

Sun Lakes 70s Continue Win Streak!
By Larry Wolfe & Bill Horne

The Sun Lakes 70s Tournament Team may be too good. At least that's what tournament officials at the recent Rio Vista Winter Nationals Tournament thought. "Our reputation preceded us," said Manager Henry Ellis. "In this tournament, we were forced to give our opponents a five-run lead before every game started. We did lose one game under these conditions, but we battled back and won the tournament." The hero of the tournament was Bruce Watkins, who drove in the winning run with two outs in the last inning of the championship game.

John Hurst, Ron Brown and Ken Ponzio all batted over .800 and Dave Boone led the team with 12 RBIs. Ken was named Most Valuable Player by combining solid defensive play with an .813 batting average. Big John Hurst slammed a long home run in addition to batting a team-best .833.

"It was another great performance under very challenging circumstances," said Manager Ellis. "I'm really proud of all the guys."

This was the 70s team's fifth major championship title in the past two years. The team is sponsored by Robson.com. Mr. Robson's generosity helps the team travel throughout the southwest, participating in many top-flight tournaments every year.

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

The Sun Lakes 70s tournament team won an unprecedented fourth World Championship tournament last month in Las Vegas. Winning one title is every ball player's dream...winning four is better than a dream...it's unbelievable.

The team plays under the Robson.com banner. Team general manager Bill Horne says that if you want to play championship-caliber senior softball, find a Robson community! So who are these guys? Ron Pennington, Thomas Grubb, Jesse Washington, Tom Lorgan and Billy Kreisman were all named to the All-Tournament Team. Ron led our hitters with a batting average over

.800 while Tom and Jesse hit over .700. Billy was the leading pitcher with three wins.

In the championship game, our team beat a very strong Northern California squad in thrilling fashion. Trailing by five runs entering the final inning, our guys scored seven times to take a 13-11 lead. With the help of some great defensive plays by Dennis Colbert and John Seigla, they held the Californians in check to take the title. "It was a team effort by a bunch of guys that never quit," said Manager Henry Ellis. Congratulations...again! (Also see the separate article in this month's *Splash* on the team's recent Rio Vista tournament victory.)

In other news, the Fall League ended on December 16. Team standings and batting stats will be in next month's *Splash* or check our website (<http://sunlakessoftball.com>) for up-to-date news. After a holiday break, the Winter League commences on January 4. Games are played every Tuesday and Thursday at the Field of Dreams. Come out and watch some competitive softball.

The Sun Lakes Swingers ladies' team also begins play in the Valley of the Sun League in January. Contact Manager Karen Kenyon at 480-802-8473 for additional information.

Around the Bases By Larry Wolfe

The Grande Valley Golf Carts team, managed by Larry Kaufmann, won the Fall League Championship with a record of 14-6. They barely edged out the Desert Cove Rehab Center team, managed by Dennis Kennedy. Grand Valley's top three hitters were Larry Kaufmann, Al Grefsheim and Larry Wolfe. Desert Cove finished one game behind Grande Valley, posting a 13-7 won-lost record. Based upon a minimum of fifty plate appearances, Bill Corso was the league's top hitter during the Fall Season. He hit .776 to runner-up Larry Kaufmann's .773. Rounding out the Top Five hitters were Jack Strauss (.767), Bill Beltz and Rich Nadler (both hit .746).

The Winter Season began on January 4 and will continue through February 22. Six teams play twenty games each during the season. Come by the Field of Dreams every Tuesday and Thursday morning to watch the teams in action. The first pitch is at 9 a.m.

The Sun Lakes Swingers Ladies Team opened their schedule on January 3. They won two of their first three contests.

