

## neighbors

# A history of the Friends of the Library book sales

By Bob Kelling

Special to the Independent

Book sales for the R.H. Johnson Library started in 1993 by putting withdrawn and donated books in discarded cartons taken from dumpsters and local stores. Prices were written in pencil and the cartons were taped shut and stored in a hallway in the R.H. Johnson Lecture Hall. When the fire department deemed this location inappropriate, the material was moved to a small room inside the library.

Storage of the book cartons was in a tin shed built by the Recreation Centers of Sun City west at a cost of \$2,000, paid by the Friends of the Library. This shed was 240 square feet in size, had two small windows, no lights nor air conditioning. Soon, a small lighted fan and a small window air conditioner were added, making the shed



Submitted Photo

**Peggy Joynson, one of 10 book sale volunteers who categorize, price and store the donated materials for the Friends of the R.H. Johnson Library quarterly book sales.**

suitable for use in the summer (until then, books were processed inside the Library in the summer months). Later, the shed was insulated with sprayed-on foam.

Book sales were three times a year in front of the library. Sales for the year 1995 totaled \$8,427.

In 1999, book sales were moved to the Social Hall. During this time, the penciled-in book prices were replaced by printed price stickers and plastic book crates were bought for storage of the books to be sold.

As donations from residents increased, categories included hard bound books of all categories and paperbacks. Soon, audio and video material and puzzles were also available for sale.

In 2012, a new storage shed was constructed and installed just outside the Social Hall of the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

This shed measures 400 square feet and is fully air conditioned and insulated. Cost of the shed was borne by the Friends of the Library.

The book sales are now four times each year and are open to all. The latest sale Feb. 16 was totaled \$13,634, bringing the year 2012 sales total to above \$40,000, with all monies going back to the library to purchase new material.

This could not be done without the staff of volunteer book workers who price, categorize and store the donated material in the shed until the sale and also work in the Social Hall displaying the material for sale.

The next book sale is 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, May 11 and is open to the public.

*Editor's Note: Bob Kelling is on the board of the Friends of the Library and does publicity for the group.*

VF Sun Library

## SUN CITY WEST LIBRARY

The history of the R. H. Johnson Library closely follows the population growth in Sun City West. The first residents moved into Sun City West on October 16, 1978. The Del Webb Corporation (DEVCO) announced that the library building, then under construction, would have capacity for 40,000 volumes.

In early 1979 the Maricopa County Library District provided bookmobile service to the residents on a one day per week schedule. The bookmobile parked near the temporary First National Bank trailer located on the northwest corner of Johnson Boulevard and Camino del Sol. At that time, their permanent building was under construction across the boulevard, presently Wells Fargo Bank.

Shortly after the first residents arrived, Del Webb arranged with the Sun City Library to provide services to Sun City West residents until the new library building was completed. When the new R. H. Johnson Library opened its doors on October 16, 1979, services by the Sun City Library were discontinued.

In 1979 the library bell tower was the tallest structure in the area and could be seen for miles across the desert land that was to become a city (Figures 324, <sup>4</sup>32~~8~~A).

The Maricopa County Library provided 10,000 books through a \$25,000 county grant. Evelyn Cornish, the first librarian, and 50 resident volunteers prepared and shelved the books for circulation. At that time, Mrs. Cornish and a janitor were the only paid library employees of the Recreation Center.

The Friends of the Library was started in 1979, and *was* chartered as a club by the Recreation Centers. It was created to promote, support and enrich the services of the library. It is recognized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by the IRS, so donations to the Friends are tax-deductible.

By the end of 1980, volunteers numbered 70 and 1,000 borrowers held library cards, and the library was open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The library proved to be very popular with the residents. In 1995 Del Webb undertook a 2,000 square foot, \$140,000 expansion of the building. This added more reading room area, a video section, and a special area for grand children, and modified the administration areas.

During the early years, the library was open to all residents of the surrounding area, and received continued services from the County Library. By 1995 real estate development in the surrounding area created a population explosion resulting in demand for library services exceeding what could be provided by the library and its personnel.

The Friends of the Library proposed that the facility be limited to use by Sun City West residents and the Recreation Centers Board agreed. Non-resident memberships were cancelled as of June 30, 1995, and the affiliation with the County Library ended. Recreation Centers membership cards are now used as library cards.

The Recreation Center budget covers the operation of the library, but does not provide funds for the purchase of books, magazines, newspapers, financial publications, video

and audiocassettes, and other library materials. It is the Friends of the Library that supply the approximately \$70,000 spent for these materials each year.

The funds are raised by the Friends through several activities. The most important effort by the Friends is the annual Endowment Fund drive during which every SCW household is given the opportunity to donate to this library materials-purchasing fund.

Another important source of funds is the sale of surplus books. Sales are conducted several times during the year, usually out of doors in front of the library. The largest sale is always in conjunction with the Recreation Centers' annual Crafts Fair. Total book sales generate about \$18,000 annually.

Another fundraiser is "Thursday Nite at the Movies" at the Stardust Theater. The movie program started as a very modest weekly event in the library on December 29, 1979. It was called "Tuesday Nite at the Movies" and used a 16 mm home projector. Public response was most favorable, and by early 1980 the showings were moved to the Lecture Hall. With the completion of the Stardust Theater, the movie

night found its present home on September 21, 1989 as  
"Thursday Nite at the Movies."

During the last twenty-five years, the library has received many donations of new and used books. For example: The Valley National Bank (now Bank One) donated 1,500 volumes on March 23, 1980. Many special books are given in memory of departed friends or family members, or in their honor for special occasions. Residents often donate books they no longer have room for, and any that the library doesn't need are given to the Friends for the book sales.

Mrs. Cornish retired in 1986, and was succeeded by Marcia Lea, the current Library Director. The paid staff now also includes a full-time Assistant Librarian, and eight part-time employees. Over 150 volunteers complete the working staff. The library is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., has over 45,000 volumes and 2,500 videos, and circulates over 230,000 items per year.

AVB 2/18/02 -

edited by mj1 2/22/02

*Art Bender*

MARCIA LEA

Tuesday, October 16, 1979 NEWS-SUN



## Library

10-16-79

Ribbon-cutting ceremony signaled opening of the Sun City West Library. Joining in the cutting this morning were from left, Mr. and Mrs. Luman Wick, Evelyn Cornish, librarian; Mike Britt,

DEVCO vice president; Bill Woodyard, general manager of the SCWest rec centers; and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Uhl.

(News-Sun Photo by Jim Painter)

# R.H. Johnson Library director takes helm

STAFF REPORT

Vince Micallef joined the Recreation Centers of Sun City West as the director of the R.H. Johnson Library, taking the helm of the newly renovated and expanded facility.

Micallef comes to the Rec Centers from Youngtown, where he served as community services/recreation director for 2½ years and as interim town manager. His experience also includes serving as a manager for the Maricopa County Library District, and as the library, parks and recreation director in Avondale.

In Sun City West, Micallef is responsible for the library operations, including overseeing the staff and more than 70 active volunteers. With its recent expansion and new technologies, the library has more room for inventory, and the opportunity for new services and special events.

The library leaped into the high-tech world in the last year, introducing an automated card catalog, a dedicated audio-visual

department, Internet-ready computers in the new data resource center, and wireless service throughout the facility. Thanks to a grant from the Sun



Micallef

City West Community Fund, the library also offers a computerized health and wellness resource center with up-to-date health information and links to medical Web sites.

"This is an exciting time at the library. We just finished a much-needed expansion and renovation, and now we have the opportunity to start concentrating on the resources and services that will make the best use of that new space and new technology," Micallef said. "I'm glad to be here and happy to be a part of this community's future as we move the library forward to better serve residents."

Micallef succeeds Carol Foutts, who retired at the end of the year to spend more time with family.





# R.H. Johnson Library

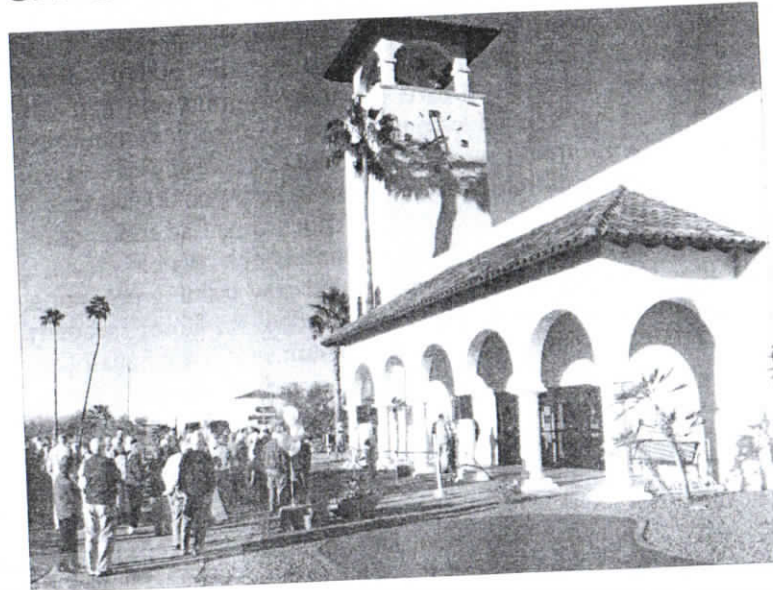


## “Libraries are not made – they grow.” – Anonymous

By Carol Foutts  
Library Director

There is a fail-safe recipe for growing a library: it's the people you mix together that make it a success.

First you sift through ideas at open forums, take suggestions from Library volunteers and staff; add nine cups of solid support from Governing Board members, an experienced head chef like General Manager Mike Whiting, a resolute assistant chef like Earl Mackert, and lots of enthusiastic Rec Center members to fan the flame and start the process.



Clockwise from top left: Library supporters gather at the front of the famous clock tower and Library entrance in anticipation of its grand re-opening Feb. 28. (Photo by Terry Foutts ) Friends of the Library Treasurer Marty Schreiberman prepares to present Governing Board President Matt Szydlowski with a \$200,000 check – the first installment of a \$350,000 donation the Friends have pledged toward the Library renovation project. (Photo by Barbara Brady ) Patrons mingle and enjoy the Library's new interior during the Sneak Peak on Feb. 28. (Photo by Terry Foutts )

Then you take an au courant architect like Ken Eller who says, "What will work best for you?"; take a meticulous contractor like Ken McIntyre and an industrious project manager like Larry Griffith who both say, "Let's do it right"; then take a skilled maintenance staff supervised by Russ Boston; add the Rec Centers support staff supervised by Joe Papay and Cindy Knowlton who say "No problem"; and fold in a determined, persistent, and generous Friends of the R.H. Johnson Library Committee who say, "We'll get the dough, just make it so"; then stir.

While the ingredients begin to blend, you take a well-seasoned Library staff that is willing to roll up their sleeves, slap on an apron, pack-up, re-locate, and re-create a smaller library, not a full meal but at least a taste of what we had so that members won't be completely hungry. A Library staff that continues to bake new books throughout the process, sprinkling humor on all their tasks as their kitchen grows smaller and smaller.

