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Life at the Park

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Get In The Picture

The Fall activities calendar for this year is filling up and we hope you'll join in. Just a few of the highlights... (the full list is in the "Message From Sue" later in this newsletter)

Halloween Costume Party, with Guilty Pleasures Band, October 30

Welcome Back Boogie, with Dakota Kid, November 3

Harvey's Fish Fry, November 19

Harvest Moon Boogie, with Saguaro Sunset, November 24

Silver Bells Dance, with Reign and Country, December 1

The Buddy Holly Christmas Show, December 10

New Year's Eve Dance – Surefire Band / Denim & Diamonds December 31

The Amazing Dueling Pianos, January 14



A Farm Girl Discovers LIFE AT THE PARK

By
Dale Dauten, Syndicated Columnist
and
Editor of *The Silveridge SUN* & *The Resort LIFE*

*"When you grow up on a dairy farm, cows don't take a day off.
So you work everyday. My dad always said,
'No one can outwork you.'"*
Pat Summit (legendary women's basketball coach)

Where do you go to find a good old-fashioned work ethic? It doesn't grow on trees, but maybe it does grow on farms... or at least it used to.

*A 'farm' today means 100,000 chickens in a space
the size of a Motel 6 shower stall.
P.J. O'Rourke*



Rhonda Ciacco, teaching her granddaughter about life at the park

What got me thinking about farming and work ethics was talking with Rhonda Ciacco, the General Manager of both The Resort and Silveridge. She credits her South Dakota farm upbringing with instilling in her a whatever-it-takes attitude. Here's one of her farm memories:

"My family raised beef cattle, milk cows, wheat, and corn. I was the oldest of five and my dad started me early, helping him out. I used to drive the pickup while he pitched out hay to the cattle. I was too young and too short to reach the gas pedal, so I'd have to scrunch down under the steering wheel and push it with my hand. My dad would yell and I'd press the gas. One morning I pushed too hard—the truck lurched forward and he went flying off the back end of the truck. He broke both wrists. But he was back out the next morning and so was I."

Rhonda moved from South Dakota to southern Colorado and that's where she fell in love with Frank Ciacco. That was 39 years ago this month. He eventually went to work for one of the old phone companies, US West, while she became what she jokingly calls a Domestic Engineer. When the kids were raised, she went to work for her brother's trucking company. Then Frank took early retirement, although the day after he

“retired,” he took a job with another firm, setting up back-up power for phone companies facilities all over the Southwest.

That's when Rhonda traded in the stationary life for the road. They bought a 43-foot fifth wheel, which she pulled behind a pickup truck, while Frank drove the company truck he was required to use. They rented out their house and spent eight years on the road, driving separately across Arizona, Utah, Nevada and New Mexico, but always headed back to one another.



Did she mind the lonely highways? She says,

“The only time I can remember resenting it was one Valentine's Day. We were meeting at a truck stop for dinner. I had to park the fifth-wheel out with the semis and Frank got to park right by the door. Other than that one night, I learned to love the road.”

But one day her husband said to her, “I'm ready to retire again. This time I'm done and I'm going to follow you.” She said, “Then we're going to Phoenix.” Or, as it turned out, Mesa. After all those years in South Dakota and Colorado, she was ready for life in the desert.

She wasn't ready to retire, and having spent all those years pulling the fifth wheel, it seemed natural to call a nearby RV park and see if they were hiring. That call was to The Resort and they told her the only opening was Gate Guard. She took the job.

BUT...

- When she went to start as Gate Guard, it turned out they needed her to help refinish the ballroom floor.
- Then they needed her in Maintenance, working to keep up the grounds, a natural fit for a former farm girl (and you might still spot her out planting flowers).
- Before long she was Head of Maintenance.
- Then Assistant Office Manager.
- Office Manager.
- Now, General Manager for both parks, The Resort and Silveridge.

I asked Rhonda what she made of all those promotions. She replied modestly, saying, “I always treat the parks as if they were my own. And the people, too—these are my people. Just now I saw a new resident go by and I went out and said, 'I've got to have a hug.'”

