



Batter up!

Spring training is about to begin in Tempe – can you smell the popcorn and hear the crack of the bat? There's nothing like spring training baseball at Tempe Diablo Stadium with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim.

Come out this March and enjoy \$20 million in improvements made to the facility last year. The fan experience is improved with new seats, expanded concession areas, an expanded "party deck" in the left field corner and more. The stadium also has a new look, with a new brick façade and hunter green trim throughout.

The improvements now allow the Angel's major and minor league players to train at the same facility. Renovations include a new, 20,000-square-foot minor league clubhouse, four new practice fields – three of them lighted – new batting tunnels, and a completely restored major league clubhouse. The project was funded by the City of Tempe, the Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority and the team. In December 2004, the Angels signed an agreement with the City of Tempe to keep spring training at Diablo for at least 20 more years.

Tempe Diablo Stadium is located at 2200 W. Alameda Drive. Visit www.tempe.gov/diablostadium for information on the upcoming schedule, how to purchase tickets and directions to the stadium.



Action and planning will continue for Tempe's future

By Vice Mayor Hut Hutson

When Tempe faced dire predictions in the last few years about our financial future, we took action to stop the bleeding and continue our city's renowned economic prosperity.

You can expect more action this year, as I have an aggressive plan of action as chair of the City Council's Finance, Economy and Veteran's Affairs Committee.

It was not so long ago that Tempe's best financial minds projected a steep decline in the amount of state-shared revenue our city would receive in 2006-2007. We thought that the stabilizing population of Tempe, in relation to our growing Valley neighbors, meant that we would receive a much thinner slice of the state pie.

In response, the city formed an Ad Hoc Budget and Finance Committee that – with participation from residents, business owners, city staff, Mayor Hallman and myself – came up with a list of cost-saving and revenue-producing ideas meant to ease the pain of losing state funds.

Fast forward several months and it became clear that Tempe would not lose as much state-shared revenue as predicted. It was great news for our city, but I will continue to work in 2007 to implement the recommendations of the Budget and Finance Committee. Even if Tempe is now doing fine financially, it's important to constantly "trim the fat" and make our city as efficient as possible.

Beyond less-than-predicted cuts in state-shared revenue, Tempe enjoyed a banner year in 2006 when it came to sales tax revenue. And 2006 ended on an especially high note when we learned in December that Standard & Poor's upgraded us from a AA to a AAA bond rating. While Tempe already had received a AAA rating from Fitch, the upgraded Standard & Poor's rating is a distinction never before enjoyed by the City of Tempe and rarely seen in Arizona municipalities. It means that Tempe will be able to sell bonds for needed capital projects and pay less in interest over the long term – a great benefit for our taxpayers.

A major focus of my committee, on which Councilmember Mark Mitchell also serves, will be researching and brainstorming solutions for how the city will deal with healthcare costs for retired employees. Tempe must plan for how we will cover these rising costs.

Another focus of my committee's work will be development and redevelopment. Tempe was frequently in the spotlight in 2006, with announcements for major projects like University Square and the prestigious Le Meridien hotel. We will help continue that momentum in 2007 and will explore ideas like impact fees that could assist our city as it grows "up." In the area of redevelopment, one of my goals is to address the affordability of workforce housing in Tempe. We must develop new housing strategies to help those employed in Tempe buy homes here as well.

Last but not least, my committee work will include Veteran's Affairs. I will make it a priority to coordinate planning and fundraising for the city's planned Veteran's Memorial. We must have a moving and fitting tribute to those Tempeans who served our country in times of war and peace.

With any financial or development matters in Tempe, my focus is always on preparing our city for future generations. I envision families I'll never know, businesses I'll never patronize – and those thoughts of the future make all our present efforts worthwhile. As always, I hope you will contact me with your ideas and feedback. Please call me anytime at 480-350-8797.

Tempe applies to be StormReady community

Tempe applied in January to be part of the National Weather Service's StormReady program, which helps communities nationwide prepare for severe weather like thunderstorms, floods, tornadoes and hurricanes. Started in 1999, StormReady arms communities with the communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property. StormReady communities are better prepared to save lives through planning, education and awareness.

Tempe will be audited by the National Weather Service during the first half of 2007. Managed by the Tempe Fire Department, the program involves placing National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association radio receivers in various city-owned buildings and monitoring weather conditions in Tempe from different sources.

Tempe has experienced micro-bursts, macro-bursts and associated power outages and heavy rain. Last year, the city and Maricopa County assessed plans for large-scale flooding. Being a StormReady community is another way Tempe is striving to become a safer and more prepared community. For more information, visit www.stormready.noaa.gov.

Towing changes approved

On Jan. 4, the City Council approved revising the Tempe code related to towing from private property. The code changes will go into effect Feb. 3, with the new charges and fees taking effect immediately. Major changes to the code include: charges and fees; proof of vehicle ownership; billing information; authority to tow; signage requirements; and penalties for violations. For more detailed information on the Tempe code changes, visit www.tempe.gov/traffic or call 480-350-2775.