Into this mix, toss some tempting ingredients from the Information Services staff,

who experiment with our newest dish, the Data Resource Room; as the timer ticks off the critical seconds, their flawless presentation belies their intense scramble to complete such a complicated task

Just like a Hostess cupcake always has a surprise inside, so does a library that is being renovated rather than being built from all-new ingredients, and sometimes those new ingredients just don't blend with the old ones.

Sometimes the old recipe for wiring has to be replaced or the whole building needs more power for all the new technologies being added, or the new plumbing doesn't match up with the old plumbing, then the ingredients have to be revised and adjusted in just the right amounts to make it blend the way it should. You keep checking to see, "Is it done yet," but because you had to take time to add those new ingredients and see how well they've blended, it's going to take a little longer till it's really done!

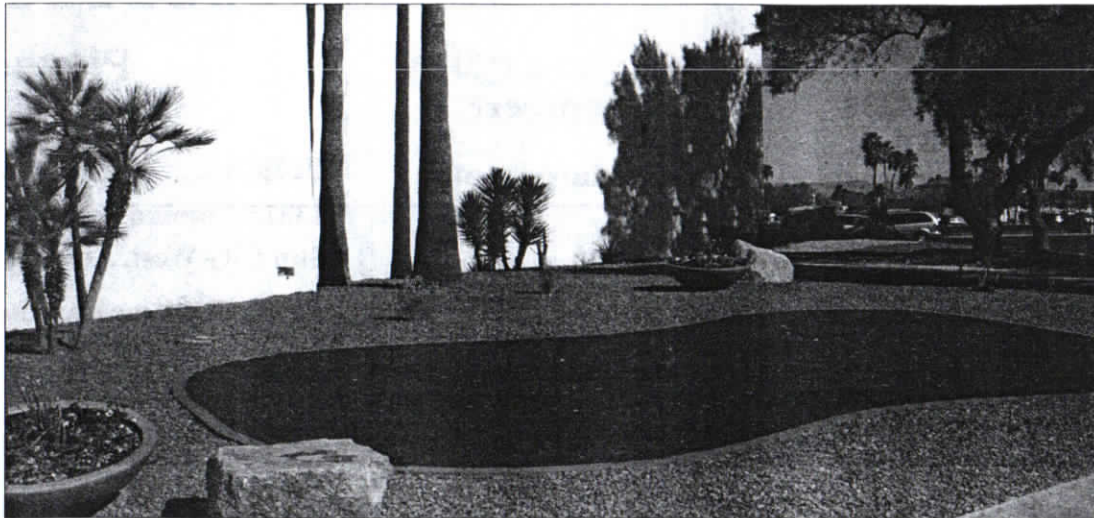
When it's close to the right temperature, you bring back the Rec staff, Library staff, Information Services staff and

lots of hungry Library volunteers to finalize the preparation: re-building shelves, adding fixtures, cleaning and arranging furnishings, and re-shelving books, books, and more books.

When Maricopa County finally sticks a toothpick into the whole batch and says, "It's done!" then you can invite company to come and visit and enjoy your new recipe. You hope they will be pleased with the new ingredients and the new tastes they discover, and will be anxious to come back for more.

On behalf of the Library staff and our volunteer cuisiniers, I would like to thank and recognize the many people who made our growing library a reality; our success is your accomplishment. Bon appetite!

## New landscaping continues 'green' trend



The new landscaping at the R.H. Johnson Library is a shining example of the Association's environmental stewardship. In an effort to conserve water, the Association's Environmental Services Division xeriscaped the facility, installing artificial turf and low-water use plants throughout.

The makeover has received plenty of compliments from residents who have admired the

stunning color and new look.

Along with two patches of artificial turf, the landscaping includes red yuccas, desert spoon, agave, purple fountain grass and lantana, all of which require very little water.

The look is complemented by Sedona red rocks for a stunning appearance. Congratulations to Environmental Services Manager Todd Patty and his crew for their work!

## R.H. Johnson library closing to nonresidents

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

SUN CITY WEST — The R.H. Johnson Library will close its doors to nonresidents in an effort to prevent overcrowding.

The board of directors of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West decided Jan. 26 to cancel nonresidents' memberships as of June 30.

Friends of the Library, a 12,000-member group, said it proposed the change out of concern that new housing developments planned near the retirement community would cause overcrowding of the library.

The library, at R.H. Johnson and Meeker boulevards, had been open to nonresidents since it was started 15 years ago.

About 5 percent of the library's 16,000 card holders live outside Sun City West — in Peoria, El Mirage, Surprise, Sun City, Wittman and other communities.

Operational costs, however, are almost entirely paid by Sun City West residents. The rec centers association pays employee salaries and building upkeep.

Because the library is going private, it no longer will be part of the Maricopa County Library District's reciprocal borrowing program. But rec centers board member Jack O'Conner said library officials are looking into other book exchange programs offered in Arizona.

In other business, the board approved a change in the rec centers' bylaws to require only one vote per voting member. Board president Joe Schoggen said that this means that the Palomar Apartments no longer will receive its voting block privileges for 100 votes. Instead, the apartment complex owner will have one vote.

The board also approved goals for 1995, including providing timely financial reporting to the membership and completing a reserve study covering long-range planning for facilities and costs.

The board wants to improve its budget development, including identifying expenses paid by the developer; obtain a new computer system; complete a compensation and classification review of full-time employee positions; and expand administrative space.

In addition, the board plans to enhance communication with the membership, update the rules, regulations and procedures for chartered clubs, and to maintain the association's seven golf courses in a first-class manner.

The board also will obtain a mutual agreement with the Property Owners and Residents Association on the procedures to be followed in enforcing the community's deed restrictions. Del Webb Corp., Sun City West's developer, will be turning over the enforcement of deed restrictions to community leaders when the company leaves the community.

# Residents hear of SCW library expansion plans at public forum

## Three design options offered for review and public comment

By Marianne Sikler

A public forum was held last week to discuss plans for the renovation and expansion of the

R. H. Johnson Library. Gen. Mgr. Mike Whiting spoke on the scope of the project, discussing its various stages of planning and implementation. The project has a two-year time schedule for study and completion, with a budget of \$400,000.

On hand to help Whiting introduce the expansion project was a panel of Planning Committee members that included Carol Foutts, librarian; Earl Mackert, chairman of the Library Endowment Fund, and Barbara James, deputy general manager. Ken Eller, an architect hired to design the project, was present to describe three design concepts.

Year one of the undertaking will be devoted to planning and design efforts. Considerable work has been done early in the planning process leading up to its first public introduction that included preparation by a staff of a project proposal cost estimates, review by the Properties and Budget & Finance committees, governing board authorization, and the establishment of a planning committee.

The purpose of the recent forum was to involve the community in the planning phase of the considerable capital improvement project. Public input is being sought to help design a renovated facility that will be pleasing to residents, and user-friendly. A second community forum is planned for Sept. 15, to present an updated design version that will incorporate suggested ideas submitted by the public. The second forum will mark the end of public input.

Librarian Foutts presented a history of the library from its startup to present. The 9,000 square foot library was established in 1979, with 10,000 books borrowed from Maricopa County. At that time there were 2,000 library members. The library became private and self-supporting in 1995, with expenses being supplemented by donations through an Endowment Fund Drive, and the activities of the Friends of the Library. Today it serves 30,000 people in an 11,000 square foot facility, housing 230,000 books. The proposed expansion will add some 900 square feet to the facility.

Foutts said the expansion will fulfill three pressing needs of the library. One is the addition of a computer room with its own public access. The computer facilities will provide the public with a faster and more updated means to obtain information, allow access to the internet, and will eliminate the library's current outdated card files. The room could double as a training area, and be used to conduct local Governing Board elections.

A second priority is the addition of a Homebound Services area, to accommodate people, who can't physically get to the library. Through volunteer efforts, it will offer delivery of books and other media to homebound residents.

The third priority is a larger video storage area to house a growing demand for updated DVDs, taped books, etc.

Architect Eller presented large drawings of three different A, B, and C design options. Eller emphasized the suggested layouts were "not cast in stone," but were designed to stimulate conversation and dialogue with the public for coming up with a desirable

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and acceptable final design plan.

Selection of a design plan depends on what would be considered a choice location for the addition of a computer room with its own public access, and potential rearrangement of the library's administrative and open areas to accommodate it. The room would contain 10 computers with extra working space for research by residents, clubs, or for training purposes.

Other changes include a centrally located computer station kiosk placed in the library's open area for reference use by the public. The plans also call for a vestibule to be added as part of the entryway, with the check in service desk located a distance away from the immediate entrance to avoid congestion in that area.

Of the three options presented by Eller, Option A would call for the administrative area to remain in its current location, but would require some plumbing construction costs to add washroom facilities nearer to a computer room that would be located some distance away from the library's current washrooms.

Options B and C would place the computer room closer to the library's present washrooms, but would call for relocation of the administrative offices to accommodate both the computer room and the addition of a Homebound Services area. These rearrangements concern the location of, and possible rerouting, of

the library's fire sprinkler system. Questions and suggestions made by those in attendance were recorded for consideration by the planning committee, to help come up with a satisfactory final plan. Prominent among them were concerns for needed storage. The library now stores some 400 crates of books in an offsite "shed." It was questioned whether that would continue, or if the volumes could be assimilated into some kind of library storage facilities. Eller said that had not been taken into consideration in the expansion plans.

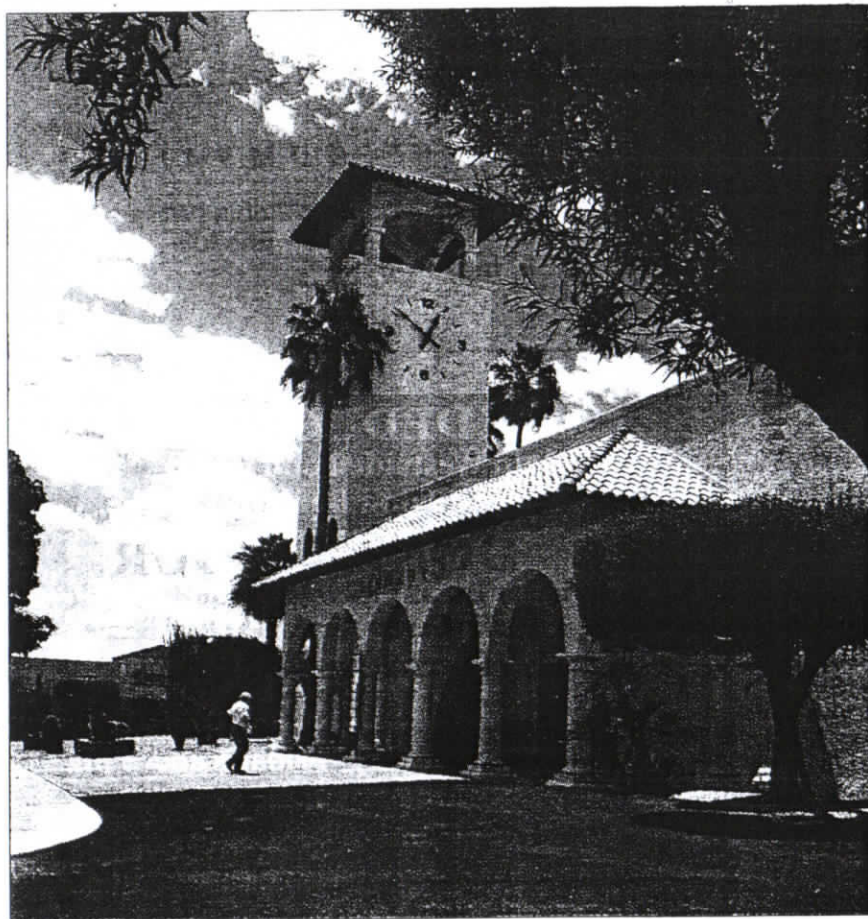
Questions were raised about the availability of enough computer stations at the kiosk location, and access to the computer room by various clubs. Under consideration is having the computer room available for use by the public or clubs during evenings, or on Mondays when the library is closed.

