
| PIMA GOLF RESORT | 9:26 | 10:36 | 11:46 | 12:56 | 2:16 | 3:26 | 4:36 |
| CAMELVIEW-RADISSON | 9:33 | 10:43 | 11:53 | 1:03 | 2:23 | 3:33 | 4:43 |
| LINCOLN VILLAGE (BORGATA) | 9:39 | 10:49 | 11:59 | <u>1:09</u> | 2:29 | 3:39 | 4:49 |
| HISTORIC OLD TOWN: | | | | | | | |
| 1ST AVE/BROWN | 9:47 | 10:57 | 12:07 | 1:27 | 2:37 | 3:47 | 4:57 |
| MAIN ST/BROWN | 9:50 | 11:00 | 12:10 | 1:30 | 2:40 | 3:50 | 5:00 |
| 5TH AVENUE: | | | | | | | |
| WEST OF 70TH ST | 9:55 | 11:05 | 12:15 | 1:35 | 2:45 | 3:55 | 5:05 |
| STETSON DR./5TH | 9:57 | 11:07 | 12:17 | 1:37 | 2:47 | 3:57 | 5:07 |
| FASHION SQUARE | 10:04 | 11:14 | 12:24 | 1:44 | 2:54 | 4:04 | 5:14 |

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WEST RESORT TROLLEY

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|------|------|------|
| VALLEY HO | 9:00 | 10:10 | 11:20 | 12:30 | 1:50 | 3:00 | 4:10 |
| SCOTTSDALE/CAMELBACK RESORT | 9:06 | 10:16 | 11:26 | 12:36 | 1:56 | 3:06 | 4:16 |
| ROYAL PALMS INN | 9:10 | 10:20 | 11:30 | 12:40 | 2:00 | 3:10 | 4:20 |
| CAMELBACK VILLAGE | 9:14 | 10:24 | 11:34 | 12:44 | 2:04 | 3:14 | 4:24 |
| LA POSADA | 9:20 | 10:30 | 11:40 | 12:50 | 2:10 | 3:20 | 4:30 |
| CAMELBACK INN | 9:22 | 10:32 | 11:42 | 12:52 | 2:12 | 3:22 | 4:32 |
| MOUNTAIN SHADOWS | 9:25 | 10:35 | 11:45 | 12:55 | 2:15 | 3:25 | 4:35 |
| JOHN GARDINER'S TENNIS RANCH | 9:28 | 10:38 | 11:48 | 12:58 | 2:18 | 3:28 | 4:38 |
| BORGATA | 9:36 | 10:46 | 11:56 | 1:06 | 2:26 | 3:36 | 4:46 |
| FASHION SQUARE | 9:43 | 10:53 | 12:03 | 1:13 | 2:33 | 3:43 | 4:53 |
| CAMELVIEW PLAZA | 9:45 | 10:55 | 12:05 | <u>1:15</u> | 2:35 | 3:45 | 4:55 |
| FIFTH AVENUE: | | | | | | | |
| WEST OF 70TH ST | 9:50 | 11:00 | 12:10 | 1:30 | 2:40 | 3:50 | 5:00 |
| STETSON DR./5TH | 9:52 | 11:02 | 12:12 | 1:32 | 2:42 | 3:52 | 5:02 |
| 3RD AVE/SCOTTSDALE RD | 9:57 | 11:07 | 12:17 | 1:37 | 2:47 | 3:57 | 5:07 |
| HISTORIC OLD TOWN: | | | | | | | |
| 1ST AVE/BROWN | 10:02 | 11:12 | 12:22 | 1:42 | 2:52 | 4:02 | 5:12 |
| MAIN ST/BROWN | 10:05 | 11:15 | 12:25 | 1:45 | 2:55 | 4:05 | 5:15 |

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DOWNTOWN RESORT TROLLEY

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|------|------|------|
| PAPAGO INN | 9:00 | 10:10 | 11:20 | 12:30 | 1:50 | 3:00 | 4:10 |
| HOSPITALITY INN | 9:04 | 10:14 | 11:24 | 12:34 | 1:54 | 3:04 | 4:14 |
| LOS ARCOS MALL | 9:09 | 10:19 | 11:29 | 12:39 | 1:59 | 3:09 | 4:19 |
| DOUBLETREE INN | 9:17 | 10:27 | 11:37 | <u>12:47</u> | 2:07 | 3:17 | 4:27 |
| SAFARI | 9:22 | 10:32 | 11:42 | 1:02 | 2:12 | 3:22 | 4:32 |
| SUNBURST | 9:24 | 10:34 | 11:44 | 1:04 | 2:14 | 3:24 | 4:34 |
| EMBASSY SUITES | 9:26 | 10:36 | 11:46 | 1:06 | 2:16 | 3:26 | 4:36 |
| HOLIDAY INN | 9:27 | 10:37 | 11:47 | 1:07 | 2:17 | 3:27 | 4:37 |
| WYNDHAM PARADISE VALLEY | 9:29 | 10:39 | 11:49 | 1:09 | 2:19 | 3:29 | 4:39 |
| COTTONWOODS (BORGATA) | 9:35 | 10:45 | 11:55 | 1:15 | 2:25 | 3:35 | 4:45 |
| CAMELVIEW PLAZA | 9:41 | 10:51 | 12:01 | 1:21 | 2:31 | 3:41 | 4:51 |
| 5TH AVE: | | | | | | | |
| WEST OF 70TH ST | 9:47 | 10:57 | 12:07 | 1:27 | 2:37 | 3:47 | 4:57 |
| STETSON DR./5TH | 9:49 | 10:59 | 12:09 | 1:29 | 2:39 | 3:49 | 4:59 |
| 3RD AVE/SCOTTSDALE RD | 9:54 | 11:04 | 12:14 | 1:34 | 2:44 | 3:54 | 5:04 |
| HISTORIC OLD TOWN: | | | | | | | |
| 1ST AVE/BROWN | 9:58 | 11:08 | 12:18 | 1:38 | 2:48 | 3:58 | 5:08 |
| MAIN ST/BROWN | 10:01 | 11:11 | 12:21 | 1:41 | 2:51 | 4:01 | 5:11 |

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NORTH ROUTE TROLLEY

| | <u>Daytime</u> | | | | <u>Evening</u> | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-------------|----------------|------|------|--------------|
| WYNDHAM PARADISE VALLEY | 10:00 | 11:15 | 12:30 | 1:45 | 5:00 | 6:30 | 8:00 | 9:30 |
| CAMELBACK INN | 10:09 | 11:24 | 12:39 | 1:54 | 5:09 | 6:39 | 8:09 | 9:39 |
| SHERATON SCOTTSDALE | 10:17 | 11:32 | 12:47 | 2:02 | 5:17 | 6:47 | 8:17 | 9:47 |
| PINNACLE PEAK VILLAGE | 10:45 | 12:00 | 1:15 | <u>2:30</u> | 5:45 | 7:15 | 8:45 | 10:15 |
| REATA PASS STEAKHOUSE | | | | | 5:53 | 7:23 | 8:53 | <u>10:23</u> |

EXPRESS BACK TO RESORTS AFTER 2:30 PM, 10:23 PM STOPS.
PLEASE CALL THE **MOLLY CORPORATION** OFFICE, 941-2957, FOR
GROUPS OF TWENTY OR MORE.

After last scheduled stop of the day, Express is back to resort areas.

Valley bus system begins Sun Cities service Jan. 26, 1987

HOA to offer senior citizen discount fare

By RICK GONZALEZ

The Phoenix Transit System will begin their new bus schedule connecting Sun City to other parts of the Valley on Jan. 26.

The announcement was made by Home Owners Association president William Herron at the monthly HOA board meeting Jan. 13.

The Phoenix Transit System will be offering bus service every 40 minutes, from 5:40

a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. Bus service will not be provided Saturdays or Sundays.

In addition to Sun City, the new bus service is available to other surrounding communities, including Sun City West and Youngtown.

Regular bus fare is 75 cents. A senior citizen discount, however, allows seniors to ride for only 35 cents. If transfers are made from bus to bus, seniors need only show their senior citizen identification card instead of paying every time they board a bus.

The senior citizen cards will

be available at the HOA office, 10401 W. Coggins Drive. Special cards will be available for those under the age of 65 with medical disabilities, according to Herron.

The bus route will begin at the Sun Bowl parking lot, 107th and Clair avenues. The route continues on to the MetroCenter shopping mall in Phoenix. Various stops will be made along the way. Persons wishing to go somewhere other than MetroCenter can make transfers at the mall.

HOA is also looking into whether or not cab stands will be available to riders wishing

to take a cab to a location not included in the routes.

The ride from the Sun Bowl to MetroCenter will take approximately 30 minutes each way.

Also included in the plans is a bus shelter which will be constructed at the Sun Bowl pick-up and drop-off designated area.

Last year's HOA board of directors set aside \$1,000 for construction of the shelter. Peoria-based Sun Living Designs, Inc. will construct the shelter.

Herron says the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc. has
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BICYCLE BUILT FOR TWO. Sun Citian George Bell takes his dog "Joc" along for a scenic view of the community aboard his bicycle. Bell and his friend have been making their daily rides through Sun City for 13 consecutive years.

Photo By Morris Berman

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• BUS

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agreed to make the Sun Bowl restrooms available to persons waiting at the shelter. A water fountain will also be available. Sun Cities Area Transit (SCAT) is also taking part in the project. Residents needing transportation to or from the

Sun Bowl bus stop will be able to call SCAT for a ride.

No public telephone will be available at the bus shelter but, according to Herron, a SCAT telephone will be installed.

SCAT may be contacted at 977-8363.

Record rainfall floods area streets

By LYNN NEWTON
and HELEN ALLEN
Staff Writers

More than two inches of rain dumped on the Sun Cities and Youngtown Thursday, wreaking havoc for many motorists who became stranded on flooded streets.

Weather observer Norman Shrenk said the 2.25 inches recorded in Youngtown Thursday was the highest rainfall total in the state for the day and was believed to be a record for the area for Sept. 29. Phoenix reported a record 1.66 inches.

Drainage ditches overflowed by mid-morning, closing several major streets and making many others impassable for anything but high-riding vehicles.

DESPITE FLOODING problems, Del E. Webb Development Co. officials claim that drainage systems are more adequate in the Sun Cities than other areas of the county.

"In comparison to the rest of Maricopa County, we probably had less of a problem in flooding conditions," said Tom Ryan, senior vice president and land manager for Devco.

"We are continually reviewing our drainage systems in developed areas and making modifications and improvements where drainage can be improved," he continued.

DEVCO IS considering future developments to curb the flooding and drainage problems, but Ryan would not discuss them.

In addition to calls from stranded motorists, the Sheriff's Office investigated several minor traffic accidents, most of which resulted from wet brakes.

Many accident reports were received in the Glendale and Peoria area and flooding continued to slow traffic this morning at Olive, Grand and 75th avenues where an underpass remained closed.

TOWING COMPANIES reported numerous flood-related calls.

Duane's Exxon Service, 12020 111th Ave., Youngtown, Thursday morning towed about 10 cars which became stranded on flooded streets, said manager Duane Hamblin.

"We had lots of calls, but most of the cars we could service on the spot by just taking the distributor cap off and drying it," he said. "They didn't all need to be towed."

DON ROBERTS, assistant manager of Automotive Dynamics on Santa Fe Drive, concurred with Hamblin, saying his employees were able to service most cars by drying the distributor cap and sending them on their way.

Sun City Towing received so many requests for tow trucks that many customers were referred to other towing companies, employee Gilbert Herrera reported.

"At one point, we had 12 cars here at one time," he said. "We were really backed up and couldn't handle all our calls."

O'MALLEY'S Building Center

(more)

reported that water from flooded drainage ditches on 99th Avenue flowed up to the receiving area, and as some larger vehicles drove by, waves would surge toward the store.

At one point, assistant manager Dawnett Stapley said the water was flowing so fast it moved some of the store's garbage dumpsters.

"We were also playing Red Cross for people stranded in the area," she added.

EMPLOYEES WADED through the street in waist-deep water to catch three cars floating down 99th Avenue and propel them toward higher ground, Miss Stapley said.

As help arrived for the stranded people, Miss Stapley said two tow trucks also became stranded in high water.

Mardian Construction Co. reported a lot of water flowing in the Royal Oaks complex site, but no damage was found.

THUNDERBIRD Texaco, 13249 103rd Ave., reported towing at least two dozen vehicles which had become stranded on flooded streets and said it had to turn many people away because of too few trucks to handle the number of calls.

Zee's Towing at Del Webb and Talisman boulevards reported having eight towing requests, an unusually high number for one day.

Rather than take a risk driving, Sun Cities Area Transit dispatcher Brenda Cooper said many residents called the transportation service for a ride.

"**WE DEFINITELY** had more calls than normal today," she said. "Some called and canceled and others called and wanted rides or wanted to know why their rides were late. They didn't understand that we had to get through the water, too."

Gary Spadafora, manager of

Airport Transportation Co., the company which contracts with SCAT, added that his vehicles were unable to get to all of the scheduled appointments in Sun City.

"Most people understood when we told them we wouldn't be able to make it because of the water," he said. "It was one of the busiest days we've had—probably 125 or 130 calls."

SPADAFORA ADDED that his dispatchers received many cancellations, but there also were many last-minute requests.

Sun City and Sun City West fire departments reported no flood-related incidents in the area.

The storm caused one two-hour power outage mid-morning in the industrial park area north of Bell Road at Grand Avenue and Dy-sart Road, according to Arizona Public Service spokesman Bob Stanley.

IT RESULTED when jumpers

burned off and then wet breakers would not switch the power back on, he said.

Meanwhile, Associated Press reported rains were continuing in Arizona this morning, with evacuations underway in Prescott, the scene of heavy flooding one week ago.

National Guardsmen were reported assisting in the evacuation of as many as five dozen people from low-lying homes, apartments and mobile homes in the downtown Prescott area this morning, emergency officials said.

IN PHOENIX it was the wettest Sept. 29 on record. All unbridged crossings of the Agua Fria River were closed because of the runoff, according to officials.

In Tucson this morning, many roads were closed because of the rains Thursday and during the night, with rush hour traffic particularly snarled on the city's northeast side.

Card lets seniors ride for less

By JACQUE PAPPAS
News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — The Phoenix Transit System is issuing new reduced fare identification cards to seniors who ride the bus.

The new cards are part of a reduced fare certification program that allows seniors and the disabled to ride the bus for 35 cents instead of the regular price of 75 cents.

When the cards were first issued in Sun City two years ago, they were made of paper. Now the cards are laminated with photo identification.

The new cards cost \$2.50 and expire in five years on the bearer's birthday.

The Sun City Home Owners Association (HOA), 10401 W. Coggins Drive, began issuing the paper bus cards in January 1987 on a daily basis. Eventually the cards were issued only once a week and now Phoenix Transit will distribute the new cards about twice a month.

The new senior citizen certification cards are available at various locations in the Valley, including Sun City West, Peoria and Youngtown.

Evelyn Hallaron, office manager for the HOA, said the office has issued 6,576 bus cards as of June.

Although the old cards have an expiration date of June 30, Hallaron said, Phoenix Transit will accept them until Dec. 30.



News-Sun photo by Patrick Knight

FARE DEAL — Sun Citian Florence McNary recently purchased a new reduced fare bus card from the Phoenix Transit System. The cards, which cost \$2.50, are available at the Sun City Homeowners Association.

"People here use the bus for all reasons. They go shopping, to the Mayo Clinic (in Scottsdale) or to Phoenix," Hallaron said. "We issue an awful lot of tickets. A lot of retirees like to take the bus instead of drive themselves."

In Sun City, the bus leaves the Sun Bowl, 107th Avenue and Clair Drive, about every 40

minutes.

Area residents use the reduced fare cards more often than other seniors in the Valley, said Becky Johnson, with Phoenix Transit marketing and planning.

Department statistics show that on an average day, 4.2 percent of transit riders on scheduled bus routes are older than 65.

"We find quite a number of seniors do use the transit system. Sun City has always been one of our largest issuers," Johnson said. "They always issue at least 75 cards a month."

Patrons must be at least 65 years old and have proof of their age or handicap to get the cards, Johnson said.

She said persons applying for a disabled reduced fare card must have updated verification from a doctor or health agency indicating that they have a permanent or temporary disability.

Medicare cards are acceptable as proof of age.

"We are not exchanging the old card for a new photo ID card. The city of Phoenix requires that all cards be completely updated," Johnson said. "The cards make it so the driver doesn't have to try to determine whether the person is eligible when they get on the bus."

The new card will be good for five years. When boarding and paying the discounted fare, the certification card must be presented to all transit operators.

"Federal law requires that we provide seniors and the disabled reduced fares on off-peak hours. But we have extended it to all periods of time because we feel that is a more workable situation," Johnson said.

For more information on certification cards, call Phoenix Transit at 253-5000.

Transit ideas are sought

By CHRISTINE SELIGA
News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — A committee formed from a group that opposed a Valley-wide transit system is trying to get citizens to contribute their ideas about transportation problems.

George Chasse is the chairman of VISTA, a committee of about 12 people, which started after the Valtrans transit system proposed by the Regional Public Transit Authority (RPTA) was voted down in March.

Chasse had been a leader of Voters Against Senseless Transit (VAST) which opposed RPTA's ValTrans plan.

"We were negative because we felt the program was ill-conceived and too expensive," Chasse said.

He said VISTA is an outgrowth of VAST. The VISTA committee has

held several meetings since the ValTrans election.

Chasse said he felt that the transit authority did not do enough to get citizen suggestions when it developed ValTrans.

Although the transit authority held public meetings all over the Valley, the meetings were more descriptions of what ValTrans would be rather than finding out what citizens wanted, Chasse said.

"They weren't hearings. They were presentations of 'Here's what the plan's going to be,'" Chasse said.

VISTA is not going to develop a plan but a procedure to come up with a plan.

"We're attempting to develop a fresh and very creative way to involve the citizens," Chasse said.

Sun City West resident Phil Vision was a member of VAST and is now a member of VISTA.

"I think they're a good, solid, meaningful organization," he said.

Vision said VAST was not against ValTrans for the sake of being against it but because the \$8.4 million pricetag on the project was too high.

He said the members of VISTA want to come up with solutions to transit problems and are willing to work with anyone regardless of the side he took on ValTrans.

"It's not a matter of them versus us. It's what's good for the county," he said.

Participation from the retirement area is important, Vision said. Among the area's retirees are people who may have worked in the transportation field and could give valu-

able information or suggestions to the VISTA committee.

Chasse agrees that there is a countywide transportation problem. He said VISTA will make sure the citizen suggestions it compiles go to the right people.

Possibly the county board of supervisors should address the problem or a new board including the supervisors, citizens and representatives from the Arizona Department of Transportation should be created, Chasse said.

"Some new entity need to be formed to look at this," he said.

People interested in sending suggestions to Chasse can write VISTA, in care of George Chasse, 4350 E. Camelback Road, Suite 140-F, Phoenix 85018.

Sun Citians voice public transit complaints

By **Connie Cone Sexton**
Staff writer

SUN CITY — Many residents speak fondly of the No. 106.

"I don't know what some people would do without it," Lillian Wheatley said minutes after stepping off the bus that had taken her on a round trip to Metrocenter.

Route 106 is the only public transportation bus line that runs into Sun City. It travels as far west as the Sun Bowl Amphitheater at 107th Avenue and Clair Drive and as far east as the Mayo Clinic at 103rd Street and Shea Boulevard.

Stops include the Peoria Community

Center, Metrocenter and Paradise Valley Mall.

Wheatley said she hops on the bus as a means of convenience.

"It's just easier than driving. It only takes a half hour to get to Metro," the Sun City resident said.

Wheatley said she is fortunate because she can drive her car to the Sun Bowl to catch the bus.

For others, getting to the bus stop is much more time-consuming.

Many turn to the Sun Cities Area Transit System, a dial-a-ride serving Sun City, Sun City West and Youngtown.

Current and former users of SCAT

complain of a long response time, saying they have to wait more than an hour for pickup service.

Sun City resident Ann Cannon said she stopped using SCAT because of the wait.

"The No. 106 bus is great. I get upset when people trash public transportation, but SCAT is terrible. When I first came out here, I used SCAT, but now you'll find you have to wait an hour for them to pick you up."

Another rider said she stopped using SCAT and relies on friends to pick her up.

A bus driver on the 106 route has heard several complaints from riders about SCAT. At times, when the driver has

radioed ahead about riders who need to make connection with a SCAT van, the van wasn't there when the riders were let off.

SCAT general manager Donna Gilliland is bothered by the complaints and said some residents fail to understand the demands on SCAT or its purpose.

As for the bus driver, she explained that those calls are sent through a Phoenix Transit dispatcher and often are delayed in reaching SCAT.

The dial-a-ride system is not a taxicab service, Gilliland stressed. "We try to route our vans; that's why it's called a shared ride."

She said riders are told that it might be up to a 90-minute wait.

"We tell people right out if we're running late," Gilliland said. "In the morning, we have so many wheelchairs that we handle. I think we're doing the best we can."

Too many people expect immediate response, she said: "They want us to be there within 10 minutes. They must realize we are a dial-a-ride. We don't have set schedules. We are a demand response."

Riders often call within 30 or 45 minutes of when they need to be someplace. They need to call at least 90

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Mark Henle / Staff photographer
Sun City residents depend on Phoenix Transit System's route 106 buses, the only public transportation serving the city, to get to Metrocenter and points east.

BUS

From Page 1

minutes ahead of time, Gilliland said.

Hearing about the complaints from riders was disturbing, she said.

"A lot of people talk, but a lot of people don't call," she said. "My door is always open. It's really baffling to me, hearing of the complaints."

Vernon Walker, a member of the Sun City Home Owners Association and chairman of the HOA transportation committee, praised SCAT for its service.

"I haven't heard anything but good things about SCAT," he said. "They provide an essential service. It isn't really a taxi service. They do the best they can."

But Sun City West resident Blanche Vision, a former member of the SCAT board of directors, is concerned about the dial-a-ride's service.

Vision resigned from the board after members denied her request for having a SCAT van stationed in Sun City West.

She complained that because the SCAT vans run out of Sun City, the wait for Sun City West residents can be lengthy. Having a van just for the west-side community would cut down on response time, Vision said.

But Gilliland said that arrangement would not work.

SCAT might need to send three vans at the same time to Sun City West, she said. To designate only one vehicle for the area would hurt service for those residents, she added.

Vision said one of the vans should be used exclusively for Sun City West riders.

"The SCAT van comes out here and it rides around and picks up Sun City West residents and then it goes and picks up people in Sun City. It can take a long time before you ever get to the bus stop," Vision said.

She also wished that SCAT would operate during the evening, even if it was on a limited basis.

SCAT runs from 7:15 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. weekdays and from 7:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. weekends and holidays.

Although she realizes the financial limitations of SCAT, Vision said expanded service is desperately needed. She suggested that Phoenix Transit add more routes to the communities.

"We need something here that will move us about within the community and also take us outside the community when we need it," she said.

Vision said the county should regionalize bus service. "We should have a countywide transit service instead of fractionalized service where each town has its own system," she said.

Gilliland said SCAT is short of money and operates as best it can with its budget of \$555,000.

The organization is conducting a fund-raising campaign with a goal of \$100,000. "But we're going to need \$135,000 to help meet our budget," she said.

SCAT fares are \$1.50, but Gilliland said the actual cost per rider is \$6. The balance of the expense has to be met through donations and through state and federal transportation dollars.

SCAT, which carries about 70,000 riders a year, served 50,000 two years ago. The increase in demand without an increase in equipment is part of the reason for extended response times, Gilliland said.

And if complaints need to be noted, riders also have their faults, she said. "People aren't there when the van arrives or they aren't ready. And they don't bother to call us and tell us if they want to cancel."

Riders have a responsibility, too, the manager said.

Charles McKinnis dies; founded local dial-a-ride

Daily News-Sun staff

TUCSON — Charles C. McKinnis, 73, a founder and first president of the Sun Cities Area Transit System, died Feb. 2, 1992.

McKinnis lived in Sun City from 1973 to 1989 and was active in a number of civic activities.

"He was very dedicated to getting a transportation organization going in the Sun Cities/Youngtown area. He spent a lot of time on it and was a very effective leader," said Dale Shockley, who took over as SCAT president in 1988.

In 1982 McKinnis helped establish a dial-a-ride system and worked with the Lions Foundation to get an office built in 1985.

McKinnis was born in Burns, Ore. He enlisted in the Army in 1941 and retired as a

colonel after 31 years of service. He was awarded the World War II Victory Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal and the Legion of Merit.

He was a member of Disabled American Veterans Star 24, Reserve Officers Association and Retired Officers Association.

He graduated from Glendale Community College with honors in 1979.

In Sun City he was co-founder, vice president and director of the Sun Valley Gleaners, co-founder and treasurer of Sun City Area Interfaith Services, president of the B-4-9 Lions Club and named Sun City Man of the Year in 1984.

See Memorial, A5

Memorial services set in Tucson, SC

— From A1

He also was secretary of the Arizona Reserve Officers Association, member of the Arizona Long Term Care Gerontology Advisory Council and was on the Human Services Advisory Curriculum Committee for GCC.

McKinnis moved to SaddleBrooke Country Club in Tucson in 1989.

There he was a member of Catalina Lions Club and president of the SaddleBrooke Republican Club.

He is survived by his wife, Donnagene; two brothers, Douglas and Alexander of Oregon; two sisters, May Patterson and Lois Novell of California; a son, Jack of Lawton, Okla.; a daughter, Sandra Kennedy of Phoenix; and four grandchildren.

