

# Scenes from Munds Park and Sun City



**THEN:** A pair of horses engage in a bit of play around sunset after a cloudburst in a meadow near Munds Park, about 20 miles south of Flagstaff. REPUBLIC ARCHIVE

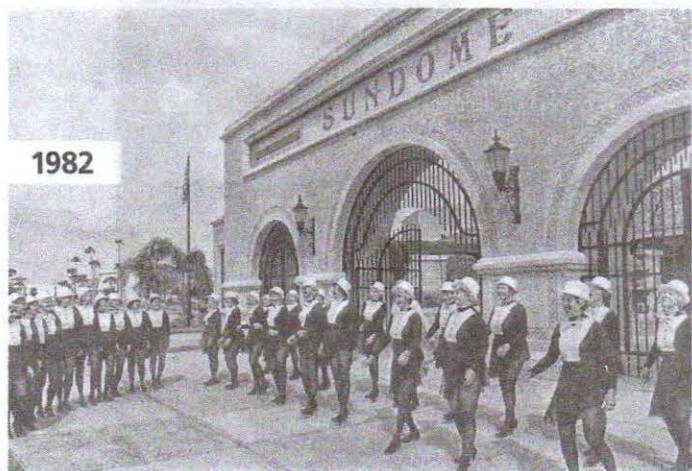


2014



## Explore Arizona

**NOW:** Sue Madden walks through fresh snow in Munds Park on Dec. 17.



**THEN:** The Sundome Center for the Performing Arts, built as a marketing tool to sell houses in Sun City West, hosted such performers as Lawrence Welk and Harry Belafonte. It opened in 1980 and closed for lack of business in 2009.

REPUBLIC ARCHIVE



**NOW:** The Sundome was torn down and a Fry's grocery store opened in its place on Aug. 26. Artifacts from the arts center have been incorporated into the store.

NICK OZA/THE REPUBLIC



# On tour

## Guide points out Sundome features, whims of stars

By Connie Cone Sexton  
Phoenix Gazette

**SUN CITY WEST** — It's 10 o'clock on a Thursday morning and Warren Norman is center stage giving a command performance at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts.

His smooth, gentle voice flows out to the 7,000-plus seats below him. He's playing to an empty auditorium.

But this is no rehearsal. His audience — all five members — are standing behind him, watching and listening to Norman in his role as tour guide.

With his guidance, the group turns their heads upward to spot a crystal ball suspended from the ceiling.

"We can drop that seven feet and it will throw a thousand stars around. That makes a show very exciting," Norman says.

His love for the Sundome and all its nooks and crannies is apparent as he ushers the tour from the lobby, down the aisle, up on the stage and behind to the dressing rooms. He even throws open the back door so you can see where the trucks pull up.

Norman's delivery isn't hurried. He's happy to have his spiel interrupted to answer a question and often interjects an anecdote or two as he winds his way through the 108,000-square-foot complex.

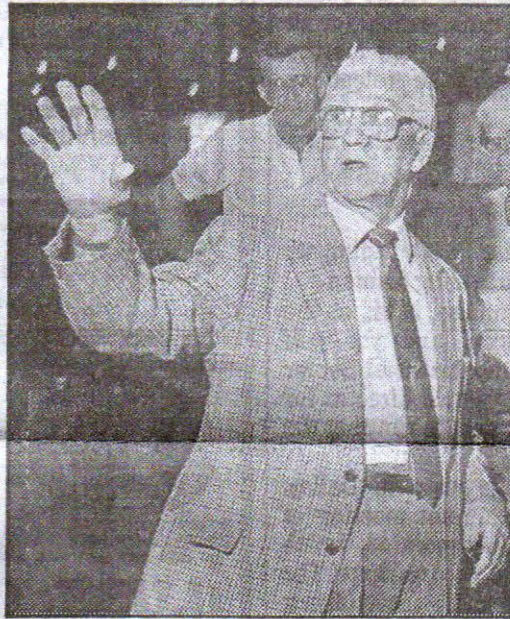
The Sun City West resident's first glimpse of the Sundome was in 1979. He and his wife, Margaret, came out to inspect the community and wandered over to where construction was in progress on the Sundome.

"I had seen a lot of mining work, so I was interested in watching them dig for the auditorium. There is about a 17-foot grade to the dance floor from the lobby. We walked through the superintendent's sidewalk and watched the work. We decided right then we wanted to be a part of all this," he says.

The Sundome opened Sept. 13, 1980, with a show by Lawrence Welk and his entourage. Norman and his wife were right there, too, having recently settled in their new home.

A tour of the Sundome begins in the lobby.

"This land was a sheep-raising desert," he says directing his arm out through the automated glass doors. "The first thing they



Warren Norman is an enthusiastic tour guide at the Sundome.

had to do was get the sheep out of here."

That was in 1978. But eight years before that, a Sun City artist named Alfred Kabica started work on a canvas, a project designed to showcase his ideas on evolution.

Several years later, Kabica completed a 75-foot-long, brightly colored canvas, which he titled "From Evolution through Progress ... to Where?" It was finished but had no place to hang. Del Webb officials gave it a home. You can see it today, stretching across the main lobby, above the doors leading to the auditorium.

The work has fascinated many visitors, including Norman.

"You can see here, where it (the evolution process) starts with the 'Big Bang,'" he says pointing to the left end of the canvas where a Kabica painted the Earth and a swirl of white. Kabica moves on to the beginning of man, to the industrial revolution, to the Holocaust, to modern technology.

"Here, it looks as if, from what I think he has painted, is the atom bomb," Norman says, nodding to a star-pointed shape in the colors

of red, orange and yellow. "It wipes out man, but then there are elements of people, maybe Martians."

At the end, there is another new Earth, another swirl of white and another beginning, Norman says.

"A lot of people don't see this when they come here," he adds. With a crowded lobby, some also miss the posters showcasing past and present stars in the room's 110-yard-long expanse.

From the lobby, a tour moves to sample the continental design seating. "There is a 40-inch space between the rows," Norman says, giving his audience a chance to rest.

For the hearing impaired, there are wires under the seat for those with telephone-type induction hearing aids. Such devices can receive audio signals from a closed-circuit broadcasting antenna buried in the theater's floor.

A limited number of hearing aids also are loaned out for use during the performance. "Just give them a credit card and we'll give you one. Just be sure to remember to bring it back to the box office or we'll keep your card," Norman says.

He's quick to point out the Sundome won't carry rock 'n' roll. "We try to keep it to about 78 decibels. That's about the sound of your refrigerator starting up or a diesel truck going by," he says.

Among the popular acts at the Sundome are Bob Hope and Red Skelton. "I've never seen a more human being in my life," Norman says of Skelton. "You have some stars who say 'Pick me up at the airport in a limo' and we do. But he tells us 'Just pick me up in a car or station wagon.'"

The Sundome gets the usual requests from stars for certain things. Certain soft drinks or kinds of snacks.

"The stars are very nice. They don't demand too much. One guy asked for Luden's Cough Drops because he had quit smoking and wanted the menthol. So we got a big glass jar and filled it," the tour guide says.

"One couple wanted a rug in their respective dressing rooms. And Del Webb had spent lots of money on expensive tile. But we

See ■ Sundome, Page B

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## ■ Sundome

put the rug (wall-to-wall) in. I don't know if they've ever noticed it," Norman says.

"But so many of the stars are so nice. Those who keep coming back, they're almost a part of my life," he says.

Some stars also are choosy about where the audience sits.

Harry Blackstone Jr. was nice enough to fill in one year when fellow magician Doug Henning had to cancel his Sundome booking because of a television commitment.

"But Blackstone said, 'Don't seat people in Section 1 or Section

6. They can see my illusions,'" Norman says.

Some stars won't keep to the stage. "Al Hirt and his band went back and forth in the aisles," he says.

Up on the stage, Norman taps his foot against the floor when one of his followers asks about the black top.

"Battleship decking," Norman explains. Layers of plywood that give and allow for dancing.

There may be dancing, but there's no smoking allowed on stage, except for three performers

Phoenix Gazette  
Wed Aug. 17, 1988



# Hirt leaves jazz haven for SC gig

By P. ATWOOD WILLIAMS  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — "Do you know what it meeeean ... to leave New Orleeeean?" wail the words to a blues song.

Trumpeter Al Hirt does. He has been leaving his hometown for years, but he always comes home. Hirt went back on the road in 1983 when he sold his Bourbon Street Club.

He will leave New Orleans to join Connie Stevens in concert Saturday in the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts.

Hirt says he sometimes performs with artists like Stevens, and sometimes he does a show alone.

"I work with the audience and explain about the music," he said. "The concert will be a mixture of this and that."

Hirt said songs like "Java" and all the things he's had success with — blues, ballads and old songs — will be performed.

"I don't do anything new," he said. "Sort of age-old music like Dixieland."

Hirt, who has been playing the trumpet since he was six, learned the classics and improved on many of them with his own arrangements.



Submitted photo

**AL HIRT** — Trumpeter said songs like "Java" and all the things he's had success with — blues, ballads and old songs — will be performed.

"His extensive capacity to store up air in his lungs, plus the ability to double and triple tongue has made Hirt one of the world's greatest trumpet virtuosos of our time," writes a reviewer who added that he is "so fluent in using chords and scales," that the music just flows out automatically and always in the

right key.

The triple tonguing technique is too fast to be articulated by the tongue alone and requires throat muscles alternating with the tongue.

Hirt will bring his sextet, including himself on trumpet, Dixieland trombone, clarinet and three rhythm players.

A recent Associated Press review says Hirt is very entertaining with his comments, but that his "real medium of communication with his audience was the trumpet itself. It crowed and bellowed, sobbed and crooned; it laughed and moaned and shrieked; it even sang a little."

"I sort of pick and choose my jobs these days," said the trumpeter who has seen a lot of places and is a father of eight and grandfather of nine.

Hirt says that his family gets together around Christmas for a "bash" and that he was once perfectly cast as Santa Claus but has been on a diet lately.

"I'm playing better than I ever have," said Hirt who enjoys fishing as a hobby, although he holds an honorary doctorate of performing arts degree, because of his musical accomplishments.

He describes himself as a "pop

commercial musician, and I've got a successful format."

For 15 years, he was named the top trumpeter by Playboy Magazine's Music Poll. In addition he was Artist of the Year by the Music Operators of America, earned a citation in two annual Billboard Disc Jockey Pools, two citations from Billboard's Campus Music, a Cashbox Disc Jockey Award and Coronet Magazine's editorial Award of Merit for outstanding achievement in the field of popular recording.

He is credited with more than 40 records and numerous hit singles.

"I strive to provide entertainment and music ... a combination of both," said Hirt.

"I'd like to continue playing as long as I can. I started professionally at age 15 and am now 66. It's been a long time," he said.

"As long as you can breathe in and out, and your health is good, you can play. Very few people retire and don't play any longer," he said.

As for leaving New Orleans?

"I like it here, the people and the city. I've always had a home here. I return because it is home. It's a nice place to live."



# Stevens' tour starts at Sundome

By ROSA DeSIMONE  
Daily News-Sun staff

**SUN CITY WEST** — Veteran singer and actress Connie Stevens begins a 22-week tour on Saturday. And her first stop will be in the Northwest Valley.

She will perform at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts, 19403 R.H. Johnson Blvd. It will be her first appearance in the Sundome, although she is no stranger to Arizona.

Tickets for the show, which includes jazz trumpeter Al Hirt, went on sale last month, according to Michelle Robbins, Sundome public relations manager.

Robbins said plenty of seats still are available.

"They (the audience) are in for a surprise," Stevens said. "They will be thoroughly entertained."

The 1 1/2 hour show will feature "gorgeous and contemporary sounds," as well as dancing, she said.

Stevens also is bringing four other singers, including her two daughters. Tricia Leigh, 21, and Joley, 22, are both actresses as well as singers.

Stevens said she has no inhibitions performing in front of large audiences and admits that she feels "free" before such crowds.

"I'm an intimate performer," she said. "The audience gets to know me and I get to know them."

## Connie Stevens, guest Al Hirt

**When:** Saturday at 8 p.m.

**Where:** Sundome, 19403 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

**Cost:** Tickets are \$13, \$16 and \$19 with \$3 off each ticket for children 12 and under.

**Information:** 975-1900.

Stevens began her career singing with a group in high school called The Fourmost. After being discovered as an actress, she left the group who later went on to become The Lettermen.

After 30 years in show business, she said that her audience is now primarily "people I grew up with."

While many younger people discover her through her Las Vegas shows, Stevens is concerned that her style of entertainment is becoming a "lost art."

She compares her show with others today as the difference between "fast food and eating dinner at a restaurant."

"Today's youth are being lost to MTV, television and theatrical gimmicks," she said.

Stevens has kept herself busy with many other projects. She recently completed filming 23

See Stevens, EE3



Submitted photo

**LOVES THE CROWDS** — Actress and singer Connie Stevens said she has no inhibitions performing in front of large audiences. "I'm an intimate performer," she said. "The audience gets to know me and I get to know them."



# Stevens brings act to Sundome

— From EE1

episodes in Montreal for a new comedy television series called "Starting from Scratch," which also stars Bill Daly.

Stevens also recently introduced her new skin care line, "Forever Spring. The Beauty System."

"I'm really excited ... it's a smash," she said of the products. "The two-year planning process was like having another child."

Stevens said she was involved

in everything from packaging plans to deciding on the texture of the products.

After being asked to endorse a skin care product that she didn't like, Stevens felt that she could "do better."

Instead of formulating only one product, she felt her six-step system was the better route to go.

Stevens is also involved in charity functions, including "Project Windfeather," which

she established in 1982.

While in Arizona, Stevens became aware and concerned about the plight of the Papago Indians. With "Project Windfeather," she raised money, which has helped to improve their living conditions, as well as to provide college scholarships for Indians to pursue studies in medicine, engineering and business.

Stevens is now planning a fashion show/luncheon in early June to raise additional monies for the project.

"I love Arizona," Stevens said. "There are good dancers in Arizona. They are very conscientious and well-taught."

She said she sometimes comes to Arizona to find dancers for her Las Vegas shows.



VF SCW Sundome

1W-4 Mon., Sept. 19, 1988

Phoenix Gazette

## Banker leads drive for Sundome funds

SUN CITY WEST — The Sundome Performing Arts Association chose Joe Davisson as the steering committee chairman to raise \$150,000 in support of Sundome programs for the 1988-89 season.

Davisson, a Citibank executive, said he is forming a team of community leaders to help with the fund-raising campaign due to start in early October.

Davisson was the chairman of the fund-raising drive for the Del E. Webb Memorial Hospital which raised more than \$9 million.

"Valley residents will be given the opportunity to sponsor a Sundome seat. SPAA members will automatically be given single ticket priority to all Sundome sponsored events," Davisson said.

Davisson's past civic activities include president of the Sun City Saints Booster Club, first vice president of the Sun Cities Art Museum, president of the Sun City



**Joe Davisson**

American Cancer Society, and founder of the Sun City West Community Fund.

Information: 584-3118.



# *\$5 million auditorium planned for Sun City*

By MIKE PETRYNI

The Del E. Webb Development Co. plans to begin construction in July on a massive new entertainment facility for Sun City West, the company's new retirement community west of Sun City.

The new facility, which was announced by company president John Meeker at the recent ground-breaking ceremony for the retirement community, will be capable of seating 6,800 persons.

Meeker said the 106,000-square-foot indoor auditorium, which will be completed by the fall of 1979, will cost "in excess of \$5 million."

Jerry Svendsen, a spokesman for the development company, said Tuesday the auditorium, is intended to fill a gap in indoor entertainment programming for both Sun City and Sun City West.

"When it comes to entertainment most people here go out and entertain themselves, with the golf courses, the shuffle board courts and so on, but until now there have been very few places where they could go in, sit and watch," Svendsen said. "This will be the best entertainment facility most have seen."

**CALLED THE "SUN DOME,"** the entertainment center has been designed by the architectural firm of Hawkins and Lindsey, according to company spokesmen, with an emphasis on ease of access, optimum visibility to the stage, cushioned seating, and will include selected seats with plug-in head sets for those with hearing impairments.

The exterior design will feature traditional Southwestern architecture. A 16,000-square-foot forecourt will have a water fountain and include garden areas and sitting areas. At its peak the roof will rise as high as a four-story building.

The auditorium will be located in the first half of the planned 13,000 acre Sun City West development, which is 14 miles northwest of Phoenix. Estimated population for the first phase of development is 32,500 persons. Sun City itself currently has a population of more than 40,000 persons.

Svendsen said the facility will offer a variety of entertainment programming, including dance bands, pageants celebrity productions, opera, symphony orchestras, ballets and films.

While final programming plans have not been concluded, Svendsen said, the facility will primarily cater to the retired residents of the area.

"BECAUSE THEY ARE mature adults," Svendsen said, "the programs will tend to be less contemporary. They would like a Lawrence Welk, a Pat and Debby Boone, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Eddie Arnold."

Programming will be handled exclusively by the development company, although provisions have been made for Sun City and Sun City West civic and community groups to book the auditorium. "We defi-

## THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC Entertainment

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nately will not be bringing in any outside impresarios," Svendsen said. "For the most part it will be Del Webb sponsored."

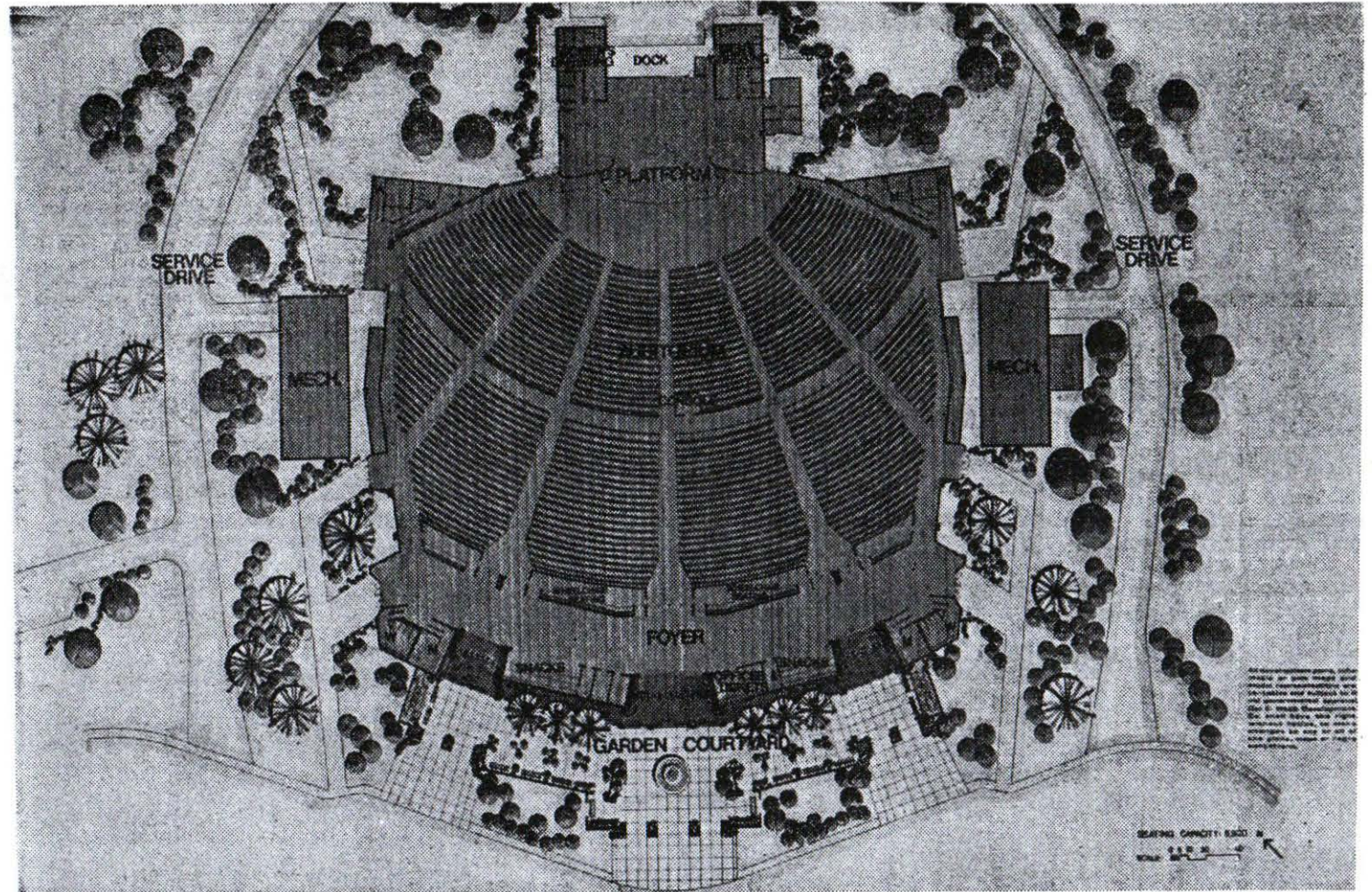
The development company currently operates the Sun Bowl, an outdoor amphitheater seating 7,500 persons, in Sun City.

Svendsen said competition between the new Sun Dome and such established entertainment arenas as Gammage Auditorium in Tempe and the Scottsdale Center for the Arts for programming is not expected.

"There will be cooperation with the others in the entertainment business," Svendsen said, "since we are separated by a good many miles. We can work together since we know the population is expanding such that neither of us will hurt a bit."

**THEATER NOTES:** El Teatro Campesino of San Juan Bautista, Calif., a touring bilingual theater group, will present performances of "El Fin del Mundo" ("The End of the World") tonight at 8 p.m. at the Glendale Community College Performing Arts Center and Friday at 8 p.m. at the Phoenix Union High School Auditorium. Sponsored here by P.A.C.T. (Phoenix Arts Coming Together) with the Western States Arts Foundation, the theater group's performance at Glendale will be free to the public and the Phoenix performance will cost \$1 a ticket. "El Fin del Mundo," according to director Luis Valdez, focuses on a Chicano family in which death is the ultimate experience in every life, thus the "end of the world". . . The Desert Foothills Community Theater presents "The Rainmaker" at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 7 p.m. Sunday at the Elbow Bend Restaurant in Carefree, also May 11-13. . . The Scottsdale Community Players will hold auditions for Jules Feiffer's "Knock, Knock" at 2 p.m. Saturday at 7 p.m. May 8 at the Stagebrush Theater. Needed are three men between 20 and 50 years old and one woman between 25 and 40 years old.





Sun Dome floor plan: space for symphonies, ballets, celebrities and 6,800 audience members. Sketches by Hawkins and Lindsey



# Lawrence Welk, entourage to open Sundome

Lawrence Welk, whose television show is probably the most-watched in Sun City, whose live appearances in the Sun Bowl have drawn together more Sun Citians than any other event, and whose music has been enjoyed for more years than any other bandleader, is the chosen one.

Chosen to open the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City West.

Welk, his Champagne Music Makers and singing and performing stars, will be presented in two shows, an evening concert Sept. 13 and a matinee Sept. 14, according to Don Tuffs, the Sundome's entertainment director.

"We are delighted to have the Welk show for

the grand opening of the Sundome," Tuffs said, adding that ticket information about the Welk shows and other special series planned in the entertainment facility for its "first season" will be available the middle of this month.

The sneak preview brochure will be distributed throughout Sun City and Sun City West. The special series include the Musical Arts Series, the Lecture Series, the Dance Festival Series, the Travel Film Lecture Series and the concert

schedule of the Sun City Symphony. Details on how to subscribe to the various series will be included.

The complete listing of special events and celebrities scheduled for the Sundome will be announced during the summer, Tuffs said.

Tennessee Ernie Ford, Sandler and Young, the Lennon Sisters and Pete Fountain are among the performers scheduled.

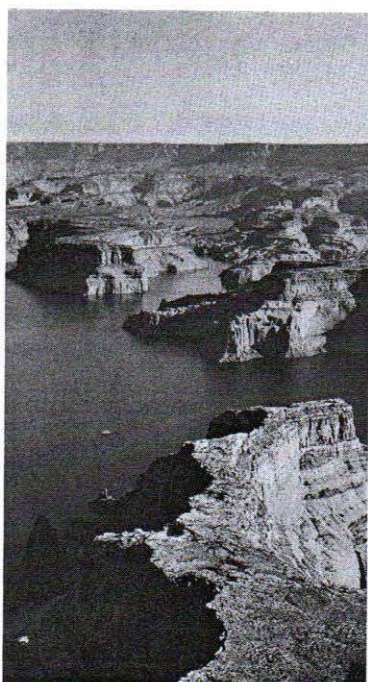
The Sundome, scheduled for completion this summer, will be Arizona's largest theater, seating 7,000 persons.



LAWRENCE WELK



## Lake Powell To Fill During July



Lake Powell

It's expected that sometime in July, Lake Powell will reach its maximum elevation of 3,700 feet. Top officials were expected to be on hand to observe the first time water has reached that level since the gates to Glen Canyon Dam were closed in 1963.

Powell's recreational and power generating importance will be the topic of that July ceremony.

**Downriver at Lake Mead, other officials were preparing in June to welcome the 20 millionth person to tour Hoover Dam. The dam and powerplant were opened to the public 43 years ago. This summer also marks the Diamond Jubilee anniversary of nearby Las Vegas.**

To date, approximately 136 million people have visited Lake Mead National Area surrounding Hoover Dam (which forms Mead) and downstream Davis Dam, which forms Lake Mohave.

Mead is the largest man-made lake in the U.S., while Lake Powell is a close second. Webb operates four resorts-marinas on Lake Powell and one each on Mead and Mohave.

## Sun City West Sundome Is BIG!

The Sundome in Sun City West is big!

Hooooow biig iis it?

Two and one-half times the seating capacity of Grady Gammage auditorium at Arizona State University!

**One thousand more seats than Radio City Music Hall in New York City!**

Its size doesn't mean the audience will be too far from the stage . . . no further than the outdoor Sunbowl, which seated 7,500 and was often full.

"The first of our 'series' of programs begins September 18," says Don Tufts, Sundome general manager. "Seats already sold represent from 30 to 75 per cent of the total available."

In July, two new series — "Celebrity" and "Salute to Broadway" — will be announced.

**"Those tickets should sell like**

**wildfire," says Tufts.**

The Celebrity Series will include such names as Tennessee Ernie Ford, 4 Girls 4, Sandler & Young, Al Martino, Lennon Sisters and the Osmonds.

The Broadway Series will open with "Whoopee" (a Follies salute), "Babes in Toyland" and "American Dance Machine."

The Sundome will also house many special events, such as an Oktoberfest, a jazz festival, etc.

**And what could be more appropriate than opening the Sundome with Lawrence Welk?**

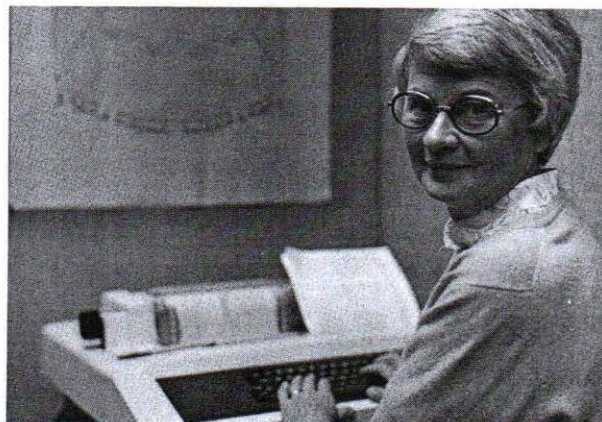
Nothing! That's why Sun City's favorite and his troupe will ring up the first curtain on Sept. 13.

We are including mid-June schedules and prices of Series I, II, III, & IV. For more information, call the Sundome Box Office at 975-1900.

SERIES	SHOWS	PRICE	PRICE	SINGLES
		UNTIL 9-1	AFTER 9-1	
(1) Musical Art Series	6	\$20-\$36	\$25-\$42	\$5-\$7.50
(2) Lecture Series	7	\$18	\$21	\$4
(3) Dance Festival Series	5	\$15-\$25	\$17-\$27.50	\$5-\$7
(4) Travel Film Lecture Series	8	\$16	\$20	\$3

(1) "Naughty Marietta," 10-25; Irish Light Orchestra, 11-6; Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra of Yugoslavia, 11-20; Young Americans, 1-20; Southwest German Chamber Orchestra, 2-11; Virgil Fox, 3-27.
(2) Louis Rukeyser, 10-27; The Amazing Kreskin, 11-2; Peter Duchin, 12-1; Marshall Loeb trio, 1-21; Frances & Richard Hadden, 2-5; Paul Harvey, 2-27; Art Buchwald, 3-27.
(3) Ballet Folclorice Nacional de Mexico, 9-18; Caribbean Carnival of Trinidad, 10-8; The Aman Folk Ensemble, 10-22; The National Folk Ballet of Yugoslavia, 2-3; The American Ballet Festival, 3-20.
(4) Kathleen Dusek, 9-23; John Roberts, 10-14; Ken Armstrong, 11-25; Doug Jones, 1-6; Thayer Soule, 1-27; Dr. Charles Forbes Taylor, 2-17; Bill Madsen, 3-3; Eric Pavel, 4-7.



**SMALL COMPUTERS**, like this one demonstrated by Executive Secretary Lucille Johnson, will help Webb Sundome personnel to keep up to date on ticket sales, placement and printing.



# Welk to open Sundome

The Lawrence Welk Show, one of the most popular programs in the history of television, will inaugurate the new Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City West, with two Grand Opening shows.

Welk, the renowned Champagne Music Maker, will bring his orchestra and stars for an evening performance Saturday, Sept. 13, and a matinee show Sunday, Sept. 14, according to Don Tuffs, the Sundome's entertainment director.

"We're extremely pleased to have the Welk Show for the grand opening of the Sundome," Tuffs said. "Mr. Welk's popularity is tremendous and his show promises to be a fitting opening for one of the finest theaters in the country."

Ticket information for

the two Welk shows will be included in a special Sundome "Sneak Preview" brochure, which will be distributed throughout Sun City and Sun City West in mid-April.

The special brochure also will include information on five of the Sundome's special series — the Musical Arts Series, the Lecture Series, the Dance Festival Series, the Travel Film Lecture Series and the series of performances by the Sun City Symphony. Details on how to subscribe to the various series will be included.

A complete schedule of special events and big-name celebrities who will perform at the Sundome during 1980-81 season will be announced this summer.

Celebrities already booked include Tennessee Ernie Ford, Sandler and Young, the Lennon Sisters and Pete Fountain.

The Sundome Center for the Performing Arts will be Arizona's largest theater when it is completed this summer. It will seat more than 7,000 persons in roomy comfort.

The Sundome's advanced acoustics will help create a "front-row-center" audio experience for every patron, regardless of his seat location. The theater also promises to be a visual extravaganza, accented by a carved-stone fountain,

wrought iron gates and sparkling chandeliers.



# Sundome plans are as large as the building

By Hardy Price  
Republic Staff

**SUN CITY WEST** — Right off, the Sundome is big. How big?

Big enough to lose a cement truck driving across its interior with a load of concrete for the 7,000-seat theater's floor.

It's so big, you could almost fit two football fields in its 110-by-80-yard, wall-to-wall measurements. The ceiling height is equal to a four-story building.

And yet the building, just north of Bell Road and west of the Agua Fria River, lacks two theater essentials — an orchestra pit and sufficient backstage area to fly scenery.

Instead of a pit, there's a 4,000-square-foot area in front of the stage that will be used as a pit when necessary. At other times, the area will be used for temporary seating or a dance floor.

Don Tuffs, newly appointed director of entertainment for the facility, sees no major problems developing from the situation in terms of programming, with the exception of musical productions.

And Tuffs and the Del Webb Development Company have big programming plans — big enough perhaps to put a dent in programming and attendance at Gammage and Symphony Hall.