Phase I of the construction is scheduled to start March 6, 2006, and according to Eller should be completed within 90 to 120 days depending on the final design. Stage I shouldn't interfere with library usage, since it will mainly deal with exterior construction. It was stated at least minimal services will be available during the second phase of construction at an alternative site.

Residents are urged to attend the second and final forum on Sept. 15 at the Lecture Hall. Drawings of the suggested remodeling plans should be available at the administration office

DAILY NEWS-SUN

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, AND SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2005



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Sun City West Library, 13801 W. Meeker Blvd., will undergo a \$400,000 transformation starting in 2006.

## DVDs, CDs force Sun City West library to burst into future

AMANDA MYERS  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Sun City West library is planning a \$400,000 renovation project that will allow patrons to move into the 21st century.

Library Director Carol South said an increased interest in the Internet, along with borrowing movies on DVD and books on CD, is the motivation for the library to undergo its expansion.

"We have a need for additional formats within the library," said South, adding that right now, the space to display such materials is limited.

"We want to be able to expand that area and make it more accommodating to people," said South.

The renovation would add an extra wall to the library and connect to the overhang of the existing roof, creating two additional rooms the library will utilize for audio-visual

materials. The expansion should also free up space for a computer center, South said.

Though South said she didn't know the exact time line for the project, she said it would happen in 2006.

At Thursday's Recreation Centers of Sun City West board meeting, directors unanimously accepted a \$200,000 donation from the Friends of the Library, a Sun City West group dedicated to raising money for library projects. That money will be matched with \$200,000 of the RCSCW's capital funds for a total project cost "not to exceed \$400,000," said Board President Ray Caldwell.

South said the library will be starting their new DVD movie and documentary collection in June, but will continue to carry VHS tapes as well.

Amanda Myers may be reached at 876-2513 or [amyers@aztrib.com](mailto:amyers@aztrib.com).

DAILY NEWS-SUN

SATURDAY, DEC. 11, AND SUNDAY, DEC. 12, 2004

# Fact finder

## New librarian welcomes quizzical patrons

KATY O'GRADY  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

There are more than 45,000 books in the Sun City West library. Ask librarian Carol Foutts to locate a particular title, and chances are she can pull it from the shelves in a few seconds.

Twenty years in the library business can do that, making the Dewey Decimal Classification System sort of a second language.

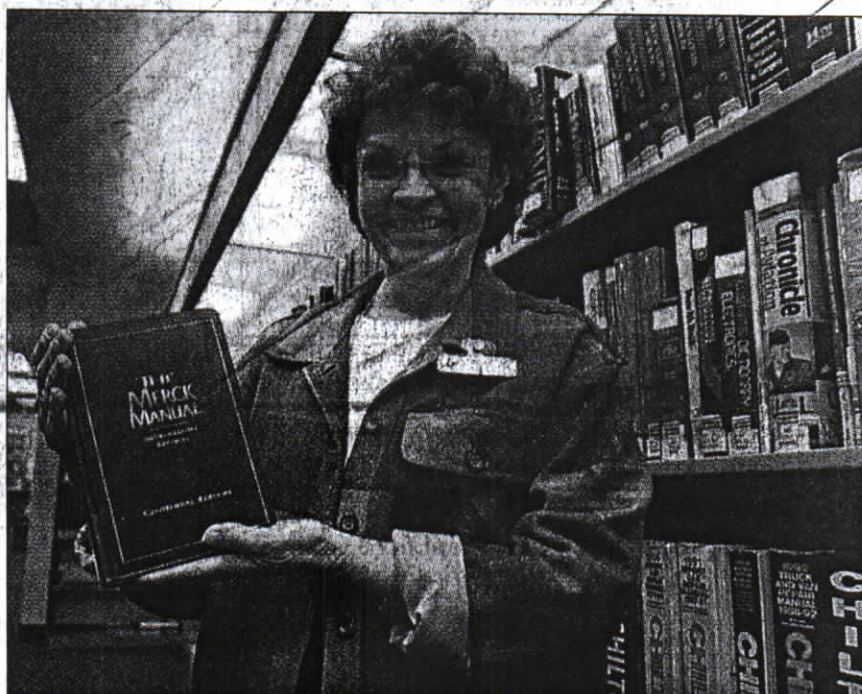
"Librarians tell jokes with the Dewey Decimal System: 'That's such a 626,'" said Foutts, who took over as director of the R.H. Johnson Library on Nov. 1.

The 626 designation, by the way, is a no-longer assigned number in the system, which was developed in 1873 and classifies books by subject matter.

The system helped Foutts easily locate the Merck Veterinary Manual when a patron at another library she worked at stopped in to find out if her pet python was pregnant.

"I said, 'Well, has she been dating lately?'" said Foutts.

Using the Merck manual, Foutts



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Carol Foutts is the new librarian in Sun City West. Her favorite section of the library is the reference section.

and the patron determined the snake was likely in the motherly way.

Interesting questions like those are what make a library's reference section Foutts' favorite.

"As a reference librarian, you know that usually what you need to do is get at the heart of what that patron wants," she said.

So when another patron came in asking for books about "gals in britches," Foutts started asking her own questions to find out how to help the patron. At first, she thought the question dealt with fashion, but Foutts soon learned the woman was a college student working on U.S. history research.

From there, she determined the

patron didn't want information on gals in britches, but instead was researching the "Gadsden Purchase." That, by the way, is a 30,000-square mile region of what is today southern Arizona and New Mexico that the United States bought from Mexico in 1853.

"So those are the kinds of mazes reference librarians go through to get to the final answer," said Foutts.

Since coming to Sun City West five weeks ago, Foutts has been welcomed into the fun and camaraderie of the library.

"I think I anticipated wariness about me, but that was not the truth. What I got was a tremendous

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## From A1

welcome," she said. "That told me this was going to be a good job."

Foutts is only the third librarian at R.H. Johnson in its 26 years. She replaces long-time director Marcia Lea, who left in August after 18 years.

Foutts said she is inspired by the energy of more than 100 volunteers who work at the library, and she plans to tap that energy to turn some of her visions into reality. She'd like to see improvements in the library's technological offerings and upgrades to some of its research sections to better meet residents' needs.

The Newberg Public Library in Oregon where Foutts once worked had a health research area stocked with the latest data and housed in an alcove to provide patrons with privacy. It was subsidized by a local hospital and Foutts believes something similar could prove popular here as well.

In addition, Foutts said, the reference volunteers in Sun City West believe patrons want improved investment research capabilities, possibly electronic so they can check their stocks on a daily basis.

To make sure the library is

## FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The library's children's corner is having special story time sessions for visiting youngsters.

Story times are 10 to 10:30 a.m. Dec. 23; Dec. 29; and Dec. 30.

Residents must have their recreation cards to check out books for children.

gearing itself to residents' interests and needs, Foutts hopes to put out a survey in the future to ask library users and non-users what the library can offer to make it more useful.

"I think the people here are very accomplished. They've been very successful in their lives," she said. "These are people who are really skilled in a lot of areas."

That's evident in the number and variety of clubs and also must be manifested in the library's offerings.

"I really consider it a challenge to keep up with them and move this library along so we can keep up with their interest levels," Foutts said. "These are people who lived through the Depression and did well. These are people who brought back astronauts safe using a slide rule instead of a computer."

Since seniors are also one

of the fastest growing segments of computer users, Foutts hopes to add additional computer capabilities to the library, and training for patrons who need it. The library has a computerized catalogue system but only one computer with Internet access.

Foutts said one of her biggest challenges will be maintaining the number of volunteers who keep the library running, but she believes she can do that in spite of declining voluntarism in other fields by making the library a fun, comfortable and interesting place to be.

Foutts came to the library sciences after teaching first- and third-grade students in California for several years. Working in a library, she said, is education in a different form.

"What I found out was the environment of the school system where you are isolated, it's fun to teach the children and have contact with them, but I missed contact with adults," she said.

Now that the tables are turned and she's working in a retirement community, Foutts said she doesn't pine for interaction with children since she has four of her own grandchildren to spend time with.

"Any time I need a children

fix I can go there," said Foutts, 58, who lives in north Phoenix with her husband, Terry. Eventually, she said, she'd like to move to a retirement community such as Sun City West.

She invites all residents to stop by or call her at 544-6160 to share their ideas for improving the library, and perhaps challenge her reference searching abilities.

For those looking for some insight into Foutts herself: Her favorite author is Jane Austen, followed by John Grisham and Scott Turow.

"I'm an eclectic reader — when I have the time to read," said Foutts, who enjoys both fiction and non-fiction, from management books to mysteries.

Most recently, she read Turow's "The Laws of Our Fathers" and a history of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Eclectic indeed.

"Maybe that fits into why I like being a reference librarian," said Foutts, who's not only certifiably book-smart but also a gregarious spirit.

"In another life I'd like to be Bette Midler because she brings, I think, a lot of warmth and sincerity in her performances, and she can be both outrageous and poignant in her performances," said Foutts. "And she has an awful lot of fun."



# Librarian checks out of Sun City West

## Makes move back to small-town life

KATY O'GRADY  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

For nearly two decades, Sun City West residents have been greeted by the same friendly librarian when visiting the R.H. Johnson Library.

On Friday, they'll bid her adieu.

Marcia Lea is leaving after 18 years to take computer classes at Glendale Community College and then seek her future in a small town somewhere in the West.

"Classes start on Monday, so I'll leave here on Friday and go there on Monday," she said. "Then I'll go to a small town somewhere where they need me. I'm so excited, but it's going to be hard leaving the people here."

Lea has seen the community and region blossom since joining the library in 1986. From fewer winter visitors to more traffic, she said the area has been transformed, and yet some of the same volunteers and patrons frequent the library.

"Many of the people I remember being young and so robust are getting less young and less robust, and that's hard," said Lea, who succeeded Evelyn Cornish as Sun City West's second librarian. "I guess that's one thing I've noticed is I'm not the only one who's getting older."