The 70s Travel Team, sponsored by Robson.com, hosted a very successful tournament at the Field of Dreams on January 8 and 9. The participating teams were split into two divisions with the Arizona Heat just edging out our 70s team for the Red Division title while the Resort Royals won the Blue Division title. Our guys posted a 3-1 record while the Heat finished 4-0. John Seigla led our hitters with a sizzling .917 average followed closely by Dene Eckholm at .900. Hal Kime, John Hurst and Paul Rost all hit .800 or better. Dr. Kime led our sluggers with nine RBI.

Successful tournaments depend upon many volunteers. Jesse Washington was the overall tournament coordinator while Dr. Roger Spark coordinated the social functions. Charlene Ellis acted as Dr. Sparks' able assistant. Several members of the ladies' team helped with serving food while Chef Bobby Thompson commanded the grille with the capable assistance of Bobby Cantor and Ray Bertsch. Dennis LePore was in charge of umpires and scorekeepers. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a great success. A special thank you goes out to Dave Martin who donated all the rolls and buns for the event.

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

Our 65+ Travel Team, sponsored by Robson.com, recently hosted the annual Winter Classic Senior Softball Tournament at the Field of Dreams. Hundreds of players and fans attended the two-day event, which was won by the Phoenix-based Rusty's squad. The Sun City 65s finished second. Thanks to all who volunteered for this event, including members of our Sun Lakes Swingers ladies team.

We welcome the Ocotillo Foot & Ankle Center as our newest billboard sponsor. The center is located at 270 W. Chandler Heights Road, Suite 5. Thank you, Dr. Robert Evans and Dr. Mary Peters. Also, a big "Thank You" goes out to Western Broadband, a full-service communications company providing cable TV, digital phone service, HDTV and high speed internet service. They recently renewed their sponsorship for a three-year term. If you'd like to advertise your business at the Field of Dreams, check out the

Sponsors Page on our website, <http://sunlakessoftball.com>, or contact Larry Wolfe at 480-802-2748.

The Winter League ended on February 22, too late for the *Splash* deadline; however, you can check out the final standings on our website. The Spring Season is now underway and will continue through April 14. We then have our annual season-ending tournament and social event on April 19. Come by the field Tuesday and Thursday mornings to catch all the action.

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

The Grande Valley Golf Cars team, managed by Larry Kaufmann, captured the Winter League pennant with a 13-5 record. There was a tie for second place with both the A-1 Golf Carts and Desert Cove Rehab Center teams posting 10-8 records. The top three hitters for the Grande Valley champs were Larry Kaufmann, Al Grefsheim and Larry Wolfe. The league's overall top five hitters through the end of the Winter Season, based upon a minimum of 120 plate appearances, were Larry Kaufmann (.838), Al Grefsheim (.759), Bill Corso (.752), Jerry Galvagno (.725) and Jack Straus (.724).

The Spring Season is now well underway and will continue through April 14. The season is followed by our year-end tournament, awards ceremony and social event on April 19. This will be a full day of fun and games. Everyone is invited. Also come by the Field of Dreams every Tuesday and Thursday morning to catch all the regular season action.

The Sun Lakes Swingers ladies team completed another successful season with a record of 14-11. At their final home game, the current team members hosted a group of former players for a social event. The team also honored Lois Koenig, the last charter member of the ladies team, who decided to "retire" after this season. Notably, Lois went out with a bang, going 2 for 3 in her final game as our Swingers beat the Stingers.

A warm welcome goes out to our newest billboard sponsor, Retirement Insurance Specialists (The RIS Agency), located at 1490 S. Price Road, Suite 203, in Chandler. Also, thanks to our local Walgreen's, located at the corner of Riggs and Alma School Roads, and Aluma-Line, Inc. of Mesa for renewing their sponsorships of advertising banners at the Field of Dreams.

Your business or charitable or civic organization can also advertise at the field. For more details, see the Sponsors Page on our website (<http://sunlakessoftball.com>) or call Larry Wolfe at 480-802-2748.