As for her philosophy of managing the parks, Rhonda says,

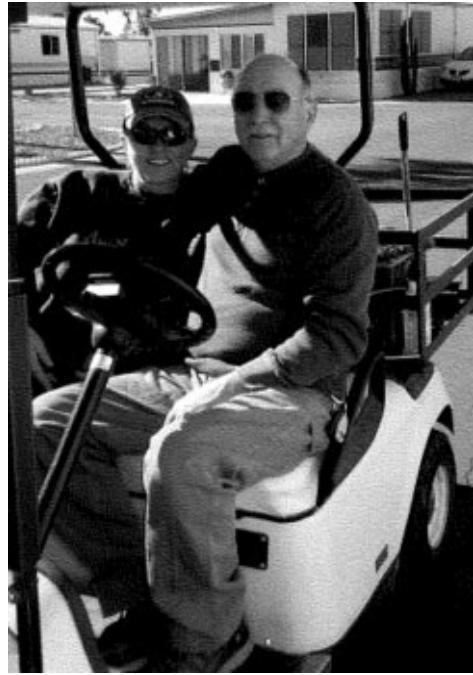
“We're here to help people have a good time. I am always trying to get people out to all the activities. Occasionally I run into someone who woke up looking to be angry at someone and I just say, 'Come play bingo tonight and sit by

me.' You can't go to our activities and stay in a bad mood. The positive energy of these parks is contagious."

I asked Rhonda if she ever misses her old life, back on the farm. She laughed and said, "We used to milk cows and separate the cream and then make butter with a hand-crank churn. These days, if I see those things for sale in antique shops, I want to just run the other way."

She concludes...

"Who wants to be on a farm in the snow when you can be in the park in the sun?"



Rhonda with her husband Frank in their early days of working at the park

The Park Motto Contest

In the last edition of *The Silveridge Sun*, we offered a few suggestions for the park's new motto. Then we asked for your suggestions, and announced that the choice would be left up to you - we're going to have a vote by residents.

THE VOTE WILL BE LATER, WHEN MORE FOLKS ARE AT THE PARK.

But, for now, here are some suggestions. (For now, we're leaving off the names of those who entered them, so it won't influence the eventual voting.)

We welcome more.

Our Place in the Sun

Another Fine Day in the Valley

Friends are Gold at Silveridge

Friendliest Park in the West

Fun Under the Sun

Mesa's Shangri La

Don't Worry, Be Happy, Stay With Us

Drop your suggestions at the office or email them to me: dale@dauten.com.

Email Dale with your suggestions

YES, we have a new WRITERS' GROUP!

Starting soon, I will be leading a group of residents experimenting with writing up their memories, or writing stories, essays and/or newsletter articles.

So far we have nine people signed up and we welcome more. Several of the folks in the new group have stated that they haven't written anything since their high school or college days. No problem. We all have stories and my goal is just to help them get out and down on paper.

We'll have fun and produce some stories/essays/articles for the residents of the park, and perhaps something your relatives will cherish.



Members so far...

- Judy Ames
- Lois Oberg
- Judy Samuelson
- Shirley Elliott
- Myrna Harrison
- Sharon Van Lieu
- Alice Plale
- Charlene Culver
- Andie Flanagan

Let me know if you want to join in – send me an email at dale@dauten.com or tell the folks at the office to let me know you're interested.

Join the Writers group

Message from Sue Summer Newsletter 2015



Hello my dear Silverridge friends! I hope my August message finds you healthy and ready to embark on an exciting adventure for our 2015-2016 season. The summer has flown by and when I recently saw a maple tree with red leaves my thoughts turned toward fall and my friends at Silverridge. I hope that this summer has been good to you and you come back all rested up as I have a big season planned for you! Please check the website calendar for a complete listing of events and times and remember that some start up times are subject to change as club leaders arrive at different times.

Many of you have shared with me that you look forward to a review of the entertainment and what outfits to wear-so start thinking about packing those bags!

We will kick off our season with our welcome back parties on Oct. 15th and 22nd followed by our Halloween costume party and dance on Oct 30th. Prizes will be given

for most original costume and best couple- so be creative! Our popular Boogie Tuesdays and Bingo will start in November. I have some returning favorite bands such as The Fairlaines, Come Back Buddy, Southwest Surfers, The Needham Twins, the Desert Drifters, and some new bands-like Saguaro Sunset, and Johnny K & Kompany. The Surefire Band will entertain us on New Years Eve. "Denim and Diamonds" will be our theme so think 'glitzy denim'. Ladies, bring your poodle skirts. We will have Prom night again and an **'evening in red.'** Bring a few pair of comfortable dancing shoes as you might wear out a pair!

