

BALLANTYNE[®]



magazine

THE SKINNY:
GREAT TASTE,
LESS WAIST

SWEET!
ROLL OUT YOUR
SUNDAE BEST

**BELLY
LAUGHS**
ROCK
DATE
NIGHT

NATURAL
TREASURE
'CLOSE' BY.
WHO KNEW?

PLUS

**SUMMER
FUN:**
KEEN ON
THEMES

**FIRED UP
& READY
TO GO.**
GRILLING 101

ENJOY
BEAUTIFUL
SEASCAPES,
EH?
CANADA'S
GOT 'EM



Happy Dance!

Ballantyne
Welcomes MetLife



Above: Since meeting at a potluck dinner, Jan Delbridge and Tom Cloos have been dating for over five years.

JAN DELBRIDGE AND TOM CLOOS are so comfortable together that they frequently finish each other's sentences. Having dated more than five years, they hold the title for longest dating relationship among their 2,500 or so neighbors in Sun City Carolina Lakes, just south of Ballantyne.

And if there were a yearbook predicting the couple "Most Likely to Laugh and Have Fun on Every Date," they would likely capture that prize, too.

Delbridge, 68, and Cloos, 66, have been dating since meeting at a singles potluck dinner organized by the Sun City Singles Club.

Bowling, Beer &



Belly Laughs



Sun City Seniors
Enjoy Night
On the Town

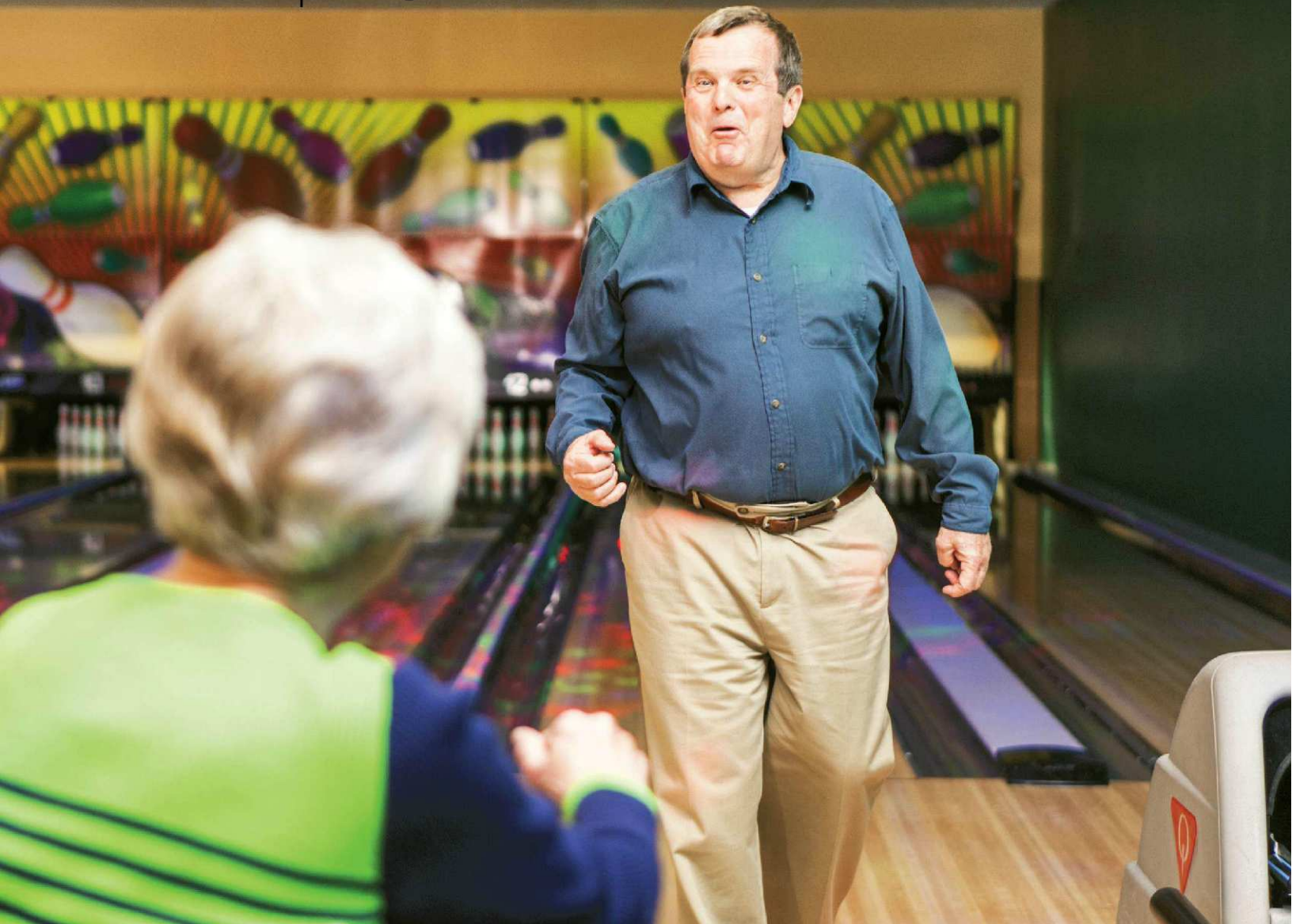
By Michael J. Solender Photos by Shane Baskin



Jan and Tom prepare to knock down the pins at Sports Connection.

"There were 27 women and three men," Cloos says with a smile. "The odds were definitely in my favor."

The potluck was held at Delbridge's home, situated about a half mile from Cloos' house. It wasn't long before Delbridge was orchestrating her morning dog walking to coincide with the precise moment that Cloos would pass her house on his morning constitutional.



