



Students create positive mural

A group of nine teens and their teacher at Tempe's Marcos de Niza High School are combating graffiti in a new way – by turning it into art with a positive message.

In April, the students and their art teacher, Reagan Guzman, unveiled a mural created with spray paint on five 8-foot-by-3-foot wooden boards. The colorful mural with the theme "Embrace Diversity" is displayed in the courtyard of the high school.

The mural idea was born out of observations by the school's Tempe Police Department resource officer, Detective John Butler, who noticed an increase in graffiti in the area surrounding the campus. Butler suggested creating a controlled environment for students to display their artistic abilities.

Under the leadership of student Noe Baez, a group of aspiring artists met during lunch and after school to brainstorm ideas for positive imagery that could be depicted. The finished mural is a brightly-colored cityscape featuring a group of teens and animals.

To reward the students for their hard work and commitment to the project, Marcos de Niza High School honored the group with certificates for a job well done.



Tempe parks a matter of community pride and quality of life

By Tempe City Councilmember Joel Navarro

From birthday parties to play dates, soccer tournaments to softball rivalries, Tempe's 48 neighborhood parks provide ideal settings for enjoying life in our community.

Growing up in Tempe, I remember playing with friends at Scudder and Meyer parks. Today, my children play basketball and use the playground equipment at Corbell Park. Our parks make memories for Tempe families and visitors, so we must do all we can to maintain and modernize these community amenities.

As chair of the City Council's Neighborhood Parks Rehabilitation and Maintenance Committee, I am working with my colleague, Councilmember Mark Mitchell, to pursue a work plan that addresses park redevelopment, environmental sustainability, right-of-way improvements, and bike and pedestrian connectivity.

One of our top priorities is to ensure that residents are involved in the planning and design of park improvements. Through the city's bond-funded Capital Improvement Program, Tempe is renovating all of our neighborhood parks. Hudson Park was finished in May, four others will begin construction in the coming months and four others are currently in the planning and design phases. When these improvements are being designed, it is vital that neighbors tell us how they use the parks and which amenities are important to them – only then can we be sure that these community centerpieces are meeting the needs of the particular residents who live there.

Another important aim is to address Tempe's right-of-ways. These strips of city-owned land are visible markers of the appearance of our city and the pride we take in our community. It is important that we replace the trees and shrubs in these areas, when needed, in order to maintain their vibrancy. Tempe re-vegetated nearly five miles of right-of-ways in just the first four months of 2009, including areas like McClintock Drive from Baseline to Guadalupe roads, and Rio Salado Parkway from Mill Avenue to Priest Drive.

The city has rejuvenated its Trees for Tempe program this year, securing private donations to replace more than 400 trees lost in last summer's monsoon storms. That program will continue to grow and partner with organizations.

Volunteers are an essential part of Tempe's work to maintain its parks. From January through April, volunteers put in an amazing 5,900 hours of work to remove litter and weeds, plant trees and install crushed granite pathways. We could not do it without these volunteers and we thank them for their continued service to Tempe.

Looking ahead, Tempe will continue to foster connectivity from our parks and open spaces to our street system and bike paths. We are improving our canal banks to create a "boardwalk" feeling that will help Tempeans commute, exercise and recreate. Over the next year, nearly eight more miles of trails will be installed along Tempe canal banks, making for safer bike and pedestrian travel across our city.

Our next goal as a committee will be to address aging neighborhood walls. Though these areas are not city-owned, we can work with residents to obtain grant funding to rebuild and repair the masonry walls that border our neighborhoods. Much like our city right-of-ways, the appearance of these walls is critical to the overall visual appeal of our community.

I invite all our residents to enjoy and learn more about Tempe's parks. The Neighborhood Parks Rehabilitation and Maintenance Committee's work plan is available at www.tempe.gov/clerk/councilcommittees.htm. Please let me know your thoughts and ideas by calling 480-350-8795 or e-mailing me at joel_navarro@tempe.gov.

Tempe Neighbor of the Year awards

The City of Tempe recognized the contributions of its most involved residents by presenting the Neighbor of the Year awards during the 2009 Neighborhood Workshop and Awards on April 18:

Mark Lymer

As Chair of the Mitchell Park West Neighborhood Association, Lymer organized the first "Art on the Fence in Mitchell Park" exhibition, and worked with residents, businesses and city staff to address issues such as code violations, mosquito breeding areas, messy alleys and overgrown landscaping.