Lea said she's worked for every general manager Sun City West has had. "I've enjoyed every one of them.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Marcia Lea has been the librarian at R.H. Johnson Library in Sun City West for 18 years. This will be her last week at the library, as she returns to school to take some computer classes.

They each had something they really contributed to the community."

One of her most enjoyable experiences in the last 18 years was seeing the library undergo a major renovation and expansion in the early 1990s.

"What a huge undertaking it was," she said. "All the staff and volunteers worked to get the place back together."

She also recalls residents returning with "stacks and stacks" of books after the library reopened six weeks later since they were encouraged to check out extra books to get them through the closing.

The library, built in 1979, now boasts more than 45,000

books, serials, video and audio tapes.

Eighteen years ago, the library had fewer books, no videos, and no computers on which visitors could look up books. The only computers the library had were used to check out books.

Lea said she also remembers there being more winter visitors compared to today. The summer's mass exodus meant she and others had more time to do projects during the summer.

Lea said she's not sure where her new computer classes will take her, but she's excited about the opportunity and is looking forward to living in a small town again.

"I'd always lived in small towns before coming here. I lived where I could walk home from my job for lunch," she said. "It's just really, well, exciting I guess, is the only word you can use."

She's also looking forward to the opportunity to say goodbye to all the friends she's met through the years, although she knows it'll be tough. The library will have a going away party for her from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday.

"I hope they'll keep visiting the library and that they'll remember me, but that they'll accept the new librarian, whoever that may be, because 18 years ago I was the new person," Lea said. "It's somebody else's turn."

THE WESTER Thursday, November 25, 2004

## **New R. H. Johnson Librarian**

**By Marie Scotti**

Carol Foutts has been named Library Director of the R.H. Johnson Library of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West. She succeeds Marcia Lea and becomes only the third librarian in the community's 26-year history. She began her job on Nov. 1.

Carol holds a degree in liberal studies from California State Polytechnic University (CalPoly), a certificate in elementary education from the Arizona Department of Education, and a librarianship certificate from Marylhurst College (now Marylhurst University) in Oregon.

She has worked as a substitute teacher in several local school districts, and as library supervisor in the Avondale Public Library, as well as assistant library director in the library in Newberg, Oreg. Carol and her husband, Terry, live in Phoenix.

# Library will be like new <sup>SCW</sup>



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS

Marcia Lea, left, Sun City West library director, shows members of the community's 25th anniversary committee where renovations to the library will be, thanks to a donation of \$86,295.32 to the Friends of the Library. Members are, from back left: Earl Mackert, Birt Kellam, Ken Meade, Joe Davisson, Dee Hjermstad and Joann Dauer, president of Friends of the Library.

SUN CITY WEST LIBRARY

The history of the R. H. Johnson Library closely follows the population growth in Sun City West. The first residents moved into Sun City West on October 16, 1978. The Del Webb Corporation (DEVCO) announced that the library building, then under construction, would have capacity for 40,000 volumes.

In early 1979 the Maricopa County Library District provided bookmobile service to the residents on a one day per week schedule. The bookmobile parked near the temporary First National Bank trailer located on the northwest corner of Johnson Boulevard and Camino del Sol. At that time, their permanent building was under construction across the boulevard, presently Wells Fargo Bank.

Shortly after the first residents arrived, Del Webb arranged with the Sun City Library to provide services to Sun City West residents until the new library building was completed. When the new R. H. Johnson Library opened its doors on October 16, 1979, services by the Sun City Library were discontinued.

OVER

In 1979 the library bell tower was the tallest structure in the area and could be seen for miles across the desert land that was to become a city (Figures 324, <sup>4</sup>32~~4~~A).

The Maricopa County Library provided 10,000 books through a \$25,000 county grant. Evelyn Cornish, the first librarian, and 50 resident volunteers prepared and shelved the books for circulation. At that time, Mrs. Cornish and a janitor were the only paid library employees of the Recreation Center.

The Friends of the Library was started in 1979, and ~~was~~ chartered as a club by the Recreation Centers. It was created to promote, support and enrich the services of the library. It is recognized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by the IRS, so donations to the Friends are tax-deductible.

By the end of 1980, volunteers numbered 70 and 1,000 borrowers held library cards, and the library was open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The library proved to be very popular with the residents. In 1995 Del Webb undertook a 2,000 square foot, \$140,000 expansion of the building. This added more reading room area, a video section, and a special area for grand children, and modified the administration areas.

During the early years, the library was open to all residents of the surrounding area, and received continued services from the County Library. By 1995 real estate development in the surrounding area created a population explosion resulting in demand for library services exceeding what could be provided by the library and its personnel.

The Friends of the Library proposed that the facility be limited to use by Sun City West residents and the Recreation Centers Board agreed. Non-resident memberships were cancelled as of June 30, 1995, and the affiliation with the County Library ended. Recreation Centers membership cards are now used as library cards.

The Recreation Center budget covers the operation of the library, but does not provide funds for the purchase of books, magazines, newspapers, financial publications, video

and audiocassettes, and other library materials. It is the Friends of the Library that supply the approximately \$70,000 spent for these materials each year.

The funds are raised by the Friends through several activities. The most important effort by the Friends is the annual Endowment Fund drive during which every SCW household is given the opportunity to donate to this library materials-purchasing fund.

Another important source of funds is the sale of surplus books. Sales are conducted several times during the year, usually out of doors in front of the library. The largest sale is always in conjunction with the Recreation Centers' annual Crafts Fair. Total book sales generate about \$18,000 annually.

Another fundraiser is "Thursday Nite at the Movies" at the Stardust Theater. The movie program started as a very modest weekly event in the library on December 29, 1979. It was called "Tuesday Nite at the Movies" and used a 16 mm home projector. Public response was most favorable, and by early 1980 the showings were moved to the Lecture Hall. With the completion of the Stardust Theater, the movie

night found its present home on September 21, 1989 as "Thursday Nite at the Movies."

During the last twenty-five years, the library has received many donations of new and used books. For example: The Valley National Bank (now Bank One) donated 1,500 volumes on March 23, 1980. Many special books are given in memory of departed friends or family members, or in their honor for special occasions. Residents often donate books they no longer have room for, and any that the library doesn't need are given to the Friends for the book sales.

Mrs. Cornish retired in 1986, and was succeeded by Marcia Lea, the current Library Director. The paid staff now also includes a full-time Assistant Librarian, and eight part-time employees. Over 150 volunteers complete the working staff. The library is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., has over 45,000 volumes and 2,500 videos, and circulates over 230,000 items per year.

AVB 2/18/02 -

\* edited by mjl 2/22/02

*Art Bender*

MARCIA LEA



# Sculpture to debut at R.H. Johnson Library

STAFF REPORT

A new bronze sculpture by local resident Sam Litrenti will be installed outside the R.H. Johnson Library in Sun City West on Thursday.

The nearly life-size work, called "Lucky Strike," depicts a prospector panning for gold.

It was purchased for the Recreation Centers of Sun City West and library by an anonymous donor.

The donor and the Centers board and management believe it exemplifies the wealth and good fortune of those lucky enough to live in Sun City West, a spokeswoman said.

The sculpture will be formally installed at 1 p.m. Thursday in a ceremony to which the public is invited.

Residents and guests also are encouraged to stay and view other of Litrenti's

works at an exhibit inside the library.

Litrenti most recently exhibited some of his works at the West Valley Art Museum. Overall, he has crafted some 28 bronzes, mostly of cowboys, Indians and horses.

"Plumb Tuckered Out," a piece at the museum that depicts a little girl asleep on a trusty steed, won a ribbon and cash award from the museum.

At age 71, Litrenti paid a visit to Sedona and met noted sculptor Ken Payne, who gave him a block of clay and suggested he take it home and try sculpting it.

While he had painted before, Litrenti had never tried three-dimensional modeling, but ignored his wife's suggestion that he try a duck, and instead successfully crafted what he wanted to make, a bucking bronco.

## Library celebration attracts large crowd



At the R.H. Johnson Library 20 year celebration, at left, Margaret Anderson (l.), assistant librarian and Librarian Marcia Lea take time out to pose. At right, Sun City West residents Camilo and Jean Perez take time to view the Library scrapbook.

Photos, Marie Scotti

By Marie Scotti

The R.H. Johnson Library celebrated its 20th Anniversary last Saturday. The Library was decorated with many balloons and two scrapbooks were on hand for guests to view.

The Library patio was decorated with umbrella tables for guests to enjoy their ice cream and chat with other bookworms. Special commemorative bookmarks were offered to visitors.

The Friends of the Library committee and staff members of the Recreation Center are to be congratulated on the outstanding planning of the event. Recreation Center Mgr. Lisa Conn, Dave Bennet and Christine Zahn were members of the committee.

Librarian Marcia Lea commented that she was pleased with the attendance of the event. "I have been happy with the growth of the Library and the changes which have taken place during my administration," she said.

The Library was dedicated exactly one year to the day after the first families moved into Sun

City West. It opened with 8,000 books, mostly on long-term loan from the County Library and books donated by residents. Evelyn Cornish was the first librarian in 1979 and the assistant librarian was Alyce Bower. There were 55 library volunteers in 1979. Today, the Library has 122 service volunteers actively working handling books, video and reference.

Cornish retired in April 1986 when Lea arrived at the R.H. Johnson Library. Margaret Anderson has been assistant librarian since July 1988.

The Library has grown with the community. Today it has 45,000 books—fiction, non-fiction, reference and large print books and subscribes to magazines, as well as financial services, newspapers and more. The Library has truly become the cultural center of Sun City West.

Contributions to the Library Endowment fund are used to

purchase books, magazines and newspapers.

The Library serves nearly 32,000 residents of Sun City West with no federal, state or local governmental financial assistance.

The Recreation Centers of SCW support the needs of the facility and its staff and the Friends of the R.H. Johnson Library raise funds to purchase materials.

If you like good films too, the Friends of the Library sponsor movies at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays at Stardust Theatre in Sun City West.

The Library carries Wall Street Journal and big city newspapers. There are also hundreds of paperbacks lent on the honor system.

Librarian Lea and her staff are looking forward to the next 10 years and know there will be many changes and challenges ahead.

# Johnson library exits teen scene

STAFF REPORT

Library patrons relaxed in the shade, lounged with books and nibbled on ice cream Saturday in celebration of the R.H. Johnson Library's 20th birthday.

The library, which offers everything from free computer access to shelves of books, serves Sun City West's bookworms.

"We enjoy everything in here," said library lover Gerry Krahn, who said she couldn't believe the library was 20 years old already. "I can't even believe I've been coming here for 10 (years)."

Though there wasn't a birthday cake, volunteers passed out 500 ice cream cups to a steady flow of patrons.