Our annual banquet was held in the Oakwood Ballroom on March 7. Over 160 players, spouses and guests attended the affair which featured entertainment in addition to a great dinner. Thanks to Event Coordinator Dr. Roger Spark, Entertainment Coordinator Jesse Washington, Emcee Duane Kramer and all the entertainers and others who helped make this a great evening. Also, thanks to Mike Core who prepared an entertaining slide show of players in action at the field. Mike was assisted by Tim Stock. Each player was presented with their own “magazine cover” featuring them in action. Check out all the photos on our website.

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

The Spring Season ended with a cook-out, awards ceremony and tournament on April 19. Check this column next month for the Spring Season and tournament results and a list of award winners. For more up-to-date news you can also go to our website: <http://sunlakessoftball.com>.

Check out our new LED scoreboard in the accompanying photo. The LED lights are a lot easier for us old guys to see! The new board replaces our old scoreboard that lasted for over 20 years and 5,000 games!

A warm welcome goes out to our newest billboard sponsor, Banner MediSun, one of the area’s top providers of supplemental Medicare insurance. In addition, Bashas, our Arizona hometown grocer, renewed their sponsorship for a three-year term. See the Sponsors Page on our website for more information about them and all of our other sponsors. And remember to support all the companies that support Sun Lakes!

A Sun Lakes All-Star team recently played an exhibition game against employees of the Pima Utility Company. The “Social Security recipients” beat the “Social Security taxpayers” 19-14 in a hard fought contest.

Karen Kenyon, manager/coach of our ladies’ team, the Sun Lakes Swingers, is retiring from that position after 10 successful and fun years. Thanks,

Karen, for all your time and efforts in making our ladies' program a huge success.

A new Board of Directors and slate of officers for the Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association were recently elected. They are as follows: Denny Davidson, President; Roger Spark, Vice-President; Bob Deken, Treasurer; Larry Wolfe, Secretary; and Members-at-Large Mike Core, Henry Ellis, Ed Sowney and Jesse Washington. Thanks to outgoing Board members Tom Halloran and Harry Roehl for their service.

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

Congratulations to Eddie Kraemer and his State Farm Insurance team which captured the Spring Season pennant with a record of 12-8. Mike Wolfe, Chuck Myrick and Howie Dielmann led the pennant winners in hitting. The Mutual of Omaha Bankers, managed by Evan Hansen, finished a close second with a record of 11-9.

Thanks to all of this year's managers and team sponsors: Bill Corso (A-1 Golf Carts); Ken Brenden (Brenden Financial Planning); Dennis Kennedy (Desert Cove Rehab Center); Larry Kaufmann (Grande Valley Golf Cars); Evan Hansen (Mutual of Omaha Bank; and Ed Kraemer (Ralph Vazquez' State Farm Insurance Agency). Also, thanks to all the umpires, scorers and scoreboard operators and their coordinator Dennis LePore.

We welcome Terry & Susan Young, RE/MAX Realtors, who specialize in Sun Lakes properties, as our newest billboard advertiser. Also, thanks to Blind Devotion, a family-owned and operated Chandler-based window treatment company and Bashas, our Arizona hometown grocer, for renewing their sponsorships for three-year periods. Find out more about these companies and all of our other sponsors by visiting our website (<http://sunlakessoftball.com>) and clicking on the Sponsors tab.

Even though our regular seasons are over until this fall, we do have a summer recreational program. The Field of Dreams is open every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning at 8 a.m. for batting practice and pick-up games. Put on your sun screen and join us for some summer fun and exercise.