Tempe Public Library seeks children's art to display

Tempe Public Library, Friends of the Tempe Public Library and Tempe Cultural Services announce Youth Art Search 2007, a program to seek and select colorful, creative works of art for display in the youth area of the Tempe Public Library.

Students in grades K-8 who live or go to school in Tempe, or students who attend school in the Tempe Elementary School District, are eligible to participate.

"X-TREME Color" is the theme of this year's search. Artists should stretch their imaginations to create colorful visual images suitable for display in the Youth Library. A special committee of professional Tempe artists will review the artwork.

Detailed information and entry forms are available at the Youth Library Reference Desk, or on the Youth Library's Web page, www.tempe.gov/library. The deadline for submitting entries is 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24. Call Judi Pimentel in the Youth Library, 480-350-5520, for more information.

Now Hiring Police Officers
For information go to:
www.tempe.gov/policejobs



Tempe launches dragon boat program for athletes with disabilities

In January, seven athletes with cognitive disabilities and nine volunteer partners met for the first time and began practicing as Tempe's first unified dragon boat racing team.

Mesa, Scottsdale and Chandler also are starting dragon boat teams for people with disabilities. All the cities will meet March 23-24 for a competitive event at Tempe Town Lake, which will be part of a larger dragon boat festival. Athletes and partners in the Tempe program are over age 18. The athletes have disabilities such as Down syndrome or brain injuries.

"This is a totally unique program in the Valley and the state of Arizona," said Linda Cano, a senior recreation coordinator at the City of Tempe. "We hope to give these athletes the satisfaction and physical rewards of participating in an exciting team sport."

The dragon boat program is one part of a broader initiative in Tempe to begin adaptive paddling programs for people with cognitive and physical disabilities. In May, a Special Olympics kayaking competition will take place at Tempe Town Lake involving Tempe and other Valley communities.

Regatta event at Town Lake

The sixth annual Desert Sprints Rowing Regatta will showcase rowers at Tempe Town Lake on Saturday, March 10, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Teams from Arizona and other Western states – comprised of athletes from junior high through adulthood – will compete in various categories. For more information, call 480-350-8069 or visit www.desertsprints.com.

Collect and drop off citrus

A key prevention against roof rats is to pick up all fruit and nuts from the ground, and to harvest citrus promptly and completely from trees. Tempe residents can donate their fruit to Native American communities and local food banks and senior centers by dropping it off at the Scottsdale Elks Club, 6398 E. Oak St., through March 31. Collections run every Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. Residents in Phoenix's Arcadia neighborhood began the citrus collection program after the area experienced problems with roof rats. For more information, call 480-350-8234, e-mail neighborhoods@tempe.gov, or visit www.tempe.gov/nhoods/roofrats.htm.



Prom dress drive and selection dates set

During the Valley's prom season each year, a dedicated group of volunteers – including the Tempe Community Council, the East Valley Women's League and the City of Tempe – offer a program to give new and gently used formals to high school students who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend prom. This year, the dress drive for the 5th annual Cinderella Affair will be held from February 10 through February 12. Donations of new and gently used formals, purses, shoes, jewelry, and wraps will be welcomed at any designated drop-off location including all Tempe fire stations, the Pyle Adult Recreation Center and Tempe Community Council. All dropoff locations can be found by visiting www.cinderellaaffair.org.

The 5th Annual Cinderella Affair Boutique will be March 30 for students of the Tempe Union High School District and March 31 for all other Valley high school juniors and seniors. Both days, the event will be held at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center, 655 E. Southern Ave., in Tempe. Female students may select one dress and accessories free of charge. Male students will be assisted with tuxedos upon referral only. For more information please call 480-858-2310.



Tempe Cares project to revitalize city cemetery

The 15th Annual Tempe Cares event will feature hundreds of volunteers spending a full day making improvements at Tempe's historic Double Butte Cemetery. This community-wide effort will take place Saturday, March 3, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Each year, hundreds of volunteers – many are Tempe Leadership alumni – converge on a Tempe site and spend a day making dramatic improvements to the landscape. Known as Tempe Cares, this special annual project of Tempe Leadership has enhanced local homes, parks and community buildings.

A city-run facility, Double Butte is Tempe's oldest cemetery. Many prominent Tempeans are buried there, including city pioneers, City Councilmembers and former Arizona governors Dr. Benjamin B. Moeur and Howard Pyle. The city has begun a \$2.4 million expansion and improvement project at the cemetery, including a new entry feature, a new lawn section that will include more than 1,000 new burial spaces and a new desert burial area that will accommodate an additional 700 plots. Improvements will be made to cemetery roads and a new, in-ground irrigation system will be installed.

Tempe Cares volunteers will help with the improvement efforts by planting trees, enhancing the irrigation system and updating the historical inventory. The Tempe Cares project will be a tremendous help to the city's efforts, said Shawn Wagner, Recreation Services management assistant.

