

# Daily News-Sun



Freedom Communications Newspaper © 2010

tion 24 Pages

MONDAY, FEB. 8, 2010

50¢

BREAKING NEWS, VIDEOS AND TRAFFIC >> [www.yourwestvalley.com](http://www.yourwestvalley.com)



ERIN TURNER/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Frances Decker, center, Pioneers Club president, reminisces with other Pioneers, Florence Robinson and Sol Robinson.

## END OF AN ERA

### Sun City West Pioneers Club faces closure

ERIN TURNER

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Florence and Sol Robinson bought one of the first 50 homes sold in Sun City West, so they have witnessed many things come and go in the community.

The next thing to pass may be the Sun City West Pioneers Club, which they helped start more than 25 years ago.

They are two of the few surviving members of the club, composed of residents who moved into the community between 1978 and 1979. A club that had about

SEE ERA, A5



# SCW Pioneers to say goodbye

By Julie Anne Maurer

Independent Newspapers

This month will be an end to an era for some Sun City West residents.

The Sun City West Pioneers Club, comprised of some of the first residents to the community, will host its last meeting March 18.

"I'll be 90 years old this week," said club president Frances Decker. "Most of us are that age. We're not as active as we used to be."

She noted that several of the clubs members have also died.

"When we met last year, we would only end up with a few people," Ms. Decker said. "We would work hard to set

things up with not too many results."

She added that a lot of the members are also homebound now, or have medical impairments that restricts their activity to many clubs or groups.

Ms. Decker and her husband first bought their Sun City West home in June 1979, but did not move to the community until 1980, when she was 60 and old enough to retire.

"As soon as we could, we took off for Sun City West," Ms. Decker said. "We've been very happy ever since."

She said that when she moved here, many clubs were just starting out. She joined as many as she could.

See Pioneers — Page 6

INDEPENDENT

March 10, 2010

## Pioneers

Continued From Page 2

When they moved here, she only remembers the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center being open.

"When we bought the house, there weren't that many things here yet," Ms. Decker said.

Though many of the boomer generation is now moving into the community, she said it is not causing too many changes.

"I haven't seen any changes," Ms. Decker said. "The younger people are nicer to us older people."

She said she has plenty of memorabilia of the community growing throughout the years.

"I have lots of albums and pictures," Ms. Decker said. "I have pictures of my church getting built."

She attends the First Baptist Church of Sun City West, 17149 W. Conquistador Drive, which will host the final club meeting at 11 a.m. March 18 in its Fellowship Hall.

"They were nice enough to let us have the meeting there," Ms. Decker said. "We stopped collecting dues so we don't have the money to rent a space."

There is no charge for the luncheon but residents must bring their own sandwiches

and beverages as no meal or beverage will be served.

Ed Allen, of the Sun Cities Historical Society will be on hand to record memories from the communities' earlier residents.

Ms. Decker recommended that club members bring pictures so the group can reminisce about the past.

"I'm hoping a lot of our pioneers will come," Ms. Decker said. "A lot of them have medical issues so they can't make a commitment on whether they are going until that day, because they don't know how they will feel until then."

Members are not required to make a reservation, but can call Ms. Decker at 584-3449 with questions.

## SCW PIONEERS FAREWELL LUNCHEON –MARCH 18, 2010

- Where:** SCW First Baptist Church's Fellowship Hall  
17419 N. Conquistador Drive, SCW
- When:** Thursday - March 18, 2010 - 11:00 - 1:00 PM
- Cost:** No Charge. You bring your own lunch - A sandwich and a soft drink/coffee,  
There will be no food served
- Come:** We can share our memories as the Pioneers of Sun City West  
(October 1978 through December 1979)
- Please Call:** Frances Decker, President or Dee Balaker, Secretary  
584-3449 584-1449



4/26/10

To: Mr. Edson F. Allen, Trustee  
Sun Cities Area Historical Society

Dear Mr. Ed,

Remember that old TV Program - Mr. Ed,  
it was a fun one.

Hi Ed, thank you for your time and  
being such a part of the SCW Pioneers  
Club, not being a Pioneer, but probably  
knowing more than most of us because  
of the wonderful book you edited and  
published.

As you can see, the pictures and labels  
are ready to put in the album.

I would like the picture of the committee  
with you. Then my starting the process,  
and last but not least, you on your way  
out the door.

It "tells a story".

I made a copy each just for you.

When I added Beverly's title, - I wanted  
to say, present but camera shy. She is  
a pretty lady and you can see by her  
pictures in the album, she is very photo-  
genic. (album)


Thank you again, you and your wife are  
lovely people.

Most Sincerely

Copies to the Committee

*Frances  
Becker*

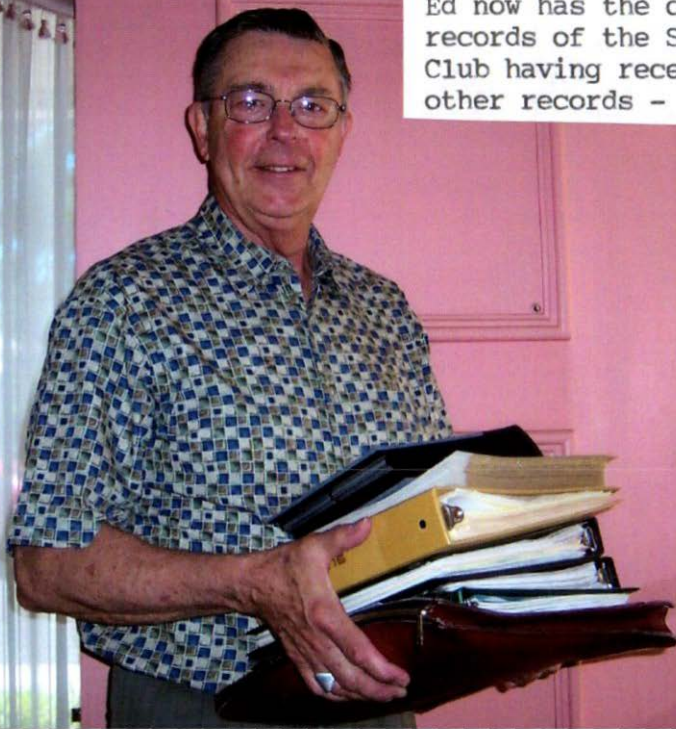


A photograph of an elderly woman, Frances Allen, with short, curly, light-colored hair, wearing a light blue short-sleeved shirt and a necklace. She is handing a dark, rectangular object, likely a folder or book, to a man, Edson F. Allen. Edson is wearing glasses and a patterned short-sleeved shirt. They are seated in front of a wall with a decorative floral border and two small, ornate wall hangings. The photo has a white border.


Edson F. Allen, Trustee

Frances starts the process of turning the records over to Edson Allen for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society

Ed now has the complete  
records of the SCW Pioneer  
Club having received the  
other records - 3/18/10







Sun City West Pioneers  
Club Officers -  
1/23/07 - 3/18/10  
with Edson F Allen

Pres. Frances Decker, Treas. Emma Koos, Sec.  
Dee Balaker. Absent, Noel Winfield, VP and  
Hospitality, Beverly Temple and Helen Daniel



Brig General Bill Woodyard led us in  
the Pledge of Allegiance



Edson F. Allen, Trustee,  
Sun Cities Historical  
Society with Frances





President Frances Decker welcomes the members and opens with prayer



# PIONEERS of SUN CITY WEST



1ST LUNCHEON

SUN CITY WEST PIONEERS

OCTOBER 20, 1984

TWELVE NOON

LAKES CLUB

## PROGRAM

Music and Sing-a-long - Duo George Rouvalis, Bass  
and Polly Harbert, Pianist

Invocation - George Copes

Pledge of Allegiance

Greetings - Mildred Toldrian

Lunch

Secretary's report - Frieda Schwartz

Treasurer's report - Sol Robinson

Vice-President's report - Loise Copes

Ken Plonski - Mgr. of Public Affairs for DEVCO

Don Tufts - Vice-President of DEVCO

Announcements - Mildred Toldrian

Door Prizes awarded



OFFICERS

President - Mildred Toldrian  
13223 Maplewood Dr.  
584-1346

Vice-President - Loise Copes  
12818 Castlebar Dr.  
584-1435

Secretary - Frieda Schwartz  
13407 Shadow Hills Dr.  
584-1879

Treasurer - Sol Robinson  
13233 Marble Dr.  
584-3613

## MENU

Fresh fruit salad

Boneless baked breast of chicken with  
orange sauce

Glazed carrots Vichy

Anna potatoes Parmesan

Hot rolls

Beverage

Chocolate eclair



SUN CITY WEST DONORS OF DOOR PRIZES

Arizona Bank

Continental Bank

DEVCO

First Interstate Bank

Great Western Bank

The Hair Barn

Home Federal Savings

Dr. S. Lukase, DDS

Marcellina Markunas, Artist

Pioneer Realty Co.

Prudential Insurance Co.

Residential Lock Co.

The Salad Bar

Setterberg Jewelers

State Farm Insurance Co.

Valley National Bank

Western Savings

Arrangements at the Lakes Club were made  
through the courtesy of Mr. Joseph Davisson  
of the United Bank of Sun City West.

## HI, NEIGHBOR

Hi, Neighbor - Hi, Neighbor  
What do ya' know - what do ya' say?  
Hi, Neighbor - Hi, Neighbor  
Throw all your worries away.  
Come on and shake my hand  
And let a grin do the rest.  
It makes ya' feel so grand  
To get your chin off your chest!  
I'm shout'n, Hi, Neighbor  
My Neighbor -  
Time to play and say, "Hi"

## DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

Gonna lay down my burden  
Down by the riverside,  
Down by the riverside,  
Down by the riverside.  
Gonna lay down my burden  
Down by the riverside  
To study war no more.  
I ain't gonna study war no more;  
Ain't gonna study war no more;  
Ain't gonna study war no more.  
I ain't gonna study war no more;  
Ain't gonna study war no more;  
Ain't gonna study war no more!

## CLEMENTINE

In a cavern, in a canyon, excavating for a mine,  
Dwelt a miner, forty-niner, and his daughter,  
Clementine.

Chorus: Oh my darling, oh my darling,  
Oh my darling Clementine.  
You are lost and gone forever  
Dreadful sorry, Clementine.



Light she was and like a feather  
And her shoes were number nine.  
Herring boxes, minus topses,  
Sandals were for Celmentine. (Chorus)

Drove she ducklings to the water  
Every morning just at nine;  
Stubbed her toe upon a splinter,  
Fell into the foaming brine. (Chorus)

Then the campers to the rescue  
Threw a lanky piece of pine;  
But she sank before it reached her,  
So I lost my Clementine. (Chorus)

#### BILL BAILEY

Won't you come home, Bill Bailey,  
Won't you come home?  
I miss you all day long.  
I'll do the cooking, honey, I'll pay the rent,  
I know I've done you wrong.  
"Member that rainy evening I drove you out,  
With nothing but a fine toothe comb?  
I know I'm to blame, Well ain't that a shame!  
Bill Bailey, won't you please come home?

#### SIDEWALKS OF NEW YORK

East side, West side  
All around the town.  
The tots sang "ring a rosie",  
London Bridge is falling down"  
Boys and girls together,  
Me and Mamie O'Rorke.  
We tripped the light fantastic  
On the sidewalks of New York.

### MY WILD IRISH ROSE

My wild Irish rose, the sweetest flow'r that grows  
You may search everywhere, but none can compare  
With my wild Irish rose.

My wild Irish rose, the dearest flow'r that grows  
And some day for my sake, she may let me take  
The bloom from my wild Irish rose.

### MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS

Meet me in St. Louie, Louie, meet me at the fair.  
Don't tell me the lights are shining any place but there.  
We will dance the hootchy-kootchy,  
I will be your tootsy-wootsy.  
Meet me in St. Louie, Louie, meet me at the fair.

### HOME ON THE RANGE

Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam,  
Where the deer and the antelope play.  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,  
And the skies are not cloudy all day.  
Home, Home on the range, where the deer and the  
antelope play,  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,  
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

### MY GAL SAL

They called her frivolous Sal,  
A peculiar short of a gal.  
With a heart that was mellow,  
An all'round good fellow,  
Was my old pal.  
Your troubles, sorrows and care,  
She was always willing to share.  
A wild sort of devil, but dead on the level,  
Was my gal Sal.



### THE YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS

There's a yellow rose in Texas I'm going back to see.  
No other fellow loves her as half as much as me.  
She cried so when I left her, it really broke my heart,  
And when we two shall meet again, we'll never,  
never part.

She's the sweetest rose in Texas a fellow ever knew.  
Her eyes are bright as diamond, they sparkle like  
the dew.  
You may rave about your Clementine, and sing of  
Rosalie  
But the yellow rose of Texas is the only girl for me!

### WHEN THE SAINTS

When the Saints go marching in,  
Oh when the Saints go marching in.  
Oh, Lord I want to be in that number,  
When the Saints go marching in.

### GOD BLESS AMERICA

God bless America, land that I love.  
Stand beside her, and guide her  
With a light through the night, from above.  
From the mountains, to the valleys,  
To the oceans, white with foam,  
God bless America, my home sweet home;  
God bless America, my home sweet home!

### ON A BICYCLE BUILT FOR TWO

Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do.  
I'm half crazy, all for the love of you.  
It won't be a stylish marriage;  
I can't afford a carriage.  
But you'll look sweet, upon the seat  
Of a bicycle built for two.

### THE BAND PLAYED ON

Casey would waltz with a strawberry blonde,  
And the band played on.  
He'd glide cross the floor with the girl he adored,  
And the band played on.  
But his brain was so loaded, it nearly exploded,  
The poor girl would shake with alarm.  
He'd ne'er leave the girl with the strawberry curl,  
And the band play on.

### OH SUSANNA

Oh I came to Alabama with my banjo on my knee.  
And I'm goin' to Lousiana, my true love for to see.  
Oh Susanna, oh don't you cry for me,  
I've come from Alabama with my banjo on my knee.

### IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME

In the good old summer time,  
In the good old summer time.  
Strolling through the shady lanes,  
With you "baby mine".  
You hold her hand and she holds yours,  
And that's a very good sign  
That she's you tootsy wootsy,  
In the good old summer time.



# Pioneers meet March 18

The Sun City West Pioneers, consisting of those original residents of Sun City West, will have what may be its last luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 18 in Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church of Sun City West, 17419 N. Conquistador Drive.

The event is free, but each member is asked to bring his or her own sandwich and beverage. They are also asked to bring their memories of being a pioneer in Sun City West.

Don't forget – mark your calendar for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 18! For information, call club President Frances



Decker at 584-3449, or Secretary Dee Balaker at 584-1449.

## Roadrunners entertain at M



Break out your best '50s The Rec Centers' fun '50s p.m. Friday, March 26, in Roadrunners Rock and Roll music of the era. Tickets for non-residents if purchased at the Sun City West Box Office, open weekdays in the R.H. Johnson Building, 17419 N. Johnson Blvd. Cost

## Final Sundome brick pickup s

The Rec Centers is announcing the final brick pickup for individuals who purchased personalized Sundome bricks and would like to reclaim them. When the Sundome closed, the Rec Centers picked up all the memorial bricks that were destined for the trash, in hopes of returning them to the donors. Many individuals have picked theirs up, but there are still several remaining.

The final pick up will be from 8 a.m. to noon

Thursday, March 26, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Rec Centers Social Hall. Bricks will be on hand to hand out.

Any bricks reclaimed will be used in a decorative location. The staff will put the bricks in the locations originally intended.

## PHOTOS FROM SCW PIONEERS LAST MEETING

March 18, 2010

- 1) Ed Allen, moderator, Dee Balaker (holding sandwich) – others unknown.
- 2) L to R: Virginia Kelso (not a Pioneer), Ed Allen, Bill Woodyard, Madeline Morlock
- 3) Ed Allen and Madeline Morlock holding envelope with ticket stubs from first Sundome events.
- 4) L to R: Henry Healy (green shirt), Neal Coffman, Ed Allen, Mary Coffman
- 5) Ed Allen, Phil Batow (standing), Neal Coffman
- 6) Ann Pamplin (standing) and Ed Allen. Ann was not a Pioneer.
- 7) Ed Allen and Terry Corbell (not a Pioneer as came in 1980)
- 8) Florence and Sol Robinson with Ed Allen
- 9) Ed Allen and Virginia Eoff
- 10) Virginia Eoff and Ed Allen looking at memorabilia provided by Frances Decker

## DONATIONS OF MEMORABILIA

**Madeline Marlock:** Four ticket stubs from early Sundome shows, including the very first starring Lawrence Welk. She also has a commemorative plate dated Oct. 27, 1978 – just 11 days later than the first couples moved in. She will consider donating it to the Society, but wants to talk to her daughter first.

**Bob & Phyllis Achlermann:** They apparently gave Frances Decker their commemorative plate, dated Dec. 12, 1978, and Frances brought it today to give to the Society.

**Frances Decker:** Three scrapbooks about SCW Pioneer events over the years. She has promised the Society additional scrapbooks and photo albums in the near future.



SCW Pioneers – End of an Era (Headline by Erin Tucker Reporter for Daily News Sun)

Welcome: Last Officers:: VP - Noel Winfield, Sec. Dee Balaker,, Treasurer, Emma Koos, Hospitality, Helen Daniel and Beverly Temple, I am Frances Decker, President

How many present were officers through the years – please stand Thank you for your dedication. Sol Robinson was our first vice-president & then President.

As in times past: Our Invocation \_Charley Frankel – In Hospital- pneumonia & now a pacemaker – in Del Webb., we wish him the best.

Let's bow in Prayer

We are honored by a faithful Pioneer, Brig. General Bill Woodyard who will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance

Noel Winfield will lead us in „“God Bless America

Please be seated

Dee Balaker : Minutes of last meeting

Dee Balaker was part of Ed Allen's Team when he gave us the Silver Anniversary of Sun City West

(David Burley – both Past Presidents of the Sun Cities Historical Society)

-All the good publicity Daily News Sun The Rec Center News, PORA the Independent We thank them. As a result, Gary and Nita Snyder called and they have donated the cake, serving it AND CLEANING UP AFTERWARDS. It reads, SCW Pioneers – Thanks for the Memories 1978-2010.

The other day, Patti Shanholtzer called from the the Boomers Club offered to give us a Pot Luck, wishing us good luck Then I got an e-mail from their President Lynne O'Grady – perfect name this time of year and she is the Mother-in-law of our Katy O'Grady There is a copy of the letter on the outer table.

Treasurers's report: \$280.00 ??? \$30 –use of room, \$50.00 – Sun Cities Historical Society, \$200 to Inter-Faith??????? Vote:

All these records will be turned over to the Sun Cities Historical Society.

What we all did for Sun City West's beginnings, The young Boomers will carry on to .

Thank you all for coming – God Bless You and God Bless America

For our  
Ending Pioneers Club  
Frances Decker President



**From:** Charlene Patti-Bisson (cbisson@newszap.com)  
**To:** edsonallen@yahoo.com  
**Date:** Mon, March 1, 2010 12:38:08 PM  
**Cc:** jmaurer@newszap.com; SCibret@aol.com  
**Subject:** FW: SCW Pioneers Club PR Opportunity

Dear Ed:

Thanks for sharing!