Grande Valley Captures Softball Tourney Title By Larry Wolfe

Our end-of-season tournament, awards ceremony and social event were held on April 19. All six teams participated in the single-elimination tournament. In game 1, Desert Cove Rehab Center beat Mutual of Omaha Bank 21-11 with Bill Cheney's five hits pacing the winning effort. In game 2 Brenden Financial Services beat State Farm Insurance 17-7 with Bill Horne, Ken Brenden and Rich Nadler leading the way with three hits each. Grande Valley Golf Cars edged Brenden Financial 12-11 in Game 3 with Larry Wolfe's three hits and Dick Moran's clutch single leading the way to victory. In the semi-finals, Red Waterfield smashed a game-winning single to lead A-1 Golf Carts to a 13-12 win over the Desert Cove Rehab Center club. A-1 then faced Grande Valley Golf Cars in the championship game. This game proved to be another hard-fought thriller with Henry Ellis driving in four runs and Al Grefsheim driving in the winning run in the bottom of the seventh to lead Grande Valley to a 13-12 win. For the Grande Valley squad, this was the culmination of a great year. They also captured the fall and winter regular season championships.

Awards were given to the Sun Lakes Swingers ladies team members who hit over .600. Their top hitters were Terry Finley (.645), Charlene Ellis (.636), Marlene Cameron (.608), Olena Buxton (.608) and Francisca Swist (.606). Awards were also presented to the Top Ten hitters in the men's league (based upon a minimum of 180 plate appearances over the Fall, Winter and Spring Seasons combined). The Top Ten were: Larry Kaufmann (.790), Frank Tanner (.749), Tom Halloran (.742), Al Grefsheim (.732), Billy Kee (.731), Bill Corso (.724), Jack Strauss (.723), Gary Dahlgren (.709), Chuck Myrick (.704) and Rich Nadler (.703). Bill Cheney was named Rookie-of-the-Year and Bob Zawidski won the Most Improved Player Award. Dennis Kennedy was named Sportsman of the Year.

There were approximately 200 players, family members, former players and fans present for the games, awards ceremony and cook-out. Kudos to Dr. Roger Spark, coordinator of the event. He was ably assisted by Bobby Thompson (Executive Chef), Bill Serdar (Sous Chef), Bob Yaryan (Prep Chef), Server/hostesses Teresa Dorman, Debbie Ebel, Terry Finley and Pat Wolfe and Larry Domas (Set-up Coordinator). Mike Core acted as Awards Ceremony Emcee and did a lame David Letterman-like "top ten" list. A great time was had by all!

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

Our 70s Travel Team got back to its winning ways by capturing the Prescott Seniors Tournament. They beat a strong Sun City Sidewinders team in the championship game. John Seigla managed the championship squad. The tourney was played in very windy conditions making pitching and fielding difficult, but our pitchers, Ronnie Brown, Billy Kreisman and Jim Mollsen did a great job on the mound while Bill Horne did a superb defensive job in the outfield. Tom Grubb led all hitters with a sizzling .833 batting average. He was strongly supported by Jim Mollsen (.733) and Bill Horne (.706). John Hurst and Bill Horne led the team with 12 RBI each. Congratulations, guys.

Our 60s Travel Team recently played in the Rock 'n' Reno Challenge Tournament in Reno, NV. That tourney is one of the largest in the nation. This year's event included 217 teams in various divisions and age groups. Our guys played in a division which included teams from Arizona and seven other states. Our guys lost a heart-breaker by a 16-15 score in the semi-finals and had to settle for third place. Kenny Seffield and Dave McCormick were both named to the All-Tournament Team. Kenny batted a team-leading .806 while Dave batted .733 and slugged four homeruns. Nice going, guys. Robson Communities is the sponsor of all of our travel teams.

Thanks to Sun Lakes Disposal and Cork Restaurant (located at 4991 S. Alma School Road at the Promenade at Fulton Ranch) for renewing their advertising banners. To learn more about them and our other sponsors and to find out how you can advertise your business or organization at the Field of Dreams, go to the Sponsors Page on our website, <http://sunlakessoftball.com>.

Batting practice and pick-up games continue through the summer at the Field of Dreams. To beat the heat, we start at 7:30 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Come by and join in the fun.

And finally, do you know why it's been so hot at the Diamondbacks' Chase Field this summer? Because there are hardly any fans in the place!