Memorial services will be at 3 p.m. Friday in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Tucson. A second memorial service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday in First Christian Church of Sun City, 14001 Thunderbird Blvd. Interment will be in Arlington National Cemetery.

Memorials may be sent to Sun Cities Area Transit System, P.O. Box 19872, Sun City, 85372.

Fall Bus Schedules To Begin Monday

Fall schedules for the Sun City Bus Line will begin Monday, Gaylen Bartlett, Del E. Webb Development Co. property manager, has announced.

Routes have been extended to include the newer populated areas of Sun City, Bartlett said. Included are the circular section encompassed by Lakeview West Golf Course, the apartments bordering Thunderbird Boulevard, the Lakeview Center-Boswell Memorial Hospital area, and the section enclosed by Bolivar Drive, 103rd Avenue, and Cameo Drive.

THE LARGE bus will

cover two routes designated "Red" and "Green" on an alternate half-hour schedule. At 9 a.m. the bus will depart from the Grand Avenue Shopping Center and cover the "Red" route, which includes the area bounded by Grand, 111th, Peoria, and 103rd avenues.

Approximately a half-hour later, the same bus will travel north of Grand Avenue on the "Green" route, which includes the newer areas of the community.

The small bus will leave the Sun Bowl Plaza Shopping Center at 9 a.m. and will cover the "Orange"

route, an area bounded by Peoria, 111th, Olive, and 99th avenues.

AT 9:30 A.M. THE bus will cover the "Blue" route, an area outlined by Peoria, 99th, Grand, and 107th avenues. The "Blue" route will originate at Plaza del Sol Shopping Center.

The buses will run Monday through Saturday. Last run of the day for each bus will be at 4 p.m.

There will be no increase in present fares, Bartlett said. Route maps will be posted at bus stops in each shopping center. Schedules are available from bus drivers.

Bus service keeps retirees on the go

By MIKE GARRETT

Daily News-Sun staff

The Regional Public Transit Authority is trying to expand services to the Northwest Valley with virtually no increase in public funding, its director says.

The Northwest Valley's rapid growth, especially along the Bell Road corridor, will strain RPTA's ability to provide increased bus service, RPTA Executive Director Ken Driggs said this week.

"We have been scraping by with the same dollars since the Proposition 300 half-cent sales tax was passed (in 1985)," Driggs said. "It's a static situation with only a promise of potential new transit money coming in."

RPTA has been forced to adjust and restructure bus routes as demand warrants.

Beginning March 1, Phoenix will restructure dial-a-ride service to include new routes on Union Hills Drive, Thunderbird and Bell roads.

Passengers will be limited to seniors and disabled persons as part of Phoenix's commitment to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

North Phoenix Dial-A-Ride routes will be discontinued to the general public.

Phoenix will inaugurate four new "EZ" bus routes March 1, making it easier for patrons in the largest employment centers, including Glendale, to travel throughout the Valley.

Sun City ridership now averages 233 boardings a day at the Route 106 Sun Bowl terminal (Claire Street and 107th Avenue) connecting to Met-rocenter, Paradise Valley Mall and the Mayo Clinic, 13400 E. Shea Blvd.

That is up from an average of 87 boardings a day in April 1987, said Dale Hardy, RPTA transit planner.

"The bus service is very convenient and is used considerably by more and more Sun City people who are having to give up their cars as they get older," said Vernon Walker, Sun City Home Owners Association director and former HOA Transportation Committee chairman.

"Their schedule meets the need of people going east into Phoenix and Scottsdale and it's used a lot by those going to the Mayo Clinic."

Expanding fixed routes along Bell Road to serve Arrowhead Mall next year will depend largely on Glendale and Peoria funding their own service, Driggs said.

Driggs said the \$175,000 RPTA annually gives to Sun City Area Transit is no longer sufficient to meet SCAT's Dial-A-Ride demands.

"One of the problems with Dial-A-

'The bus service is very convenient and is used considerably by more and more Sun City people who are having to give up their cars as they get older.'

**Vernon Walker
Sun City Home Owners
Association**

Ride is the more success you have, the more it costs you," he said. "The money we give SCAT has flattened out and it doesn't look like we'll be able to give them any more."

Sun City West residents, although served by SCAT, continue to depend on their cars, with little interest in public transportation. That's based on last summer's Property Owners and Residents Association survey, said Glenn Weatherby, immediate past PORA Transportation Committee chairman.

Weatherby said a public transit survey included in last summer's PORA newsletter to more than 10,000 members showed apathy on the issue.

"Out of the 10,000 distribution, we had 147 people who said no, five said yes and the rest didn't reply," Weatherby said. "I think people out here aren't interested in public transportation at this time."

"We've talked about getting a free (transit) van and talked with SCAT about taking care of the van and giving us drivers and a dispatch system," Weatherby said. "They (SCAT) came up with a figure of \$42,000 a year, which seems like an awful lot. But they said it costs them \$7.50 per pickup and they only get \$1.50 back on fares."

Weatherby said he has asked RPTA about the availability of six high-mileage Red Cross vans to serve the community.

He said the vans would probably need a \$30,000 overhaul, volunteer drivers to make them cost-effective, a dispatch system and a place to park them overnight. "Where would we get that kind of money in Sun City West?"

"One thing our (transportation) committee feels is that maybe we're still too young a community," Weatherby said. "Our attitude is that 10 years from now we may have an entirely different need for transportation here. Right now, buses aren't convenient for people who just go to the grocery store."

OVL R

Sun City boardings on the rise

By MIKE GARRETT
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — The Regional Public Transit Authority reports an average of 233 boardings a day during 23 stops at its Sun City Route 106 terminal, Claire and 107th Avenue.

Thursday must have been a slow day in Sun City. Two stops between 11:10 and 11:54 a.m. produced one departing rider and two incoming riders, who then transferred to waiting Sun City Area Transit vans. Buses normally start their routes from Sun City at 5:22 a.m. and make their last stop at 8:11 p.m.

The departing rider, former Sun City West resident Dorothea Scirup, said she was on her way to Metrocenter to do some shopping. Now a resident of Excelsior, Minn., she was visiting a friend in Sun City and had some time while the friend was golfing.

"I haven't ridden the bus that much while I've been here," she said. "We didn't have bus service in Sun City West. I would rather ride the bus because I don't like to drive

much anymore, especially at night."

Scirup said she was a little confused trying to read the bus schedule pamphlet showing the scheduled stops along Route 106 and wanted to know where the Metrocenter terminal stop was.

Incoming rider Dr. Andrew McDonald, who lives near the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, said he rides the bus to visit his sister in Sun City about three times a month.

"It's more convenient and takes me 15 minutes less time and about six hours less irritation to come over on the bus," McDonald said. He takes a SCAT van from the Sun City terminal to his sister's house.

"I've had a chance to use the bus service in 13 states in the West and I think Phoenix (transit system) is the best, although they don't run late enough and on Sundays," he said.

"The buses are clean, the drivers are courteous and they keep people under control. I never hesitate to ride the bus or to recommend it to anybody, even in some of the so-called bad districts of Phoenix, be-

cause they watch things so closely."

McDonald said Phoenix doesn't need a rapid transit rail system (which voters rejected in 1990) because the city is so spread out and doesn't have a large, established downtown destination core. "What we already have is better than Atlanta's \$85 million (transit) system."

Once the Arrowhead Regional Mall is completed this year, riders like Scirup will be looking for connecting routes to Bell Road instead of Metrocenter.

Bell Road between 75th and 83rd avenues will support a vast commercial network including the new Peoria baseball stadium for the San Diego Padres and Seattle Mariners.

Adding another fixed route along Bell Road next year should be a high priority for Glendale, said Tim Ernster, deputy city manager of community services.

He said city council and Glendale's new Transportation Advisory Commission will decide transit priorities within the next couple of months, based on what the city can afford.

Greyhound to close SC station

By IAN MITCHELL
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Residents seeking long-distance bus service may soon have to leave the driving to someone other than Greyhound.

The buses won't stop in Sun City after the company's station at 10795 Grand Ave. closes Thursday.

"That was a good location," said Rick Selph, Phoenix-area customer service manager for Greyhound Lines. "We had the desire to stay out there, but it didn't work out."

The bus company plans to put a replacement station in the Sun City area, but no location or opening date has been announced, Selph said.

Lew Absher, operator of the present contract bus station, said his lease is expiring. A travel agency which operated under the same roof as the station has closed, and the landlord wanted the bus operation to expand into the space it occupied, Absher said.

"The economy is such that we could not justify renting and leasing the entire building," he said.

Absher said he then approached CBS Property Services to discuss leasing a replacement site in one of their centers but was rebuffed when the leasing agent learned he planned to use the space for a bus station.

Randy Miller, director of leasing for CBS, said the property owner prefers retail tenants, but he added that the reason the bus contractor was turned away is because a current leaser is considering expanding into the space Absher wanted.

Nine buses a day stop at the Sun City station: one bus to Los Angeles, three runs to downtown Phoenix and five buses to Laughlin, Nev., and Las Vegas.

After the bus station closes, Absher said he and his manager will still be busy with package pick-up and delivery and charter operations independent of Greyhound, which he runs from a downtown Phoenix office.

"The ones that are going to feel it (the closing) most are the people that live out here that have no transportation," he said.

It's difficult to say how many passengers board the bus in Sun City on an average day, he said. "That's the problem: Some days there's one and some days there's none and some days there's 14. You can't predict how many are going to be there."

Greyhound's Selph said his firm is not giving up on Sun City.

Greyhound bus terminal to close in Sun City

Loss of lease, lack of riders causes station to close after 23 years

By KATHLEEN WINSTEAD
Sun Cities Independent

Residents who used to "go Greyhound" from Sun City will now have to do so from 27th and Glendale avenues.

The retirement community was home to a Greyhound bus terminal at 10795 W. Grand Ave. for 23 years.

Terminal operator Lew Absher,

however, last month lost his lease.

"We're operating in the red, but we didn't want to (close)," Mr. Absher says.

"It's just every year, every month there's fewer people using the facilities.

"When you're not making money and people don't want you here, you might as well leave.

"I'm a contract agent. There are eight (Greyhound) facilities operat-

ed by agents who get a commission on the sales. When you have no sales, you get no commissions and it's extremely hard to pay your help."

Mr. Absher says the terminal was used by few residents. He says he investigated various options to continue operating, including cutting costs by renting a more inexpensive space elsewhere and selling tickets for the Flamingo Hilton's bus com-

pany.

He believes the bus terminal's lack of business may be due to increased use of other modes of transportation along with the dwindling popularity of bus service and fewer residents traveling.

However, the bus service was popular with many Sun City residents, he says.

"I've had tons of calls from people saying, 'What are we going to

do?' This means hardships for everyone."

Sun City residents traveled to downtown Phoenix, Las Vegas, Laughlin and Tucson via the terminal, but the most popular destination was Laughlin.

"You could go back and forth for \$30," Mr. Absher says.

"Now it's going to cost about \$20 just to get to the other bus station."

The nearest terminal to Sun City is located at 27th and Glendale avenues, Mr. Absher says.

Bus tests SC route

Since, except for the Sun Bowl, Valley Metro buses don't serve Sun City, you might have been a bit surprised if you saw one driving by Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital Tuesday.

An extension of Route 106 has been under consideration and buses may be traveling through Sun City by May, but the Regional Public Transportation Authority isn't two months ahead of schedule:

Dale Hardy, a planner with RPTA, said Tuesday's bus was making test trips without passengers to ensure a bus could safely traverse the Sun City route.

Official approval of the extension is pending, he said.

Ian Mitchell covers news in Sun City. His column is published Wednesdays on the Community page.

RPTA expands route to serve Boswell Hospital, Youngtown

By KATHLEEN WINSTEAD
Sun Cities Independent

Some Sun City residents unable to drive to Boswell Memorial Hospital soon may be able to take a bus to their destination.

Expansion of one Sun City bus route has been approved by Regional Public Transportation Authority officials, says Phil Hanson, vice president of Human Resources for Sun Health and president of the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce.

RPTA's Route 106, which currently goes as far as the Sun Bowl at 107th Avenue and Clair Drive, will soon be traveling to Boswell Memorial Hospital, Mr. Hanson says.

The route currently enters Sun City on Peoria Avenue and travels as far west as the Sun Bowl. The bus turns around at the Sun Bowl and returns east

along Peoria Avenue.

The Sun Bowl stop will eventually be phased out.

"They (RPTA) wanted to be able to stop on (the) Boswell Hospital campus so they needed our approval to do that," Mr. Hanson says.

Route 106 buses will travel west on Peoria Road to 111th Avenue, north on 111th to Thunderbird Boulevard, east on Thunderbird to 103rd Avenue, south on 103rd to Santa Fe Drive and west on Santa Fe to the hospital.

From the hospital, a bus will continue west to 107th Avenue before heading north on 107th to Thunderbird Boulevard and traveling east on Thunderbird.

Mr. Hanson believes the route change will go into effect in May or June. Not only will area residents find the new route more accessible than the old, but Mr. Hansen also expects a great number

of Sun Health employees to use the bus. Sun Health owns Boswell Hospital.

"We have a very aggressive travel reduction program and we hope to establish some park-and-ride (facilities) along the route," Mr. Hanson says.

"I know one lady who is assistant director of our child care center and for several years she's taken Route 106 to the Sun Bowl and had (Sun Cities Area Transit) pick her up."

Mr. Hanson says Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce officials are working closely with Gerald Unger, who serves on the Sun City Home Owners Association Transportation and Traffic Safety Committee, to expand routes further into Sun City, Sun City West, El Mirage, Surprise and Youngtown.

Mr. Unger, who also serves on the

■ BUS ROUTE

From Page 1

chamber's transportation committee, has devised a plan which creates a loop system to connect all five communities.

Under Mr. Unger's proposal, a route which terminates at Arrowhead Towne Center at 75th Avenue and Bell would extend to Del Webb Hospital in Sun City West. A route which terminates in Peoria at 83rd Avenue would be extended west on Grand Avenue into Surprise.

He will present the proposal to chamber officials.

"I think they're ready to go to the Legislature, the county, to the RPTA, to the (Maricopa Association of Governments), to activate this plan," Mr. Unger says.

See ■ BUS ROUTE, Page 3

Bus route expands in area

By JULIE LARSON
Daily News-Sun staff

Public transit users may be glad to know bus route 106 will make more stops in the Sun Cities area in less than two months, thanks to a plan to improve transit service in Maricopa County.

Dale Hardy, Valley Metro transit planning manager, said the plan includes expanding bus service on the route, which travels on Peoria Avenue and stops at 107th Avenue.

On Aug. 22, the service will be extended to continue west on Peoria Avenue to 115th Avenue. The bus will then head north on 115th Avenue to Thunderbird Boulevard, and then east on Thunderbird to Boswell Boulevard.

"It is a local route so there are stops about every quarter-mile," Hardy said. "When it (the bus) goes back, it goes back the way it came. It travels on Peoria (Avenue) and Shea (Boulevard) from Sun City all the way to the Mayo Clinic. It also goes to Metro Center and Paradise Valley Mall."

State air quality legislation passed in November mandated a portion of the money made by Arizona's Powerball multistate lottery game be dedicated to improving public transit service in Maricopa County, according to Valley Metro transit officials.

It will take about a year to see how much money the Regional Public Transportation Authority will receive from Powerball for transit improvements.

So as part of the legislation, state lawmakers provided RPTA with a \$6 million advance from the state's Underground Storage Tank Fund, officials said. The advance includes covering the extended service of bus route 106.

Valley Metro also is working with the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce on other ideas for addi-

See Plans call, A5

Plans call for extended Grand route

—From A1
tional service to the Sun Cities area.

Whether the ideas will become reality depends on whether voters approve a half-cent sales tax increase in November to complete the freeways and improve the transit system, Hardy said.

The main part of the plans for additional service in the Sun Cities area is an extension of the Grand Avenue route.

"Right now it stops in downtown Peoria at 83rd Av-

enue," Hardy said. "The plans are to extend it to at least Bell Road. Also, the Bell Road (route) stops at Arrowhead Towne Center, and the plans are to extend the service west from the center to Grand Avenue."

The Thunderbird Boulevard route stops at 59th Avenue, and plans are to extend it west to Grand Avenue. The plan also calls for a new north/south route on Litchfield and Dysart roads, Hardy said.

"Those things are all in the

plan and we're working with each of the individual communities on exactly how those things could happen and anything else that would be useful or needed," he said.

The new bus route 106 that will be implemented Aug. 22 will run Monday through Friday only. Service begins around 5 a.m. and runs until 8:30 p.m. An adult fare is \$1, 65 and older and disabled pay 50 cents, and tickets, tokens and passes are available.

The transit information line is 253-5000.

Greyhound to open Youngtown station

By IAN MITCHELL
Daily News-Sun staff

Here comes the bus.

A Greyhound Bus Lines contract station is scheduled to open Monday in Youngtown at the Youngtown Restaurant, 12006 N. 111th Ave.

Four buses a day will stop at the station, which will issue tickets but will not accept freight, said Rick Selph, area customer service manager for Greyhound.

"So far, so good," said Selph, who last month had hoped to put a station in Bob's V&S Variety Store in Sun City West. Those plans were

scrapped by the store's owner after residents called and objected to having a bus stop at Sundome Plaza.

The Northwest Valley has been without a permanent contract station since the Sun City bus depot at 10765 Grand Ave. closed in February. A temporary bus stop in El Mirage has closed.

"We still get phone calls on needing service in that area and this will help the community, that's what we want to do, is help the community," Selph said. "They need us and we need them."

Kamran Shargani said he wants a bus station at his restaurant for the same reason he has off-track betting — it could help bring in business.

"People are very happy over it, because they lost a station on Grand Avenue," said Shargani, who owns the restaurant as president of Kmm Inc.

Shargani said he hasn't talked to other owners of businesses in the Youngtown Shopping Center about the bus station.

"Youngtown has gone down, you know, and I imagine anything that brings more traffic into Youngtown,

everybody should be happy about it," he said.

Youngtown Mayor Jack Bradway said his town was competing with businesses in other areas for the bus station. "We fought to keep it," he said.

The bus should bring in business and the station will serve as something of a landmark, Bradway said.

Selph said buses are dropping off passengers at the restaurant already and the station will issue tickets beginning Monday.

SC hails bus service

Valley Metro extends route to hospital

By IAN MITCHELL
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Sun City community leaders and Regional Public Transportation Authority officials gathered at the Sun Health Resource Center Wednesday to celebrate a new arrival — a bus.

The extension of Valley Metro's Route 106 has been a goal of the Sun City Home Owners Association and the Recreation Centers of Sun City for more than a year. Service began along the new route Aug. 22.

"We think it's something that's very much needed here in Sun City and we think that it's just the first phase of it," HOA President Lynn Arend said after the celebration, which featured refreshments and a tour of one of Valley Metro's new buses.

Route 106's western terminus was at the Sun Bowl parking lot, 107th Avenue and Clair Drive. The new Route 106 extends west along Peoria Avenue to 111th Avenue, then north to Thunderbird Boulevard to Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital.

Gerry Unger, chairman of the HOA's transportation committee, said the Northwest Valley needs more bus service.

Last year, as president of the recreation centers, Unger pushed for a circular route which would connect all seven centers. This year he served on the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce's transportation committee, which planned extended bus routes.

"We have done a lot of study in this area, and we know where we want the buses to go," Unger said.

Andrea Han, Valley Metro spokeswoman, said bus service can't be extended without more funding. Although the frequency of service along Route 106 has been cut back, extending the route still cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000, she said.

"We've had a lot of requests for service to Boswell," she said.

Han noted that Valley Metro also is planning to extend service west along Bell Road to Dysart Road and even running an intercity service along Grand Avenue to Wick-enburg.

"We can't really do anything until we get the funding," she said.

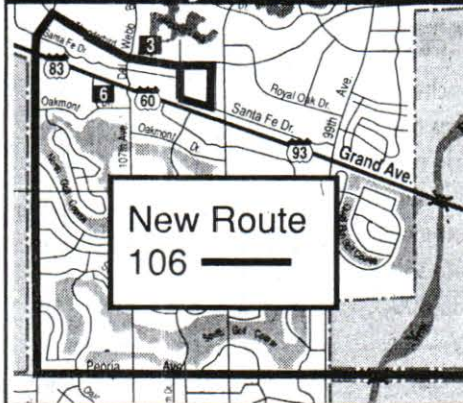
Mass transit would receive half of a proposed half-cent Maricopa County sales tax increase which is



Steve Chernelk/Daily News-Sun

Visitors tour a bus on display at Wednesday's party. It's one of 71 new buses that has a wheelchair ramp and a feature that lowers the bus for easier wheelchair access.

Sun City bus route



on the November ballot as Proposition 400.

Unger said proponents of the sales tax increase "better get a little more active" in promoting their cause.

"I told them the retirement community out here has to be assured that they're going to get ser-

vice for taxes; not just lip service, but service for taxes," he said. "And when they get service or a good solid promise of service, they may support that ... Proposition 400."

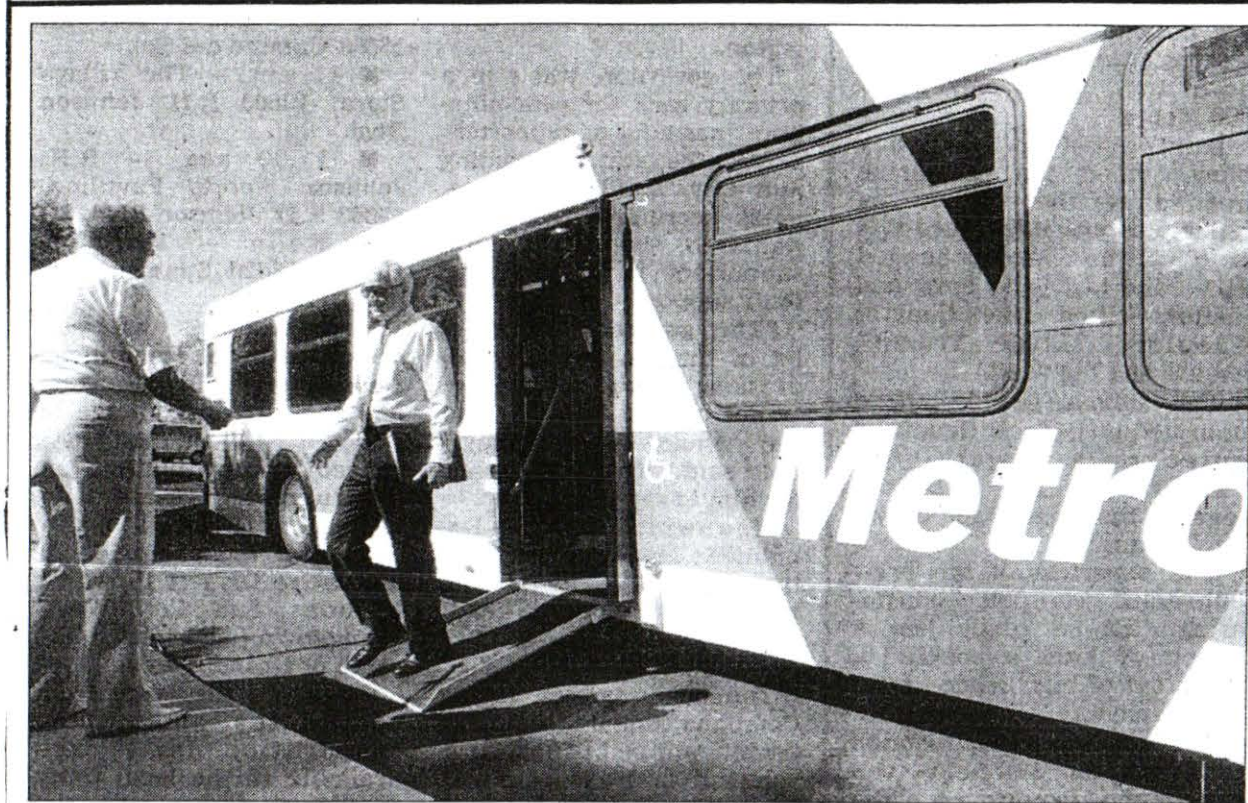
Unger said transportation officials will be watching ridership levels on Route 106 to see if there is interest in bus service to the Northwest Valley.

"It's going to take a year (or) two years for people to get used to using a bus system that they never had before," he said.

The bus should reduce traffic on Sun City roads, Unger said.

"They employ 1,000 people at the hospital and if they get 100 of them on the bus, that's a significant number," he said. "That takes maybe 60, 80 automobiles off the street."

For bus schedule and route information, call 253-5000.



Dale Shockley, left, of Sun Cities Area Transit, greets Ken Driggs, executive director of the Regional Public Transit Authority, which runs the Valley Metro bus system. Both were on hand at a party to celebrate the extension of Route 106 to the Boswell Memorial Hospital campus.

Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

Bus route to serve Boswell Hospital

By KATHLEEN WINSTEAD
Business Review

Some Sun Health employees tired of driving to Boswell Memorial Hospital soon may be able to take a bus to their destination.

Expansion of one Sun City bus route has been approved by Regional Public Transportation Authority officials, says Phil Hanson, vice president of Human Resources for Sun Health and president of the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce.