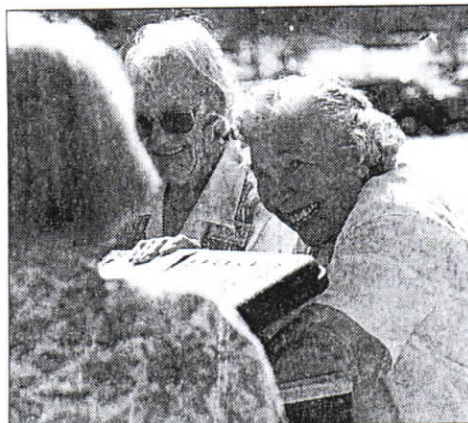
"The ice cream has been very popular," volunteer Lucille Anderson said. She added that chocolate was the flavor of choice.

Library Director Marcia Lea said they actually ran out of ice cream shortly after 1 p.m.

"We had quite a few people in, more people than we usually see on a Saturday afternoon," Lea said.

For library regular Shirley Cavallo, it's the selection of magazines and books that keeps her coming to the library at least twice a week.

Cavallo, a retired librarian, said



E. B. McGovern/Daily News-Sun

Mary Hawthorne, secretary for the endowment fund, digs for another tub of chocolate ice cream Saturday at the R.H. Johnson Library's 20th birthday celebration.

the Johnson Library is one of the best.

Her husband, Ernie, agreed.

"We've got more books in our living room than we've got chairs," he said with a smile.

Lea said the library stocks information an older adult would be interested in. Travel, business and financial books fill the shelves.

She said the anniversary of the library pays tribute to how much the library has expanded.

"We began when we had nothing but a building," Lea said. "But the thing that continues to be exciting is the number of people who use the library."

The library is at 13801 Meeker Blvd., Sun City West. It is open to members of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West. For information, call 584-2405.

THE WESTER Thursday, October 7, 1999

## **R.H. Johnson Library celebrates 20 years**

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West's R.H. Johnson Library is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a special day on Oct. 16. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Library visitors will enjoy ice cream and receive a special commemorative bookmark.

The Library, which houses nearly 45,000 volumes, first opened its doors on Oct. 16,

1979. It serves the nearly 32,000 residents of Sun City West with no federal, state, or local governmental financial assistance. The Recreation Centers of Sun City West support the needs of the facility and its staff and the Friends of the R.H. Johnson Library raise funds to purchase materials.

# Video thefts prompt library officials to change procedures

By PATRICK O'GRADY  
Sun Cities Independent

Incl.  
10-25-95

An R.H. Johnson Library policy designed to make it easier for people to check out videocassettes has been scrapped after 50 videos turned up missing during the summer.

Marcia Lea, library director, says the policy of placing videocassettes on racks was changed after library officials noticed many of the films had been taken.

Officials have since moved the movies behind the counter and out of reach of library patrons.

"We wanted to make it easier on people to get the tapes," she says. "We found out afterwards we

made it a little too easy."

Ms. Lea says the missing tapes were all from the feature films section. All were donated to the library by residents, making the loss not as significant as if the library had paid for them.

"Since we hadn't paid for them, we had the least invested in that section of our tapes," she says.

Dr. John Ray, who helps check out videos, says he thought it was a shame the library had to resort back to the check-out system just to keep people from stealing videos.

"I think it's a travesty for someone in this community to do this sort of thing," he says.

To check out a movie, patrons must take an empty box of the movie to the counter where they will be given the actual film.

The policy regarding the videos had been changed in July, Ms. Lea says. Many residents had complained of the unavailability of newer release videos because they were being cleaned.

"The people really do use the feature films a lot," she says.

Up to that point, each time a video was returned it was cleaned and serviced to make sure nothing was wrong with it. After the check it was returned to the shelf.

Returned feature films were labeled with bar codes and put back on the rack without cleaning, where residents could check them out like a book, Ms. Lea says. The films could be checked out for two nights and three days.

Feature films will now be handled the same as new releases. Ms. Lea says feature films, however, will not be cleaned as often as new releases.

Still, the experience has not been received well by many at the library, Ms. Lea says. "Everybody was really disappointed this happened," she says.

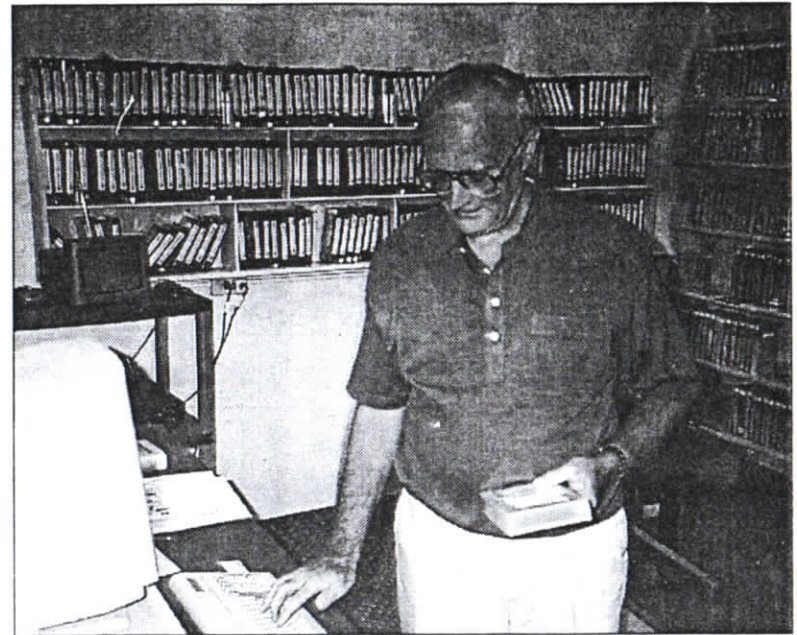


Photo by PATRICK O'GRADY/Independent Newspapers

Dr. John Ray uses the Johnson library computer system to check out a feature film. The library recently changed its policy on videos after a rash of thefts among the feature films which are donated by residents. Films are now housed with newer releases with only the container on the library floor.

# R.H. Johnson library closing to nonresidents

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

2-3-95

**SUN CITY WEST** — The R.H. Johnson Library will close its doors to nonresidents in an effort to prevent overcrowding.

The board of directors of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West decided Jan. 26 to cancel nonresidents' memberships as of June 30.

Friends of the Library, a 12,000-member group, said it proposed the change out of concern that new housing developments planned near the retirement community would cause overcrowding of the library.

The library, at R.H. Johnson and Meeker boulevards, had been open to nonresidents since it was started 15 years ago.

About 5 percent of the library's 16,000 card holders live outside Sun City West — in Peoria, El Mirage, Surprise, Sun City, Wittman and other communities.

Operational costs, however, are almost entirely paid by Sun City West residents. The rec centers association pays employee salaries and building upkeep.

Because the library is going private, it no longer will be part of the Maricopa County Library District's reciprocal borrowing program. But rec centers board member Jack O'Conner said library officials are looking into other book exchange programs offered in Arizona.

In other business, the board approved a change in the rec centers' bylaws to require only one vote per voting member. Board president Joe Schoggen said that this means that the Palomar Apartments no longer will receive its voting block privileges for 100 votes. Instead, the apartment complex owner will have one vote.

The board also approved goals for 1995, including providing timely financial reporting to the membership and completing a reserve study covering long-range planning for facilities and costs.

The board wants to improve its budget development, including identifying expenses paid by the developer; obtain a new computer system; complete a compensation and classification review of full-time employee positions; and expand administrative space.

In addition, the board plans to enhance communication with the membership, update the rules, regulations and procedures for chartered clubs, and to maintain the association's seven golf courses in a first-class manner.

The board also will obtain a mutual agreement with the Property Owners and Residents Association on the procedures to be followed in enforcing the community's deed restrictions. Del Webb Corp., Sun City West's developer, will be turning over the enforcement of deed restrictions to community leaders when the company leaves the community.

# SCW limits library patronage

By DEBBIE L. SKLAR

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — The Recreation Centers of Sun City West Governing Board closed the book on a former agreement allowing non-residents to use R.H. Johnson Library.

"The bylaws state that all facilities in the rec center property are for the residents who live there; the policy says that non-residents are not allowed to use the library," said governing board President Joe Schoggen. "This is a resolution supporting a change in operating policy."

Governing board members unanimously agreed to ban non-residents from the R.H. Johnson Library during the board's first meeting of the year Thursday.

The resolution states that no new patrons, other than Sun City West residents with current membership cards or tenant activity cards, will be eligible to be issued an R.H. Johnson Library card effective Feb. 1. The termination date for non-residents who presently have R.H. Johnson Library cards will be June 30.

The resolution was approved by the Friends of the Library Board at its December 1994 meeting. "The bylaws state that the facility is for residents only," Schoggen said. "We have talked about this in the past and it started early in the game when our population was growing. At the time, we needed some help from the county and to get that help, we started in the way of book loans and some computer help."

"We had to open the library to non-residents and that was done as a concession to get started," he said. "Now, we are totally on our own."

The library is supported entirely by recreation center members, Schoggen said.

Governing board member Bob Kelley asked the board if Sun City West was now in compliance with the Maricopa County rules as to the size of the library.

"I don't believe there are any

county rules, codes or ordinances, that state you have to have so many square feet or books to have a library," said Schoggen. "We did expand the library before because of the growth of the community, not because of any ordinance."

SCW

# Library may close doors to outsiders

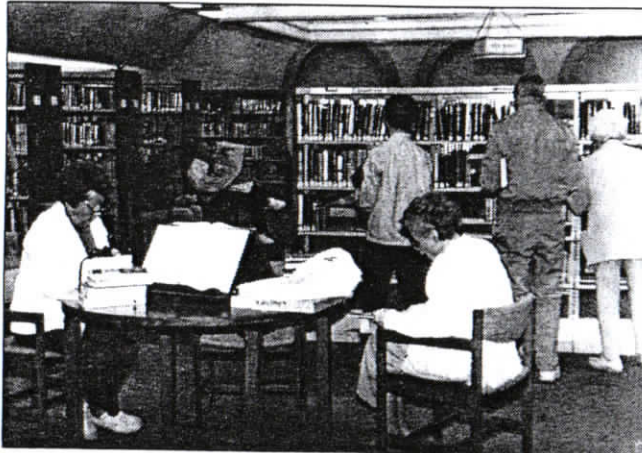
## Growing population in SCW is overwhelming facility

By **TERI CARNICELLI**  
Sun Cities Independent

Residents of the communities surrounding Sun City West may soon be denied access to the R.H. Johnson Library — library card holders or not.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West, Inc. Governing Board will vote this month on whether to limit the use of the R.H. Johnson Library solely to Sun City West residents.

The issue was first discussed by the board during its September meeting when Director Jack O'Connor, then-chairman of the Library Committee, brought it to the board as a suggestion from the



While the R.H. Johnson Library is currently used by residents of Sun City, Westbrook Village and Happy Trails and Sunflower R.V. resorts, that may change drastically after a Jan. 26 Governing Board meeting.

committee.

Friends of the Library, a non-profit fund-raising arm of the library, last month approved a resolution to cut off all ties to the Maricopa County Library District, thereby making the R.H. Johnson Library a private facility.