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

You know the old saying “No news is good news?” Well, in this case, no news is pretty much no news. Many of our players have headed for cooler climates for the summer; however, we do still have batting practice and pick-up games at the Field of Dreams. To try to beat the heat, we start at 7:30 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Come by and join in the fun.

Thanks to the Desert Cove Nursing and Rehab Center, located at 1750 West Frye Road in Chandler, for renewing their advertising banner. Desert Cove has also been a team sponsor for the past two years. To learn more about them and our other sponsors and to find out how you can advertise your business or organization at the Field of Dreams, go to the Sponsors Page on our website, <http://sunlakessoftball.com>.

Just thinking....if you finish in last place in softball, they call you a loser, but if you finish last in medical school, they call you a doctor. Go figure!

Around the Bases
By Larry Wolfe

Our World Champion 70s team, sponsored by Robson.com, recently won the Western National Tournament held in Woodland, California. They posted a record of five wins and two losses in capturing the title. The tournament featured teams from Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington. Tom Grubb led our hitters with a .727 average. He was ably supported by Dave Boone and Billy Kreisman who both batted .632. Tom Grubb also led all hitters with 11 RBI. Tom Lorgan and Billy Kreisman both chipped in with nine ribbies. Congratulations, again!

Thanks and a big welcome to our latest new sponsor, the Frank Margiotta Insurance Agency, a Farmers Insurance representative. See their new advertising banner down at the Field of Dreams and check out their website (www.Farmersagent.com/fmargiotta.com) for more information about their services. Your business or organization can also advertise at the field. See the Sponsors Page on our website (<http://sunlakessoftball.com>) or call Larry Wolfe at 480-802-2748 for detailed information.

Our summer recreational program continues through October. The program includes batting practice followed by a pick-up game. The start time is 7:30 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning. Sign ups for League

Play will take place in October. Call Association President Denny Davidson (883-9716) or check our website for more information.

Baseball Factoid: Mariano Rivera, the great relief pitcher for the New York Yankees, now has over 25 saves in 15 consecutive seasons and is approaching 600 for his career. He now ranks number three all-time in total saves, trailing only Trevor Hoffman and John the Baptist!

Softball League Play Begins Soon
By Larry Wolfe

It won't be long now! Our Fall League season begins play on November 1st. This year's team sponsors are A-1 Golf Carts, Brenden Financial Services, Desert Cove Nursing & Rehab Center, Farmers Insurance (Frank Margiotta Agency), Mutual of Omaha Bank and State Farm Insurance (Ralph Vasquez Agency). Team managers are Ken Brenden, Bill Corso, Evan Hansen, Larry Kaufmann, Rich Nadler and Harry Roehl.

While we look forward to November, our summer recreational program will continue through October. The program includes batting practice followed by a pick-up game. The start time is 8:00 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning. Note that due to re-seeding of the outfield at the Field of Dreams, we will be playing some days at the Snedaker Sports Complex. Check our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for the latest information. Sign ups for League Play will take place on October 18, 20 and 25. Teams will be drafted on the 26th.

You know I really love autumn. It's the time of year when we all get to sit around and watch the baseball playoffs and World Series on TV....kind of like the Chicago Cubs always do!

Fall Softball Season Opens November 1st
By Larry Wolfe

Opening day for the fall softball season is Tuesday, November 1st. Players were drafted and assigned to teams by the managers on October 26. The fall season runs through December 15 with six teams each playing a sixteen-game schedule. This year's team sponsors are A-1 Golf Carts, Brenden Financial Services, Desert Cove Nursing & Rehab Center, Frank Margiotta's Farmers Insurance Agency, Mutual of Omaha Bank and Ralph Vasquez's

State Farm Insurance Agency. Managers are Ken Brenden, Bill Corso, Evan Hansen, Larry Kaufmann, Rich Nadler and Harry Roehl. Two doubleheaders are played every Tuesday and Thursday morning, so come out to the Field of Dreams to watch some competitive senior softball. (Note that the first few games may be played at Snedigar Park due to re-seeding of our field. (Check our website, <http://sunlakessoftball.com>, for up-to-date news.)