Our editor, Julie Maurer, has already placed information on the last outing for Page 3 in this week's newspaper to alert our readers. She is also planning a follow up with a story to preview the event and share stories, memories, etc.

I am copying her in case the two of you find it useful to communicate.

Best of luck!

Charlene

**Charlene Bisson**

Publisher

Independent Newspapers

Sun Cities, Sun City West, Surprise, Peoria and Arrowhead Ranch

[cbisson@newszap.com](mailto:cbisson@newszap.com)

623-445-2823

Support unbiased, local journalism!

You can show your support for your Independent newspaper by purchasing an e-subscription. You'll receive an e-mail with a live link to the latest issue, allowing you to read the entire paper Online – anywhere. To subscribe, please call 1-800-282-8586 or go Online at <http://circulation.newszap.com/>

Free online classifieds!

It's fun and easy to create your own ads online. 2 weeks, 4 lines + 8 photos absolutely free! Nominal fees to also post your ad in any of our newspapers (entirely your option). To place your ad, go to [newszap.com](http://newszap.com) and click on Classified Ads.

*Go Green: Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.*

---

From: edsonallen@yahoo.com  
To: scibret@aol.com  
CC: bpearson6@cox.net  
Sent: 2/27/2010 7:37:48 P.M. US Mountain Standard Time  
Subj: SCW Pioneers Club PR Opportunity

Bret, I don't know if you'd like the the Independent to cover this – or have me call Maryanne Leyshon at DNS.

I saw in the SCW Rec Center News that the SCW Pioneers are meeting for the last time on March 18. They invited members to bring a sandwich and a memory to share of the pioneer years. I thought this was too good an opportunity to pass up, and called the secretary who was on my SCW history book committee years ago. She thought it would be great if the Historical Society was represented, and that the attendees would have no trouble having their comments recorded.

3/18/10 Attendees:

Neal and Mary Coffman  
Dorothy Bruchta  
Fillmore Batow  
William Neutout  
Elizabeth Neutout  
Irene Dyda

INER & BYRON SALEM

Philp TERRY CORBELL (1-1980/Pastor 5-1979)

Lois Shook  
✓ Fred Grode  
✓ Ruth Grode  
✓ Emma Koos  
✓ Bea Balaker  
✓ Frances Decker

Yvonne Rau - friend of Virginia Eoff  
✓ Virginia Kelso  
✓ Ber Temple

Madeline S. Marlock  
Virginia S. Thompson - friend of Madeline Marlock.  
Annee Pamplin (non-member)

JACQUELINE M. SOLTIS

HENRY J. HEALY

✓ Sol Robinson

✓ Florence Robinson

Virginia Eoff 13031 La Terraza 584-5006

Plus Ed & Loretta Allen

Reporter & photog from DUS

Couple from Boomers Club who donated cake



Pioneers Club of SCW luncheon

Thursday - January 21, 2010

First Baptist Church, SCW  
17419 N. Conquistador Drive

Bring Sandwich and Soft Drink

Coming? Call: Frances - 584-3449

✓ = left message  
X They returned message

Changed to

March 18, 2010

11-1

NAME

PHONE #

|    |                      |                           |                         |
|----|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1  | ✓ Frances Becker     | 584-3449                  | X                       |
| 2  | ✓ Irene Dyda         | 623-584-5014              | X                       |
| 3  | ✓ Elizabeth Neuntout | { 584-1443                | X                       |
| 4  | ✓ William Neuntout   | { " }                     | X                       |
| 5  | ✓ Mary Coffman       | { 584-1605                |                         |
| 6  | ✓ Neal Coffman       | { " }                     |                         |
| 7  | ✓ Marnie Kammer      | 584-2187                  |                         |
| 8  | ✓ Lois Shook         | 584-2487                  |                         |
| 9  | ✓ Phil Batow         | 584-2570                  |                         |
| 10 | ? Joan Ayl           | 546-8471 (8471)           |                         |
| 11 | ✓ Joyce Radsack      | 584-1457 (1457) (Ernest?) |                         |
| 12 | ? Dorothy Linje      | 584-2668                  |                         |
| 13 | ✓ Dorothy Stick      | 584-4065                  | Don't call              |
| 14 | ✓ Althea Curfman     | 584-0816                  | maybe answer for Bessie |
| 15 | ✓ Sal J. Robinson    | { 584-3613                | X OK                    |
| 16 | ✓ Florence Robinson  | { " }                     | X OK                    |
| 17 | ✓ Helen Weingarten   | 584-2119                  | 1571 (X) (No)           |
| 18 | ✓ Ida Vorderbruggen  | 584-2419                  | left message X          |
| 19 | ✓ Bill Woodard       | 584-2055                  | X                       |
| 20 | ✓ " "                | "                         | X                       |
| 21 | ✓ Noel E. Winfield   | OK 584-2520               | 2252 X                  |
| 22 | ✓ Ann Eckert         | OK 584-1636               | X                       |
| 23 | ✓ Fred Grode         | 11(?) OK { 584-2637       | X left message          |
| 24 | ✓ Ruth Grode         | 12 OK { " }               | X                       |
| 25 |                      |                           |                         |































## SUN CITY WEST PIONEERS CLUB

Final Meeting

March 18, 2010

*Ed Allen of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society led the Pioneers present in reminiscing about the early years of Sun City West. Following are transcripts of the anecdotes they contributed as they reflected on life here 30 years ago.*

**Madeline Morlock:** Madeline attended the Lawrence Welk show that opened the Sundome and showed ticket stubs she had saved from that event, along with several others. She also recounted watching her house being built and showed candid photos taken at the time. "Houses were built on street at a time," she explained.

**Henry Healy:** "When we moved here, we could see for miles around us. I lived on 132<sup>nd</sup> and Gaucha where we had a few neighbors, but all was open prairie behind us. Tumbleweeds would come down the street and roll up between our homes so we all thought since it was around December, we should make snowmen. We piled up tumbleweed to make a snowman."

**Terry Corbell:** "My parents were pioneers, coming here in May 1979. I came down after getting out of the Air Force in Jan. 1980. This has been my permanent residence since, even though I've had apartments and commuted to work at California Tech, this has always been my home. What was interesting, I came down from South Dakota with my yellow lab, and he loved really cold weather – an outdoor dog! Came from minus-60 to Arizona in January at 60 above – 120-degree temperature change. He was shedding for the next three years. He was also used to going out where there were trees and bushes. We came out here, lived on Beardsley Rd – nothing there. Totally desert, nothing in sight. Well, I would take him out and he would love to run – but there was no place where he could lift his leg – this was a male dog. One time, a lady was out walking her dog, and she came walking along and I called my dog, as I wanted to grab him, didn't want him to run over and knock her down. Well, she came over to talk to me and my dog comes up – he's well behaved standing beside her – and while we were standing out in this desert talking, he just raises his leg and starts going to the bathroom on her leg! I was so embarrassed – apologized, but she understood that the dog didn't know what else to do."

**Ann Pamplin:** "I'm not a Pioneer, arrived in 1984. I was told that this was where medical students came to capture scorpions – known as 'Scorpion Hill.' When I moved here in '84, I had no neighbors. Woke up one day to a lot of noise, and it was a lot of cattle that had come in from up north – flowing through our yard like a wild herd. I love living here! I was privileged to dance on the stage at the Sundome in one of the Variety Shows."

**Phil Batow:** "How many were here when the bridge went down? We had just driven in in two cars – my daughter and wife in one, and me in the other. We kept switching leaders. Went down to Mexico to get cheap booze. On way back, it was dark, and when we



approached Del Webb Blvd we could see a Posse member with a flashlight. He told us this was as far as we could go and told us how we could get back to SCW. We took Del Webb Blvd. south to 91<sup>st</sup> (Grand?), followed the tracks to Dysart, and then came back on Del Webb Blvd (RH Johnson?). Next day, we were out of food – couldn't get across because the bridge was down. Guess Del Webb got a lot of calls. They had a machine come down to river and built a temporary road out of asphalt to go down and up on the other side. That settled that!"

**Dee Balaker:** "The bridge (bypass) was fixed because SCW was holding a Ladies PGA golf tournament in April."

**Mary Coffman:** Because there was no rec center initially ... "Del Webb ran tours so we went on tours all over Arizona – Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly, and more. Mildred Toldrian was our hostess."

**Neal Coffman:** "I'm the oldest, meanest guy in Arizona! Mildred was hostess. In Monument Valley at a motel overnight, the ceiling collapsed in her room in the motel. She survived!"

**Phil Batow:** "Rec Center up, had Saturday night dancing. With neighbor of ours, we were just ready to go and we stopped at our house. The garage was filled with big cartons with all our things in them. As she closed the door, I saw something skittering across the garage floor, disappearing among the cartons. I had a large screwdriver and went after it. It was a rattlesnake. Hit it on the back of the head and killed it. Dragged it out and laid in on the curb. It was all over the dance floor that I had killed a rattlesnake. Fortunately, the County never heard about it, and I wasn't penalized for it!"

**Henry Healy:** "Does anyone remember the Del Webb factory here? Quonset huts at Bell Rd and Dysart. I was working for them. We'd build houses at the site and they'd transport frames, roof shingles to site where Del Webb would first fumigate the area – you'll remember the smell of fumigation. Poured concrete and put up bathroom on each corner, and then transport walls to site and build the home."

**Frances Decker:** "My husband and I were driving to California in a big Buick without air conditioning. It was 110 degrees. Finally came to a motel on Highway 60 – the King's Inn. We stopped and were asked if we wanted to see the model homes. We said no – we'd be on our way in the morning. Ended up staying five days! Finally headed back home, but didn't want to leave. We never did make it to California."

**Sol Robinson:** Introduced as first president – "Mildred Toldrian actually started the club in 1979."

**Ann Pamplin:** "I had a little dog when I moved here and a doggy door. It was hot when I got up, and went into kitchen to prepare coffee for breakfast. I saw movement. It was a snake that had crawled in through the doggy door. I picked up my little dog and ran into



bedroom and called 9-1-1. Fire Dept. came and the snake had crawled into the laundry room. They got it, but it sure scared me!"

**Virginia Oeff:** "I had two javelina in my back yard! Would come from one golf course to another across my back yard."

**Virginia Oeff:** "I didn't believe there were snakes – but there were. I took my golf car down on Beardsley to have it serviced. The man called and said it was ready to go so I went over to get it. I drove it to my house, jumped out and thought 'Good night, I didn't look to see what he did!' I raised the back end and there was a snake. I jumped in the car and went back fast as I could. Ran in and told the man, 'look what's in the back of my car!' He came out, raised the thing, dropped it back down and told me to get a long something to get it out. Well, I went in and looked, and found a rake. He could not get that snake out of there! In a minute a golf car drove up, and the man asked 'What's going on?' I told him 'it's a snake in my golf car,' and he said he didn't believe it. 'You look!' Owner said, 'Get something to help me.' So the man ran into the shop to get something. When they both were out there, I went into the shop and sat down. Don't know if it was a rattlesnake. (The owner) got it out, put it in a pail and took it to the shop in Sun City."

**Terry Corbell:** "There always used to be a lot of road runners around, and they killed snakes. So whenever we'd have visitors, if they'd like to go out and exercise – and before we had facilities, that meant running in the desert – we told them to go down to the pet shop and buy a road runner and run with it on a leash, and they'd protect you from snakes!"

**Terry Corbell:** This was open rangeland. It means ranchers pay to let cattle graze out in the desert. If you don't want cattle on your property, you must fence them off – he doesn't have to fence them in. For awhile here, first ten years or so – cattle started coming into community, walking through back yards, so tried to stop that by putting in a cattle guard on Beardsley Rd. But it cost \$320,000, so decided to just paint lines on road – cattle couldn't tell the difference. Now, I had no problem with that – saved a lot of money – but I did have a problem with their erecting a sign 'Cattle Guard.' I don't think cattle could read, and all of us knew it wasn't a real cattle guard!"

**Dee Balaker:** "We didn't have a Post Office and had to go to Sun City for our mail. The first rabbit I ever saw here was in Sun City right in front of the Post Office. We had to go into Sun City to pick up our mail there."

**Henry Healy:** Does anyone remember going to Coury's Market on Grand Av? Safeway on Bell hadn't been built yet so we'd travel down to Coury's – the only shopping around."

*As the stories petered out, Ed Allen closed the session by reading the tribute to Pioneers written by Mrs. Sylvia Lustig, and found on page 44 of the Sun City West history book.*



# VF SCW Party Pioneers & Early YEARS Original Westerners roughed it in early days

By Connie Cone Sexton  
Phoenix Gazette

SUN CITY WEST — Mildred Toldrian sliced into her steak, jabbed a piece with her fork then paused before taking the morsel to her mouth.

She gave a slight smile and set the utensil down. Her meal had been interrupted several times to say hello to friends, give a hand pat to people as they walked by and finally, to answer a reporter's questions about the early days of Sun City West. Never mind the quickly cooling steak, she said, reassuringly. She'd be more than happy to reflect awhile.

Sitting around Toldrian were hundreds of other original settlers of Sun City West who met Sunday for an annual meeting and to celebrate their community's 10th birthday.

Toldrian is one of the founders of the Sun City Pioneers Club. She said the group got its start with the help of Del E. Webb Corp., the community's developer.

"We all started back in 1978 and '79, getting together for coffee and doughnuts to meet people and to have something to do. We didn't have a rec center, we didn't have a swimming pool, we didn't even have a grocery store out here, back then," she said.

About 2,000 people moved into the community during the first 18 months. Without any of the recreational facilities in place, the residents did a lot of visiting, Toldrian said.

The early days were fun but things in Sun City West certainly got a little easier when the amenities were finally in place.

It had been the second go-round for Toldrian in watching a retirement community grow up.

She also had been a pioneer of Sun City. "I moved there June 20, 1960, and I moved into Sun City West on Oct. 20, 1978. My husband had died and I needed a change," she said.

Toldrian took a bite of the

steak and munched while she thought. She turned her head to survey the crowd that had come for this year's gathering. "We've got about 1,000 members, now. You can only belong if you moved in during 1978 and 1979. Our numbers will start going down more as time goes on," she said.

When asked about the future of Sun City West, she cocked her head in the direction of Sun City.

"I think we can learn from what they've experienced. The problems they have had," Toldrian said.

Sun City residents have been long been divided over the issue of whether to incorporate.

Del Webb Corp. removed itself from the community once it was fully developed and the company's absence seemed to heat up the incorporation debate. There were other contributing factors such as a slow economy, causing an ebb in home sales, an aging population and some concern over having to rely on county officials for the planning of the retirement community.

Sun City West still operates under the watchful eye of Del Webb Corp., whose officials monitor events that can affect the area.

Toldrian has faith in the Sun City West Property Owners and

Residents Association to help direct the residents.

A woman wheeled a cart of biscuits by her table and Toldrian punctured a small one with her fork. "This is a great place to live. I think we have a special bunch of people here."

Her praise of the community was echoed dozens of times by others at the meeting.

Ruth Spiegelberg moved to Sun City West in 1979 from Maryland. "Everybody here helps everybody else. Everybody is so caring and so friendly. And the community is just beautiful and so clean," she said.

John Spaulding, who moved

here 10 years ago from Chicago, nodded his head as she spoke. "I wouldn't live any place else," he said.

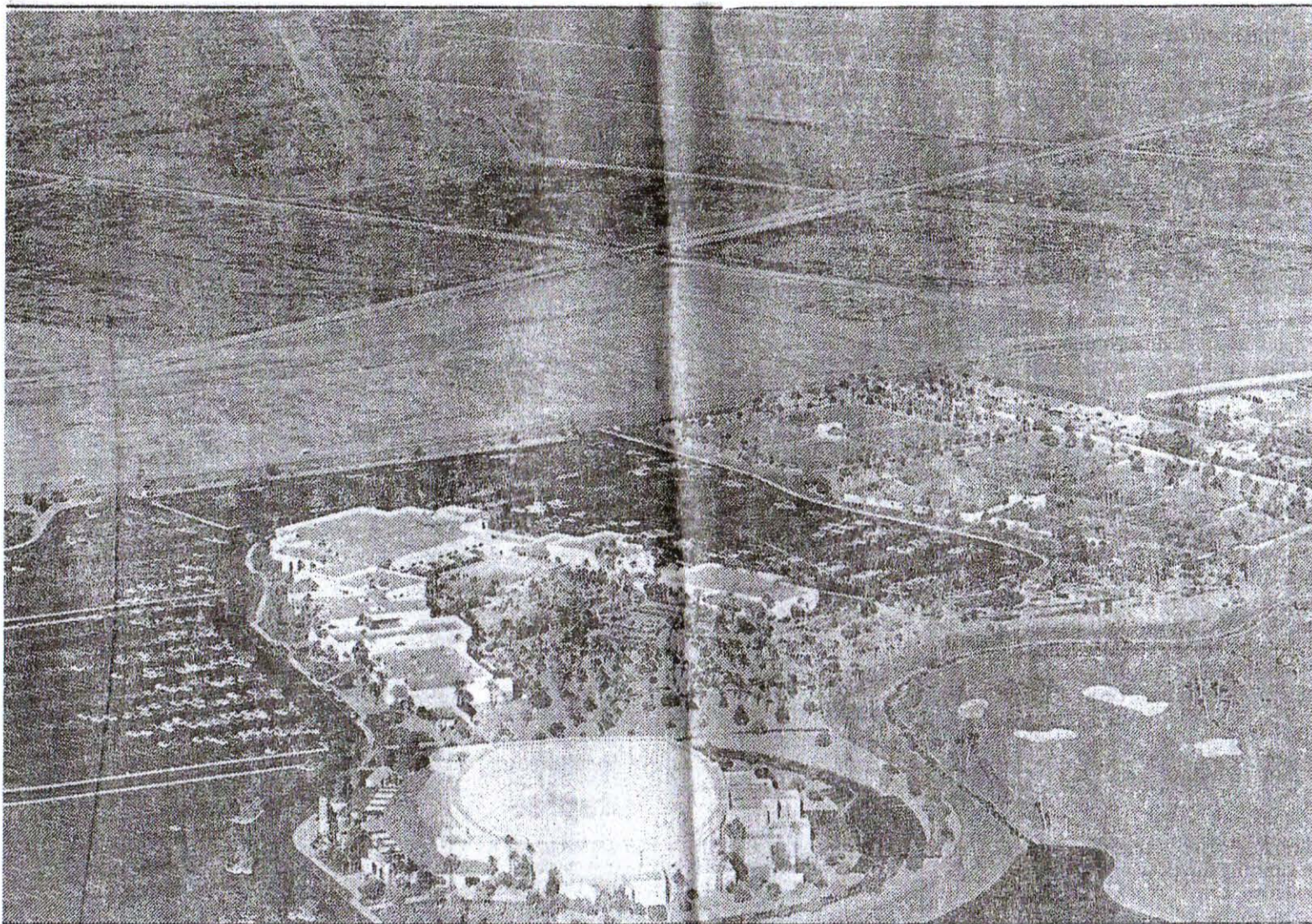
Edward Pinter moved to Sun City West in 1978 from Westchester, Ill. "I got tired going to work in the dark and coming home in the dark," he said.