The only assistance the library now receives from the county is a book loan agreement.

"The Friends of the Library have worked very, very hard and if they think it will best serve Sun City West to (adopt this resolution) then I think we should go along with it," says Governing Board Director Virginia Smith.

Library Director Marcia Lea

reports the library, which contains about 40,000 books, loans about 25,000 books a month. Last year, 301,000 books were checked out.

There are 16,000 active library memberships, 600 of which are outside Sun City West, she adds.

The library is currently used by residents of Sunflower and Happy Trails RV resorts, as well as residents of Sun Village, Sun City and Westbrook Village.

"It wasn't really until the last two years that it's become a problem," Mr. O'Connor explains.

Library volunteers and committee members fear the increasing population of Sun City West, coupled with the expected boom in Surprise, will place an undue

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## LIBRARY

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demand on the facility.

"Our concern is doing the best job we can for people in Sun City West," Ms. Lea says.

Library volunteer Agnes Raught says, "I never liked the fact that people from Sun City can come over here and use our library and we can't use their (library). It's not fair."

Besides, she says, with more than 16,000 card holders, "it's really

crowded."

Ms. Lea concurs. "We open 9 a.m. Tuesday (after being closed Sun.-Mon.) and by 10 or 10:30 a.m. it's so crowded there's often no place to sit."

Mr. O'Connor agrees there is already an overcrowding problem.

"The growth is here and they're going to come here to use the library; it is becoming a problem now, and it's better to do this now

when the growth is still at a minimum."

The resolution before the board is to discontinue issuing cards to residents outside the community beginning Feb. 1.

The next step would be to sever all ties with the County Library District the next fiscal year, which begins June 30. At that time all library cards that belong to non-residents will be invalid.

Governing Board Director Allan Grossman points out that nonresidents will still have access to county libraries, such as those located in El Mirage and Surprise, and to the county bookmobile, although "it's just not as convenient as ours."

The board will vote on the resolution at its regular meeting, scheduled for 8 a.m. Jan. 26 in the R.H. Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd.





Tom Tingle / Staff photographer

Marcia Lea is director of the R.H. Johnson Library in Sun City West. The library has 19,000 cardholders, including 800 nonresidents, and has about 40,000 books and 650 videotapes.

# Members only?

## Growth may force library to go private

By Lori Baker  
Staff writer

### Sun City West

Arthur Bender has watched with pride as the R.H. Johnson Library has expanded over the past 15 years.

"This is the cultural center of our community," said Bender, a past president of the 12,000-member Friends of the Library.

But Bender and other Sun City West leaders are worried about the library's future. Because it is open to the public, they worry that the library will become overcrowded.

Neighboring communities such as Surprise are expected to grow rapidly in the next few years. Del Webb Corp., for example, will build a retirement community in Surprise, on the south side of Grand Avenue. A library is planned but won't be built for about 12 years, Webb officials said.

The Library Council is conducting a study to determine whether the library should become private, only for the use of Recreation Centers of Sun City West members.

"This library is paid for by the people who live here," said Jack

O'Connor, a rec centers board member and Library Council chairman.

"We want to make sure that Sun City West is not subsidizing other communities," rec centers general manager Les Hicks said.

The rec centers association pays for operational costs, including employee salaries and building upkeep.

Community donations are used to buy about \$47,000 worth of books and videotapes annually. About 120 volunteers give more than 18,000 hours of their time each year helping at the library, at 13801 Meeker Blvd.

The library has about 19,000 cardholders, including about 800 nonresidents who live in Sun City, Westbrook Village, Surprise and elsewhere.

**"Our library is more heavily used in proportion to our population than a typical library."**

**Arthur Bender**  
Past president of Friends of the Library

"We're not in a big rush to disassociate nonresidents," O'Connor said. "We're studying the situation and considering options."

O'Connor said he hopes to present a report to the rec centers board by the end of the year.

An advantage of having the library open to nonresidents is that the library participates in a reciprocal borrowing program through the Maricopa County Library District.

R.H. Johnson Library users may request a book from any library in the nation. The county reimburses the library for the postage costs to return the book. About 700 books a year are borrowed from libraries outside Sun City West.

"Our library is more heavily used in proportion to our population than a typical library," Bender said.

The library has about 40,000 books and subscribes to 112 magazines and newspapers. During the fiscal year ending June 30, the circulation exceeded 300,000 books.

"We have high use because we cater to our residents — senior citizens," Lea said. "We don't have books on

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# LIBRARY

From Page 1

raising children, but we have books on heart problems, arthritis and travel."

The videotape collection has been popular since it was added in November. Since then, the 650 tapes have been checked out 19,777 times.

To raise money for the library, the Friends of the Library will have a book sale on Nov. 5. Book

donations may be dropped off at the library.

Also, movies from the 1930s to 1960s are held at 7 p.m. every Thursday at the Stardust Theater. Donations are accepted. Upcoming movies include "The Road to Utopia" on Thursday; "Topkapi," Oct. 13; "I'll Get By," Oct. 20; and "The Maltese Falcon," Oct. 27.

The library is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.

# Renovations to SC West Library begin

## Facility will close during August for remodeling, expansion project

By ANNE RYMAN  
Sun Cities Independent

Sun City West residents will have to do without the R.H. Johnson Library in August but not without books.

The library will close Aug. 1 through Sept. 8 because of remodeling to the existing building and a planned 2,100-foot expansion. Dick Gray, Library Council member, says the decision was made to close the building for safety reasons because the modifications would cause a risk to people walking into and through library.

"Furthermore, major rearrangements and locations of periodicals will be going on and it will be very awkward for people to try and enter the library and make use of it during that time."

Library Director Marcia Lea says many people have expressed concern about the library closing for a month but adds starting July 21, books will be given extended due dates until September.

"We want to assure them to take as many books as they want. Taking books out benefits us as well because we won't have to move them."

Because the outside book return will be moved from the right to the left side of the building, Ms. Lea says people should keep their books until the library reopens in September.

Del Webb is spending \$140,000 for the library expansion, says

Martha Moyer, manager of public and community relations. The money is part of \$14.6 million Del Webb plans to spend on renovating and expanding existing recreation facilities, providing a new golf course and building a recreation center because of a planned 1,320-acre expansion expected to add 6,000 residents to the community.

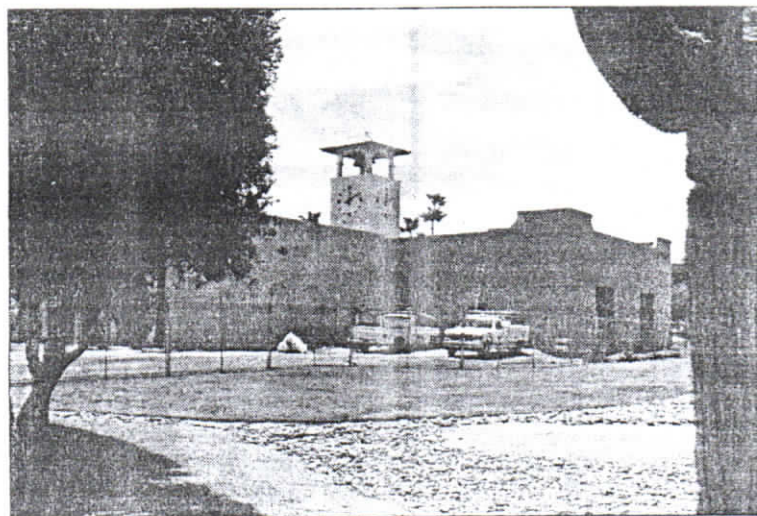
The Recreation Centers of Sun City West, Inc. plans to upgrade the existing library as well at the same time and has budgeted \$67,000 to replace library decor and \$9,500 to add and replace equipment. Plans include new carpet and shelves, a new administrative area and the addition of a videocassette library.

Steve O'Donnell, Recreation Centers general manager, says because of the renovations, the video program will be delayed until late this year or the first part of 1993.

Reference material such as periodicals, magazines and newspapers will be centrally located in a designated quiet area. One corner of the library will become a children's reading area where grandparents can sit and read stories to their grandchildren, Ms. Lea says.

"Now, we do have children's books, but they're in a place that's not good because it's near the emergency exits."

The new arrangement will consist of separate check-in/check-out desks. Right now, the circulation desk is L-shaped, a configuration which can be confusing to residents, Ms. Lea says.



Photograph by TYSON KUHR/T/Sun Cities Independent

Work has begun on the remodeling of R.H. Johnson Library in Sun City West. The library will also be expanded to accommodate future growth of the community. The facility will be closed during the entire month of August. All books checked out in July will not be due back until September.

SCW

# It's showtime!

## Sun City West Library enters video age

By ANNE RYMAN  
Sun Cities Independent

The R.H. Johnson Library has entered the video age.

On Nov. 6 the library opened its videocassette library featuring documentaries, travelogues, classic movies and instructional tapes.

A unique feature of the service is a machine that cleans the tapes and electronically checks them for damage each time they are returned, says Jill Laube, Video

Librarian. Many video rental outlets do not offer this service, she says.

Residents checking out videos for the first time must sign a release form and have a VHS sticker attached to their library card. The borrower is responsible for replacement of damaged tapes. Replacement costs range from \$20 to \$150.

Patrons may check out two video tapes per library card at one time. No renewals or reserves are

allowed. Instructional tapes may be checked out for up to two weeks. Other tapes, including drama, children's, travel, documentary and classic movies may be borrowed for three days. Overdue fines are 50 cents per day.

The video library is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Head Librarian Marcia Lea says hours will be extended once staff becomes familiar with



Photo by TYSON KUHRT/Sun

At the R.H. Johnson Library in Sun City West, library volunteer Ardis and Richard McCready, who checked out the facility's new videocassette library.

See ■ VIDEO, Page 3

### ■ VIDEO

From Page 1

the system. Ms. Laube is assisted by two volunteers each day.

The library also accepts donations of videocassette tapes, Ms. Laube says. Donated tapes must be originals because unauthorized copying of tapes is prohibited under federal law.

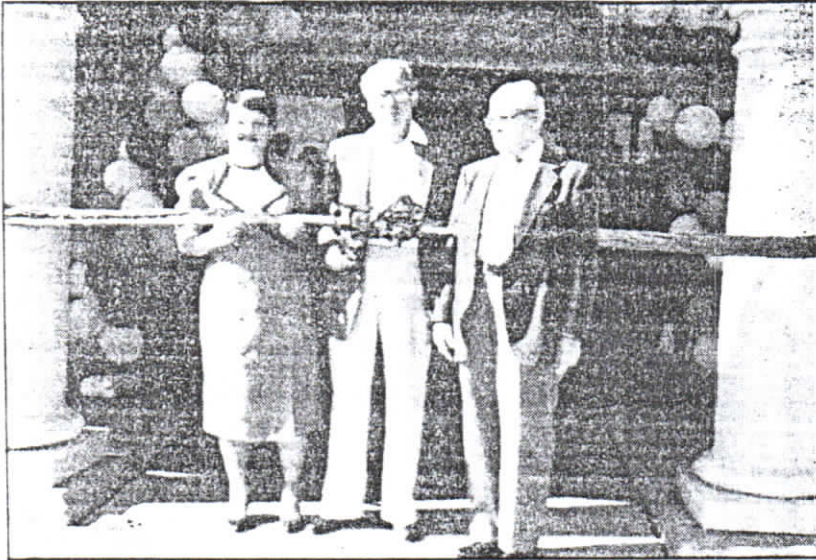
"We're certainly open arms for videos people want to donate," General Manager Steve O'Donnell says. "We think it's going to be an exciting service and one that will expand very rapidly."