Speaking of competitive softball, two of our current league members have been competitors for about forty years. Both Bill Ligon and Ron Brown played against each other in various leagues and tournaments in the Chicago area in the early 70s. Bill owned his own company, Ligon Engineering, which sponsored a team for many years, while Ron played for one of the top teams in Illinois. One of those teams, the Lantern Softball Club of Naperville, placed third in the nation one year. Bill and Ron like to reminisce about those Chicago teams. Bill remembers that Ron's teams were always better than his, but one time they played a game when Bill's team was one player short. He "borrowed" a guy from the grandstands to fill in. That guy went 3 for 4 and led Ligon's team to victory. Ron's recollection of that event: "I don't remember that!"

The 65+ Travel Team had a busy schedule in October. They were scheduled to play in a tournament in Casa Grande, then in the World Championships in Phoenix. They were also selected to play in a round of exhibition games against a Japanese squad prior to the World Championship Tournament. The 70s team also had some tournaments scheduled for October. We'll include all the results in next month's *Splash*.

Thanks to Outpatient Physical Therapy Center, located in the Bashas Shopping Center and locally-owned by Kim & Bob Durka, for renewing their advertising banner at the Field of Dreams. To learn how your company or organization can advertise at the field, see the Sponsors Page on our website.

November 11 marks the 22nd anniversary of the dedication of the original Field of Dreams which was on Riggs Road where the current Sun Lakes Library is located. That event featured a Veteran's Day observance followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony, a performance by the Dancing Grannies and three softball games. One game featured a group of retired major leaguers playing our Senior All-Stars led by Manager Jack Lander. The pros included Don Blasingame, Jim Colbern, Duffy Dyer, Tom Egan, Lou Klimchuck,

Stan Lopata, Jim Marshall, Greg Minton, Jim Umbarger and Ozzie Virgil. Although there was some Sun Lakes softball played before that event, this was the real kick-off to what is now one of the best senior softball programs in the nation. (Thanks to Bill Serdar, one of our original members, for providing this info.)

The Fall Softball Season is Underway
By Larry Wolfe

The fall men's softball season is well underway. Our six teams each play a 16-game schedule ending December 15. For up-to-date standings and statistics check out our website (<http://sunlakessoftball.com>). After a break for the holidays, our winter season will commence on January 3. Come by the Field of Dreams near Riggs & Price Roads every Tuesday and Thursday morning to check out the action.

Our ladies' team, the Sun Lakes Swingers, managed by Henry and Charlene Ellis, is practicing for their upcoming season which starts in January. If you're interested in playing, call the managers at 480-883-1745.

Our 65s and 70s Travel Teams both placed second in their divisions in the recent World Championships Tournament. Over 300 teams participated in the event, which is the largest of its kind in the nation. Al Grefsheim, Hank Harvey and Jim Sobek were named to the 65s All-Tournament Team while Ron Brown, Tom Lorgan and Jim Mollsen captured that honor for the 70s. Big Al led the way for the 65s, batting an amazing .839, while John Hurst led the way for the 70s with a .774 average. Congratulations to both teams on a great tournament.

Thanks and a hearty welcome to Pinnacle Physical Therapy, this year's new sponsor of our 70s team. That team, managed by Henry Ellis and Bruce Watkins, also participated in the recent Fountain Hills Tournament. They placed second in that one, too, with Dan Gallichio and Wayne Erickson the top hitters in that tourney.

Thanks to Kokopelli Winery & Bistro, located at 35 W. Boston Street in old downtown Chandler, for renewing their advertising banner at the Field of Dreams. To learn how your company or organization can advertise at the field, see the Sponsors Page on our website.