But Ray White, a former Long Island, N.Y., resident, said it hasn't all been easy living in the community. "Remember the 100-year-flood we had years ago? I lost a pair of loafers. I put them outside and when I went to get them, then were gone. The loafers are probably still down there, somewhere," he said.

The Phoenix Gazette

Wednesday, October 12, 1988





*Phoenix Gazette*

(and that was undeveloped in 1985 west of the Sundome now is full of houses.



Monday, February 8, 2010

# END OF AN ERA

## Sun City West Pioneers Club faces closure

ERIN TURNER

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Florence and Sol Robinson bought one of the first 50 homes sold in Sun City West, so they have witnessed many things come and go in the community.

The next thing to pass may be the Sun City West Pioneers Club, which they helped start more than 25 years ago.

They are two of the few surviving members of the club, composed of residents who moved into the community between 1978 and 1979. A club that had about

500 members attend its first event in 1984 now consists of about 75 members. The group may have its final event, a luncheon, in March because so many members are unable to drive and have health issues that make it impossible for them to participate any longer.

The Robinsons remember when there was nothing west of R.H. Johnson Boulevard — when they had to grocery shop in Wickenburg or Sun City because no stores or shops were built in their community.

Being two of the first — in March 1978 — to move into the community that now boasts more than 28,000 residents is a bit of a distinction for the couple.

"It's a wonderful place to live," Sol Robinson said. "We've done it for 32 years."

Likewise, Frances Decker and her husband Rawleigh moved into Sun City West a few months after the Robinsons. Frances lives in the same home she purchased for \$55,000 more than 30 years ago.

"I feel like club members can kind of brag in a way because we were the first to come in. I'm proud to be the first," she said. "I just think this is heaven on earth. I love it here. It's a wonderful place to live."

The trio are pioneers to Sun City West — and because it was so sparse and the vision of another sprawling Del Webb community only a promise — they truly embodied the pioneer spirit, Sol Robinson said.

"When we first moved in, every house on the street was for sale and we thought what the heck are we getting into," he said.

"That's why we're called pioneers because we started something new," Decker added.

"They tried to fold the club once before, in 2007, and I said, 'Oh no! We can't do that!' so they asked if I would be president and I said, 'Yes, of course' and I've been president ever since," Decker said. "We've decided to get together at least one more time and reminisce. I'm just so thrilled that I was a part of all of this and I hate to let it go, but I know we've got to because we've lost so many people."

The Robinsons moved to Sun City West from California and the Deckers from New York. For them,

the friends they made among fellow pioneers helped them become accustomed to the community and stave off homesickness.

The camaraderie of the group is something the trio said they will be sorry to see come to an end.

"Everybody was in the same position, so people wanted to meet people," Sol Robinson said. "We didn't know anybody. It made it easier."

The club will meet from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 18, at the First Baptist Church in Sun City West, 17419 N. Conquistador Drive. For information, call Frances Decker, club president, at 623-584-3449.



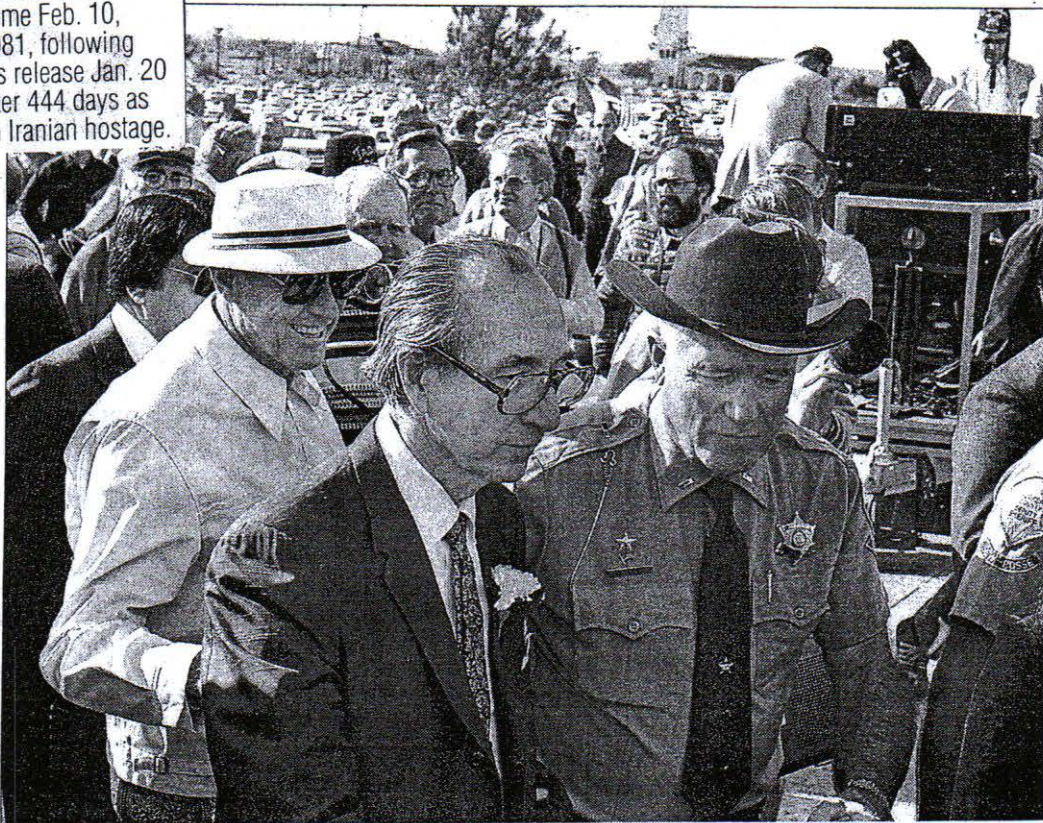


ERIN TURNER/DAILY NEWS-S

Frances Decker, center, Pioneers Club president, reminisces with other Pioneer  
Florence Robinson and Sol Robinson.

Sun City West  
Pioneers were  
in abundance to  
welcome Bob Ode  
home Feb. 10,  
1981, following  
his release Jan. 20  
after 444 days as  
an Iranian hostage.

## OUT OF THE PAST





Sample

## SCW pioneers recollect 29 years of club history

The Pioneers of Sun City West celebrated the club's 29th anniversary Sunday.

The early "settlers" of Sun City West are residents who moved to the area from October 1978 through October 1979.

After many residents found themselves gathering regularly for socials, the idea was presented to create a club. On March 6, 1984, an organizational meeting took place at the Sundome and was attended by more than 500 residents. The first official social meeting was in October 1984 at The Lakes Club.



**Nancy  
Gerdes  
& Linda  
Hasenauer**

Your turn

The group had a contest to determine the name of the club, and "Pioneers of Sun City West" was chosen.

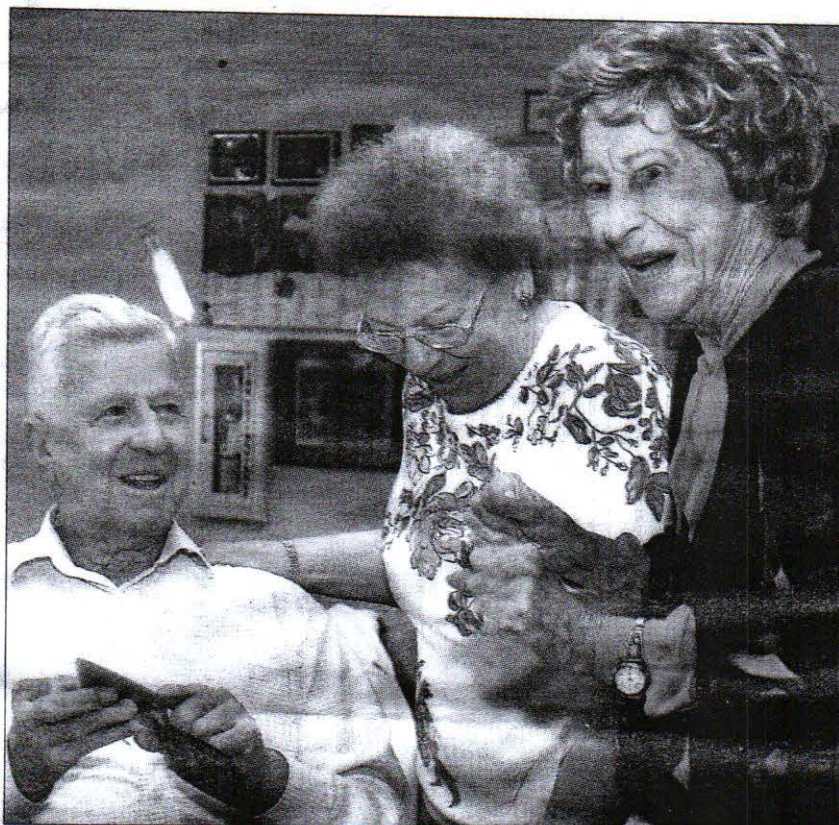
Mildred Toldrian, the organizer, was the club's first president. Toldrian passed away in 2000. Other first officers were: Loise Copes, vice president; Frieda Schwartz, secretary; and Sol Robinson, treasurer. In 1986, the membership was 1,092.

Today, club officers are Frances Decker, president; Noel Winfield, vice president; Dee Balaker, secretary; Emma Koos, treasurer; Beverly Temple, hospitality; and Helen Daniel, honorary.

Although the club is smaller now, members continue to meet as often as possible to become reacquainted and to reminisce about the old times.



Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Bill Woodyard, the first general manger of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West, shows his original rec card, the first one issued, to Loretta Allen, center, and Virginia Eoff, members of the Sun City West Pioneers Club that had its final luncheon Thursday.



MOLLIE J. HOPPE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

## Sun City West Pioneers recall early days, friendships

ERIN TURNER  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bill Woodyard carries an interesting piece of Sun City West history in his wallet — something that often causes confusion.

"When I call to try and play golf and I tell them my rec card is one, they say, 'No, no. What is your rec card number?'" he said. "I tell them again. It's No. 1."

Woodyard, who will be 91 years old next week, moved to Sun City West in 1979 and served as general manager of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West for the first 10 years the position existed. With that distinction, his secretary gave him the first rec card issued.

"I kind of like that I have it," he said with a laugh.

Likewise, he's still as big a fan of his community as he was three decades ago.

"I think the recreation centers facilities still serve the people as they've done since the early days, and I'm very pleased because I use the rec centers now, rather than manage them," he said.

Woodyard attended the final meeting of the Sun City West Pioneers Club Thursday. The club, at one time made up of about 1,000 people who were the first to move into the community, now has about 70 members. About 30 longtime Sun City Westers — and 14 original club members — attended the final meeting led by President Frances Decker.

Members told stories about the now bustling community, which, for them upon arrival, was little more than desert, dirt roads and lots of open space.

Henry Healy and his wife were the 39th couple to move into Sun City West in November 1978.

"R.H. Johnson Boulevard was a two-lane street, and we could see from our property — there were no homes — for four miles either way," he said. "And tumbleweed were so prevalent, we'd make snowmen out of them and put them in the front yard."

Virginia Kelso was one of the first 100 people in the community. She moved into her home on Ashwood Drive in 1978 and

recalled how the community has changed.

"When we first came out here there weren't any streets. It was just dirt," she said.

The longtime Pioneers member said her time in the club has produced many friendships.

"I enjoyed seeing the people and knowing the people. It makes me feel bad that the club is closing. I wonder if I'll ever bump into these people again," she said.

Other members remembered driving to the post office in Sun City because mail was not delivered to Sun City West in the early days. And stories about desert creatures abounded among the longtime residents, including tales of cattle wandering through front yards, mountain lion tracking around homes, crickets galore and rattlesnakes in golf cars and garages.

The stories offered by the longtime Sun City West residents were especially important for Edson Allen, a trustee and former president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, who attended the meeting to record the recollections of club members for preservation. Allen said the stories would be transcribed and saved in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, which is on Oakmont Avenue in one of the original five homes in Sun City. In addition, Decker said several photo and memorabilia albums kept by Pioneer Club members for the last 30 years would be donated to the museum.

"We're looking for reflections on life as a pioneer," Allen said. "Maybe some new things will pop up about what it was like here in 1979 when the roads weren't in and the rec centers weren't done and the golf courses weren't ready."

"We're always interested in gathering more of the story because as time passes, we lose it. People leave us and with them go their stories."

And while most of the final meeting of the Sun City West Pioneers Club consisted of residents sharing their recollections — some sad, some funny, some touching, some bizarre — a common theme among them was the friendliness of the community.

"We all came from all over the country. I didn't know a single person when I moved here and now I have friends as dear as I've ever had anywhere," Woodward said.

VF  
SCW  
PIONEERS  
daily news sun  
March 19, 2010



## SCW pioneers recollect 29 years of club history

The Pioneers of Sun City West celebrated the club's 29th anniversary Sunday.

The early "settlers" of Sun City West are residents who moved to the area from October 1978 through October 1979.

After many residents found themselves gathering regularly for socials, the idea was presented to create a club. On March 6, 1984, an organizational meeting took place at the Sundome and was attended by more than 500 residents. The first official social meeting was in October 1984 at The Lakes Club.



**Nancy  
Gerdes  
& Linda  
Hasenauer**

**Your turn**

The group had a contest to determine the name of the club, and "Pioneers of Sun City West" was chosen.

Mildred Toldrian, the organizer, was the club's first president. Toldrian passed away in 2000. Other first officers were: Loise Copes, vice president; Frieda Schwartz, secretary; and Sol Robinson, treasurer. In 1986, the membership was 1,092.

Today, club officers are Frances Decker, president; Noel Winfield, vice president; Dee Balaker, secretary; Emma Koos, treasurer; Beverly Temple, hospitality; and Helen Daniel, honorary.

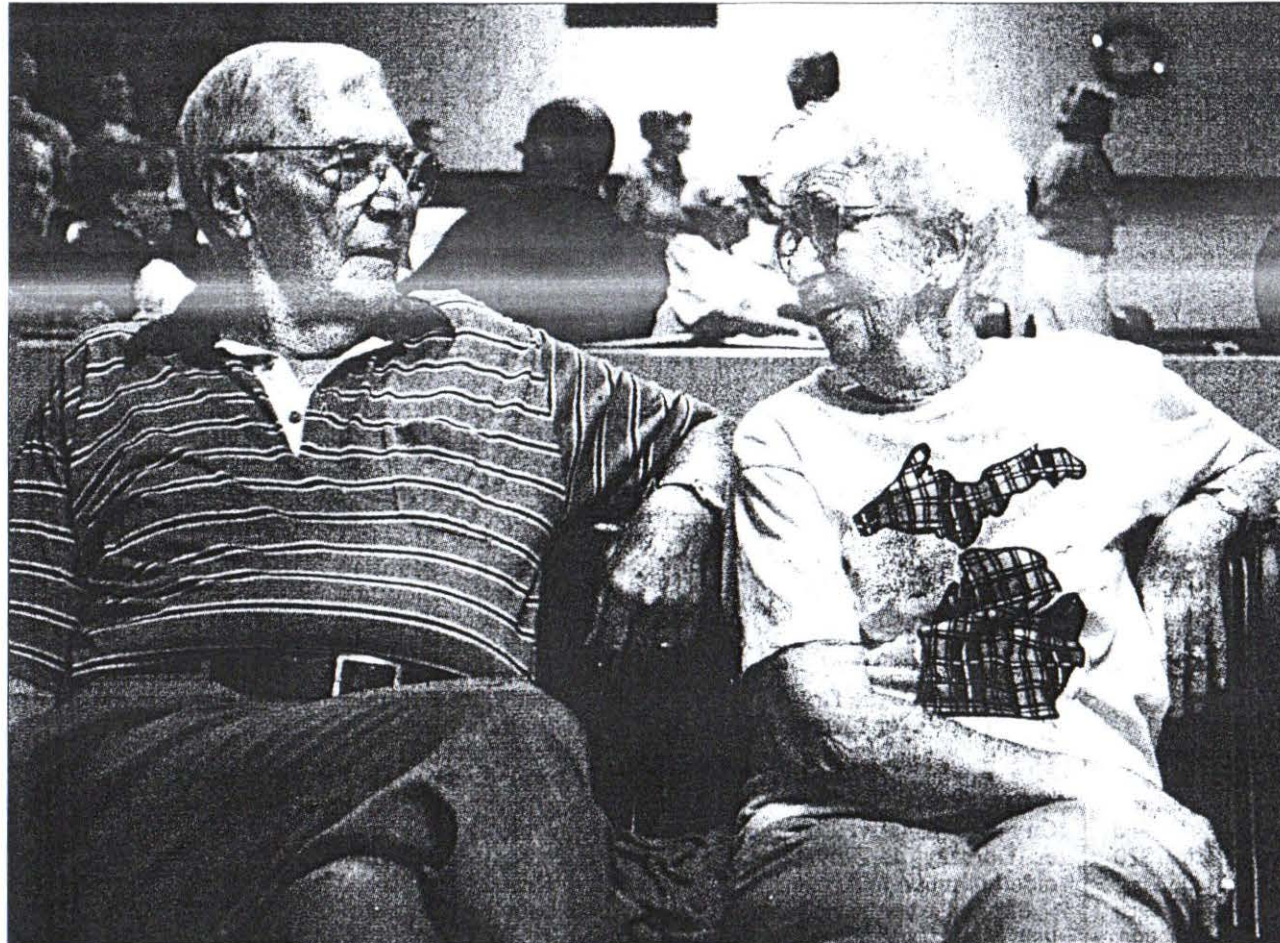
Although the club is smaller now, members continue to meet as often as possible to become reacquainted and to reminisce about the old times.



# 25 years in Sun City West

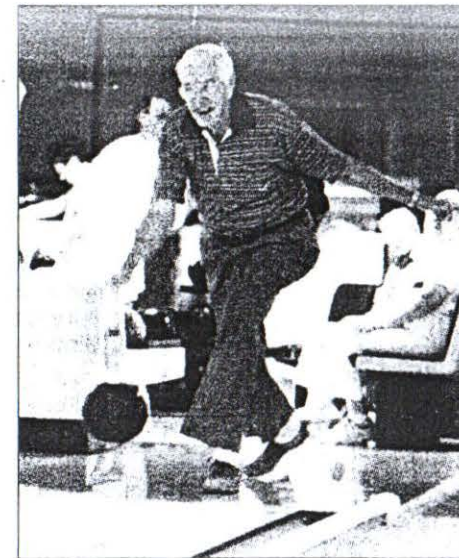
© THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2003



**"We're very happy here. We've been able to keep active both mentally and physically."**

— Mary Silvis  
Sun City West resident



Photos by Dave Cruz/The Arizona Republic

Bill and Mary Silvis moved to Sun City West when houses were first built in 1978. They bowl in a league. Bill golfs, and Mary still bikes every weekday.

Mary and Bill Silvis were part of the first wave of residents to move into Sun City West after the initial homes were built in late 1978.