December 17th will be our 4th annual Christmas Parade so be thinking how you would like to decorate your golf cart or any other moving vehicle (i.e. shopping cart, bicycle, old car, etc.) Who will be the winners for the most creative ideas?? Our Silveridge Carolers will be singing again and our beautiful park and ballroom will be all aglow with Christmas lights and decorations!

We are "Forever Celebrating." What a lineup I have planned for you –including some ideas for outfits.

Dinner Shows:

Dec. 10th: **Buddy Holly Christmas Dinner Show.** For the first time ever in December- a spectacular tribute show with Buddy, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper. You will want to buy your tickets early for this one. A guaranteed sell out! Wear your Christmas sweaters! (Vintage sweaters are good)

Jan. 14th: **The Amazing Dueling Pianos.** A fun sought after engaging duo who will delight you with favorite piano tunes and even take requests! Wear

Jan. 21st: **Best of 60's and 70's Show.** JR McAlexander is back with another knock your socks off musical. He was the piano player and producer of our Broadway Showstoppers last season. Wear your 60's and 70'.s outfits

Feb. 11th: **Jimmy Buffet Island Show.** This will be a fun **Margaritaville night** with music and comedy. Dress in your grass skirts and island themed clothes. There will be a tiki bar so bring your margaritas and remember that "It's 5 o'clock somewhere!!"

We will have **Two Spectacular Concerts** this year:

Feb. 18th: **Legends of Country.** Larry King and his 12 piece band will pay tribute to all the country great legendary artists. This concert is for country and rock and roll fans alike!

March 3rd: **Franki Valli Tribute Show.** Where were you in Dec. of 63?? You will be glad you are at Silveridge attending this concert. Be ready to travel down nostalgia lane remembering all the Franki Valli hits!

March 10th will be our biannual **Variety Show.** Armand Gagnier has been 'twisting arms' for a year already and I promise you that this will be the best ever Variety Show featuring our very own Silveridge Stars!

I am getting excited just writing about all the wonderful entertainment - and this is just the beginning. We will have 4 Dinner Delights including our favorite "The Strolling Strings."

In addition to all the entertainment there will be plenty of classes to attend. Try something new this year and remember, you are never too old to learn! How about taking a computer or camera class? How about trying Pilates, Zumba, Step Aerobics or our new dance class? Don't forget favorite sports like softball, tennis or hiking. There will even be a class on learning how to make lefse! Thanks to our talented and giving class leaders and volunteers Silveridge can offer all these fabulous opportunities. Most of the classes are either free or minimal costs for supplies. If you have a talent you would like to share consider volunteering. Let's not forget to thank our wonderful volunteers for all the work they do!

On a sad note- We will all miss our dear Lou Pickard who passed away in May. Lou and her husband Jim gave many years of service to Silveridge. She was our head decorator and "Miss Congeniality" who greeted us at our events. A memorial service is planned

for Lou on November 13th.

A final thank you to Chef Harvey and assistants Jerry Colling, Tracy Gagnier and all the kitchen volunteers who will be back! Thanks to them we will have our popular Saturday Breakfasts, Dinner Boogies, Dinner Shows, Dinner Delights and Bingo dinners and other events. We know that everything revolves around food!

I am looking forward to our year together and the fun we will have. Do look for the [2015-2016 Ticket Order List](#) to be posted online on the Silverridge web pages by October 1st. My assistant Jill Belcher and office volunteers will be at the Activity office to assist you starting October 1st. You can call us at [480-373-7700](tel:480-373-7700) or email me at sractdr@iiiaz.com with your ticket order. We will pull your tickets and notify you of the price. Please send a check made out to Silverridge Activities. We can send your tickets in the mail or you may pick up your tickets when you arrive. We appreciate all your pre orders but know that you can also buy your tickets when you return. (unless the event is sold out.) Thank you in advance for buying tickets and all your support and enthusiasm for our activities. It gives me pleasure to bring you great entertainment as well as a fun filled and fulfilling year. I am proud to be your Activity Director! Here's looking forward to seeing you SOON. Make sure you stop by the Activity Office when you arrive so we can greet you with a big hug and some candy!

Your Activity Director, Sue