They are both active and eager to keep pace with the myriad of activities offered in the nearly self-contained community at Carolina Lakes.



Above: Tom relished this roll, but his game was another story.

Left: Jan and Tom cut up so much that it took them an hour to play a single game.

Waiting to be Asked

“For six months I waited for him to ask me out to dinner,” says Delbridge, giving Cloos a playful nudge in the ribs.

“And I waited for six months for her to have me over for dinner,” Cloos remarks. “I guess my stubbornness won out as Jan finally had me over and we have been dating ever since.”

The two “not-from here’s” — she is most recently from Texas; his last pre-Charlotte stop was New Hampshire — relocated to be closer to children,

grandchildren and for the weather.

"I wanted cooler weather coming from Texas, and Tom was after warmer weather coming from New Hampshire, so we both got what we were after in a happy medium," Delbridge says.

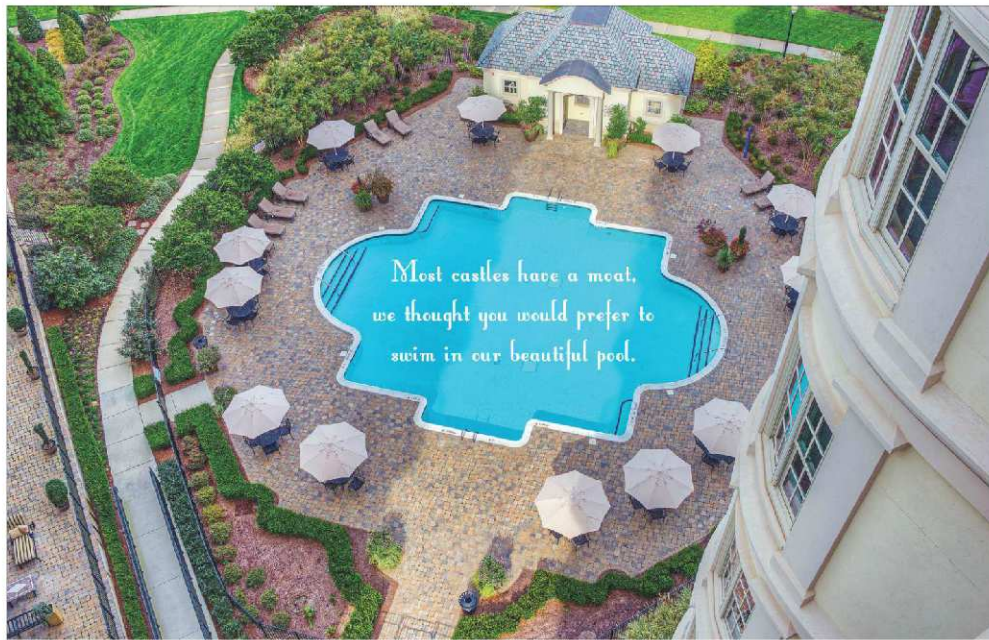
They are both active and eager to keep pace with the myriad of activities offered in the nearly self-contained community at Carolina Lakes. She plays tennis, anchoring a mixed doubles team for both a spring and fall league, and he coaches softball and is former president of both the Sun City Softball League and the singles group.

"It is definitely a friendly crowd — there is always something going on and everyone is quite social," Cloos says.

'Who' not 'What'

When asked about her idea of an ideal date, Delbridge doesn't hesitate in responding that it is more about "who" than "what."

Right: Though the couple rolled only a collective 225, it didn't diminish their enthusiasm.



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After their bowlfest, Jan and Tom relaxed over salmon (Jan) and meatloaf (Tom) at PJ O'Reilly's Irish Pub.

"As long as you enjoy the company of the person you are with, that is the main ingredient of a successful date in my opinion," Delbridge says. "I like to talk and laugh and just feel comfortable being with someone I like."

"Ditto!" Cloos chimes in. "Common interests, a good sense of humor and the ability to laugh and enjoy yourself are the recipe for a great time together."

After Cloos scoffed at the suggestion of antiquing for this Date Night feature, rolling a few lines at Sports Connection seemed more up his alley, so to speak. The convivial couple ventured to the Ballantyne site near the corner of Ardrey Kell and Johnston roads.

Unfortunately for Cloos, though, more than a few of his balls went awry as the usually reliable bowler with a 150 average managed to turn in a barely respectable 115 on this couples-only game day. Delbridge, on the other hand, took her special orange (she swears it is "pink") custom ball and nearly clipped her partner with a 110.

"Too many distractions," protests Cloos, who is looking for redemption. "I'm not used to being photographed when I bowl."

It was all Delbridge could do to keep from breaking out laughing. "It's OK," she says with a wink. "And it's not like anyone will ever know."

Live Laugh Track

That the pair only managed to get in one game in an hour was due, they say, to the stop-and-go nature of being photographed for this feature. This writer has it on good authority that the laughs, continual joking and playfulness of the two principals were the main "distractions," however.


Neighboring lanes also slowed to a standstill to watch the

“celebrity” couple in action and try and figure out just exactly who they were to merit so much attention.

Rather than stay and sign autographs, the stars-for-the-evening had worked up enough of a hunger to check out PJ O'Reilly's Irish Pub next door for a few beers and some satisfying pub grub to cap their evening out.

Cloos made a beeline for the table situated in front of the Red Sox-Yankees game, ordered up drinks for himself and Delbridge and licked his wounds a bit. “I was looking for some help from the Sox, but that didn't go my way either,” laments Cloos.

Yet, salmon for Delbridge and meatloaf for Cloos were ample compensation for a tough evening at the lanes and the two settled into what they liked most about the evening's date — lots of chuckles and joking around.

For this fun couple, laughter is indeed the best medicine. 



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