They expected to stay maybe 10 years. But now they celebrating the 25th anniversary of the community, and Mary Silvis is convinced living here has extended their lives.

"We're very happy here," she said. "We've been able to keep active both mentally and physically."

The couple, who are in their mid-80s, are busy. They bowl in a league. Bill golfs, and Mary still bikes every weekday morning with the club she helped start more than 20 years ago.

They've seen the retirement community grow from 1,200 homes that first year, to about 17,000 rooftops now. They watched dirt lots become filled with stores, churches, medical facilities and, count them, nine golf courses "inside the walls," as residents say.

Through it all, like many other longtime residents, the Silvises say they never regretted retiring here.

To celebrate Sun City West's silver anniversary, parties, concerts and sporting events have been ongoing since February, and more are on the way.

A few final events in the next two months mark the end of the festivities, including a special symphony concert, parade and annual talent show featuring residents.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society has published a book detailing the history of the community, which was partly built on the Circle One Livestock Co. ranch, also known as "Lizard Acres."

See SCW Page 2

OVER



From Page 1

*Sun City West Silver Celebration*, edited by resident Edson F. Allen and researched and written by a 16-member history committee, explains that the ranch was a leading cattle company in the Southwest when the Del E. Webb Development Co. bought it. It was part of 13,000 acres west of Sun City in 1971 and 1972.

A few years later, DEVCO President John Meeker announced plans to build a second retirement community neighboring the successful Sun City.

Even before the first shovel of dirt was ever turned, many people bought homes in the new retirement community.

After visiting friends in Sun City in 1978, native East Coaster Dorothy de Noyelles decided to move to Arizona.

She chose her home from the last Sun City models and put down a \$500 deposit with her letter of intent to buy in the new community. She recalled paying about \$60,000 for her brand new home.

De Noyelles, 85, remembers that the perpetually busy Bell Road didn't even reach Sun City West when she moved into her new home in December 1979.

The hub of the community, the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center, was just being built as was the Sundome — billed as the nation's largest single-floor auditorium.

De Noyelles is part of the shrinking group of pioneers, original residents who moved into SCW in 1978 and 1979.

The group's president, Althea Curfman, said they don't meet that often anymore as most of the members have become very elderly and find it hard to get around.

With few roads, no stores and construction dust still in the air, those first residents did feel like pioneers out West, Curfman remembers.

"We thought we were out in the boonies when we first got here but not anymore," she said. "It's the best place in the world to be living. It's a very caring place. People care about one another."

Curfman, 84, said it offers everything a retiree could want, "You can be as busy as you want or as lazy as you want."

Four recreation centers offer pools, fitness and dance classes, and a long list of

sports. Residents have formed over 100 clubs for everything from gardening to RVing to card playing.

Carolyn Check, who volunteers at the Visitors Center and takes Jazzercise classes, said it's known as a "Disneyland for adults."

She came alone to the retirement community and said it's a "wonderful place for single women" because there's so much to do.

Living here has changed Dusty Bowenkamp's definition of "old," especially when she sees women in their 90s in her country line-dancing class.

"I'm one of the youngest ones here, but I want to take naps more than they do," said the 57-year-old. "People don't grow old around here. They grow young."

Although the newest Del Webb retirement community, Sun City Grand, has lured many new baby-boomer retirees, Sun City West is still attracting retirees like Bowenkamp who said she got more value for her money by buying a resale home here.

Likewise, Ed Stroming and his wife, Jean, searched for a retirement home for five years before deciding on Sun City West.

Now he volunteers in the Visitors Center, meeting with prospective residents and explaining the workings of the community.

Like other age-restricted communities, at least one resident in each home must be at least 55 years old. Others must be at least 19 years old.

Since it is an unincorporated area, SCW does not have its own government, but relies on county services.

In 1979, the non-profit organization called Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association was formed to represent homeowners, according to *Sun City West Silver Celebration*.

PORA works with the county and state on planning and zoning, traffic and safety, and legislative issues. It also operates the volunteer-staffed Visitors Center.

A well-organized group of volunteers called the Sun City West PRIDES clean the rights of way every Saturday.

And of course, the well-known Sun City West Posse provides the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office with assistance in the community.

SCW

# 25 years in Sun City West

By Angela Rabago-Mussi  
Special for The Republic

**M**ary and Bill Silvis were part of the first wave of residents to move into Sun City West after the initial homes were built in late 1978.

They expected to stay maybe 10 years. But now they are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the community, and Mary Silvis is convinced living here has extended their lives.

"We're very happy here," she said. "We've been able to keep active both mentally and physically."

The couple, who are in their mid-80s, are busy. They bowl in a league. Bill golfs, and Mary still bikes every weekday morning with the club she helped start more than 20 years ago.

They've seen the retirement community grow from 1,200 homes that first year, to about 17,000 rooftops now. They watched dirt lots become filled with stores, churches, medical facilities

## Silver anniversary events continue in W. Valley city

### Inside

■ A look at Sun City West "Then and Now." **See Page 2.**

■ Events planned to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the retirement community. **See Page 2.**

and, count them, nine golf courses "inside the walls," as residents say.

Through it all, like many other longtime residents, the Silvises say they never regretted retiring here.

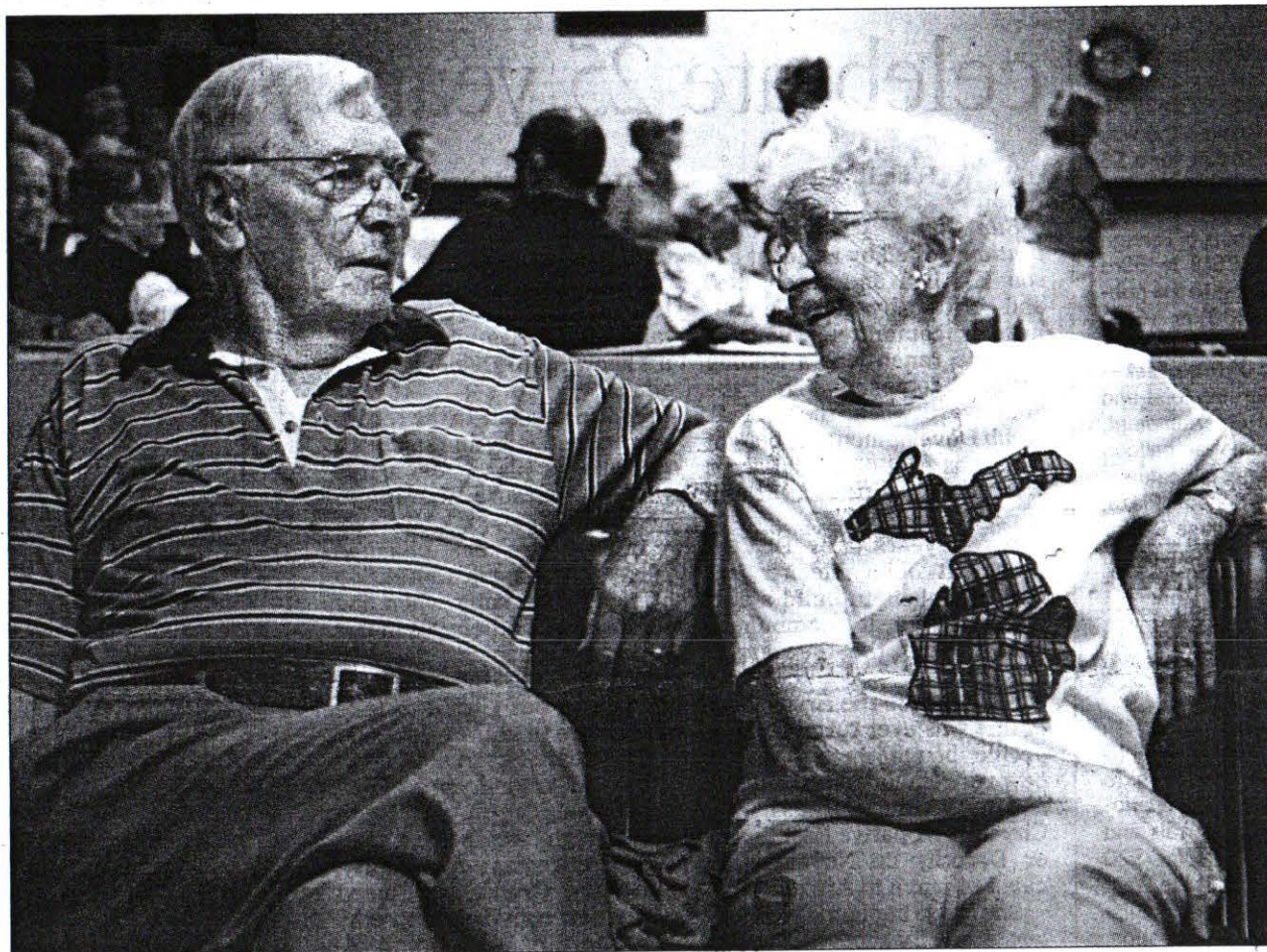
To celebrate Sun City West's silver anniversary, parties, concerts and sporting events have been ongoing since February, and more are on the way.

A few final events in the next two months mark the end of the festivities, including a special symphony concert, parade and annual talent show featuring residents.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society has published a book detailing the history of the community, which was partly built on the Circle One Livestock Co. ranch, also known as "Lizard Acres."

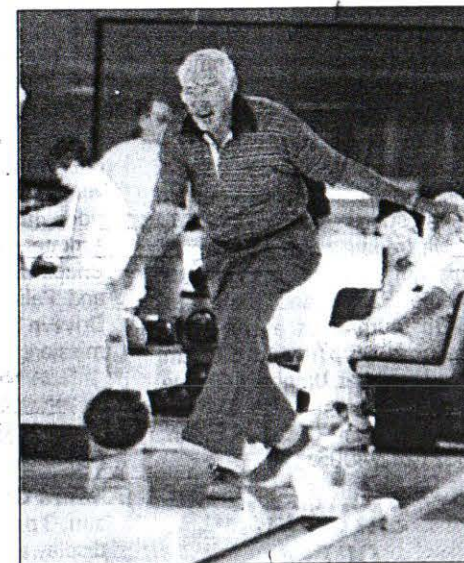
See **SCW** Page 2





**"We're very happy here.  
We've been able to keep  
active both mentally and  
physically."**

— Mary Silvis  
*Sun City West resident*



Photos by Dave Cruz/The Arizona Republic

**Bill and Mary Silvis moved to Sun City West when houses were first built in 1978. They bowl in a league. Bill golfs, and Mary still bikes every weekday.**



# SCW Residents celebrate 25 years

From Page 1

*Sun City West Silver Celebration*, edited by resident Edson F. Allen and researched and written by a 16-member history committee, explains that the ranch was a leading cattle company in the Southwest when the Del E. Webb Development Co. bought it. It was part of 13,000 acres west of Sun City in 1971 and 1972.

A few years later, DEVCO President John Meeker announced plans to build a second retirement community neighboring the successful Sun City.

Even before the first shovel of dirt was ever turned, many people bought homes in the new retirement community.

After visiting friends in Sun City in 1978, native East Coaster Dorothy de Noyelles decided to move to Arizona.

She chose her home from the last Sun City models and put down a \$500 deposit with her letter of intent to buy in the new community. She recalled paying about \$60,000 for her brand new home.

De Noyelles, 85, remembers that the perpetually busy Bell Road didn't even reach Sun City West when she moved into her new home in December 1979.

The hub of the community, the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center, was just being built as was the Sundome — billed as the nation's largest single-floor auditorium.

De Noyelles is part of the shrinking group of pioneers, original residents who moved into SCW in 1978 and 1979.

The group's president, Althea Curfman, said they don't meet that often anymore as most of the members have become very elderly and find it hard to get around.

With few roads, no stores and construction dust still in the air, those first residents did feel like pioneers out West, Curfman remembers.

"We thought we were out in the boonies when we first got here but not anymore," she said. "It's the best place in the world to be living. It's a very caring place. People care about one another."

Curfman, 84, said it offers everything a retiree could want, "You can be as busy as you want or as lazy as you want."

Four recreation centers offer pools, fitness and dance classes, and a long list of

sports. Residents have formed over 100 clubs for everything from gardening to RVing to card playing.

Carolyn Check, who volunteers at the Visitors Center and takes Jazzercise classes, said it's known as a "Disneyland for adults."

She came alone to the retirement community and said it's a "wonderful place for single women" because there's so much to do.

Living here has changed Dusty Bowenkamp's definition of "old," especially when she sees women in their 90s in her country line-dancing class.

"I'm one of the youngest ones here, but I want to take naps more than they do," said the 57-year-old. "People don't grow old around here. They grow young."

Although the newest Del Webb retirement community, Sun City Grand, has lured many new baby-boomer retirees, Sun City West is still attracting retirees like Bowenkamp who said she got more value for her money by buying a resale home here.

Likewise, Ed Stroming and his wife, Jean, searched for a retirement home for five years before deciding on Sun City West.

Now he volunteers in the Visitors Center, meeting with prospective residents and explaining the workings of the community.

Like other age-restricted communities, at least one resident in each home must be at least 55 years old. Others must be at least 19 years old.

Since it is an unincorporated area, SCW does not have its own government, but relies on county services.

In 1979, the non-profit organization called Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association was formed to represent homeowners, according to *Sun City West Silver Celebration*.

PORA works with the county and state on planning and zoning, traffic and safety, and legislative issues. It also operates the volunteer-staffed Visitors Center.

A well-organized group of volunteers called the Sun City West PRIDES clean the rights of way every Saturday.

And of course, the well-known Sun City West Posse provides the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office with assistance in the community.

## If you go

**The Sun City West Silver Celebration committee plans two final celebration events.**

**WHAT:** The Symphony of the West Valley will perform a special chamber orchestra concert featuring former New York Metropolitan Opera mezzo soprano Isola Jones.

**WHEN:** 3 p.m. Sunday.

**WHERE:** Prince of Peace Catholic Church, 14818 W. Deer Valley Drive, Sun City West.

**COST:** \$10. Tickets may be purchased at Prince of Peace church, the symphony office, 10451 Palmeras Drive, Sun City; Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, 19002 N. 128th Ave., Sun City West, or The Photo Shop, 13940 W. Meeker Blvd., Sun City West.

**WHAT:** "Look for the Silver Lining" Parade with bands, horses & decorated golf cars.

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. Oct. 25.

**WHERE:** Beginning at R.H. Johnson and Meeker boulevards.

**WHAT:** Sun City West 25th Anniversary Concert featuring original stars of the Lawrence Welk television show — Myron Floren, Bobby & Elaine, and Anacani.

**WHEN:** 3 p.m. Oct. 25.

**WHERE:** Sundome, 19403 R.H. Johnson Blvd. A raffle drawing for a car, cruise and furniture shopping spree will be held during intermission.

**COST:** Tickets are \$10 and \$20 and can be purchased at the Sundome.

Also, two November events are dedicated to the 25th anniversary.

**WHAT:** A flag raising sponsored by Sundome Merchants Association, VFW and American Legion.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. Nov. 10.

The Sun City West Annual Variety Show is Nov. 13, 14, 15 at the Sundome. Tickets and performance times are available at Sundome Plaza.

**WHERE:** Sundome Plaza.

## Sun City West

*Sun City West opened 25 years ago in October 1978.*

### "Then and Now"

■ **Population:** 1,200 people in 1979. Now, about 31,000.

■ **Homes:** 1,600 completed homes by July 1979. Now, 17,000 homes, including single-family homes, condos and duplexes.

■ **Golf courses:** Two (Hillcrest and Pebblebrook courses) opened in 1979. Now, nine.

■ **Pioneers (residents who moved into SCW in 1978 and 1979):** Nearly 1,000 members then. Now, fewer than 300.

■ **Home prices:** Base price without upgrades ranged from \$36,990 to \$70,490 in December 1978. Now, they range from \$80,000 to over \$400,000.

■ **SCW Prides:** Forty-four members in 1982 when the volunteer street-cleaning program began. Nearly 300 volunteers by the 20th anniversary in 2002.

■ **Chartered clubs:** By June 1979, 14 clubs. Now, 104 clubs.

■ **Recreation Center annual fee:** \$60 per person in 1979. Now, \$180 per person.

■ **Worship centers:** None. Six denominations held services in the social hall while waiting to build. Now, there are 16 worship centers with more planned.

■ **Library:** Bookmobile visited once a week in early 1979. Now, the Sun City West Library has a collection of over 40,000 items.

■ **Sports Pavilion:** Included 24 bowling lanes and 10 indoor shuffleboard courts then. Now, includes 30 bowling lanes and five shuffleboard courts.

Sources: "Sun City West Silver Celebration - The first 25 years," edited by Edson F. Allen, Sun City West Visitors Center.



# Melton Bryan SCW's top 'Pioneer and Hero,' pockets \$1,000

## Bill and Mary Silvis win \$500; others receive \$100

Melton H. Bryan, a 24-year resident of Sun City West, collected \$1,000 Saturday as top winner of the Pioneers and Heroes Awards, presented at the Palm Ridge and Johnson recreation centers during the community's 25th anniversary kickoff parties.

Bryan and his wife Alice came to Sun City West in December of 1978, when, Bryan says, more coyotes prowled Beardsley Road than cars.

Bryan has served on the PORA governing board, several Rec Centers' committees, the SCW Foundation, has been a PRIDES volunteer, sold luminarias during the Christmas season and his wife was a men's golf club monitor before she died.

Winners of a \$500 award were Bill and Mary Silvis, who moved to the community in February of 1979 from Michigan. After spending two weeks in an apartment, they found the new Del Webb development irresistible, canceled plans for a tour of the west and dropped anchor.

The couple have been active volunteers over the years, at the Sundome, library, Habitat for Humanity, Variety Show stagehands, served on various committees and founded the AARP Tax Aide program. Bill also launched a men's golf league at a church and Mary served as a bowling secretary for 15 years.

**\$100 winners:**

Joan and Franklin Barnett came in October, 1978, after she and her husband both served in the military followed by archaeology and the excavation of 350 prehistoric sites in Arizona and New Mexico. After her husband died, Joan helped start the PRIDES, served on the Sun Health and SCW Rec Center boards, delivered Meals on Wheels, served on condo boards, started the singles program for Briarwood and volunteered at her church.

Chuck and Betsy Bennett came in September, 1979, after meeting each other following the death of their spouses. They wanted to start the new life together in a different place and to conquer a growing arthritic problem. The change produced such good health that Betsy won swimming contests where she also exhibited her famous jack-

knife dive. Chuck served as a Posse volunteer. They sang in the original "Westernairs" which has since changed its spelling. Betsy puts her handmade dollars on display in their window every Christmas. They kept a box full of Del Webb flyers and pictures showing community activities and events since the origin of Sun City West.

Barbara Kingsland Clark moved here in November, 1978, from New Jersey so her first husband, Bob, could recover from open-heart surgery. Given seven years to live, he survived 23. She recalls the dust, tumbleweeds, beetles, smell of manure from this former cattle feed lot. Their daughter moved with them and was the youngest person in town, turning many heads. Bob was an artist and designed Del Webb logos used on brochures, lawn bowling emblems and helped many clubs, as did Barbara.