Sun City Library, in particular, has seen its videocassette program grow and become one of the most popular parts of the library, Library Director Charles Youngman says.

A video section opened at Bell Library in January 1990 and at Fairway Library three years later. Circulation of videocassettes has more than doubled in recent years— from 4,634 in 1991 to 8,636 in 1992.

A large portion of its tapes come from donations by residents.

# SCW Library Holds Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony



From left: Marcia Lea, Librarian, Dick Gray, Secretary Library Council, and Art Bender, Friends of Library president participated in Library ribbon-cutting.

Story & Photo,  
Marie Scotti

The R. H. Johnson Library conducted an Open House on Thursday, Nov. 5th from 1 to 4 p.m. This was part of a "Grand Reopening" ceremony held in the community for the completion of expanded facilities.

The Library was decorated with large numbers of colorful balloons. Volunteers were on

LIBRARY

Continued on Page B6

## Library Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Continued from Page B1

hand to answer questions and conduct tours of the expanded library area. Art Bender, Friends of the Library president, presided at the meeting. Marcia Lea welcomed all in attendance and expressed her thanks to all who participated in the expansion. Dick Gray, secretary, Library Council and Advisory Board member, made a few remarks. There were guests from Del Webb Corporation and the Recreation Center.

There were three noted local authors on hand as guests to discuss how to write for publication and to autograph copies of their books.



Burley Packwood, author, "Quail in My Bed".

Burley Packwood, author of "Quail in My Bed," now has a new book titled, "Bird Turd Peppers," which should be off the press early 1993.

Betty Baker Spohr, author of "To Hold a Falling Star," was on hand to discuss her book and to autograph it.

Paul Stefik, author of "My Will Be Done," had a very interesting exhibit relating to the contents of his book.

SCW

# Library sleuths solve visitors' mysteries

By CarolAnne Gainer  
Staff Writer

Did you ever wonder about those people who sit behind the reference desk at the library?

Well, sometimes they really get to wondering about some of the people who make information requests.

And as these reference librarians will tell you, what may seem like an easy, matter-of-fact job is sometimes a most curious, amusing and challenging position.

**CHARLOTTE** Johnson, Rob Robertson and Eloise Jackson—who work at Johnson Library in Sun City West—recalled many odd requests they have been asked in the past.

Try these inquiries: What nationality was Sophie Tucker? On what day of the week did June 18, 1932 fall?

These were but two of the questions that stood out in Mrs. Johnson's mind. Then the gears really began to click and more subjects came to mind. "We have a lot of poetry quotations—where is it from? We have many geneology questions. Right now, there's a rash of questions about travel on freighters."

The library may be open year-round but certain reference requests depend on the season.

**TAKE INTO** consideration the subjects of crickets, monsoons, temperature, solar hot water and pre-coolers.

And when it comes to more specific seasonal requests, "about one month or so before income tax time (February or March)," people are in need of income tax and financial information.

Sound a bit average? Then perhaps one of Mrs. Jackson's latest requests might raise a few eyebrows. It's called reflexology and the only hint the asker offered was that it was somehow connected with feet.

At times, the reference desk takes on the image of a lost and found department. "One time a woman lost half the article in a magazine (which involved a recipe) and needed the other half of the recipe."

**ALTHOUGH THIS** next inquiry that Mrs. Jackson recalled sounds like a Japanese dish, it is far removed from cookery and kitchens. It is aikido, a martial art of self defense, she explained, and was a subject seldom—if ever—requested.

Besieged with one-in-a-million requests, too, Robertson said, "Somebody called up and wanted to know who invented the ballpoint pen." Sure enough, he eventually found the answer in a book on inventions.

One particular request that he found strange yet heartening came from a young man. "This was an odd one. A retarded boy came in with his parents and wanted a book on heroes ... like Batman." Again, Robertson was stumped yet able to fulfill the request.

One repeated incident Robertson has had to solve and resolve is the case of the unknown book. "More than once, people come in and don't know the name or the author."

**BY PROCESS** of elimination he asks what the book is about and if there's any other information on it at all. Surprisingly, the book often can be found.

When the book can't be found, it is usually for a good reason. "If it's a new book sometimes we don't get it," Mrs. Jackson explained.

A constant source of queries the reference people hear is "Who's the

president of so-and-so company?"

It's usually indicative of a person with a consumer complaint who needs to find out names, titles, addresses and phone numbers, Mrs. Johnson stated.

**DEATH IS** no exception to the list of unusual requests.

Perhaps it is not as strange as it is sensitive and practical because some people wish to read up on dying and handling grief—whether death is approaching or after it has happened to someone close to them.

The same thing applies to the medical field. "We do have a lot of medical questions—why people have to take certain drugs and their side effects," Mrs. Johnson said. Or, as Robertson added, they try to diagnose themselves.

These volunteers are usually scheduled to work only one day a week, there's no telling what they will be run up against.

**"SOMETIMES** you get one or two questions in an hour or sometimes you're swamped," said Robertson. But what makes it interesting is "You never know what's going to come next."



Johnson Center librarians Charlotte Johnson and Rob Robertson help Frank Cristiano find his way through

the reference system.

10-27-82  
(News-Sun Photos by Jim Painter)

# LIBRARY CONTINUES TO GROW

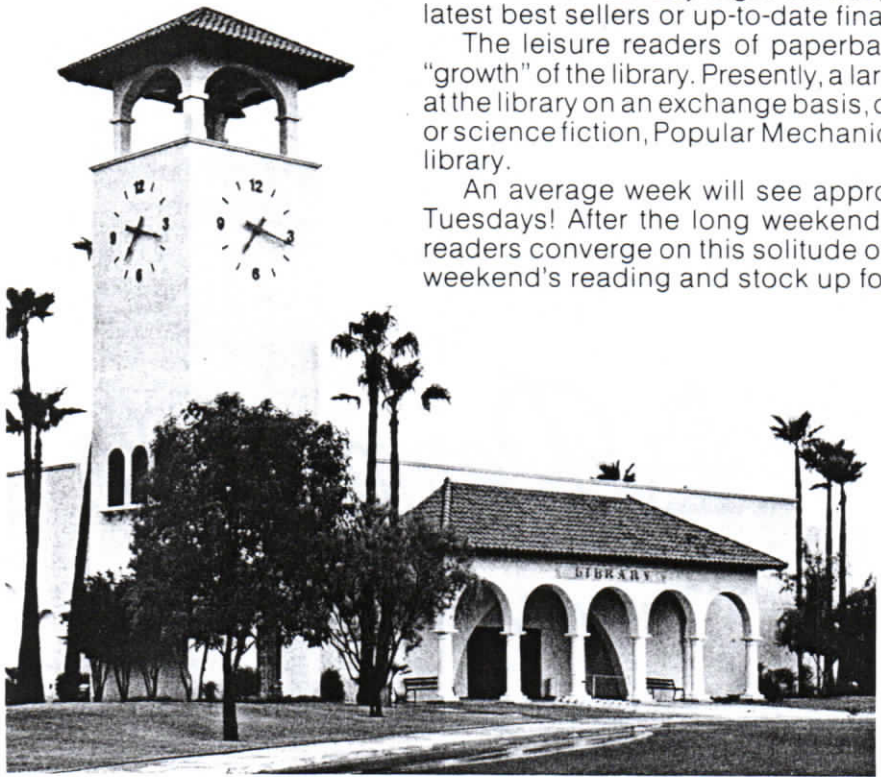
It may be a hackneyed expression, but "service with a smile" is the motto at the Sun City West library. And whether you're researching a topic, looking for a best seller or just checking out a book, Librarian Evelyn Cornish and her 109 volunteers are ready to help.

Since opening in the Fall of 1979, the library's inventory has grown to over 19,000 volumes, but there's still plenty of room for growth. This spacious facility will one day house over 40,000 copies.

The rapid growth is a direct reflection of community support channeled into the Friends of the Library Endowment Fund. Their yearly fund drive, coupled with donations taken at the Tuesday night movies, enable the library to enrich its collection with the latest best sellers or up-to-date financial works.

The leisure readers of paperbacks and magazines have also contributed to the "growth" of the library. Presently, a large collection of these reading materials are available at the library on an exchange basis, operated on the honor system. Whether it's a mystery or science fiction, Popular Mechanics or Women's Day, chances are you can find it at the library.

An average week will see approximately 575 books circulated. But watch out for Tuesdays! After the long weekend, (the library is closed Sunday and Monday) avid readers converge on this solitude of serenity en masse. After all, they have to return the weekend's reading and stock up for the week ahead.







Althea Curfman, R.H. Johnson Friends of the Library publicity chairman and Evelyn Cornish, Sun City West librarian, inspect recently acquired large-print books for the visually impaired. Friends of the Library is overseeing a fund-raising campaign to gather tax-free donations to buy more books for the Sun City West library. Goal for the group's campaign is \$8,000. Approximately \$3,500 has been raised since Thanksgiving. (News-Sun Photo)

12-12-81

# Library brightens SCW

Evelyn Cornish, librarian at Sun City West's R.H. Johnson Library, sees retirement years as a time when "people have more leisure time to read than they had before," a time when "people are branching out and doing things they never did before."

Requests for books on raquetball, swimming and crafts, she said, "go with this lifestyle."

And, because of the particular needs of residents who have left hometowns behind or who have lost loved ones, requests come in for books that focus on personal problems.

"RESIDENTS are not without problems. They ask for books about grief

and loss or about getting acquainted in a new community," she said.

The library's financial corner is a popular spot for Sun City Westers. Research materials in the corner have been donated by R.H. Johnson Friends of the Library and individuals.

Friends of the Library donates a \$400 an annual subscription to "The Value Line Investment Survey," a weekly stock analysis.

**THE ORGANIZATION**, with more than 400 members, also has provided literary works in large print and sponsors rental selections which they purchase for the library.

Friends of the Library is presently

involved in a library fund-raising drive.

To upgrade and expand library holdings in what Mrs. Cornish considers a well-used community facility, the library is seeking additional funding in the form of tax-deductible donations to the Library Endowment Fund.

**MONIES RECEIVED**, Mrs. Cornish said, will be administered by the Endowment Fund Committee of Friends of the Library.

The goal of \$8,000, she said, will be "used for improving the collection and is limited to the collection."

The Endowment committee would set aside surplus monies received "as reserve, and spend some to build a true income producing endowment."