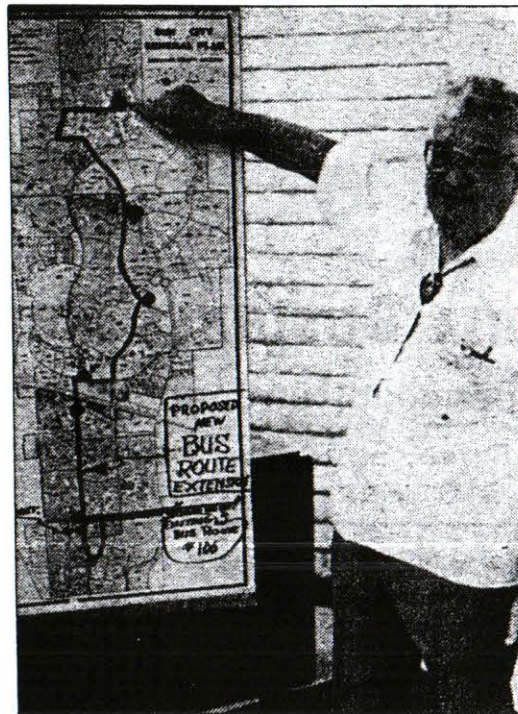
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The Sun Bowl stop will eventually be phased out.

"They (RPTA) wanted to be able to stop on (the) Boswell Hospital campus so they needed our approval to do that," Mr. Hanson says.

Route 106 buses will travel west on Peoria



Gerald Unger points to a bus stop at the Sun Bowl which will soon be eliminated in favor of a turnaround site at Boswell Memorial Hospital.

Avenue to 111th Avenue, north on 111th to Thunderbird Boulevard, east on Thunderbird to 103rd Avenue, south on 103rd to Santa Fe Drive and west on Santa Fe to the hospital.

From the hospital, a bus will continue west to 107th Avenue before heading north on 107th to Thunderbird Boulevard and traveling east on Thunderbird.

Mr. Hanson believes the route change will go into effect in May or June. Not only will area residents find the new route more accessible than the old, but Mr. Hansen also expects a great number of Sun Health employees to use the bus. Sun Health owns Boswell Hospital.

"We have a very aggressive travel reduction program and we hope to establish some park-and-ride (facilities) along the route," Mr. Hanson says.

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■ BUS

From Page 1

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"I think they're ready to go to the Legislature, the county, to the RPTA, to the (Maricopa Association of Governments), to activate this plan," Mr. Unger says.

NW Valley bus ridership climbs

Extended route draws 43% more passengers

By J.J. McCORMACK
Daily News-Sun staff

What a difference a loop makes.

Since Valley Metro bus Route 106 began making a loop through Youngtown and around Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital, ridership has increased markedly.

Ridership reports compiled by the Regional Public Transit Authority show passenger trips in the Sun City and Youngtown leg of the route increased from an average of 110 in June to 157 in January, or about 43 percent.

"Whenever you add more bus service, in our experience, people have used it," said Andrea Han, transit authority spokeswoman. The Regional Public Transit Authority is the planning agency that administers federal and state transit funds.

"This shows you the real need for expanded transit services in the Valley. As soon as you put the route out there, people respond to it," Han said.

Route 106 was extended in August. Previously, riders could only go as far as the Sun Bowl at 107th and Peoria avenues in Sun City. Today, the bus continues on Peoria to 111th Avenue in Youngtown. From there, the route takes passengers north, across Grand Avenue and east on Thunderbird Boulevard to 103rd Avenue. The bus then loops around the hospital, going east on Santa Fe Drive, back to Thunderbird and back to 111th, south to Peoria and then east across the

Valley as far as the Mayo Clinic at 131st Street in Scottsdale.

Local transportation officials attribute the increase in ridership on the Sun Cities leg of Route 106 to hospital employees and to Youngtown residents who have access to Valley Metro buses for the first time.

"A lot of hospital workers live outside of the Sun Cities. Before the bus went up as far as the hospital, they drove their cars up. When the bus went clear up there, they didn't have to drive their cars up," said Dale Shockley, president of the Sun Cities Area Transit System, a local dial-a-ride service.

Shockley said SCAT lost 100 to 200 rides a month when the bus started going to Boswell, but the loss has been more than offset by the increasing demand for dial-a-ride services in the Sun Cities.

He said a lot more hospital workers likely would ride the bus if it was in service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The bus currently operates weekdays from early morning until early evening.

Youngtown Vice Mayor Daphne Green said she knows residents are taking advantage of the bus service because she sees people waiting at bus stops along 111th.

"We worked hard to get this bus coming this way. We are very fortunate that it is stopping for Youngtown," said Green, who served on the Northwest Chamber of Commerce's transportation

committee and on an advisory panel that recommended bus-route realignments for the entire Valley.

Route 106 won't be extended farther into Sun City anytime soon, Han said.

"For the most part, there just isn't any funding to expand transit. Proposition 400 would have done that for us," Han said, referring to the transportation tax package voters rejected in the November general election. Revenues from a proposed additional half-cent transportation tax and the extension of an existing half-cent tax would have been split between freeway construction and transit.

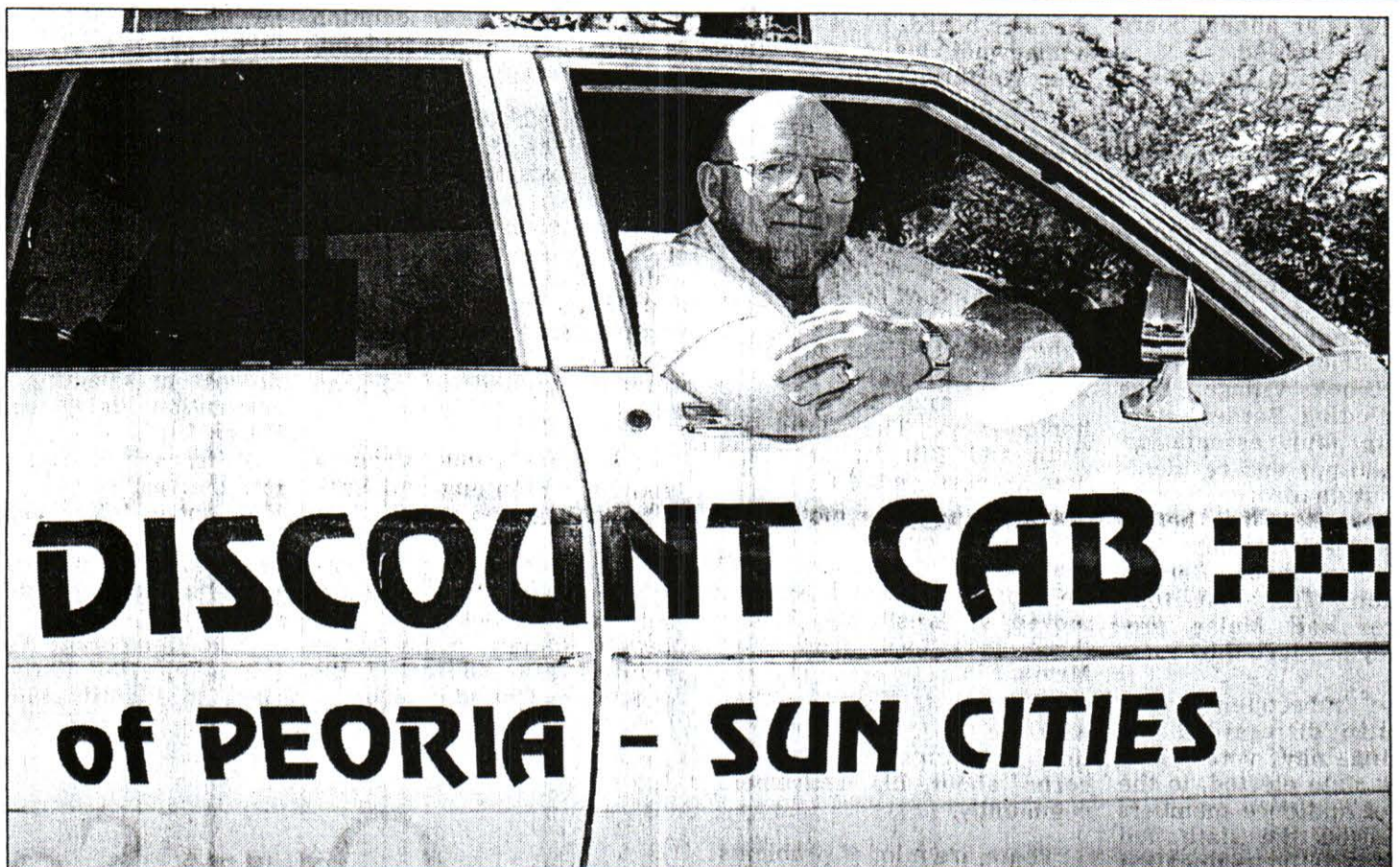
Shockley said he heard a rumor that Route 106 may be abandoned altogether because funding woes.

Han said she doesn't think there are any plans to discontinue the route, "but you never know."

When the transit authority does have money to expand bus service in the Valley, local transportation officials have proposed extending a Valley Metro bus route that now stops at 83rd Avenue and Bell Road into Sun City, Surprise and Sun City West.

That proposed extension is part of the transit authority's long-range plan, said Gerald Unger, chairman of Sun City Home Owners Association's transportation committee.

The fact that ridership has increased on the only current bus route in Sun City may help when the time comes for residents to lobby for additional service, Unger said.



Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Dan Bertram, who owns seven cabs including the one he drives for the Discount Cab company, said he can pick up his Sun Cities-area customers within 20 minutes.

Cabbie vows punctuality

Taxi service gives residents a choice in transportation

By MICHAEL P. HEGARTY
Staff writer

Eleanor Arcamone can't drive.
The Sun Citian is legally blind.

But she needs to get around to the grocery store, beauty parlor and likes to go to the swimming pool a couple times a week.

For a long time, Arcamone's only option was the Sun Cities Area Transit System.

Then, in November, a new taxi service came to town. Arcamone now can choose between two transportation services.

SCAT is much cheaper than taxis, but appointments can be difficult to get with the non-profit organization that serves Sun City, Sun City West and Youngtown exclusively. And the wait can be long.

Cabs, on the other hand, are quicker and will travel anywhere — for a price.

"SCAT is wonderful if you don't have to wait," Arcamone said. "Taxis are not high if I use it once in a while."

She prefers to use SCAT for short, local trips and calls a cab when she needs to travel a distance, say to the Metrocenter mall.

SCAT charges \$1.50 per ride. Taxis cost anywhere from \$1.10 to \$1.40 a mile plus a first-mile rate of upwards of \$2.75.

While most taxi services operate 24 hours a day, SCAT, which provides 80,000 rides per year, runs from 7:15 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 7:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on weekends and holidays.

The service requires that appointments be made 11/2 hours in advance. Twenty-four hours notice is required for people who need wheelchair or special assistance, said Donna Gilliland, who has been the executive director of SCAT for eight years.

SCAT does not take reservations for pick-ups. When a person needs a ride home, say from the doctor's office, they must telephone SCAT and wait for the nearest of its 14 vans. SCAT records show 92 percent of riders are picked up within 30 minutes.

For some riders, that's too long.

Dan Bertram, 53, of Peoria, who owns seven cabs including the one he drives for the Discount Cab company, said he can pick up his Sun Cities-area customers within 20 minutes.

"He's punctual," Arcamone said. "I don't have to wait for an hour."

Bertram, who has been driving taxis in the Valley since 1981, enjoys the senior audience.

"They're sweethearts; the best people I've ever been around," he said.

His customers are just as appreciative of his service.

"He's wonderful," Arcamone said. "He helps me in and out of the cab. I told him once, 'I don't like to be helped if I don't want it.' He said, 'That's my job.'"

Discount is thriving on its service to the retirement communities.

"I have a very positive attitude about it," said Bertram, who plans on moving to Sun City as soon as he's eligible. "I know there's a need for the cab service and I feel good about it. I know it's going to work."

"We're not out here because of the snowbirds. We want to take care of the people who will be here during the heat of the summer. But I don't want them to complain if when I get there (in the summertime), their ice cream is melted," Bertram said with a laugh.

Residents air traffic concerns



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Art Williams of Sun City and Sen. Jan Brewer of Glendale, R-District 19, listen to Maricopa County Supervisor Ed King at a town hall meeting Friday in Sun City.

King attends open forum

By J.J. McCORMACK
Senior staff writer

SUN CITY — Customizing Sun City streets to accommodate older drivers was among the suggestions raised at a town-hall style meeting Friday morning with Maricopa County Board of Supervisors Chairman Ed King.

The proposal was one of several that zeroed in on the traffic safety and transportation concerns broached by many of the some 20 Sun Cities-area residents who attended the inaugural First Friday Forum.

The forum at Faith Presby-

terian Church was the first of a series to be sponsored by the Sun Cities Area Community Council.

The council intended the forums to encourage residents to express their concerns and generate ideas for future planning by the council and other agencies that plan and create human-service programs.

Hal Lind, president of the Property Owners and Residents Association, suggested the county consider "customizing" the road systems in the Sun Cities to make it easier for people with vision problems and slower reaction times to negotiate the streets in cars, on bicycles and in golf cars.

The driving habits of seniors, Lind said, "are somewhat

different than the population as a whole."

A specific suggestion Lind made was to include painting "stop head" on streets "so a stop sign doesn't come up as a surprise."

Gerry Unger, chairman of the Sun City Home Owners Association's transportation committee, has lobbied for for painted street signs for more than a year to no avail.

King said after the meeting he had never heard the suggestion before and believes it may be feasible.

Howard Matthias, HOA vice president, suggested during the town hall that the county investigate adding a traffic lane exclusively for golf cars and bikes to certain Sun City streets. Streets in Green Valley, a retirement community

south of Tucson, have the restricted lanes, he said.

If drivers in the Sun Cities would slow down, traffic safety would improve a lot, some town hall participants said.

Maybe some signs identifying retirement community boundaries would help slow people down, said Connie McMillen of Sun City. She suggested a sign on Bell Road stating "Welcome to Sun City, a laid-back community, slow it down."

Other participants in the town hall said the Sun Cities need better public transportation than existing dial-a-ride services and bus systems now provide.

"You can develop all the human services in the world, but if you can't get to them,



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Ed King

you're in trouble," said Sylvia Cartsonis, director of the community council.

The Rev. Fran Park, pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church

► See Council sponsors, A5

Council sponsors session

■ From A1

and town hall moderator, said seniors are reluctant to give up their driver's licenses and their cars in large part because they're afraid they won't have any other way to get around.

"Public transportation is no longer a luxury, it's essential," he said. "People will drive if you don't provide them with an alternative means of transportation."

Oliver Nixon of Sun City said residents could get the traffic safety and transportation improvements they want without "begging" for the county's help by establishing a city government and putting state-shared revenue to work in the retirement communities.

After the town hall, King said he will explore with county engineering and other staffers the suggestions raised during the meeting. He said it makes sense to "customize" Sun City-area streets in the name of traffic safety.

"I view Sun City as a unique planned community development that has a different set of circumstances that has to be addressed," he said.

"Some of the things we talked about today just involve sorting it out and putting it in place. Some of the things are just housekeeping issues. We'll find out what the impediments are, if there are any," King said.

YourVoices

+ Candidates misinformed about Estrella Roadway

VIEWPOINT

By Roger Cousin

I am a member of the Maricopa County Department of Transportation Estrella Roadway Task Force. After attending the recent "Meet the Candidates" forum at the Johnson Social Hall, I was shocked to learn how little the eight out of nine candidates for the Sun City West Recreation Board (Dudley Gibson being the exception) actually knew about the most important issue facing the future of Sun City West — the Deer Valley Drive hookup to the Estrella Roadway (Route 303).

Many of these hopefuls are already board members running for re-election to the Rec Board.

In essence, these are some of their comments:

"Deer Valley Drive will be barricaded in two places . . . one near the intersection of the Estrella and the other at the western wall of SCW."

This is not true. There will be one barricade, and that will be at the intersection of Route 303, 600 feet away from SCW property. Why? There is a land-locked wedge of land just over the western wall of our community, that borders Deer

Valley Drive on the north and Route 303 on the west, that is owned by a developer who wishes to build 500 homes. These homes are anticipated to be non-age restricted, which means children and approximately 2.3 (or more) cars per home. The county must give these homes access to a through street. That access is our Deer Valley Drive, not Estrella Roadway.

We, therefore, can expect 1,300 or more additional cars to use 151st Avenue and Deer Valley Drive to head to our shopping centers and churches just from that development alone. It will not be barricaded at our wall as it is now.

"Your Rec Board has decided, for the good of all residents, that Deer Valley Drive will be extended to the Estrella. It will be barricaded until the people of SCW can vote whether or not to open it to 303 traffic."

The barricade is not on SCW property. SCW residents cannot vote on such an issue outside of its boundary.

"Opening Deer Valley Drive to the Estrella will create less traffic

on 151st Avenue."

In fact it will create more. Residents in the expansion area will still be using Deer Valley Drive, 135th Avenue and 151st Avenue to do their shopping at Safeway, golf on their courses, go to the Rec Centers or attend church. The Estrella does not take residents to these places. The 500 new homes will add to the misery.

And here's the kicker: The residents near 151st Avenue are currently complaining about the 5,000 people going down their street from the expansion area to get to places within SCW. If Deer Valley Drive is opened to 303, not only will those 5,000 continue to go down their street, but they may also now see 25,000 people from the original area driving up their street to get to the Estrella.

"Del Webb is responsible for connecting Deer Valley Drive at a cost of about \$130,000. If we do not allow them to build it, and somewhere in the future the residents want it, the residents will have to pay for it."

This extension will always be a county road. We will always have the option of asking the county to build it, at Maricopa County ex-

pense, not ours. It may be put at a lower priority, but it will be eligible for completion at no cost to us. Besides, if it's a lower priority then, why is it such a high priority now?

"A sign will be located on Deer Valley Drive and 303 stating, 'No through trucking.'"

While a sign on Deer Valley Drive at 303 may help, I requested one on El Mirage as well. However, who does the Rec Board think will enforce these signs?

"Crime has risen in SCW 100 percent in the past year."

Very true. The more exposed we are to outside traffic, the more this figure will rise. So will accidents and the probability of loss of life.

Citizens of SCW, don't be fooled by members of your Rec Board or MCDOT who state that 303 will only be a "two-lane" road. It may start that way, but it will become four or six lanes in the very near future. Why else would they be erecting a four-lane bridge over Grand Avenue? For every lane that is added, the Estrella gets closer and closer to our walled community.

Your Rec Board sealed our fate at a closed-door meeting just 24 hours after our representative to the

county Board of Supervisors agreed to remove this connection.

Because MCDOT has now received the blessing of our board, they are now planning to build a second bridge. This is another 20-odd-foot-high elevated bridge, over Deer Valley Drive and the Estrella.

If you agree with the current Rec Board decision to connect Deer Valley Drive to 303 and agree with the comments made by these candidates, vote them in. If you realize just how little they really know on this issue . . . well, what can I say? It's in your hands.

Since the forum, candidate John Firestone has contacted me for task force information on this matter. He spent two hours with me, driving through the desert surrounding SCW, while listening to all of the pros and cons of this issue as laid before me in recent meetings with MCDOT and data compiled from the files of PORA and our Rec Board. Firestone is now an informed candidate who has my vote.

I implore the Rec Board to allow the residents of SCW to vote on this issue now.

Roger Cousin lives in Sun City West.

Busy intersection gets light makeover

Staff report

Making good on a recent promise, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation has installed left turn signals on the traffic lights at one of the busiest intersections in Sun City West.

Installation of the lights was completed Friday at R.H. Johnson Boulevard and Camino del Sol.

But the left turn arrows still were covered that day, pending final electronic testing of the system.

Traffic safety committee representatives at the Property Owners and Residents Association had been pushing for the improved signals for about a year. Last summer, MCDOT turned down the idea, saying the problem was largely seasonal and the benefits wouldn't justify the cost.

MCDOT relented in January after a PORa study showed that the intersection, near Safeway, had the community's highest accident rate.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Travelers through this intersection at R.H. Johnson Boulevard and Camino del Sol in Sun City West will be a little safer with the help of protected left-turn arrows.

County OKs transportation contract

By JEFF OWENS
Staff writer

At least for one more year, Maricopa County will continue giving a free lift to older citizens of 14 West Valley communities, including Sun City, Peoria, Glendale, Surprise and El Mirage.

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors renewed a contract Wednesday for its Special Transportation Services Program in 19 communities in the county.

Under the contract, the county's Human Services Department will

pair up for another year with the Central Arizona Chapter of the American Red Cross to provide meal delivery for the homebound and door-to-door transportation for elderly, low-income and disabled clients.

If those people need a ride to a doctor's appointment, a senior center, child care center, job interview, or even just a grocery store, the county will give them one. Free of charge.

"We've created an inner city network that connects 14 cities and towns in western Maricopa County,"

said Chairwoman Jan Brewer. "By providing essential transportation services, we can help people move toward greater self-sufficiency."

The contract stipulates that the county has slightly less than \$1.38 million to spend on the program from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999.

The county accomplishes this program with a fleet of 70 vehicles, and the contract is overseen by the Human Services Department.

"It's a cost-effective, energy-efficient program that benefits everyone," Brewer said. "Our vehicles range from three- to 15-

passenger vans, and we're proud of the fact that 51 of our vans are wheelchair-accessible."

Previous studies have indicated that lack of adequate transportation is one of the main obstacles to successful employment for those receiving assistance.

The contract renewal also features expanded services which include transportation for refugees and for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Funding for the program comes from several cities and towns, the county, the Regional Public Trans-

portation Authority, the state Department of Economic Security and the Area Agency on Aging.

Other communities in the program are Aguila, Wickenburg, Wittmann, Avondale, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Tolleson, Chandler, Fountain Hills, Gilbert, Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe and Ahwatukee.

In other action, the supervisors approved an application and acceptance of an extra \$721,009 in federal grant funds to provide financial support for hiring extra sheriff's deputies for community policing.

Sat., June 13 and Sun., June 14, 1998 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Federal mulligan

U.S. reclassifies golf cars for safety rules

By DAVID MILLER
Staff writer

No need to break out the crash helmets and roll bars just yet.

But those contemplating the purchase of a golf car should know that new federal guidelines on seat belts and other safety features are going into effect, as soon as the Feds publish their ruling.

There's no reason to mothball your souped-up street machine or throw the clubs in the Lincoln, however. The ruling creates a new class of "low speed vehicle," classified as those traveling over 15 mph, but it does not make the order retroactive.

Thus, those tooling around the Sun Cities yet less than anxious to strap on seat belts have won a reprieve. But those in the market for a golf car

may have to shell out for headlights, turn signals and other safety features.

The move answers a contentious debate between golfers, some of whom argue that local codes give them the right to bring their golf cars onto the street, and the federal government, which says drivers need to follow certain guidelines.

"The conflict created a logjam, and we wanted to break that," said Phil Recht, with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which issued the ruling. "We wanted to facilitate the market, with the appropriate safety requirements at the appropriate level."

Under the order, "low speed vehicles" will be exempt from federal crash-test standards and requirements for such safety equipment as

air bags. They must, however, have other safety features including seat belts, headlights, turn signals and rear-view mirrors.

Vehicles without the capability of traveling more than 15 mph need not feature seat belts.

Golfers also needn't worry about buckling up on the golf course, since most carts used for golf have a top speed of only 15 mph, and will be exempt from the ruling.

The agency sees the ruling as having a two-pronged benefit: It will make the elderly more mobile and will help the environment, since most golf cars run on electricity.

Seat belts on higher speed vehicles will also help drivers, say police. Already in 1998 there has been a fatality involving a car and a golf cart, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office said.



Daily News-Sun

New federal guidelines on golf cars will require seat belts and other safety features on golf cars that travel more than 15 mph.

Review set for Grand Avenue plan

8 overpasses in the works for stretch between I-17 and Loop 101

By TINA SCHADE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Long considered the stepchild of Valley transportation, Grand Avenue may soon get the attention it needs.

Next month, the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Maricopa Association of Governments will go to the table to review a plan which makes Grand a priority when it comes to state transportation funding.

Jan Brewer, District 4 representative on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors said she is confident the agencies will stamp the agreement, which would provide \$160

million to build eight overpasses along Grand Avenue between I-17 and Loop 101.

"To see a dream finally happen is pretty exciting news for those of us who lived on the West Side for 30 years. This is really a landmark ... this is big," Brewer said.

For years, various agencies kicked around the idea of building overpasses, but politics and expenses kept the project from getting off the ground.

In 1994, Grand Avenue was dropped from the funding roster when voters gave a thumbs down to continuing the half-cent tax increase which would pay for Valley freeways,

said Doug Nintzel, a spokesman for ADOT.

The following year, the MAG Regional Council reinstated part of the program, calling for overpasses to be built at Thomas and Camelback, but funding was a problem.

This time around, however, funding is already in place through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. Through the TEA-21 bill, the federal government collects states' gasoline tax and reallocates the money to states based on need.

In the past, Arizona was long considered a donor to the program, receiving only 82 cents for every dollar contributed to TEA-21. This year, however, Arizona will receive 92 cents for every dollar contribution.

"I think they're going to find the

balance of the funds and I think they're going to get the project where something will actually be constructed on Grand Avenue and that's our goal," said Ken Martin, Glendale deputy city manager.

The project has been delayed because there were some questions about which agency was accountable for making improvements to Grand.

"The state has always considered itself in charge of freeways and Grand Avenue is not really a freeway. MAG was in charge of thoroughfares. Grand Avenue fell in between the two, so neither one took responsibility for it in the past," said Kevin Tyne, a Brewer spokesman.

Additionally, the East Valley had been receiving the bulk of transpor-

tation funds in the last 10 years.

"We're more quiet over here in the West Valley. We don't speak up as noisily," said Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs.

Rep. Jerry Overton of Litchfield Park, R-District 15, said he is proposing a bill that would get the overpasses up, but said he wants to float the money from the state treasurer.

"We are probably going to see something done this year on Grand Avenue," Overton said.