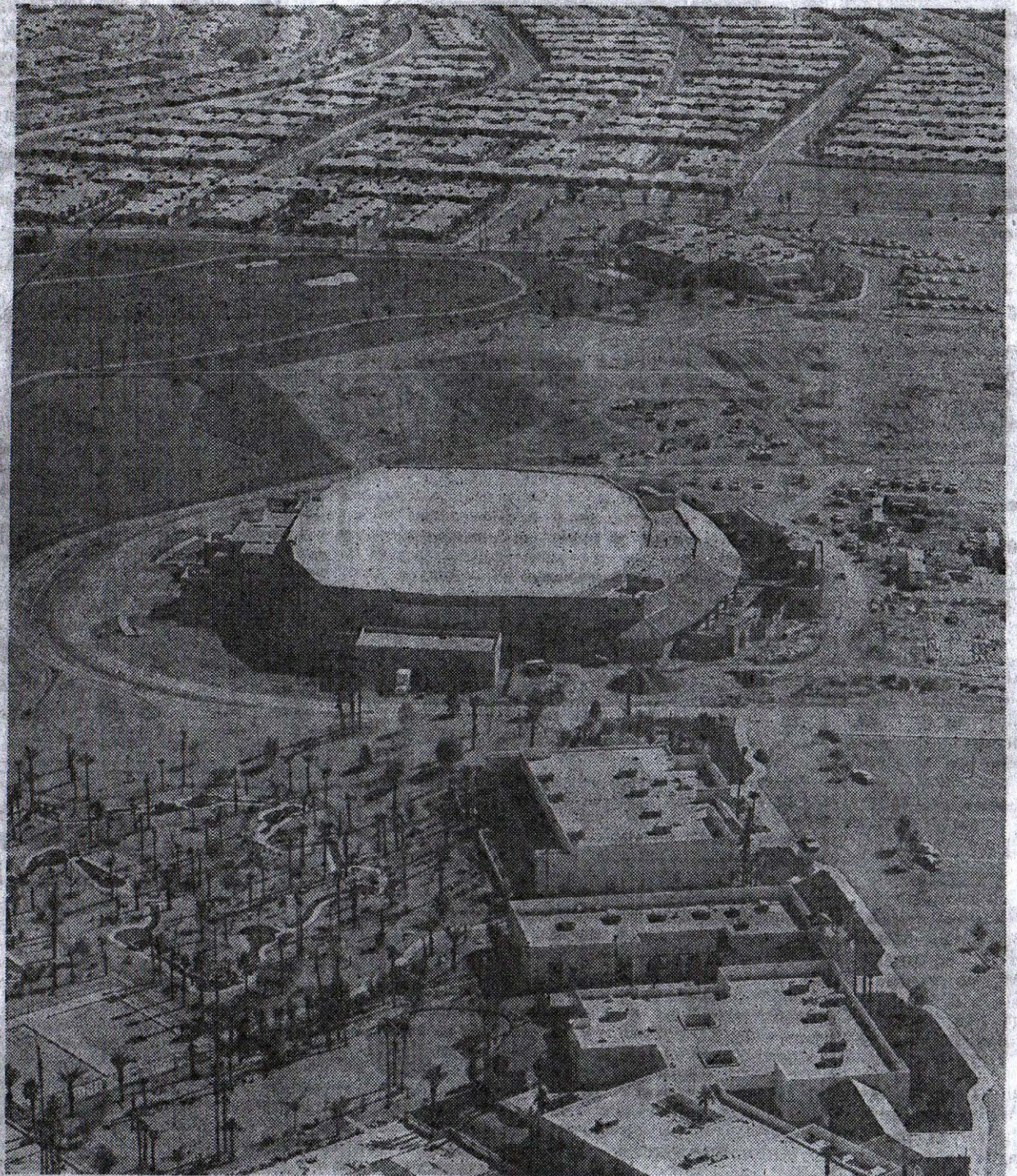
"We are planning between 100 and 150 programs a year," Tuffs said.

Tuffs hopes to open the Sundome shortly after Labor Day with the complete Lawrence Welk show, a natural for the retirement community.

He said the programming would be geared to the 50-plus crowd and would include the five-concert Sun City Symphony season. Symphony founder and conductor Jennings Butterfield, who recently celebrated his 80th birthday, will be stepping down after next season, a season that will see the symphony move up to guest-artist status.

"It will have to in order to fill 7,000 seats," Tuffs said.

The symphony season will open with violinist Eugene Fodor. Other guest artists include Anna Marie Alberghetti,



*Sundome, F6*

The Sundome in Sun City will have 7,000 seats.



# Sundome

*Continued from F1*

Gordon MacRae and guest conductor Skitch Henderson.

The programming will include eight series — dance, drama, the Sun City Symphony, lecture, travel films, musical art and at least two celebrity series. The Sun Bowl series will move to the Sundome, which is adjacent to the Johnson Recreation Center in Sun City West. The site of the Sun Bowl has been offered to the Recreation Centers of Sun City for \$1, but with the stipulation it would not attempt to compete with the new facility.

Tuffs and Gammage managing director Miriam Boegel are working together on several programs, including Fred Waring. In past years, Waring has played one night at Gammage and the next night as part of the Sun Bowl series, which is closed to the public. In the future, Waring will alternate each year between the two buildings.

The two will share some programming next year and probably in the future. The dance series at the Sundome will be almost identical to the one at Gammage and will include the Ballet Folkloric National of Mexico, the Caribbean Carnival of Trinidad and the National Folk Ballet of Yugoslavia.

Tuffs said it is unlikely he will book modern dance troupes. He thinks their work would not be popular with his primary audience. Ballet companies booked into the Sundome will be asked to stick with classical works and forgo the contemporary.

This is not to say Tuffs' audience is a bunch of stuffed shirts.

"I'm negotiating right now with the Osmond family, all 28 of them,

for a show next season," said Tuffs. "There's a lot of contemporary shows I think I'll be able to present here. When disco was at its height, all our disco classes were booked solid and had waiting lists. Right now, roller skating is the big thing and we have two roller-skating clubs going at the present time."

Other programming for the first season includes the Southwest German Chamber Orchestra, organist Virgil Fox, the Irish Light Orchestra of Dublin, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, an Eastern Opera Theater of New York production of *Naughty Marietta*, and Les Brown and his Band of Renown.

Tuffs said the Arizona Opera Company has asked for dates in the Sundome for the coming season to supplement a pair of dates at Symphony Hall.

Mrs. Boegel said she is not worried that the Sundome might drain the Gammage audience because of the distance between the two and because of the Sundome's technical limitations. The Sundome is approximately 20 miles from midtown Phoenix.

Tuffs said tickets would be available to the public, but Sun City residents get first choice. With a population of 48,000 in Sun City and 6,000 in Sun City West, there is the possibility programs will be all but sold out before sale to non-residents.

Tickets will be available through Diamond's Box Office, which will open a Sun City office.

The Sundome will include a pair of concession stands, dispensing soft drinks and cocktails. The building comes with a full-service liquor license.

Tuffs said the Webb Company has not put a price tag on the project, but added the company is not looking at the Sundome as a money maker. "We are hoping that within a few years the Sundome came reach a break-even point," said Tuffs.



**ASU - SUNDOME**  
**19403 R.H. JOHNSON BLVD. SUN CITY WEST, AZ 85375**

Designer/Builder:	Del E. Webb Corporation
Construction Began:	November 8, 1978
Official Dedication:	September 13, 1980

**SUNDOME FEATURES**

Seating Capacity:	7,030
Handicapped Seating:	Seating for 254 wheelchairs, including companion.
Type of seating:	Continental Design (40 inches between rows)
Interior Dimension:	320 feet wide by 225 feet deep
Interior Area:	108,000 square feet
Height (ceiling to floor):	40 to 52 feet
Dance Floor:	5,700 square feet (space for 500 couples). Also used for seating, orchestra, or additional performance area.
Wall Design:	Side and rear walls are "soft" and absorb sound. Walls at right and left of proscenium are "hard" and reflect sound.
Sound System:	EAW, CROWN, YAMAHA sound system. Sound system emanates from speaker clusters above the stage and above the center cross aisle. Suspended reflective sound clouds, acoustically treated walls, and a floating panel ceiling help create the front row center audio experience.
Audio Enhancement:	Sundome is equipped with state of the art multi. channel infrared hearing system. Patrons with infrared headsets receive all audio signals from six sending units located on either side of the stage. These headsets are available free of charge at the East Bar for use during performances.
Video Enhancement:	A video system was installed in 1995 to enhance performances. Two 15' x 20' retractable Video Matte screens are on either side of the stage. This system is especially helpful to those patrons seated to the rear of the auditorium. The system is not equipped to record events.
Additional Features:	A computerized lighting system, three follow-spot positions, and a moveable, oak-veneered orchestra shell.
Parking:	Free parking with space for 3,000 vehicles. There is handicapped parking available for over 100 vehicles with approved insignia or plates.

For rental information, call Melissa Schwartz 214-5230.  
For ticket information, call the Box Office at 975-1900.



# Sundome 'sells' seats to supporters

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Searching for an uncommon holiday gift?

The Sundome Performing Arts Association (SPAA) has a suggestion: A personalized seat at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts.

The permanent nameplate is available through the seat sponsorship program of the annual "Support Our Sundome" campaign.

"Many Sundome supporters have found that a seat sponsorship makes a great gift," said Helen Marie Flory, volunteer coordinator for the Sundome Association board of directors.

"It can be used in many ways. Some of our patrons have used it as sort of a memorial to departed relatives," Flory said.

Fred Dunikoski, chairman of the Sundome Association fundraiser, also is promoting the Sundome's brand of entertainment as a gift.

"These (seat sponsorships) make beautiful gifts, not only for family, but for friends and neighbors you might want to reciprocate for some particular occasion."

To date, approximately 150 Sundome patrons have become seat sponsors, paying \$500 (or \$100 annual installments) for the personalized seat. The an-

nual fund-raising campaign has netted \$132,000 since the Oct. 1 kickoff.

Campaign officials hoped to collect \$200,000 by Dec. 31, but are now making plans to continue the campaign in the new year. The funds are being sought to offset performance costs and fund facility improvement projects.

"The support is here. We just have to keep working at it. We still need more support from the community," Dunikoski said.

More information about the Sundome seat sponsorships or memberships is available by contacting the Sundome administration office, 584-3118.



# Sundome murals trace progress of universe

By DIANA TOLLEFSON  
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Scenes from the evolution of the universe, the progress of life on Earth and man's ultimate destruction of the planet are depicted in the 75-foot mural hanging above the center portal in the lobby of the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts.

Sun City artist Fred Kabica began the mural in 1970. It took him four years to complete his project. He first drew ten separate panels, then painted them in sequence for this mural on a single piece of canvas, which took three months to prime.

A method of rolling the 75 feet on drums was devised allowing Kabica to crank handles for wind and rewind of the canvas. Grace Nix is the daughter of the muralist and recalls her father's difficulties with the elaborate task.

"The canvas is six feet wide

and took up a tremendous amount of space during the time it was being painted. Father did not know where it would be placed since the Sundome was not opened to the public until Sept. 13 1980," she said. "However when word spread that the facility was to be built, he immediately approached Del Webb and offered the mural on permanent loan."

Kabica died in 1980, but said earlier of his work, "It has a lousy, pessimistic ending, but we're heading toward it. What are we accomplishing? Where are we going? This painting came out of my tremendous fear of what humans do, because I lived through so much destruction."

Entitled "From Evolution Through Progress ... To Where," the most vivid colors start at the left of the mural where planets, stars and other heavenly bodies detail the origin of the universe

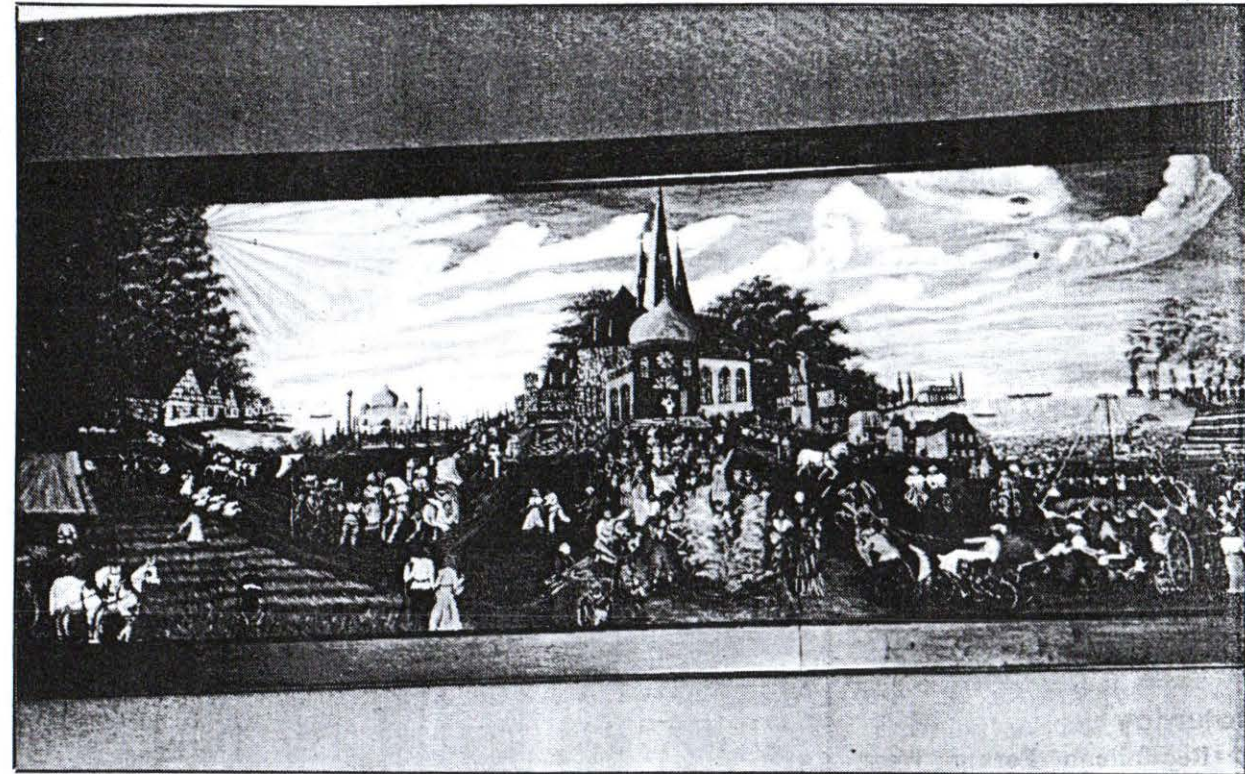
and the solar system.

Volcanoes erupt and spill lava into a blue-green sea while lightning bolts crisscross beneath a brilliant rainbow-filled sky. Dense vegetation surrounds dinosaurs in battle followed by apes in trees and the emergence of primitive man from a cave.

Mammals and birds accompany a woman who holds her child while a hand-shaped cloud floats above her, possibly suggesting the Deity, since Kabica was a religious man.

The emergence of cultivated fields, towns, shops, knights and Vikings with the Taj Mahal depict recorded history through the origin of the nations. Horse-drawn wagons are replaced by bicycles, cars, trains and monorails while offshore oil rigs and factory smokestacks show the development of the industrial age.

Skyscrapers and a nuclear power plant flank a scene from



Daily News-Sun photo by Diana Tollefson

**PANELS** — "From Evolution through Progress ... to Where?" the Sundome water-color mural by Fred Kabica, depicts peasants and knights from medieval times.

the present, replete with fuel trucks, an armored tank, jets and spacecraft amid a smoggy sky that blots out the sun.

Kabica was born in Germany during World War I. He lived in the Chicago area where he was

employed in the telecommunications division of Swift and Co.

He studied art at the Chicago Art Institute. Due to poor health, Kabica retired early to Arizona where he became active

in community art projects. Some of his posters are still being displayed in the area.

The first showing of the mural was in April 1974, in the United Church of Sun City.



# Association formed to raise funds for Sundome

Group begins campaign  
to meet goal of \$150,000

A group of Sun Cities residents who feel "the Sundome is pretty important to this community," have gotten together to organize a non-profit association designed to help raise funds for the entertainment facility.

According to Clayton Brower, a Sun City West resident and a director on the newly-formed Sundome Performing Arts

Association (SPAA), the group will begin a fund drive this month in hopes of raising more than \$150,000 for the facility.

"We think the Sundome is pretty important to this community," says Mr. Brower.

"If the Sundome should fold, what would happen to the Symphony and other groups who currently use the facility?"

Mr. Brower says the Sundome has no intention of folding. But since it is owned by Arizona

State University, public monies are used to fund its operations and pay for all repairs.

He says ticket sales account for about 76-84 percent of the Sundome's annual budget, a "significant jump over the national average of 58 percent," says Mr. Brower.

The remaining "income gap," he says, must be raised through annual fund-raising events, private and public grants, program sponsorships and donations.

Mr. Brower says ticket sales, grants and program sponsorships combined are not enough for the Sundome to meet its 1988-89 operating budget.

Rather than cut back in programs or ask the Legislature for more money, Mr. Brower says the SPAA will seek private donations from residents in the community.

In 1984, the Del Webb Cor-

See FUNDS, Page 16

## • FUNDS

from page one

puration donated the Sundome to ASU. Over the years, Webb has helped to subsidize the facility on a decreasing basis. This year, however, marks the end of Webb's funding.

"Webb has always been somewhat of a father figure to the Sundome," says Mr. Brower.

"Well, that father has left now and it's time for the child to walk on his own."

Mr. Brower says telephone solicitors will be calling local residents over the next three

months in hopes of gaining contributions.



# First-class performing arts center has brought prestige, top acts to area

By CAROL ANNE GAINER  
View Editor

It's not situated in Sun City but it certainly has played a major role in its history.

It's the 7,169-seat Sundome which made its debut Sept. 13, 1980.

"It was the first regular theater in the Sun Cities; the first dedicated theater with permanent seating," said the Sundome's first general manager, Don Tuffs, currently senior vice president of Marketing for Del E. Webb Development Co. (Devco).

**BUILDING THE** superstructure was nearly a two-year venture at a total cost of over \$9.5 million that resulted in the following features:

—A 108,000-square-foot interior area.

—A 6,000-square-foot multi-purpose area in front of the stage which doubles as an orchestra pit and dance floor.

—A ceiling composed of acoustically perfect "sound clouds" which are suspended 25 feet below the actual roof.

—**A SOUND SYSTEM** consisting of a 4,800-watt Yamaha amplification system, a "Digital Delay" system whereby all seat locations in the theater hear the same sound simultaneously, and a closed-circuit broadcasting antenna buried in the theater floor which transmits to patrons' hearing aids with "telephone" pick-ups.

—Special seating for wheelchair patrons.

The Sundome personnel, such as Tuffs, were already involved with the theater before its walls went up.

"It started for me in spring 1979, about 18 months prior to opening," Tuffs recalled. "I dedicated 90 percent of my time to set policies, get entertainment."

**AS HE FURTHER** recalled, it was a time of high enthusiasm, excitement and anticipation.

"It was going to afford the community the opportunity to see the best entertainment in the world," he stated. "It was an opportunity to manage one of the largest theaters in the United States. But it was scary at

times. I wondered, 'Will I make a lot of wrong decisions?'"

Thus, Tuffs relied on his experiences from having worked in Sun City since 1971 with the Sun Bowl, the Boswell Hospital lecture series and the Sun City Fine Arts Society, which he helped establish.

What he learned was to go with what was successful.

**"WE WANTED TO** move into the Sundome very carefully. We were working with a multimillion dollar budget," Tuffs explained.

Each year at the Sun Bowl, the caliber of entertainment included such celebrities as Lawrence Welk and Henry Mancini. That lineup was reflected in the Sundome's programming the first year.

"We opened with Lawrence Welk, Pearl Bailey and big bands," Tuffs said.

From its inception to the present—the Sundome and its 100-member staff is in its fifth

season—the facility hosts an average of 100 entertainment events from September through June. Included are Las Vegas shows, musicals, theatrical productions, celebrity lectures, international symphonies, ethnic dance groups, ballet, light opera, big band dance parties, travel film lectures, cinema greats, superstar concerts and special theme events.

In popularity, Tuffs found two of the above events to be at the top of the list: the Celebrity Forum—a lecture series which has featured such prominent people as President Gerald Ford, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany, attorney F. Lee Bailey and radio commentator Paul Harvey and which won the Everett Peterson Award in 1983 for the best lecture series in the United States—and the travel film series.

**THE TRAVEL** series is so successful, Tuffs pointed out, for multiple reasons. "The cost is so reasonable (\$2.25 a show), we've

backed what we feel are the top travel films, and because the people want to see where they've been and see where they're going."

Rating high with the public, too, are the "stars" the Sundome presents. "Extremely popular

\* Center, C15

**SUNDOME**

## \*Center brings in top acts

—**From C13**  
were Lawrence Welk, Perry Como, Henry Mancini, Wayne Newton, Tom Jones and Dan Fogelberg," stated Tuffs.

The last three entertainers were introduced into the Sundome lineup in its third year because "there was enough demand for them," Tuffs added. "We knew eventually we'd be changing, modifying our philosophy, and updating our lineup and (aside from the local communities' patronage) including the Valley."

**AT THE ONSET**, 15 percent of the Sundome audience came from the Phoenix area. The latest reading, according to Tuffs, is 35 to 40 percent Phoenixian patronage.

Nationally, the Sundome has also gained recognition.

"We are already considered one of the major theaters in the United States ... for two reasons: the fine reputation for handling the stars and the audience and because we are a major stop on the way to the West Coast," explained Tuffs.

Another major change that has taken place in the Sundome's short history was when it became a non-profit organization Oct. 1, 1984.

**"THE SUNDOME'S** future looks very bright under the new non-profit," Tuffs stated, "because now we're getting community involvement; residents are on the board of directors. Hopefully we'll get a much better feel of what the community wants."

At the end of the past year, word came that the Sundome was making a major change. Devco chairman and president Robert Swanson announced Dec. 15 that the Sundome was presented as a gift to Arizona State University.



# Hearing aids? Sundome explains ills of sound system

By CAROL ANNE GAINER  
Staff Writer 9/29/86

SUN CITY WEST — Just ask anyone connected with the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts what the most common complaint is from the public and you'll hear two words: the sound.

"Turn it down. It's too loud."

"It's too soft; we can't hear it."

This problem has plagued the facility since its opening and has been worked on constantly.

Part of the solution is public awareness. Initially that was done through monthly public tours of the Sundome, with a portion devoted to explaining the sound system.

But it didn't have a strong enough impact, since only a surface explanation was given. And, says Ric Alling, the Sundome's technical director, it's a lot more complicated.

"They spend 45 minutes to an hour on the sound and lighting end," he says. "I don't feel it's

enough time to grasp it all.

"The biggest misconception is that people think we have a volume knob that we can control the sound with."

Quite to the contrary, there is a sea of knobs on the control board — or sound mixing console — situated in the middle of the auditorium. Alling defends it, saying, "It's state of the art. More halls around the country use this type of sound board — the Yamaha PM2000, which costs about \$32,000."

As he explained it, the Sundome house sound system, which is a single point distribution, "has to be distributed because of the size of the hall. When you amplify sound, it disperses when it travels. So we distribute it to have it equal all over."

The system also is designed with delay units, which Alling refers to in the business as psycho-acoustics.

Simply put, it plays tricks on

the audience. That means the live sound and the amplified sound will both be heard by the front rows, while the people in the back actually are hearing through the speakers, but are made to believe it's coming from the stage.

There's a catch, though. "It only works when a person's on stage," says Alling. "When they stroll the aisle in the audience, the crowd will hear an echo after the voice."

While the audience may think the Sundome staff that operates the house sound system is responsible for controlling such matters, that is not always so. They are sound enhancers.

"We're not here to reproduce it (sound) or regenerate it," Alling says.

And, he says, many of the performers trust the house system.

"We never release control of

\* Sundome, A3



Ric Alling, Sundome technical director, works the facility's sound board.

(News-Sun photo)



# \*Sundome

—From A1

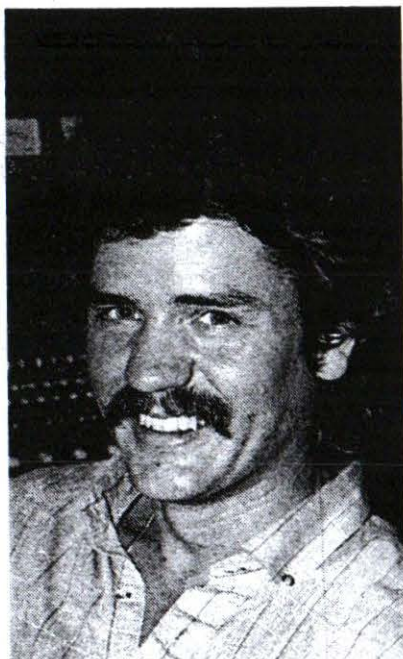
the house system. Many times the performer's sound man will run the mixing console, but it's actually to our advantage to a certain extent. They know the show and the sound and how the performer will act — talk loud here or there. But we have our own man standing with him."

A performer's primary concern, he says, is that their own sound system works well. That is where the Sundome runs into trouble.

"When we run into a problem is when outside factors are involved. There are two main ways: One, with the entertainer's monitor system on stage — one for them to hear themselves. They may have as many as 15 to 16 speakers on stage ... the drummer always gets one, the keyboard man, and so on."

Every celebrity, he says, except Pearl Bailey, uses a monitor system, which breaches the Sundome's control of the house.

"We are only enhancing what is coming off the stage. If a lecturer is mumbling, we'll pick it up."



RIC ALLING

Likewise, the sound people are subject to the contracts drawn up between the performer and the Sundome, says Alling, who cites Barbara Mandrell as a good example.

"As her father, who is also her manager, informed us, 'Barbara Mandrell did not become the top female vocalist of the year by

watching a sound pressure meter.'

"In contracts, artistic control is at the discretion of the performers. So we get what we buy ... say we sign Donny Osmond. He'll do rock more now than he did six years ago."

The other outside factor affecting the Sundome's control is a simple lesson in music.

"Certain instruments can produce a louder sound, such as the electric guitar and bass," says Alling. "And we can't turn an instrument down. We can only turn it up (through amplification)."

"Take, for example, an orchestra. The musicians themselves are controlling that sound. We could turn our whole system off and go home and that sound would still be too loud."

When a singer is involved, matters get further complicated. The Sundome has to compensate for the instrumental loudness by turning up the vocalist's sound so he or she won't be drowned out.

Not all is hopeless where the Sundome's sound system is concerned, though. Alling and the

staff use the tricks of the trade, such as setting up acoustic panels to balance the sound and using velvet drapes in front of the brass section to absorb some of the sound.

Moreover, the auditorium is acoustically designed to be reflective at the stage. "The sides, ceiling, back of the hall are designed to absorb sound," says Alling.

This may also work against them. "For example, a drummer bangs away and it blasts out at the audience. That's why, if you notice, we put panels around the drummer."

Then, too, Alling says, "There is a problem where we aren't able to adequately amplify a performer or lecturer who speaks in a low or soft voice. The sound system goes only so high before feedback occurs."

Another problem he faces is with theater groups, since there aren't enough speakers to cover all the singers in those large casts. That's why "we can't get Broadway touring companies," he says.

For the musical productions the Sundome have been able to

get, special treatment is applied. "The orchestra is in the pit ... we use speakers to reject the orchestra sounds and pick up the sounds from the stage performers," Alling says.

"So a good tip is: Don't sit in the front rows because you'll hear, say, the horn player."

Ironically enough, Alling says the musical theater series they do offer is one of the Sundome's hottest selling series.

The perfect set-up, says Alling, "would be not to have a sound system at all; to have a totally acoustic sound from the stage. Last year that happened with the Hambro Piano Quartet."

Just last week, the Sundome made a breakthrough involving contracts with performers.

"We added a sound addendum requiring special levels: The sound pressure level at the console should not exceed 93 decibels and it can't go over 101 decibels from the stage to the first row," says Alling.

"That gives the Sundome more control, which is very unusual in most auditoriums."

"It won't go in effect, though,

until after the new year, because all of the contracts through this year were already in effect. And it's very experimental. We won't know if the artists will do it. So we're also in the process of toying with a straight penalty on non-compliance."

Meanwhile, Alling hopes this information will reach Sundome patrons and cause them to be more understanding toward the sound system staff.

"The worst thing that happens is when we're having a problem, we're the first to know it. The person out here (the man at the console) is trying his best. Most shows it is active and he should not be distracted by any means. But people are always coming up to him with complaints."

"That's like someone going to the pilot when a plane is crashing and ask what's he's going to do about it."

What action is taken by the Sundome is done after the show. "We take a seat number (where the complainer sat) and go down to that seat and check it out. We also do a sound system check twice a year and can check every seat."



NEWS - SUN  
Sun City AZ  
Cir: 17,500

DEC 18 1984

MAR JON

## ASU sees no immediate Sundome change

By **P. ATWOOD WILLIAMS**  
Staff Writer

There will be no changes in personnel at the Sundome, at least until after June 30, according to Paige Mulhollan, Arizona State University (ASU) executive vice president, who will oversee the operation of the Sundome.

The Arizona Board of Regents Saturday accepted the entertainment facility as a centennial gift from Del E. Webb Development

Co. (Devco).

Mulhollan reported Monday that Jim O'Connell, director of ASU events, will operate the Sundome along with Gammage Center for the Performing Arts and other ASU facilities.

**O'CONNELL WILL** be out of the Valley until later this week.

Mulhollan also said all performance contracts will be honored and there will be "no sudden changes of direction."

He hopes for joint bookings

between Gammage and the Sundome that will enhance the schedule of each entertainment center.

**"I AM SURE** that we will operate the Sundome in a manner consistent with community interests," he added in a phone interview Monday afternoon.

The Sundome is reported to be operating at a deficit of \$200,000 annually.

Devco, which built the facility in 1980, will operate it the bal-

ance of this month and has agreed to underwrite anticipated operating losses through 1988.

**MULHOLLAN DID** not know that Sundome facilities had been provided at no charge for at least two annual events, the Sun Cities Thanksgiving Day service and the Sun City West Talent Show.

He said that he could not be certain, but he did not expect there would be a change in policies affecting these events.



CHANDLER ARIZONAN  
Chandler AZ  
Cir: 6500

DEC 16 1984

MAR JON

## Regents OK Sundome

From staff reports

Christmas came early for Arizona State University.

The Arizona Board of Regents Saturday approved receipt of the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City and 90 acres of Arizona Public Service Co. land at the Salt River in Tempe.

Both donations have conditions attached to them. The land is to be developed into a golf course and other recreational areas, and the Sundome must break even financially by 1988.

The land donated by APS surrounds the company's Ocotillo power plant between Hayden and Rural roads, north of University Drive.

In accepting the land, the regents agreed it would be used for recreation, "including the operation of a golf course, tennis courts, playing fields and playing grounds, running tracks, hiking and bridle paths . . ."

The Sun Angels, an alumni fundraising organization, has wanted to build a golf course in the area, partially on ASU property at First Street and Rural Road.

"It's not anticipated that any state funds will go into (developing) that golf course," said Regent Jack Pfister of Phoenix.

So far, ASU administrators don't have any definite plans for recreational facilities other than a golf course.

The Sundome, owned by the Del E. Webb Development Co. (DEVCO), a subsidiary of the Phoenix-

based Del E. Webb Corp., is an \$8.7 million theater.

It's the nation's largest single-level auditorium, with more than 7,100 seats — 1,500 more than the Radio City Music Hall in New York.

ASU will manage it in conjunction with the Gammage Center for the Performing Arts.

A financial history of the theater, compiled by DEVCO, reveals the Sundome has operated in the red since its construction in 1960, with deficits ranging from \$105,000 in 1960 to \$490,000 in 1981, for an average of nearly \$300,000 in annual losses.

By operating the Sundome in conjunction with the Gammage Center, ASU hopes to achieve greater economies so the Sun City facility can break even in a few years.

ASU has the option of giving the Sundome back to DEVCO if it keeps losing money by 1988.

"It's quite likely that in a reasonable period of time, ASU could . . . even make a slight profit on it," Pfister said.

DEVCO has agreed to underwrite up to \$750,000 in anticipated operating losses at the Sundome until the 1987-88 fiscal year.

Said Pfister: "We're more likely to be more efficient than Del Webb."

Paige Mulholla, ASU's executive vice president, said the Sundome is the largest gift received by the university.



NEWS - SUN  
Sun City AZ  
Cir: 17,500

DEC 17 1984

WAR JON

## Devco gives Sundome to ASU

The Sundome now belongs to Arizona State University (ASU), which will manage the Valley's two largest cultural centers, the Sundome and Gammage Center for the Performing Arts, located at its Tempe campus.

Gift of the Sundome was announced Saturday by Robert Swanson, Del E. Webb Development Co. (Devco) chairman and president. It was accepted by the Arizona Board of Regents at a Saturday meeting.

Devco built the \$8.65 million facility, the largest single-level auditorium in the country, in 1980. It is equipped with the latest lighting and sound technology and seats 7,169.

ASU EXECUTIVE Vice President Paige Mulhollan, who will oversee management of the Sundome, was in a meeting and not available to answer questions about any proposed changes in staffing or

programming before presstime today.

He said in a prepared release that "The Sundome represents the largest single gift ever received by the university," which accepted the gift in honor of the centennial celebration this year.

To help ASU make the transition to ownership of the facility, and to assure the continued success of the Sundome, Devco has agreed to underwrite anticipated operating losses through 1988.

THE ANNUAL operating deficit was reported in a Phoenix newspaper as \$200,000 annually. ASU hopes to reduce the deficit by 1989.

There was no word as to whether the new owner will continue to provide the facility free for the Sun Cities Thanksgiving service and the annual Sun City West Variety Show held last week as a food-raiser

for the Salvation Army and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

"It is our great pleasure to accept this gift," Mulhollan said.

"AND I WANT to assure all the Sundome's patrons throughout the west Valley that we will operate the facility according to the same high standards which characterize Gammage Center ..."

"The donation will broaden the Sundome's access to performers and greatly enhance ASU's presence in the western part of the Phoenix area," said Swanson.

The Sundome has hosted symphonies, lectures, ballet and guest stars. As of this morning the Sun Cities Symphony had no word regarding any changes in their contract.

It also was unknown whether services of the Sun City West Sheriff's Posse would be retained for crowd control.



# Sundome donated to ASU

Dec 15 1984

Gift is made in honor  
of school's centennial

By JACQUEE G. PETCHEL  
Arizona Republic Staff

The \$8.6 million Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City West has been donated to Arizona State University to honor the university's centennial, the center's owners announced Saturday.

The announcement was made at a Saturday meeting of the Arizona Board of Regents, which voted to accept the donation. The university now will manage both the Sundome and the Gammage Center for Performing Arts, located on ASU's main campus.