Bob & Dee Haver and Gary & Pam Schrack

These residents have led the Superstition Neighborhood Association for many years, encouraging involvement from all neighbors in addressing a variety of concerns, including crime, park enhancement and alleys. They took the lead in improving Joyce Park by obtaining neighborhood grants to add an accessible walkway, install a climbing wall and improve playground amenities.

Linda Knutson

Recognized as the 2009 Chuck Malpede Neighbor of the Year, Knutson was nominated by the Mitchell Park East Neighborhood Association. She has helped to organize many neighborhood projects and events, including the Annual Alley Clean-up Day, block parties, public art projects and grants, traffic calming measures and Childsplay's integration into the neighborhood during 2007 and 2008.

For information about Tempe's neighborhoods, visit www.tempe.gov/neighborhoods.

Papago Park input sessions this summer

Tempe community members are invited to participate in two sessions this summer to gather input for the future of Papago Park. Tempe, Phoenix, Scottsdale and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community are working to develop a vision and recommendations that will guide the future of Papago Park as a premier regional amenity. The public is invited to provide input at two sessions on Monday, June 15:

10 a.m. to noon at Desert Botanical Garden's Dorrance Hall, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix
6-8 p.m. North Tempe Multi-Generational Center's gymnasium, 1555 N. Bridalwreath St., Tempe

Additional workshops will be held Thursday, Aug. 20. Check the project Web site for location updates. Visit www.discoverpapagopark.com or call 480-391-6800.

Curtain goes up on MADCAP Theaters



This month, a new downtown Tempe facility will begin serving as a haven for performing arts. Downtown Tempe Community, in partnership with Centerpoint on Mill, opens the Mill Avenue District Community Arts Project (MADCAP) Theaters, in the building at that formerly housed a Harkins Theatre, 730 S. Mill Ave. The aim is to increase the live entertainment and cultural activity in the Mill Avenue District, while attracting new independent businesses to the area. Some of the 11 theaters within the building have been revamped as spaces for live music performances, theatre shows, dance and comedy performances, as well as lectures and corporate meetings. For more information, visit www.downtowntempe.com and click on "What's Happening."

Valley Metro fare increase

Due to tax revenue shortfalls and increased operating costs, Valley Metro transit fares will increase beginning July 1. For local bus and light rail, a single ride will now cost \$1.75, an all-day pass (on-board bus) will be \$5.25, an all-day pass (off-board bus) will cost \$3.50, a three-day pass will cost \$10.50, a seven-day pass will cost \$17.50 and a 31-day pass will cost \$55. Reduced fares are available for people 65 and older, people with disabilities and youth ages 6 to 18. Passes are available at www.valleymetro.org, transit centers, at over 80 select locations and stores throughout the Valley, as well as at fare vending machines on all METRO light rail platforms. For a full list of locations or the new fares for express/rapid buses, visit www.valleymetro.org or call 602-253-5000.

Tempe hosts two "firsts"



Tempe has recently enjoyed two more moments in the international spotlight as President Barack Obama delivered the Arizona State University commencement address at Sun Devil Stadium on May 13 and as the city hosted the world premiere of "X-Men Origins: Wolverine" at Tempe Marketplace on April 27.

An estimated 70,000 attendees packed ASU's biggest venue to watch thousands of 2009 graduates receive their honors and to hear an address by President Obama. The history-making event was covered extensively by media around the world, putting Tempe on an international stage once again.

Tempe surpassed 3,000 other cities in an online voting contest to host the movie premiere. Thousands of fans lined up hours before the red carpet was rolled out to participate in the festivities, to win tickets and to watch the film. Hugh Jackman, the entire cast and other local celebrities came to Tempe to celebrate the premiere. By official proclamation, Mayor Hugh Hallman declared the occasion "X-Men Day" in Tempe and presented Jackman a "Wolverine Parking Only" sign.

Household waste facility celebrates 10 years

In April, the City of Tempe's Household Products Collection Center (HPCC) celebrated 10 years of protecting the health and safety of Tempe and Guadalupe residents. Since opening on Earth Day in 1999, the center – the first of its kind in the Valley – has recycled more than 1.5 million pounds of potentially hazardous household waste.