Reports on when the project could be completed vary. If all goes according to the ADOT plan, West Valley residents may be using overpasses as early as 2004, Scruggs said.

Others predict the project to be completed by 2007.

Rapid transit plans stall for West Valley

By JANICE TARLETON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Some traffic-stopping plans may be in the works for Phoenix and Glendale.

But West Valley cities such as Surprise, Youngtown and Wickensburg are left out of the loop when it comes to transportation.

It seems they need to spend some money before they can ever expect to receive any — at least from the federal government.

That's the message city leaders heard in an informal briefing on a transportation study completed last year that recommends a combination light rail/bus system as one way to alleviate commuter congestion.

The Phoenix/Glendale study is the first step to receiving half of the \$2 billion in capital funding needed from the federal government.

Next is a study to determine the real cost and environmental impact of the project, expected to be completed by next January.

Surprise will likely start looking at transportation needs as soon as the general plan update is completed this summer, said Mayor Joan Shafer.

Funding was recently allocated to study the northwest portion of Grand Avenue and Shafer said she would like to discuss making the diagonal thoroughfare to downtown Phoenix

an expressway.

As for extending the light rail system, now projected to stop further west at 51st and Glendale avenues, she doesn't see it as a viable option. "It's a wonderful plan to get to sports events, but what about getting people to jobs?"

Express buses, traveling in high occupancy vehicle lanes, may be the answer for shuttling commuters from Surprise, leaders were told. At a downtown station, commuters could switch to local buses for the final leg of the trip.

While it might seem logical to take advantage of the railroad tracks that run along Grand Avenue, it's not as simple as it sounds, said Steve Beard of the Regional Public Transportation Authority. "It's not just a matter of buying a train and putting it on the tracks," he said.

Railroad companies aren't typically cooperative in such matters. Even if they were, it would take millions of dollars to upgrade and rehabilitate the tracks to allow trains to go faster than 25 miles per hour, he said.

"We're dead out here. There's no freeways," City Manager Richard McComb told planners, adding that, for now, the fastest way to downtown Phoenix is to take Dysart Road to Interstate 10.

That could be the commuter bus route of the future.

It's time for action on Grand

It's time to stop studying and start constructing." That pronouncement by Byron Healy, president of the Sun City Home Owner's Association (HOA), expressed the sentiments of many of the persons in attendance.

"After many studies of Grand Avenue," Healy stated, "the need for making improvements with overpasses at 107th, 103rd, or 99th avenues is pressing." He said further that public transportation in the Valley "hardly exists."

Mr. Healy's remarks at the meeting sponsored by the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee were echoes of oral and written comments made repeatedly in recent years by, among others, this columnist.

Impediments associated with lengthy freight trains blocking for critical minutes the access to crossings by emergency vehicles at major Grand Avenue intersections serving the Sun Cities, Youngtown, El Mirage, and Surprise have been cited many times as a hazard to public health, safety, and welfare.

THE PUBLIC MEETING on July 27 in the West Valley Art Museum had the usual presentation format of many choreographed by private, quasi-public, and governmental agencies in recent years. There was an introduction, an explanation of roles, presentation of plans, a summary of projects, and a call for public comment.

Many groups of well-intentioned authorities and civic-minded participants have for decades addressed the Valley's transportation deficiencies — not the least of which involve Grand



**LLOYD
CLARK**

*As Time
Goes By*

Avenue. But showing slides (I counted 34) that describe the levels of planning agencies and governmental bureaus tinkering with the problem served to bolster the remarks of Gerry Unger, chairman of the HOA Transportation Committee.

"Too many dollars spread among too many local bodies are ineffective." He suggested creating a single authority to have planning and implementation responsibility for transit matters in this area of burgeoning population.

The Federal Highway Administration, the Arizona Department of Transportation, Maricopa Association of Governments, Maricopa County, Regional Public Transportation Authority, the cities and towns of the Salt River Valley — all have been "putting in their two cents worth" (costing huge sums of tax dollars spent on consultants), with the intention of curing gridlock, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, and providing safety.

Isn't there a saying about too many cooks?

County tears up 99th Avenue

3 intersections under construction through summer

By BRUCE ELLISON and GINGER SCOTT-EIDEN
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Drivers traveling regularly along 99th Avenue in Sun City might want to find another route for the next few months.

Crews under contract to the Maricopa County Department of Transportation have begun rebuilding and improving three intersections along North 99th Avenue — work that will last until November or so. Work is under way at Boswell Boulevard, Burns Drive and Hutton Drive.

And while the road won't be closed, narrowed lanes and turn restrictions have made travel less than pleasant, motorists say.

"I just try to avoid it as much as I can," said Ethel Zittel of Sun City. "It's a pity. I'll even try to go out of my way."

Zittel and others said many of the places where they do business — banks, grocery stores and gas stations — are serviced by 99th Avenue, making the construction even more frustrating.

"I try to go to the bank and grocery store all at the same time," Bobbie McCannon said this morning as she dashed into the ABCO grocery store on 99th Avenue and Hutton Drive.

But others aren't as bothered by the torn-up roads.

Don Seigel of Sun City said he is able to avoid the construction. Also, "I think they showed some wisdom in choosing the summer months to do this," Seigel said.

Louise Vogel lives near the intersection of Boswell and 99th Avenue and said she couldn't be happier to see workmen digging down the road.

"I think this is progress," she said. "There are an awful lot of accidents there, and you can always take another road."

Ruth and Joe McHugh have lived near Boswell and 99th for seven years and said they've seen traffic increase significantly over the past few years. And with the construction of new homes in Peoria, traffic accidents are only

going to become more frequent, they said.

"This is accident haven," said Joe McHugh. "We just hope the construction accomplishes what it's supposed to."

MCDOT originally had planned to build the projects, each of them costing more than \$350,000, over two or three years, but found the county organization could save considerable money by awarding one contract and letting the contractor move from one site to the next.

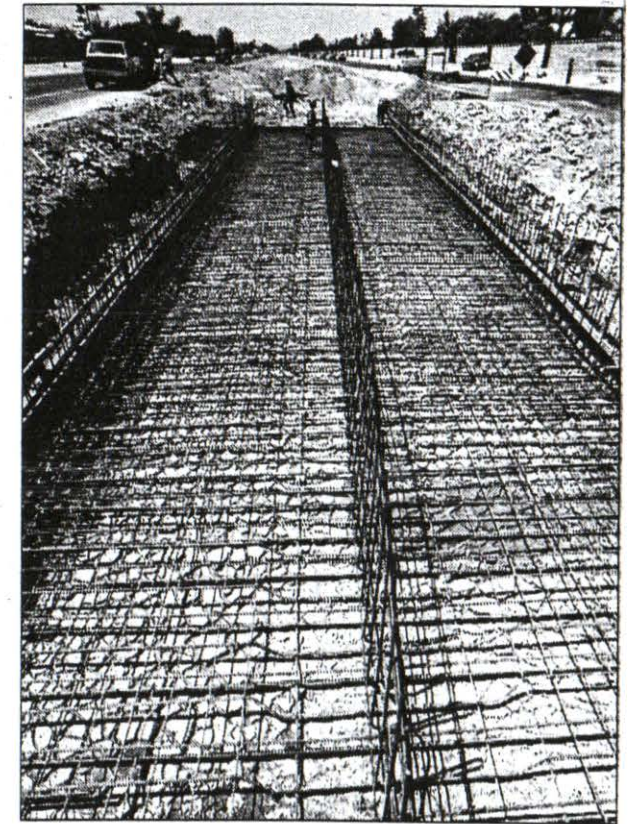
As a result, all three will be under way more or less simultaneously.

The work is similar to what was done last year at the Greenway Road and 99th Avenue intersection.

The median strip drainage ditch will be reconfigured and made into a box culvert that then will be paved over to create a left-turn lane for traffic on 99th Avenue.

New signals will be installed, and traffic on 99th will be able to turn left from both north and south lanes simultaneously, a change that should speed up traffic.

Now, traffic stops in three directions while just one direction has the right of way across the two divided legs on 99th Avenue.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Maricopa County Department of Transportation workers install rebar in the culvert at 99th Avenue and Burns Drive.

Noise sparks complaints

Nearby residents demand re-routing of trucks

By JOSH KRIST
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Trucks now rumbling through Peoria and parts of Sun City could be officially routed through Sun City under some of the alternative long-term truck routes offered by the Entranco consulting firm.

Officials stress that this is only one option of many, and they're still gathering opinions and information.

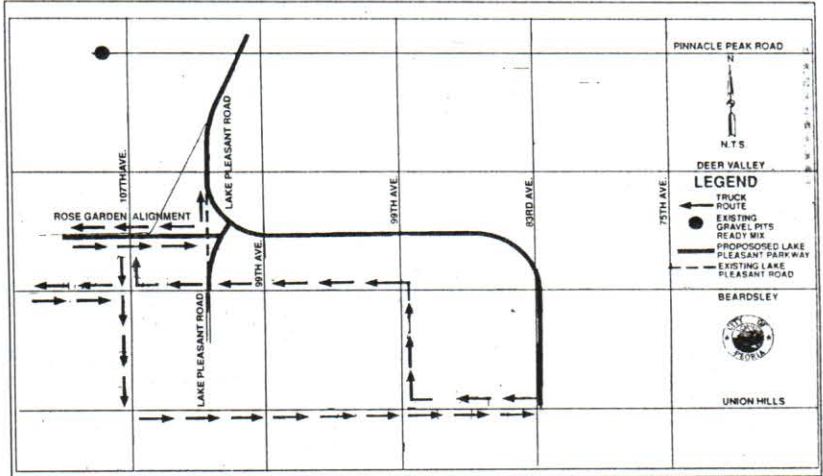
"We're not going to just move the problem to another neighborhood," said Dave Eberhart of Entranco.

The problem is that Peoria residents are getting vocal about heavy trucks going through their neighborhoods to get to and from three nearby quarries.

It's not a new problem, since the quarries have been operating for years. In a twist on the philosophical debate about a tree falling in the woods, it seems if a truckful of gravel is banging through sparsely a populated area, it doesn't make a sound.

But when that area starts sprouting homes, things change.

A study in the early '90s



A map produced by the city of Peoria shows potential new routes for truck traffic.

jointly undertaken by Peoria, Surprise and Maricopa County resulted in a truck ordinance that limited heavy trucks mainly to Rose Garden Lane, when the Ventana Lakes development was in its infancy.

Now homes line both sides of the streets.

"The decision was made by council to go back and relook at everything, and this time look at some quality-of-life issues as well as long-term issues," said Dave Moody, public works engineering director for Peoria. "Part of the issues were: How much more life do the quarries have? What do they need to do? What do homeowners need to do?"

He acknowledged the problem "may not go away, but it will make those residents better off than they are now."

In a public meeting earlier this month at Ventana Lakes, Entranco presented its findings

to nearly 270 residents.

Ventana Lakes is just north of Sun City, between 99th and 111th avenues.

'If we have to smell diesel trucks and hear this noise all our lives, we've lost our investment on this house.'

Sandra Lander
Sun City

Those attending were mainly from Ventana Lakes and Westbrook Village, with some Sun Citians, said Deena Cigoy head of the Ventana Lakes Truck Committee, a citizen's group pushing for a solution.

"The presentation was very poor. It did not offer anything creative or new. 'If we don't route them here we'll route them there,'" she said.

A resident of the area since 1993, she said her group would "like to see the city, county, state, the trucker's association, the quarries, all cooperate and put a road in the river bottom."

She said the problem is a

See Company considers, A5

OVER

combination of too many trucks on roads they're allowed to be on and trucks on roads they're not allowed to be on.

Cigoy and Sun City resident Sandra Lander, think Peoria has been irresponsible to allow homes to be built next to truck routes.

She said the city keeps using a "Band-Aid, by moving the trucks to where nobody lives, but then they let people live there."

Lander found out about the Ventana Lakes meeting "by accident," and feels the city of Peoria is trying to slip something past Sun Citians.

"It was done in stealth, as far in Sun City," she said.

She said she and her neighbors hear the trucks coming by on Beardsley Road, which is on the other side of her back yard, starting at 4 a.m.

"I'm laying in bed, in my house, and I'm hearing this rumble — My god, what is this rumble here?" she said.

She wants the trucks to get out of Sun City, and not get the official OK from Peoria to drive through.

"If we have to smell diesel trucks and hear this noise all our lives, we've lost our investment on this house," she said.

Dave Eberhart of Entranco, a former state representative for Peoria, said people seemed to expect answers at the Ventana Lakes meeting.

"We were just trying to lay out some options and get some input from residents, we weren't saying we had the answer yet," he said.

His firm offered five different truck route options, one of which would route trucks through the leg of Sun City intersected by Union Hills, which trucks already sometimes use.

The study found the highest truck volumes on Union Hills Drive from 91st Avenue to Loop 101, on Rose Garden Lane from 107th Avenue to Lake Pleasant Road, and on Lake Pleasant Road from Beardsley to Rose Garden Lane.

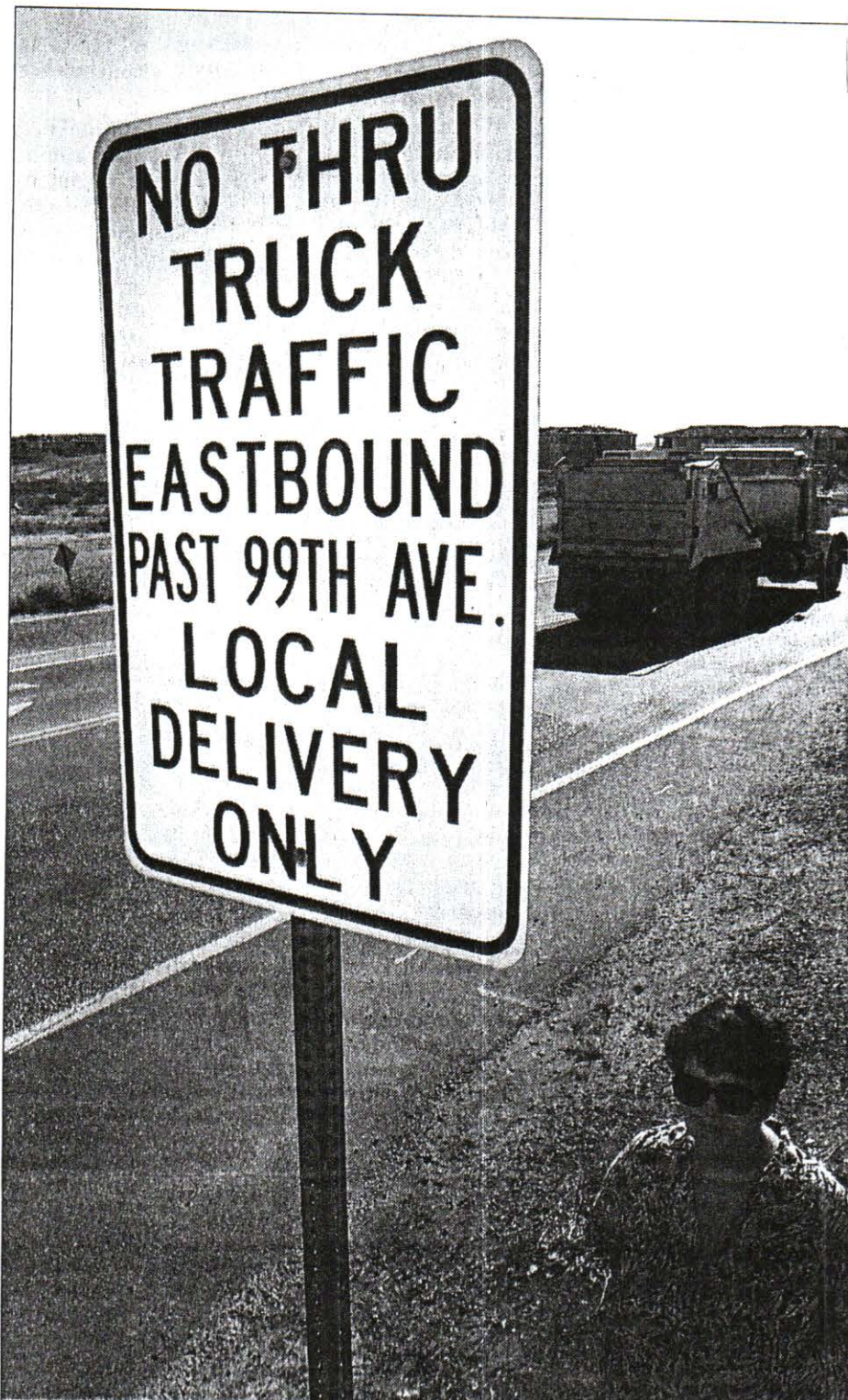
Traffic on Rose Garden Lane runs around the clock, with a reported hourly average of five trucks at 4 a.m. and 37 trucks at 7 a.m.

Entranco expects to come up with recommendations in mid-July that Moody will present to the Peoria City Council.

Entranco and the city will consider the width of roads, the setback of houses from roads, the population density and existing walls before they can come up with the best truck routes. There will probably be separate routes for separate quarries to lessen the noise pollution, he said.

"It's still too big to put your hands around it and say, 'I've got it, this is the answer' " he said.

Sandra Lander stands by a sign prohibiting trucks on Beardsley Road between 99th and 91st avenues. She lives south of Beardsley in Sun City and said she often hears them early in the morning.



Steve Cherek/Daily

Corner still in county plans

Improvements should be made within few months

By **MIKE RUSSO**
Independent Newspapers

Although it has been three months since the Sun City Home Owners Association received notification from the Maricopa County Department of Transportation that the county intended to modify the confusing intersection at Bell Road and 99th Avenue, action has yet to be taken. However, relief should be forthcoming during the first quarter of the new fiscal year, according a MCDOT official.

Gerry Unger, chairman of HOA's Transportation Committee, has met with county representatives, and "they are committed to do it," he said.

"We are preparing the striping design plans," explained Nicholas Swart, MCDOT traffic engineer. "We are awaiting the new fiscal year."

Mr. Swart expects the project to be undertaken in the first quarter of new fiscal year, which begins July 1.

HOA's Transportation Committee has been pursuing changes to the intersection of Bell Road and 99th Avenue for a couple of years and had corresponded with MCDOT on a regular basis, seeking changes.

The committee wanted the county to more clearly mark the right

lane, north and south of Bell Road, for turns, so motorists do not get caught by surprise and squeezed out of pavement as they approach the Promenade and Mobil on the Run, according to Mr. Unger.

"Striping will indicate two through lanes and a right-turn lane," Mr. Swart confirmed.

Mr. Unger noted the troublesome intersection has been a subject of conversation for several years; ever since its completion.

When the intersection was redesigned, people initially had problems with making left turns, according to Mr. Unger. However, motorists adjusted to that but have continued to be stymied by the merging of three lanes into two, just north and south of Bell Road.

HOA decided to seek the improved lane delineations following the receipt of numerous com-

plaints, Mr. Unger explained.

In his March letter to HOA, Mr. Swart wrote: "MCDOT has evaluated the current and projected peak hour traffic demand at this intersection and has concluded that the curb lanes, currently striped for shared through and right-turn traffic, can be converted into right-turn only lanes without considerable impact on the remaining two through lanes in each direction. It is anticipated that the remaining two through lanes on 99th Avenue will be able to accommodate the projected traffic demand for at least the medium-term future."

Mr. Swart noted the county continuously monitors intersections and "those with more accidents, we look at the improvement we can do. We prioritize them to make them safer. It is continuous process."

Compromise on El Mirage Road hailed

By Brent Whiting
The Arizona Republic

A road tussle in the northwest Valley has ended with both sides smiling.

County officials and community leaders in Sun City West are exchanging hearty handshakes over the highway decisions.

The debate focused on El Mirage Road, now a two-lane thoroughfare north of Bell Road that parallels the brick wall along the eastern edge of Sun City West.

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation will get an improved El Mirage Road north of Bell Road, a route that will be widened and extended along a four-mile stretch to connect with the future Loop 303, or Estrella Freeway.

Residents in the retirement community, worried about noise and traffic, will get a new road, but most of it will be built as much as 600 feet east of the current alignment.

"We're most pleased with this result," said Phil Garner, president of the Property Owners and Residents Association. "The people along the east wall will be protected. That's about the best we could do for them."

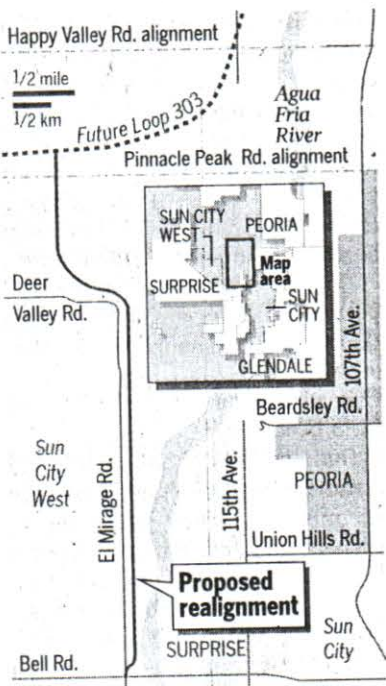
The arrangement was described by Jan Brewer, a member of the county Board of Supervisors, as a "wonderful example of the county adapting its plans to address legitimate concerns raised by our constituents."

Brewer, whose District 4 includes Sun City West, said the new design concept for El Mirage Road will be cost-effective and safe.

"I am thrilled that we have found a way to design this major transportation link so that it reduces the noise impact on the community while still keeping the overall costs down," she said.

Plans call for a new El Mirage Road that will be widened to six lanes at an estimated cost of nearly \$20 million.

The project may be completed in five years, making El Mirage Road the major connection between Bell Road and Loop 303, which now ends on Grand Avenue north of Sun City West.



From Page 1

Work will start in late 2001 to extend Loop 303 about eight miles east, approaching Lake Pleasant Road.

Randy Fuller, a board member and president-elect of PORA, joined with Garner in approving the new El Mirage Road idea.

"County officials came and heard our concerns, and we're very pleased with the way they responded to them," Fuller said.

PORA is a quasi-government organization with about 16,000 members that sponsors lobbying efforts on retirement issues, among other things.

In a poll that PORA sponsored last year, 90 percent of Sun City West residents who responded said they preferred a new El Mirage Road that would remain on the western side of the Agua Fria River about 600 feet east from the current alignment. The idea was favored by 3,469 of

3,839 residents.

John Waldron, a spokesman for Del Webb Corp., the developer of Sun City West, said Webb officials believe that a good, long-term solution has been reached for pressing road needs in the area.

Webb is considering developing the 638-acre Pleasant Valley Ranch orchard north of Sun City West and other adjacent properties that would be served by El Mirage Road.

County officials said the road expansion is needed to accommodate residents who will be living in the proposed 9,300-home Lakeland Village development north of Sun City West.

That project would bring nearly 25,000 residents to 3,128 acres between Peoria and Surprise.

Reach the reporter at
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(602) 444-7119.

Buddy DeVito goes golfing in style in his Cadillac-styled golf car.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

James Wormley of Sun City sits on the "hood" of his golf car styled like a Mercedes Benz. The trend in luxury golf cars is making a comeback

Sun Citians putt around town in luxury golf cars

HAYLEY RINGLE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jim Wormley told his wife, Myrna, he would buy her a Mercedes, and came home with a slightly smaller version — a Mercedes-replica golf car.

"We were just newly married and it was a joke," said Jim, a Sun City resident, who also takes his cat, Little One, along with him for rides in the Mercedes golf car.

And Myrna, said jokingly, "I'm still waiting for that Mercedes."

More and more people are forking out the extra money to buy these luxury, or custom designed, golf cars. From the Viper model with its sleek regular-car look, to the souped-up golf cars with extra, added

features, residents who frequently use their golf cars for more than just transportation to and from the golf course are looking for something different to ride around town in.

"I saw someone driving it and I loved it," said Myrna. "The look is different and it goes faster than a regular golf car."

The Wormleys bought their silver, electric Mercedes in 1990, and love its faux wood paneling, radio with a tape player and smooth ride.

The trend dates to Jackie Gleason, who tooted around in a faux Rolls-Royce in the '70s, but sales have taken off the last couple of years, particularly in California, Hawaii and Florida. Ranging in

See Luxury golf, A5

(over)

From A1

price from \$11,000 to \$25,000, these hot wheels are being used not only on the golf course, but also in gated communities, which restrict cars and encourage carts to lessen congestion.

Sports stars such as Deion Sanders and Joe Montana are buying them to get around their lavish estates. The cool cars are even popping up on Hollywood movie sets.

"We are booked. We even had to bring in some extra people to keep up with the demand," says Luis Martinez, sales director for Genesis Golf in New York City, which is licensed to manufacture mini Humdingers, Lamborghinis and other exotic cars.

A Western custom-designed car that runs about \$13,000 has available features such as a compact disc player, a water cooler and an air top which is sort of

like a swamp cooler, for an added price.

"You can buy an automobile for \$10,000 or \$60,000, it's the conveniences, luxuries and comforts and features the custom golf car offers," said Steve Pohle, owner of Pohle Golf and Neighborhood Vehicle Center in Sun City. "The prices are more expensive because it becomes a custom, handcrafted car."

Newer colors range from bright red to viper green, and the four-seater Elegante Western golf car, which is the top of the line available at Pohle's dealership, offers pearl paint, a multiple-stage paint, for an extra \$360.

A color television is another offer available for an extra \$510, but Pohle said he hasn't sold any in Sun City.

Because of the custom capabilities, if one is ready to spend the money, anything is possible.

"One lady got lavender seats

with gold spoked wheels," Pohle said.

Another common feature is a club and ball washer on the rear of the golf car, which Pohle said a large number of Sun City residents get.