Frances and Rawleigh Decker came in July, 1979, intending to go to California but a hotel clerk in the Sun City Kings Inn asked if they had seen "the models." They looked, bought and only Rawleigh's health kept them from doing more volunteer work and activities. Frances started the Sunshine Serenaders, a group of singers that entertained in nursing homes and other places, and served as president of three clubs. Rawleigh was an officer in several clubs and Frances continues to sing and to play piano for organizations, as well as being photographer, historian and photographer for groups.

Charles and Adele Frankel moved to Sun City West in November, 1978, in search of a warmer climate than New York City, where Charlie was a police lieutenant and security officer for a hospital. They helped start many clubs, were performers in the Variety Show, volunteers at Del Webb and Boswell hospitals, American Red Cross, and other groups. Charlie has held office in the R.V. club, Rockhounds Club, Dance Club, and SCW Disaster Committee. Charlie has served on the Fire District of SCW as a volunteer checking business, board member, and current board president and his wife volunteers in all events of the Fire District. They both volunteered at the Gammage and Herzberger theaters as well as locally.

Bill and Marion Friebolin arrived in February, 1979, from

Illinois. They remember seeing cotton fields and cattle pens where Sun City West now stands. They were part of a group of seven who started the Variety Show with a misspelled playbill called "Varity Show." They were part of the original Sunshine Serenaders, helped start a Mens' Senior Baseball Team, were in the first stage show ("Hello Dolly"), and have held office in clubs such as the Westernaires, Hillcrest Dance Club, etc.

Don and Bernice Henninger moved here in May, 1978, at the invitation of friends in Lake Tahoe. They learned to play golf, learned new crafts and skills, have helped clubs grow, and have enjoyed watching the community grow.

Eddie Steving Kildow and her husband Vern moved here in 1981 after Eddie saw an ad for Sun City West in her doctor's office. She and her husband sent for a coupon and made reservations to visit. They appreciated the warmth after Denver winters. They became extremely active in organizations, participating in variety shows, and even got a streetlight and stop sign for streets where they were needed. Eddie Steving Kildow lost her husband but remarried four years ago.

Marilyn and Bob Radford moved here from Kansas City in January, 1979, and although Marilyn was just pleasing her husband, she found many new hobbies and a new life. She remembers the trapped feeling residents had on the day the Bell Bridge over the Agua Fria collapsed. They were hospital volunteers, Bob called square dances, and she helped raise \$100,000 for the Sun Health Research Institute through her realtor's club.

Sol and Florence Robinson moved here in December, 1978, after a friend told them about the community. They recall the crop-dusting airport at the corner of El Mirage and Bell Roads and the fact that they had to use Sun City's Rec Centers until Sun City West centers were built. Sol worked with Chuck Roach and others to plan Palm Ridge Rec Center and has officiated in many clubs and organizations, including Rockhounds, SCW Pioneers, California Club, Cycle Club, Fire Board, and organized the Jewish Club.



## SUN CITY WEST ANNIVERSARY

## Pioneers &amp; Heroes

Sun City West's Pioneers & Heroes were honored Saturday by the 25th Anniversary Committee during parties at the R.H. Johnson and Palm Ridge recreation centers.

Top honor, \$1,000, went to Melton H. Bryan.

**Melton and Alice Bryan** moved to Sun City West in December 1978 when there were more coyotes than cars on Beardsley Road. He has served on the board of Property Owners and Residents Association, several Recreation Centers of Sun City West committees, as well as the Sun City West Foundation, and has been a PRIDES volunteer. His wife was monitor of a men's golf club before she died.

The \$500 winners are **Bill and Mary Silvis**, who moved to Sun City West in February 1979 from Michigan. They have both been active as volunteers for the Sundome, library, Habitat for Humanity, variety show stagehands, and founded the AARP Tax-aide program and the men's golf league at a church.

Winning \$100 each for their stories are the following:

**Joan Barnett**, who moved to the community in October 1978. After her husband died, Joan helped start the PRIDES, served on the Sun Health and rec center boards, delivered Meals on Wheels, served on condo boards, started the singles program for Briarwood and volunteered at her church.

**Chuck and Betsy Bennett**, who moved to Sun City West in September 1979 after meeting each other following the death of their spouses and wanted to start a new life together in a different place and to conquer a growing arthritic problem. The change produced such good health that Betsy won swimming contests where she also exhibited her famous jackknife dive.

**Barbara Kingsland Clark**, who moved to Sun City West in November 1978 from New Jersey so her first husband, Bob, could recover from open-heart surgery. Given seven years to live, he survived 23 years here. She recalls the dust, tumbleweeds, beetles, smell of manure from this former cattle feed lot. Bob was an artist and designed Del Webb logos.

**Frances Decker**, who with husband, Rawleigh, came in July 1979 intending to go to California but a hotel clerk in the Sun City King's Inn asked if they had seen "the models." Curious, they looked, bought and only Rawleigh's health kept them from doing more volunteer work and activities. Frances started

the Sunshine Serenaders, a group of singers that provides entertainment to this day.

**Charles and Adele Frankel**, who moved to Sun City West in November 1978 in search of a warmer climate than New York City where Charlie was a police lieutenant and security director for a hospital. They helped start many clubs, were performers in the Variety Show, volunteers at Del Webb and Boswell Memorial hospitals, American Red Cross, and other groups. Among other things, Charlie is president of the Sun City West Fire District board.

**Bill and Marion Friebohn**, who arrived in February 1979 from Illinois. They remember seeing cotton fields and cattle pens where Sun City West now stands. They were part of a group of seven who started the Variety Show with a misspelled playbill called "Varity Show," as well as members of the original Sunshine Serenaders.

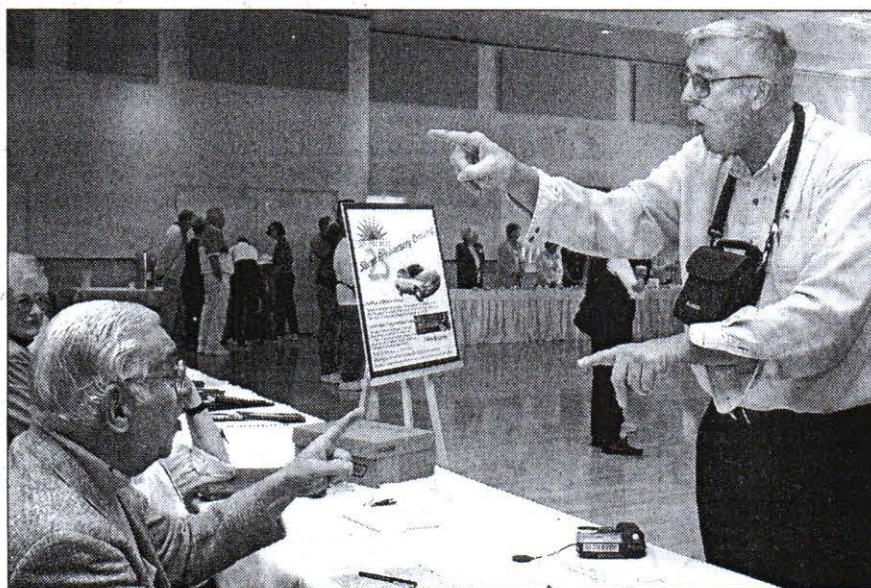
**Don and Bernice Henninger**, who moved to Sun City West in May 1978 at the invitation of friends in Lake Tahoe. They learned to play golf, engaged in craft projects and have helped clubs grow, while enjoying the community grow.

**Edie Steving Kildow**, who and her husband Vem moved to Sun City West in 1981 after Edie saw an ad for Sun City West in her doctor's office. She and her husband sent for a coupon and made reservations to visit. They appreciated the warmth after Denver winters. They became active in organizations, participating in variety shows, and even got a streetlight and stop sign for streets where they were needed. Edie Steving Kildow lost her husband but remarried four years ago.

**Marilyn and Bob Radford**, who came from Kansas City in January 1979 and although Marilyn was just pleasing her husband, she found many new hobbies and a new life. The two were hospital volunteers, Bob called square dances, and she helped raise \$100,000 for the Sun Health Research Institute through her Realtor's association.

**Sol and Florence Robinson**, who moved to Sun City West in December 1978 after a friend told them about the community. They remember the crop-dusting airport at the corner of El Mirage and Bell roads and the fact that they had to use Sun City's Rec Centers until R.H. Johnson was built. Sol worked with Del Webb's Chuck Roach and others to plan Palm Ridge Rec Center and has served as an officer in many clubs and organizations.

Sandy Goldstein, a member of the Sun City West 25th anniversary committee, left, and Community Information Specialist Bruce Ellison sing along to the orchestra's rendition of "God Bless America" at the 25th anniversary party for Sun City West Saturday.



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN



SCW

DAILY NEWS-SUN TUESDAY, FEB. 4, 2003

# Residents relate experiences from 'pioneer days'

**MICHAEL MARESH**  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

**C**harles and Betsy Bennett remember Sun City West in its infancy stage as the couple were among the first to move into the retirement community.

The couple purchased their lot in April 1979 and moved into their constructed home in September 1979.

The Bennetts moved from Pennsylvania and for the first month the couple lived in their new home with no furniture as they waited for their belongings to arrive from back East.

Of all the things that have happened in Sun City West in the past 25 years, Charles remembers the 1980 flood that washed out the bridges over the Agua Fria River bed as the most memorable.

Traffic at that time was a nightmare since the few residents in the community were forced to take Grand Avenue in order to travel west.

"We managed to get by on Grand Avenue," he said. "The one bridge that survived never did go out."

And being able to travel to go

shopping was paramount since there were no shops in Sun City West at the time.

The Bennetts were shopping in Sun City when the flood occurred.

"It was a little frightening," he said. "It was a lot of water for a small river bed. It took a year to get a new bridge."

Charles and his wife remember the streets being already constructed, though there were few homes at the time.

"We used to ride our bikes around Sun City West in empty lots," he said, adding he and his wife visited the the R.H. Johnson Recreation Centers swimming pool daily.

"When we rode our bikes, it was like riding in the desert (on asphalt)," he said.

The R.H. Johnson Recreation Center at the time was the only rec center in the community.

William and Mary Silvis also witnessed the changes time brings to a community.

Mary Silvis said she and her husband read about Sun City vacation apartments in 1977 and decided to visit the community for two weeks.

"We were impressed with what we saw," she said, and they decided to move to the new retirement community from Michigan.

The growth in Sun City West over the past 25 years, she said, has been incredible. Back in 1979, Bell Road was a two-lane road and 128th Avenue was a dirt road.

Silvis said she did not expect Sun City West to grow like it did, even though she and her husband knew what had occurred in Sun City.

"We had to have faith," she said. "We felt like pioneers."

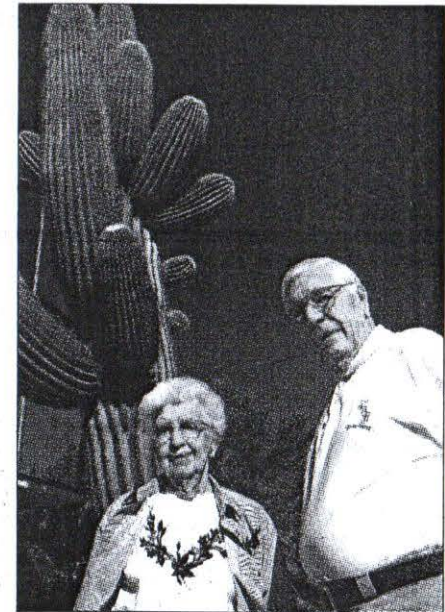
Charles Frankel was among the first 50 people who moved into Sun City West in the late 1970s.

"We were the first ones on Marble Drive," said Frankel, who moved to the retirement community from Long Island, N.Y.

In 1977, he stopped to visit some friends in Sun City, and instantly knew where he wanted to retire.

"As soon as drove up Del Webb, we knew this was the place," he said.

Frankel said while the community was pretty vacant at the time he moved in, he anticipated the growth because of what had previ-



**STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN**

When Mary and Bill Silvis moved into their home in Sun City West 25 years ago, their saguaro was only five feet high.

ously occurred in Sun City West.

"I am very happy here," he said. "I am living life to the fullest."

Michael Maresch can be reached at 876-2513 or [mmaresch@aztrib.com](mailto:mmaresch@aztrib.com).



## Pioneer resident enjoys Sun Cities

By DEBBIE L. SKLAR  
Staff writer

SUN CITY WEST — Pioneer Johnny Appleseed may have made his mark in American history by scattering apple seeds, but Mildred Toldrian, a pioneer of a different kind, prefers to spread the Golden Rule.

"My parents always told me to do unto others as you would want done to you," said Toldrian, one of the first homeowners in both the Sun Cities. "I live by the Golden Rule and have made that my motto."

The 88-year-old Wisconsin native narrowly missed being the first homeowner in both Sun City and Sun City West.

"The first person moved

into Sun City at the end of April 1960 and I moved in June 1960," said the former employee of Oster manufacturing, the kitchen appliance company. "In Sun City West it happened again; I moved in on Oct. 20, 1978, and the first person in the community moved in on the 13th. After my husband died I wanted a change and that's why I moved to Sun City West."

Toldrian said she and her husband moved to Arizona because they wanted a drier climate.

"When people complain about the heat, I don't let it bother me," she said. "I love the heat and tell people that's

► See Woman recalls, A5



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Mildred Toldrian is a Sun Cities pioneer.

## Woman recalls communities' past

■ From A1

why I came to a warmer climate."

Arizona with its sprawling desert and hot temperatures is nothing new to Toldrian.

"I came to Arizona in 1932 to tutor some kids in Tucson," said the former Milwaukee elementary school teacher. "I had been out here in 1932 on a job to tutor six children in the Tucson area. Actually, it

was on Oracle Ranch for two months. I was tutoring some kids and I made up my mind then. I would be back some day."

Sixty-three years later and Toldrian is back and happy to be in the Valley of the Sun. She enjoys living in the retirement community because of the many activities offered.

"There's so much to do here, it's hard to become

bored," she said with a laugh. "I like crafts, swimming, walking and I've volunteered more than 3,200 hours at Del E. Webb Hospital," she said.

As for the ever-changing community, Toldrian said she has seen both Sun Cities undergo alterations. She is not happy about the recall efforts to oust three board members from the Recreation Centers

of Sun City West Governing Board.

"You'll find rabble-rousers wherever you go," she said. "People are the same all over the world. I just believe in keeping a positive attitude like my mom and dad taught me. They said to follow the Golden Rule and that's the way I've lived my life. I've also tried to ingrain it in my children — so far it's worked."



THE WESTER

OCTOBER 7-13, 1993

## Mildred Toldrian -- Pioneer



Mildred Toldrian  
Photo, Stan Steciak

**BY Stan Steciak**

A "pioneer's" pioneer. Mildred Toldrian was a pioneer in Sun City and then again in Sun City West. She was the first president of the SCW Pioneers. (Those residents who moved in between October 16, 1978 and December 31, 1979). She said, "I was really too busy to accept the presidency, but Loise copes, 2nd president, sure helped me".

Mildred was born in Denmark, Wis., but spent most of her young life in Milwaukee. She attended Milwaukee State Col-

lege and later taught school in Wisconsin. In 1958, the Toldrians move to Phoenix and in 1960 to Sun City. It was on October 20, 1978, that Mildred became a Wester. She started the SCW Pioneers, with the help of Elynor Stoffer and Peter Strupp. Her time in SCW was spent leading tours for the SCW AARP. She had more than eight years experience taking people to "here, there and everywhere". It was fun, but she was always on the go. A neighbor, pioneer Olaf Joahnsen, on Desert Glen Drive said, "Mildred always has her bags packed ready to take off". Other pioneer residents nearby said, "Mildred is the greatest neighbor".

The 86-year-old bundle of energy hardly sits still. Mildred now volunteers time at Del Webb Hospital. She has over 3000 hours of volunteer service. If the average person would volunteer 4 hours a week, it would take them about 16 years to get 3000 hours. SCW residents should be proud of the SCW Pioneers.

# Uhls And Wicks First SCW 'Key Holders'

By Stan Steciak

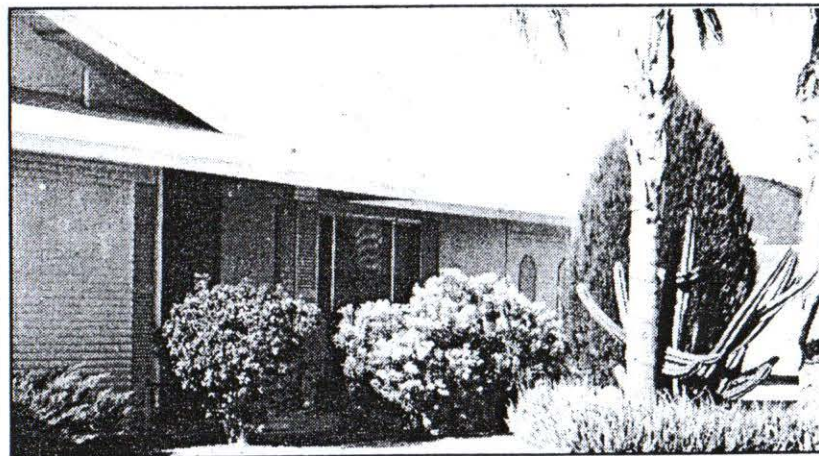
Fifteen years ago, October 16, 1978, Clarice and Ed Uhl along with Mary and Luman Wick were the first people to "take key" to their new homes. In a short ceremony, Devco President John Meeker (that's the reason for Meeker Blvd) presented Clarice Uhl and the Wicks with their keys. (Mr. Uhl was hospitalized at that time). Meeker also presented the pioneers with a plaque, on which a large key was attached, with the proper words saying the Uhls and Wicks were number one. The Uhl's home was in the 13200 block of Desert Glen Drive and the Wick's in the 13200 block of Maplewood Drive. Since then, the pioneer residents have moved to different, newer homes in SCW.

The Uhls came to Arizona from Alameda, Calif. They lived in Sun City for nine months. Ed said, "As soon as I heard about



Mary Wick holding "First Key" plaque given to her by Del Webb Oct. 16, 1978, for the home on Maplewood Dr.

Photos, Stan Steciak



Sun City West, I told Webb to put our names on the list. I didn't think we would be the first ones with the Wicks". Ed Uhl was born in Chicago, attended Lane Technical High School, and had a very active life. In the 30's he was a member of the CCC's. In 1940 he joined the US Navy. He actually asked for submarine service. Why? Ed said he was

intrigued with submarines. After his training in New London, Conn. he was assigned to the USS Gar. The Gar was commissioned in 1941 and left for Pearl Harbor, after the attack, for sea duty in the South Pacific. Ed continued in the Navy for 22 years with many submarine assignments.