The Sundome, which seats more than 7,000, is owned by the Del E. Webb Development Corp., builder of the Sun City and Sun City West communities and a subsidiary of the Del E. Webb Corp.

Corporation spokesman Bill Acton said that the Sundome was built in 1980 as an amenity to the Sun City communities but that the corporation did not intend to retain ownership of the facility.

"We're not in the entertainment business, we're in home building," Acton said.

Scheduled events at the Sundome will not be affected by the donation, he said.

ASU Executive Vice President Paige Mulhollan, who will oversee management of the Sundome, said the contribution is the largest single gift ever received by the university.

He said the Webb corporation has agreed to assume the Sundome's annual \$200,000 operating deficit until 1988.

"Part of the gift is that Del Webb will continue to assume the loss through fiscal 1988, and we hope by that time we will have reduced the deficit to zero," Mulhollan said.

The Sundome, like the Gammage Center, will be managed by ASU's public-events department. ASU officials said acquisition of the Sundome will help to attract more performers and other public events.

"If you can offer a prospective artist two different appearances, sometimes you can get artists you otherwise couldn't get, and we believe this will give us a better opportunity to attract the best talent.

"This will make us better able to provide cultural and artistic leadership to the Valley," Mulhollan said. "We also believe the service the university can provide is strengthened by a west-side presence in performing arts."

The university also plans to use the Sundome for its own fine-arts programs and presentations, he said.

The Sundome can accommodate twice as many people as the Gammage Center, which seats 3,300.



# Dome tour offers views behind scenes

By CAROLANNE GAINER  
Staff Writer

Yes, it's summer but the Sundome has come to life again—with a free tour.

Of what?

The 7,169-seat auditorium, of course.

In hopes of supplying answers to all those unanswered questions people ask about the facility, technical director Mitchell Simons will provide curious folks with an hour and a half of explanations, anecdotes and life as it really is at the Sundome.

He'll guide people through parts of the building never before accessible to the public.

This enlightening glimpse behind the scenes should be of particular interest to those people who attend Sundome programs and see only the finished product.

If Simons looks familiar, he should. During shows, he's usually found at the sound and lighting console—located in the middle of the auditorium. The console installation looks like an airplane cockpit's instrument panel.

It's no coincidence that the tour begins there.

Quite a bit of time is spent in this area, since most of the show is controlled from here.

As Simons explained, many decisions—both human and mechanical—take place in this multi-board location.

Via computer, the lighting program for each show is pre-recorded. And for an hour-long show, that can take four hours, Simons said.

The longest show—the circus—took three days and 10 men.

"You have to have everything you want pre-programmed. You can't program during the show," he said. "And that's where we get sluggish."

Because when stars change their minds, it's up to the sound and lighting staff to accommodate them.

Simon's description of the sound system alone will give tour members a new respect for and understanding of the productions they'll see in the future.

Although the sound process and its numerous technical gadgets can't be explained here in simple terms, the tour is worthwhile if only for

this information.

Facts on such items as the four miles of wiring in the floor, the hard-of-hearing system, approximately \$500,000 of lighting equipment and \$800,000 of sound equipment give insight into the inner workings of the Sundome.

A great example—and an often-heard complaint—is the sound system. More specifically, the volume.

"At times, we get complaints the sound is too loud. It's not the sound system or the staff," said Simons as he proceeded to explain the limitations and controls their sound system offers.

Instead, the problem lies with the musicians overcompensating to fill the 4½ million cubic feet of auditorium with sound, he said.

Not to fear, though. Simons doesn't weigh the mind down with technical trivia and dull dialogue. He sustains the listener's attention with examples of situations involving famous names.

It's the kind of name-

dropping everyone can enjoy—amusing, interesting and upbeat.

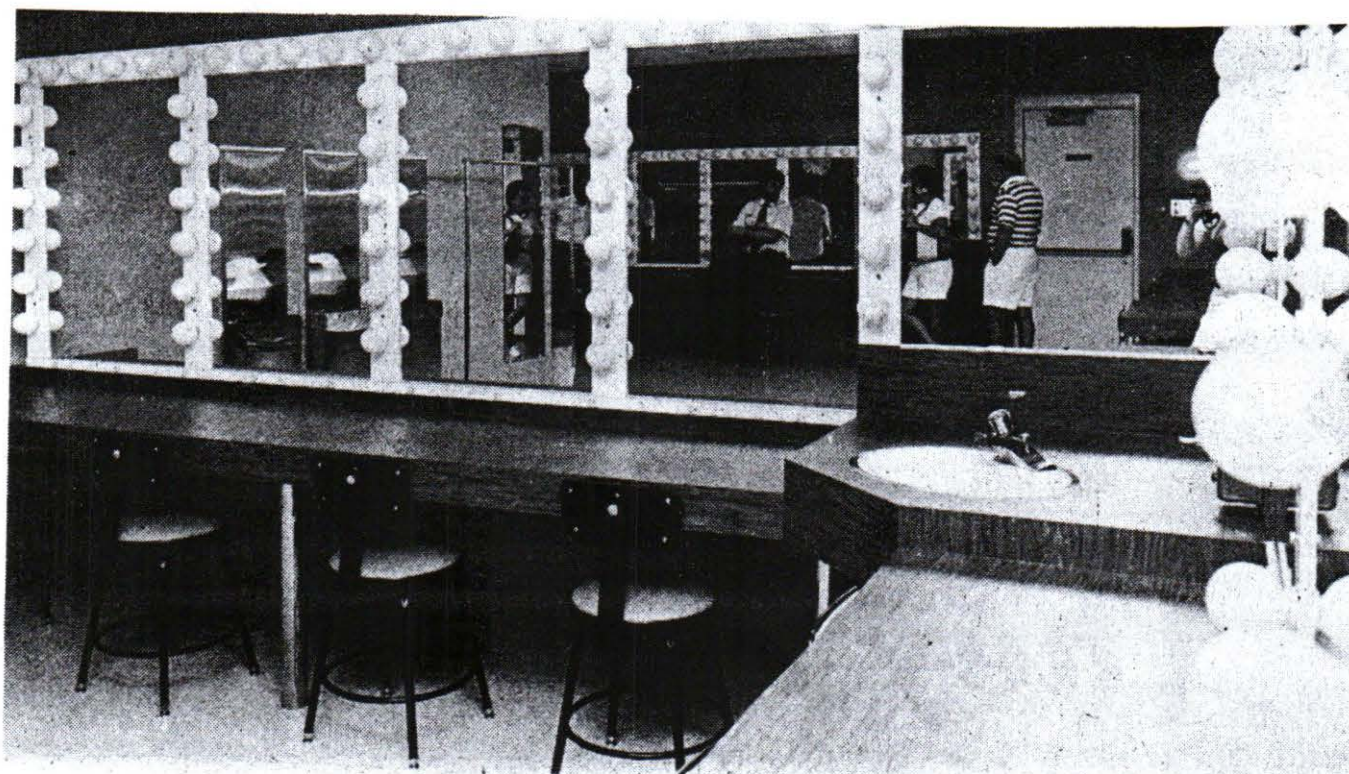
To give the tour members yet another aspect from which to comprehend the Sundome's vastness, Simons next leads the group onstage.

It's at this point that people are able to experience what the entertainer feels.

Simons' facts add to the feeling. "There are 5,500 watts of light in the entertainer's face and

that's just from the follow spotlights (as opposed to the stationary ones) alone. And though we have a cooling system, it's usually 95 to 100 degrees on stage."

When uncomfortable



The light-studded dressing room: It speeds show preparations. The expensive plate glass mirrors

reflect one of the Sundome's first tour groups. (News-Sun photos by M.J. Hoppes)





Sundome technical director Mitchell Simons is shown amid a mass of dials, knobs and buttons which

control one of the best theatrical sound and lighting systems around. (News-Sun Photo by Jim Painter)

## Sundome sound sytem praised

By HELEN ALLEN  
Staff Writer

Back stage action isn't always behind the scenes during a Sundome performance.

Where sound and lighting are concerned, the action is quietly taking place in the center of the theater.

Knobs and dials and switches are being constantly manipulated on separate consoles, in an attempt to get sounds and lights just right for audience enjoyment.

**THE SITUATION** at times becomes tense, said technical director Mitchell Simons, requiring sound control to become a two-man job with instructions also being phoned to the stage.

Sound can suddenly go out of control during a band performance, he said, when musicians decide to up the volume of their instruments and override those next to them.

This happens, he commented, when first time performers at the Sundome suddenly become overwhelmed by the size of the theater.

**ARTISTS** and orchestras, in most cases, do not see the theater until a short time before their performance, according to the director.

"Rehearsals," he added, "would let us see a problem prior to a performance, and would also let the artist get a grip on the size of the theater, but they would also increase the cost of the show."

Simons estimated that about 75 percent of the performances are put on without a rehearsal, and about half the rehearsals held go on without the artist.

**HE EXPLAINED** that attempts are now being made to inform artists beforehand of the excellent acoustics in the Sundome, and some help is also being provided by previous performers.

Among these, Simons said, is Pearl Bailey who returned to Los Angeles praising the Sundome acoustics.

Tony Orlando and Wayne Newton, convinced of the sound effects, he said, found that they could set aside their usual high sound level performances and put on a good show at normal level.

**SPEAKING** proudly of the Sundome, Simons said: "This place has the finest acoustics I've heard anywhere."

The theater, he said, was designed by an acoustical consultant to handle a wide variety of shows, ranging from a solo act to one having a full contingent of performers.

**FLOOR TO CEILING** heights in the 7,200 seat theater vary from 40 to 52 feet, and side and back walls are covered with a soft material. A portion of the ceiling is composed of acoustically perfect "sound clouds."

The sound mixing board, located in the center of the theater, according to Simons, controls the input of different instruments on stage, brings out the quality of certain instruments, adjusts, mixes, balances and sets the volume of sound reaching the audience.

Sounds to the audience come through a 4,800 watt audio system controlling different speakers.

**A DELAY** system, Simons said, "guarantees" that natural sound coming from the stage reaches the ears of the audience at the same time amplified sound does.

The 30-year-old Simons, who lives in Phoenix, joined the Sundome shortly before it was open to the public.

Prior to moving to Arizona, he worked in theaters in the Detroit area and also taught theater art on the high school level in Michigan.



# Sundome official lures stars, success to facility

*Webb*  
By Susan Felt  
The Phoenix Gazette

Two years ago, people in the entertainment industry for the most part ignored a place called the Sundome in Sun City West.

They dismissed the 7,000-seat auditorium built in the middle of a desert retirement community as an unlikely place to showcase their stars.

Now, Las Vegas performers like Wayne Newton cannot stop praising the country's largest single-level theater.

Booking the Sundome remains a gamble, and one of the key people who has helped stack the deck in the theater's favor is Don Tuffs.

Tuffs was moved from public relations manager for Sun City's Sun Bowl to start up Del E. Webb Development Company's multimillion dollar showpiece for the developer's newest real estate undertaking, Sun City West.

Tuffs recently was promoted from Sundome general manager to vice president of public relations. He will continue to manage the facility he has helped develop.

He brought traditional booking strategies from the Sun Bowl — Sun City's outdoor amphitheater — to the larger, elaborate Sundome.

"I probably brought a philosophy that everyone wanted Lawrence Welk," Tuffs said. "There was an effort for more nostalgic-type events and to think of booking people with interesting topics rather than interesting people."

"We thought, 'Let's start here,' and I think that was the proper way to start," Tuffs said.

Although marketing strategies for the Sundome have changed, a constant is the attempt to keep tickets under \$15 for everything.

"Very often it costs \$15 a ticket just to pay the entertainer. That doesn't include lighting, utilities, ushers, technicians and publicity," Tuffs said.

Although there have been several turning points for the Sundome, a key one was booking Wayne Newton, who Tuffs said was the first Las Vegas superstar to play the Sundome.

"He drew two near-capacity crowds and basically the dates (in May) were out-of-season for us. Most of our winter visitors had gone home. He filled the Sundome twice, and 70 percent of the audience was from the Phoenix metropolitan area.

"It's been hard getting the superstars here. They

wonder how our lights and the acoustics are. What kind of facility can the Sundome be, placed out in the middle of a desert 20 miles north of Phoenix?

"But Wayne has gone back to Las Vegas and is spreading the good word about the Sundome and what a fabulous facility it is. Now we're getting phone calls. This is new for us. Before, we would call and the agent would say, 'He'll return your call,' and that never happened," Tuffs said.

Not only do performers have a clearer idea of the Sundome, but, Tuffs said, he has a clearer idea of what the market is and what to book.

He said he is scheduling a season for an audience of 45 years and older. So while Lawrence Welk has great appeal, Newton and stars like Neil Diamond, Kenny Rogers and John Denver are also wanted by Sundome patrons.

Tuffs expects negotiations with high-priced Las Vegas stars will become even more favorable not only as performers boast of the facility but as decreasing numbers of tourists reduce entertainment fees nightclubs are willing, and able, to pay.

"They are looking around," Tuffs said. And Sun City West — a short flight from Los Angeles, near Las Vegas and Palm Springs — becomes a very favorable spot.

Tuffs said stars are also lowering their initial entertainment fees and taking a percentage of ticket sales, thereby assuming part of the risk and making themselves more affordable.

Part of the message that goes back to other performers is the care and treatment of entertainers by Sundome staff.

Tuffs said the most unusual request was by Eydie Gorme and Steve Lawrence's agent for carpeting in their dressing rooms.

"It was 3 in the afternoon. They had two shows on Saturday. So, at 4:30 on Friday afternoon we were having carpeting installed in the rooms. We would have anyway, so we went ahead. ... In that instance, I think it was the agent, not the stars, who was being difficult," Tuffs said.

Standard amenities include limosine service to and from the airport and during the performer's stay; and lodging in DevCo's vacation apartments bordering Hillcrest Golf Course in Sun City West and next door to the Sundome.

The apartments are fully furnished down to knives and forks in the kitchen and there are fully stocked refrigerators and liquor cabinets, Tuffs said.





# Sundome Drama

**S**un City West's Sundome Center for the Performing Arts, the largest, single-floor theatre in the nation, presented several architectural challenges to its designers and builders. First: build it large yet make it look small, intimate. Second: create an attractive exterior that would be compatible with the architectural theme of Sun City West. Finally: create an interior to accommodate all patrons of the theatre, including the elderly and the handicapped.

The architectural firm of Hawkins, Lindsey, Wilson Associates, Phoenix and Los Angeles and the builder and owner Del E. Webb Corporation met and surpassed these challenges.

Only the Grand Old Opry in Nashville and the Aladdin Hotel theatre in Las Vegas outstrip the 108,000-square-foot Sundome in size due to balcony configurations.

Despite its size, though, the Sundome complements rather than dominates the surrounding structures. Its low profile is achieved by nestling the building into the crest of an earth berm whose flanks hide its bulk. The entry to the theatre is marked by arched portals and Spanish wrought-iron gates.

The name Sundome is derived from the oval-shaped 240-by-324-foot domed roof. In actuality, the roof is a huge diaphragm which moves up and down for temperature expansion. Eight steel columns set in drilled caissons and masonry walls up to 40 feet in height support the 'dome.'

Four 240-foot long, single-span roof trusses and a 17-foot slope in the floor from foyer to stage are also design features contributing to the building's low profile. The single-span design of the roof affords an unobstructed angle to the stage from every seat in the theatre.

The four, 40-ton, shallow roof trusses are the principle engineering feature. They span the theatre width-wise, providing the primary structural support and effectively keep the height of the building to a minimum. The ceiling is suspended 25 feet below the roof and effectively hides the roof trusses. What the theatre patron sees is a ceiling composed



of 'islands' of acoustic panels over the theatre and directly over the stage a cluster of geometrically designed sound reflectors resembling huge fish scales.

According to architect Jasper Hawkins of Hawkins, Lindsey, Wilson Associates, deciding the type of roof for the Sundome involved two years of research. After many styles had been investigated and discarded, the architects finally chose the single-span steel dome supported by shallow trusses, with expansion joints and covered by insulation board, gravel and epoxy stabilizers which waterproofs and reflects sunlight. Hence the name, "Sundome."

The auditorium of the Sundome fans nearly 160 degrees outward from its 55-by-55-foot stage. The broad shoulders of the 24-foot thrust stage allow stars to move freely back and forth as they build a rapport with the audience. The stage thrust coupled with the illusion created by the design of the acoustically-treated walls, which close at an angle to the stage, focus attention on the performance. A spectator, however, is not met with the feeling of vastness and isolation often found in large theatres. Rather, as one sinks into the plush, Continental-style seats, it is easy to feel close to the performers. This sense of intimacy vastly enhances the enjoyment of any performance.

Several additional features within the

theatre illustrate a true sensitivity to the needs of all theatre patrons, including the elderly and handicapped. Induction coils buried in the concrete floor beneath all seating transmits the audio to those with telephone pickups in their hearing aids. There is a section of seating for 200 people in wheelchairs and their attendants. In addition, everything is on floor level or is ramped, including the stage delivery door. There is also a separate entrance for wheelchairs into the auditorium. Approximately four feet of room between each row of seats provides easy access for all patrons.

These features have earned the Sundome Center the 1981 Merit Award for showing consideration to the handicapped from the Arizona Society of the American Institute of Architects, the State of Arizona Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and the Easter Seal Society.

In addition, the Arizona Society of Professional Engineers gave the Sundome its 1981 structural engineering award.

These recognitions represent professional acclaim for a superior structure. But the Sundome Center presents its own award to each theatre patron at every performance with its feeling of shared warmth and welcome. The challenges of design were well-met indeed.

*by Elaine M. Beall*



# 'Sound Clouds' Tame Acoustics Inside Sun City West's Sundome

VF SCW SUNDOME

## SUN CITY WEST

A reinforced sound system, and a thoughtful building design, tame the acoustics inside the 7,169-seat Sundome Center for the Performing Arts 20 miles west of Phoenix.

The largest single-floor theater in the country, it is located at Sun City West, a master-planned resort-retirement community built by Del E. Webb Development Co., a subsidiary of the Del E. Webb Corporation, for an eventual population of 65,000.

Coralling stray sounds, and diverting them into acoustical box canyons, required months of research before construction began. Fitted with sound-treated walls and ceiling, and a bank of "sound clouds" — 25-by-30 ft. geometric reflectors resembling huge fish scales — suspended over the stage, the Sundome is free of the bounce and distortion which often plagues large theaters.

The Sundome was completed in September, 1980, at a cost of \$9.6 million. Only the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville and the Aladdin Hotel theater in Las Vegas are larger due to their balcony configurations.

From center stage, the 108,000 sq. ft. theater fans outward approximately 160 degrees. From the front of the stage to the back wall is 70 yards, and 110 yards from side to side.

There is an unobstructed view from everywhere in the house, because of the single-span design of the theater's 250-by-324 ft. domed roof.

To a performer, the theater must appear as a vast arena, and you'd almost expect to hear an echo. But a star like Ella Fitzgerald can run up and down the octaves, belting out jazz, while sequential delays programmed into the 12 clusters of overhead speakers assure that spectators in the rear will hear the same sound, at the same instant, as those up front.

The speakers work on a ripple system to eliminate bounce. Speakers in front hold back sound for 110 milliseconds. Successive banks of speakers delay for 60 and 40 milliseconds, respectively, compensating for the time it takes sound to travel to the back of the theater.

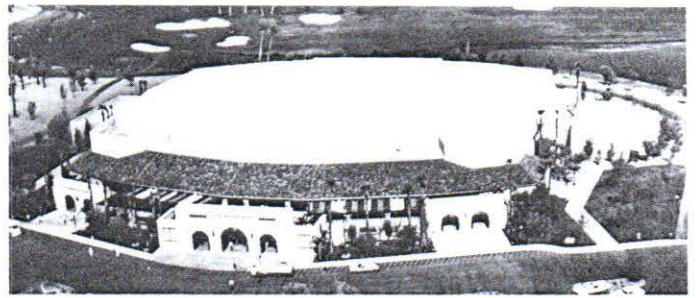
Theater manager Donald R. Tuffs says the stars love it because they sound good everywhere in the theater. Pearl Bailey was so impressed with the Sundome she has told others about it.

★ ★ ★

"Everywhere she goes," Tuffs said, "she lets other stars and promoters know what a great theater this is. I'm constantly getting calls from people who say Pearl Bailey told them to call."

The acoustical design for the Sundome was developed by Coffeen Anderson & Associates of Mission, Kan. The need to produce perfect sound rendition influenced nearly every aspect of construction.

Stage sound is piped through a Yamaha PM2000 mixer console connected in tandem to a computerized Kliegl Performance light control panel for spe-



*Sundome Center for the Performing Arts*



cial sound-modulated effects. Both panels are located in an open control booth in the center of the theater, so the operators can monitor first hand what the audience is hearing and seeing.

The Yamaha console has 32 inputs and eight outputs, plus an auxiliary sound effects console with six channels that can create a variety of hoots, whistles and echoes.

"We can take any of the inputs — like a group of violins, cellos and other strings — and send it all through a single output, controlling everything so the orchestra doesn't outreach the singer," theater technical director Mitchell Simons says.

"At the same time we're doing a mix to the house, we can do a mix to an eight-channel Revox, three-hour stereo recorder. Most of the tapes are for control purposes. We don't record the shows for commercial purposes because of professional costs and copyrights, but we have the capability."

Simons taught theater in a West Bloomfield, Mich., high school, and worked the sound systems for several theaters in the Detroit area, including Fisher Music Hall, before moving to Arizona. The Sundome, he says, outclasses everything.

"It looks good, and it sounds good too," he said. "We can even offer good sound to a person who is hard of hearing."

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Four miles of induction loops buried every six feet in the concrete floor beneath all the seats in the theater transmit to hearing aids with telephone pickups used by persons with severe hearing impairment.

Continued on Page 28

OVER

Atlantic City Star Las Vegas, New • March 1982



Reception is good four feet above the floor.

"These people now have a direct couple to our sound system," Simons explained. "That's turned out to be a real good thing. A lot of people are able to hear a performance for the first time in years, or even in their lives."

Banks of Yamaha amplifiers, stacked in racks in a room just offstage, give the theater a sound potential of 5,000 watts, but normally no more than 300 watts are used because of the fine-tuned acoustics. "The watts are available," says Simons, "but if we were to use them in here, we'd all die."

Forty-six amplifiers serve the amphitheater. Another 20 serve the stage and dressing rooms. The stage manager's station, on stage left, has miniature sound and lighting consoles which allow a direct hand in production.

Components for the sound and light system are contained in modules which can be removed quickly by stage crews when failures occur, for replacement with ready spares.

"Every technical station is connected by intercom," Simons continues. "There are 50 microphone stations in the theater which also can be used to speak into the intercom."

Two-way intercoms have been installed in both the stars' and troupes' dressing rooms for stage calls.

Backstage, behind a scrim, is an acoustical shell that prevents sound from leaking out the rear of the theater. Theater construction complements the acous-

A 55-by-55 ft. raised stage with a 24 ft. thrust puts performers directly under the computer-designed acoustical reflectors which defuse wandering sounds at ceiling level.

The amphitheater floor slopes 17 ft. from foyer to stage, and the oval-forming walls close at angles to the front — an effect which transforms the stage into the throat of a gigantic horn that pumps filtered, enriched sound out over the amphitheater.

"We produce the finest sound for a large facility in the country," theater manager Tuffs boasts.

The crowds seem to agree. In the first 12 months, Sundome has had four sellouts, and several other performances have come close.

One of the most recent events was former President Gerald Ford, who spoke there Oct. 12 soon after returning from the funeral of assassinated Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

Sellouts have included Bob Hope, Fred Waring, Red Skelton and Lawrence Welk.

Because of the theater's reputation for good sound and large crowds, owner Del E. Webb Development Co. has had no trouble getting stars to come to Sun City West, a community that in its three-year existence has grown to 7,500 population. The marquee has included Jim Nabors, Victor Borge, Edy Gorme, Donnie and Marie Osmond, Glen Campbell, Vikki Carr and Sergio Franchi.

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Visiting symphony orchestras have played there; the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra with Andre Previn is scheduled for February. National and international performing troupes, musical theater and opera productions have swirled across its stage. The management says most of the shows make money.

Ticket prices that are some of the lowest in show business increase the Sundome's popularity among Arizona theater-goers. Oscar winner George Burns and Bob Hope performed to \$8 ticket-holders. Big bands play to an 800-person dance floor in front of the stage for the price of a movie.

"We know our ticket prices are very low, but it's primarily because the Webb company has traditionally provided entertainment that's been a bargain in these retirement communities. You might say it's good public relations."

The Sundome naturally draws a large part of its audiences from Sun City West and neighboring Sun City, another master-planned resort-retirement community built by Webb which today has 47,500 population.

But Arizonans in general have been quick to recognize an entertainment bargain in a theater with stuffed-chair comfort and echo-free sound. Twenty-five percent of the ticket sales for feature performances, for example, are to people who drive from Phoenix and suburbs.

Tuffs, 33, says a lot of them are young people like himself.

General contractor for the Sundome was Del E. Webb Corporation's contracting division. Another subsidiary, Webb Development, completed the interior and operates the theater. Architect was Hawkins Lindsey Wilson Associates of Phoenix and Los Angeles.

★



# Circus set for four shows

By CAROL ANNE GAINER  
Staff Writer

It's showtime, folks. After reading numerous behind-the-scenes features of the 1869 Circus in the Sundome, the public will get to see the finished product today and Sunday in four performances.

Show times are 2 and 7 p.m. today and 2 and 6 p.m. Sunday.

Tickets at \$5 and \$6 (children 12 and under will be admitted for \$3) are available in the Sundome and Kings Inn box offices and all Diamonds outlets, or may be charged to MasterCard or VISA by calling 975-1900.

**THE FINISHED** product may look glamorous to the untrained eye but keep in mind that the circus is made up of individuals a lot like ourselves.

But as different as each one is from the other, they all have a number of similarities. One of the most obvious common denominators is something which we've all heard many times before but thought to be a myth. It is true that many people actually do run away with the circus.

Ron Pace, 29, and Chris Kennington, 29, who do an aerial act called a

"cradle act" are perfect examples of circus runaways. Pace had just gotten out of the Air Force and was on his way to Chicago when he saw an ad in the paper. It requested circus help in exchange for free room and board.

"I THOUGHT THAT would be a nice way to get back to Chicago," Pace stated. It took him five months to get back to Chicago and by then he was hooked on circus life. Initially, he started as a prop person and was part of the tent crew. He then went from elephant handling to elephant trainer—for Neena.

"I had no idea to be one but I had the best rapport (with Neena)," Pace explained. But Neena can have her bad days, too. She once hit Pace with her trunk and sent him flying 10 feet in the air. "Elephants are still basically wild animals. Man is the No. 1 killer of man, then autos, then elephants."

And it was while he was with Big John Strong's circus that he met his present partner, Miss Kennington—another circus runaway. Her older sister was already with the circus when it came to Miss Kennington's hometown.

"I DIDN'T KNOW anything about

circuses. Before that, I'd only seen one Shrine Circus," she said.

She helped her sister at the novelty stand and worked the entire stay of the circus. "I fell for it. I really loved it. I felt sad when it left." So much so that on a whim she upped and ran away with it. Her climb went from a seller to clown bits to the heights, literally.

Her circus sister pushed her into the web—a rope with one or two loops on it—and the aerial—a metal ladder—both of which are suspended from the ceiling. Along with that, Miss Kennington did secretarial work for Big John and worked with the elephant. When Pace suggested they do a cradle act, she not only teamed up with him but she sews all the outfits that they design together.

**CHRIS (HUCKLEBERRY** the Clown) Roberts, 22, is another circus runaway but he does so sporadically. A drama major in college in California, he drops out when the money runs low and runs away with the circus for a while. He does a season or so and then goes back to school.

"This (clowning) is something I can always go back to. You can do this

anywhere. I recommend it highly. I wouldn't trade this in for anything," Roberts stated with a huge grin.

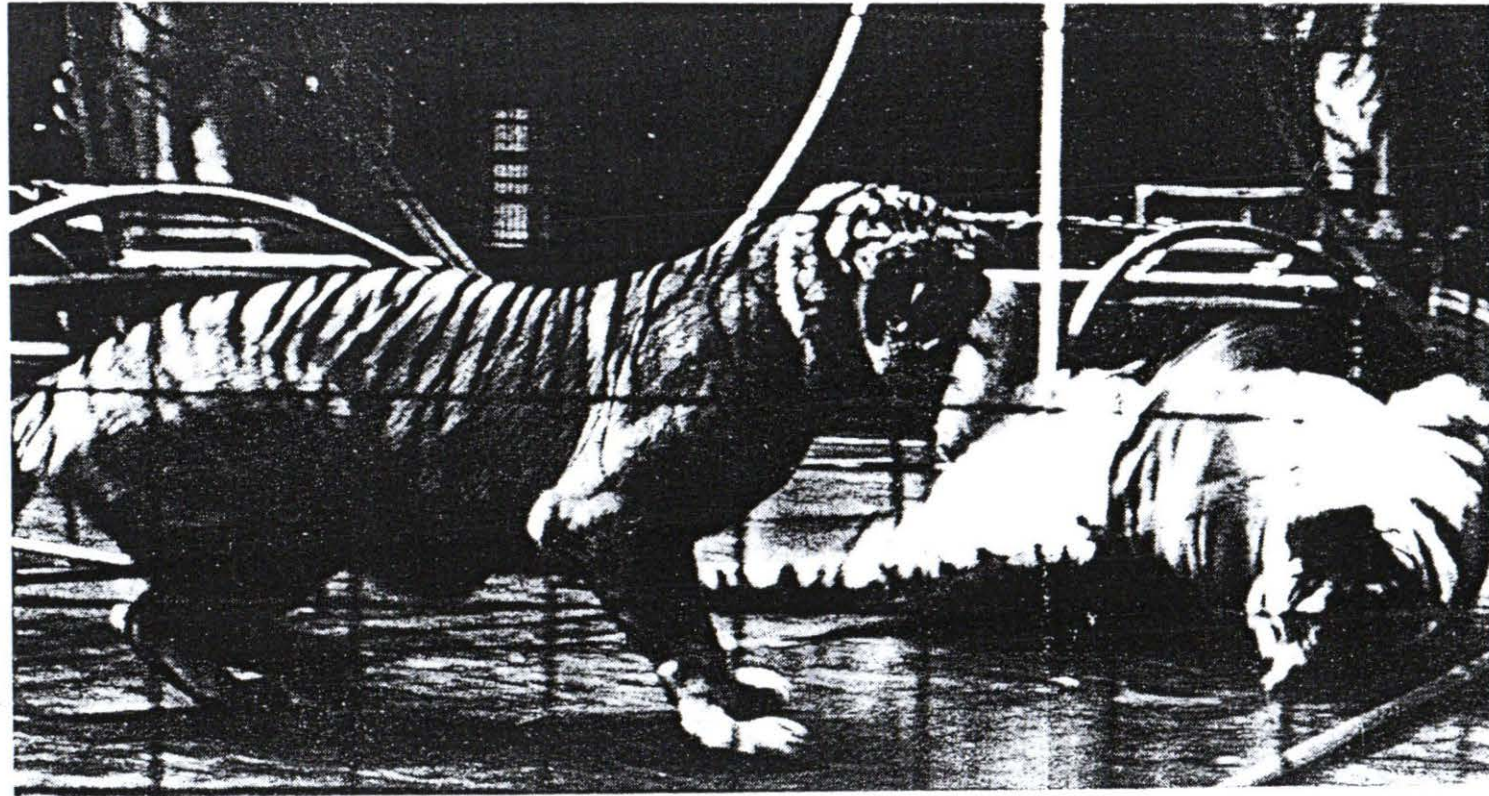
Tina Grieser, 22, who has a bear act, comes from a long line of circus people. Instead of running away with the circus, she more-or-less married it. Her husband is in the circus which is where they got married. A judge in Flint, Mich., also a circus fan, came to the show when it played there and married Tina and Brian in the arena with the lions and tigers.

"YOU EITHER have to want to be in it or not be in it," Tina summed it up.

Sandy Strong was the one performer I ran into who didn't have to run away with the circus. She was born into it. She is Big John's 24-year-old daughter.

But that had little bearing on her choice to remain with the circus. "My parents never pushed us, ever. I chose to be here. Mom is the support system and Dad supervises. I had to audition before my folks like everyone else," Miss Strong explained.





One tiger snarls at trainer while another obediently rolls over during rehearsal Friday for 1869 Circus which begins two-day run in the Sundome at 2 this afternoon. Additional photos, A14. (News-Sun Photo by M. H. Hoppes)

**SHE HAS BEEN** a professional circus performer since she was 4 when she worked the baby elephant act. From there, the skills increased and Miss Strong worked other animal acts, the web and swinging ladder, did clowning, walked on glass, balanced a sword and dagger and performed a special fire act.