For Gary Leigh, developer of Walnut Brook, an upscale planned community in Rochester Hills, Mich., custom cars are more than a means of getting around. Leigh uses a Cadillac, a Royal Ride and an eight-passenger limousine as marketing tools to show off his models and community design to prospective home buyers.

"These cars just really create a nice impression on people. Many times people are shocked at how fancy they are," Leigh says. "They're just the greatest idea."

Buddy DiVito of Sun City bought his Cadillac golf car three years ago for \$12,000. It has a folding windshield that allows air to stream in to cool the

passengers, along with vents that blow air, and a cooler case in the back to hold food and drinks. And it has a license plate that reads, "Budmax," which is a combination of "Buddy" and his wife's name, "Maxine."

"This is a nice, sharp looking car," said DiVito, a resident for 10 years. "They gang around it all the time. It's a fun car and it's good on the road."

DiVito uses his car, which can go as fast as 35 mph, for golfing purposes, and plays golf four times a week on the Sun City courses.

"I don't show off, though," DiVito said. "It's a good little car and it's kept up nice."

And his wife, Maxine, who doesn't usually drive the golf car, offered a little aside.

"They're pretty but they don't help your game," she added.

USA Today contributed to this article.

Hayley Ringle can be reached by e-mail at hpringle@aztrib.com or by calling 876-2519.

Crossing repairs await ADOT

BURLINGTON NORTHERN AND SANTA FE RAILWAY:

Approaches must be graded to track level before repairs can be done

PATRICK O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The equipment is ready for replacing two railroad crossings near Grand Avenue in Sun City, but a difference in height between the road and the tracks will delay the project.

Officials at Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway have placed new cement pads near railroad crossings at 99th and 107th Avenue just north of Grand, but the crossings will not be put in place until the roadway is made level with the crossing

and the railway receives permission to close the roads, said Lena Kent.

"(Track workers) said they are not going to do it until they get permission," she said.

The two crossings, with 107th slated to be the first replacement, will be the only two done this year. In April, railway officials put together a more ambitious project of possibly replacing up to four crossings — including the crossings at 99th, 103rd, 107th and Meeker Boulevard — by the end of the year.

Those projects have been delayed while the railway waits for the Arizona Department of Transportation to make the grade level between the tracks and the rest of the road. ADOT officials did not reply prior to press time as to whether the crossings would be improved.

Although the road is the province of the Maricopa County Department of Transportation, as all roads in the Sun Cities are, the county is superseded in its

control of railroad crossings by ADOT, which controls the roads around all such crossings in the state, said Julie White, communication coordinator for MCDOT.

To date, MCDOT officials have not been notified of any pending closures around their roads either by themselves or any other agency, White said.

The problem with the road and crossing not being level is the damage it is causing to the crossing. A recent repaving of many streets in the area have left the road slightly higher than the crossing, allowing cars to fall down on the tracks and cause damage, notably loosening railroad ties and causing lag screws holding those ties down to rise up and become a possible road hazard, officials said.

"On 99th alone they've been out there three times in the past three weeks replacing screws," Kent said.

Once the roadway is leveled, getting the crossings in place should be done fairly quickly with

only a limited amount of time the road should be closed, Kent said.

"They usually get a big crew out there and crank them out pretty fast," she said.

New crossings also might aid a MCDOT project currently being examined with a study by the Maricopa Association of Governments that is examining the feasibility of placing new crosswalks at the 99th, 103rd, 107th and 111th intersections with Grand, White said.

The street-level crossings would be compatible with the Americans With Disabilities Act to aid people crossing the street, White said.

"I think there's concern that people can't get wheelchairs over the tracks," she said.

There was some discussion of possible raised walkways that would be routed above Grand, but that project would not be feasible. Once the study is complete, MCDOT officials would apply for a grant to fund the improvements, White said.



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Repair materials for railroad-crossing repairs lie waiting for Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway to upgrade the crossing north of Grand Avenue on 99th Avenue in Sun City. The Arizona Department of Transportation must schedule closing the street and bring the level of the street to the same grade as the crossing before the repairs will be done.

Cities draft Grand wish list

PAVING THE WAY: Sun Cities, Youngtown, Surprise and El Mirage present MAG with list of recommended improvements on 8-mile stretch between loops

BRUCE ELLISON
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Even as the Maricopa Association of Governments is set to award a contract to study Grand Avenue through the Sun Cities, local leaders are preparing their own list of what upgrades are needed.

The MAG study comes after decisions already have been made regarding — and money

made available for — extensive work from Loop 101 east of Sun City, and from Loop 303, west of Sun City West.

Those improvements will see major intersection reconstruction in Peoria, Glendale and Phoenix, and some bridges over the railroad.

To the west, at the edge of Surprise, a new bridge will carry an extension of Loop 303 over

Grand Avenue. Grand itself will be widened to four lanes west to Morristown, where the pavement already is four-lanes.

Work on both sections should start late this year and early next, including the Loop 303 bridge and a planned connection to northbound Loop 101 from 91st Avenue in Peoria.

It's the eight miles between those loops that concerns local officials.

MAG's \$100,000 study of Grand Avenue through the Sun Cities as well as Youngtown, El Mirage and Surprise is on the agency's agenda for approval at its Wednesday meeting, said

spokesman Chris Voight.

MAG is a regional association of governments whose responsibilities include region-wide transportation planning.

To aid the study contractor, mayors of Youngtown, El Mirage and Surprise have prepared a two-page letter with eight specific concerns they think need to be addressed.

That letter also will be signed by officials of the Sun City Home Owners Association, the Property Owners and Residents Association of Sun City West, and the Sun City Grand Community Association.

Members of those groups got

together last week to talk over their requests.

"We really need to get an intelligent traffic flow on Grand Avenue," said Gerry Unger, chairman of the Sun City Home Owners Association's traffic and safety committee. We are sitting in a big vacuum with no plans for Grand Avenue around our cities. There are plans for west of 303 and east of 101, but nothing in between."

The letter says the signers "are becoming increasingly concerned about traffic conditions on Grand Avenue" in their communities, and cites numerous recent

See Cities recommend, A5

From A1

fatalities along the road, also known as U.S. 60.

PORA President Phil Garner said the letter details "concerns we have for Grand Avenue that we hope they will include in their study.

"It's best to keep them in a non-prioritized way, because everybody (the surrounding cities) is going to want to put their (concern) on the top of the list."

Sun City Grand residents see Grand Avenue "as ... the battle cry for most of the people who live out here," said John Waldron, a spokesman for developer Del Webb Corp.

The points the signers want to see studied, and some remedies suggested, are:

- Increasing congestion and attendant air pollution.

Integrated traffic lights could

help, they say.

- Problems with emergency medical access to Boswell and Del Webb hospitals, where increasing rail traffic could cause problems.

- Better provision for pedestrian crossings of Grand Avenue and the railroad track. Many rail crossings have no sidewalks and are difficult for handicapped residents.

- Inconsistency in the number of lanes on Grand Avenue, which widens and narrows regularly from two lanes to three in both directions.

- Longer and better left-turn lanes, particularly from Meeker Boulevard in Sun City West onto Grand Avenue. Additional traffic from the new Wal-Mart and Home Depot, and other stores now being built, will only compound the problem, they say.

- Better markings of current

left turn lanes onto and off Grand Avenue, to avoid wrong-way driving.

- Methods to deter or halt pedestrian traffic across the tracks and Grand Avenue in undesignated areas in Surprise and El Mirage.

- Consideration of a park-and-ride facility somewhere along Grand Avenue to reduce its traffic load.

The letter signers also ask that their cities or organizations be kept fully apprised of any work or studies, with multiple copies of reports made available to them.

A copy of the letter also will be sent to District 4 County Supervisor Jan Brewer, and to Mary Peters, who heads the Arizona Department of Transportation.

One problem that prevents easy solution of some of the problems is the multiplicity of jurisdictions that would have to deal

with them. The road itself is a federal highway and under the control of the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Some of its intersecting streets, such as those at 99th, 103rd and 107th avenues, are entirely under the control of Maricopa County.

At 111th Avenue, Youngtown weighs in with its own special problems on the south side of the road and at 113th Avenue, while Thompson Ranch Road is in El Mirage, Greenway in Surprise, and so on.

At Meeker and at R.H. Johnson boulevards, Surprise controls the south side of Grand, and the county the north side, while ADOT runs the road itself.

Intergovernmental cost-sharing agreements may be needed to achieve solutions, as well as cooperation from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Traffic turns from 91st Avenue onto Thunderbird Road in Peoria. The traffic signals in the background are on Thunderbird Road at Boswell Boulevard.

8-12-00

Growth signals time for change

TRAFFIC FLOW:
Effort under way to synchronize lights in West Valley cities

PATRICK O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Jan Martinez does not have to direct traffic to understand traffic-signal changes from city to city in the West Valley.

She knows because she is the transportation supervisor for the Peoria Unified School District, whose buses traverse several jurisdictions. She also knows because she moved from Peoria to Glendale.

"There is a huge difference between Glendale and Peoria," she said.

That may change in the future as cities are climbing aboard with controlled signalization and smarter traffic systems designed to increase traffic flow as it moves through the burgeoning West Valley. And while drivers' complaints mount that signals are not properly timed, the reality is there's just too much traffic on the roads, officials said.

"The biggest problem we have is that people call us and say the signals aren't timed right," said Ben McCawley, advanced traffic systems coordinator for the Maricopa County Department of Transportation. "It's not that they're not timed right, it's that they are at saturation."

That has spurred the county's AZTech program, a seven-year plan designed to incorporate elements of what local jurisdictions are doing to tie signals together

into a regional approach of getting drivers from one side of the Valley to another with as few red lights as possible, McCawley said.

"Really what it is to do is to give a seamless view of traffic," he said. "To give you an example, it would let you go from Bell and Grand to Bell and Scottsdale without stopping at every light or with stopping only at a couple of lights."

Several cities, including Glendale and Phoenix, are participating along with the county — which controls all the signals in the Sun Cities — and the Arizona Department of Transportation. That has presented problems in the past with city officials reluctant to give up their signal control, something this program is attempting to work around, McCawley said.

"The cities aren't giving up control," he said. "What the state and county did is say, 'We want to find out what you're doing and go from there.'"

The approach to signal management differs for each city, according to plans pitched by local officials. In Glendale, several streets including Bell Road and 59th Avenue are closed-loop systems designed to keep signals timed with each other and to keep traffic moving, said Dave Sabers, the city's assistant traffic engineer.

Glendale officials said the ultimate plan is to eventually hard-wire connections using fiber-optic cables to the city's traffic signals to attempt to control the signals and provide a "demand response"

See Growth dictates, A5

OVER

Growth dictates signal management

From A1

system that adjusts to traffic flow, but that may be a long way off and would prove a costly proposition, Sabers said.

"That's very expensive because you have to loop sensors all over the roads and we're not going to be able to do that right now," he said.

Part of the other problem for people traveling between jurisdictions is not every city is using the same 90-second clock to change lights. If city clocks differ by even a few seconds, it means people are going to be waiting in line, Sabers said.

Although traffic counts continue to climb in the West Valley as more people move in, the area has lagged behind East Valley cities in its traffic control measures.

In Peoria, city officials are just beginning to plan to tie together all of their traffic signals, with money set aside in their capital improvement plan during the next five year to upgrade the signals, said Burton Charron, the city's civil engineering project manager.

"From Peoria's vantage point, it was that we didn't have enough signals to tie in with other communities," he said.

The community, which used to install only one signal a year if even that is now installing at least four per year, Charron said.

Part of their upgrade already is under way, with newly purchased traffic signals meeting criteria that would allow them to tie in with a computer system, for which the city has applied for a

\$1 million federal grant to purchase and install in 2002. They also will apply for another \$1 million to grant to expand the system in 2004, Charron said.

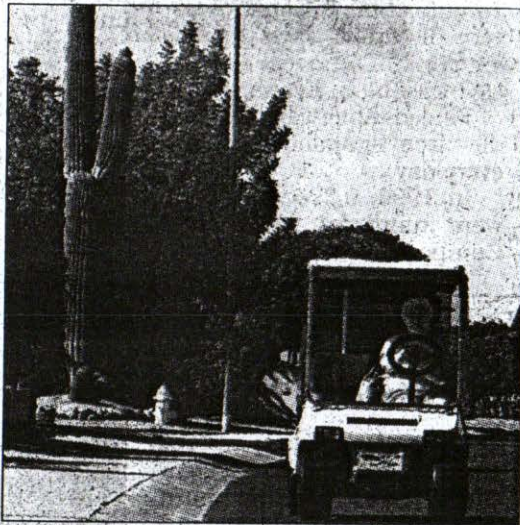
"It's likely we'll ask for more federal money as we progress and it's likely the other agencies will press us to do that as we proceed," he said.

Part of the problem people notice when traveling through the West Valley and getting stopped at traffic signals is the shape of the communities. In the East Valley, the communities are rectangular, and driving on one road means staying in one community for a long period of time. The West Valley is just the opposite, with long north-south roads but many multi-jurisdictional roads that go east and west, Charron said.

Bell Road is one of the prime examples of that, and already has a Glendale system tying sections together, officials said. The closed loop system and high peak traffic hours on weekends make it unique and have put it on a study list for the AZTech program, McCawley said.

That is where Surprise city officials will fit into the increasingly complex web of signal planning. The city has its lights tied in with Maricopa County's timing for its intersections on Bell Road east of El Mirage Road, but crossing intersections elsewhere involves a different time, said Gabe Gonzales, Surprise traffic signal engineer technician.

"Currently, everything west of El Mirage Road runs on their own time," he said.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

In the Sun Cities, golf cars are a popular mode of transportation.

MAG polishes study

SENIOR MOBILITY: When it's time to give up the keys, older drivers are hard-pressed for transportation

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Gerry Ward of Sun City said he has not seen many transportation problems in this retirement community.

But, he said, there needs to be something in place for seniors who are no longer able to drive.

"The thing is if you can't drive, how will you

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get to the grocery store," Ward said. "We ought to help them if they can't (drive)."

But there are some retirees, he said, who should turn in their car keys. "You should be on a bus if you are old and (unable) to drive," he said.

Ward is one of many Sun Citizens who has views on the transportation issues within the retired communities which has prompted one organization to look at solutions.

The Maricopa Association of Governments is putting the finishing touches on its senior-mobility study, which will be used to help older Arizonans with transportation issues over the next several years.

Suzanne Quigley, MAG's human-services planner,

The MAG study showed 42 percent respondents said they would rely on senior-transportation services once they were not able to drive anymore, while 44 percent said they do or would rely on public transit to get around.

Sun City resident J.W. McNeill, 65, said as long as he is "laughing" he will continue to drive.

McNeill said the biggest problem in the Sun Cities is the overabundance of cars and homes in the retirement communities.

"As long as I am laughing," he said, when asked if he would ever stop driving. "That is the key. The key is laughing."

Given the need for transportation, MAG officials wondered what kinds of services would help. Two in five seniors said better bus

Live within walking distance



SOURCE: WestGroup Research

TINA GAMEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

said implementation of a few areas of the study could occur as early as this fall.

Of the 230 surveys returned by seniors, including residents of the Sun Cities, 31 percent said transportation, or the ability to get around as needed,

is a major problem for them. That statistic was foreshadowed by the more than 500 Sun Citizens who voiced their needs at a MAG meeting on senior mobility issues back in May at the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center in Sun City West.

service is needed, while another 20 percent said there needs to be a source of transportation to entertainment destinations, shopping and the library, along with other popular locations.

Fifteen percent of the surveyed seniors asked for more shuttle vans, 12 percent wanted affordable transportation for medical appointments, and another 12 percent wanted more Dial-a-Ride services.

While transportation demands were addressed, MAG's study also revealed the kinds of places seniors didn't need help getting to. Of the 230 respondents, 57 percent said they were close enough to walk to a grocery store, 50 percent were in close proximity to recreation activities, and 42 percent said they were in

close proximity to a park.

Quigley said providing nearby services to seniors helps those who can no longer drive, and this is one aspect that was closely monitored.

But the results were not as favorable when looking at how many residents were close enough to walk to a doctor's office (27 percent), a shopping center (27 percent), or a church (10 percent).

Seniors who responded to the survey said they don't want to stop driving, so some form of assistance should be available to them. Sixty-two percent said there should be additional training for them to compensate for their diminishing driving capabilities, declining eyesight and reduced reaction times.

Foundation funds transportation program for needy

Fills void left by Circle 40 Route

By **JULI NESSETT**
Independent Newspapers

The Sun City Foundation is in the process of getting the ball rolling on a new program aimed at assisting residents who do not have access to transportation or the financial capacity to pay for it.

The foundation bought 1,000 Sun Cities Area Transit tickets May 31 to distribute to members who are unable to get out of the house for financial reasons.

Cost of the tickets was \$2,500, which was paid for by the foundation through funds raised by the 40th Anniversary Committee.

The 40th Anniversary Committee

formed in 1999 to raise money to create a sort of bus system within Sun City.

After raising over \$100,000, with the help of SCAT, the Circle 40 Route was created in January of 2001.

Unfortunately the route never caught on and on May 7, Harold Boudrie, foundation treasurer, called a special meeting to formulate ideas for a new program.

A committee of three was established, including The Rev. Fran Park, former president of the 40th; Ivy Wixson, director of Sun Health Olive Branch Senior Center, and Bob Briscoe, foundation board member and vice president of RCSC board of directors.

The three were selected due to the capacities they serve in the community. It was thought Rev. Park could locate needy people through his church connections, Mrs. Wixson through her affiliation with Olive Branch, which offers low-cost meals and free groceries to seniors, and Mr. Briscoe through his association with the recreation centers.

Although requirements to receive the tickets are not stringent, you must be a resident of Sun City and be financially in need.

It is hoped that through these tickets, financially challenged members will be able to get out to doctors appointments, go grocery shopping or attend a rec center event or performance.

Each member requesting tickets will be given 10 initially, which will provide them five round-trip rides.

For more information about the tickets, contact Helen Thiel at the Lakeview board office at 876-3000.

Transportation options expand

SUN CITY: Red Cross service offers alternative to Dial-A-Ride

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City residents in need of transportation have a couple of options from which to choose, which means those capable of driving have two volunteer outlets.

Sun Cities Area Transit, with its Dial-A-Ride program, has been a tremendous help — and in many cases, the only option — for seniors needing to get to medical appointments or shopping centers, but another organization also is driving residents where they need to go.

The American Red Cross program may be lesser known, but it's not new to the community. It has gained new funding, though, and is looking to raise awareness and recruit volunteer drivers.

"This program has actually been around quite a while," said Edward Gorman of the Red Cross. "It started out as a group of volunteers and has grown greatly. It now has funding from Maricopa County."

The Red Cross Special Transportation Services Department is available to seniors and disabled individuals for rides to medical and other necessary appointments throughout the Northwest Valley.

A 24-hour notice is required to ride the Red Cross vans because organizers try to schedule close assignments ahead of time to ease unneeded runs through the area.

Last year, according to Gorman, the Red Cross fleet of 70 vans drove more than 1 million miles and transported upward of 50,000 clients.

Tom Profico, SCAT's executive director, said his operation and the one at the Red Cross complement each other, as SCAT's buses are limited to a specific area — Sun City.

"We obviously aren't in competition with each other," he said. "When they get booked up, they will refer people to us, and likewise, if someone wants to go outside the area we cover, we will refer the individual to the Red Cross."

But the Red Cross is having one problem with its program — a shortage of volunteers — and its officials are pleading with community members to donate their time to help their neighbors.

"We are really hard up sometimes," Gorman said. "We are running so many vans, and we have been so busy, that we are in need of drivers."

Anyone who wants to volunteer to drive can contact Anita Gonzalez at the Red Cross, 972-3407.

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

Plan would test older drivers

EN. MIKE

GLEASON: Sun City West lawmaker proposes biennial testing beginning at age 75

JOHN SOKOLICH Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2001
DAILY NEWS-SUN

With age comes experience, but at some point, it also brings diminished motor functions and the potential for more vehicular accidents.



Gleason

A local lawmaker thinks that point in one's life tends to come at about age 75, and he wants those drivers checked to make sure their experience outweighs slower reaction times and enables them to drive safely.

District 15 Republican Sen. Mike Gleason has proposed a bill requiring motorists 75 and older be tested on their driving skills every two years.

"It's a public-safety deal, really," he said recently. "What this is going to do is offer a simplified driving test for the drivers who are older than 75."

Gleason, a Sun City West



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Golf cars and passenger cars traverse Boswell Boulevard in Sun City recently.

resident who will turn 75 this year, said the tests would consist of basic driving skills, such as backing up, turning and pulling into parking spaces.

"We just want to be sure that people have control of their vehicle," he said.

Gleason noted existing laws allow the state Department of Motor Vehicles to restrict or withdraw the driving privileges of motorists because of medical

reasons.

"I think it's a good idea," Sun City Home Owners Association secretary Ione Boynton said. "I am not familiar with the proposed bill, but I think testing is a good idea for older drivers."

Boynton said she has not personally observed poor driving in Sun City compared to other cities throughout the Valley, but she said many

accidents within the community might be attributed to age.

"We've had our share of attention-getting accidents," she said. "We have drivers who drive through a store window or run into curbs."

A criticism she had about the bill, however, is the age at which people would be

See Older drivers, A5

over

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subjected to the tests.

"I think 75 might be a little young to start it," she said, "but I agree that renewing drivers licenses for 90-year-olds without any type of test is not a good practice."

Under Gleason's proposal, older drivers would get three chances at passing the driving test before being required to undergo a medical review.

"People will get three bites at the apple," he said, "and I think these tests will speed up the process of medical review."

Drivers required to go through medical reviews can have a number of different restrictions placed on their licenses, including distance, road or vehicle bans, according to Gleason.

"After medical review, some drivers might only be allowed

to drive on certain roads or a certain distance from their homes," he said. "In some, as in cases like in Sun City, the drivers might be restricted to only driving golf carts."

Gleason said he believes golf cars are safer for older drivers because the majority of accidents in retirement communities are fender-benders and not major collisions. Because the maximum speed of golf cars is limited, accidents would be less severe, he said.

HOA estimates anywhere between 5,000 and 10,000 golf cars are driven on the streets of the Sun Cities on any given day.

A Maricopa County Sheriff's Office spokesman said golf cars are not involved in as many accidents as cars in Sun City, but that's not necessarily a reflection of their safety since there are fewer golf cars than cars on the road.

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

Vans to circle Sun City

**40th ANNIVERSARY
PRESENT: Route to key
locales starts Monday**

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Starting Monday, Sun City will have a local bus route through the community.

The service was made possible with money raised by the Sun City 40th Anniversary Committee last year.

It will use Sun Cities Area Transit vans. Officials from the anniversary committee and SCAT met Tuesday morning to work out final details for the daily runs.

As the 40-year-old community developed, local merchants and then Del Webb Corp. at one time provided a kind of shuttle service, but it disappeared years ago.

The route will intersect with the Valley Metro 106 bus at the intersection of 107th and Peoria avenues, giving residents a chance to make connections to the Mayo Clinic, downtown Phoenix and even Tempe on public transit.

Transferring to the Valley Metro bus is free with a transfer, said Tom Profico, SCAT's executive director. But on the return trip, patrons must present a Valley Metro transfer and pay \$1.75.

"We are calling it the Sun City Circle 40 Route, and it can be a real benefit for residents in the community," anniversary committee chairman Fran Park said.

"This route will make a real connection with shopping centers and recreation centers, so it will be a big help to people who need daily transportation."

Four circle trips a day are planned, Profico said.

The complete-circuit takes about an hour and 45 minutes, officials estimate.

As an example, Profico said, buses will leave Mountain View Rec Center at 7:30

See Shuttle service, A5

From A1

a.m., 9:30 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m.

The bus route will be a complete circle through Sun City, with 15 major stops along it. Some of the stops have several drop-off points to make it more convenient for the passengers.

"Right now, it is set up as a basic route," SCAT Executive Director Tom Profico said. "But there is a variance to it, within reason."

The two-hour loop through Sun City will start and end at the SCAT offices on 99th Avenue near Olive Avenue. Stops for the route include shopping centers in the north and south parts of the community, as far west as Del Webb Boulevard, and on the east, along 99th Avenue.

One-way fare for the rides is \$2.50, which is the same as SCAT's original Dial-A-Ride program. But unlike the Dial-A-Ride, the Circle 40 Route is available to all people within the community throughout the day. One bus will be running the loop, but patrons do not need to call ahead for a ride.

Although the loop comes with

a charge to riders, most of the cost is to be absorbed by money donated to SCAT from the 40th Anniversary Committee.

SCAT President Jim Lackey said each ride costs about \$9 per person to provide, and subtracting the \$2.50 fee, the remaining \$6.50 must be made up through fund-raising and grants.

But with the route costing the 40th Anniversary Committee \$2,000 a month, the funds are likely to run out within two years.

Park said the committee will be conducting fund-raisers to ensure the service will continue well into the future, but final plans for the funds have not been agreed upon yet.

Because the new service will run from 7:30 a.m. until approximately 5 p.m. and is being funded by the committee, the vans are available to anyone in the community.

Park said membership cards will not be required to ride, and all people waiting for a ride will be picked up.

The project, although kicking off Monday morning, still requires a couple of housekeeping measures to be finished, such as bus stop signs, pick-up locations and logos. Park said each of the issues will be addressed in the next few weeks.

"This is going to be a great asset to the community, and something everyone has worked hard for," Park said. "We are all very excited about this."

