

Gym Rat Rantings

by Bob Ring



Happy Birthday Tucson

This month marks Tucson's 232nd birthday and the Fit Center is going all out to help the city celebrate. The plan is to hold a series of lectures on Old Pueblo history and special events for the people of the community.

Shelley herself has agreed to speak every day during the last two weeks of August about the history of the Fit Center. She will recall how long ago her pioneer wagon-driver ancestor Shelley Whiplash started the Fit Center at the recommendation of infirmity doctors at nearby Fort Lowell. Shelley's historical reminiscences will include well known Tucson area Fit Center members, such as first gold card holder, G. E. Ronimo. Recent history highlights are dominated by the start of the Gym Rat Rantings articles in the Newsletter.

The exalted Fit Center staff has also recognized the enormous talent available in Fit Center members and has invited me, your lowly Gym Rat, to present a lecture on the history of Tucson as seen from two inches above the ground. Oh, but I jest ... however, I have been asked to talk about my new book (this is true), *Frontier Lady of Letters – The Heroic Love Story of Ines Fraser*, an historical memoir of Ines's gold mining days with her husband in Territorial Southern Arizona. You don't want to miss this – Ines's story has both murders and hot love letters.

Special events planned for Tucson's birthday month celebration include stuffing the Fit Center pool with 232 people to take a commemorative photograph. Has anybody actually figured out that the pool can hold 232 people? I hope so. Here is a scene to imagine: All 232 people are crowded into the pool, body to body like sardines. Suddenly, someone in the middle of the pools wails, "I've got to ... " Keep that camera shooting!

Another special event, not yet announced, is a free dance class. Ira has volunteered to teach Tucson's most famous historic dance, the Father Kino Two-Step, to the first 232 people who sign up. Ira requests that students wear flowing robes and maintain a proper sober decorum during class.

Finally, Shelley has generously agreed to present special birthday celebration prizes to any Fit Center members 232 years old or older. The prize is an all expenses paid trip to Yale University to be interviewed by the Geriatric Miracle Institute. Oops, word just in - we have no members who qualify for the special prize. So we go to Shelley's Plan B: cash prizes will be given to the ten Fit Center members who most *look* like they're 232 years old, as judged by Tyler from recent photographs. Staff members are eligible. Time is short, so drop off those entry photos with Tyler at the front desk and get ready to celebrate Tucson's birthday.