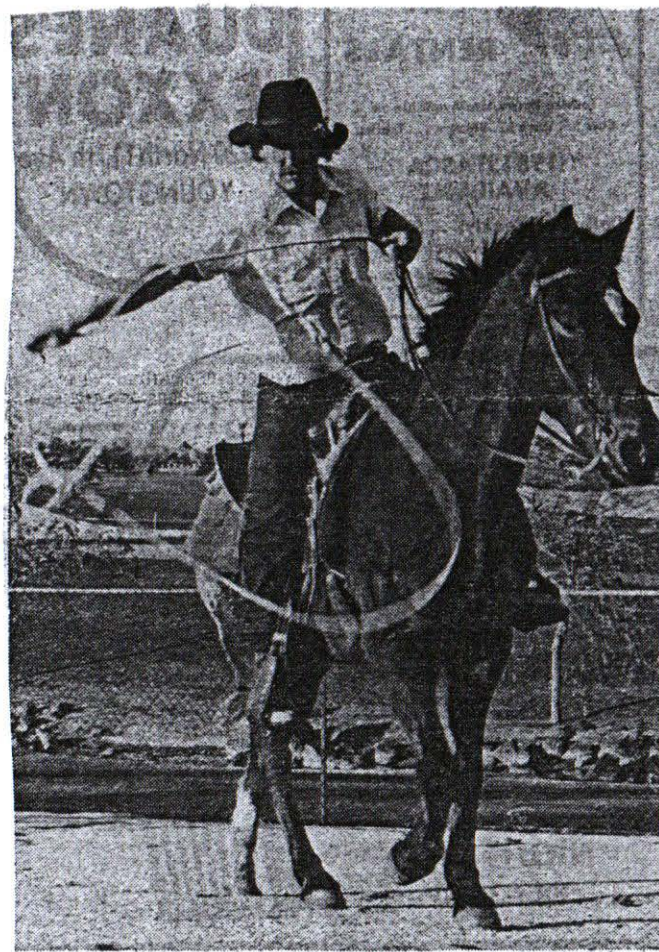
Miss Strong is what circus people are all about. They are multi-talented, full of zest and enthusiasm for circus life and mainly have only good things to say about the circus. These are warm and friendly people who do unusual things and go out of their way to please us—the crowds. It is no easy task and all they ask back in return is smiles and laughter mixed in with applause.

I am proud to have been asked to be a part of this circus and these wonderful people, if only for one show. From the week I've spent covering the circus and getting to know many of the people involved, I feel I've got a whole new family ... of friends.

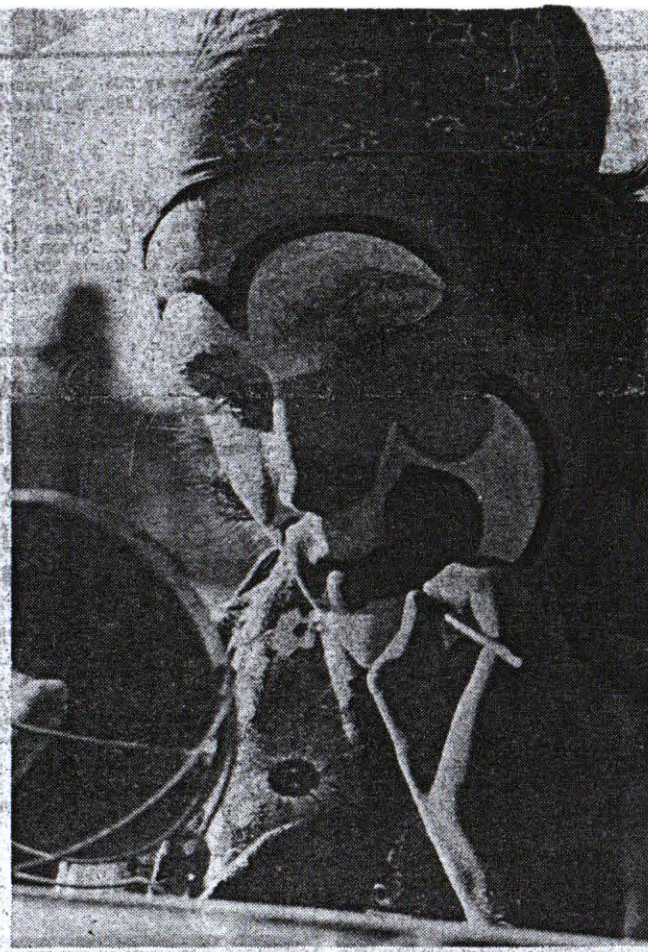
And as an outsider who got a good look in, I would not miss seeing the 1869 Circus if I were not going to participate in it. For those of you not fortunate enough to catch one of their four shows in the Sundome, the Big John Strong Circus will return to the Valley in March. I know I'll be there.



# *Circus comes to town*

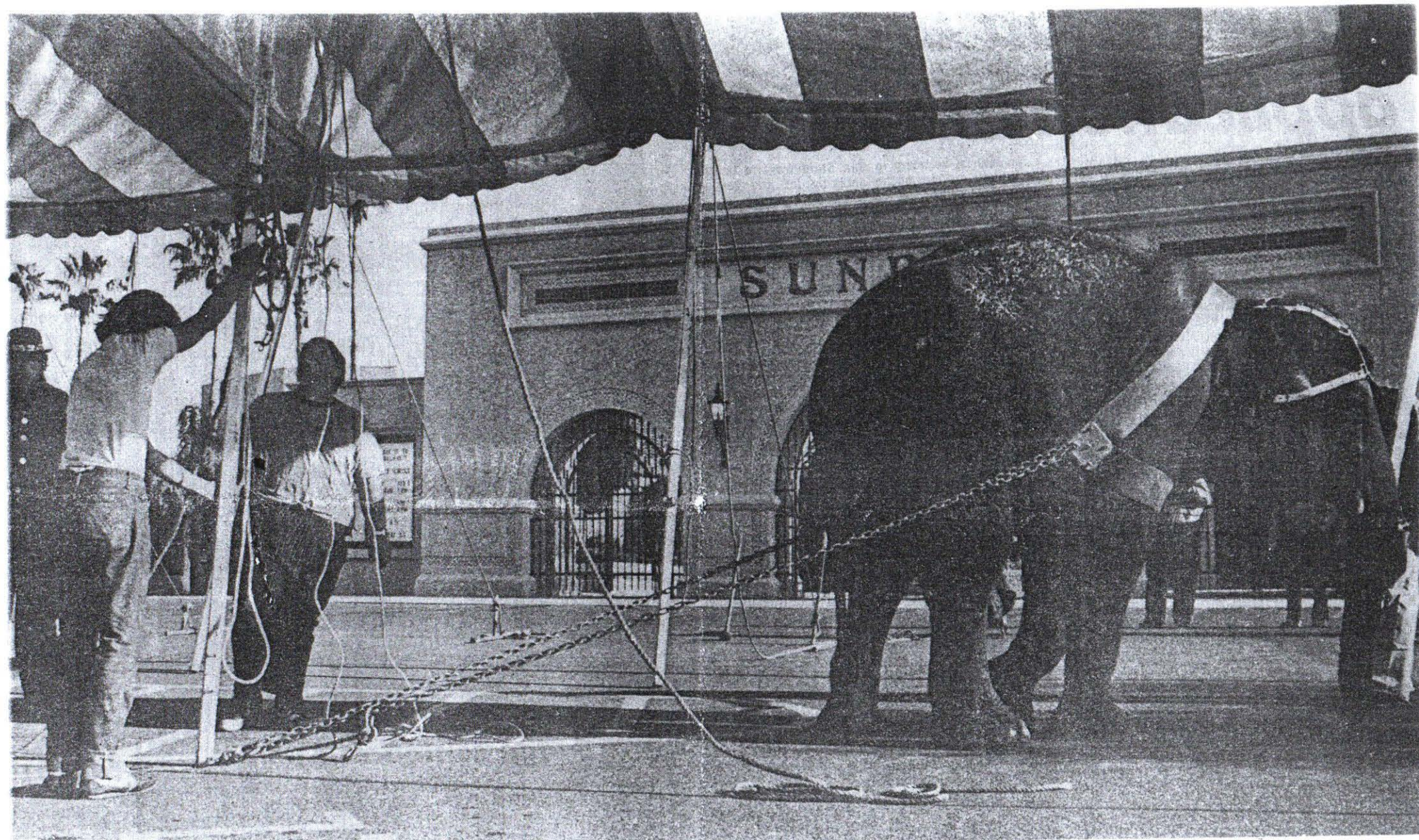


Circus wrangler Jay Evans and "El Capitan" practice rope tricks and fancy four-foot dancing.



Huckleberry the clown takes advantage of early morning light to put on his face.





Everyone in the Circus 1869 gets to help put up pulls her weight when it comes to tightening tent man or beast, as it was before the century's turn. performances at 2 and 7 p.m. today and at 2 and

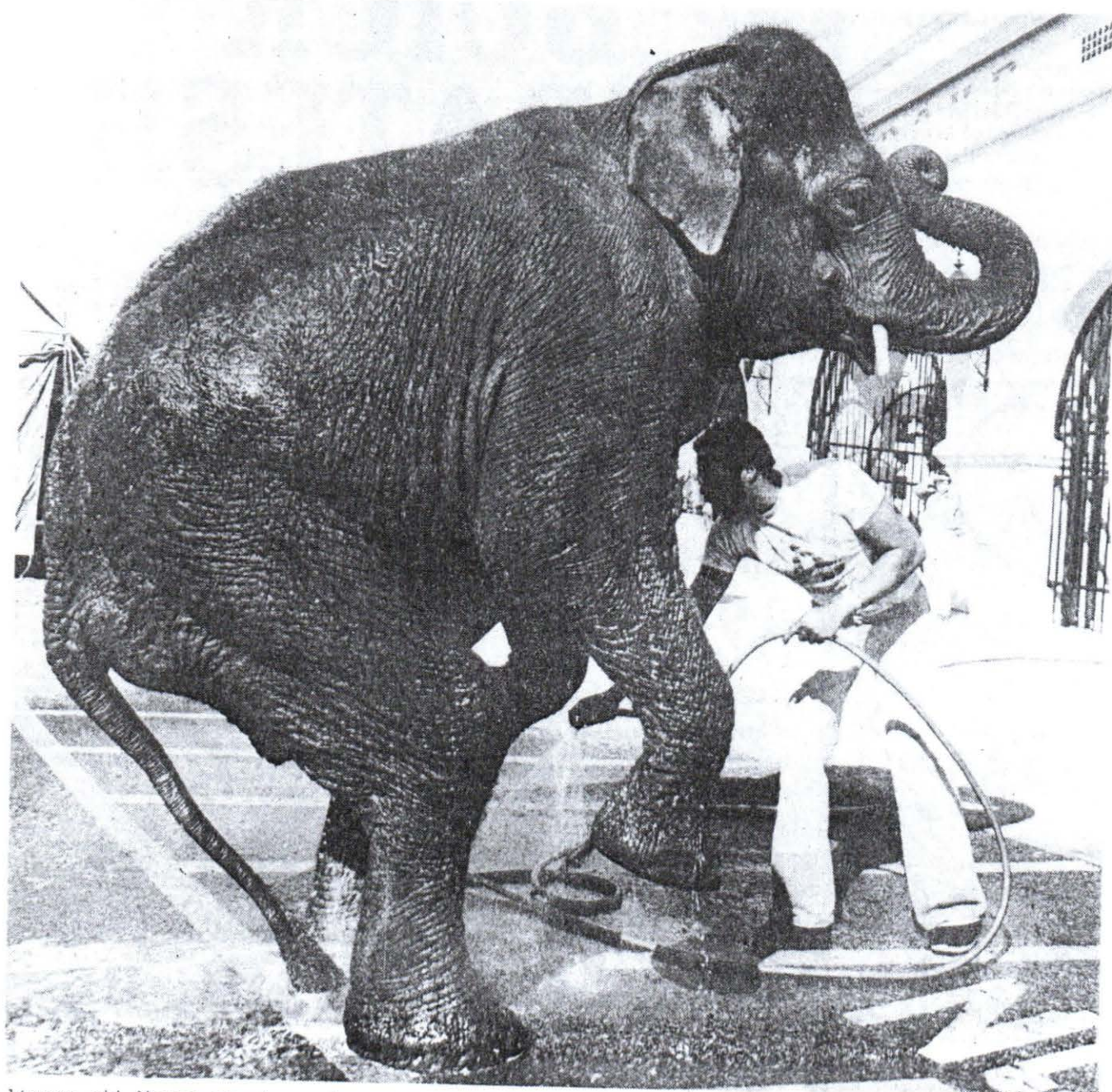




"Will we be that tall when we grow up?" ask James Wegler and Bradley Tuffs. The two seem overpow-

ered while peering up at Flippo, Circus 1869's clown on stilts.



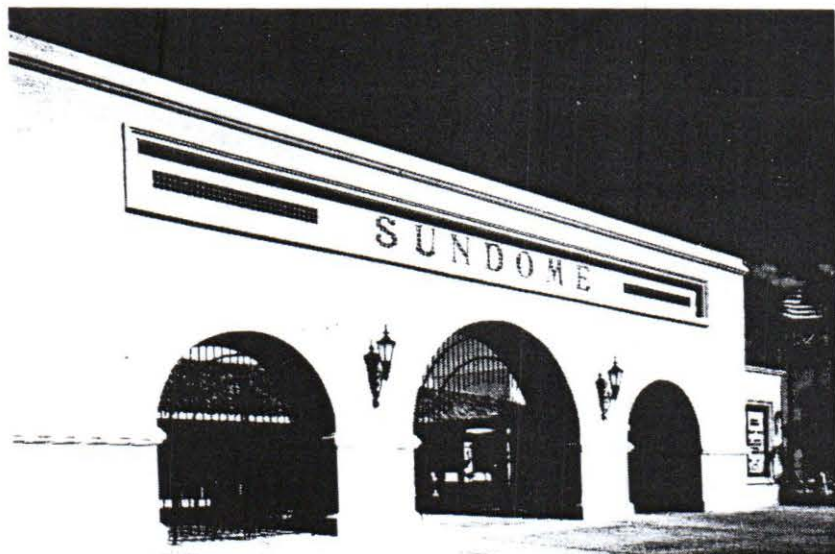


14-year old Neena stands up to get her morning shower from animal trainer Ron Pace before starting on the day's rounds of work and rehearsals for the week-end shows.



BY MICHAEL DIXON

## Surveying the Mighty Sundome



**T**he Sundome Center for the Performing Arts, now celebrating its second season in Sun City West, is a formidable beast. Not only does it dwarf every other performing facility in the Valley with its seating capacity of 7,200, but under the entertainment directorship of Don Tuffs and his staff, the schedule of events for one season makes the combined attractions of all other houses in the area pale by comparison.

To those still unfamiliar with this theatre, the name Sundome probably recalls the Sun Bowl, the outdoor structure that has featured everyone from Dixieland to Roberta Peters. That facility has been turned over to the residents of Sun City.

The new house is located approximately four miles west of Sun City. Go out on Bell Road to R.H. Johnson Boulevard, turn right, and keep going. It sits on a hill to the right and looks huge. You can't miss it.

Events this year feature everyone from George Burns, Beverly Sills and Walter Cronkite to Ella Fitzgerald and former President Gerald Ford.

Even the most jaded theatre veterans will find themselves gasping at the enormity of the house, the expanse of the lobby — with large photographs of stars of the past, including a prominent poster of Ronald Reagan complete with six-gun — and the beautiful tiled fountain standing

sentinel to the main entrance.

Show managers are warned in advance that the sightlines cover 180 degrees. It is, at first, very discomfoting to stand center-stage and not be able to see, even in peripheral vision, the sides of the house to which you are playing. And yet, the opinion of the stars who have already played the Sundome is universally favorable. Because of the extensive lighting system, the Sundome can block out whole areas of the house and concentrate the focus of the performer.

Likewise, the sound system can be focused to fit the size and shape of the attending audience whether it be 100 or the full 7,200. And for those who have a hearing problem, an induction-loop antenna has been built into the floor of the theatre and transmits audio signals from all performances directly to patrons' induction-type hearing aids. For the benefit of other disabled audience members, the facility is completely ramped. There are wide doors and portals, low-level telephones and drinking fountains and special seating areas for wheelchairs that will also accommodate attendants.

There is no orchestra pit. Instead, eight rows of chairs can be removed to accommodate musicians on the house floor in front of the stage, or the same rows can be removed, the orchestra can be put on-stage, and the open area can be used as a

dance floor. That should come in handy when Les Brown and His Band of Renown appear later in the season.

The activities of the Sundome have been divided into several categories. There is the Celebrity Forum, which will feature Sills, Cronkite, Louis Rukeyser and former President Ford. The Musical Arts division will offer such attractions as the Chicago Symphony Chamber Players, the Montreal Symphony, the Roger Wagner Chorale, André Previn and the Pittsburgh Symphony, and the Canadian Brass.

There will be a dance series, which will include The Los Angeles Ballet, and a block of travel films that will take cinema tours from Norway and Ireland to Robert Frost's New England. In addition, the Sun City Symphony under the new direction of Bernard Goodman will feature soloists Robert Merrill, Peter Nero and Leonard Rose in special concerts.

But the most recently released event series, the Starfest Season, is proving to be one of the most successful. Debuting last month with Glen Campbell, the series continues with Vikki Carr, Sergio Franchi, Ella Fitzgerald, Les Brown, George Burns, Roger Williams and the Lawrence Welk Show. Thrown in for good measure is the musical version of "A Christmas Carol," a special concert-dance "Oktoberfest," and "Love In the Afternoon," a soap-opera musical review featuring stars of daytime television in a live stage performance.

Dinah Shore had also been signed, but was forced to cancel due to a change in her television commitments.

This "Starfest '81" is just that: events scheduled for 1981. In January, look for another lineup of major stars.

As you can imagine, this is no inexpensive enterprise. The theatre alone cost \$10 million. The money for all of it has come down from the Del E. Webb Development Co. The intent of the Sundome is to break even. Although it is not classified as a nonprofit enterprise — they still have to add all the taxes to the price of the ticket — profit is not the motive. As a result, the tickets are affordable, and if you buy a season ticket, you can plan to save from \$1 to about \$1.50 per show.

According to entertainment director Tuffs, 25 percent of the Sundome's audiences come from the public at large. There are approximately 55,000 residents in Sun City, so seats are available. But I'm told the extra tickets go fast. It is not unusual for the 7,200 seats to be sold out.

For more information, call the Sundome at 975-1900.



# Sundome draws rave reviews at preview

By LORRAINE TOWNE  
Staff Writer

Expectations ran high, but not as high as the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts drew

realization.

Friday night's preview of the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts drew



John and Bonnie Meeker hold hands in front of the fountain at the Sundome, as they arrive for the preview cocktail party Friday night in Sun City West. Meeker is president of Del E. Webb Development Co.

gasps of admiration and amazement from more than 3,000 guests.

Del E. Webb Development Co. hosted the preview party for "the Southwest's Newest Showplace" in Sun City West with emphasis on entertainment.

The courtyard was alive with Mexican folk music by the Los Caballeros Mariachis. They strolled and played near the large fountain. Zeke Chavez, their "el presidente," smiled and said, "It's a very nice place."

JOHN AND Bonnie Meeker were among the first to arrive. They paused to view the fountain and gazed in admiration at the exterior of the Sundome. "If it works as good as it looks, it has to be a winner," commented John, Devco president.

Don Tuffs, Sundome director, greeted Joe Aubin, a Devco executive vice president. Joe looked around carefully and said, "All of our people did a great job on this project."

Johnnie and Connie Kroll stood together at the main entrance greeting incoming guests. They are head ushers and long-time Sun Citians.

"WE'VE SPENT a lot of our time here at the Sundome preparing for this opening. We're looking forward to meeting a lot of people in our jobs here. And having fun at the same time," Connie said. She was Miss Michigan of 1933. She and Johnnie are popular tour guides.

They greeted Linda and Gerald Williams, Lea Goodman and Jeff Smith, all from Phoenix. "This Sundome is gorgeous — we've only seen the outside so far. But it is well worth the trip out here," Lea said.

Ida Anne Sandler was the next to arrive. She was one of the first Devco employees in Sun City. "I started on Jan. 3, 1966, as cash controller. I'm staying at the Sun City West Vacation Headquarters for the weekend."

"I'M LOOKING forward to visiting the Sun City museum tomorrow afternoon to see the Tiffany exhibit," she said. "I'm very active in the Phoenix Art Museum."

Jane Freeman and Helen Blackburn looked around in amazement. "This is breathtaking," they agreed. They are

board members of Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc.

Jennings and Lillian Butterfield explored all areas of the Sundome. He is music director and conductor of the Sun City Symphony Orchestra, which will hold performances in the Sundome.

Jennings reflected, "This is beyond anyone's dreams of what it could have been. It is unbelievable. I feel it is going to be a wonderfully new experience to conduct here."

LILLIAN ADDED, "People will not only be pouring in from all over the Valley, but will bring their friends to see it."

Jim and Ann White were a handsome couple. Jim, commander of the Sun City Posse, informed, "The SC Posse will assist the SCW Posse with the Sundome traffic for the balance of '80 and the '81 season. We will also assist them during the LPGA tournament in '81."

He was also informative about the liaison between the two posses. "The SC Posse is training the newly formed SCW Posse through our qualified instructors. This includes Red Cross First Aid, CPR; training in traffic control, communications and firearms. All of this is per the sheriff's criteria."

ALFRED AND Maria Della Kabeca were surrounded by friends. Alfred is the artist who created the mural over the portals. A plaque on the wall explains it. "From Evlution Through Progress—to Where?" is its title.

Alfred was very modest, but added, "There was a big story about me in the News-Sun in August."

Owen Childress conferred with Jim Handley. "Take a look at this facility—it is one of the best—it is something the community needs, and I feel the community will support it," Jim said. Owen is treasurer of Devco; Jim is an advertising executive with the company.

HAWLEY AND Elizabeth Atkinson conversed with Jim and Emma Ratliff. "This is fantastic—beyond my imagination—I have never seen anything like this," Jim is a state representative. Hawley is a Maricopa County Supervisor.

Bill Thompson held forth at the Yamaha organ onstage. Surrounded

Continued on 7A



# Sundome draws rave...



Helen Blackburn, left, and Jane Freeman both agreed, "This is breathtaking," when they saw the inside of the new Sundome Center for the Performing Arts. Both women are board members of Recreation Centers Inc.

Continued from 6A  
by fans, he played requests—some listeners sang and some danced on the spacious floor in front of the stage.

Crazy Ed's band took over when Bill took a break. Under Igor's leadership they included Wendy Evans, Skip LaCompe, Bob Wardlaw, Norm Powers, Ron Rittosky, Daniel Dupont and Billy Easton.

JOE AND Marie Robinson found the backstage area interesting. Marie said, "I think the entire Sundome is lovely. The acoustics are perfect so everyone is sure to hear."

Joe added, "We have season tickets for the dance series. We've been Sun Citians since 1972. Everything here at the Sundome is just beautiful."

Jerry and Linda Svendsen surveyed the partygoers. Jerry is Devco's vice president for public relations. He is well known as master of ceremonies for the Sun Bowl shows. Sun Citians have affectionately tolerated his jokes for 14 years.

He was asked to comment on the Sundome's opening show starring Lawrence Welk. He reached into his pocket. "I just happen to have my speech with me—"

Linda interrupted, "Jerry—save that for tomorrow night."



Jim and Ann White strike a happy pose in the lobby of the Sundome. Jim, commander of Sun City Posse, said his group will assist the SCW Posse with Sundome traffic control. Ann assists Rose Schwartz with popular aerobic exercise classes.



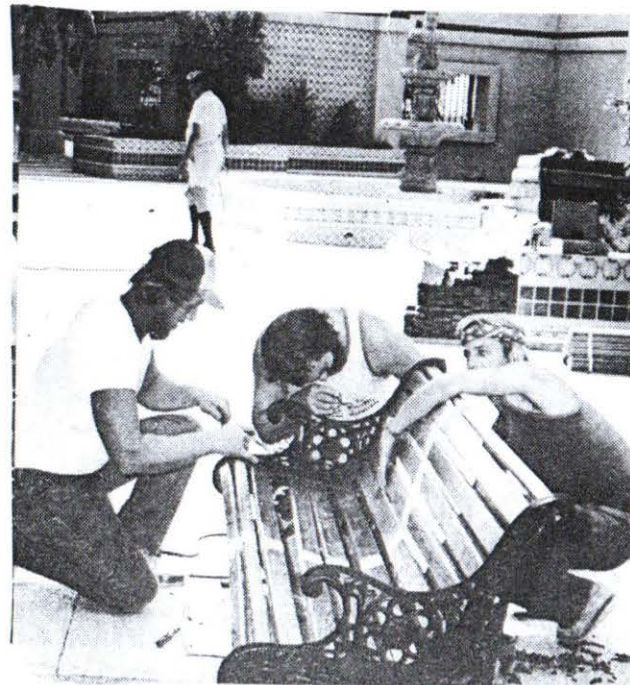
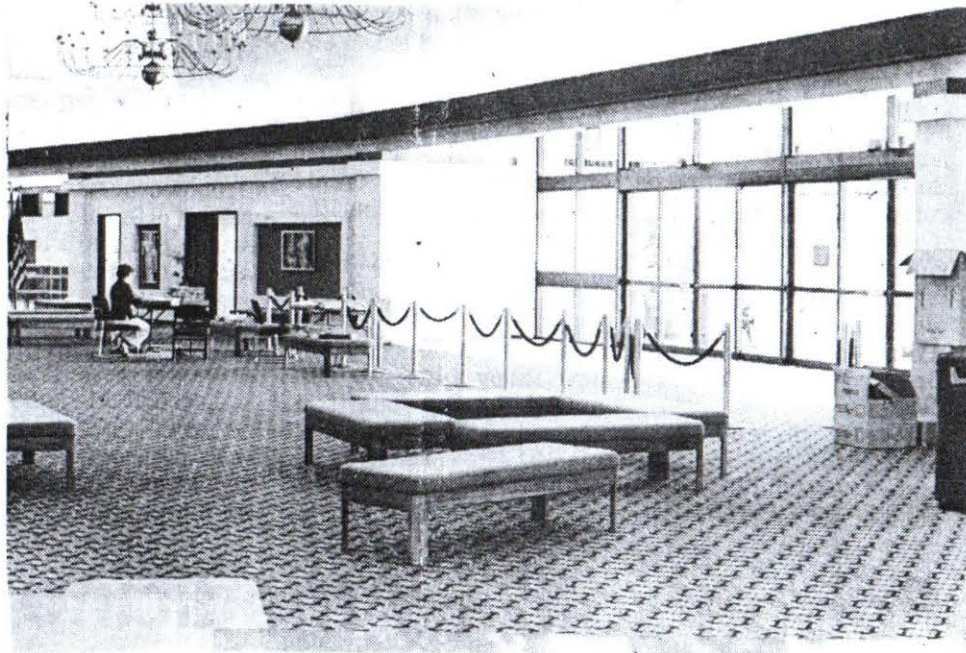
# Welk show will christen Sundome

The event which has had many residents of the retirement tri-communities buzzing with excitement is about to occur.

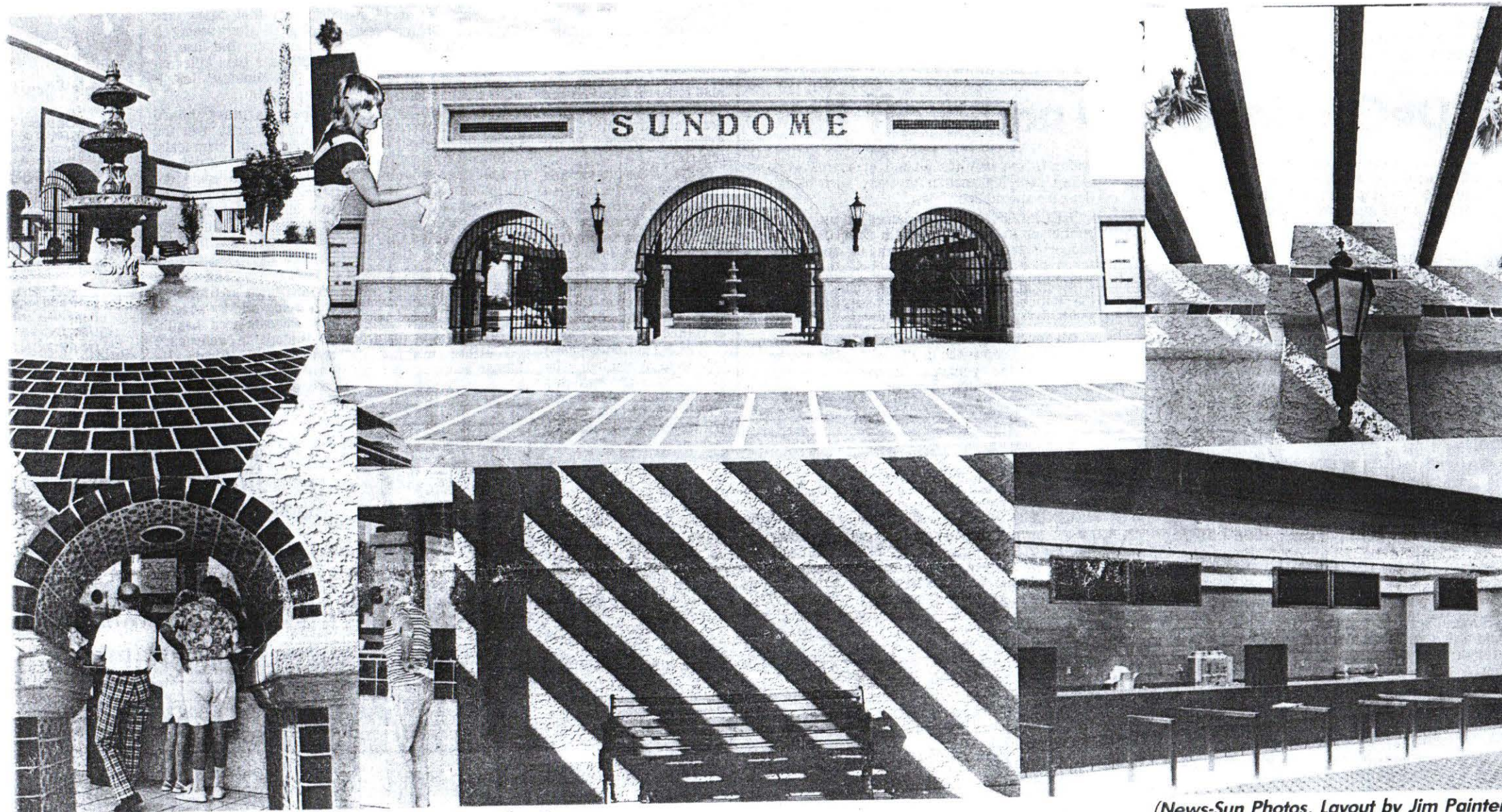
After two years and expenditures of \$9 million, Del E. Webb's "masterpiece" will be christened Saturday night when Lawrence Welk and his orchestra perform in the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts in Sun City West.

With a seating capacity of 7,169, the Sundome is the largest auditorium in the Southwest. The 108,000 square-foot interior has been designed and coordinated with the intent of providing the ultimate in sensory sound.

The Sundome features continental seating with wide aisles and deep, cushioned chairs. Ramps make the auditorium easily accessible for handicapped patrons.







Sundome Center for the Performing Arts 9-12-80

(News-Sun Photos, Layout by Jim Painter)



## Engineers do final check of Sundome sound system

The massive audio system inside the new Sundome Center for the Performing Arts underwent its final check-out last week.

Engineers from Coffeen, Anderson and Associates of Shawnee Mission, Kan., spent several days behind closed doors adjusting the levels of sound throughout the 7,169-seat auditorium and programming control information into the banks of audio equipment housed in a separate room backstage.

Of critical importance because it is what sets the Sundome apart from an amphitheater or coliseum-type auditorium, the all-Yamaha system has been carefully planned from the outset.

"The sound heard in the audience does not come directly from the stage, it comes from 'sound clouds' suspended by wires from the entire

ceiling," explained Don Tuffs, Sundome entertainment director. "Thus the system of speakers does not just amplify for the back rows, it 'drops' the sound over the entire audience."

Tuffs likened old-fashioned sound systems to a television set or radio in a person's living room. "If you couldn't hear it, you turned up the volume. But since the volume was always coming from that single spot in the room, it was never really satisfactory from any place in the room no matter what you did."

Literally "bathing" the audience in sound also eliminates the problem of echo. And, because of the size of the Sundome seating area, the effects of sound traveling more slowly than light (or the action on the stage) and creating the "delay-action" so often encountered in the back rows during old Sun Bowl programs, also are eliminated.

No novices when it comes to audio systems, Coffeen, Anderson & Associates did the entire Republican National Convention earlier this month.

They didn't have to innovate there, however.

But two innovations in the Sundome may become pacesetters in the industry. "We have built in the capacity for intimacy," Tuffs said.