An estimated 55 percent of materials collected are flammable and toxic, such as gasoline and insecticides, while another 25 percent includes batteries and “e-waste,” such as computers and monitors. The HPCC recycles more than 88 percent of the materials it receives, saving space in our landfills and saving our storm drains and groundwater from potential contamination.

Recent trends toward “green” living and sustainability have resonated with residents, as shown by a record-breaking year in 2008 at the HPCC. So far in 2009, the center is on pace to exceed that record. HPCC employees make use of paint that has been dropped off at the center, mixing it to make other colors that can be re-used by the city. Patrons to the center can even “shop” for free items they need, including paint, stains, cleaning products, automotive products, and lawn and garden products.

The HPCC is located at 1320 E. University Drive, on the north side of University west of McClintock Drive. It is open Fridays 7 a.m. to noon and Saturdays 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Proof of Tempe or Guadalupe residency is required in the form of a driver's license or water bill. Items that cannot be accepted include appliances, tires and explosives. For a list of accepted items and for ways to safely transport items to the HPCC, visit www.tempe.gov/HHW or call 480-858-2223.

Doing the right thing for the planet

On a recent Friday morning, these Tempe residents stopped by the HPCC to drop off chemicals they no longer needed or to pick up items they could use in their homes. Here's a look at why they made the effort:



Jim Cotton

What he was “shopping” for: *Epsom salt, joint compound and household cleaners*

Why he uses the facility: *“I hate to waste anything.”*



Yolanda Mathews

What she dropped off: *Eight cans of paint*

Why she uses the facility: *“I've always tried to seek out a facility like this. I'm concerned about my kids and grandkids.”*



Paul Crays

What he dropped off: *Paint, pesticides and antifreeze*

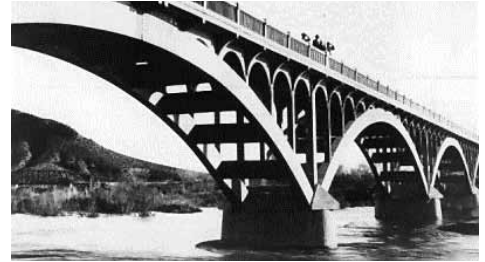
Why he uses the facility: *“You don't want all this stuff in the landfills. You don't know what would happen if it mixed together.”*



Eckart Sellheim

What he dropped off: *Chlorine, 10 cans of paint*

Why he uses the facility: *“I'm very well aware of waste. Resources are not unlimited. We live in a throwaway society.”*



Ash Avenue Bridge

Convicts, rumors, automobiles, and floods are all part of the history of the Ash Avenue Bridge, Arizona's first highway bridge across the Salt River.

In the early 1900s, Tempe and communities throughout the Salt River Valley were growing and evolving. A dependable crossing over the Salt River was vital to commerce in the area. Traveling between Phoenix and Tempe was difficult since the only alternative to wading across the shallow areas of the river was to ride Hayden's Ferry. It took two years and more than \$116,000 to build the Ash Avenue Bridge.

Governor George W. P. Hunt decided to use convict labor from the Arizona Territorial Prison in Florence to build the bridge. From 1911 to 1913, 250 prisoners were housed in Tempe while they constructed the bridge. Governor Hunt was so sure of the precautions taken that he said he would resign if even one prisoner escaped during construction. In the end, 15 prisoners escaped and Hunt continued to hold office. A convict was even rumored to have hidden money in the 1,507-foot-long span.

Built before cars became the main mode of transportation, the bridge was not wide or strong enough to support two lanes of automobile traffic. In addition to the strain from the unanticipated weight of automobiles, the bridge was weakened by floods in 1916 and 1919. During the 1920s, repairs were made but they were not enough. In 1931, when the Mill Avenue Bridge was constructed, the Ash Avenue Bridge was closed to all but pedestrian traffic. In 1980, Mayor Harry Mitchell ordered the bridge completely closed.

Although the Ash Avenue Bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, it was demolished in 1991, leaving only a segment at the south abutment. That portion of the bridge can still be seen today in Tempe Beach Park.