**SINCE THE FIRST** community mailout at Thanksgiving requesting donations, the Endowment committee has received \$3,500 in donations.

The Endowment committee will present a monthly financial report to Friends of the Library and the Recreation Centers Governing Board.

Contributions are confidential.

Committee members are: Cyril Meusey, chairman; Dick Hammon, treasurer; John Cusick; Margaret Simpson; Howard Chapman; and George Meeks, incoming president of Friends of the Library.

SCW



## Library looks to enlarging community support, services

One of the quietest places in Johnson Recreation Center, the library, is getting ready to make more noise.

Not that the facility is exactly low-profile (what with the landmark bell tower and all), but with a capacity for thousands more books than it presently has, the library is planning a membership drive this spring to call attention to itself.

"We have approximately 2,000 registered borrowers and a circulation of about 300 items per day," notes Librarian Evelyn Cornish. "But there must be more library supporters out in this community who recognize our need to increase our stacks and therefore our service."

With operational costs as part of the Recreation Centers of SCW, Inc., the library houses 10,000 volumes from the Maricopa County Library, which also provided a grant for purchases. There have been a remarkable number of local donations and

*Space, light architecture, comfort — and even trees — are part of the library scene which brings soft-spoken handfuls of SCWesters to entertainment, information and even social comforts.*



contributions of books and periodicals in the year and a quarter since the library opened, more than 70 volunteers accumulate hundreds of service hours monthly. Friends of the Library provides outstanding support for program enrichment, and the numbers of people who use the library for "a quiet spot" or to enjoy the weekly film series is growing.

Yet Mrs. Cornish, a former school librarian, continues looking for ways to involve more SC Westers in "their" library. "We have developed a service for shut-ins with the leadership of Friends which will take a selection of books to people's homes," she announced. The Friends also have a display showcase near the entrance and a monthly art exhibit is featured in one reading corner.

Reference books, books on Arizona and desert landscaping, along with 50 current magazines and periodicals are sought-after items in the library. Mysteries and fiction dominate the reading taste, but many borrowers also seek books on arts and crafts and financial matters, Mrs. Cornish said.

For those who've never been inside the library, it's open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 AM to 4 PM. Most books can be borrowed on the Rec Center Activity Card but there also is a lime-a-day section for current best-sellers. And if paperbacks is your style, the borrowing is by number — just bring back the same number you borrowed.

Special requests are handled through the county inter-library loan service which can search out just about any book in print, although it may take a week or more.

And the answer to one question often asked: Do the bells really work? "Yes," laughs Mrs. Cornish, "they can be pealed by hand or we have an automatic system."

# Volunteers race library deadline

SCW

By KATHIE PRICE  
Staff Writer

Amid hammering and the clang of metal shelves being assembled, 40 Sun City West residents have been methodically organizing everything from mysteries to travel guidebooks. Around them a card catalog is put together and tabletops acquire legs.

The daily work is being performed in anticipation of the new Sun City West library opening Oct. 16. The volunteer residents, many former professional librarians, are a godsend to Sun City West head librarian Evelyn Cornish. She's had about six weeks to ready the library since the interior was completed by Del Webb Corporation.

"I have men and women volunteers," said Mrs. Cornish. "Some are shelving and some are helping with the cataloging. It's a good way to get to know your neighbors. This is a very short amount of time to get a library rolling, but I'm really enjoying it."

MRS. CORNISH, a former Sun City library volunteer, calls her appointment a "bonanza or surprise" in her life. She retired as a school library supervisor in Seattle, mov-

ing to Arizona in January 1978. Her husband, a retired painting contractor, was anxious to get to Sun City. But Mrs. Cornish found she "liked working rather than having leisure time."

"I've always been a reader and I was an English teacher before I was a librarian," she explained. "I used to work with parent volunteers in the school districts. I need these people to get everything well organized. Besides, it acquaints me with people in Sun City West, since I live in Sun City."

So far, close to 5,000 books from county and private donations are reaching the Sun City West shelves.

"We'll be getting up another few thousand before opening," said Mrs. Cornish. "The county is getting us about 10,000 volumes from a \$25,000 grant. Fortunately they are providing a lot of reference books."

SHE IS leaning heavily on her experience at the Sun City branch. Retired people, she found, seem to prefer more books on finance, travel, public affairs, gardening, home improvement, mysteries,

westerns and current events. She hopes to develop these sections extensively while providing only a small children's section for visiting grandchildren.

"We'll have a section of large print books too," she said. "Tracing your family tree was a high point in Sun City so I hope to include more of that here. These people are also very aware of current happenings. When an author appeared on Phil Donahue, Today or Good Morning America, at least 10 people would come into the library looking for the book. So we'll be carrying best sellers."

Residents can expect to find more than 50 magazines plus several daily metropolitan newspapers at the library. Any book not available at Sun City West can be found through the inter-library loan system, Mrs. Cornish said.

"The population is so diverse and there are a lot of people with serious intellectual interests," she said. "That's why I want to build up the non-fiction sections. We'll have a special section on Arizona and the Southwest because many residents are not from this area and want to know more about it."

RESIDENTS will find the library's atmosphere warm. Shades of cream, orange and brown color the interior, as tall palms begin to blossom outside. The bell tower peals every half hour and adds classical music to the Johnson Center area at 12:05 and 6:05 each day. All library staff, except Mrs. Cornish and the janitor, will be volunteers from the community.

"I don't think attendance will be a problem," Mrs. Cornish added. "The people have a lot of time to browse and read. The turnover of books should be

rapid. We hope to eventually organize a Friends of the Library group as well as a library board. Presently we are part of the Rec Center."

In the future the library will provide book reviews, lecturers and book discussion groups, she said. She is also considering the possibility of residents having a Christmas program for children.

"I want to wait and see what people are interested in having," she said. "But we will be using up to 50 volunteers even after the library opens. All this fall we'll be in the process of arrival."

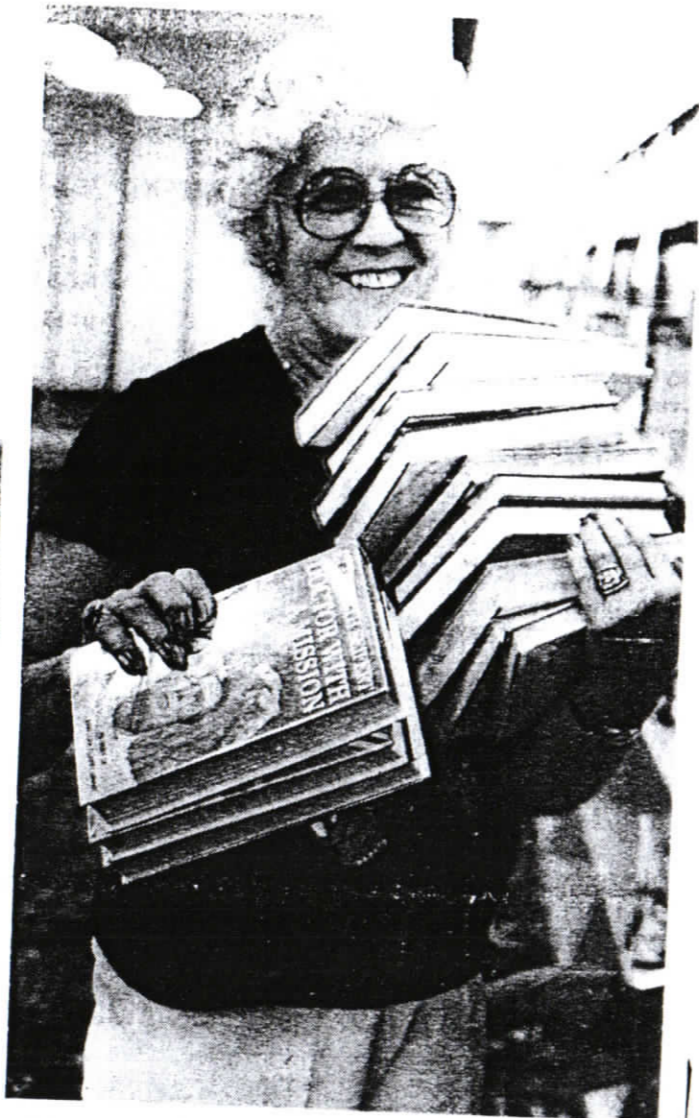
The library will be open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Rec center cards will suffice to register residents.



Evelyn Cornish, head librarian at the Sun City West library, enjoys working after retirement.



Mary Gotter shelves new books as she and other volunteers ready for the opening Oct. 16 of the Sun City West library.  
(News-Sun Photos)



Ann Fischer smiles over a stock of books for the new Sun City West library.

SCW



## Books donated 7-23-80

Valley National Bank executive vice president Leonard Huck, left, gives librarian Evelyn Cornish the first of 1,500 volumes of fiction and non-fiction books donated by the bank to Johnson Library in Sun City West. At right is Joe Aubin, Del E. Webb Development Co. executive vice president.  
(News-Sun Photo)

SCW



## Library

Ribbon-cutting ceremony signaled opening of the Sun City West Library. Joining in the cutting this morning were from left, Mr. and Mrs. Luman Wick, Evelyn Cornish, librarian; Mike Britt,

DEVCO vice president; Bill Woodyard, general manager of the SCWest rec centers; and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Uhl.

(News-Sun Photo by Jim Painter)

# Sun City West



## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Del E. Webb Development Co. ★ Public Relations Dept. ★ P.O. Box 1705 ★ Sun City, Arizona 85372 ★ October 1979



*Visible for miles around, the Spanish bell tower of the Johnson Recreation Center Library is expected to become a Sun City West landmark. The library, which features a comfortable reading room and stack space for 40,000 volumes, is scheduled to open October 16.*

### **SCW Library ready to open**

The opening of the Sun City West Library will be October 16, 1979. Evelyn Cornish, Librarian, has announced temporary library hours will be Tuesday through Saturday from 10AM to 4PM. The library will be closed on Sunday and Monday.

The library welcomes volunteers and sign-up forms may be obtained from the Rec Center office or the Library after it is opened.

A "Friends of the Library" organization is planned. Further details will be upcoming.

Donations of both paperbacks and hard cover books will be welcome at this time.

### **Lecture Series tickets on sale October 1**

Season tickets for the upcoming 1979-1980 Sun City Lecture Series will be sold from 9AM to 3PM Monday, October 1, in the Johnson Rec Center Social Hall.

Author Timothy Severin, whose "Voyage of the Brendan" chronicled his sailing of an ancient Irish leather boat from Ireland to Newfoundland, will open the series Monday, October 15.

All lecture series events begin at 2PM and 8PM in Sundial Auditorium.

Also on the Lecture Series are Troika Balalaikas, a Russian folk music group, November 12; "Today Show" economist Paula Nelson December 17; "Caribbean Dutch Treat," a travel film, January 21, 1980; "NBC Nightly News" anchorman David Brinkley February 4; and popular Broadway star Bob Wright March 17. Season tickets, good for all six programs, are priced at \$12.

Proceeds from the Lecture Series go to the work of the Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.