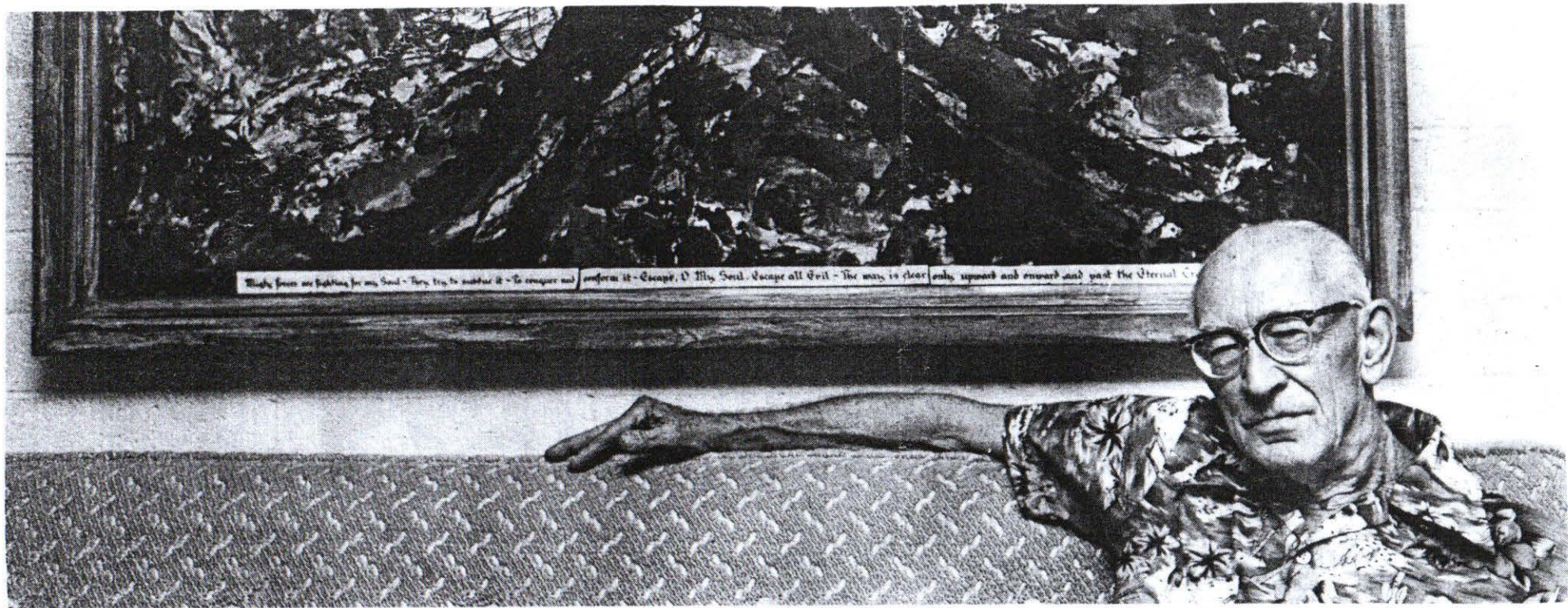
Since some programs anticipate a less-than-full-house audience, using the full system would be overbearing from an audio standpoint. So instead of "turning the volume down" for a smaller audience, several of the dozen sound clusters will be turned off, creating an audio illusion of a smaller auditorium, or intimacy.

The second much-talked-about innovation is of benefit to anyone attending an event who wears a hearing-aid. "A cable is built right into the auditorium so a person simply has to turn on their individual hearing aid and it will pick up a signal that automatically amplifies the sound from the stage.

Since the entire system is designed and built by Yamaha, it includes Yamaha technology with the sleek stage organ, which has a Pulse Analogue Synthesis System. A Yamaha grand piano and upright piano are included as well.

—By Val Bembenek





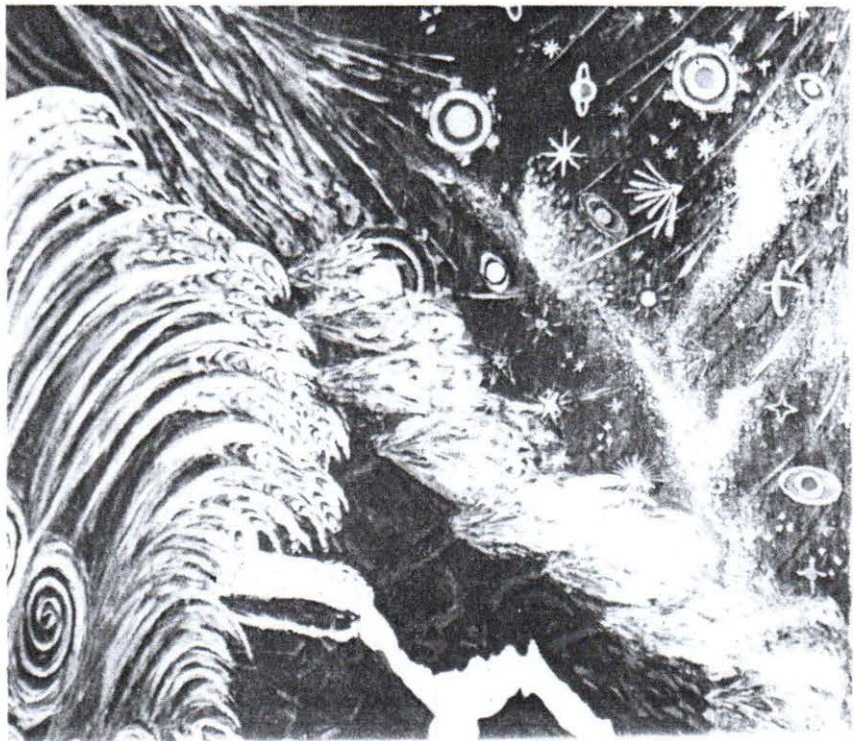
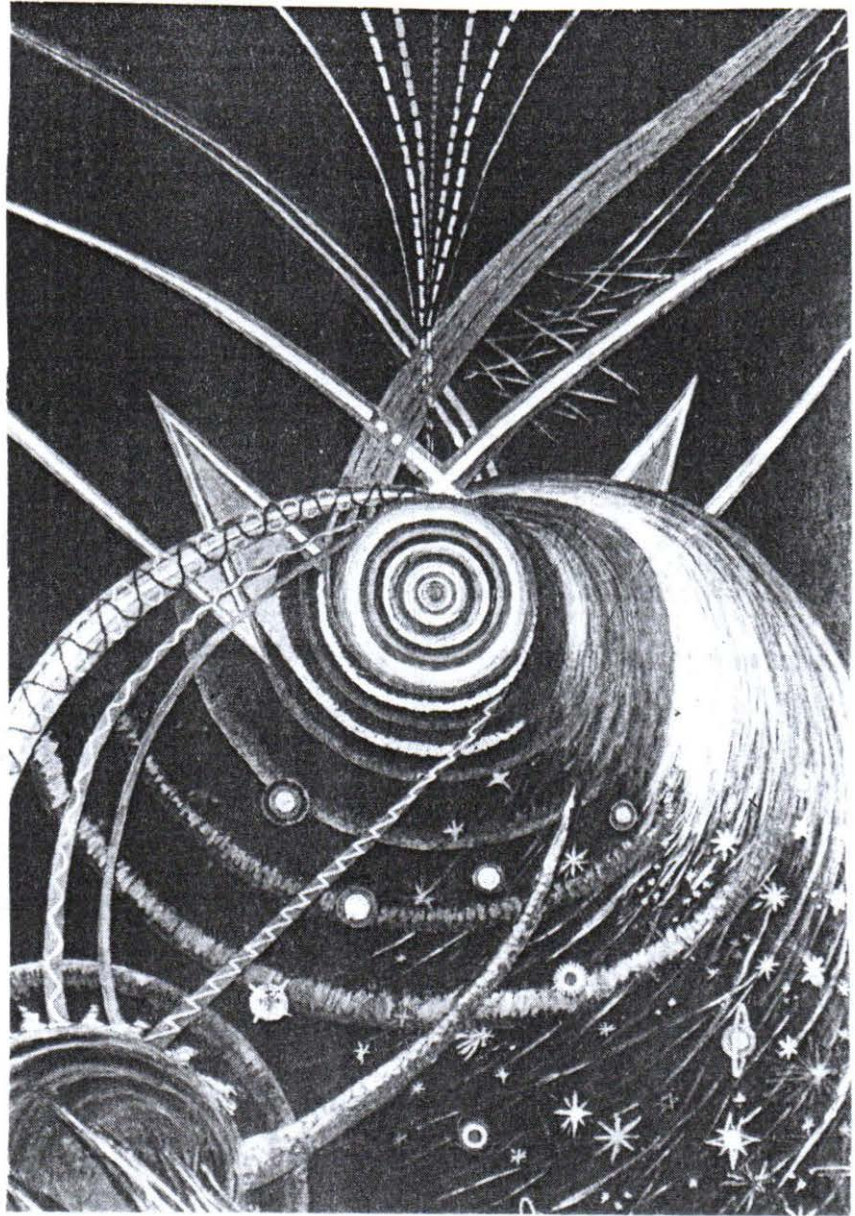
8-29-80

## ***Beginning to end of planet Earth painted by Sun Citian***

"THERE IS nothing in the world like it," admits Sun City artist Alfred Kabica. That statement doesn't refer his 'smaller' works, one of which hangs behind him (above). It has to do with his 70-foot mural, "From Evolution Through Progress to Where?," which will be viewed by the thousands who will pass under it as they enter through the main portals of the Sundome's auditorium. His painting begins with the titanic struggle of the Universe's creation (below). The tremendous upheavals and development of stars, planets and the resulting mutation of the planet Earth. Kabica takes you from the past to the present to what he believes is the very near future. Story and more pictures of the multi-foot, almost five-foot tall canvas inside today's View. Turn to pages 10, 11.

(News-Sun Photos)







SYNOPSIS  
OF CANVAS "FROM EVOLUTION - THROUGH PROGRESS - TO WHERE?"

painted by A. R. Nabica

Preface--Let our generation and the generations in the future look at this picture created in 1974.

- Panel 1. The titanic struggle of the creation of the Universe.
- Panel 2. The tremendous upheavals and development of stars, planets and the resulting mutation of the planet Earth.
- Panel 3. The cooling off period of the volcanic masses on Earth.  
The creation of the atmosphere and of the waters.  
The beginning of nature and the spark of life.
- Panel 4. Nature provides bountifully for all its creatures. The primeaval monsters of the wild forest and jungles start the fight for survival until one by one vanishes.
- Panel 5. The survival of the smaller more cunning and resourceful animals.  
The development of Man and Woman.  
The birth of civilization and the domestication of some animals.
- Panel 6. The beginning of human efforts to improve and sustain life by building shelters and planting seeds.  
The first meeting of the rulers of the different nations and the subsequent division of the known world.  
The fight for government, spiritual enlightenment and superstitious beliefs.  
Religious persecution and witch burning.
- Panel 7. The glorious Sun-up, after the period of the dark ages.  
The great progress in all Sciences and the unexcelled Arts.  
Creation of many schools in all fields of knowledge resulting in the rapid developments of machines and architectural superstructures.  
The beginning of over-population and pollution of the waters and the atmosphere.
- Panel 8. The speed and transportation mania in the air.  
New and tremendously destructive elements were discovered in nature.  
New powerful weapons and computers are developed.  
After the inventors had developed the most sensitive gadgets the Bio-chemist used them to create superhumans and semi-robots.
- Panel 9. The atomic war and the resulting destruction of civilization.  
The pollution of the atmosphere and the flight of the remaining people into caves.
- Panel 10. The impossible existence in the caves due to the radioactivity on the surface of the earth.  
The final escape from the planet Earth. Then Nature takes over again and cleanses the atmosphere of the poisons and impurities getting it ready for some new inhabitants.



## ***FROM EVOLUTION . . . THROUGH PROGRESS . . . TO WHERE***

Scenes from the evolution of the universe, life's progress on Earth and man's ultimate destruction of the planet are depicted on the 75-foot mural hanging over the center portal in the Sundome lobby.

Sun City Artist Fred Kabica took four years to complete his project (1970-74). He first drew ten separate panels and then painted them in sequence for this mural which is described below. Kabica died in 1980 several months after this mural was placed in the Sundome lobby.

The most vivid colors in Kabica's mural start at the left where planets, stars and other heavenly bodies detail the origin of the universe and the solar system.

Volcanoes erupt and spill lava into a blue-green sea while lightning bolts crisscross beneath a brilliant rainbow filled sky.

Dense vegetation surround dinosaurs in battle followed by apes in trees and the emergence of primitive man from a cave.

Mammals and birds surround a pond where a woman holds a child while above her floats a hand-shaped cloud.

The emergence of cultivated fields, towns, shops, Vikings, cars and monorails, while offshore oil rigs and factory smokestacks show the development of the industrial age.

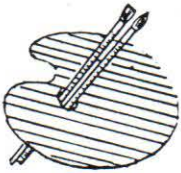
Skyscrapers and a nuclear power plant flank a scene from the present, replete with fuel trucks, an armored tank, jets and a spacecraft amid a smoggy sky that blots out the sun.

At the base of the Omega Tower, Kabica illustrates famine, which could represent the famine that struck Ethiopia and South Africa.

Missiles blast off near a city left in ruin. A woman with a baby in her arms cries out, a man lies face down in the dirt. Bones and a burnt tree amidst a cracked and rutted landscape reveal the aftermath of nuclear war.

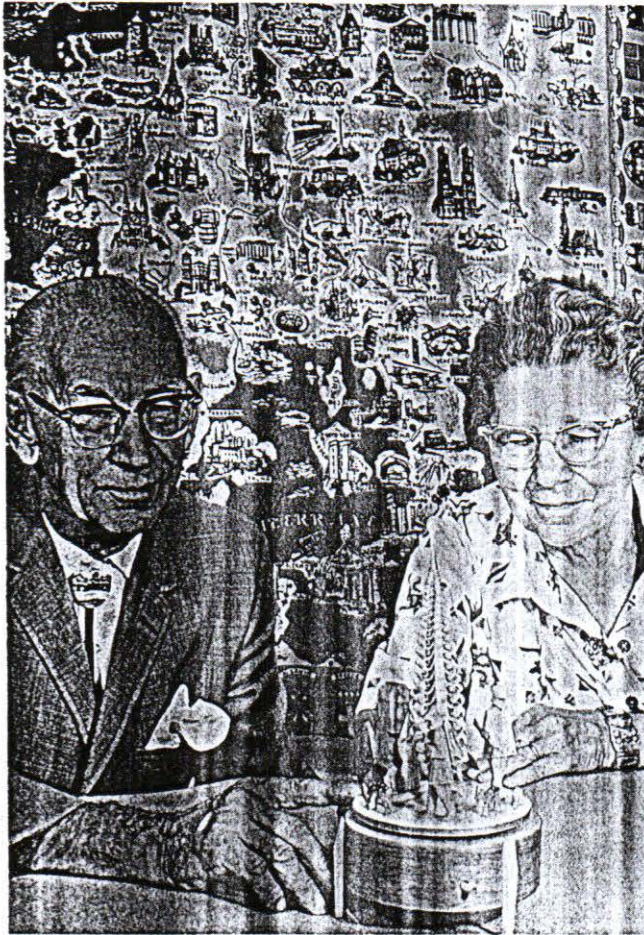
Underground are hydroponic gardens and people in radiation suits as spaceships depart Earth for unknown destinations.





## Artist visits country of his youth

*Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Kabica admire music box they brought back from the Iron Curtain. Behind them is a souvenir table cloth showing tourist attractions in Europe.*



Alfred Kabica, a native of Germany, was 23 when he came to the Chicago area after World War I. He knew only three words of the English language when he arrived, so Kabica took special studies to learn English. Later he landed a job in Swift's general office as an accountant and, with his knowledge of five languages, he also worked in translation and communication.

When Kabica retired nine years ago he and his wife, Della, moved to Sun City, Arizona where he found plenty of time to devote to his favorite pastime . . . oil painting on canvas.

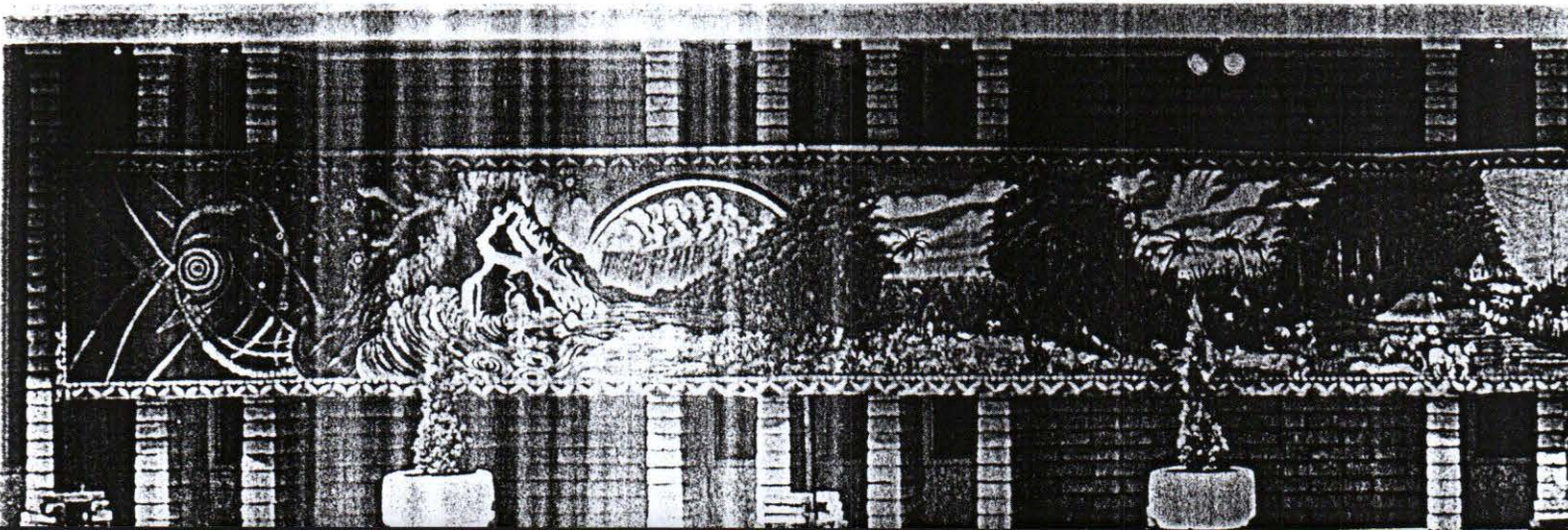
During the past four years Kabica worked in his outdoor home studio creating his masterpiece. After 150 tubes of oil paint, 100 brushes and a couple of gallons of linseed oil, his painting project was completed.

His 75-foot canvas entitled "From Evolution thru Progress to Where?" was unveiled in the open court of the United Church of Sun City.

The master mural consists of 10 panels each depicting a stage in the development of the earth and its inhabitants from "the titanic struggle of the creation of the universe to the atomic war and the resulting destruction of civilization."

Kabica, 70, says the mural is the culmination of research on recent history and a lifetime of observation, and he

After four years of painting, the mural was displayed in open court of United Church, Sun City, Arizona.







German born Fred Kabica discusses final sections of his canvas masterpiece "From Evolution thru Progress to Where?"

hopes his picture will serve as a warning for his generation and future generations to preserve what nature has provided.

Last August, after his four-year project was completed, Mr. Kabica visited the country of his youth accompanied by his wife, and their daughter Grace, and her husband Don Nix. They spent six weeks in Germany, "so they could meet their generation of relatives in Germany."

"We spent the first three weeks behind the Iron Curtain and learned that the Russians' hold on East Germany has not relaxed and restrictions are as stringent as ever." Although they were given permission to visit their relatives, they were not allowed to travel around except for a one-day visit to the Wartburg to see where Martin Luther lived. Any other trips were refused.

The Kabicas said they paid \$7.50 American money per day per person in East Germany, which was exchanged at \$2.50 in East German money per dollar ("when it should have been \$10").

It takes a housewife a full morning, shopping in several stores, to get the food necessary for a day, and refrigeration is unavailable for the average household. Appliances and other goods are sold at high prices but are of very poor quality. The waiting period for some items of quality—at enormously high price—can be months or even years.

Kabica explained there is no unemployment in the

Eastern zone. People work long hours but have nothing to show for it.

In addition to the Wartburg trip where they saw the small starkly furnished room in which Luther translated the Bible into German, they found something to do every day in West Berlin.

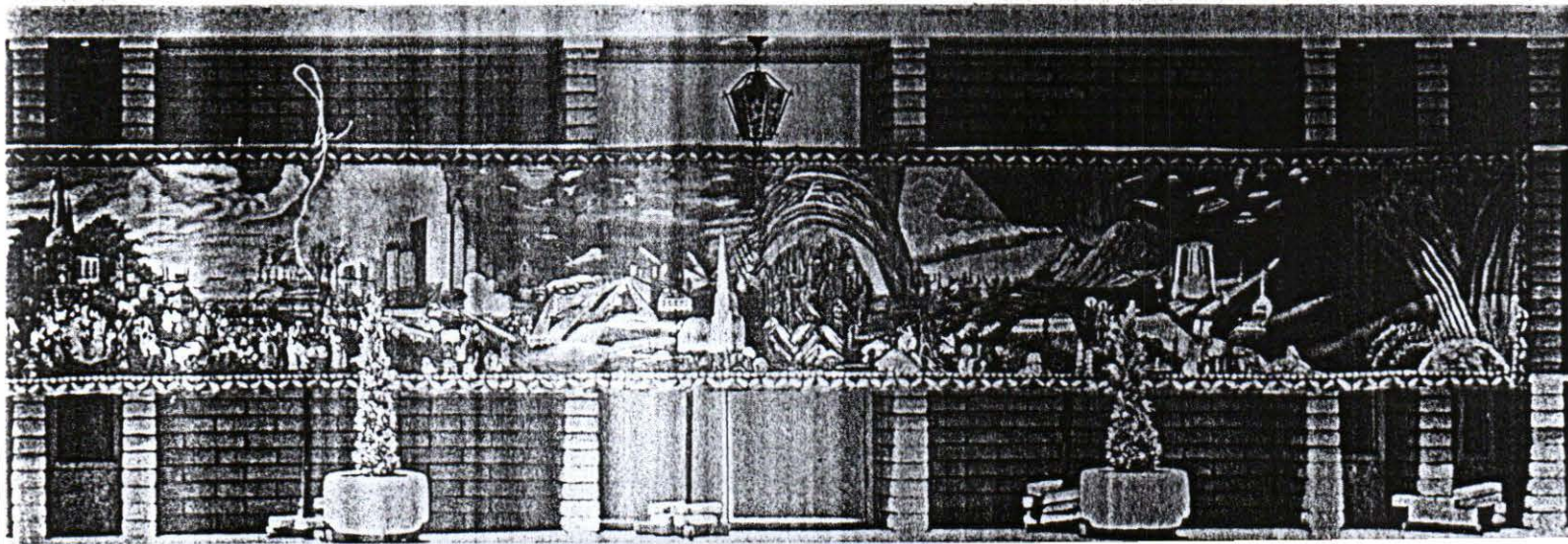
They saw the ballet, took an excursion boat trip, a bus tour to points of interest, and rented a car for the last two weeks to travel the "corridor" to West Germany to visit relatives there.

"At the entrance to the corridor we had to pay 20 West German marks, and were stopped and checked about five times before we reached the west," Kabica said.

After tours of several well preserved castles on the Rhine, the Kabicas drove to Munich especially to see a documentary film of Sun City which had been taken by the Bavarian Film Co. two years ago.

"The film had been shown twice on European television and since it included the presentation of my 70-foot painting 'From Evolution through Progress to Where?' we were curious to see it," Kabica said.

The photography was excellent and the portion on Sun City was correct as presented. But the Kabicas were disappointed that the film makers brought in "some derogatory factors which detract from the satisfactory life," in Sun City.





By KIM SUE LIA PERKES

View Writer

They all had a vision.

The Dutch had Van Gogh and Rembrandt, Russia had Chagall, Italy had Michelangelo, France had Cezanne, Spain had Picasso. And Sun City has Alfred Kabica.

Kabica, 11045 Elk Ave., has created his masterpiece. "It's like a 70-foot sail; it's huge," says the German-born artist. "This is a momentous big deal."

After four years of diligent work, 150 tubes of oil paint, 100 brushes and a couple gallons of linseed oil, Kabica had on canvas his conception of life—past, present and future.

"You must ferociously want to paint something like that. It's not like copying a landscape—it comes out of your mind."

In 1970, visualizing 10 individual panels, Kabica gave birth to the mural "From Evolution Through Progress to Where?" The vision in his mind had become the tangible force of which he dreamed. "Let our generation and the generations in the future look at this picture created in 1974."

It took six years before the artist's work found a permanent home. His mural was mounted above the main portals in the Sundome lobby Monday.

"He came to us way back in 1974 with his painting and asked us if we'd put it up," explained John Meeker, Del E. Webb Development Co. president.

"He pursued it and we said yes."

Preliminary plans for the yet-to-be-built Bell Recreation Center included a theater and Kabica's painting was to be the permanent featured attraction.

"We started out at Bell Rec Center but the theater didn't work out so we defined a spot for it in the Sundome."

"It's a colorful painting and it's his interpretation of life," Meeker says. "He is a fine gentleman and he put a lot of effort into it."

There is more to Kabica than meets the palate.

"I came from a teeny-weeny village in Germany deep in the forest that had no conveniences of any kind," Kabica says of his homeland. "The area is now Poland; it has been taken over."

Kabica confides he did not want to be an artist. "If it wasn't for my mother I would be a punk. I didn't want to work, but then she did this to me." He raises his index finger to his nose and shakes it. "And when she did that, I knew she meant business. She had 10 children and every one amounted to something. My father was a slave—all he did was work, work, work."

In his village, the artist relates in his native accent, "the preacher was number one guy and the school superintendent was number two guy. The preacher came to my mother and said 'Madam, you must make him a preacher'; then the superintendent of schools came to her and said, 'He must be a teacher' and then came along a runt who said, 'You must make him an artist.'"

When he was 15, his mother sent him to art school in a nearby town. "In that school you had to learn what was the curriculum and nothing else. My friend and I went to class and we were the only boys. The rest were all girls. And I said what is this class—do you know what it was? Stenography. And I had to take it whether I liked it or not. I can type, too. In German schools you know how you learn to type? They turn all the lights out."

Although Kabica didn't think these classes would be of much use to him, it was these skills that enabled him to obtain a job with Swift. & Co. in

Chicago when he came to the U.S.

"I was so lucky in my life," he earnestly admits. "After I started art school I was walking with a friend when we came to a place that was overgrown with plants. We wondered what was behind them so we looked for a place to get in and found a gate that was overgrown. When we got through

## Kabica brushes canvas with strokes of life





the gate there was a house and we went up to it and hollered to see if any one was at home. When we looked in the house there were all these paintings. It was an artist studio.

"We thought there would be no harm in looking so we walked around. I was looking at a portrait and when I turned around there was a lady standing there. 'You boys like art?' she asked me and I said 'Do we.' And we talked for a while and then she said if you take care of my garden I will let you use my canvas, brushes and paints. So for 1½ years I took care of her garden and she taught me so much, especially basics. Oh, she taught me all about colors."

In 1926, when he was 23, Kabica left his home for America. "And my mother said, 'You go to America and I will never see you again.' And she was right."

The village Kabica grew up in was destroyed during World War II. Many of his family members found themselves trapped behind the Iron Curtain.

"I wrote my mother that I was in Chicago. She cried, 'Oh my boy in Chicago. Oh no, anywhere but there.' We didn't know a lot about America but we knew about the stink in Chicago. She was afraid I would be in the stockyards.

"When I came here I knew three words of English so I went to school to learn the language. Then I got job with Swift. And when they learned I knew stenography and could type they moved me right up to the bargaining table. They didn't want any women in their meetings. And I would sit in the meetings and look like I was taking notes but I just made scribbles and I listened. I would write down names, but I listened.

"Then I would go and type the report. And at the next meeting they would say, 'Oh what a report. We have never seen such a report. It is so good.' You know what I did? I wrote about accomplishments from both sides. And they were so happy."

He never gave up painting. He and his wife Della say they have visited virtually every park in the U.S. "We use to do a lot of camping. We had a station wagon and a tent. And I would paint the scenery where we went."

Kabica enjoys painting outdoors. He painted the multi-foot mural in his studio—the patio behind his home.

"He comes from a school of make do," Della volunteers with a smile.

"And he saves everything. He still has the suitcase he came to America with."

Not to be outdone, Kabica jokes, "I was married to her for years before I found out she was born in Chicago. If I

would have known that I wouldn't have married her."

Della was only a couple months old when her family returned to Germany. But she came back to the U.S. and met her husband here.

Kabica's love for the outdoors is reflected in the almost five-foot tall mural.

"I painted this picture because I was praying and hoping, because if the people do not take care of nature and put something back they'll just ruin themselves."

Kabica says there is only one way to create a piece such as his. "First you must know what you want to paint and it involves anything known and unknown to the human. You have to have a preconceived idea so strong that you don't deviate. This painting was made in stages and I knew exactly what the next and next stage would be. It is in no way a religious picture. It is for all nations and all peoples."

The mural, he admits, doesn't paint a pretty picture, but not every picture has a happy ending.

"It has a lousy, pessimistic ending but we're heading to it. What are we accomplishing? Where are we going? This picture came out of my tremendous fear of what humans do because I lived through so much devastation."

At 77 years of age, his concern over things to come is an obsession.

As he talks about the future, his voice jumps an octave and begins to crack. "Think of 100 years from now; they'll have cosmic bombs, hydrogen bombs. Oh my God! If they get into the wrong hands the poor nature will be sunk."

He said he thought about sending the mural overseas as he is sure the German museums would love to have it. A German film crew doing a documentary on Sun City came to his home and photographed the piece. It is shown twice a year in Europe.

"I could've sent it back to Europe. At first I thought there is no wall big enough in all of Arizona to hang it. But Del Webb said, 'Keep it here; we'll build you a wall big enough to hang it.' It was made here and I think it should stay here."

Kabica would not reveal his material cost, but did make a point of saying it would cost him twice as much to do it today.

"A picture like that is worth a lot of money. You know when? After I'm dead."

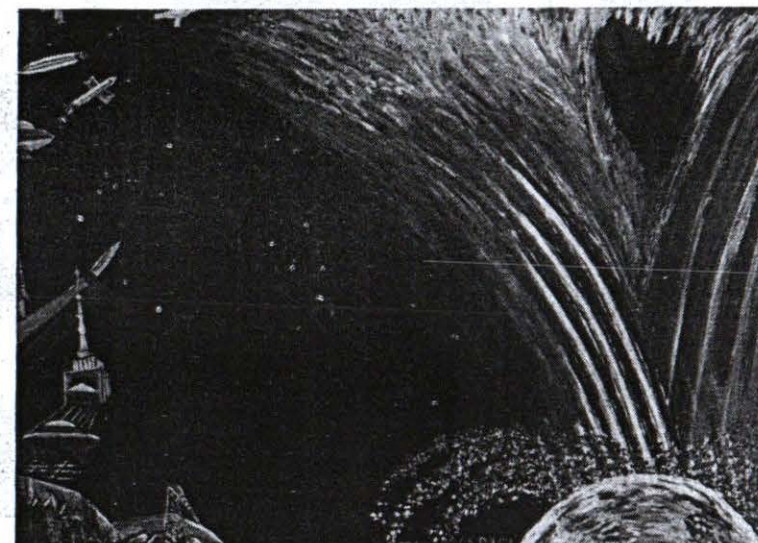
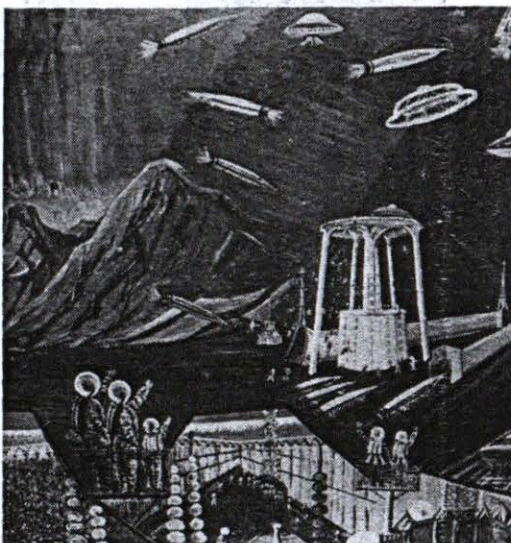




AFTER THE COOLING off period of the volcanic masses, the Earth begins take shape and sparks of life appear. Nature provides bountifully for all its creatures. Man and woman appear and with them comes the birth of civilization and the domestication of some animals. Human efforts begin, improving and sustaining life by building shelters and planting seeds. World rulers meet for the first time and there is fighting and persecution. But there is a glorious sun-up with a technological explosion. It is the beginning of overpopulation and pollution. Technology brings with it the speed and transportation mania, powerful weapons, computers and inventors who create gadgets the biochemist use to make superhumans and semi-robots.

Kabica's mural is one continuous piece of canvas with 10 stages merging into each other until the end.





THE ATOMIC WAR and civilization's destruction. Radioactivity forces the masses into caves. But existence is impossible even though the Earth is still full of technology. Radioactivity seeps into the caves resulting in the final escape from the planet. The end signifies a new beginning as nature once again rules the planet's surface preparing it for new inhabitants.



# Sun City West

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Del E. Webb Development Co. ★ Public Relations Dept. ★ P.O. Box 1705 ★ Sun City, Arizona 85372 ★ August, 1980



### Sun bathers

The R. H. Johnson Recreation Center pool is not only a great place to swim, it's also a great place to soak up the sun, as these smiling Sun City West residents have found out. The pool is open from 10AM to 9:30PM daily.

## Sundome countdown begins

With the frills and finishing touches now being applied, Sun City West's Sundome Center for the Performing Arts is nearing completion.