Calendar

City Council Meetings

The June/July schedule for Tempe City Council meetings

June 11, 2009

6 p.m., Issue Review Session
7:30 p.m., Council Meeting
(adoption of property tax)

July 2, 2009

6 p.m., Issue Review Session
7:30 p.m., Council Meeting

Meetings are aired live on Tempe 11 and the Internet at www.tempe.gov/tempe11.

City Council meetings are held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 31 E. Fifth St. Agendas are posted 24 hours before each meeting outside the Council Chambers and on the second floor of City Hall. Meetings are subject to change. Confirm dates and times with the City Clerk's Office, 480-350-8241 or on the Web site at www.tempe.gov/clerk.

Tempe City Council

Hugh Hallman
Mayor

Shana Ellis
Vice Mayor

P. Ben Arredondo
Councilmember

Mark W. Mitchell
Councilmember

Joel Navarro
Councilmember

Onnie Shekerjian
Councilmember

Corey Woods
Councilmember

Charlie Meyer
City Manager

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News you can use

Tempe Opportunities is "going green"!

Tempe Opportunities, the brochure of city recreation and arts classes, will no longer be mailed to every Tempe household beginning this fall. The change in delivery will help reduce waste and costs. Residents still will be able to pick up hard copies at many city facilities and access the brochure at www.tempe.gov/brochure. Each time a new issue is ready, an e-mail will be sent to members of a Tempe Opportunities distribution list, letting them know when the brochure will be available online. To sign up for the electronic distribution list, visit www.tempe.gov/brochure. To continue receiving the brochure via the U.S. Postal Service, register by calling 480-350-5315 or by e-mail at brochure@tempe.gov.

Cell Phones for Soldiers

A Tempe business is collecting old cell phones to benefit those serving in the military. Cell Phones for Soldiers is a nonprofit organization that was started in Massachusetts in 2004. In addition to sending calling cards to soldiers, the group also collects old cell phone and recycles them for cash to purchase calling cards. The program will accept any make or model phone, along with the attached batteries or accessories. Phones can be dropped off year-round at Mailworks, 3330 S. Price Road. For more information, visit www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com or call 480-777-1770.

Tempe names Bike Hero

Tempe has presented its 2009 Bike Hero Award to Sue Babcock-Fassett, who has worked to educate the public about bicycle laws, basic bicycle mechanics and safety aspects of group cycling. The award celebrates bicycling in Tempe as an alternative mode of transportation and as an environmentally-friendly recreational activity and illustrates the dedication of Tempe residents and employers to bicycling. For more information about bicycling in Tempe, visit www.tempe.gov/tim.

Water pollution prevention

Did you know that every street, gutter, storm drain and retention basin in Tempe is a pathway that pollutants can travel through to make our water unusable? The U.S. EPA identifies stormwater pollution as the leading threat to water quality in the United States. Since water that enters Tempe's stormwater system drains directly to our waterways or retention basins, it is important to be mindful of your role in preventing pollutants from entering the system. You are the first line of defense in the protection of our vital and scarce water resource. When outdoor activities are not performed with care, contaminants enter our waterways. If you see anything other than stormwater entering a storm drain, call the Stormwater Hotline at 480-350-2811 or fill out a complaint form at www.tempe.gov/stormwater/.

2009 Don Carlos Humanitarian Award nominations

Nominations are being sought for the Don Carlos Humanitarian Award, which is presented annually to an individual or couple who has given outstanding service to the community over an extended period of time, has benefitted the less fortunate in lasting ways, and has made Tempe a better place to live. The nominee must be a current or former resident, or work in Tempe. Nominations must be received by July 31. For more information or to submit a nomination, visit www.tempe.gov/tcc or call 480-858-2300.

Tempe Public Library computers

Beginning this summer, renovations at the Tempe Public Library will mean a temporary reduction in the number of computers available for public use. The library has assembled a list of other Tempe sites, and locations in other cities, where patrons can find computers available for public use. For more information, visit www.tempe.gov/library and click on the renovation link.

Summer food program to feed Tempe children

On weekdays this summer, the Tempe Elementary School District will provide breakfast and lunch without charge to anyone 18 and younger at several schools. All sites will be closed Friday, July 3.

For information on the Summer Food Service Program, call Tempe Elementary District Nutritional Services at 480-774-2124 or visit www.tempeschools.org.