Clarice was born in York,

Penn. After schooling she worked as a payroll clerk. In 1944, she became Mrs. Uhl and became a homemaker. As a Navy wife Clarice and young Ed, Jr. saw many ports of call. After Ed's Navy retirement, in 1962, the Uhls lived in Alameda, Ca-

**Uhls and Wicks  
continued on Page 2**



## Uhls and Wicks

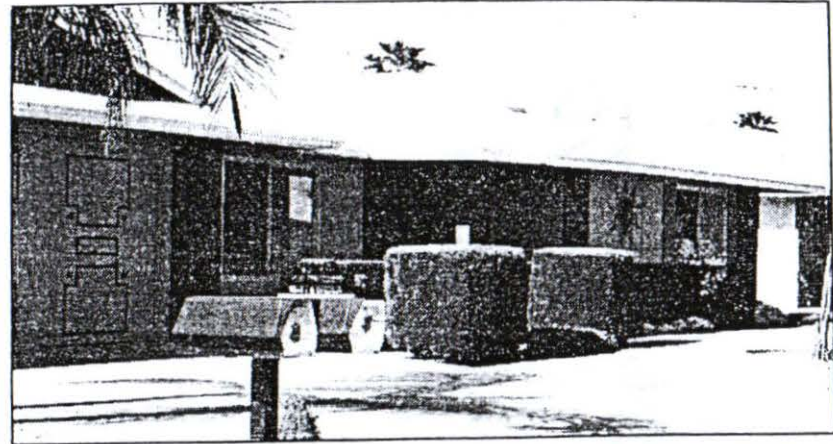
Continued from Page 1

lif., where Ed spent 12 years with the Alameda County Court System. In Sun City West, Clarice likes the lifestyle with swimming and biking. Ten years ago she initiated the Pebbelbrook Nine Holvers, Ladies golf.

Mary and Luman Wick came to Sun City West from Topeka, Kan. Luman was born in Salina, Kan., and Mary in Oklahoma. Mary attended Oklahoma State U and Luman received a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Washburn U, in topeka. Later, Wick worked for the U. S. dealing with government contracts. Mrs. Wick worked for the university of Illinois as a County Extension Agent. During WW II,



Clarice and Ed Uhl with their key to one of two first homes in SCW on Desert Glen Dr.



Photos, Stan Steciak

Luman served in the Quartermaster Corps.

Luman Wick then worked for General Motors, Frigidaire Division as general sales manager. His service covered almost 30 years. Needless to say, Mary and Luman had a close relationship because Mary also worked for the Frigidaire Division as a

Home Economist. The Wicks came to Sun City West in 1978, never realizing they would be the first pioneers. The wicks were home bodies and enjoyed each others company. Unfortunately, Luman Wick passed away on September 16, 1993. Mrs Wick said, "Luman did many important things in his lifetime. I think

the most important event in my life was when I married Luman."

Mary Wick enjoys our community and was happy to come here and to be a first pioneer, on October 16, 1978. She said, "It sure is nice to be one of the first in Sun City West. I like the loving people living here and I think I will stay".

THE WESTER

Oct. 7-13, 1993

## SCW Pioneers Celebrate 15th Anniversary

By Stan Steciak

The 15th anniversary of Del Webb's Sun City West will be a festive event for the SCW Pioneers. This group includes residents who moved into homes in SCW, and joined the Pioneers, between October 16, 1978 and December 31, 1979. Incidentally, the first residents were Clarice and Ed Uhl and Mary and Luman Wick. They were presented citations by Del Webb, to make it official. Membership was open to those "early settlers" until a few years ago and is now closed. The present membership numbers 586.

Mildred Tolrian has the unique distinction of being a Sun City Pioneer, and once its president, and later she was the first president of the Sun City West Pioneers. Mildred met with a group of Westers and they decided there should be a SCW Pioneers club. The SCW Pioneers had their first organizational meeting at the Sundome on March 16, 1984. Del Webb Corp. provided

the coffee and donuts. Webb still carries on that tradition at the yearly SCW Pioneers coffee and donuts meeting, every January. The Pioneers tend to be low key. They seem to like it that way. They do have two social events a year, one in Spring and one in Fall.

Under Mildred Toldrian's leadership, the Pioneers set guidelines, rules and effective dates for members. Mildred was first president, followed by Loise Copes, Dorothy Siek, Althea Curfman, Sol Robinson and present president Richard Hymes. With Hymes, the other 1993 officers are: VP Virginia Kelso; Sec'y. Frieda Schwartz; Treas. Helen Daniel; Historian Catherine Holst and PR person Emma Koos. It seems the SCW Pioneers have a penchant for being unique. Diminutive Frieda Schwartz, a most active member, was the first sec-

**SCW Pioneers**  
Continued on Page D3

## W Pioneers Celebrate 15th Anniversary

Continued from Page D1

retary and still holds that position.

Pres. Hymes said, "Of course, we are elated to help celebrate SCW's 15th anniversary. We certainly watched and enjoyed

the growth of our community.

Unfortunately, we are probably the only club whose membership will decrease as the years go by. Happy Anniversary to all".



SCW

THE WESTER

OCTOBER 7-13, 1993

## Del Webb 'Celebrates The Spirit Of Sun City West'

Fifteen days of special events are planned in celebration of Sun City West's 15th birthday.

The celebration is "kicked-off" with a performance by the Rhythm Tappers at the Stardust Theater, 14401 R. H. Johnson Blvd., on October 16 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. An official cake cutting ceremony is held at 1 p.m. at the R. H. Johnson Recreation Center Arts and Crafts Vil-

lage, 19803 R. H. Johnson Blvd., featuring Chuck Roach, Del Webb Corp. executive vice president, and Al Spanjer, SCW Governing Board president, handling the cake cutting honors.

From 1 to 3 p.m., all three of Sun City West's recreation centers will offer cake, punch and festive entertainment compliments of the Del Webb Corporation. At the Kuentz Recreation

Center, entertainment is provided by Theatre West, the Organ and Keyboard Club, the Musicians Club and the Westernaires Chorus. Dr. Sasparilla's Red Hot Jazz Band will play by the Kuentz pool from 3 to 5 p.m.

At the Beardsley Recreation Center ramadas, 12755 Beardsley Dr., crowds will be entertained by the Canyon State Western Band, and the Starlighters dance

band will play at the R. H. Johnson Recreation Center Arts and Crafts Village from 1 to 3 p.m.

Various Sun City West community clubs and organizations join the celebration by sponsoring special events and open houses from October 17 to 30. Watch the next issues of The Wester for dates and times of specific events.

SCW

# Pioneer settlers

## Couple become first to move into SCW expansion

By KATHLEEN WINSTEAD  
Sun Cities Independent

Eileen and Harold Haber love to move.

Fourteen years ago, the couple moved to Sun City where they lived for five years before eventually moving to Sun City West.

"We've moved several times," Mrs. Haber says. "Every time Del Webb Corp. makes a new series, they upgrade the comfort factor."

The couple then found the new homes in the newest expansion area too attractive to pass up and purchased one — becoming the first homeowners in the area.

They moved into a 1,643-square-foot home, the "second smallest house" available in the Sun City West expansion area, Mrs. Haber says.

"I wanted a different layout and I chose this house because I'm very conscious of the architecture," Mrs. Haber says. "I like the balance of this house on the inside. We had a little smaller house than this and we wanted more space.

---

"... 288 homes  
have been sold in  
the expansion area  
as of Aug. 18."

---

My husband loves to watch TV and sports and I don't like to watch sports."

The couple say this is their last move.

Martha Moyer, Del Webb's Community Relations Manager, says 288 homes had been sold in the expansion area as of Aug. 18.

In August 1992, Del Webb broke ground in the Sun City West expansion area between 135th and 151st avenues north of Deer Valley Drive. About 2,400 homes and 6,000 new residents will comprise the 1,320-acre expansion area, Ms. Moyer says.

Del Webb officials expect development in the expansion area to be completed some time in 1997.



Photo by KATHLEEN WINSTEAD/Sun Cities Independent

Eileen and Harold Haber, the first homeowners in the Sun City West expansion area, hold a "house" full of cookies presented to them by Del Webb Corp. officials.



Aug. 6-12, 1992

PIONEERS  
SCW

## The Uhl's Still Love SCW

Moved in October 1978

Story & Photos,  
Ed Troch

Remember that old saying, "The more things change, the more they stay the same?" In doing this story about the first residents who moved into what we now call Sun City West, it just seemed to pop out at us.

There was a youngster who was born and raised in the very vicinity of our Safeway store, who rode his bike, and later horses and then drove the proverbial pick-up truck. Little Louis is very much a part of today's SCW. The small community was then known as Lizard Acres, and it included a feed lot, the largest in Arizona we were told.

Then, along came a man and a dream. Del Webb's concept brought with it huge earth-moving machines, and the start of the sister city of Sun City. We called upon Ed and Clarice Uhl, the first of two to accept keys to their new residence, back in 1978.

Ed told us that he had selected his model from those in Sun City since there were NO models to choose from here. Clarice proudly showed us a photo taken in the kitchen of her home, and pointed to a pile of dirt just outside her kitchen window. "This pile of earth later became R.H. Johnson Boulevard," she stated.

Ed Uhl dreamed of just such a place, after serving a full 22 years in the Navy in the Submarine Service. He joined the Navy a few months before Pearl Harbor, and was just two days out of the Panama Canal when war broke out. He met his wife while in the

Navy, and they would travel to many places after the war. It was while living in California that they decided to make Arizona their home.

We asked if the many earthquakes they endured in California was a criteria in their move to Arizona. Ed smiled at the question. "No!" he told us. "While living in Japan we were in a big hotel when a quake hit. I was taking a bath, and Clarice was preparing dinner. The building shook so violently, I was tossed out of the tub onto the floor. Clarice was also thrown to the floor, and our dinner was all over the place. Now, THAT was a quake!" he smiled.

Along with the Wicks, Luman and Mary, they have the distinction of being the first to "take key" in our popular community. They like it so much, they said, that they have never left the valley in all of their 14 years as homeowners. Short trips, perhaps, but no snow-birding.

Ed says that wife Clarice is an avid golfer, hitting the links as much as three times a week. As for himself, he said he has plenty to keep him busy also. They no longer live in that original home they bought, having upgraded their lifestyle, as have many others.

Meanwhile, that young boy we mentioned at the start of this article, has since grown up, joined the fire department, and is now the commander of a group of firefighter/paramedics right here in Sun City West!

Now...getting back to that saying about how some things never change. Consider...first a feed-lot.

LITTLE LOUIS  
Continued on C4

## Little Louis Still Apart of SCW

Continued from Page C1

NOW a Safeway store. From Lizard Acres to Sun City West. Then, a young boy named Louis... now Capt. Louis Chappell, of our own Engine Co. #34.

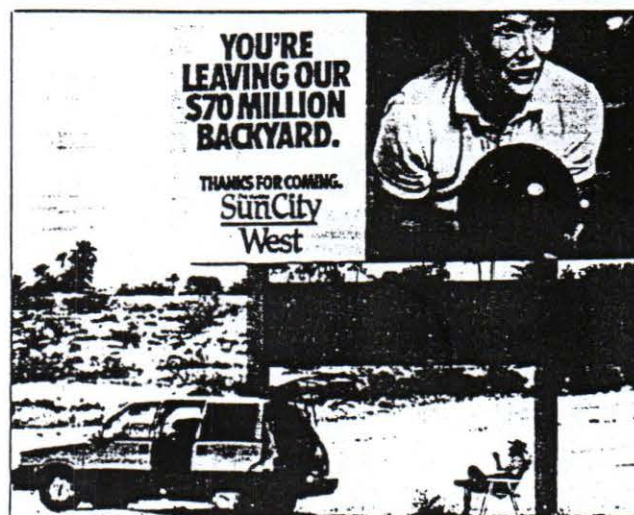
Another saying comes to mind. "What goes around, comes around". Thanks to Del Webb!



This sign points to what would become Sun City West.



Left are early visitors from as far away as Florida. Below a sign on Grand provides shade for a retiree in hopes of selling his car.



August 8-12, 1992

The photos on this page were graciously provided by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.



# "Two-Timer" Still Going Strong

Story & Photos,  
Mildred Baker

Mildred Toldrian is a self-styled "two-time pioneer". She and her husband Clarence were pioneers of Sun City by virtue of moving there from Milwaukee June 20, 1960. Having been widowed, Mildred moved to Sun City West in October 1978.

"I think I am the only "two-timer" left," she states.

She started the Pioneer Club and was elected first president at its first meeting March 6, 1984.

"In 1978," she reminisces, "there was no recreation center, no grocery store...just Crestview Restaurant and apartments for vacationers, who selected homes from models in Sun City. Sun City West residents had passes to use certain Sun City



Loise Copes, Don Tuffs, and Mildred Toldrian at Pioneers of Sun City West luncheon October 20, 1984.

restricted recreation center amenities".

many Sun City residents speculated on Sun City West properties, paying water, garbage, and rec center fees. Then when housing suffered a poor buying period, those multiple-house owners were not as fortunate as they

had anticipated.

In the meantime the Webb Company provided outings, parties, and trips for new residents, and Mildred became a tour guide.

She had been a resident about three months when.

**TWICE A PIONEER**  
Continued on Page C1

## Twice A Pioneer

Continued from Page 1

in 1979, she embarked on this new career.

She escorted groups to Mountain Shadows (which was owned by the Webb Company). For three years she directed trips to San Diego, San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, Laughlin, Canyon de Chelly, Nogales, Las Vegas, Wickenburg, etc. At the Vulture Mine travelers were warned, "Don't step on the rattlesnakes!"

"These trips were highly subsidized by Webb," she explains, "and were very popular with residents".

Mildred then became a tour guide for AARP, guiding 130 trips in eight and one-half years.

It would be difficult to



Mildred Toldrian, today

find another resident who has contributed so much over such a wide span of time to the ongoing progress of Sun City West. Volunteering at the local hospital is now the top priority for Mildred.



# 1978, A New Sun Rises In The West

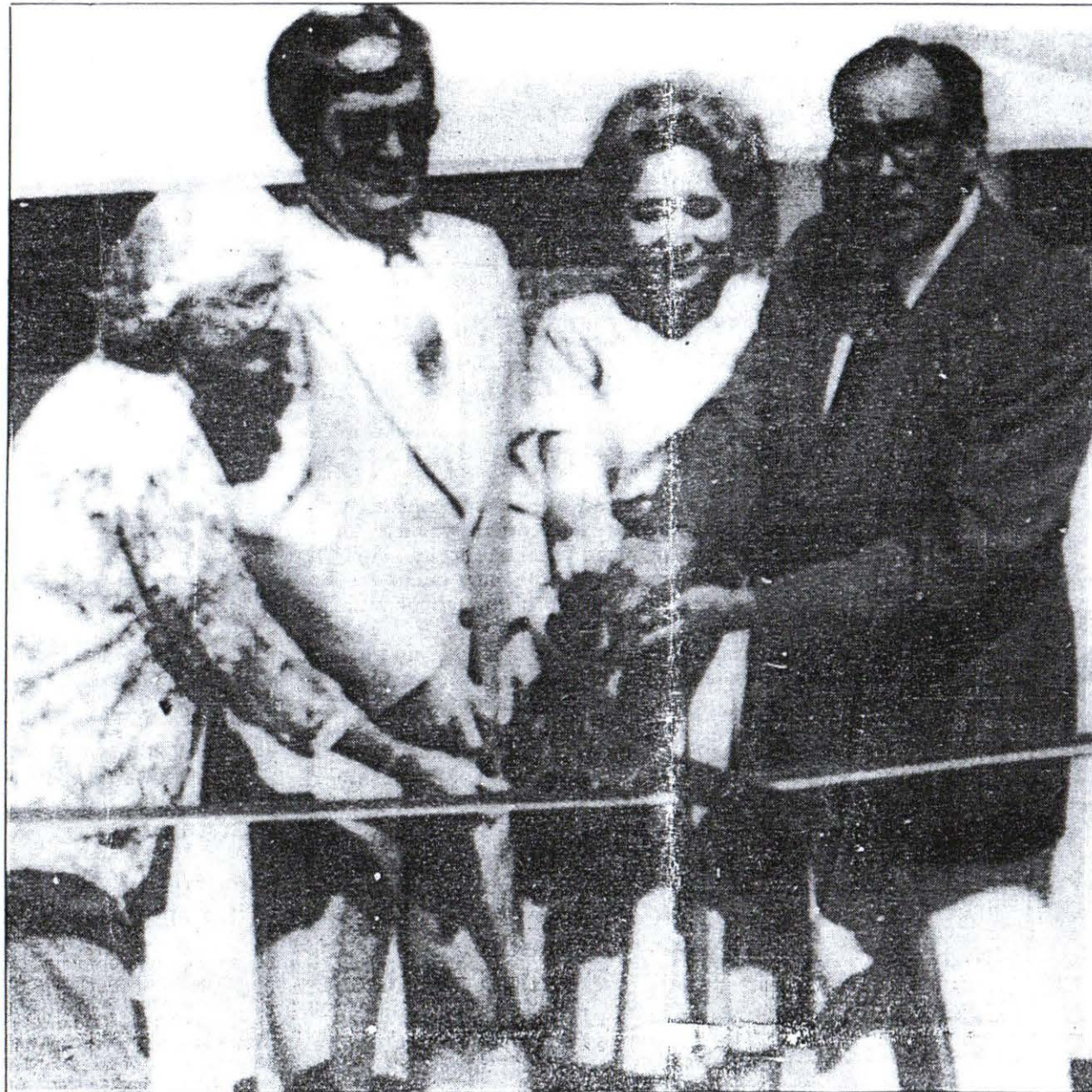
It took six years to happen, but happen it did! Del Webb purchased 11,000 acres west of the Agua Fria and north of Bell Road in 1972. In February of 1978, ground was broken for the creation of our present community. Next week ushers in the ground breaking for the expansion of our community. But what of the land use prior to this mega development?

For the most part, it was just desert. Home to the ground squirrels, jackrabbits, an assortment of snakes and of course, lizards among other native wildlife. About 1800 of those acres belonged to J.C. "Charlie" Wetzler who started a cattle operation known as the Circle One Livestock Company in 1945. It was basically a feed lot, where cattle are shipped from all over the country to fatten for market, some from as far away as Florida.

The name "Lizard Acres" was developed so that shippers could not mistake

NEW SUN

Continued on Page C1



## First Residents

Clarice Uhl (l.) and Mary & Luman Wick (r.) join John Meeker to cut the ribbon that officially opens Sun City West. The photo is dated Oct. 16, 1978. Today Clarice & Ed Uhl proudly display their 1st Citizen Plaque given them by the Del Webb Corp.

(See "The Uhl's" and more historic photos Section C).



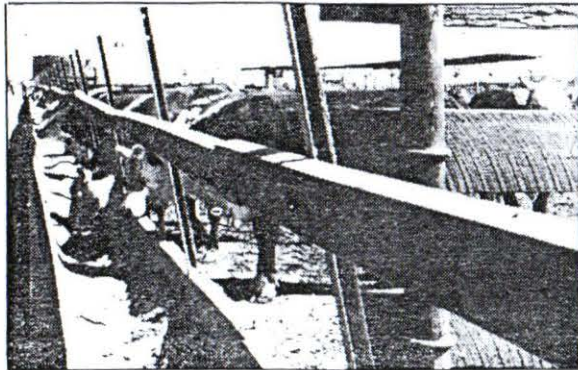
Over



*Lizard Acres*

**SPURLOCK & WETZLER  
FEED LOT  
— I MILE —**

This sign points to what would become Sun City West.