Landscapers have been putting trees and shrubbery in place and interior designers are stretching carpet through the giant arena that will seat 7,169 people. Crews are getting the refreshment areas readied and riggers and sound people are hard at work.

And the Box Office continues to fill orders for tickets.

The Sundome's opening night — Saturday, September 13 — will feature Lawrence Welk, his orchestra and troupe. Welk also will be on hand for a matinee performance Sunday, September 14.

Public sale of tickets for both performances went on sale August 1. Sundome Entertainment Director Don Tuffs urged local residents to buy their tickets early. "Once word spreads through the Valley," he said, "tickets will go fast."

The fall season Celebrities Series opens with 4-Girls-4 Sunday, September 21, with Tennessee Ernie Ford set for Saturday and Sunday, September 27-28. Other Celebrities Series shows include Sandler & Young, Al Martino, Ed Ames, the Mills Brothers, the Lennon Sisters, Joann Castle and the Osmond family, featuring Donny and Marie.

"Whoopee" opens the 1980-81 Salute to Broadway series Wednesday, October 1, followed by the Fabulous Follies, Babes in Toyland and the American Dance Machine.

And, while all this is going on, the Salute to Broadway Series, Musical Arts Series, Dance Festival Series, Lecture Series and Film/Lecture Series, as well as Sun City Symphony performances, will keep the Sundome buzzing with activity.

Brochures and additional information may be obtained by calling the Sundome Box Office at 975-1900.

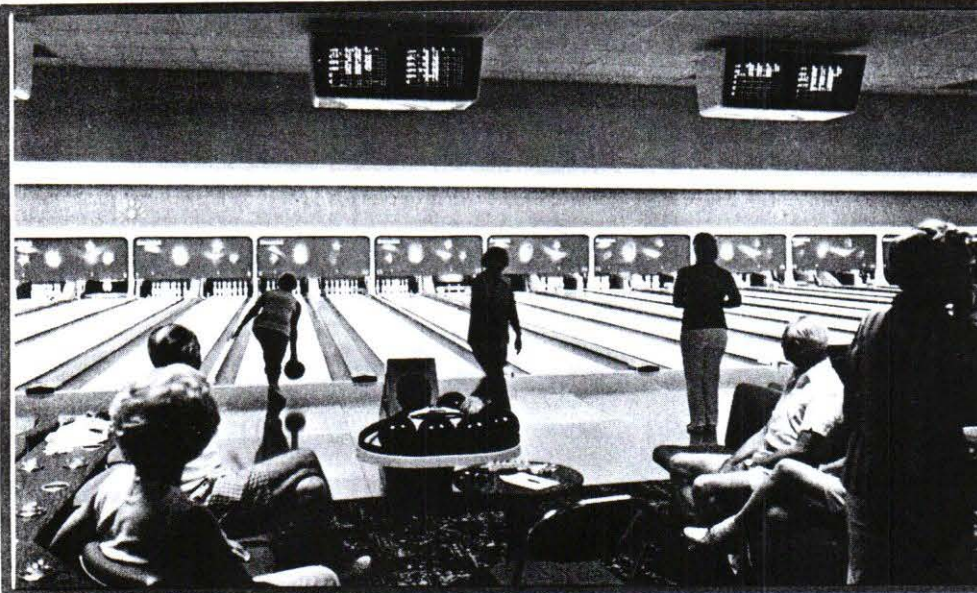
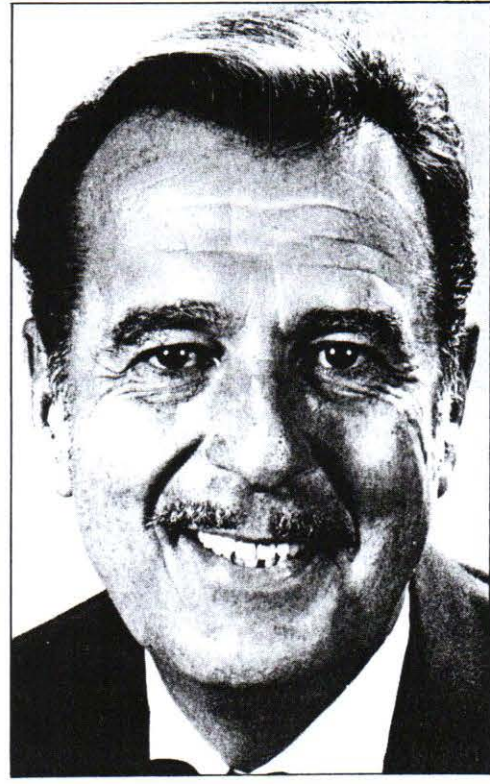
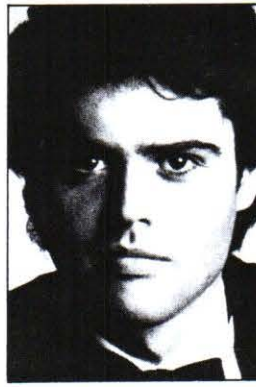
See Sundome Photo  
Feature on Page 2





### *Picture this . .*

*Shows scheduled for this fall at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts include (clockwise from left) the Mills Brothers; Lawrence Welk, his orchestra and stars; 4-Girls-4; Tennessee Ernie Ford; and the entire Osmond Family, featuring Donny and Marie. Complete ticket information may be obtained by calling the Box Office at 975-1900.*



### *Sign up now for winter leagues*

*It may seem warm now, but the winter bowling league season is just around the corner. Johnson Center Lanes is now accepting sign-ups for winter leagues, which start in September. Don't miss out on America's most popular participation sport! Contact Al Freitas or Sharon Nelson at the lanes, or call 584-2407 for further information.*



# Sun City West

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Del E. Webb Development Co. ★ Public Relations Dept. ★ P.O. Box 1705 ★ Sun City, Arizona 85372 ★ September, 1980



## *Debut of Sundome nears*

The Sundome, Arizona's newest and largest facility for lectures, theater and the performing arts, will debut at 8 p.m., Saturday, September 13th when Lawrence Welk gives the downbeat to his traveling company and the bubble machine.

State-of-the-art is the phrase that best typifies the 108,000 square-foot complex located in Sun City West. Wide aisles, comfortable continental seating for 7,200, a beautiful garden/fountain courtyard in the Spanish style, outstanding acoustics, a 5,700 square-foot dance floor and, of course, the best in diversified entertainment offerings are only a few of the

hallmarks setting the Sundome off from the ordinary.

Programs at the Dome will be offered as part of several theme series and will include musical arts, lecture, travel film/lecture, dance, Broadway, and celebrities. See page two for September's line-up.

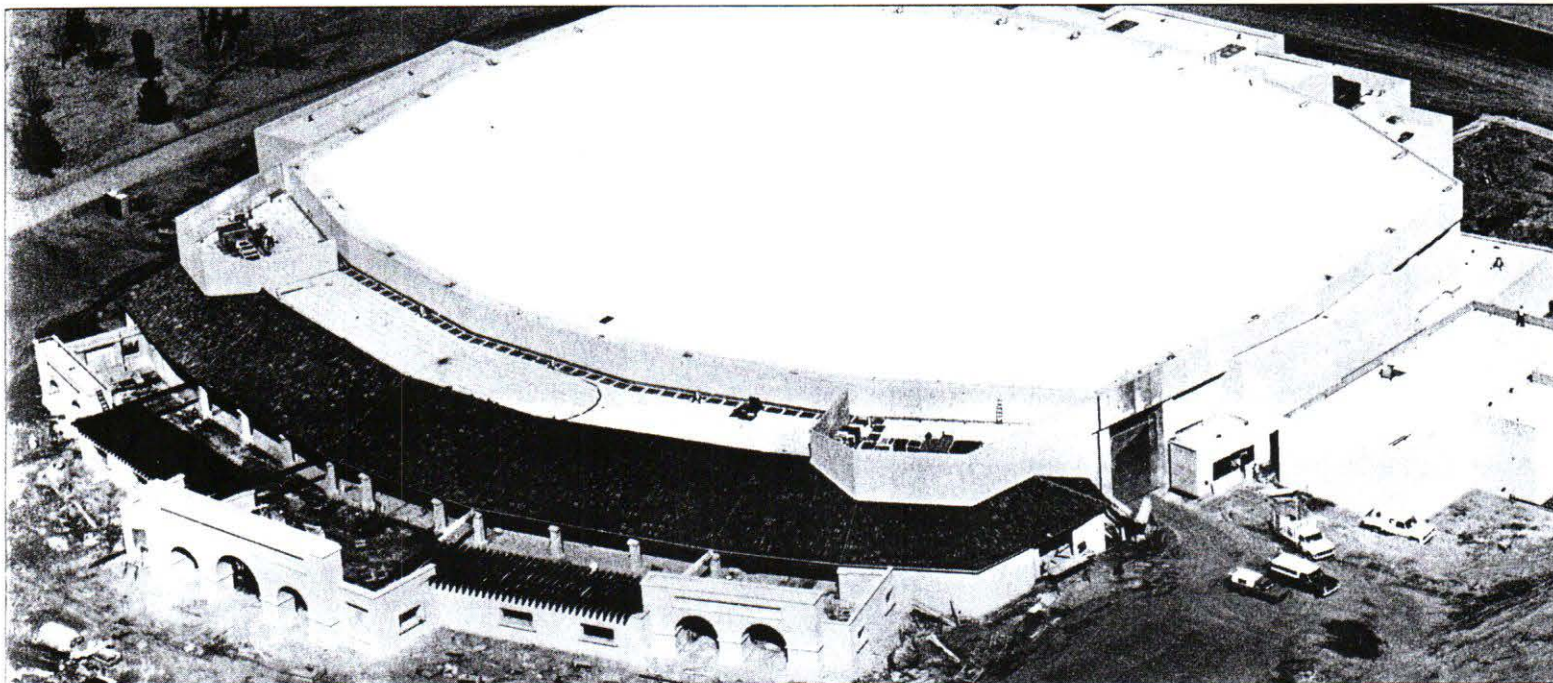
The Sundome is truly the new gem of the desert. Tickets for all events at this exciting entertainment facility may be obtained from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays at the Sundome Box Office, the King's Inn (107th and Grand in Sun City), or daily at all Diamond's Box Office outlets.



# Sun City West

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Del E. Webb Development Co. ★ Public Relations Dept. ★ P.O. Box 1705 ★ Sun City, Arizona 85372 ★ May 1980



### Sundome nears completion

*The Sundome Center for the Performing Arts, Sun City West's 7,200-seat theater, is nearly 90 percent completed. Lawrence Welk, his orchestra and stars are scheduled for two Grand Opening shows in September. Sneak preview brochures highlighting the Sundome's first four series are*

*currently available in Sun City West at Crestview Restaurant, Johnson Recreation Center, the Sales Pavilion and various businesses. For additional information call the Sundome Box Office at 975-1900.*

### Les Brown, Band of Renown set for Mother's Day show

Les Brown and the Band of Renown, one of the most famous "big bands" of all time, will perform at the annual Mother's Day Strawberry Festival Sunday, May 11, in the Sun Bowl.

The special evening will begin at 7:30 P. M. with the serving of free eight ounce strawberry sundaes. The Les Brown concert will begin at 8 P. M.

Over the years Les Brown and the Band of Renown has become a universal symbol of danceable and listenable music. The Mother's Day concert will feature the finest music of the "big band" era—the

tunes of Glenn Miller, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Charlie Barnet, Bob Crosby and, of course, Les Brown himself.

Tickets for the Les Brown and the Band of Renown/Strawberry Festival show are priced at \$2.50 and are available from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. weekdays at the Del E. Webb Administration Building. Tickets must be purchased in advance. There will be no ticket sales the day of the show.

All seating will be provided.



**LES BROWN**



# Sundome lecture series lines up personalities

If all the personalities who will appear in the 1980-81 Lecture Series in the Sundome were gathered in one room, the scenario might look like this:

*Louis Rukeyser would sit down at Peter Duchin's piano to write a check to his Wall Street broker on a back page of Art Buchwald's most recent book while Marshall Loeb, Leonard Silk and Walter Marek explain how everyone should save energy. Frances and Richard Hadden would hide the check in one of their pianos and The Amazing Kreskin would find it after Paul Harvey explained the rest of the story.*

That's fiction, of course, but subscribers to the series can enjoy all the wisdom, commentary, music and humor of the seven 8 p.m. programs by obtaining season tickets, \$18 for any reserved seat in the Sundome, at the "Sneak Preview" prices offered through August.

**DETAILS** are in the Sundome brochure, available at the Del Webb Administration Building and Kings Inn in Sun City and at Crestview Restaurant, Johnson Recreation Center and the sales pavilion in Sun City West. Or persons may call the Sundome box office, 975-1900.

Rukeyser, considered the top financial expert on television, will talk on "What's Ahead for the Economy" on Oct. 27. His "Wall Street Week," now in its fifth year on PBS, is based on his own successful format:

"Talk about economics and people are bored to death. But talk about money and watch everyone's eyes light up."

The 47-year-old was a 1954 Princeton graduate, spent 11 years as a political and foreign correspondent for the Baltimore Sun, then worked for ABC. His book, "How to Make Money in Wall Street," was chosen the Best Investment Book of the Year and already is a classic in its field.

**THE AMAZING Kres-**

kin, tabbed by Performance Magazine as "the most astounding performer today," will come to the Sundome stage on Nov. 17. A foremost authority in the field of extra-sensory perception, Kreskin says he is not "a psychic, an occultist, a fortune teller, a mind reader, a medium or a hypnotist. If I had those abilities I would go to the nearest racetrack and work out a retirement program."

One of Kreskin's most astounding feats occurs when he lets a member of the audience hide his paycheck, with the understanding that he will forego his fee for that performance if he cannot locate it. One person from the audience acts as a guide by concentrating on the check's location. Kreskin once found his check hidden in a man's upper denture plate.

**NOTED MUSICIAN** and bandleader Peter Duchin will present "The Musical World of Peter Duchin" on Dec. 8. Though his band is considered one of the best "society bands," his talents don't stop there. He's a world-class pianist, composer and arranger.

Duchin has recorded 25 albums and is a favorite on the lecture circuit. In the Sundome, he will talk about his experiences and philosophies and offer his inimitable renditions of favorite songs at the piano.

**IN A UNIQUE** trio format, the series will continue Jan. 12 with Marshall Loeb, Leonard Silk and Walter Marek speaking on the subject of energy. Loeb is the senior editor of Time magazine's business, economy and energy sections; Silk is a noted economist and highly-acclaimed columnist for The New York Times; Marek is the associate publishing director of U.S. News and World Report magazine.

**FRANCES AND** Richard Hadden, whose duo-



piano and multi-media shows were presented in Sun City in 1976 and 1977, will return Feb. 9 with a new program exploring the ambiguities of today's China.

They will combine a stirring two-piano concert of popular and classical numbers with a dramatic look at the dilemma facing the leaders and creative artists in the People's Republic of China, based on their long-time residence on the Mainland and friendship with many of China's leaders under both the Nationalist and Communist regimes.

They were invited by Premier Chou in 1972 to perform in Peking's finest concert hall, an informal breakthrough in cultural relations. The couple is credited with paving the way for the visit 13 months later of Eugene Ormandy and his Philadelphia Orchestra.

The Sundome program

will include the premiere of Frances Hadden's new work for two pianos, synchronized with her husband's spectacular color views of China.

**PAUL HARVEY**, called "America's one-man news network" and "the voice of the silent majority," will appear Feb. 27 in "A Time to be Alive."

His news broadcasts are heard by more than five million listeners of 836 radio stations; "Paul Harvey News and Comment" is carried by 400 armed services stations around the world; and Harvey writes a column that appears three times a week in 300 newspapers.

Although he realizes the size of his audience, he says, "I never think that I'm talking to millions of people. As far as I'm concerned, I'm talking to my wife's sister in St. Louis because I feel her concerns are the concerns of so many Americans."

A patriot, he doesn't hesitate to say so. He believes in Horatio Alger and Yankee ingenuity. They are traditional values, formed as a child of the Depression. Harvey's program will be presented on a Friday, the only one of the series not scheduled on a Monday evening.

**CIGAR-CHOMPING** Art Buchwald, called by Time magazine "the most successful humorous columnist in the U.S.," will close the series on March 23. In addition to his rib-tickling books, "Down the Seine and Up the Potomac," "Washington is Leaking," "Getting High in Government Circles" and "The Establishment is Alive and Well in Washington," Buchwald is heard on records, on TV and before audiences across the nation.

Raised on Long Island, he enlisted in the Marines in 1942 and gained his early journalistic ex-

perience editing his company newspaper on Eniwetok, where he was stationed for more than three years. His first column, "Paris After Dark," began in 1949. He now is syndicated in more than 400 newspapers throughout the world.

### Kelsey gets role

Linda Kelsey, who is reporter Billie Newman on "Lou Grant," switches to fashion designer for the CBS movie "A Perfect Match."

She plays a woman whose chance for survival from a rare disease depend on whether the daughter she gave up for adoption can be found and if she has blood that is a perfect match for hers.

Lisa Lucas plays the daughter and Colleen Dewhurst plays the adoptive mother.



# Sundome plans are as large as the building

By Hardy Price  
Republic Staff

SUN CITY WEST — Right off, the Sundome is big.  
How big?

Big enough to lose a cement truck driving across its interior with a load of concrete for the 7,000-seat theater's floor.

It's so big, you could almost fit two football fields in its 110-by-80-yard, wall-to-wall measurements. The ceiling height is equal to a four-story building.

And yet the building, just north of Bell Road and west of the Agua Fria River, lacks two theater essentials — an orchestra pit and sufficient backstage area to fly scenery.

Instead of a pit, there's a 4,000-square-foot area in front of the stage that will be used as a pit when necessary. At other times, the area will be used for temporary seating or a dance floor.

Don Tuffs, newly appointed director of entertainment for the facility, sees no major problems developing from the situation in terms of programming, with the exception of musical productions.

And Tuffs and the Del Webb Development Company have big programming plans — big enough perhaps to put a dent in programming and attendance at Gammage and Symphony Hall.

"We are planning between 100 and 150 programs a year," Tuffs said.

Tuffs hopes to open the Sundome shortly after Labor Day with the complete Lawrence Welk show, a natural for the retirement community.

He said the programming would be geared to the 50-plus crowd and would include the five-concert Sun City Symphony season. Symphony founder and conductor Jennings Butterfield, who recently celebrated his 80th birthday, will be stepping down after next season, a season that will see the symphony move up to guest-artist status.

"It will have to in order to fill 7,000 seats," Tuffs said.

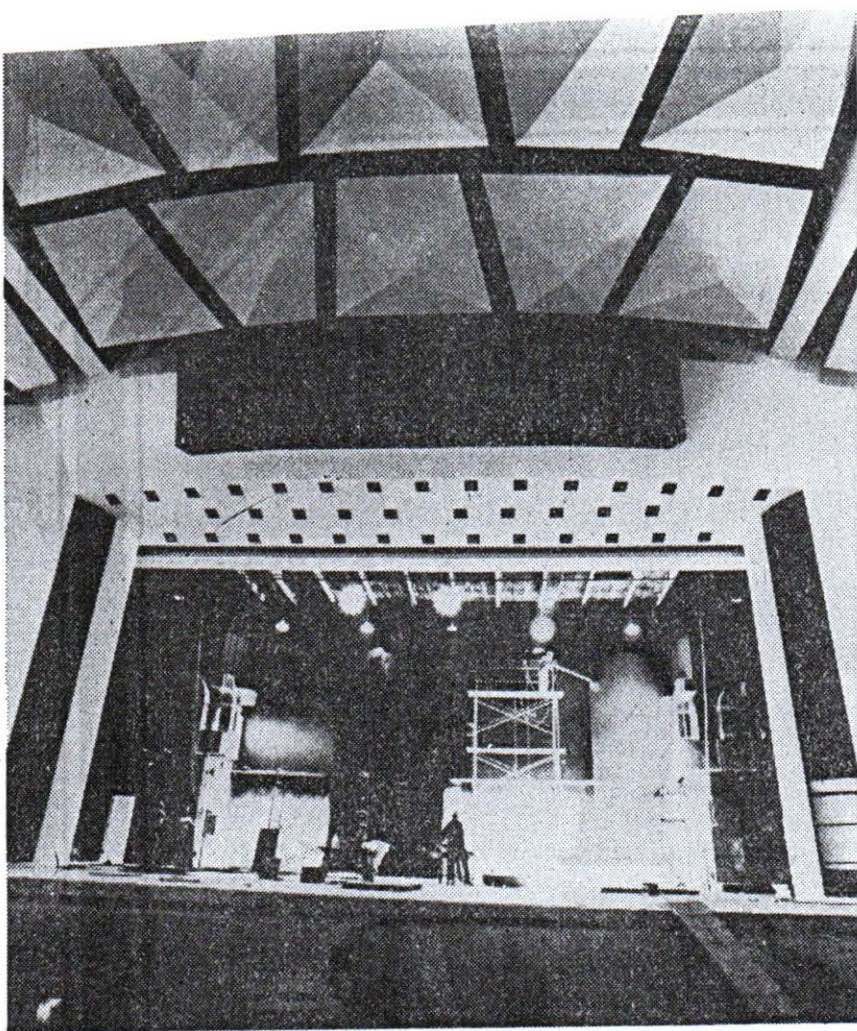
The symphony season will open with violinist Eugene Fodor. Other guest artists include Anna Marie Alberghetti,



Sundome, F6

The Sundome in Sun City will have 7,000 seats.





John Willard/Republic

Workers put finishing touches on Sundome stage.

## Sundome

*Continued from F1*

Gordon MacRae and guest conductor Skitch Henderson.

The programming will include eight series — dance, drama, the Sun City Symphony, lecture, travel films, musical art and at least two celebrity series. The Sun Bowl series will move to the Sundome, which is adjacent to the Johnson Recreation Center in Sun City West. The site of the Sun Bowl has been offered to the Recreation Centers of Sun City for \$1, but with the stipulation it would not attempt to compete with the new facility.

Tuffs and Gammage managing director Miriam Boegel are working together on several programs, including Fred Waring. In past years, Waring has played one night at Gammage and the next night as part of the Sun Bowl series, which is closed to the public. In the future, Waring will alternate each year between the two buildings.

The two will share some programming next year and probably in the future. The dance series at the Sundome will be almost identical to the one at Gammage and will include the Ballet Folkloric National of Mexico, the Caribbean Carnival of Trinidad and the National Folk Ballet of Yugoslavia.

Tuffs said it is unlikely he will book modern dance troupes. He thinks their work would not be popular with his primary audience. Ballet companies booked into the Sundome will be asked to stick with classical works and forgo the contemporary.

This is not to say Tuffs' audience is a bunch of stuffed shirts.

"I'm negotiating right now with the Osmond family, all 28 of them,

for a show next season," said Tuffs. "There's a lot of contemporary shows I think I'll be able to present here. When disco was at its height, all our disco classes were booked solid and had waiting lists. Right now, roller skating is the big thing and we have two roller-skating clubs going at the present time."

Other programming for the first season includes the Southwest German Chamber Orchestra, organist Virgil Fox, the Irish Light Orchestra of Dublin, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, an Eastern Opera Theater of New York production of *Naughty Marietta*, and Les Brown and his Band of Renown.

Tuffs said the Arizona Opera Company has asked for dates in the Sundome for the coming season to supplement a pair of dates at Symphony Hall.

Mrs. Boegel said she is not worried that the Sundome might drain the Gammage audience because of the distance between the two and because of the Sundome's technical limitations. The Sundome is approximately 20 miles from midtown Phoenix.

Tuffs said tickets would be available to the public, but Sun City residents get first choice. With a population of 48,000 in Sun City and 6,000 in Sun City West, there is the possibility programs will be all but sold out before sale to non-residents.

Tickets will be available through Diamond's Box Office, which will open a Sun City office.

The Sundome will include a pair of concession stands, dispensing soft drinks and cocktails. The building comes with a full-service liquor license.

Tuffs said the Webb Company has not put a price tag on the project, but added the company is not looking at the Sundome as a money maker. "We are hoping that within a few years the Sundome came reach a break-even point," said Tuffs.

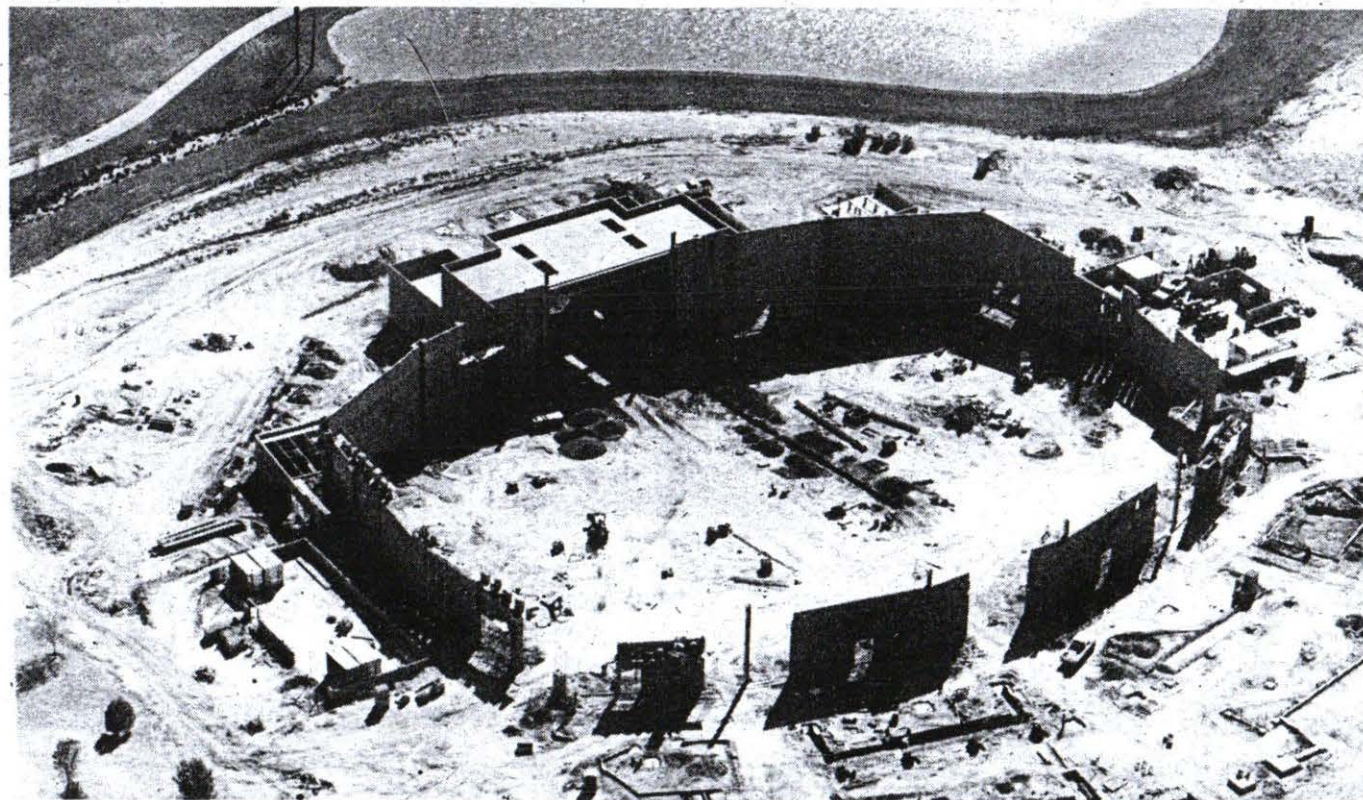


**SUNDOME**  
special edition





# NEWS-SUN View

**Friday, September 19, 1980**entertainment   radio   tv listings this week  
dining out   cinemas   art news   book reviews

Looking at the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts from across a water hazard on the Sun City West golf course, the multi-faceted structure appears like a carved sand "jewel" dominating its landscape. The three-arched front of the Sundome is a more familiar view, welcoming audience and performers alike into a green, shade-streaked courtyard which is brightened with fiesta-colored awning strips overhead. Below, it was only 16 months ago that the building—at least from the air—looked like something a giant boy-child was building of cardboard strips and an old box. Mounds of dirt were "stage right" and scaffolding held fragile walls in place. Follow us through the fascinating Sundome story, inside View.





With ground broken Nov. 6, 1978, it wasn't until the first of January, 1979, that the tracing of foundations for the building became noticeable.



By March of last year, the outline of construction phases was fully marked and the stage area walls partially erected.

## An inside view:

Santa Claus couldn't have brought a better present.

This issue of View takes you behind the scenes of the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts—a huge present that couldn't have been gift-wrapped except in spirit.

The story of how the Sundome evolved and how this community is responding to the facility—a facility unmatched by any other retirement community—is here.

The opening of the Sundome was only the beginning. It is here, it is open and it is for you. Its success will be measured in terms of community support.

The Del E. Webb Development Co. has

voiced its confidence in the performing arts center saying it has no doubts the Sundome will be a winner.

But, let's face reality: the Sundome is a multi-million dollar gamble and residents of these retirement communities are the dealers who can play the game. You can deal out a royal flush or a hand of zilch.

A select few in the community have said they were disappointed with the fact that seating in the back makes the stage so far away. Isn't that the same as it was at Sun Bowl performances? Wasn't the stage just as far away from the back?

As before, an investment in a pair of opera

glasses, binoculars or field glasses will pay dividends.

The Sundome was designed on one level for a purpose. It wouldn't have been difficult to build the Sundome with balconies. That would have brought portions of the audience closer to the stage. But the Webb Co. chose convenience and walking comfort and safety for patrons instead.

The Sundome also features wide aisles, again for convenience. The facility was designed so that no matter what a person's age, 23 or 103, it affords the freedom of movement.

Some criticism has stemmed from the congested traffic situation be-

fore Saturday's performance. That was a bug that was "fixed" by the next evening. One of the Sun City Posse members said the situation will be under control in the future.

Not everyone is going to like everything about the Sundome. It's just human nature. Many of the bookings will not be "everybody's" type of entertainment.

Yet most folks feel they want to be part of the audience that fills up those 7,169 seats.

This writer would like to thank John Meeker for keeping his interview appointment in spite of the fact he was still recovering from root canal work. Anyone who's ever had that kind of work

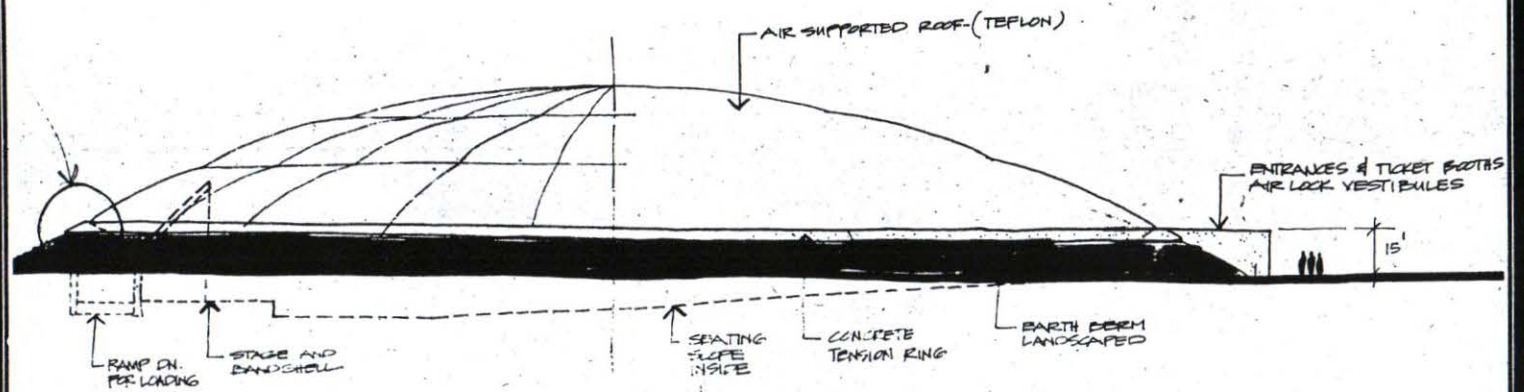
done in their mouth will be able to relate to the agony of it. And it sure doesn't make it feel any better to have a reporter firing away with 100 questions.

Special thanks also to the Webb Co. staff for the color photograph on the cover, the aerial pictures and for help in compiling the information in this section.

Many of the photos in this section were taken by News-Sun photographers Jim Painter and Bill Dosham. They covered many miles between the office and the Sundome while it was being built and during opening events.

—By Kim Sue Lia  
Barber





## Originally...

When the name "Sundome" was applied to the performing arts facility, it was just that, an air supported dome structure covering a Sun Bowl-like bandshell. It was to have seated 8,000. Earth berming was to rise up the side, the roof was to have been of teflon and air-lock vestibules were noted on the architect sketches from March 1977. The idea was abandoned when Webb officials visited a similar structure elsewhere.



# News releases tell Sundome story

It was Oct. 4, 1977 when the Del E. Webb Development Company issued its first press release which made mention of "a 7,000-seat theater."

Sun City West construction was not yet underway; that began at the first of the year and on Jan. 4, 1978, the development company once again said a large theater was a part of its masterplan.

IN MAY of that same year the company released the projected cost of this massive theater undertaking—more than \$5 million.

On Nov. 6, 1978 Sundome construction began.

From then on only scattered pieces of information updated the progress of construction. Originally set to unveil in Spring '80, it was on March 18 of this year the company announced the Sundome would open in Fall '80.