A T-shirt, continental breakfast and lunch will be provided to volunteers. To become a sponsor of Tempe Cares, call Zach Berning at 480-350-4457 or zach@bernings.com. To volunteer for Tempe Cares, call Rebecka Johnson at 480-921-7232.

Calendar

City Council Meetings

The February/March schedule for Tempe City Council meetings

February 1

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

February 15

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

March 1

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

March 22

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

Hut Hutson, Vice Mayor

P. Ben Arredondo, Councilmember

Barbara J. Carter, Councilmember

Shana Ellis, Councilmember

Mark W. Mitchell, Councilmember

Onnie Shekerjian, Councilmember

Will Manley, City Manager

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To contact the Mayor and Council, call 480-350-8110.

City of Tempe
31 E. 5th St., Tempe, AZ 85281
www.tempe.gov

News you can use

Tax prep program helps families

Free tax preparation is available for qualified individuals and couples every Saturday through April 14 (except March 17) from 9 a.m. to noon at Tempe Schools Credit Union, 2800 S. Mill Ave. Trained volunteer tax preparers certified by the IRS will provide free tax preparation and electronic filing for individuals earning \$33,000 or less per year and couples making \$55,000 or less per year. Spanish translators will be available. With electronic filing, taxpayers can expect refunds within 10-14 working days. For more information and a list of documents to bring with you, visit www.tempe.gov/tcc/eitc.htm.

Empty Bowls event feeds hungry

Purchase a handmade bowl and help feed hungry children at the Empty Bowls event, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Friday, Feb. 23, at Sixth Street Park and Saturday, Feb. 24, at Tempe Beach Park. The bowls, which are available for a donation of \$10, are created by potters at the City of Tempe Ceramics Program, local artists and Tempe middle school and high school students. With the purchase of a bowl, Whole Foods Market will provide a simple meal that is symbolic of the caloric intake that sustains many in the world for an entire day. A volunteer initiative of the Tempe Community Council, Empty Bowls gives proceeds from the event to the United Food Bank's Kids' Café program. The program provides a meal or nutritious snack to an estimated 300 children in Tempe each day. For more information, call 480-858-2300.

Annual MLK brunch honored diversity efforts

Hundreds gathered at The Buttes Resort on Jan. 15 for the ninth annual Tempe Human Relations Commission MLK Diversity Awards Brunch. The celebration honors community members who have demonstrated a commitment to diversity in Tempe. The winners included:

Graciela Calderon – A fourth grade teacher at Frank Elementary School, Mrs. Calderon has developed a multicultural curriculum that teaches children to respect diversity. Songs, poems and dances are all part of the learning experience. Attendance is routinely at or near perfect in Mrs. Calderon's engaging classes.

Dr. Mark Duplissis – As Assistant Vice Principal at Corona del Sol High School, Dr. Duplissis ensures that all students feel at home on campus. He has championed school groups like the Jewish Student Union, the Black Student Union, the Gay/Straight Alliance and the Best Buddies Club.

Colleen Jennings-Roggensack – As Executive Director of Public Affairs and Assistant Vice President for Cultural Affairs at Arizona State University, she has a long history of connecting the community through art. She has developed festivals, projects and shows involving cultural exchanges, including – among many others – Arte es Amor, a year-long celebration of Latino arts and culture.

Katie Poirier – A senior at Corona del Sol High School, Ms. Poirier has been involved in the school's diversity program since she was a freshman and has become a leader among her peers. Among other initiatives, she is president of the Best Buddies Club, which fosters friendships and employment opportunities for students with cognitive disabilities.

Salimeh Hobeheidar – She demonstrates her commitment to diversity as a member of her high school's Stand & Serve Club, as a volunteer at the annual Tempe Tardeada and as a volunteer organizer for a domestic violence discussion at the state capital.

Foundation for Intercultural Dialogue (FID) – This Tempe-based organization's mission is to promote dialogue, respect and collaboration within the city's multicultural community. Among other activities, FID sponsors student organizations at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona, with events and lecture series that allow people to learn about different cultures.

Tempe Tardeada Advisory Board – Board members have been advocating for and celebrating Tempe's Hispanic history for more than eight years. They brought the community an annual festival celebrating Tempe's Hispanic culture called Tempe Tardeada. The board is currently working on the Ninth Annual Tempe Tardeada, which will be Sunday, October 14.

"The Tempe 10" – These individuals displayed courage and perseverance in seeking to change their working environment at the City of Tempe. By speaking up against workplace discrimination, they contributed to positive changes for city employees.

Kyrene Middle School – The school demonstrates its commitment to diversity with many innovative, student-led activities, such as annual leadership camps, multicultural celebrations and a diversity poetry contest.

Waxie Sanitary Supply – This Tempe-based company is a new contractor of janitorial supplies for the City of Tempe. The company has a five-year plan to incorporate minority-owned manufacturers within their supply family.