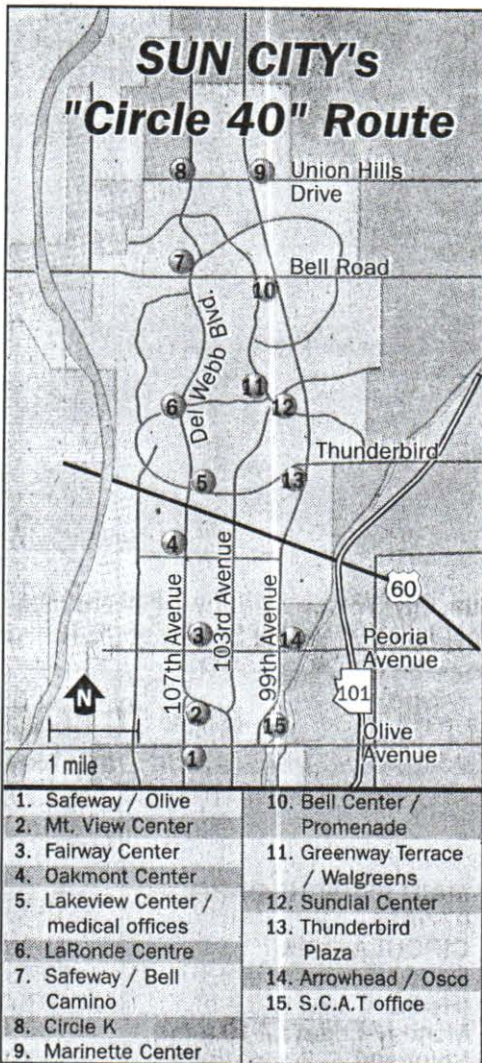
The money to make the bus route possible came primarily from raffle tickets sold by the 40th Anniversary Committee in 2000. The committee also raised enough money for SCAT officials to purchase two replacement vans for its aging fleet. The new vehicles are due to arrive some time in March.

Riders should be aware that the route will detour for three weeks because county officials will close Del Webb Boulevard at Santa Fe Drive to repair the railroad crossing.

So, Profico said, "we will go down to 111th on Thunderbird Boulevard to cross the tracks, then return to 107th Avenue at Grand."

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

OVER



SCAT routing

To Commerce January 15th, 2001

| Destination | 1st Run | 2nd Run | 3rd Run | 4th Run |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Safeway / Olive | | 9:25 | 11:55 | 1:55 |
| Mt. View Rec. | 7:30 | 9:30 | 12:00 | 2:00 |
| Sun Bowl | 7:35 | 9:35 | 12:05 | 2:05 |
| Fairway Rec. | 7:40 | 9:40 | 12:10 | 2:10 |
| Oakmont Rec. | 7:45 | 9:45 | 12:15 | 2:15 |
| Grand Center | 7:50 | 9:50 | 12:20 | 2:20 |
| Lakeview Rec. | 7:55 | 9:55 | 12:25 | 2:25 |
| La Ronde Centre | 8:00 | 10:00 | 12:30 | 2:30 |
| Bell Camino Center | 8:05 | 10:05 | 12:35 | 2:35 |
| 107th & Union Hills | 8:15 | 10:15 | 12:45 | 2:45 |
| Marinette Rec. | 8:20 | 10:20 | 12:50 | 2:50 |
| 99th & Bell (Inc'l P.O.) | 8:30 | 10:30 | 1:00 | 3:00 |
| Bell Rec. | 8:40 | 10:40 | 1:10 | 3:10 |
| Greenway Terrace | 8:50 | 10:50 | 1:20 | 3:20 |
| Sundial Rec. | 8:55 | 10:55 | 1:25 | 3:25 |
| Thunderbird Plaza | 9:00 | 11:00 | 1:30 | 3:30 |
| Arrowhead Mall | 9:10 | 11:10 | 1:40 | 3:40 |
| S.C.A.T. | 9:15 | 11:15 | 1:45 | 3:45 |

Tour focuses on traffic

MAG: Northwest Valley circuit part of developing Regional Transportation Plan

BRIAN POWELL
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Traffic problems in the Sun Cities and Surprise — and possible long-term solutions — were among subjects discussed by area community leaders during a three-hour bus tour of the Northwest Valley Wednesday.

The bus tour was part of the Maricopa Association of Government's Northwest Area Transportation Study, a sub-regional study of the MAG's Regional Transportation Plan, expected to be completed by the middle of next year, said Kelly Taft, MAG spokeswoman.

As the Valley Metro bus proceeded north on 99th Avenue through Sun City, Jon O'Hare, a Maricopa County Department of Transportation planner, shared some of the area's traffic challenges with representatives from Surprise, Glendale, Peoria, Phoenix, Wickenburg and county and state agencies.

O'Hare said Sun City receives a failing grade in highway capacity from the county because it doesn't have a constant traffic flow. The lack of a grid system and slow speed limits contribute to the problem, he said.

"As you go through Sun City, the access is very limited, and it creates a lot of problems," O'Hare said.

The proposed Loop 303 could alleviate some of those problems. O'Hare said during public meetings he has attended in the Sun Cities, residents have expressed an interest in an access route to the north. But there's a catch.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs welcomes officials from area communities and the Maricopa Association of Governments aboard the bus for a tour of the Northwest Valley Wednesday.

"They don't want it in their backyard, but they want access to it," O'Hare said.

Andy Smith, an Arizona Department of Transportation planner, said Loop 303 is planned to ultimately be a freeway connecting Interstate 10 with Interstate 17. The anticipated connection with I-17 is the Lone Mountain alignment, but Smith said Wednesday there are other options — much to the dismay of Surprise, Peoria and Glendale officials.

The tour started at Glendale City

OVER

Hall, proceeded west along Northern Avenue to Loop 303, north to Bell Road, east to Grand Avenue, southeast to 99th Avenue, north through Sun City into Peoria and east to I-17 before returning to Glendale.

Surprise Mayor Joan Shafer expressed frustration with how she perceives the city has been treated by county and state agencies.

"Our main issue is Grand Avenue. This is the entrance to the Valley, and Surprise has been treated like chopped liver," Shafer said. "We're now on our 13th study for Grand Avenue in our area, and I'm tired of Surprise being put on the backburner."

"We have 54,000 people paying taxes, and we want something in return. Do not put me off until 2020. I won't be here."

Miryam Gutier, Surprise's intergovernmental-relations director, said most of the commercial development in the city is occurring near Bell Road and Grand Avenue. She said businesses are opposed to a grade separation at the intersection that could eliminate or limit their access.

"One of our biggest challenges over the next two years is to address our needs from a local standpoint," Gutier said.

El Mirage and Youngtown representatives were invited, but could not participate in the bus tour. Steven Hogan, a consultant with Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, said both cities have said the future of Grand Avenue is an important issue. Hogan added that Youngtown officials support a bridge crossing of the New River in their town.

There was discussion on the bus about a possible commuter-or light-rail system along Grand Avenue.

Hogan said it's a "good bet in the future," but negotiations would first have to occur with the railway company.

Glendale officials spoke of a future project to transform Northern Avenue — between Grand Avenue and Loop 303 — into a "super street." The six-lane road would have grade separations and limited stop lights, said Terry Johnson, Glendale's transportation-planning manager. Although the completion of the road is probably about 20 years away, the concept design is expected to begin in a couple of months, Johnson said.

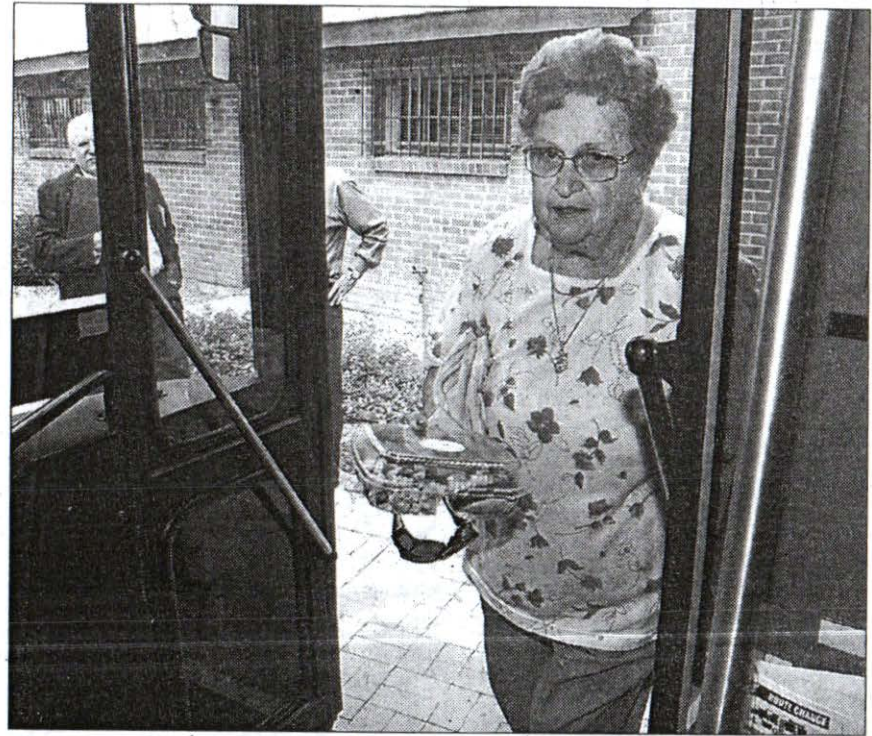
Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs supports the Northern Avenue plan: "The West Valley has developed without an easy east-west access. This would provide a more rapid, less obstructed road between two freeways (Loop 101 and Loop 303)."

MAG's Regional Transportation Plan, which will list specific transportation projects and address the Valley's expected growth over the course of the next five decades, will incorporate traffic studies from the northwest, southwest and southeast portions of the county. Taft said northeast communities did not express interest in a study.

A Southwest Area Transportation Study bus tour is planned today through Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Avondale, Buckeye and Tolleson.

The MAG, an agency comprised of 24 Maricopa County municipalities and two Indian communities, is also conducting an East-West Mobility Study, Freeway Bottleneck Study, High Capacity Transit Plan and Regional Transit System Study. The results of these studies will be considered in the Regional Transportation Plan.

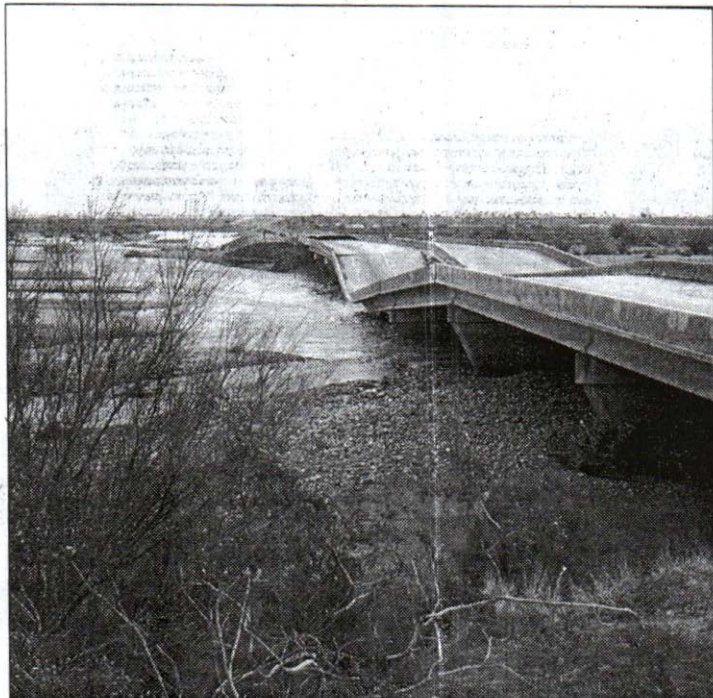
Brian Powell may be reached at 876-2531 or bpowell@aztrib.com.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Surprise Mayor Joan Shafer boards a bus for a tour of the Northwest Valley with other area officials and Maricopa Association of Governments representatives Wednesday.

Family scrapbook



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The photo of Bell Road bridge between the two Sun Cities, taken by Marilyn Radford of Sun City West, was shot in March of 1980 after run-off from storms undermined the bridge.

Q
A

I was living here at the time the water from rain was so bad that it washed out the bridge on Bell Road between Sun City and Sun City West. I cannot remember the year. Can you help me?

— Submitted by

Thelma Sherrill

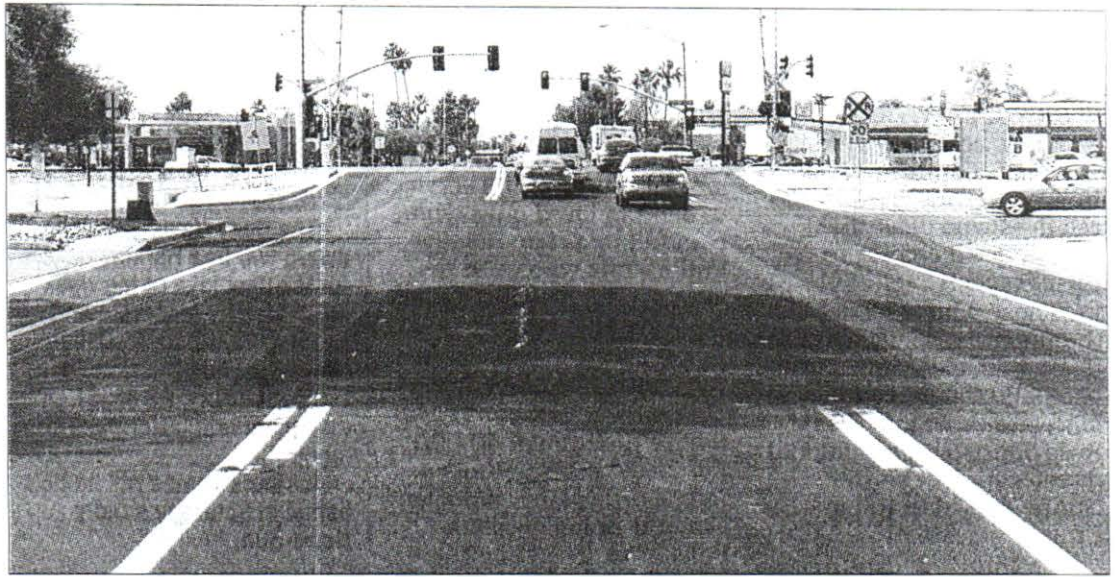
Flood waters tore at the footings of the Bell Road Bridge over the Agua Fria (see photo this page) and it sank Feb. 22, 1980. A temporary crossing was erected when the water receded, and 18 months later a new bridge was completed.

Have a question? Call Dan McCarthy at 876-2534 or e-mail him at dmccarthy@aztrib.com.



CHARLES WADE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Maricopa County Department of Transportation is applying asphalt-concrete pavements on a number of streets in the Sun Cities.



CHARLES WADE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Maricopa County Department of Transportation has resurfaced and halfway re-striped 103rd Avenue between Thunderbird Boulevard and Santa Fe Drive.

ROADS UNDER REPAIR

■ SUN CITY:

- 98th Avenue between Grenada Drive & Palmeras Drive
- Prairie Hills Circle between Desert Rose Road & Boswell Boulevard
- Burns Drive between 98th Avenue & Fern Drive
- Concho Circle between Lake Forest Drive to 99th Avenue
- Saddle Ridge Drive between 99th Avenue to Lake Forest Drive
- Meadow Park Drive from Long Hills Drive to Bowling Green Drive
- Bowling Green Drive around Meadow Park Drive (entire circle)

■ SUN CITY WEST:

- Whispering Oak Drive between 138th Avenue & R.H. Johnson Boulevard
 - Aleppo between 137th Drive & 136th Avenue
 - 137th Avenue between Aleppo & Franciscan Drive
 - Terra Vista Drive between Stonegate Drive & Desert Sands Drive
 - Echo Mesa Drive between Trail Ridge Drive & Stonegate Drive
 - 142nd Avenue between Desert Glen Drive & Stardust Boulevard
 - 124th Avenue between Blue Stem Drive & Firebird Drive
 - Blue Stem Drive between 124th Avenue & Storm Drain
 - Amora Drive between Stardust Boulevard & 125th Avenue
 - Shamrock Drive between Springdale Drive & Stardust Boulevard
- Source: Maricopa County Department of Transportation

ERIN REEP
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Local motorists may find it takes a little longer to get to their destinations as area construction projects tie up traffic in the next few weeks.

A Maricopa County Department of Transportation spokeswoman said the county is working on several projects to improve roads and traffic conditions in the Sun Cities.

MCDOT has started work on removing and replacing concrete valley gutters on several local streets, according to MCDOT information.

In January 1999, MCDOT completed a study addressing inverted crown streets in the Sun Cities, said MCDOT spokeswoman Roberta Crowe. When Del Webb constructed the Sun Cities, streets were constructed with inverted crowns — structures serving as gutters in the middle of Sun City and Sun City West streets that allowed water to drain down the middle of the street.

"Streets constructed in this way are more likely to sustain water damage through scour and deterioration," Crowe said. During heavy rains and storms, water runs down the center of the streets, she explained.

Under the project, the crowns — which are made of asphalt and other road-product materials — will be replaced with concrete crowns.

"The existing roadway section will be removed down the center of the road and replaced with concrete," she said.

At the project's completion, 16,540 linear feet of concrete will be installed in the two communities, at a cost of \$384,000, Crowe said.

In other MCDOT news:

- MCDOT is 55 percent finished with a slurry seal project on several Sun City neighborhood streets.
- MCDOT is 66 percent finished with a \$1.7 million roadway reconstruction

covering 21.8 miles. The process involves milling existing road surfaces, then overlaying them with new base material and asphalt-concrete pavement. Lane lines were also replaced in some areas.

- Surface treatment work is being completed on Thunderbird Road between 103rd and 99th Avenues.

- MCDOT continues repair work on the canal along 99th Avenue in Sun City, which began in April and is expected to continue for two months, Crowe said. The \$90,000 project involves tearing up and removing parts of the cracked and eroding concrete in the canal. The section under repair stretches from Grand north to Bell Road. The project is 87 percent complete, Crowe said.

All of the projects were completed under MCDOT's Roadway Management Systems program, Crowe said. "The MCDOT RMS system is designed to provide the data

See MCDOT, A5

From A1

to make informed decisions concerning which roadways should be upgraded or totally reconstructed," Crowe cited MCDOT information.

The RMS system is made up of data collection, inventory of existing pavement and roadway features (number of lanes, pavement widths and surface types), the information said. "The RMS also includes a conditions survey that measures ride quality, surface distress, rutting and

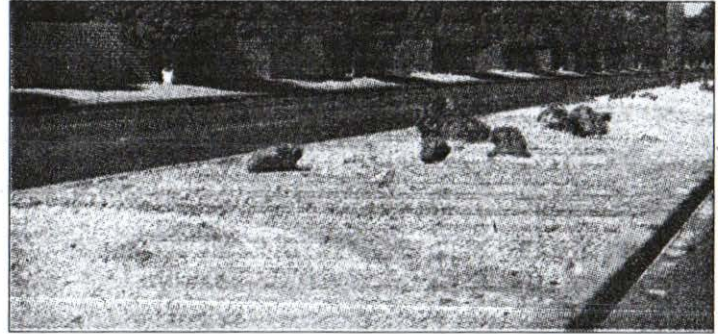
surface friction, according to MCDOT.

MCDOT uses the information gathered by RMS to evaluate pavement conditions and whether and how pavement should be rehabilitated and maintained, and when it needs replacement, the information said.

For information on local construction projects, call the MCDOT 24-hour hot line: 480-350-9288.

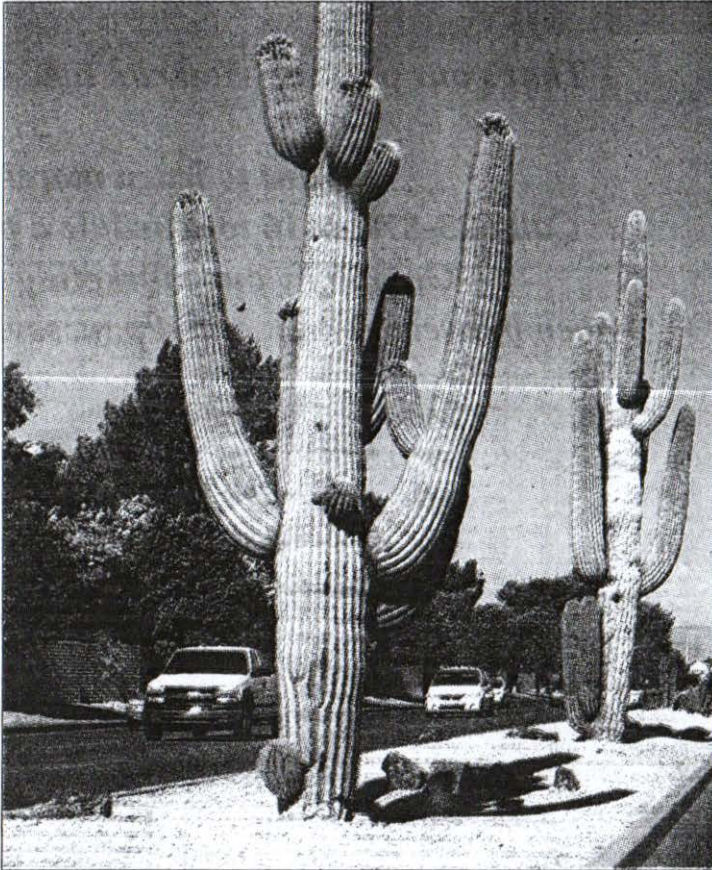
Erin Reep can be reached at 876-2532 or at ereep@aztrib.com

Giants pose traffic hazard



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

If you were traveling east of Del Webb Boulevard on Bell Road in Sun City Tuesday, you may have noticed crews from Maricopa County Department of Transportation removing some stately saguaros from the median. The cactuses were removed from the area shown in the picture above because they showed signs of leaning and decay, and could have posed a traffic hazard if they fell over, said MCDOT spokesman Roger Ball.



Work commences on Union Hills crossing County plans to add median

By **Mike Russo**
Independent Newspapers

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation has completed some of the improvements to Union Hills

Drive that should make crossing the road less hazardous for players at Willowcreek Golf Course.

Further modifications to the roadway are expected by the middle of January, according

to John Snyder, Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc., director of golf operations.

New access approaches were installed on the north

See **Crossing** — Page 7

Crossing

Continued From Page 1

and south sides of the street just prior to Christmas. The work was done by Lamson Construction, which was awarded an \$87,000 contract to construct the new access ramps.

"There will only be one crossing now," Mr. Snyder said. The sole crossing will be behind the first green.

Work still to be done by MCDOT includes the installation of a raised median at the main crossing and the elimination of the second crossing at

the maintenance yard.

"The county will also be putting in a turn lane down the center," Mr. Snyder said. He believes the county will have the work completed within the next week and half.

"Improvements are being made to help prevent any fatalities happening among our golfers," said Bev Davis, former RCSC Board member.

There have been no accidents reported yet at the location but there have been several near misses, according to Mrs. Davis.

Installation of the median will greatly assist in slowing traffic through the crossing area, Mr. Davis noted.

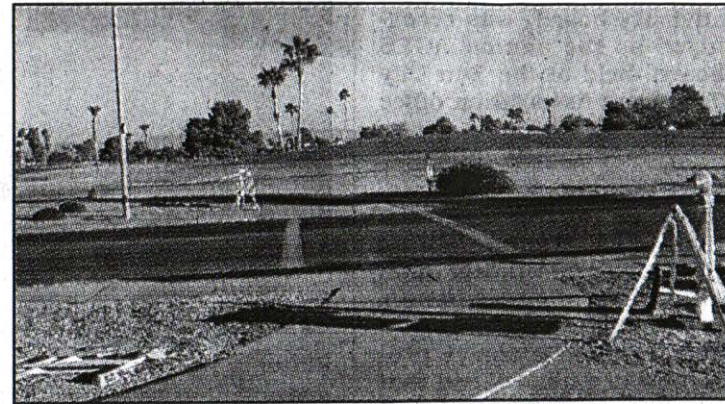


Photo by Mike Russo Independent Newspapers

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation has completed the new golf cart access ramps on the north and south sides of Union Hills Drive at Willowcreek Golf Course. Additional improvements are forthcoming.

"This will help a great deal in eliminating a four-lane road and slowing traffic to a two-lane road," Mrs. Davis said.

"Union Hills has gotten much busier since it was opened up a couple of years ago through to Coyote Lakes," Mrs. Davis said.

To make the street even safer, there have been discussions held to have a traffic signal laced at the intersection of Union Hills and 107th Ave. That move is also supported by the Sun City Home Owners Association.

County tackles road work

Cooler weather brings crews to Sun Cities

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Motorists will have a more difficult time navigating the retirement communities in the coming months.

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation plans to undertake its annual maintenance program on more than a hundred roads in Sun City and Sun City West in November and December.

MCDOT spokesman Roger Ball said he expects all the work to be completed by the end of February.

"With cooler weather approaching, MCDOT crews are gearing up for winter road improvements," he said.

Currently, MCDOT is working on intersection improvements at 107th Avenue and Union Hills Drive for underground drainage conveyance and a traffic signal. The project should be done by mid-November, with intersection closures scheduled tentatively for Oct. 10-13 and Oct. 17-20.

Traffic at that intersection will be one way in all four directions during construction hours, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The main streets, which MCDOT calls connectors, to be affected in Sun City include 99th, 107th and 111th avenues, as well as Alabama Avenue, Boswell Boulevard and Pebble Beach and Desert Hills drives.

In Sun City West, the main connectors that will have work done include Paintbrush, Crystal Lake, Skylark and Bluebonnet drives, along with Beardsley Road and Camino del Sol.