Left are early visitors from as far away as Florida. Below a sign on Grand provides shade for a retiree in hopes of selling his car.

## A New Sun in The West

Continued from Page 1

their cattle's destination. During its heyday, they were feeding as many as 25,000 head at one time and were one of the nations largest feed lots.

I first met Charlie in 1972 when we were members of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral at Central and Roosevelt in Phoenix. He really took to our children, but until I began researching this story, I never knew he was the son of a pioneer Arizona family and had been working with cattle in Arizona since 1920. Charlie passed away in March of 1982, but had a chance to see the beginnings of his new "Lizard Acres". In his memory, we still have the tiny silver barbell he presented to our son Adam on his christening in October 1974 at the Cathedral. Thank you again Charlie and thank you for Sun City West (well, at least your part of it).

So by April of 1978 earthmovers had carved

out of raw desert the heart of Sun City West. In the aerial view of that rough-out (Section C), a real old-timer can distinguish in that photo many familiar sites. We've numbered them 1 through 9.

The first seven are familiar structures, while 8, 9 and 10 are now streets. The first three people to come into our offices with all ten guessed correctly will win \$15 cash. If you are a subscriber to The Wester, the prize money is \$25. Remember, you must guess all 10 to win the prizes. We will repeat the photo weekly until we have three winners. Please write your correctly numbered answers from 1 to 10 on a plain piece of paper with your name, address and phone number clearly printed and bring them to our offices during regular business hours. Wester employees, subcontractors and members of the Sun Cities Historical Society are ineligible to

win prizes.

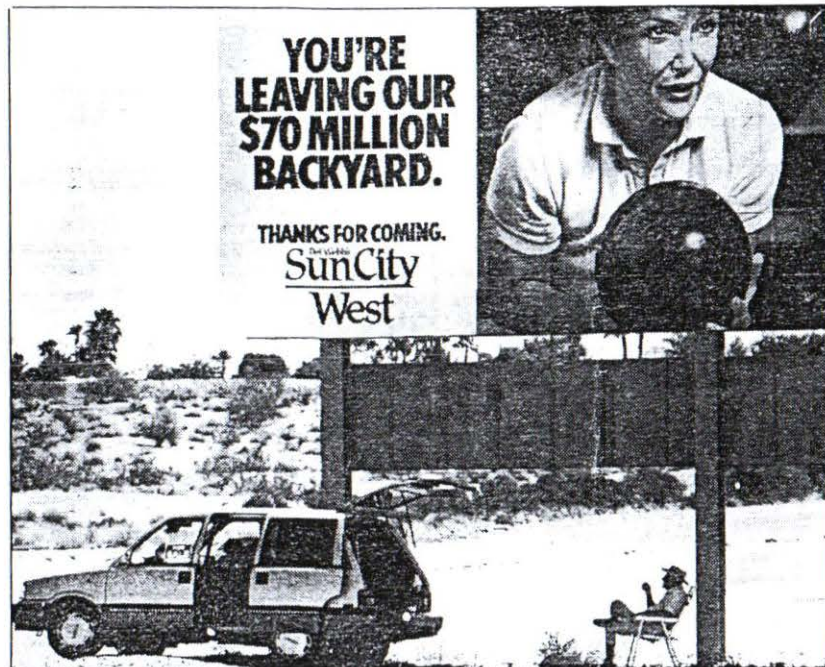
By September 1978, the first real buildings were taking shape and in late December, the grand opening of the Crestview occurred. Our waitress Monday night, Retha Simmons, was there and has been since, except for a brief sojourn back to Kings Inn. Retha remembered, "I don't remember a lot of the parties, but I do remember the winter rains. Nothing was paved... not the parking lots, not the streets...nothing. We came to work and left in a sea of mud". She did, however, remember the beautiful ice sculptures that were present at most of the banquets.

This is the first of a 15 part series. Each week we will detail the next consecutive year through 1992. Next week, 1979.

Should you have any remembrances of any year up to and including 1992, please share them with us at The Wester,

13540 Camino del Sol, Suite 15. Business hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or you can phone us at 584-2992.

Editors Note: "A New Sun Rising in the West" is a year by year anthology of the birth and growth of our community. It is not intended to be a historical reconstruction of Sun City West. Our interest is purely our neighbors remembrances and events that brought us up to today. We would like to acknowledge our own Joyce Salfingere for planting the seed, our managing editor, Cal Snyder, for making it happen, our great writers for the stories, and you, our readers, for supporting us in what we do. Cal Snyder, our bionic editor, is in serious condition at Good Samaritan Hospital in Phoenix, so I took the liberty of getting this series underway. "I think you'd want it that way Cal". Your friend and publisher, Frank Kahler.





SCW

# Sun City West pioneers celebrate early days

By JENNIFER ARP  
Daily News-Sun staff

**SUN CITY WEST** — Hundreds of retirees flocked to the retirement community a decade ago in search of friendship and a climate conducive to year-round activities.

For the earliest couples to settle into the first dwellings on Desert Glen and Maplewood Drives, Sun City West offered only a few of the amenities it has today.

"We didn't have any street lights or anything. No swimming pools, no stores, nothing," recalled Dorothy Siek, president-elect of the Sun City West Pioneers Club.

Siek joined 300 fellow pioneers at an anniversary dinner Sunday night commemorating the 10th anniversary of the first settlement in Sun City West.

It was a night for reminiscing and saluting good friends and neighbors who had since died.

Everyone at the dinner had settled in Sun City West by Dec. 31, 1979 — the cutoff date for membership in the pioneers club.

Virginia Kelso was among the first handful of residents to brave dirt roads and isolation in November 1978.

She recalled being the first one to register for membership in the fledgling Our Lady of the Lourdes Catholic Church congregation and being about sixth in line for a water hookup.

Kelso and other pioneers participated in Del Webb Corp.

sponsored bus tours of the Phoenix area and points of interest statewide.

"That's what got people together," said tour bus operator Mildred Todrian, a pioneer club founder who moved from Sun City to Sun City West in October 1978.

Todrian, a Sun City Pioneer, said she decided to switch communities after her husband died.

"When you retire you can go any place you want to. I decided this (Sun City West) was for me. I picked up all my good memories and left all the sick (declining health of her husband and neighbors) memories there."

Asked what lured her to a then-stark Sun City West, Kelso replied, "My husband's health, a pioneer spirit and year-round country club resort living."

Siek recalled warming to a strong sense of camaraderie when she first arrived in early 1979.

"You never went down the street where you didn't talk to everybody," she said. "There was a lot more friendliness then because we were small, because we were stuck out here in the sticks with the orange trees and cotton fields."

Nevertheless, Siek said she has enjoyed watching Sun City West grow. "I kind of think it's a good thing," she said.

Although the pioneers club steers clear of political controversy, Siek said she person-

ally would like to see Sun City West incorporate.

"I'd like to have control over what's coming in here," she said.

Other pioneers attending the anniversary dinner at the R.H. Johnson Social Hall said incorporation was a bad idea.

"I'm very happy with the way

**'You never went down the street where you didn't talk to everybody. There was a lot more friendliness then because we were small, because we were stuck out here in the sticks with the orange trees and cotton fields.'**

Dorothy Siek  
president-elect  
Sun City West Pioneers Club

it is," said Ann Fischer, a pioneer from Cincinnati, Ohio.

Ruth Siebert, a pioneer who moved to Sun City West when the golf course behind her home "was nothing but mud," also wants to maintain the status quo.

"I just feel there's no place on earth like this. It's absolutely a paradise and it gets better all the time."



Wednesday, October 12, 1988

# SUN CITIES

## Original Westers roughed it in early days

By Connie Cone Sexton  
Phoenix Gazette

**SUN CITY WEST** — Mildred Toldrian sliced into her steak, jabbed a piece with her fork then paused before taking the morsel to her mouth.

She gave a slight smile and set the utensil down. Her meal had been interrupted several times to say hello to friends, give a hand pat to people as they walked by and finally, to answer a reporter's questions about the early days of Sun City West. Never mind the

quickly cooling steak, she said, reassuringly. She'd be more than happy to reflect awhile.

Sitting around Toldrian were hundreds of other original settlers of Sun City West who met Sunday for an annual meeting and to celebrate their community's 10th birthday.

Toldrian is one of the founders of the Sun City Pioneers Club. She said the group got its start with the help of Del E. Webb Corp., the community's developer.

"We all started back in 1978 and '79, getting together for coffee and doughnuts to meet people and to have something to do. We didn't have a rec center, we didn't have a swimming pool, we didn't even have a grocery store out here, back then," she said.

About 2,000 people moved into the community during the first 18 months. Without any of the recreational facilities in place, the residents did a lot of visiting, Toldrian said.

The early days were fun but things in Sun City West certainly got a little easier when the amenities were finally in place.

It had been the second go-round for Toldrian in watching a retirement community grow up.

She also had been a pioneer of Sun City. "I moved here June 20, 1960, and I moved into Sun City West on Oct. 20 1978. My husband had died and I needed a change," she said.

Toldrian took a bite of the

steak and munched while she thought. She turned her head to survey the crowd that had come for this year's gathering. "We've got about 1,000 members, now. You can only belong if you moved in during 1978 and 1979. Our numbers will start going down more as time goes on," she said.

When asked about the future of Sun City West, she cocked her head in the direction of Sun City.

"I think we can learn from what they've experienced. The problems they have had," Toldrian said.

Sun City residents have been long been divided over the issue of whether to incorporate.

Del Webb Corp. removed itself from the community once it was fully developed and the company's absence seemed to heat up the incorporation debate. There were other contributing factors such as a slow economy, causing an ebb in home sales, an aging population and some concern over having to rely on county officials for the planning of the retirement community.

Sun City West still operates under the watchful eye of Del Webb Corp., whose officials monitor events that can affect the area.

Toldrian has faith in the Sun City West Property Owners and

Residents Association to help direct the residents.

A woman wheeled a cart of biscuits by her table and Toldrian punctured a small one with her fork. "This is a great place to live. I think we have a special bunch of people here."

Her praise of the community was echoed dozens of times by others at the meeting.

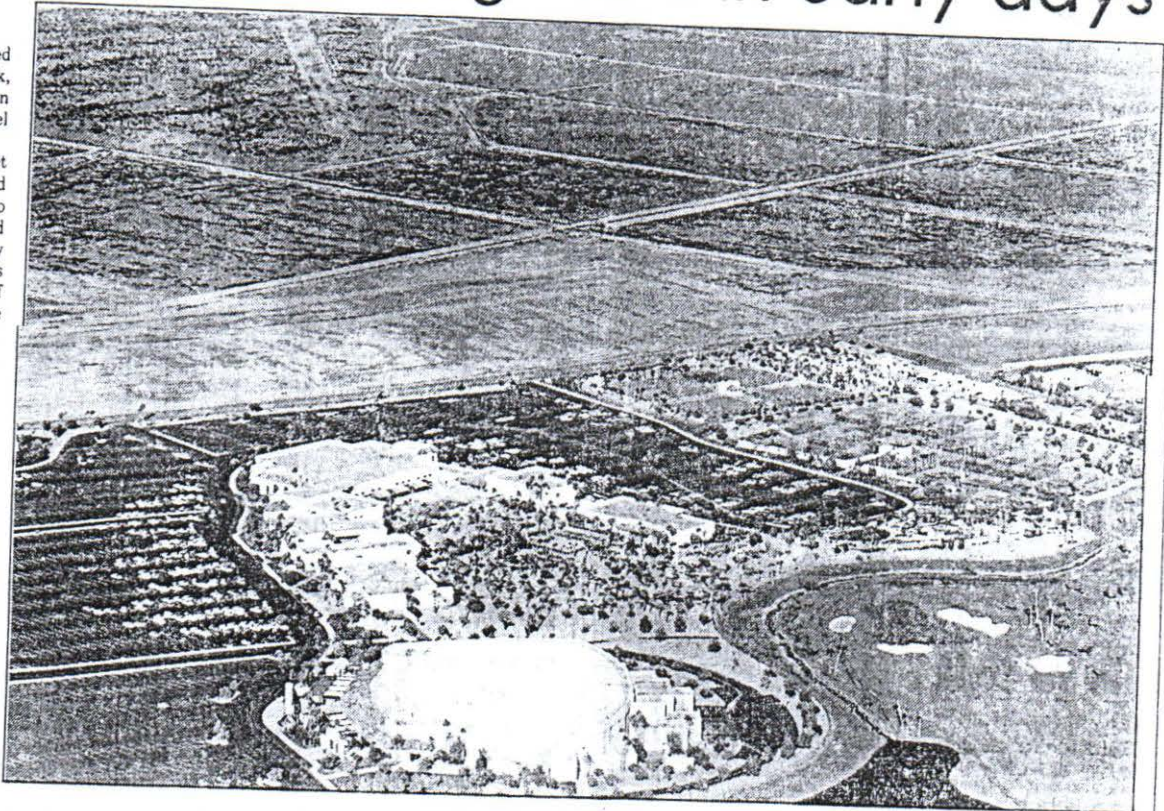
Ruth Spiegelberg moved to Sun City West in 1979 from Maryland. "Everybody here helps everybody else. Everybody is so caring and so friendly. And the community is just beautiful and so clean," she said.

John Spaulding, who moved

here 10 years ago from Chicago, nodded his head as she spoke. "I wouldn't live any place else," he said.

Edward Pinter moved to Sun City West in 1978 from Westchester, Ill. "I got tired going to work in the dark and coming home in the dark," he said.

But Ray White, a former Long Island, N.Y., resident, said it hasn't all been easy living in the community. "Remember the 100-year-flood we had years ago? I lost a pair of loafers. I put them outside and when I went to get them, then were gone. The loafers are probably still down there, somewhere," he said.



Land that was undeveloped in 1985 west of the Sundome now is full of houses.

Phoenix Gazette



SCW

## Pioneers to form in West <sup>2-28-84</sup>

A Sun City West Pioneer Club is being formed with the first meeting set for March 6.

Anyone who moved into the community between Oct. 16, 1978, and Dec. 31, 1979, is eligible to join.

The organizational meeting and "get together" will be at 9 a.m. in Johnson Social Hall.

Behind the organizational effort is Mildred Toldrian, who moved to Sun City West on Oct. 27, 1978. "Being one of the first residents, a great many of my friends are also pioneers," she said.

Del E. Webb Development Co., in addition to providing her with the names of the first group of residents, has offered to sponsor the organizational meeting.



### Pioneers of SCW

Officers of the Pioneers of Sun City West are from left, Loise Copes, vice president; Freida Schwartz, secretary; Sol Roberts,

treasurer and Mildred Toldrian, president. Mrs. Schwartz is addressing invitations to the first luncheon at the Lakes Club on Oct.

20. Membership is open to persons who resided in SCW during 1978 and 1979. (News-Sun photo)



# Community's 2nd family hails SCW as No. 1

By ROSA De SIMONE  
Daily News-Sun staff

"No regrets."

After almost 15 years in Sun City West, Clarice and Edward Uhl said they can honestly claim complete satisfaction.

"I wouldn't live anywhere else but

here," Clarice said.

The Uhls were one of the first two couples to move to Sun City West Oct. 16, 1978 — but even back then, before the community had a recreation center, they knew it was for them.

They had been visiting the Sun

Cities area since 1962, to see Clarice's mother and aunt who lived in Youngtown.

While in the area, they generally stayed at the Kings Inn. But one year the inn had no vacancies — a predicament that motivated the Uhls to See Couple embraces, D4

## Couple embraces SCW lifestyle

—From D1

look into a new community to be called Sun City West.

"We made a commitment here before we even considered selling our place in (Alameda) California because we clearly saw the future," Edward said.

They sold their Alameda home and settled into Sun City West to live that vision.

"I saw a new lifestyle — a good future for working people because they could now afford a new home in a new community," Edward said.

It was the opportunity to live in a "new community" that attracted the Uhls, Clar-

ice said.

Their first home was house No. 6, the last of Del Webb Corp.'s first half-dozen built in Sun City West on Desert Glen Drive.

During the building, the Uhls lived in Sun City — close enough for them to visit the construction site.

"You had to go over huge ruts and sometimes you couldn't make it because there were no roads," Edward said.

"Our view out of the back window was a dirt pile, which later turned out to be R.H. Johnson Boulevard," Edward recalled.



Deirdre Hamill / Staff photographer

"I don't want to ever live any place else," says Clarice Uhl of Sun City West. "The people are so friendly and nice." Uhl and her husband, Ed, were among the first residents of the development when it opened in 1978.

13225 Desert Glen



## SCW pioneers recall early days

By ROSA De SIMONE  
Daily News-Sun staff

It may not have been the Wild West, but Luman and Mary Wick were pioneers in their own right — they were among the first settlers of Sun City West.

The Wicks, leaving Topeka, Kan., behind, were one of the first couples to move into Sun City West on Oct. 16, 1978.

"I can remember driving out on Bell Road west of Sun City and looking over where Sun City West was to be located and it was a cattle feed lot," Luman said. "I told the (Realtor) who was with me that 'no way do I want to live out there' and he assured me the cattle feed lot would be taken away."

Although the community was somewhat deserted then, Luman knew that would not last.

"We were informed that Sun City West would be larger than Sun City, which was then 45,000," Luman said.

"I knew that the city was supposed to be bigger than it is now, but I didn't know it would be north of here," he said referring to the community's expansion north of Deer Valley Drive.

Whether the expansion, referred to as Phase II, was a go-ahead at the original site south of Grand Avenue or north of Deer Valley Drive, Luman said he had no gripes then or now.



Stephen Chermek/Daily News

Luman and Mary Wick moved from Topeka, Kan., to be among the first residents of Sun City West.



SCW

# "Two-Timer" Still Going Strong

Story & Photos,  
Mildred Baker

Mildred Toldrian is a self-styled "two-time pioneer". She and her husband Clarence were pioneers of Sun City by virtue of moving there from Milwaukee June 20, 1960. Having been widowed, Mildred moved to Sun City West in October 1978.

"I think I am the only "two-timer" left," she states.

She started the Pioneer Club and was elected first president at its first meeting March 6, 1984.

"In 1978," she reminisces, "there was no recreation center, no grocery store...just Crestview Restaurant and apartments for vacationers, who selected homes from models in Sun City. Sun City West residents had passes to use certain Sun City



Loise Copes, Don Tuffs, and Mildred Toldrian at Pioneers of Sun City West luncheon October 20, 1984.

restricted recreation center amenities".

many Sun City residents speculated on Sun City West properties, paying water, garbage, and rec center fees. Then when housing suffered a poor buying period, those multiple-house owners were not as fortunate as they

had anticipated.

In the meantime the Webb Company provided outings, parties, and trips for new residents, and Mildred became a tour guide.

She had been a resident about three months when,

**TWICE A PIONEER**  
Continued on Page C1

## Twice A Pioneer

Continued from Page 1

in 1979, she embarked on this new career.