ALSO IN March, Del Webb named Don Tuffs as the Sundome's entertainment director. Tuffs, who was instrumental in launching the Sundome project from its onset, has been d in promoting Sun City events for the past nine years.

The March news story was the most detailed to date, revealing how the largest theater in the state would be an acoustical masterpiece to rival the world's finest music halls. It would boast a main arena large enough to accommodate two football fields laid side by side.

"Seating more than 7,000 persons, the perform-

ing arts center's ceiling will reach the height of a four-story building.

"Sound will emanate from speaker clusters above the stage and above the center cross aisle. Suspended reflective sound 'clouds,' acoustically treated walls and a floating panel ceiling will help create the front-row-center audio experience.

"Those with hearing aids will receive the sound of the performance via a web of transmitting antennae in the floor.

"IN ADDITION, the Sundome will be accented by a carved-stone fountain, wrought-iron gates and chandeliers."

John Meeker, the development company's president, announced his plans to bring top celebrities, lecturers, theater groups and films to the Sundome as well as symphony orchestras, musical troupes and dancebands from around the world. It was also learned that entertainment will be geared to the 50-plus crowd.

"At the Sundome we're planning a wide variety of events," Tuffs said. "For the big name acts we'll utilize all seats. However, through our unique sound and lighting systems, the theater can be made more intimate for programs catering to the smaller, select audience."

Other Sundome features not previously mentioned include a computerized lighting and dimming system, three follow-spot positions, a movable, oak-

veneered orchestra shell, a 5,700-square foot dance floor in front of the stage, an elevated seating area for the handicapped and parking for 3,166 cars.

ON APRIL 15, with construction 90 percent complete, the fall entertainment line-up was made public and tickets went on sale by mail order.

And it was made official that Lawrence Welk and his Champagne Music would christen the new facility Sept. 13-14.

BILL PARKS, Sundome project coordinator, detailed the special induction loop sound system that will enable persons with induction-type hearing aids to hear the program directly through their hearing device.

A loop antennae, buried 1 1/2 inch beneath the theater's concrete floor will transmit the same sound as the overhead

speaker system, he said adding, the induction loop is set up on the same sound delay system as the rest of the Sundome's speakers, eliminating any possible echo effect.

Parks said the signal transmitted from the loop antennae will reach all seat locations in the new facility.

PRESS information detailed that four sections have been reserved for wheelchair patrons, accommodating up to 75 wheelchairs. These sections have been designed so that attendants are sitting adjacent to the wheelchairs. Drinking fountains, toilet facilities and public telephones are designed with accessibility for wheelchairs.

The Sundome will have all-around level entries and entrances equipped with sliding doors.

AS THE summer progressed the Sundome became more than a giant shell going up along R.H. Johnson Boulevard in Sun City West; seats, carpeting, landscaping and paving transformed it well along its path to becoming the showplace of the southwest.

"It's like watching your baby grow," said Tuffs. "Every day is something different and something new and it all adds up to the finishing touches on what yesterday was really no more than a dream."

At this time, nearly 1,000 seats have been sold for each of the Celebrities and Salute to Broadway series, while orders for the performing arts center's other



The Rhythm Ramblers played to an empty house—though it was crowded with technicians—for the final "live music" run-through before the premiere performance of Lawrence Welk.

four series—Dance, Musical Arts, Film-Lecture and Lecture—continue to flow in.

"OUR BOX office personnel are kept busy all day long, filling ticket requests, trying hard to fill every penned special request and seeing to it that canceled checks carry on their reverse side section and seat number information. This unique plan has paid dividends by allowing patrons early knowledge of their seat locations, information they otherwise couldn't gain until tickets are distributed," said Tuffs. "And response has indicated great appreciation."

"It is unfeasible to establish bus transportation from Sun City. Many Sun City churches already are planning special bus trips," Tuffs said.

He reiterated the fact the Sundome has no balcony and persons standing at the rear of the seating area are just 17 feet above stage level.

Although not yet finished, the Sundome opened for public view in August. On Aug. 25, the mural painted by Sun Citian Fred Kabica was erected over the Sundome's main portals. On Sept. 2, the Sundome's house crew had its final "dry run," the Sun City Rhythm Ramblers were performed on stage, marking the first live music in the theater. Meeker was on hand for the momentous occasion. "We've worked long and hard for this," Meeker said. "There've been changes and improvements as we went along. And now, it's almost done."

On a fittingly starry Arizona night, Sept. 13, the completed \$10-million Sundome Center for the Performing Arts opened its doors to a capacity crowd.



Action at the Sundome Box Office picked up in August.





Relief and exhilaration filled John Meeker's face at the preview opening as he showed the Sundome to his wife, Bonnie.

## John Meeker's vision bubbled into bursting showplace

Story by  
**KIM SUE LIA PERKES**

### Sundome facts:

The Sundome has earned a Type I building certification which signifies that only non-combustible materials were used in its construction; and it is equipped with an advanced life-safety system which includes a complete sprinkler system, ion exchange smoke detectors and emergency power generators.

The Sundome's interior dimensions are: 320 feet wide by 225 feet deep from the back wall of the auditorium to stage front; interior area is 108,000 square feet; maximum seating for 7,169; ceiling to floor height varies from 40 to 52 feet; 5,700 square foot dance floor at stage front which will accommodate approximately 500 couples.

The Sundome sound system is a 4,800 watt Yamaha audio system. The system can be focused to fit the size and shape of the audience, thereby a group of 100 can enjoy the richness of sound as a full house. The theater's side and back walls are soft and act as sound absorbers.

Hawkins, Lindsey and Wilson Associates of Phoenix and Los Angeles constructed the Sundome. The firm was also responsible for the Lakes Club, Fountainbell and Crestview restaurants and Bell and Johnson recreation centers. The firm's next project is to construct a dining and social club in Sun City West.

*This is the story of the Sundome that John built. Unlike the fairy-tale Jack, who limited himself to single-handedly constructing one house, this man had many helpers and the backing of his company, but...*

John W. Meeker is the man who made it all happen.

The Del E. Webb Development Company president has a

reputation for building dreams into realities. He's been doing it ever since he started with the company in 1946.

When the concept of a retirement community in the desert was a vision, Meeker was involved in the planning of the community which bears the name Sun City.

"I was the force behind the Sun Bowl," he openly admits. "It's very simple but it works."

It was from the success of the Sun Bowl that Meeker formulated yet another vision.

"An energy-efficient facility; an air-supported bubble made of plastic, nylon, etc."

And when the masterplans for Sun City West were drawn, the dream was put on paper.

"The planning actually began in 1977. We patterned the facility after the Sun Bowl. We knew the sound was not good there because it's outdoors, but we did know the people could see from that far back.

"We spent a lot of time researching the air-supported structure because as you know operating costs are a major factor. We sent a team to Iowa where they have such a facility. Contrary to what the architects had been telling us, they saw people being blown around trying to enter and exit the facility."

One of the major problems with an air-supported structure is the difference in air pressure between the exterior and the interior of the building. The inside air pressure supports the roof of this type of building.

For "safety and sound" reasons, Meeker says, the air-supported concept was abandoned.

"We had named it the Sundome during the period of time we spent on the air-supported structure."

But Meeker was determined not to let his bubble burst. Just because he couldn't build the Sundome with a dome on it, didn't mean he wasn't going to build it.

"The Sundome is John Meeker's baby," confides a Webb company source. "He's been the motivating force behind it."

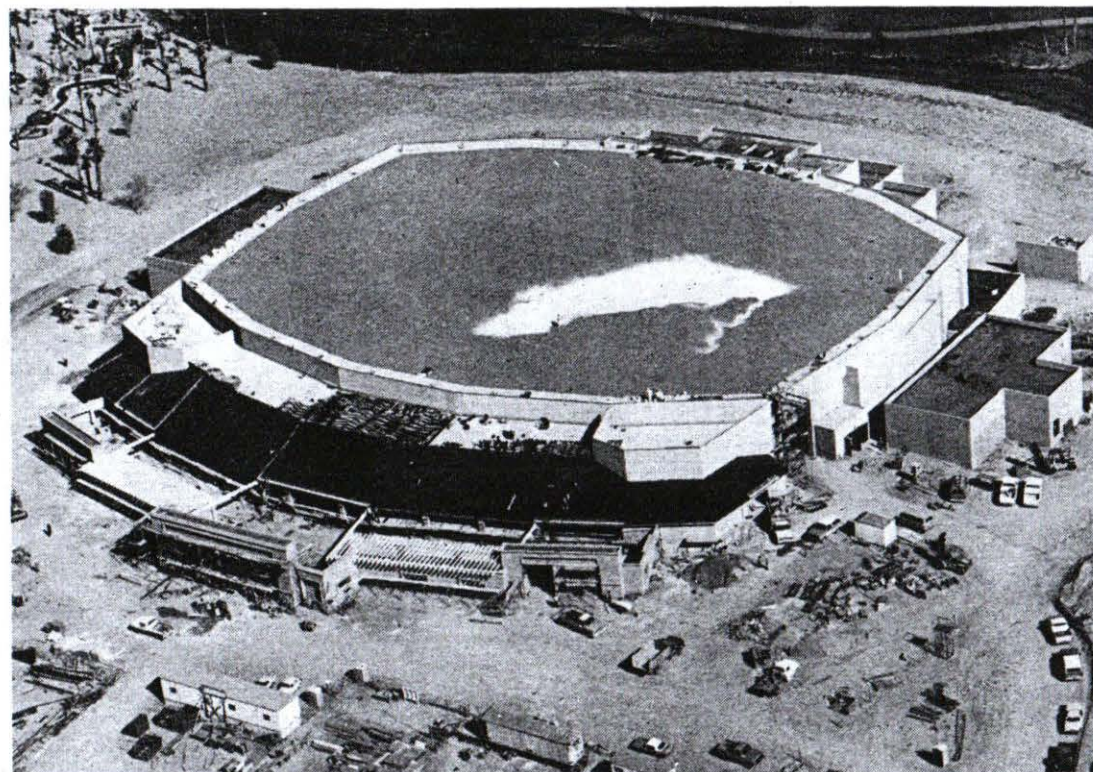
Back at the drawing board, the Webb company architects redesigned the Sundome as we see it today.

"Our management had the wherewithall to stick with it and we did it," Meeker says with a solid tone. "Looking back I think we made a wise decision because the sound quality is excellent. When the Sun City Ramblers tested the sound system (the musicians were the first live performers on the Sundome stage), the sound quality was better than we had expected."





Just a few weeks shy of one year ago, the Sundome shape and exterior appearance was beyond the paper stage, though the foyer still was open to the sunshine.

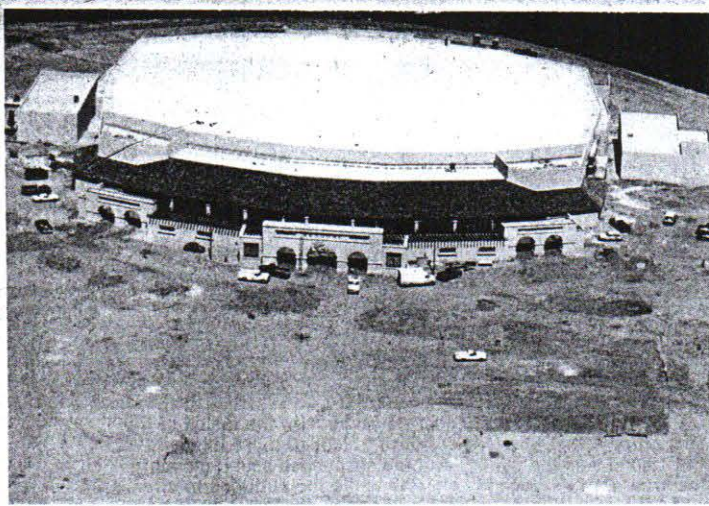


In November, 1979, a lone worker stood on the roof of the Sundome, spray paint gun in hand, and began the artistic sweep of white to cover the expanse that compares to football fields. Work inside also was underway.





The first day back after the 1980 new year holiday found workers touching up the front of the Sundome.



By April, the hand-painted tile letters announcing "SUNDOME" and the west and east entry were in place. The construction trailers had been packed up and work inside continued.

## 1980 only starts series...

Lawrence Welk was just the first. "Just" is perhaps the wrong word—if thinking in terms of Lawrence Welk—but it is the right word when looking at the season through the end of this year.

September already has presented Ballet Folklorico and, on Sunday, 4 Girls 4 will star. Tuesday the Travel Film-Lecture Series opens with Kathleen Dusek and Sept. 27-28, Tennessee Ernie Ford offers two variety shows.

October presents such great names as Robert Q. Lewis and Mamie Van Doren in *Whoopie!*, the Broadway musical Oct. 1-2; singing team Sandler and Young, Oct. 19; Al Martino, Oct. 26; and Louis Rukeysser opening the Lecture Series Oct. 27. Variety features include the Caribbean Carnival Band of Trinidad, Oct. 8; an Oktoberfest with Frankie Yankovic and his polka band, Oct. 12; the International Salvation Army Band from London, Oct. 16; the AMAN International Folk Ensemble, Oct. 22; and the New York production of Victor Herbert's *Naughty Marietta*, Oct. 25.

November opens with the new season of the Sun City Symphony Orchestra (see related story) on the 2nd and progresses into personalities like Ed Ames, Nov. 9; The Mills Brothers, two shows on Nov. 16; the Amazing Kreskin, Nov. 17; and the Lennon Sisters with JoAnne Castle, Nov. 23.

Filling the Sundome stage will be the Irish Light Orchestra of Dublin with 45 singers, dancers and musicians, Nov. 6; the Norman Luboff Choir, Nov. 7; *Fabulous Follies*, a musical spectacular in the flavor of Broadway, Nov. 14-15; and the Slovenian Philharmonic of Yugoslavia, one of the oldest orchestras in the world, Nov. 20.

December highlights will include Peter Duchin on the lecture circuit, Dec. 1; the Osmond Family with all their beautiful people and songs, in two shows on Dec. 13; and the classic Babes in Toyland, based on the Victor Herbert work, Dec. 15.

"We brought in one of the outstanding soundmen in the nation, Robert Coffeen. If that sound works as good as it looks like it's going to, then we have a winner. I have all the confidence in the world it'll work."

Meeker was willing to go all out to make sure his "baby" grew up properly—even if it meant the seat of his pants.

"We had every major theater seat manufacturer in the country bring their seats here and we gave them the 'seating test.' We did not buy the most economical seats. The sound is the very best you can get and the seating the very best you can buy."

A combination of upgrading, changing and inflation brought the Sundome price tag above its original projected costs.

"We started out in the \$7 million range and it's going to cost us in the \$10 million range."

But Meeker notes that's not such a bad price. "When we were planning to put a theater in Bell Rec Center it was going to cost us \$10 million for that. I think we did the right thing by waiting."

The Webb company president is quick to point out the multi-million dollar facility is not intended to be a money-making operation.

"It was not put there to make money. It was put there on a break even basis to serve Sun City and Sun City West primarily. We did it in 1967 with the Sun Bowl. We established the need for such a facility with the Sun Bowl. It's a cultural facility for the people who are here. They are given first shot at the tickets."

"We are not in competition with Gammage or the Civic Center. We are merely bringing entertainment to the west side of the Valley for the people's enjoyment. We will own, operate and promote all shows. That way we will be in control at all times."

Booking entertainment, Meeker relates, is a "trial and error" process.

"It will probably take two years to find out what Sun City people will support. I just hope everything works out all right. Initially, the response has been very rewarding. The most rewarding thing to us would be to see the facility used 300 times a year and to see people happy using it."

Aside from celebrities, Meeker says he would like to see the Sundome used for such things as network television shows and "it would please us to have a presidential

debate out here. Maybe not this time, but next time."

Locally, he says he would like to see art shows in the Sundome courtyard and auto shows.

"There will be many functions that will be exclusively for Sun Citizens and Sun City Westers. There will be much community promotion involved and not all events will be charged for. It's a multi-purpose facility."

But the Sundome is not without its limitations.

"A musical like 'Oklahoma' we could never have and there are a few others. The reason is because they need so many lines and backdrops for scenery and the Sundome stage is not equipped with these. We dropped that because of the costs. But they could be added later."

With the new performing arts center in the spotlight, the Sun Bowl issue seems to have taken a back seat. Meeker says that is not the case.

"We do not wish the Sun Bowl to disappear. There is a need for it there and a lot of functions can be held outdoors. There could still be entertainers at the Sun Bowl. The Sundome would never be in competition with the Sun Bowl."

"The issue of the Sun Bowl will be resolved this winter. I have a long list of buyers, but I keep hoping the community will put something together and take it over."

"We could've put another Sun Bowl in Sun City West, but we chose not to because we thought the Sundome would be a better service. For instance, because we have such a facility as the Sundome, the Sun City Symphony can now bring in soloists of the highest caliber. I am not aware of any other retirement community that has such a facility as the Sundome."

Although these facilities give the Webb company considerable exposure and are good promotional tools, Meeker says, "The reason we have been able to build these facilities is through our promotional efforts."

When Meeker refers to "these facilities" situated in Sun City and Sun City West he does not talk in terms of two separate communities. If it were not for the geographical barrier the Agua Fria River imposes, the two development areas could have merged into one. Even with the river, Meeker says he does not see any reason the two should cut each other off.

"Nothing would please us more than to see cooperation between them."

"When we first started Sun City the Webb

company was not going to become involved in people's lives. We weren't going to run their lives."

"But we found residents were not getting active in clubs and the community as much as we had hoped. So we started donating nice door prizes—I believe it was color TV sets—for club meetings and various functions and the next thing we knew people were getting involved. They just needed an incentive."

If it wasn't for the community support given throughout the past two decades, the Sundome may have been nothing more than a dream.

"Our greatest compliment comes from the people who purchase the Sundome tickets. And with that support, we can offer the west side of the Valley good entertainment at the very lowest possible price."

With the Sundome complete, Meeker chalks up another dream come true.

What would he like to see built next?

He recited aloud the community's major assets hitting on the recreation centers, libraries and the performing arts center. "I would like to see a museum."

And after that? "And if we have all that what else is there?"

OVER



## 1981 only adds series...

The new year will be the big year for the Sundome. It will be the one in which scheduled entertainment events are "judged" for their response from the audience, both the Sun City communities and the Valley community.

Several of the series which begin this fall continue into next year. The remainder will be announced as early as November, said Don Tuffs, director of entertainment.

Tuffs promised some "sure things," meaning the contracts are signed. The Pittsburgh Symphony with Andre Previn is "for sure" in 1982. Ferrante and Teicher, the duo piano marvels are scheduled.

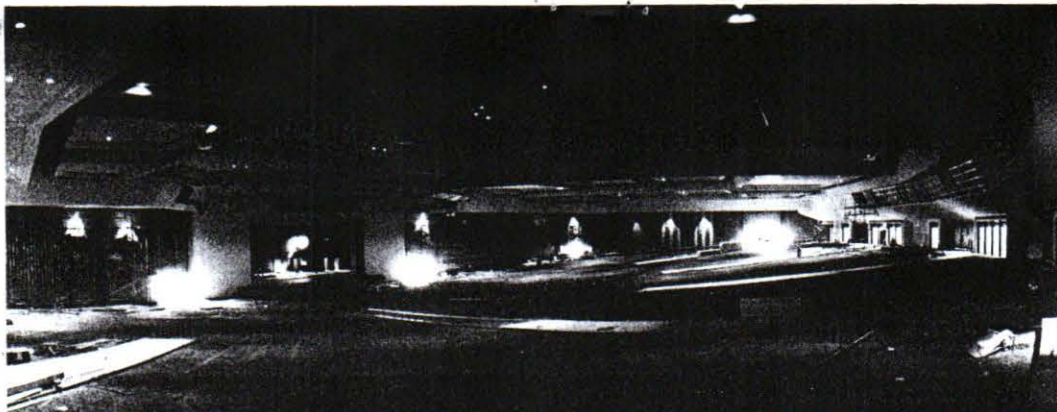
"For the fall of 1981, we're discussing the lecture series with former president Gerald Ford and Beverly Sills," he said. Pete Fountain and Pearl Bailey are other personalities who will glitter in the Sundome in the months ahead.

We will have the same types of series as we started with this season, Tuffs promised. That means celebrities, film-travel, lecture, theater and dance. "But it will take seven to 10 years before there are Sundome events scheduled nearly every night," he added, noting that that time frame coincides with completion of the first phase of Sun City West.

Performers that will open 1981 are part of previously-announced series. Loeb, Silk and Marek discussing energy on Jan. 12; a Salute to Gershwin with the Young Americans on Jan. 20; the National Folk Ballet of Yugoslavia, Feb. 9; Frances and Richard Hadden, duo pianists, Feb. 9; the Southwest German Chamber Orchestra, Feb. 11; the fabulous American Dance Machine show on Feb. 25; and Paul Harvey Feb. 27.

March programs include the American Ballet Festival, March 20, and Virgil Fox at the console of the Mighty Alan Touring Organ, March 27.

"Ticket prices will hold at lower-than-average as long as we continue to have the support of the Sun City audience," Tuffs said.



Dark, damp, smelling of concrete and earth, the inside of the Sundome, without benefit of lighting, looked more like a cave. First done was the ceiling and the suspended sound clouds; the foyer had its floor of concrete while the auditorium still was littered with rocks, holes and cable; the walls were bare and the stage, gaping emptiness.



## For Don Tuffs, Sundome work began in Sun Bowl

By KIM SUE LIA PERKES

View Writer

If you see a fairly young, lean, good-looking guy running, not walking, everywhere he goes then you've seen "Mr. Sundome." Who is Mr. Sundome? Well, he's what you might call one "Tuff" character.

"I got involved in the Sundome through assisting in the booking of the Sun Bowl's Lecture and Fine Arts Series," recalls Don Tuffs, Sundome entertainment director, a.k.a., Mr. Sundome.

The Sun Bowl experience he carries under his belt, is the only background Tuffs had in working with an entertainment facility when the Del E. Webb Development Company turned him loose on the Sundome project.

Nine pounds lighter than when he first took over the project and thousands of man hours fallen by the wayside, Tuffs isn't sure he deserves to be dubbed Mr. Sundome. "It was a total team effort on the part of the Webb company who put this thing together."

But he admits he was the one man who had to know everything that was transpiring on the performing arts center.

"The Sundome would have been impossible without someone to coordinate all the different things going on," he says, quickly adding with a laugh, "Now that doesn't necessarily mean me..."

When it comes to talking about himself, Tuffs is short of words. But ask him anything about the Sundome and your next trick is trying to figure out how you can gracefully steer him on another subject.

"The one thing the communities lacked was a cultural center. The Sundome was a facility the communities needed and it was a huge success opening weekend. Other than the congested traffic situation Saturday evening, problems were relatively minor.

"Everybody just did a super job. The ushers and hostesses did a great job. The technical people did a super job especially considering there was no rehearsal.

"The season ticket purchases have been gratifying. There are 27,000 series ticket holders. Now that doesn't mean 27,000 different individuals bought tickets. Some people bought tickets to more than one series."

The success of the Lawrence Welk performances, Mr. Sundome says, made him feel "terrific. It was just a big relief really."

In addition to overseeing Sundome operations and booking entertainment, Tuffs' duties include being in charge of the Sun Bowl and the Sun City Stadium.

But it's a rare day indeed if you stop by the Sundome and fail to bump into Tuffs.

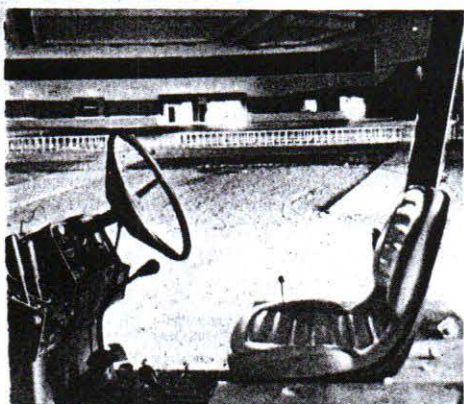
Ask Mr. Sundome if he's married to a woman who understands his dedication to the performing arts center and his reply comes back like a good-humored bolt of lightning.

"You have to have an understanding wife. Either that or I would have been out the door a long time ago."





Trucks, lift trucks, miles of wires on hundreds of spools and dozens of technicians worked the plans to the timetable. Eighty percent done, ninety percent done and the curiosity of the community increased.



The stage floor finished with its layers of wood protected by heavy brown paper "starred" more technicians as landscapers and gardeners concentrated on the courtyard and interior designers added the desert color scheme.



## Symphony waits its turn

The Sun City Symphony Orchestra is the "old timer" in the Sundome season. A Sun City "institution" which is starting its 13th season in the new facility, the familiar faces of orchestra members will be joined on stage by familiar entertainment faces.

An outstanding guest list has made the selling of season tickets an amazing success; nearly 4,300 were sold in the first several months they were offered and the orders continue to pour into the Sundome Box Office.

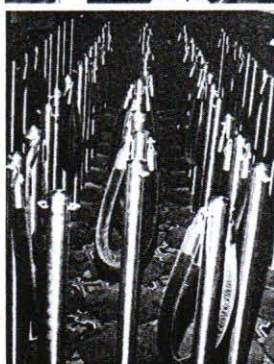
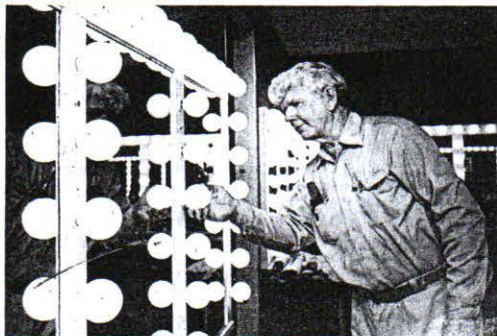
All concerts will be at 8 p.m. Sundays—the traditional SCSO time—but, as with all Sundome events, all seating will be reserved. Arriving an hour early for front-row-center—as was the custom in Sundial Auditorium—is a thing of the past. And the best news is, season tickets are all the same price, \$20.

Fine seats still are available, say orchestra officials. And individual concert tickets will go on sale Oct. 1, ranging in price from \$6 to \$8, depending on the concert.

The guest artists include violinist Eugene Fodor, Nov. 2; soprano Anna Maria Alberghetti and baritone Gordon MacRae with guest conductor Gordon Munford, Dec. 7; duo-pianists Jeffrey and Ronald Marlowe, Jan. 25; Skitch Henderson as guest conductor March 1; and soprano Roberta Peters of the Metropolitan Opera, April 5.



Lights in the dressing room, the final vacuum of 7,000 seats, checking here, there and everywhere dominated the final days before the public debut. Everything was on schedule, even the line-up of velvet and brass interior barricades on the Southwest-patterned carpet.





## A full-house crowd packed its way in for the show. Yes, many

were there to see the Maestro and his Champagne Music, but the biggest show of all was the Sundome itself.

Even with reserved seating, there were people in the Sundome courtyard at 5:50 p.m. waiting to get their first glimpse of the southwest's largest theater. The bubble-maker was not expected to take the stage until 8 p.m.

Things like "magnificent," "Isn't this something," "I can't believe how beautiful it is" and "I'm so proud to say I live here" were heard as persons awaiting the performance mingled in the Sundome lobby.

A large crowd, with heads tilted and eyes fixed upward, gathered beneath the main portals of the theater. "What on earth is it?," someone asked. "You guessed it; it's the earth," came the reply. They were all observing, admiring and philosophizing over Sun Citian Fred Kabica's mural, "From Evolution Through Progress to Where?"

Others paraded around the semi-circular-shaped foyer taking a trip down memory lane.

"My favorite was *The Cowboys*," remarked one Sundome-goer standing in front of a large, framed photograph of John Wayne.

The lobby walls are lined with silent and early 'talkie' film stars. And, as if there wasn't enough to absorb for one evening, Mexican dancers entertained in the courtyard while mariachis serenaded in the lobby. Security personnel gave an extra-added flavor of safety and a paramedic crew let you know the Sundome was prepared for any unforeseen emergency.

Two distinct crowds were at the opening performance of the Sundome—those who were all smiles, beaming with pride that this was THEIR facility and those whose faces expressed awe and amazement.

"Can you believe this place? I had no idea it was going to be so glamorous," commented one woman.

"Everyone is thrilled with the vastness of it," said Sun Citian Connie Kroll, Sundome head hostess and ticket-taker supervisor. "Everyone is extremely complimentary."

As curtain-time approached, everyone filed, in orderly fashion, into the Sundome theater. It was announced that the show would be detained a few minutes as cars were still lined up on R.H. Johnson Boulevard as far back as Bell Road, streaming their way to the performing arts center.

The audience was growing restless. The house lights dimmed and the spotlight focused on a podium at the stage's left.

Jerry Svendsen, Del E. Webb Development Company vice president and public relations director, was the first to appear on stage.

He welcomed the audience and told of how the Sundome was the company's "biggest thrill of all...we have a natural winner."

He praised Sun Citians for their support and encouraged them to use the performing arts center often.

Following his opening remarks, Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz. stepped into the spotlight.

"This is truly the new gem of the desert," he said. "The Sundome Center for the Performing Arts is a monument...This would make a great place for a presidential debate. Don't you agree?"

The audience responded with applause.

John W. Meeker, Del E. Webb Development Company president, was the next to speak.

"I feel like a politician waiting for the votes to be counted," he admitted to the capacity crowd. "This facility far exceeds even our fondest dreams..."

Meeker acknowledged several persons who had helped to make the Sundome a reality. Finally, the moment the crowd had been waiting for, Meeker brought to the stage Lawrence Welk and his Musical Family.

For an hour and a half, a spellbound and appreciative audience, directed its undivided attention to the show on stage.

It was at intermission that an attuned ear could hear discreet whispers in the lobby.

One woman sitting on one of foyer benches politely pinched a friend's elbow. The friend leaned over.

"Can you believe there are only four stalls for all these women," the woman said. "It's look like they thought of everything except enough restrooms," came the reply.

It was apparent that the majority of the crowd was unaware that there are four sets of restrooms located in the building. There are women's and men's rooms at each end of the lobby and on either side of the theater, midway between the front and back of the seating area. Unfortunately, there are no signs which direct you to these facilities.

Many persons sitting in the back seating area remarked at how well they could see the stage, but also said they didn't realize how large the theater would be and related that next time they would remember to take opera glasses.

The Lawrence Welk performance resumed and after the final number, the Sundome had its first standing ovation.

As the crowd filtered out through the Sundome's portals, one man summed up the evening, "It's just been...wait a minute let me see if I can get it right...Wunnerful! Wunnerful!"

—By KSLP

## Residents find words

A fantastic show for which words cannot dry away those tears caused by the perfection of musicmakers and performers. It is indeed unfortunate that every Sun Citian did not attend this truly magnificent performance. We understand that lines are already forming for tickets for upcoming events.

—A Sun City resident

The professional performance by the Lawrence Welk group cannot be described in words. A standing ovation told it all. It was wunnerful, wunnerful.

—A. & V. Rosier

Excellent music with eyesore atmosphere describes the Lawrence Welk show at the Sundome.

A first-nighter or grand opening should be filled with pomp, ceremony and printed programs. A mixture of good music should blend with all.

No props or flowers were seen. Only a drab background making good

music try to overshadow these deficiencies.

Champagne music means bubbles floating, blending with music played and songs rendered. The only bubbles were half-way through the program and these were of minor significance. I wonder of Mr. Welk felt out of place without them.

—Harry Berner

I assume the musicians, singers and dancers had features, but from the 27th row, one had to rely on the maestro for a description of the performers. The ladies were bee-ute-ti-full and the men tree-mend-us.

His pronounced use of these adjectives was a welcome switch from his usual selection, although he had to insert the wunnerful-wunnerful routine a couple of times to show he could still pronounce it.

But the singing and music cascaded in and around everything which provided proof that the sound system was as advertised, tree-mend-us, bee-you-ti-full and wunnerful-wunnerful.

—Frank Zambito

The nostalgic, melodious sounds of Lawrence Welk's champagne music emanated from the tremendously large new Sundome and caught the capacity crowds of 7,200 in its magic.

Patrons' posteriors were sunken in utmost luxurious, air-conditioned comfort in this awe-inspiring auditorium while the Welk Musical Family went all out to entertain and please. There was incredibly graceful and intricate dancing done in flashing, colorful costumes.

There was the pure, sweet tones of singers raised in the songs all loved to hear. Specialty numbers were played in masterful fashion by musical artists.

And, of course, there was that Big Band music played masterfully the the band, including a champagne-number complete with spot-lighted bubbles. The maestro, himself, tall, slim and handsome in white, shared his dancing skills with several lucky ladies in the crowd.

Even some of the band joined in the dancing to make even more ladies happy. It was an all-round fitting introduction with entertainment at its best to open the eye-inspiring Sundome.

—Violette V. Lloyd

Champagne christened the Sundome this past weekend—not the usual type from a bottle but musical champagne that had even more sparkle, bubble and exhilaration than the liquid variety.

A full house of "imbibers" for both performances agreed that Welk, despite his 77 years, was still the real master showman and also each performer proved his or her talent and the right to be a part of the famous musical family. It would be impossible to select a top performer and, in addition, the old timers continued to be as effective as the excellent younger talent such as Joey Schmidt, the accordionist, of whom

Lawrence is so rightfully proud.