Ball said the roads are called connectors because several streets connecting to them are also up for maintenance repairs. He said residents need to be alert to changes on roadways during the construction process.

Eric Mayer, MCDOT engineering technician, said residents need to be especially careful around slurry-seal work.

"This surface will have the most impact of all the projects, because it covers the entire roadway," he said.

He added that once the surface is completed, it cannot be driven on for any reason for at least 30 minutes. Mayer said it is a two-part, two-year process. The first year, MCDOT repairs all the cracks in the roads, and the following year, the same streets are slurry sealed.

"This will ensure a safe, well-maintained roadway for the next five to six years," he said.

The whole project is estimated to cost about \$1.4 million — \$350,000 for crack sealing, \$675,000 for slurry sealing and \$400,000 to install concrete gutters.

Arizona Department of Transportation spokesman Matt Burdick said his department is working on very few construction projects that would affect the Sun Cities. ADOT is responsible for work on Grand Avenue and Loop 101.

He said the only project affecting Sun City consists of the irrigation lines ADOT is adding in the medians of Grand Avenue from Loop 101 to 107th Avenue. That work is expected to be completed by the end of October.

Burdick said over the next three weekends, ADOT will also be laying rubberized asphalt on Loop 101 at 59th Avenue in Glendale, and is currently working on building a bridge at the intersection of 75th and Grand avenues in Peoria. He said the bridge will be completed next fall.

Michael Maresch can be reached at 876-2513 or mmaresch@aztrib.com.

Study cites inadequacies of transportation



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Interfaith driver John Lucas of Sun City buckles Marietta Coffin of Peoria in before taking her to Mary's Place in Sun City. Coffin lives in a group home and relies on the transportation to take her to the adult day-care center.

Elderly nondrivers get stuck at home

AMANDA MYERS
DAILY NEWS-SUN

On any given day, more than half of the 7 million elderly Americans who don't drive stay home because they lack adequate transportation alternatives, according to a report released Wednesday.

The report by the nonprofit Surface Transportation Policy Project is based on 2001 data collected by the U.S. Department of Transportation and was financed by AARP, the nation's largest organization for people 50 and older.

The report found that elderly nondrivers stay at home because public transportation is not available, particularly in rural areas and small towns.

Options for older people in the Northwest Valley run the

gamut from Sun Cities Area Transit and Interfaith Community Care to dial-a-rides and Valley Metro.

Interfaith Community Care has a transportation assistance program free of charge for those needing rides to necessary appointments, such as to a doctor or lawyer.

Minerva Neshcoff is one such resident. Macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetes and a stroke three years ago left the Sun City Grand resident homebound. At 76, she said she's "just about blind," and is prone to falling easily.

However, Neshcoff isn't deterred. "I'm getting along pretty good though," she said.

But when it's time to go to

a doctor's appointment, she relies on Interfaith to pick her up and take her back home again.

"I think it's a very good organization. They're always on time and very polite," said Neshcoff.

Her daughter lives with her now, but works from 6:30 in the morning to nearly 9 at night, said Neshcoff. So getting out of the house for reasons other than medical appointments is a rare occurrence. She relies on friends to take her to the grocery store, but acknowledges many of her friends are sick right now.

Still, she doesn't seem to mind her solitude. "I'm an old child, so I'm used to being alone."

See TRANSPORTATION, A5

TRANSPORTATION:

Study supports more services for homebound elderly

From A1

She talks of Ohio, from where she moved five years ago, and the garden club in which she used to be active. She also used to do volunteer work, and participate in the culinary club.

Now she spends her days listening to the radio and reading. Her steadfast companion is Prince, her daughter's Siberian husky, who Neshcoff says always stands behind her so she doesn't trip over him.

Elderly nondrivers are likely to be isolated and more prone to depression, alcoholism and physical ailments than elderly drivers, said Dr. Byron Thames, a physician and AARP board member.

Compared with drivers, elderly nondrivers make 15 percent fewer doctor visits, 59 percent fewer trips for shopping and dining and 65 percent fewer trips for social, family and religious activities, the report states.

Anne Canby, president of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, said the report's findings highlight the need for greater support for public transportation and other transit alternatives aimed at older people, and on-road improvements that include bicycle lanes and sidewalks to promote cycling and walking.

Amanda Myers may be reached at 876-2513 or amyers@aztrib.com.

TRANSIT OPTIONS

■ **Discount Cab: 602-266-1110**

Offers a 10 percent discount for seniors. Rates are \$2.50 for pick-up and \$1.65 per mile after that.

■ **El Mirage Dial-a-Ride: 937-0500**

■ **Human Services Department Special Transportation Services Core Program: 623-934-4256**

Provides transportation assistance to the elderly, disabled, and low-income individuals, and provides home-delivered meals to homebound individuals. Operates Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance. The service is free of charge.

■ **Interfaith Community Care: 584-4999.**

Volunteer service available from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, predominantly for medical and legal appointments. Friendly Visitor volunteer program and Home-Care Aid for transportation, housekeeping, and running errands. Fees vary.

■ **Peoria Dial-a-Ride: 773-7435**

■ **Red Cross Special Transportation Services: 934-4256**

Service available 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday with priority on dialysis and medical trips. Cost by donation; reservations at least 48 hours in advance.

■ **Sun Cities Area Transit System Inc.: 977-8363**

Dial-a-ride service 365 days a year through shared rides to anywhere in the Sun City, Sun City West and Youngtown areas. Cost is \$2.50 each way. Wheelchair users need to make reservations a day in advance. Late-night service available from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. for rides home from Boswell and Del Webb hospitals' emergency rooms.

The Sun City Foundation offers free and discounted SCAT tickets for residents with low incomes. For more information about the tickets, call 876-3000.

■ **Sun City Express: 933-9300**

Airport transportation is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Tickets are \$20 one way, \$40 round trip per person. For two people, fare is \$28 one way or \$52 round trip. Two days advance notice required.

■ **Surprise Dial-a-Ride: 583-1688**

■ **Valley Metro: 253-5000**

Provides connections with the Sun Cities Area Transit, which allows riders to be picked up at their doors and delivered to a Park and Ride facility. From there, connections are made to Metrocenter, Paradise Valley Mall, Scottsdale or any other location served by Valley Metro.

ADOT project to make Grand, 99th intersection easier for drivers

By Cecilia Chan
Independent Newspapers

Arizona Department of Transportation plans to reconfigure the intersection of Grand and 99th avenues in Sun City, to improve driving for senior citizens.

The construction is expected to begin late fall and take two to three months to complete with minimal traffic disruptions.

"The whole purpose is to reconfigure the intersection for safety," ADOT spokesman Matt

To comment on project:

Audrey Unger, HDR Engineering, Inc.
3200 East Camelback Road, Suite 350
Phoenix, AZ 85018
or e-mail, Audrey.Unger@hdrinc.com or call (602) 522-4323.

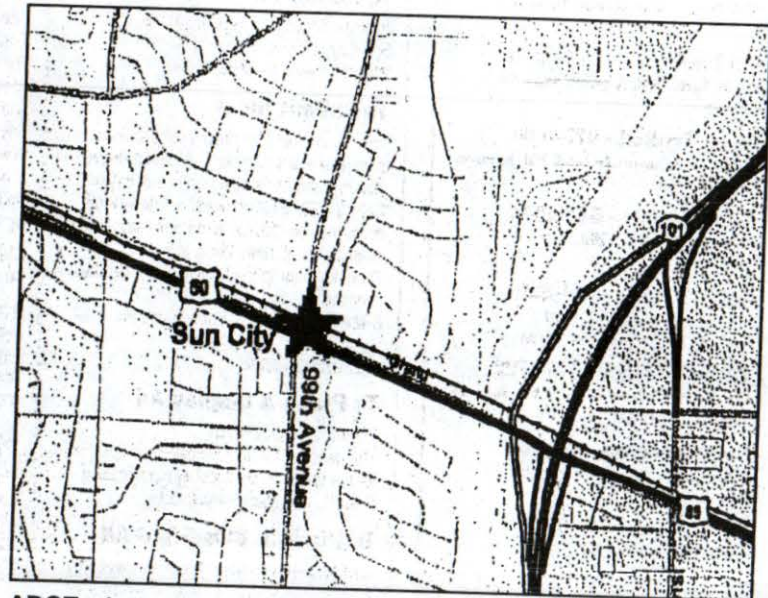
Burdick said. "The reconfigured intersection will still have left-turn lanes and right-turn lanes. We are just removing the islands and making the Grand

and 99 intersection more at a 90-degree angle instead of a skewed angle as it is today."

According to ADOT, the turning island at the intersection cause turning drivers to be angled away from on-coming through traffic. This requires drivers to look over their shoulders before turning into traffic, which can be hard for older drivers. It also can cause accidents prompted by drivers pulling into oncoming traffic.

According to the Federal

See Project — Page 3



ADOT plans to reconfigure the intersection at U.S. 60/Grand and 99th Avenue in Sun City.

Project

Continued From Page 1

Highway Administration, the 65 and older age group, which numbered 33.5 million in the United States in 1995, will grow to more than 36 million by 2005. By 2020, older drivers will exceed 50 million, accounting for roughly one-fifth of the population of driving age in this country.

The proposed project includes:

- Removing four turning islands
- Reconfiguring the intersection to allow approximate 90-degree turns
- Redesigning the existing traffic signal to include longer mast

arms and additional signal heads

- Installing appropriate signing and markings; size and intersection distance modified for older drivers
- Re-stripping crosswalks
- Extending the eastbound left-turn lanes to provide adequate storage for queuing.

Mr. Burdick said the project is in the environmental impact study phase.

"We anticipate starting the design work for this project this summer, starting in July," he said.

Public comments will be taken until construction begins in the fall, he added.

He said federal dollars will fund the project. The cost was not yet known.

Not everyone thinks the proj-

ect is needed.

"Now you tell me what driver, I don't care how old or how young, doesn't have to look over their shoulders for making a right turn or pulling out of a driveway or pulling out of a parking space in a mall or merging into traffic in the freeway," asked Sun City resident Lenore Rothschild. "It's a ridiculous use of federal tax dollars for a project like this."

She said she was informed by ADOT the intersection ranked No. 8 in vehicle crashes.

Mr. Burdick did not have readily available the accident numbers at the intersection.

"It's our taxpayer dollars at work for something as stupid as this," Ms. Rothschild said. "They put those islands in not that many

years ago and now they are taking them out."

She said officials should instead focus on cracking down on traffic violators at the intersection.

"It's not a road problem" she said. "It's a human stupid problem."

She said it may be time for older drivers to stop driving.

"If they are too infirm to look over their shoulders, they should quit driving," the 66-year-old said. "I told my daughter when you see I am not driving (well), you take my keys away and sell the car."

Post your comments on this issue at newsblog.info/0302

News editor Cecilia Chan can be reached at 972-6101 or cchan@newszap.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Sun City Shop-Lifter, shown in this 1963 photo in front of the former Hiway House at 107th and Grand avenues, was the original transportation system in Sun City. The open-air trolley was pulled by a Jeep.

Attempts at bus system dodge Sun Cities

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Every so often, the call goes out for better public transportation in the Sun Cities.

Since the early 1980s, Sun Cities Area Transit has been doing its part to provide residents with a way to get around town, although some residents have asked for a more traditional bus route rather than the advance-notice, door-to-door service SCAT provides.

A glance back at history from the founding days of Sun City indicates those residents may never get what they want — unless someone steps forward to subsidize the cause.

Long before SCAT proved successful in filling its niche, there were at least two failed attempts to provide public transportation in Sun City, according to information from the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. A third attempt that started about the time SCAT did also has disappeared. Each system had established routes and minimal fares, but each was dissolved after the required subsidies became too much of a burden.

Del Webb opened the doors to Sun City in 1960, and that same year introduced the Shop-Lifter, the community's first attempt at getting residents where they



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Del Webb Development Co. subsidized the operation of these Blue Bird buses for Sun City residents. DEVCO operated the buses out of its building on Santa Fe Drive that now is home to the Daily News-Sun. Shown looking at a new bus schedule in this 1969 photo are, from left, Helen Taylor, Tony Fay, Al Stobbia and John Haffey. Below, a 1983 photo shows a station wagon and the larger van operated by the Sun Cities Area Transit. SCAT started the door-to-door service in 1982.



needed to go. The Shop-Lifter was a 25-seat open-air trailer, much like those at tourist attractions like Disneyland, that was pulled by a Jeep.

According to a Daily

News-Sun article from the time, the Shop-Lifter was "designed to provide easy transportation for persons who do not drive or have no other means available." The Del

Webb Development Corp., or DEVCO, subsidized the system.

After the Shop-Lifter faded away, DEVCO in 1967 introduced Sun City Bus Lines, which used non-air-conditioned Blue Bird buses with plush seats, handrails, tinted glass and a chime system so riders could indicate their stops. The first passenger was Margaret Steffek, who was given a lifetime pass for the system.

The buses operated out of DEVCO's building at 10102 Santa Fe Drive, the same building that now houses the Daily News-Sun. Youngtown resident Margaret Chittenden remembers those days. She worked for DEVCO from 1971 to 1974, and recalls one day when she had to fill in for another employee and spent the day riding the buses to make sure the routes were running smoothly.

A recessed pit in the Daily News-Sun's back parking lot was used for maintenance on the buses, Chittenden recalled. According to the historical society information, the system at one point had four routes running every half hour, Monday through Saturday.

Chittenden said the bus line offered extensive routes, complete with color-coded maps, transfers and service to all the major shopping

See BUS. A5

BUS: Service too expensive to maintain in Sun Cities

From A1

malls in the community.

The Sun City Bus Line ceased operations in Sun City and Sun City West, where two vans had been introduced, on June 30, 1982. A 1981 Webb survey revealed the system cost the company \$6 per ride, with the buses serving about 2 percent of the population. The company charged 35 cents per ride, and had unsuccessfully requested the Arizona Corporation Commission to allow an increase to \$1.50.

The commission regulated bus service in the state until the industry was deregulated July 1, 1982.

Chittenden said the Sun City Bus Line was ahead of its time, which may have led to its demise.

"It was probably 20 years too soon because most of the people moving out here in the '70s still had their cars," she said.

Jane Freeman of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society said most of the public transportation systems have failed in the Sun Cities because of people's attachment to their

vehicles.

"Look at how SCAT struggles and they go door to door," she said. "We all grew up used to having our own cars."

Freeman moved to the community in 1970 and said she never rode the Sun City Bus Line.

"They say nobody rode them," she said. "There were not enough people to support it financially, and that's why they don't have enough to do it today."

Chittenden said she's not sure a bus system could operate successfully in Sun City today, but if another one started, it likely would have to tap into the local businesses for financial support.

"I don't know if it'd work or not. I really don't," she said. "But it would have to be subsidized."

When the Sun City Bus Line folded in 1982, the two Sun City West vans were donated to SCAT, which incorporated in May 1982 and started service that September.

In November 1983, Molly the Trolley and Dolly the Trolley began a free service to

Sun City shopping centers. The trolleys ran every 30 minutes, and were subsidized by advertising and donations from more than 100 area merchants.

Pamphlets advertised the service as such: "It's your free shopping trolley, go-to-lunch trolley, sight-seeing trolley, here-to-there trolley, fun-to-ride trolley."

The trolley service was discontinued after Easter 1984.

Although the other three transportation systems are now just files of old pictures and clippings at the historical society, SCAT continues to provide door-to-door service to residents, although it also continues to struggle financially.

SCAT Executive Director Tom Profico said fund-raising efforts have paid off fairly consistently, but skyrocketing insurance rates after 9-11 led to the nonprofit group's financial woes. The group's board is looking at ways to gain funding, possibly from Maricopa County or other government sources. Because the Sun Cities aren't incorporated, however, many government funding sources aren't

available.

SCAT provides about 61,000 rides a year, with all of its vans handicap-accessible. Fares provide about 20 percent of the cost to run the system.

"Any public transportation system, as we are a public transportation system, never charges what it really costs to operate, not like a private taxi," Profico said.

Profico said he doesn't foresee SCAT going the way of the Shop-Lifter, Sun City Bus Lines and Molly the Trolley.

"The type of service we provide is especially needed out here. The passengers really need to have the vehicle as close to their door as possible," he said. "There will always be a need for us."

But whether there's enough support for a more traditional bus route, Profico said he's not sure.

"That's an issue where a lot of people find it difficult to use a public, shared transportation system," he said. "Sometimes we're not always satisfied with what we adjust to, but we have to adjust."

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

Sun City getting bus route

Wheelchair-accessible vans will travel loop

January 13, 2001

By Ashley Bach
The Arizona Republic

Nearly two decades after its last bus line stopped running, Sun City is getting a regular transit route through town beginning Monday.

The van will make 18 stops in a loop going north on 107th Avenue, east on Union Hills Drive and south on 99th Avenue to Olive Avenue. It's the first regular route in town since 1982, when the "Bluebird" bus, subsidized by Del Webb, stopped operating because of a lack of riders.

Proceeds from the 40th anniversary celebration last year will finance the purchase of two wheelchair-compatible vans. The \$100,000 for the vans will be supplemented by enough money to maintain the route for a year, said Fran Park, head of the 40th anniversary committee.

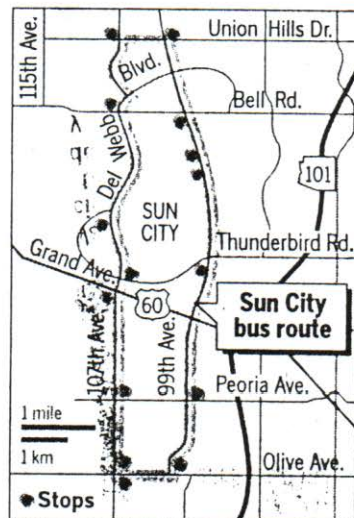
Park said residents and committee members seemed to agree on using money from the celebration to improve transportation.

"This will enable more of a route, and people will know at a certain time that a van will

come," he said.

Until now, the Sun Cities Area Transit System has operated a program in which people call for rides to their destinations. Now, in addition to the phone service, SCAT will operate the regular route, which will pass most of the recreation centers and shopping centers four times each weekday.

Jane Freeman, author of *Jubilee*, a history of Sun City's first 25 years, said she hopes the route will work, because its predecessors



Mark Waters/The Arizona Republic

See **BUS** | Page 7

From Page 1

transportation, and when it's offered, they don't support it," she said. "I hope they support this endeavor."

The nearly two-hour loop will be covered by one van probably until March, when the new vans arrive and take over. Each van will hold up to

seven people, which could include up to two wheelchairs.

The route will kick off Monday at 7:30 a.m. at Mountain View Recreation Center, 9749 N. 107th Ave. Other major stops include several recreation centers, such as Fairway, Oakmont and Lakeview, as well as shopping

centers, such as Bell Camino and Promenade.








Each ride costs \$2.50. Call SCAT at (623) 977-8363 for more information.

Reach the reporter at
ashley.bach@arizona
republic.com or (602) 444-6919.

Driving Alternatives

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz Thursday, March 2, 2000

Examples of transportation options

| | Organization | Users | Cost | Phone | Hours |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
|  | American Red Cross Sun Cities / NW Valley Branch | Transports Sun City, SCW, El Mirage, Surprise, Glendale, Peoria elderly, low income or disabled residents. Call 3-5 days in advance. | \$2 donation round trip | 972 - 3407 | M - F 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
|  | Interfaith Services | Transports Sun City, SCW, El Mirage, Surprise, Glendale, Peoria, Youngtown residents to legal / medical appt. | Free | 584 - 4999 | M - F 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. Hours may vary |
|  | Dail-a-Ride | Varies by city. | Less than \$2 (approx.) | 583 - 1688 (Surprise) 937 - 0500 (El Mirage) | Varies by city |
|  | Sun Cities Area Transit | Transports Sun City, SCW, Youngtown residents Call 1 hour in advance. No appts. necessary. | \$2.50 per person 1 way Sun City, SCW, Youngtown | 977 - 8363 | Switchboard opens 6:45 a.m. M - F 7:15 a.m. - 6:45 p.m. S-S, holidays 7:15 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. |
|  | Taxis | No boundaries. | \$1.40 mile (approx.) \$1.40 pick-up charge (approx.) min. \$4 (approx.) | N/A | 24 hours |
|  | Sun Cities Information and Referral Service | Will provide information on public and private forms of transportation. | Free | 974 - 4713 | M - F 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. |
|  | Retirement / care centers | Provide transportation to various locations for residents. | N/A | N/A | N/A |

SC transit comes long way in 20 years



The first form of public transportation in the Sun Cities began when Del Webb Co. brought the Shop-Lifter into service in 1963.



The Blue Bird Bus was instituted by Webb Co. in 1969. An unidentified passenger stands in front of driver Tony Fay.



Today passengers can ride in comfort in the SCAT van or station wagon. It is estimated that 40,000 riders will use Dial-A-Ride in the Sun Cities this year.

By P. ATWOOD WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

As the Sun Cities have grown, so has its transportation system which began in 1963 with an open trolley which seated 18 people.

The Sun City Shop-Lifter, similar to but not the same as the trolley now used by Del E. Webb Development Co. to shuttle Sun Dome visitors from the parking lot to the auditorium, was pulled by a jeep and operated between the Grand Shopping Center and other parts of Sun City.

In 1967, Del Webb put a small bus into service which was replaced two years later with a new and larger Blue Bird Bus freshly painted in Sun City colors and sunburst. It had plush 34-inch wide seats and stainless steel handrails, tinted glass and a chime system for passengers signaling their stops.

MRS. MARGARET Steffek was the first passenger and was issued a lifetime pass on the Sun City Bus Lines. She walked one-half mile to board the bus at 107th and Peoria avenues where she rode to her nursing job at the Sun Valley Lodge.

Mrs. Steffek recalls how driver Tony Fay was very accommodating, helping people with their packages. He left the route occasionally to assist a handicapped passenger for whom he also carried groceries.

Public transportation in Sun City ceased June 30, 1982, when the Webb Co. closed down the bus line. At the same time they also discontinued service on the two vans they had provided in Sun City West. The two vans were donated to the new Sun Cities Area Transit System, Inc.

SCAT WAS THE dream of Charles McKinnis, president of the Community Council. After being turned down by the Sun City Lions Club and the Home Owners Association, he presented it to the

council which backed the project.

A group of citizens met May 20, 1982, and the following committee adopted Articles of Incorporation: Mary Albert, Helen Cann, Jeanne Lloyd, Dick Meiner, William Mower, Raymond Nelson, Mathew Platt, George Seldin, Robert Kennedy and Chairman McKinnis.

The original directors were Robert Kennedy, chairman; Charles McKinnis, president and chief operating officer; George Seldin, vice-president; Raymond Nelson, treasurer.

PRESENT OFFICERS include Chairman Kennedy, President McKinnis, Mathew Platt, vice president; Dale R. Shockley, secretary; and Albert E. Dillow, treasurer. There are 11 directors and an advisory board of 15.

The first money received was a \$500 check from Art Hassel, president of Saguaro Life Member Club of the Telephone Pioneers of America. The board members pledged an additional \$1,100. Maricopa County made \$30,000 of Revenue Sharing Funds available for their fiscal year 1983.

Del E. Webb Company gave SCAT two Ford vans and two years office space use, including utilities and telephone for \$1 per year. SCAT contracted with Handi Van to operate their Dial-A-Ride service which began Sept. 1, 1982. Service operates seven days a week, Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

and Sunday by reservation in advance from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

THE BOARD, executive committee and office workers do not receive salaries or expense accounts. Because of contributions from the public, organizations and three business communities, the operation has survived. The first mail solicitation for funds was made February 1983.

Wheelchair lifts were installed in two vans and there are now approximately 50 people regularly using these facilities. SCAT picks up groceries and drugs and delivers them to shut-ins.

An analysis of the ridership is as follows: 10 per cent wheelchair; 20 per cent handicapped; 70 per

cent general public.

Airport Transportation Co. was selected to handle the operation of SCAT vehicles during the second year of operation. SCAT pays them \$1.55 for every ride; the passenger pays \$1.25.

Contributions to SCAT are recognized as tax-free deductions.

THE RECENT fund-raising campaign has almost reached the half-way mark with a \$1,000 contribution (with \$4,000 more promised) by the City of Youngtown bringing the total to \$44,034. It is anticipated that there will be 40,000 riders during 1984.

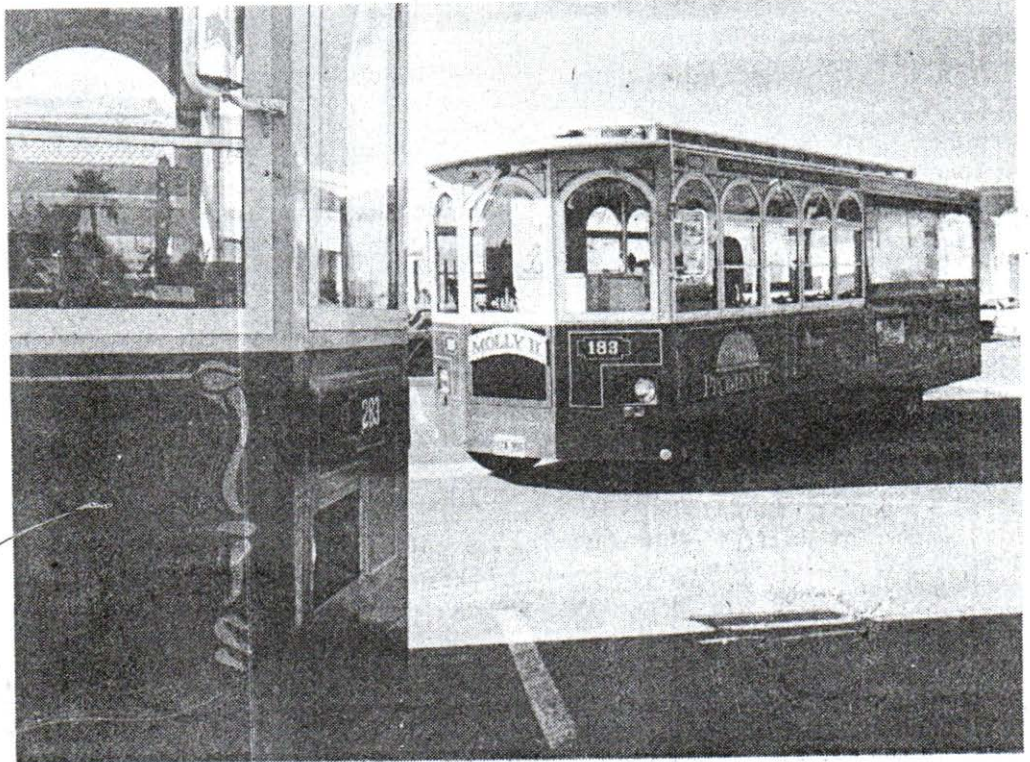
Plans for SCAT transportation service will depend on the funds raised this spring. They hope to

replace the present vans and add station wagons as secondary vehicles. It is possible that service will be extended to 7:30 p.m. weekdays.