She escorted groups to Mountain Shadows (which was owned by the Webb Company). For three years she directed trips to San Diego, San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, Laughlin, Canyon de Chelly, Nogales, Las Vegas, Wickenburg, etc. At the Vulture Mine travelers were warned, "Don't step on the rattlesnakes!"

"These trips were highly subsidized by Webb," she explains, "and were very popular with residents".

Mildred then became a tour guide for AARP, guiding 130 trips in eight and one-half years.

It would be difficult to



Mildred Toldrian, today

find another resident who has contributed so much over such a wide span of time to the ongoing progress of Sun City West. Volunteering at the local hospital is now the top priority for Mildred.

THE WESTER Aug. 6-12, 1992



# Uhls record SCW firsts

By KATHIE PRICE  
Staff Writer

Clarice Uhl decided to preserve hers and husband Edward's pioneer years in Sun City West in a special scrapbook. It's the first time she's displayed mementos of a community she's lived in.

But it's also the first time the Uhls have been among the first residents. In fact, Clarice picked up the couple's key to their Desert Glen Drive home Oct. 16, 1978. It was the same day the other "first" couple, the Wicks, picked up their key.

Clarice proudly displays the key plaque and ceramic plate honoring the couple as first residents. But she is equally proud of her scrapbook. She has the ribbon cut at the first opening ceremonies in Sun City West, pictures of their house under construction, copies of activities calendars and other paraphernalia.

**THE COUPLE** has lived in Hawaii, Japan and California. Edward, in the Navy's submarine service for 22 years, also lived in South America and Australia. But he, originally from Chicago, and she, a York, Pa., native, have settled in Sun City West for retirement.

When Edward retired from the Navy in 1962 the couple moved to Alameda, Calif., in the east bay of the San Francisco, Oakland area.

"California is hard to beat," admits Edward. "But it is overcrowded there. Too much of a rat race. It just wasn't a desirable retirement area."

The Uhls had been visiting Clarice's mother and aunt in their Youngtown residence for 18 years. But they say they "really didn't look at Sun City on our visits."

**THEN**, after a number of stays at the King's Inn, they took a look at the model homes in Sun City.

"What we saw decided it for us," Edward says. "At that time we knew nothing of plans for a Sun City West."

They spent close to a year in their Sun City home before the move west.

"We decided to move to Sun City West because it would be closer to things of interest to us," Edward says. "Luke Air Force Base is closer and so was Clarice's mother. It's a beautiful setting out here with the mountains all around."

**"WE LIKED** the idea of being pioneers in a new

community," adds Clarice.

When October rolled around Edward was in the hospital having a foot operation so Clarice moved into the Sun City West home alone.

"I'm used to it," she says. "Being a Navy wife you are alone sometimes. I had my neighbors from



Edward and Clarice Uhl lived in Sun City a year before moving to their Sun City West home. The Uhls were one of two couples to pick up SCW keys. (News-Sun Photo)

OVER



Sun City. Still, it seemed like a ghost town out there at first."

The couple completed moving in late March. They've spent most of their time like other new residents, planting trees, reupholstering furniture and buying drapes.

CLARICE HAS found time to join the bike club, a bowling league and swimming daily. Edward enjoys occasional golfing and says he'd like to try out the jogging track. Both bike for three miles each evening.

They are definitely satisfied with their choice.

"What you get for your money here is unbelievable," Edward says. "I can't believe so much could be had in view of inflation. The house may not be as well constructed as you find in Chicago or New York. But we don't need that here. Del Webb Development has made the transition very pleasant for us."

The Uhls selected their home site because of the wall along Johnson Boulevard behind the lot. But when they moved in Johnson Boulevard was one lane with no walls.

"THERE was no construction on the other side of Johnson Boulevard either," recalls Edward. "It's much cleaner here now because there was a lot of dust with construction. The landscaping just completed on the duplexes has really enhanced this area. We're amazed at what's done every day."

Clarice says she plans to use the library often. Both were at the library's opening.

"I'll be happy when they finish the shopping center," adds Clarice. "We shop at the base commissary but I always seem to forget something. The grocery store will be right up the road from us."



# The Uhl's Still Love SCW

Moved in October 1978

Story & Photos,  
Ed Troch

Remember that old saying, "The more things change, the more they stay the same?" In doing this story about the first residents who moved into what we now call Sun City West, it just seemed to pop out at us.

There was a youngster who was born and raised in the very vicinity of our Safeway store, who rode his bike, and later horses and then drove the proverbial pick-up truck. Little Louis is very much a part of today's SCW. The small community was then known as Lizard Acres, and it included a feed lot, the largest in Arizona we were told.

Then, along came a man and a dream. Del Webb's concept brought with it huge earth-moving machines, and the start of the sister city of Sun City. We called upon Ed and Clarice Uhl, the first of two to accept keys to their new residence, back in 1978.

Ed told us that he had selected his model from those in Sun City since there were NO models to choose from here. Clarice proudly showed us a photo taken in the kitchen of her home, and pointed to a pile of dirt just outside her kitchen window. "This pile of earth later became R.H. Johnson Boulevard," she stated.

Ed Uhl dreamed of just such a place, after serving a full 22 years in the Navy in the Submarine Service. He joined the Navy a few months before Pearl Harbor, and was just two days out of the Panama Canal when war broke out. He met his wife while in the

Navy, and they would travel to many places after the war. It was while living in California that they decided to make Arizona their home.

We asked if the many earthquakes they endured in California was a criteria in their move to Arizona. Ed smiled at the question. "No!" he told us. "While living in Japan we were in a big hotel when a quake hit. I was taking a bath, and Clarice was preparing dinner. The building shook so violently, I was tossed out of the tub onto the floor. Clarice was also thrown to the floor, and our dinner was all over the place. Now, THAT was a quake!" he smiled.

Along with the Wicks, Luman and Mary, they have the distinction of being the first to "take key" in our popular community. They like it so much, they said, that they have never left the valley in all of their 14 years as homeowners. Short trips, perhaps, but no snow-birding.

Ed says that wife Clarice is an avid golfer, hitting the links as much as three times a week. As for himself, he said he has plenty to keep him busy also. They no longer live in that original home they bought, having upgraded their lifestyle, as have many others.

Meanwhile, that young boy we mentioned at the start of this article, has since grown up, joined the fire department, and is now the commander of a group of firefighter/paramedics right here in Sun City West!

Now...getting back to that saying about how some things never change. Consider...first a feed-lot,

LITTLE LOUIS  
Continued on C4

## Little Louis Still Apart of SCW

Continued from Page C1

NOW a Safeway store. From Lizard Acres to Sun City West. Then, a young boy named Louis... now Capt. Louis Chappell, of our own Engine Co. #34.

Another saying comes to mind. "What goes around, comes around". Thanks to Del Webb!

The photos on this page were graciously provided by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.



SCW



Mrs. Edward Uhl; John Meeker, Del E. Webb Development Co. president; and Mr. and Mrs. Luman Wick wield oversized scissors to accomplish the ribbon-cutting which welcomed the Uhls and Wicks as first Sun City West residents.

(News-Sun Photo)

POP. 4

# SC West opens

Sun City West's population reached four Monday — and growing.

The first Sun City West residents received their house keys after a short ceremony featuring remarks by John Meeker, president of Del E. Webb Development Co.

"The shaping of Sun City West will be a cooperative venture between the Del E. Webb Development Co. and new residents," said Meeker.

"We will encourage positive interaction between Sun City and Sun City West people," he added.

**THE CEREMONY** concluded with the cutting of a red, white and blue ribbon stretched between two barbecue grills.

Those grills were later presented to the first two couples moving to Sun City West, Mr. and Ms. Luman Wick of Topeka, Kan., and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Uhl of Sun City. Uhl was unable to attend because he is recovering from recent foot surgery.

"For several months we have been developing facilities; now this new community will begin developing personality because, as has been stated on many occasions in the past, people make the community," said Meeker.

**THE WEBB** president said that new Sun City Westers will organize civic, recreational and cultural groups with

the assistance of Webb "and we hope that of Sun City."

The developer also will hold coffees, potlucks and picnics for Sun City West newcomers to become acquainted, Meeker said.

In addition to the barbecue grills, the first Sun City Westers received a special clock plaque and the promise of beef for their first cookouts on the grills.

**WEBB OFFICIALS** said Sun City West's population will reach 30 by the end of the first month, although construction still continues in the area.

A total of 1,191 houses, 302 garden apartments and 326 vacation apartments are under construction in the first phase of Sun City West, Webb officials estimated.

About 80 units are being completed each week, with a projection that 900 units will be finished by the end of the year.

The \$6 million Johnson Recreation Center is under construction, as does the 6,800-seat Sundome indoor theater, 19 model homes, a restaurant and two golf courses.

Webb projects about 32,500 residents in Sun City West's first phase, located north of Grand Avenue. They estimate total cost of the five-year project at about \$1 billion.



SCW



The Wicks discovered a new refreshing drink when they moved to Sun City West from Kansas a year ago. Mary pours some sun tea when Luman gets home from the golf course.

(News-Sun photo by Rick Smith)

## Wicks were first to move to SCW

By KATHIE PRICE  
Staff Writer

Their home is a cool pastel green brightened further by large islands of lush green grass in the front and back yards. Sheer mint colored drapes lend a cooling atmosphere to the interior as sentimental objects and antiques warm the rooms. Step off the long lanai and you see similar neatly landscaped yards in both directions.

Mary and Luman Wick still have the only house on Maplewood Drive with grass, but there was a time recently that they had the only house. The Wicks are the first residents of Sun City West. On Oct. 17 they

will be celebrating their first year in their Arizona home.

When they first saw Sun City West their property was filled with grazing cattle. Even after they moved in, "we were in the middle of a desert" says Mary.

JOHNSON Boulevard was only a two-lane road and only two streets of homes were near completion, adds Luman. There was nothing south of Bell Road, he says. North of the Wicks' house construction was in varying stages.

"It was eerie but not frightening to be all alone out here," Mary says. "We do have friends in Sun City but we had no phone at first and didn't even know how to get to a hospital."

The Wicks spent their first week in a garden apartment. Their home was supposed to be ready Oct. 1 but was delayed. The following six months was filled with getting settled, buying draperies, landscaping and just becoming familiar with the area.

"WE WERE too busy to be lonely," Mary says. "But I almost overpowered our first neighbors, who like us, were from Kansas. The people who have moved into Sun City West are lovely."

The Wicks, in their 60s, are originally from Topeka. They shopped around for a retirement home before selecting Sun City West, touring Florida, California and the Brownsville, Texas, area.

"But we felt we belonged here," says Mary. "I feel you either like desert living or you don't. California real estate was very inflated. And we didn't want to have a dual residence because we wanted all our things in one place."

Luman, a former Frigidaire division manager, retired in 1974. Mary had retired several years before from her job as a Frigidaire home economist. They took time to adjust to retirement.

"WE DIDN'T come out here immediately after retiring," Mary says. "By standing back and taking a look at ourselves and Luman still working part time, we were more wise as to what we wanted for retirement."

Like many who migrate to Arizona, the Wicks were leaving behind bitter and severe winters. Luman's open heart surgery required that he get regular exercise.

OVER



"I had to go to shopping malls and walk around during the winter for my exercise," says a now well-tanned Luman. "Now I play golf a lot, swim and play pool. We wanted to be able to enjoy the winter time."

Besides his sports, Luman is on the Property Owners and Residents Association board. He feels it is needed because "there's a lot that we can't do as individuals."

**MARY HAS** taken an interest in ceramics, but neither of them is an activity fanatic. Yet they appreciate what the community has to offer its residents.

"We're still the same people as before," Mary says. "We enjoy being together at home a lot but we also enjoy going out. Still, it's just not in my nature to schedule activities. The couple behind us is busy all the time."

"There's something for everyone," agrees Luman. "You can do something every hour. If you can't find anything you're hard to please."

The rapid growth of their new community has impressed the Wicks. When they attended the first social events only 10 to 15 houses were inhabited, says Mary.

"**THEN** suddenly I didn't know anyone," she laughs. "I kept saying 'where did they come from?' It is amazing when you look back at the progress. There were more 'For Sale' signs than you could shake a stick at, but now they're all gone."

The Wicks arrived in Sun City West knowing there would be no shopping centers or even a recreation facility for a while. While they are happy to see stores going up, the situation hasn't really bothered them.

"We knew it would only be temporary," says Luman. "We do have a freezer where we can stock up. But it's not much further to drive than when you live in the city."

The couple say they never planned to be the first residents. It just happened that way.

"We saw a model home in Sun City then picked a different floor plan," recalls Mary. "Then they sent us a map to pick out a lot. Another couple picked up their keys the same day we did but we moved in first. How many people today are the first residents of a town and then have a private city all to themselves?"

**THEY FIND** their neighbors in Sun City West more content than those in a working community. Luman says it's because the tension of earning a living is gone.

"People here are basically very happy," adds Mary. "They're very relaxed and it's a different perspective. They can use time rather than time using them. I find because we're without stores nearby that we all borrow more, like oleo or a cup of sugar."

The Wicks, who are fascinated with history, plan numerous sidetrips to parts of Arizona. They want "to feel like residents of the state."

"We're the kind of travelers who take time to read historical markers," Luman says.



THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

## Real Estate

B-14 Sun., Jan. 8, '78



The courtyard of the Sun Drome Theater planned at Sun City West.

## Sun City West started

Construction has begun on Sun City West, which someday is expected to have 75,000 residents, nearly two-thirds more than the original Sun City a mile to the east.

The Del E. Webb Development Co., subsidiary of Del E. Webb Corp. of Phoenix, said the new community's first phase will encompass 5,700 acres that will eventually accommodate 32,500 residents. The total site is 13,000 acres.

The original Sun City, now nearly completed, has 8,900 acres and 42,000 residents. Begun 18 years ago, Sun City today is the largest resort-retirement community in the nation and one of the best known.

Sun City also is Arizona's seventh-largest city, and includes 10 golf courses, six recreation centers, six shopping centers, a 7,500-seat outdoor amphitheater, a baseball stadium used by the Milwaukee Brewers, and Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital, a modern, 250-bed facility.

Work underway is focused on building the main and arterial streets in Sun City West and preparing its main core area.

The core area will feature a recreation center; commercial buildings; vacation special apartments; model homes and sales complex; the Sun Drome, a 7,000-seat theater, and an 18-hole golf course. The developer said 2.4 million yards of soil will be moved to make way for the sunken golf course. The master plan for the entire first phase has been approved by Maricopa County and development will proceed without interruption, the company said.

Upon completion in seven to nine years, the first phase of Sun City West will include housing valued at about \$817 million. It will include 17,000 housing units, approximately 65 percent of which will be single-family dwellings and the remaining 35 percent condominiums.

In addition to the 18-hole golf course in the core of Sun City West, the first phase will have five other 18-hole golf courses, two other recreation centers, three neighborhood shopping centers, six additional commercial sites for gas stations

and financial institutions, a hospital, fire station, cemetery and more than 10 church sites. There also will be a medical and professional office complex, and an area for nursing home and extended-care facilities.

The developer predicted that Sun City West will "have great economic impact on the Phoenix metropolitan area."

"During first-phase construction an impact estimated at \$662 million will be made on the construction trades and areas directly or indirectly affected," said John W. Meeker, president of Del E. Webb Development Co.

"Construction and related areas will provide jobs for approximately 55,588 workers over the projected development period."

Meeker said that, in addition, a need will be generated for about 2,100 jobs in retail and service areas and another 350 jobs in the administration and professional areas such as law, finance, health and medical fields.

Meeker also noted that, like Sun City, the new community will provide millions of dollars in new taxable wealth to Arizona and Maricopa County.

Total assessed valuation of the completed phase I master plan is estimated by Meeker to be \$101 million (in 1976 dollars) based on current assessing criteria and a development pattern as specified in the master plan report.

He said it is estimated that 80 percent of the residents of Sun City West will come from other states.

Since moving to Arizona, Sun City residents have created tax revenue through the purchase of automobiles, boats and recreation vehicles, he said. The 1,300 such vehicles parked in the Sun City recreational storage compound are valued at around \$12.5 million.

Valley National Bank, in the November "Arizona Progress," reported the average per-person expenditure for retail goods and services by Sun City residents was \$3,830 in 1977. With its present 42,000 population, Sun City's economic impact on the county and state exceeds \$152 million annually in retail sales

alone, Meeker said.

Bank deposits in Sun City represent 4.7 percent of all deposits in the state, and savings deposits represent 13.3 percent of savings statewide. Combined, the company said, these figures represent more than \$800 million. The funds go for construction financing and auto and personal loans throughout the state.

Meeker said these savings, purchases and tax revenues will continue to expand as Sun City West is developed and Sun City reaches its estimated 48,000 capacity with completion of homes sold in 1977.

"We are optimistic," Meeker said. "The retirement market is a fast-growing industry."

"That period of life we like to refer to as the bonus or elective years can be looked forward to with anticipation — a time of beginning again, another commencement."



## Pioneer resident enjoys Sun Cities

By DEBBIE L. SKLAR  
Staff writer

SUN CITY WEST — Pioneer Johnny Appleseed may have made his mark in American history by scattering apple seeds, but Mildred Toldrian, a pioneer of a different kind, prefers to spread the Golden Rule.

"My parents always told me to do unto others as you would want done to you," said Toldrian, one of the first homeowners in both the Sun Cities. "I live by the Golden Rule and have made that my motto."

The 88-year-old Wisconsin native narrowly missed being the first homeowner in both Sun City and Sun City West.

"The first person moved

into Sun City at the end of April 1960 and I moved in June 1960," said the former employee of Oster manufacturing, the kitchen appliance company. "In Sun City West it happened again; I moved in on Oct. 20, 1978, and the first person in the community moved in on the 13th. After my husband died I wanted a change and that's why I moved to Sun City West."

Toldrian said she and her husband moved to Arizona because they wanted a drier climate.

"When people complain about the heat, I don't let it bother me," she said. "I love the heat and tell people that's

► See Woman recalls, A5



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Mildred Toldrian is a Sun Cities pioneer.

## Woman recalls communities' past

■ From A1

why I came to a warmer climate."

Arizona with its sprawling desert and hot temperatures is nothing new to Toldrian.

"I came to Arizona in 1932 to tutor some kids in Tucson," said the former Milwaukee elementary school teacher. "I had been out here in 1932 on a job to tutor six children in the Tucson area. Actually, it

was on Oracle Ranch for two months. I was tutoring some kids and I made up my mind then, I would be back some day."

Sixty-three years later and Toldrian is back and happy to be in the Valley of the Sun. She enjoys living in the retirement community because of the many activities offered.

"There's so much to do here, it's hard to become

bored," she said with a laugh. "I like crafts, swimming, walking and I've volunteered more than 3,200 hours at Del E. Webb Hospital," she said.

As for the ever-changing community, Toldrian said she has seen both Sun Cities undergo alterations. She is not happy about the recall efforts to oust three board members from the Recreation Centers

of Sun City West Governing Board.

"You'll find rabble-rousers wherever you go," she said. "People are the same all over the world. I just believe in keeping a positive attitude like my mom and dad taught me. They said to follow the Golden Rule and that's the way I've lived my life. I've also tried to ingrain it in my children — so far it's worked."