

Sundial: 'biggest and best'

Rec center sees 25 years of activity

By JEFF OWENS
Staff writer

In the beginning, there was Oakmont Recreation Center.

And Del Webb saw that it was good, and other rec centers followed: Fairway, Mountain View, and Lakeview.

Those four were well-received, but it wasn't long before plans were under way for the costliest and most ambitious recreation center yet.

Now, exactly 25 years to the day after it was dedicated on April 14, 1973, the Sundial Recreation Center is going as strong as ever.

After 10 months of construction, the \$2 million Sundial Recreation Center on 103rd Avenue was the biggest of the five. It had more club, recreation and entertainment facilities. It had immense covered pools, and a 1,200-seat auditorium.

And out in front, pointing straight north, was the massive sundial — certainly the largest in town; maybe even the largest in the West.

At the 10 a.m. dedication ceremony on Saturday, April 14, 1973, Del Webb stood before his latest, best and biggest creation and told the throng assembled there, "The building speaks for itself."



Daily News-Sun file photo

This aerial view, taken during construction, shows the sundial that gave the rec center its name.

Then-Gov. Jack Williams had toured the facility the night before the dedication ceremony.

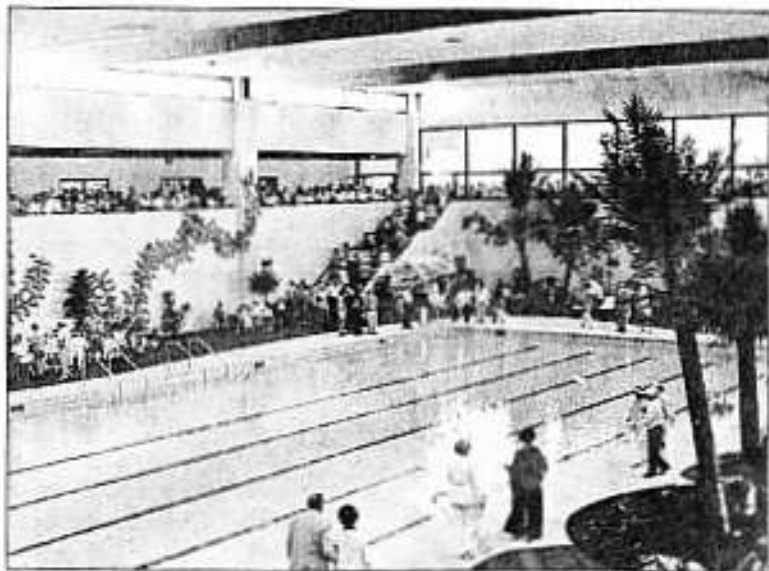
Sun Citizens then poured in by the thousands, signing up for clubs and

marveling at the indoor pools. More than 7,500 doughnuts and 5,000 cups of hot coffee were waiting for them that morning.

Sundial is now home to 17 clubs, including popular rockhound, pho-

tography, silvercraft and lapidary organizations.

No special anniversary celebrations are planned at the rec center; today it's just business, or, ahem, pleasure as usual.



Daily News-Sun file photo

The covered pool and plantings inside the Sundial Recreation Center drew big crowds and favorable comments when the center opened for the first time.



Daily News-Sun file photo

Del Webb presided over the dedication ceremony April 14, 1973, that marked the opening of the Sundial Recreation Center.