Meanwhile, the new Molly Trolley system which began service to the shopping centers in November, will be discontinued after Easter. Whether it will start up again in the fall is unknown.

MOLLY TROLLEY was the brainchild of A. W. Brooks Jr. of Del E. Webb Realty and Management Co.

The rides in the open air street car-type vehicles are free. Cost of the service is borne by merchants who buy advertising on the sides of the two trolleys.



Two Molly Trolleys began service last fall, carrying residents to and from several area shopping centers. (News-Sun photo by M. J. Hoppes)

Republic
Sun City
chooses
10-20-86
bus route

Homeowners pick Peoria-Sun Bowl

By ROBERT BARRETT
The Arizona Republic

SUN CITY — A proposed regional-bus route crossing the Valley along Peoria Avenue from Scottsdale Road to a turnaround point at the Sun Bowl was endorsed by the community's largest civic organization last week.

The Sun Bowl, at 107th and Peoria Avenues, was selected as the best of three potential turnaround points for the bus service by the Sun City Home Owners Association.

Chuck McKinnis, president of the Sun City Area Transit, the community's Dial-A-Ride service, presented the three alternative routes to the board.

One alternative calls for the bus to follow Peoria Avenue to 107th Avenue and go north to Thunderbird Road. The bus would turn around near the Lakeview Recreation Center.

The second alternative route calls for the bus to follow Peoria Avenue to 107th Avenue, turn north and turn around at La Ronde Shopping Center.

"We suppose most people who use buses don't have cars," McKinnis said.

However, he said, it is expected that many residents will use the bus rather than drive to Metrocenter or downtown Phoenix.

McKinnis didn't support the second alternative because there is little additional parking space in the Lakeview Recreation Center area.

The La Ronde Center turnaround point also is bad because the merchants will not like residents parking in their lot and taking the bus to shop at Metrocenter, he said.

"We'll end up with cars being towed away, and we don't want that," McKinnis said. "So it seems to me the simplest solution is to take the route south on 107th for the turnaround at the Sun Bowl."

Officials for the Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc. already have given permission for residents to park in the Sun Bowl lot, he said.

The bus service, scheduled to begin in mid-January, is part of the Regional Public Transit Authority's attempt to develop

transportation systems in outlying areas of the Valley.

"This all goes back to Proposition 300, the half-cent sales-tax increase," McKinnis said.

Passed in October 1985, Proposition 300 increased the sales tax primarily to raise money for construction of a Valley-wide freeway system. However, part of the funds were allocated for regional transportation.

McKinnis said transit officials have asked for input from the residents about the bus route because ridership will be reviewed after one year.

If the bus is not being used, Sun City will lose its bus service, he said.

Bus line to connect Sun City, metro area

By GEOFF GORVIN
News-Sun staff

N.S.

PEORIA — Connecting the Sun City area to the Valley with a public transit system will be one of the first stages of a system that will eventually connect every area of the Valley.

Bus service connecting Sun City, the Paradise Valley Mall and most points between will begin in January as part of the Regional Transit Planning Authority's attempt to create a comprehensive public transit system, said Larry Miller, executive director of the transit authority.

Miller spoke this morning to about 30 area businessmen at Country Meadows during a breakfast meeting sponsored by the Coalition of Westside Chambers of Commerce.

Miller said by the year 2000, the Valley's highway system should be nearly completed and the public will be served by a transit system that will include a bus system, a rail system, Dial

11-14-86
A-Ride service and a car-pooling system.

People will probably use a combination of those services, with buses an integral part of the transit system, Miller said.

"I feel (bus service) will be improved, both in convenience and energy-wise, and will ultimately be the workhorse in the Valley," Miller said.

Buses are already heavily used in the Central Avenue area where 15,000 people board buses each day, Miller said.

The high demand projected for bus service will lead the transit authority to increase its bus fleet from its current 350 buses to more than 1,000 within a couple years, Miller said.

That will be accomplished with the \$180 million in transit authority funding during the next 20 years, he said.

The transit authority will spend \$8 million during each of the next five years to improve its system and \$5 million a year to

add seating to the system, Miller said.

"Five million dollars adds 1,000 rush-hour seats to the system each day and keeps them going," Miller said. "That's six (bus) routes or 18 to 20 buses."

Increasing the bus fleet by 700 buses will cost the transit authority about \$80 million and about \$100,000 a year to operate and maintain each bus, he said.

Although it appears that the public transit system is intended to increase business to the larger shopping centers in Phoenix, small downtown businesses will also benefit, Miller said.

"We'll have exchange points in such places as downtown Peoria," he said. "Those connections will give people time to stop and shop.

"We have to work on some priority things...to make people see that a transit system is a better way," Miller said.

Golf Cars Affected By New Arizona Law

A new law in Arizona now exempts golf cars from carrying three accessory requirements, the Sun City Home Owners Association Legislative Committee reported this week.

The law, Senate Bill 1164, no longer makes it necessary for golf cars to carry windshield wipers, windshields or safety glass. The statute does not affect other motor vehicles.

"It took a year of work," Ellis Danner, committee chairman, pointed out, "to get this bill into the Arizona statutes. Rep. Pat Wright and Sen. Anne Lindeman put a lot of effort into clearing up this issue."

Danner said the bill affects more than 2,000 golf car owners in Sun City. He said about one year ago the HOA was successful in getting golf cars exempted from emissions testing, but the accessory requirements were still technically in effect until the final passage of SB 1164.

TRANSPORTATION SUN CITY CITIZEN JUNE 15, 1977

-June 15, 1977—SUN CITY CITIZEN

\$450,000 Reported Spent On Sun City Highways

By Charlene Paraniuk

Maricopa County Highway Department officials told the Sun City Home Owners Association board yesterday, June 21, that approximately \$450,000 in services were spent in Sun City this past year.

Robert Esterbrooks, Maricopa County assistant manager and engineer, and Joe Dorbin, county assistant engineer, reviewed for directors the department's street maintenance in the community and its projects scheduled within the next five years.

Esterbrooks estimated that street maintenance, paving and repair work in the community cost the county more than \$300,000 last year.

He said an eight- to nine-member full-time crew is scheduled to sweep streets during the summer every three weeks, while median strip grooming will be done every two weeks.

Traffic engineering services, according to Dorbin, were \$150,000 for the past fiscal year. These costs included, Dorbin explained, \$28,000 for installation and maintenance of light signals, \$14,000 for electricity, \$15,000 for striping, \$86,000 for signing, and \$8,000 for traffic studies.

"Sun City," he pointed out, "has been planned fairly well and we've worked right along with the developer. The traffic pattern, too, is fairly well established except for new streets opening north of Bell Road.

"We are aware of the unique character of the driver in Sun City," he remarked.

Projects scheduled for completion during the next five years include:

- *Construction of a bridge over New River at 99th Avenue south of Olive Avenue, and of bridges to the east of Sun City on Bell Road.

- *New surfacing of Bell Road from Interstate 17 to Sun City to Grand Avenue.

- *Railroad crossings at Olive Avenue and 75th Avenue, Bell Road and Grand Avenue, 103rd Avenue and Grand Avenue, Dycart Road and Grand Avenue, Factory Street and Grand Avenue, Del Webb Boulevard and Grand Avenue, and Beardsley and Grand Avenue.

Other proposed projects are:

- *A by-pass for traffic through Litchfield Park.

- *Construction of a bridge on Thunderbird Road and the New River.

- *Improvement of 99th Avenue south from Glendale Avenue.

The traffic engineers also told directors the department is studying a mass transit bus system from Sun City to Metrocenter, but this, if approved, would not be available until after July 1978.

TRANSPORTATION

y cancels Red Cross transit ct



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

MORE SCAT RIDERS: Local agency expects to gain riders; spending cut tied to state woes

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

After 20 years of providing transportation service to the county, the Red Cross is becoming the first area victim of the state's budget cuts.

Maricopa County is canceling its contract with the Red Cross, effective July 1, in an effort to reduce spending after the state cut funding to many elder and medical care services.

"This is exactly what I was talking about

when I said Maricopa County was being penalized by the state for having a good track record with its money," said Scott Isham of county Supervisor Max Wilson's office. "The state is taking its budget problems out on the most needy, so the county now has to re-prioritize where the money goes."

Although Isham said the county has not stopped or cut any funding for services in the area, the state has, putting the burden on the county.

"We are now faced with what can be cut," Isham said. "We don't want to duplicate services. We have SCAT in the Sun Cities working similar to the Red Cross, so we were looking at those types of things first to save some money. This is what happens when there is a

See Red Cross, A5

Red Cross loses bid for service

From A1

bad budget in place."

Red Cross spokeswoman Jennifer Liewry said for the last 25 years Red Cross has had a contract with Maricopa County for special transportation service, but it was put out to bid instead this year.

"It was a year-to-year contract," she said. "Why they decided to go with someone else I do not know. We have done it so long there is going to be some confusion."

The county chose the company Drivers Only for the contract, after two failed rounds of bids on the contract, according to Chuck Post, director of Special Transportation for the Red Cross.

"We bid the first time along with three other agencies," he said. "All four bids came in too high. So it was put out again."

Finally, Post said, the contract was bid on again, and was awarded to Drivers Only for \$13.22 per hour. The next highest bid was at \$20.

"To tell you the truth, I

don't know how that is going to work," Post said. "That bid per hour includes a driver, management, vehicle cost and insurance. I know that we would not be able to do it for that price. We wouldn't be able to cover our liability alone at that price."

Come July 1, the Red Cross' van fleet of 77 vehicles will be downsized to seven in Maricopa County and will provide transportation to children and the elderly on a very limited basis, Post said.

The Sun Cities Area Transit service is expected to pick up some of the slack and has seen an increase in handicapped riders, said Tom Profico, executive director.

During the first nine months of fiscal year 2000-2001, SCAT picked up 3,150 wheelchair-bound passengers compared to 3,964 passengers in wheelchairs in the first nine months of the current fiscal year.

"In the past, we have seen a lot more riders," Profico said. "We have had quite an increase in wheelchair carries over the past few months."

Ivy Wixson, manager of the Olive Branch Senior Center, said the county made this decision weeks ago and has given organizations like hers, different options, including:

- Leaving everything the way it is while waiting for the new provider to begin providing transportation services.

- Providing transportation and delivering the meals themselves through volunteer drivers.

Wixson said the Olive Branch Senior Center has decided to wait to see what kind of service the new provider provides.

"Maybe this new provider will be better," Wixson said. "It's not a lot of people we are talking about," she added, citing seven clients who use the Red Cross service regularly.

Wixson said the Olive Branch Senior Center will make sure its clients won't be affected.

"Our people will not suffer no matter what," she said.

Liewry said people need to realize there will be some

form of transportation service available.

"It will just not be Red Cross. We are trying to get a grasp of what is going on," she said.

Liewry said Red Cross will have 5 percent of its fleet after July 1, but is unsure of what it will be able to provide.

"Right now we are in a transition stage to see where we are going," she said. "We need to look at what we can provide. There is such a need for it."

The need is something Isham said the county is working on.


"I don't want people to give up yet," he said. "The county's budget is sound, but we need to figure out what we are going to do to alleviate some of the burden for these service organizations now that the state's funding is gone."

Michael Maresh can be reached at 876-2513 or mmaresh@aztrib.com.

John Sokolich contributed to this story.



SUN CITY BUS LINE ROUTES and LEGEND

-  Bus No. 11
-  Bus No. 21
-  Bus No. 31
-  Lakeview Medical Arts
-  Models Pavilion/Sales Office
-  1 La Ronde Centre
-  2 Greenway Terrace
-  3 Thunderbird Plaza
-  4 Grand Center
-  5 Sun Bowl Plaza
-  6 Plaza del Sol
-  1 Mountain View Rec. Center
-  2 Fairway Rec. Center
-  3 Oakmont Rec. Center
-  4 Lakeview Rec. Center
-  5 Sundial Rec. Center



DEL WEBB'S
Sun City

America's Most Famous Resort-Retirement Community

Bus No. 11 — North/South (Counterclockwise/ Yellow Line) — 103rd/ 107th

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:00 | 10:15 | 11:30 | 12:45 | 2:00 | 3:15 |
| Sun Dial Rec Center | 9:05 | 10:20 | 11:35 | 12:50 | 2:05 | 3:20 |
| Greenway Terrace SC | 9:08 | 10:23 | 11:38 | 12:53 | 2:08 | 3:23 |
| Sales Complex/Model Homes | 9:15 | 10:30 | 11:45 | 1:00 | 2:15 | 3:30 |
| La Ronde Centre (west side) | 9:22 | 10:37 | 11:52 | 1:07 | 2:22 | 3:37 |
| Thunderbird Blvd./Del Webb | 9:25 | 10:40 | 11:55 | 1:10 | 2:25 | 3:40 |
| Boswell Hospital | 9:27 | 10:42 | 11:57 | 1:12 | 2:27 | 3:42 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:30 | 10:45 | 12:00 | 1:15 | 2:30 | 3:45 |
| Post Office/SC Prof. Bldg. | 9:32 | 10:47 | 12:02 | 1:17 | 2:32 | 3:47 |
| Grand Center | 9:35 | 10:50 | 12:05 | 1:20 | 2:35 | 3:50 |
| Sun Bowl Plaza Center | 9:45 | 11:00 | 12:15 | 1:30 | 2:45 | 4:00 |
| Mountain View Rec Center | 9:50 | 11:05 | 12:20 | 1:35 | 2:50 | 4:05 |
| Kelso & 103rd | 9:55 | 11:10 | 12:25 | 1:40 | 2:55 | 4:10 |
| 103rd & Peoria | 9:58 | 11:13 | 12:28 | 1:43 | 2:58 | 4:13 |
| Sun Valley Lodge/Post Office | 10:00 | 11:15 | 12:30 | 1:45 | 3:00 | 4:15 |
| Kings Inn/Grand Center | 10:04 | 11:19 | 12:34 | 1:49 | 3:04 | 4:19 |
| Boswell Hospital | 10:10 | 11:25 | 12:40 | 1:55 | 3:10 | 4:25 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 10:12 | 11:27 | 12:42 | 1:57 | 3:12 | 4:30 |

**Bus No. 21 — South on 103rd — North on 107th (Del Webb)
(Clockwise/Red Line)**

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:00 | 10:15 | 11:30 | 12:45 | 2:00 | 3:15 |
| Lakeview Lanes/Rec. Center | 9:03 | 10:18 | 11:33 | 12:48 | 2:03 | 3:18 |
| Grand Shopping Center | 9:05 | 10:20 | 11:35 | 12:50 | 2:05 | 3:20 |
| 107th & Oakmont | 9:07 | 10:22 | 11:37 | 12:52 | 2:07 | 3:22 |
| 103rd & Oakmont, Sun Valley Lodge | 9:10 | 10:25 | 11:40 | 12:55 | 2:10 | 3:25 |
| 103rd & Peoria | 9:12 | 10:27 | 11:42 | 12:57 | 2:12 | 3:27 |
| 103rd & Kelso | 9:15 | 10:30 | 11:45 | 1:00 | 2:15 | 3:30 |
| 111th & Kelso | 9:18 | 10:33 | 11:48 | 1:03 | 2:18 | 3:33 |
| Plaza Del Sol Shopping Center | 9:25 | 10:40 | 11:55 | 1:10 | 2:25 | 3:40 |
| 107th & Sun City Blvd. | 9:28 | 10:43 | 11:58 | 1:13 | 2:28 | 3:43 |
| Grand Shopping Center | 9:30 | 10:45 | 12:00 | 1:15 | 2:30 | 3:45 |
| 103rd & Oakmont | 9:32 | 10:47 | 12:02 | 1:17 | 2:32 | 3:47 |
| Post Office/Sun Valley Lodge | 9:33 | 10:48 | 12:03 | 1:18 | 2:33 | 3:48 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 9:35 | 10:50 | 12:05 | 1:20 | 2:35 | 3:50 |
| Lakeview Lanes/Rec. Center | 9:38 | 10:53 | 12:08 | 1:23 | 2:38 | 3:53 |
| LaRonde Shopping Center East Side | 9:45 | 11:00 | 12:15 | 1:30 | 2:45 | 4:00 |
| Sales Office/Model Homes | 9:55 | 11:10 | 12:25 | 1:40 | 2:55 | 4:10 |
| Greenway Terrace Shopping Center | 10:05 | 11:20 | 12:35 | 1:50 | 3:05 | 4:20 |
| Sun Dial Rec. Center | 10:08 | 11:23 | 12:38 | 1:53 | 3:08 | 4:23 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 10:10 | 11:25 | 12:40 | 1:55 | 3:10 | 4:25 |

Bus No. 31 — (Peripheral/Blue Line)

(Same schedule every hour On Hour)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Lakeview Medical Arts | |
| East on Thunderbird Blvd. to | |
| Royal Oak/100th Ave. to Lancaster | |
| Thunderbird Plaza SC | 00:05 |
| Cross 99th to Royal Ridge to 98th | |
| To Thunderbird (Chalet Apts) | 00:07 |
| Bolivar & Boswell Blvd. | 00:10 |
| Sun Dial Rec Center | 00:13 |
| Greenway Terrace SC | 00:18 |
| Greenway Rd. & Bowling Green | 00:20 |
| Hutton & 99th | 00:25 |
| Hutton & Del Webb Blvd. | 00:30 |
| Mead & Aqua Fria | 00:35 |
| LaRonde Centre | 00:37 |
| Thunderbird Blvd & Del Webb Blvd. | 00:40 |
| Grand Center | 00:42 |
| Boswell Hospital | 00:45 |
| Lakeview Medical Arts | 00:52 |

(Repeats route every hour)

SUN CITY BUS LINE

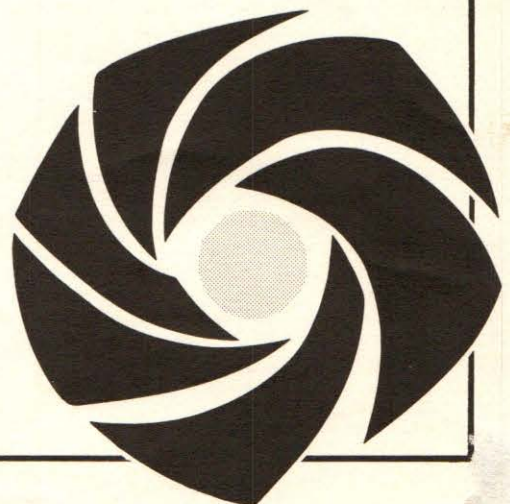
Schedules run continuously Monday through Saturday beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bus No. 11 and No. 21 end at 4:30 p.m. and Bus No. 31 ends at 4:00 p.m. daily. All times listed are approximate and could vary a few minutes either way.

Fare: 25¢
Tickets:
10 rides — \$1.75
20 rides — \$3.00

Transfers are free, good between Peripheral (No. 31) and either North/South (No. 11 & 21). Transfers cannot be used between North/South buses.

Effective Date:
February, 1975

Information: 974-7516



SCAT VALUES

Self Esteem

We understand that continuing a sense of independence and self-esteem in our riders is essential to their well-being.

Putting the Customer First

We believe that providing services in a timely and responsive manner will enhance our riders' experience and satisfaction.

People Oriented

We believe that our employees are the most important resource our organization has.

We know that our riders rely upon us to understand their transportation needs.

Respect

We always treat our riders with dignity and respect. We also acknowledge and respect the unique aspect of each rider's disability and/or circumstance.

Trust

We understand that our riders expect to receive quality service in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

Teamwork

We believe that cooperative relationships with whom and for whom we work are essential to the long term success of the company.

- ◆ Will help you carry your luggage or packages to your door.
- ◆ Will meet you at your front door when requested; however, they will not enter your house.
- ◆ Will help wheelchair passengers into and out of medical and other facilities.
- ◆ Will use the Van's wheelchair and wheelchair lift to assist passengers in the vehicle if such assistance is needed.

BUYING TICKETS IN ADVANCE

Everyone can help improve SCAT service... drivers, dispatchers, office workers, maintenance folks... and SCAT passengers!

You can help by having the EXACT CHANGE ready or better still; buy tickets in advance and save all that wallet and bag shuffling when you come aboard.

Call the office, 977-8363, for details on when and how to purchase tickets in advance.

REMEMBER SCAT is a "SHARED RIDE"
NO EARLY and LATE PASSENGERS
ARE UNFAIR TO OTHER RIDERS

GO
SCAT
DIAL • A • RIDE

977-8363



EASY ACCESS
PERSONAL SERVICE
WHEELCHAIR SERVICE
AVAILABLE
SCAT-RPTA CONNECTION

SUN CITIES AREA
TRANSIT SYSTEM, INC.

P.O. BOX 1972
SUN CITY, AZ 85372

977-8363

SCAT VALUES

Self Esteem

We understand that continuing a sense of independence and self-esteem in our riders is essential to their well-being.

Putting the Customer First

We believe that providing services in a timely and responsive manner will enhance our riders' experience and satisfaction.

People Oriented

We believe that our employees are the most important resource our organization has.

We know that our riders rely upon us to understand their transportation needs.

Respect

We always treat our riders with dignity and respect. We also acknowledge and respect the unique aspect of each rider's disability and/or circumstance.

Trust

We understand that our riders expect to receive quality service in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

Teamwork

We believe that cooperative relationships with whom and for whom we work are essential to the long term success of the company.

DRIVER ASSISTANCE

- ◆ Will help you carry your luggage or other packages to your destination.
- ◆ Will meet you at your front door when requested; however, they will not enter your house.
- ◆ Will help wheelchair passengers into and from medical and other facilities.
- ◆ Will use the Van's wheelchair and wheelchair lift to assist passengers into the vehicle if such assistance is needed.

BUYING TICKETS IN ADVANCE

Everyone can help improve SCAT service . . . drivers, dispatchers, office workers, maintenance folks . . . and SCAT passengers too!

You can help by having the EXACT CHANGE ready or better still; buy tickets in advance and save all that wallet and handbag shuffling when you come aboard.

Call the office, 977-8363, for details on where and how to purchase tickets in advance.

**REMEMBER SCAT is a "SHARED RIDE"
NO SHOW and LATE PASSENGERS
ARE UNFAIR TO OTHER RIDERS**

**GO
SCAT**
DIAL - A - RIDE

977-8363



**EASY ACCESS
PERSONAL SERVICE
WHEELCHAIR SERVICE
AVAILABLE
SCAT-RPTA CONNECTION**

**SUN CITIES AREA
TRANSIT SYSTEM, INC.**

P.O. BOX 1972
SUN CITY, AZ 85372

977-8363

SCAT FACTS

SCAT is a professionally managed non-profit, charitable organization. About 30% of the operating cost is from fares. Additional financial needs are met by individuals, non-profit organizations and businesses plus some matching funds from the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA).

SCAT is a public transit company that gives special consideration to seniors, the disabled and wheelchair passengers. However, SCAT is not an ambulance service nor can our drivers be responsible for mentally confused individuals.

SCAT is a clean-air advocate....SCAT's prime fuel is CNG...Using compressed natural gas (CNG), vehicle pollution of carbon-monoxide is 1/7 of gasoline users.

On February 19, 1999 SCAT carried its one millionth rider.

SCAT IS A PEOPLE MOVER

SCAT operates 365 days a year...Monday through Friday from 7:15 AM to 6:45 PM; weekends and holidays from 7:15 AM to 4:45 PM. SCAT Dial-A-Ride is a door-to-door bus service for anyone traveling within the SUN CITY, SUN CITY WEST and YOUNGTOWN area. DIAL-A-RIDE works best for ALL when you observe these procedures:

- ♦ BE READY TO GO when you call... You are sharing the ride with others.
- ♦ HAVE CORRECT CHANGE READY before boarding the van.
- ♦ NO FOOD, DRINK, OR SMOKING is allowed in the van.
- ♦ SCAT FARE is @\$2.50 per passenger, one way at this time.

977-8363

HOW TO ARRANGE FOR A RIDE

- ♦ For shopping and visiting...call when ready.
- ♦ For medical or other appointments ... Call one and one half hours ahead.
- ♦ WHEELCHAIR users need to call the day before so that a wheelchair accessible Van is available.
- ♦ To CANCEL ... Call at least 30 minutes in advance ... Otherwise we expect no-show riders to pay the full cost.

REMEMBER - - - SCAT is a "Shared Ride." No-show and late passengers are unfair to other riders.