



Alicia Weber, the aquatics instructor for The Villages Wellness Center, wrote and illustrated the book 'Wild Under the Waves' to go along with her aquatics exercise class 'Catch of the Day.'

George Horsford / Daily Sun

Aquatic instructor publishes book

By **WILMA FLEMING**
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THE VILLAGES — A whale of an exercise class has incorporated a whale of a story, put together with words and pictures by its author, who also happens to be a local water aerobics instructor.

Alicia Weber, who teaches the "Catch of the Day" class at The Villages Wellness Center, started writing early and won a poetry writing award at age 17 and an honorable mention in the Dolphin Log magazine.

"My poem was selected for an audio tape by the National Library of Poetry in 1997, so I got inspired," Weber said.

She went on to write her self-published book, titled, "Wild under The Waves," which discusses the phylum species, better known as ocean dwelling critters such as sponges, jellyfish, shrimp, crabs, oysters, etc.

"In high school, I had a reputation for being good in biology, but the phylum species gave me trouble, so I was challenged to study it further, to keep my reputation, but also to make studying phylums more user-friendly," she said.

"I didn't want my book to be dry like textbooks. I wanted it to be an enjoyable way to learn, so I divided the table of contents by phylum species and made it clearer, adding a glossary for each section," she said.

"By the time I was a senior in

FOR INFORMATION

The Villages Wellness Center offers the 'Catch of the Day' creative water aerobics classes for four consecutive weeks to members and nonmembers for better coordination and fitness. For information, call (352) 753-6910.

college, I had redone the book three times. But finally, I started over and submitted it to copyright in 2003, with my own research and my own art work, and now I have it printed on an as-needed basis."

Weber said she feels the book crosses boundaries between middle school students and adults because younger students enjoy her illustrations and poetry, whereas adults are interested in the factual information about biology species.

Now Weber has found another practical use for her book. She

hopes to 'hook' the participants of her Wellness Center Water Aerobics classes on a personalized aquatics fitness program that coincides with an ocean theme.

"I hope to create some pilates and yoga-type movements each week to go along with the different marine animals in the book, and I'll be throwing out some factual information, too," Weber said. Area participants have enjoyed Weber's energizing way of instructing.

"My husband, Jay, and I have both attended Alicia's classes," Valerie Nace said. "She works us hard, but when we're finished with her workout and we come out of the pool, we know we're better than when we went in. She is a great motivator and encourages us."

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