The ensemble's broad musical range was exemplified by "Rhapsody in Blue" and a fiddlers' hoedown, both done with precise timing and tone excellence. The Sundome's overall facilities were all that were promised.

The Welk organization also accomplished something not seen previously in this area. No member of the audience left prematurely as the program neared its conclusion—a rude custom that has prevailed at so many previous performances.

Did anything go wrong? Yes, I forgot my binoculars.

—Les Worth

The opening of the Sundome under the skillful musical talents of Lawrence Welk and his orchestra was like the unveiling of a great masterpiece of art. Each portion of the program added intense expectancy toward the next.

Music is the living soul of love, and music that has lasted through the decades of half a century is indeed a rhapsody of the heart.

The heart is ever youthful and always remembers the songs of earlier days. The opening notes of songs instantly bring to life a myriad of hopes and dreams long dormant.

The professional talent aptly displayed by members of Lawrence Welk's orchestra was like an exhibition of precious gems—each different in hue, but equally important.

The orchestra truly christened Sun City West's Sundome with professional expertise—a goal succeeding shows will have to stretch high to equal.

—Jane S. James

Good clean family entertainment, minus filth and obscenity, often prevalent today. Superb sound in this great auditorium. An afternoon well spent and proud to be a part of this great opening event.

—Margaret Valentine

Wunnerful, wunnerful. How else could anyone describe Lawrence Welk and his musical family? The maestro was his usual energetic and personable self and his music brought back many happy memories of days gone by.

While I didn't get to dance with him (my suppressed desire), I did get his autograph which, of course, made the evening a complete joy.

—Mrs. Mert Iwanski



## to write reviews of Lawrence Welk performances

Especially welcome was the medley from "Fiddler on the Roof" when so many of the fine instrumental musicians were highlighted without the distraction of all those singers. "Rhapsody in Blue" would have been excellent without the hummers.

The sound was excellent; the air conditioning frigid. And the finale: canned music with all those fine musicians just pretending to play was disappointing.

—Annette Wohl

The Sundome is spectacular—wide aisles, carpeted floors and waxed floors under the seats. I know because I guess I was the first one who fell face down on the waxed surface (on the 13th of September). But I was born lucky on the 13th and was lucky with no injuries and thoroughly enjoyed the whole evening there.

—Ann (& Lincoln) Nelson

"Accordian" to my husband and I:

A WELK'om program at Sundome we found colorful, thrilling and grand.

Beautiful singing and a bit of ham.

Bubbly music, "a one Anna two" by the band.

—Mrs. Henry Stanton Siers

After being laid up with a back problem for several weeks, and Saturday being my worst day of all, well, my friends told me I'd never make the performance—alone the sitting through it.

But I made it and it was the most outstanding medicine or treatment I could have taken. It not only made me 100 percent better, but also built my morale up to the extent that I forgot all my aches and pains.

—Pat Ellas

Wonderful, excellent—these were the words the great showman Lawrence Welk used to describe each of the several acts that were so capably presented at the Sundome.

Lawrence Welk has come a long way since I first heard him play with his four-piece band over station WNAX in Yankton, S. Dak., almost 50 years ago.

—Joe I. Goldstein

Even though Mr. Del E. Webb passed away a few years ago, I'm sure he had dreams of the future. And this Sundome is one of his best projects. It is a dream world that everyone should visit. I'm sure Lawrence Welk and his musicians felt it was an honor to play in this wonderful place.

—Paul L. Schepman

The Sundome, nondescript on the exterior, comes alive in its pleasant courtyard. Inside we found a modern auditorium that, paradoxically, is at once vast and cozy.

The sound was excellent in quality, but was flawed by the attack on one's ears by the upper

notes of the vocal and instrumental soloists.

Welk gave us our money's worth. He was his expected self. He danced, he over-applauded his soloists, and he climaxed his "ham" act by carrying the big brass drum in the finale when the band, dressed in field band uniforms, paraded through the aisles.

We missed some performers but the rest of the artists did the dependable and expected. The dancers and singers were professional as always. Yet, are we wrong, is Welk and his "family" getting tired? Or are we?

—Lloyd C. Nyman

One thing might be pointed out: the dancers should be able to use the floor stage below the orchestra stage. That would allow them more room to express their routines.

I'm sure the Sundome will become known throughout the United States. I, for one, plan on attending many more times.

—E. Dahlin

Once, I would have refused to review a Lawrence Welk show, but that was in the years B.T. I resented the fact that Welk retained his male entertainers but constantly replaced the old gals with pretty young girls.

But that was B.T. (Before Tom). Pretty girls do enhance the program and I forgave the Old Boy his old boys when he introduced Tom Netherton. At the Sundome, Tom was dressed in a white suit with a pink vest. His sparkling tie matched his heavenly blue eyes. His magnificent baritone voice filled the auditorium and while singing with the groups, he stood out like a beautiful Norse god.

—Gwen B. Holmes

Oh builder of the Universe, You have endowed man with the intelligence to erect the Sundome, And we are impressed.

Oh Maestro of the Heavenly Chorus, you have imparted to Lawrence Welk and his musical family the magical gift of song and sound, And we are entranced.

—David J. Roberts

Flowing gowns and suits to match  
Bright colors all aglow,  
A figure tall and handsome  
For one and all to know,  
The snapping sounds of taps  
And the tinkle of the keys  
Upon a stage of color  
That could match the autumn leaves.

Now wrap this all up in a package  
That we can call our own,  
And, yes, it is the one and only,  
Beautiful Sundome.

—Janet Hauser

It was a show that was enjoyed every minute. The beauty of the Lawrence Welk Show is that he has the ability to make each and every one of the audience feel they, too, are a part of it and feel completely relaxed.

Sitting in the last row of the immense Sundome, the sound was clear and distinct and completely audible. The only regret is that we forgot the binoculars.

—Irene Modeen

—Bill Dahms



We may have been at a loss to review the Lawrence Welk concerts in the Sundome, but Sun Citizens certainly weren't. The "Be a Critic" contest of the View section drew a delightful array of entries and we present portions of all the comments.

The winners of the contest were everyone who entered. And the old-fashioned bubble machine we promised as prizes were, that's right, bottles of the soapy liquid we all dipped and waved in the air as kids.

Perfect from beginning to end. The whole show was outstanding. The Sundome is beautiful with roomy seats and plenty space to stretch out your feet. Three cheers to the posse.

—Harriet Terry

The new gem of the desert—Sundome.

Getting to seating is no problem with ample space between seat rows. However, misdirections had some people apologetically going through 40' seats to reach theirs.

The stage appears very small from Row 35, but opera glasses are helpful in getting a "bead" on the performers. The acoustics are great. The big sound makes up for the small stage. The air conditioning was a mite breezy and many were happy for the shawls and sweaters they had brought.

Members of the musical family put on a superb show. The maestro himself danced with many lucky ladies who were fast in coming forward to the call. He said "You girls are such good dancers, would you mind if I come to your next dance?" Lawrence was right, the whole evening was indeed "wunnerful."

—Agnes E. Jensen

A highlight of the performance was the accordian of Joey Schmidt, subbing for ailing Myron Floren. His fine playing was rewarded with the most enthusiastic applause of the evening.

Yes, Lawrence danced with the ladies, as did Tom Netherton. This time it was Tom, Cathy Sullivan and Ken Delo who came down the stairs to be near the audience. The regulars did their parts admirably and enjoyed it.

I missed Bob Ralston, Rolna Hovis and Norma Zimmer. I also missed the curtain. It would have relieved the awkwardness of the performers standing on stage when the program was finished.

—Katherine Taube

I know it is not very professional for a reviewer to be dazzled by the unusual, but I must confess that what I experienced Saturday night put me in a state of euphoria that completely distracted me from the job at hand.

Beautiful Mexican star, Anacani, immediately made me feel like I was in a "romantic situation" south of the border. This was followed in rapid succession with such nostalgia as the band playing "Fiddler

on the Roof." Arthur Duncan and his dancing feet, Lawrence tripping the light fantastic with ladies, Joe Feeney singing a medley.

At intermission time I could have collected my wits and concentrated on the job I was "sent" to do, but I was again sidetracked while in the lobby watching about 2,000 cross-legged women trying to get into a ladies room.

A memory-laden evening.

—Jack Spellman

As an accolade to Lawrence's fame,  
Ladies dashed to dance like moths  
to a flame.

—Agnes Hopper






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# SUNDOME

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✱  
*Dedication of  
Arizona State University  
signage to the*

# **SUNDOME**

*Center for the Performing Arts  
on its  
10th Anniversary*

✱  
*September 12, 1990*



**Arizona State University's  
Sundome Center for the Performing Arts  
and  
PriMERIT Bank  
present  
The Sundome's Gala Celebration  
with  
Bob Hope and George Burns  
and  
The Manhattan Rhythm Kings  
and the Chuck Craig Orchestra**

**Friday, November 2, 1990 • 8 p.m.**

**BOB HOPE**

In the entire history of show business, no individual has traveled so far, so often, to entertain so many, as comedian Bob Hope.

Hope came from modest beginnings. He was born Leslie Townes Hope in Eltham, England, May 29, 1903. He was the fifth of seven sons of William Henry Hope, a stonemason, and Avis Townes Hope, a former concert singer. When he was four, his father brought his family to Cleveland, Ohio. On December 20, 1920, by virtue of his father's naturalization, Hope and his six brothers also became U.S. citizens.

In Cleveland, Hope attended Fairmount Grammar and Junior High Schools. During his years at East High, he worked as a delivery boy, soda fountain clerk and a shoe salesman. When he left high school, he went to work for a motor car company. The following year he earned enough money to take dancing lessons from a couple of local instructors and even took over the classes for one of his teachers in 1922.

Hope also tried amateur boxing under the name of Packy East, and worked briefly as a newspaper reporter. His first professional stage appearance was in a Fatty Arbuckle show with George Byrne. It was a hastily put together dancing act just for Arbuckle's Cleveland appearance. But the famed Hollywood comedian liked it and was instrumental in getting them booked into a tabloid show, "Hurley's Jolly Follies." They danced, did comedy bits, and Hope sang in the show's quartet and doubled on the saxophone.

After "Sidewalks" closed, Hope and Byrne opened a new act in Newcastle, Pennsylvania. Opening night, Hope was asked to announce to the audience that a certain group would appear at the theatre the following week. His introduction was so funny that when he had finished, he had a new act worked out. Shortly afterward, he and his partner split up and Hope was doing a "single." In 1932, he finally hit Broadway in "Ballyhoo."

After that, there was a succession of New York hits: "Roberta" in 1933, "Say When" in 1934, "Ziegfield Follies" in 1935 and "Red, Hot and Blue" in 1936.

While Hope was appearing in "Roberta" on Broadway, a friend introduced him to singer Dolores Reade. They were married soon after. They have four children: Linda, Anthony, Honorah, and William Kelly Francis, and now four grandchildren.



Hope's radio career was launched when he was a guest on Rudy Vallee's Thursday night program. He became the star of his own show in 1938. Throughout the next 18 years, Hope performed in 1,145 radio programs for a variety of sponsors at NBC Studios and at military bases around the country, while doing many special broadcasts for the Armed Forces Radio Network.

Easter Sunday, 1950, saw his TV debut on NBC and the beginning of the longest-term contract ever on national television. His radio and television work combined to represent more than 51 years with the same network.

In 1948, Hope began what was to become a Christmas custom, when he went to Berlin at the request of then Air Secretary Stuart Symington, to put on several shows for the GIs involved in the airlift. Between 1950 and 1963, Hope and a troupe of Hollywood performers entertained GIs from Alaska to the Far East. Throughout World War II and the Korean conflict, he traveled more than a million miles entertaining more than 10 million troops and appearing at almost every military base in the world. He became an annual visitor at many of them.

Hope's efforts on behalf of the men and women serving in Vietnam are legendary. In 1969, it became the "Around the World Christmas Tour," with a preview of the show at the White House. The Christmases of 1951, '52 and '53 saw him in California, but still close to the GIs, as he entertained patients at Long Beach Veterans' Hospital.

Upon completion of his 22nd overseas show in 1972, Hope informed the world that this would be his last Christmas Show. Hardly. Christmas 1973 found him packed and on the go, with a mini-troupe of entertainers, on a tour of American veterans' hospitals.

In 1983, the Department of Defense and the USA called and Hope was off again to a trouble spot in the world—Beirut. And on Christmas Day 1987, Hope ventured into the Persian Gulf to entertain the military serving in the area.

It has been said of Hope "that if he could live his life over again—he wouldn't have time." Or, in the words of John Steinbeck, concerning Hope: "This man drives himself and is driven. It is impossible to see how he can do so much, can cover so much ground, can work so hard and be so effective. There's a man. There is really a man."

## George Burns

When George Burns celebrated his 80th year in show business in 1983, he achieved a record no living performer can match.

The ninth of 12 children, Burns was born Nathan Birnbaum on New York's Lower East Side on January 20, 1886. His father died when Burns was seven, and he started earning money shining shoes, running errands and selling newspapers. He organized a group of kid singers called the "Peewee Quartet," who were willing to sing for a buck wherever there was a crowd. He quit school when he was in the fourth grade, and by age 14, Burns was a trick rollerskater, a dance teacher and a neophyte vaudeville entertainer. At that point, he adopted the cigar as a prop, and he has smoked one ever since.

In vaudeville, Burns had a constantly changing act until 1923, when he teamed with a then unemployed Irish-American actress named Gracie Allen. Initially, Burns was the comic and Gracie the "straight" woman, but they reversed roles after the first performance when she drew all the big laughs. After performing together for three years, they were married on January 7, 1926, in Cleveland.



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A list of the total SPAA membership will be printed in a program for an upcoming event. We sincerely regret any errors in this list and appreciate your help in correcting any erroneous information.



Substituting at the last minute for Fred Allen, who was ill, Burns and Allen brought one of their standard routines, "I Wanna Buy A Tie," before the motion picture cameras for the one-reeler, "Burns and Allen in Lamb Chops," in 1929. They subsequently played themselves in 14 shorts in which they were the stars, and in some dozen features in which they had cameo or supporting roles. The features included: "The Big Broadcast of 1932," International House" in 1933, "Six of a Kind" in 1934, "The Big Broadcast of 1936," "The Big Broadcast of 1937," "A Damsel in Distress" in 1937 and "College Swing" in 1938. Their last film together was "Honolulu" in 1939.

The end of their vaudeville career came when the Columbia Broadcasting System gave them their own radio program in February 1932. It remained on the air, usually with Top Ten ratings, until 1950 when they started the Burns and Allen TV show for CBS.

In 1955, Burns and Allen founded McCadden Corporation to film television shows and commercials. The company produced "The Burns and Allen Show," as well as "The Bob Cummings Show," "The People's Choice" and "Panic!" Their own show ran until 1958 when Gracie Allen retired. During 1958-59, Burns continued on alone on TV as star of "The George Burns Show," and later he produced and starred with Connie Stevens in the series "Wendy and Me." He also produced the series "Mona McCluskey," starring Juliet Prowse, and was co-owner of the TV series "Mr. Ed."

In the 1960s, Burns began a series of night club and theater dates with Carol Channing, Dorothy Provine, Jane Russell, Connie Haines and Berle Davis. And when Gracie died of a heart attack in August 1964, Burns further immersed himself in his work. He produced the "No Time for Sergeants" TV series and did even more night club work.

Burns then conquered the concert field. Several years ago, he appeared at New York's Philharmonic Hall and followed this with a tour of colleges and universities, plus a return engagement of concerts in New York, winding up at Carnegie Hall before a capacity audience.

In the 1970s, Burns began a new film career. "The Sunshine Boys" was released in November 1975, and it broke the all-time, single-day box office record when it was premiered at Radio City Music Hall. Burns' notices were unanimously glowing. For that role, he won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor.

Next came the title role in "Oh, God!" in 1977, with George teamed with musical star John Denver. In 1978, Burns was given special star billing for an appearance in "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" with pop stars Peter Frampton and the Bee Gees. In 1979, Burns teamed up with Brooke Shields for "Just You and Me, Kid" and in 1980, Art Carney, Lee Strasberg and Burns comprised an unforgettable trio in the poignant "Going in Style."

1981 saw the release of "Oh, God—Book II." Also in 1981, Burns was honored at an 85th birthday party given in Hollywood by the Ben Gurion University to commemorate the building of the George Burns Medical Center at the University of Israel. In 1984, he starred in "Oh, God, You Devil." Burns' most recent film was "18 Again," released in 1988.

Of the five performing mediums, Burns came lastly to records. His 1980 album, "I Wish I Was 18 Again," marked his first recording in nearly a decade. In the last 10 years, Burns has done TV specials with guest stars like Walter Matthau, Ann-Margret, John Denver, Goldie Hawn, Bernadette Peters, Johnny Carson, Bob Hope and scores of others. Like Hope, Burns is a best-selling author.

At the party given in honor of his 80th year in show business, Burns reminisced about his career: "I'd rather be a failure at something I'm in love with than be successful at something I hate. I'm very fortunate, because I'm doing well in a business I've always loved. I've always been in love with show business, and I still am. I love it today as much as I did for the 20 years I flopped at it."



## **The Manhattan Rhythm Kings**

Known for their polished performances of much of America's most popular music from the 1920s, '30s and '40s, The Manhattan Rhythm Kings have gained a large and enthusiastic following across the country. Hal Shane, Brian Nalepka and Tripp Hanson are frequently compared with the Mills Brothers and Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys, but this trio has established a unique character of its own with a combination of close harmony singing, virtuosic instrumental work and spectacular tap dancing.

It was their combination of song and dance that first attracted the attention of Broadway star Tommy Tune, with whom they have successfully collaborated on numerous occasions. In 1984, Tune asked the trio to help him assemble an act based on songs written by Fred Astaire. They have continued to perform together since that time.

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Your \$100, \$75, \$50, or \$25 ticket entitles you to a charitable deduction of 50 percent.

Half the proceeds of this show go to the Sundome Performing Arts Association. Please retain this announcement and your ticket stub as evidence for your tax records.

### **Acknowledgments**

The Sundome Center for the Performing Arts sincerely appreciates the time and effort dedicated to this evening's celebration by the following:

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*One of my goals as President of Arizona State University is to make sure that the university is a true community service. I regard the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts as the university's premier entertainment and cultural link to the citizens of the Sun Cities and the West Valley. I have deep roots in that community and, therefore, I have more than normal interest in the welfare of the Sundome. On the occasion of the Sundome's tenth anniversary, I pledge my support and that of Arizona State University to the Sundome and the Sundome Performing Arts Association in their ongoing commitment to presenting the public with the best in quality entertainment.*

—Lattie F. Coor  
President, ASU

*To congratulate the Sundome for ten years of excellence in entertainment is also to congratulate the people of the Sun Cities and the West Valley for their continued support of this community-oriented facility. Since the Sundome came into the ASU family almost six years ago, it has been my distinct pleasure to witness this unique theatre, with the help of a talented staff, carve its own niche as the premier cultural center in the West Valley and as one of the top entertainment venues in the Phoenix area. I am excited about the Sundome's future and confident that the next ten years will be even better!*

—Jim O'Connell  
Executive Director, ASU Public Events

*Those of us who live in the Sun Cities and the West Valley know what an asset it is to have this renowned center of culture and entertainment right in our own backyard! The Sundome's success is due largely to the very generous support of community members who continually have patronized shows and also contributed to the Sundome Performing Arts Association's (SPAA) annual campaign drive and the untiring efforts of the volunteers have become critical in maintaining the quality and variety of entertainment. On behalf of SPAA, I thank you for your support.*

—Fred Dunikoski  
President, SPAA

*Celebrating ten years of excellence is a Sundome milestone! This celebration would not be possible without the support of our patrons. The Sundome staff recognizes this support and in return commits to providing quality service to our customers. We strive to make every performance a success—a success measured by our customer satisfaction. We continue our efforts this year and in the many years to come. Happy Birthday, Sundome!*

—Sundome Staff





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# SUNDOME

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Join us,  
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as we present  
**Entertainment That Makes An Impression:**  
the 10th Anniversary Season  
of the  
Sundome Center for the Performing Arts



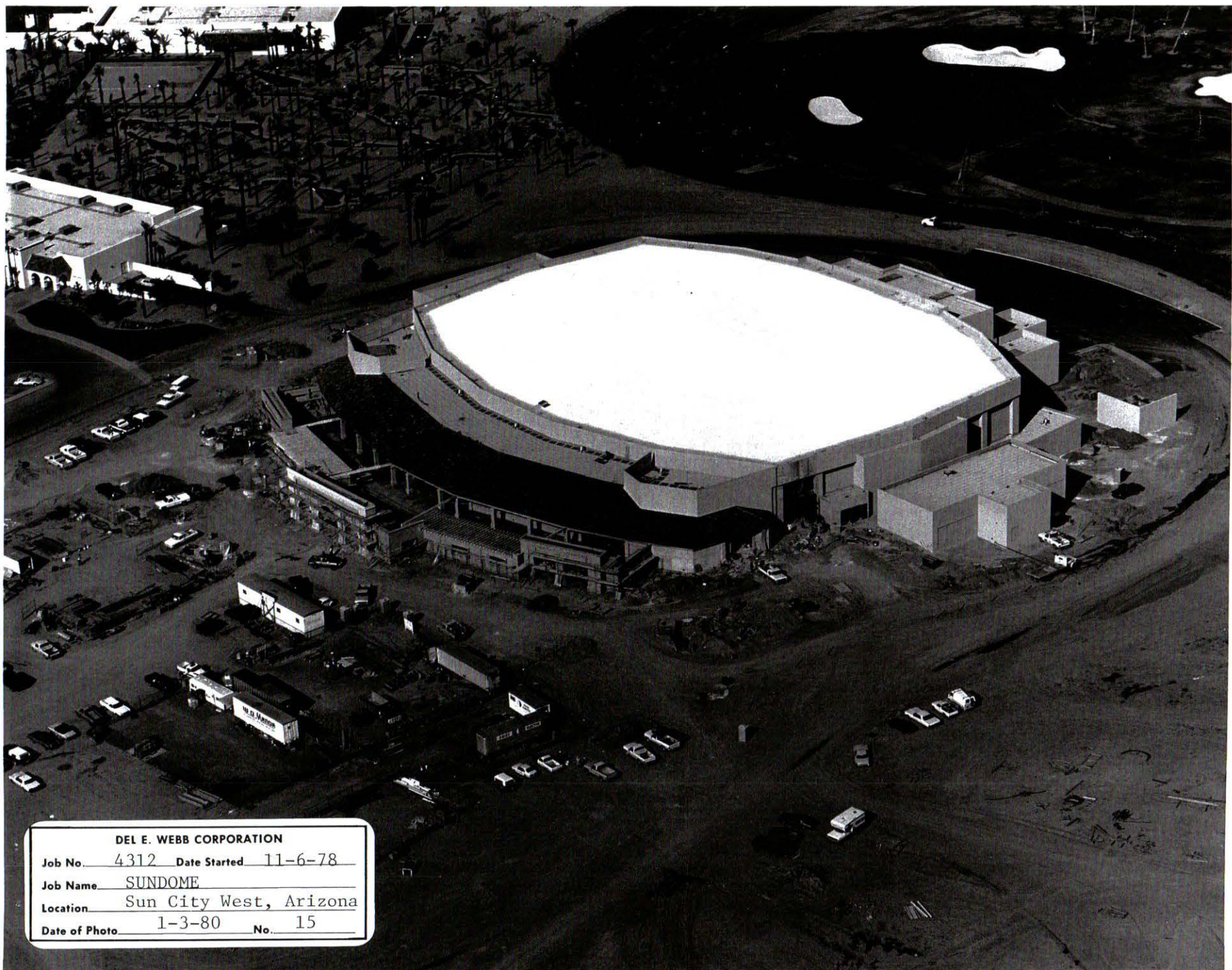
Gala Performance by  
**Bob Hope and George Burns**  
with the  
**Manhattan Rhythm Kings**  
Friday, November 2, 1990



Program begins at 8 p.m. at the Sundome  
**Champagne and Dessert Reception**  
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This invitation is your ticket to the Reception;  
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Job Name SUNDOME

Location Sun City West, Arizona

Date of Photo 1-3-80 No. 15





Arizona State University  
19403 R.H. Johnson Blvd.  
Sun City West, AZ 85375

Designer/Builder: Del E. Webb Corporation  
Construction Began: November 8, 1978  
Official Dedication: September 13, 1980

### SUNDOME FEATURES

Seating Capacity:	7,169
Handicapped Seating:	Seating for 78 wheelchairs
Type of Seating:	Continental design (40 inches between rows)
Interior Dimension:	320 feet wide by 225 feet deep
Interior Area:	108,000 square feet
Height (ceiling to floor):	40 to 52 feet
Dance Floor:	5,700 square feet (space for 500 couples). Also used for seating, orchestra pit or additional performance area.
Wall Design:	Side and rear walls are "soft" and absorb sound. Walls at right and left of proscenium are "hard" and reflect sound.
Sound System:	4,800-watt Yamaha audio system. Sound emanates from speaker clusters above the stage and above the center cross aisle. Suspended reflective sound "clouds," acoustically treated walls and a floating panel ceiling help create the front-row center audio experience.
Audio Enhancement:	Patrons with telephone-type induction hearing aids receive all audio signals from a closed-circuit broadcasting antenna buried in the theatre's floor. A limited number of these hearing aids are available free of charge at the information table for use during performances.
Additional Features:	A computerized lighting system that can handle more than 300 different lighting combinations, three follow-spot positions, and a movable, oak-veneered orchestra shell.
Parking:	Free parking with space for 3,166 vehicles.



## *FROM EVOLUTION...THROUGH PROGRESS...TO WHERE*

Scenes from the evolution of the universe, life's progress on Earth and man's ultimate destruction of the planet are depicted in the 75-foot mural hanging over the center portal in the Sundome lobby.

Sun City Artist Fred Kabica took four years to complete his project (1970-74). He first drew ten separate panels, and then painted them in sequence for this mural which is described below. Kabica died in 1980, several months after his mural was placed in the Sundome lobby.

The most vivid colors in Kabica's mural start at the left where planets, stars and other heavenly bodies detail the origin of the universe and the solar system.

Volcanoes erupt and spill lava into a blue-green sea while lightning bolts crisscross beneath a brilliant rainbow-filled sky.

Dense vegetation surround dinosaurs in battle followed by apes in trees and the emergence of primitive man from a cave.

Mammals and birds surround a pond where a woman holds a child while above her floats a hand-shaped cloud.

The emergence of cultivated fields, towns, shops, Vikings, cars and monorails, while offshore oil rigs and factory smokestacks show the development of the industrial age.

Skyscrapers and a nuclear power plant flank a scene from the present, replete with fuel trucks, an armored tank, jets and spacecraft amid a smoggy sky that blots out the sun.

At the base of the Omega Tower, Kabica illustrates a famine, which could represent the famine that struck Ethiopia and South Africa.

Missiles blast off near a city left in ruin. A woman with a baby in her arms cries out, a man lies face down in the dirt. Bones and a burnt tree amidst a cracked and rutted landscape reveal the aftermath of nuclear war.

Underground are hydroponic gardens and people in radiation suits as spaceships depart Earth for unknown destinations.



SCW



Burt Kellam, President for the Sundome Performing Arts Association is pictured with Mary and Mike Teigen, Managers of The Madison and John Bergh, SPAA board member and Gala Dinner chairperson.

Feb 22, 2002



SCW

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## Help Us Help The Sundome

We cordially request your consideration  
in supporting the  
Sundome Center for the Performing Arts  
by attending our...  
10th Anniversary  
Gala Benefit Dinner  
in the Madison Room

The Madison • 18626 Spanish Garden Dr. • Sun City West

Friday • February 22, 2002 • 6:30 P.M.

Tickets \$100.00 per person (\$80.00 tax deductible)

Our goal is to raise \$12,000

All Proceeds To Benefit The Sundome

It is with great satisfaction that  
The Madison provides this benefit.  
The Sundome is a great asset to our communities.

**Purchase Your Tickets Today**

For Reservations Call -

The Madison

623-584-1999

R.S.V.P. by February 15th, 2002

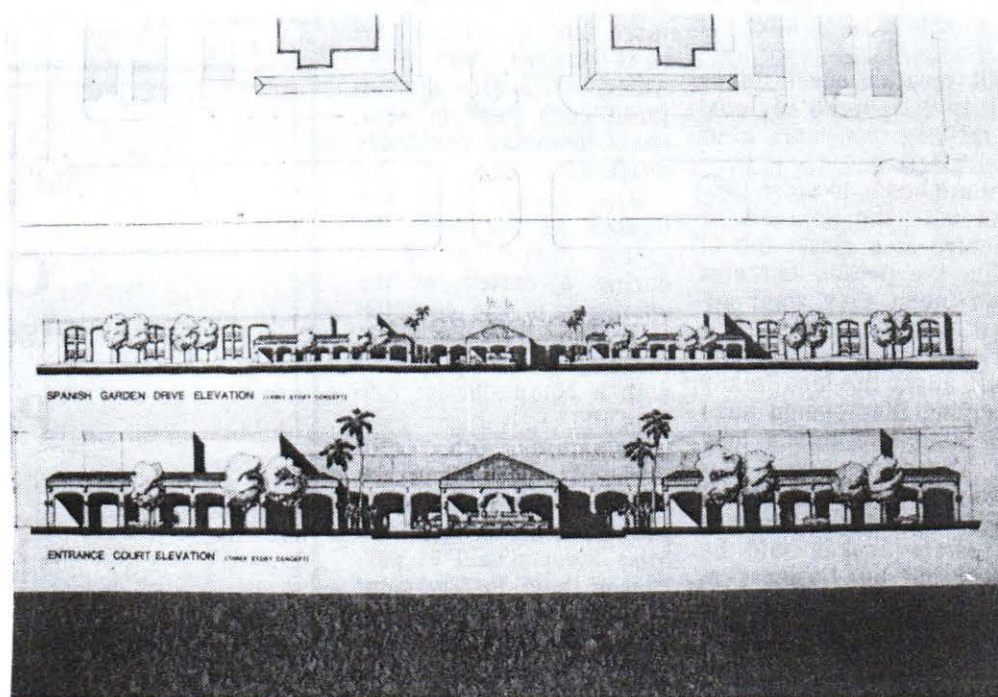
Make Checks Payable to: S.P.A.A. - ASU Foundation

The Madison  
10th Anniversary  
Sundome Gala Benefit Dinner

Appetizer	Salad
Sauteed Prawns with Maltaise Sauce	Caesar Salad
	Palate Cleanser
	Lemon Sorbet
Land & Sea - Beef Medallions and Deep Fried Shrimp	
	Entrée
	Puffed Chicken Breast La Grille
	w/ Dried Fruit, Cheese & Angula Stuffing & Wine Sauce
	Dessert
	Broccoli Rice Pilaf, Dilled Baby Carrots
	Hazel Nut Torte ala Madison



SCW



11-16-83

## ***New SCW apartment complex***

Architectural renderings show the front view of Madison House, a "catered living" apartment complex to be built in Sun City West early next year by a Washington firm. The 196-unit project, planned by Danmor Co., will occupy a nine-acre site on Spanish Garden Drive near Johnson Boulevard. The three-story, multi-winged complex was designed by a Washington architectural firm.



Managers Mary & Mike Teigen

## Benefit raises \$11,600 for Sundome

By Marie Scotti

The Madison Managers Mary and Mike Teigen hosted the 10th Anniversary Gala Benefit Dinner recently. A check in the amount of \$11,600 was presented to Birt Kellam, president, Sundome Performing Arts Association.

Residents who appreciate fine dining enjoyed an exquisite dinner prepared by The Madison chef Tim Horvath and his staff. The cook always believes in putting together food that is creative and exciting. He says, "I want food to be elegant and at the same time, I always concentrate on flavor and presentation."

The menu included an appetizer of sauteed prawns (large shrimp) in Maltaise Sauce, Caesar salad, lemon sorbet, and a choice of either beef medallions and deep fried shrimp or stuffed chicken breast la garde with dried

fruit, cheese and arugula stuffing with wine sauce, broccoli rice pilaf and dilled baby carrots. The dessert was a hazel nut torte a la Madison.

Dinner music was provided by the Desert Rose String Quartet. Members of this quartet also play in The Symphony Orchestra.

John Bergh, Sundome Per-

forming Arts Association board member and chairman of the gala said, "Proceeds from The Madison gala are very instrumental in supporting the Sundome." Bergh arranged for a large number of door prizes which were awarded during the evening.

See BENEFIT, Page 2



THE MADISON

Elegant Retirement Living

MIKE & MARY TEIGEN

Managers

(623) 584-1999 • Fax (623) 546-6045

18626 Spanish Garden Dr. • Sun City West, AZ 85375



THE MADISON

Elegant Retirement Living

PAT HORTON

MARKETING

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arizonarose22@hotmail.com

## BENEFIT: Raises \$11,600,

from Page 1

Special guests were: Colleen Jennings-Roggensack, ASU Executive Director, Sundome Center and Gammage and Smokey Renehan, Sundome Center Director in Sun City West.

The Madison gifted all guests with 10th anniversary wine glasses.

Photo by Pat Horton





SUNDOME PERFORMING ARTS  
ASSOCIATION

The Board of the  
Sundome Performing Arts Association  
gratefully salutes

*The Madison*

In recognition and with deepest appreciation  
of your steadfast and most generous support,  
now exceeding \$100,000.

April 19, 2002



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