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Economic Reporter

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY THE CITY OF MESA OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FIRST QUARTER 2012



Arizona Republican Presidential Debate in Downtown Mesa

CNN and the Arizona Republican Party will host the Arizona Republican Presidential Debate at the Mesa Arts Center in Downtown Mesa on February 28, 2012, at 6pm. Over 300 journalists from around the nation will be Downtown for several days leading up to the prime time debate to be broadcast on CNN, CNN en Español and globally on CNN International and CNN Radio.

“This is a tremendous opportunity to showcase the world-class Mesa Arts Center and introduce Downtown Mesa to the millions who participate in the political process through attending or viewing candidate debates,” noted Councilman Chris Glover (District 4).

According to Bill Jabjiniak, City of Mesa Economic Development Director, the event will be a welcome economic boost to Downtown and surrounding businesses.

For more information, visit www.mesaaz.gov.

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport lands a second commercial airline

Spirit Airlines has announced it will begin service from Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport to Las Vegas, Dallas/



Fort Worth and Fort Lauderdale, as well as 30 other cities throughout the U.S., Caribbean and Latin America during the first quarter of 2012. Two daily non-stop flights between Phoenix-Mesa and Las Vegas begin on February 9, 2012, and daily non-stop service between Phoenix-Mesa and Dallas/Fort Worth, and continuing service to Fort Lauderdale begins on March 22, 2012.

“We are excited to bring our ultra-low fares to travelers from Arizona and give even more consumers the opportunity to save money on travel,” said Spirit’s Senior Director of Sales Michael Pewther. “Our cheap base fares with a range of optional services

for a fee allows customers the freedom to choose only the extras they value.”



“Spirit’s commitment to Gateway Airport represents a turning point for air travel in

Arizona,” said Lynn Kusy, Executive Director of the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport Authority. “Combining Spirit’s famous low prices, Gateway Airport’s easy terminal experience, and new service to popular destinations and you have the framework for a tremendously successful venture. I thank the Arizona community for supporting Gateway Airport. It is because of their support, Spirit has chosen to be here.”

For more information, visit www.spirit.com.

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The Economic Development Advisory Board meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 am in the Lower Level Council Chambers (57 East First Street). All meetings are open to the public.



The Quick Jab *by Bill Jabjiniak*

Robert Brinton made his mark in more places than Mesa

This is a difficult article for me to write. How does one accurately describe the impact that an individual has on a community, or on oneself? I struggle to capture the essence of a person, to explain how a single individual's passion and integrity so positively influenced Mesa and the entire State of Arizona. Words don't seem to suffice.

Robert Brinton was one of those people who invested his heart in his community. I greatly appreciated his leadership and guidance over the years. His spirit of service and commitment to quality created a legacy that will live on in Mesa - and Arizona - for decades to come.

Robert served for more than 25 years in the tourism industry as the Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) President & CEO. As part of his career, Robert received countless accolades (Arizona Tourism Hall of Fame, Mesa Man of the Year), led organizations (Cactus League, Mesa Hohokams) and championed many economic development initiatives.

Robert was excited to move forward with a new Cubs stadium project. He understood the significant economic impact Spring Training generated and advocated for high quality tourism development. Robert worked tirelessly with us in the Office of Economic Development, partnering on business development events, hosting site visits, and marketing Mesa to recruit higher quality jobs, hotels and attractions to Mesa. He loved showing off Mesa.

Robert would be happy to know that work continues on the design and project programming for the Chicago Cubs City of Mesa Spring Training project. The project team continues to work diligently on completing the programming and site design. The Spring Training project comprises the stadium and practice facilities, as well as the future commercial area and Riverview Park redesign. The start of construction is scheduled to begin soon after the end of the 2012 Spring Training season.

Often death makes us examine the past in a different light, to remember and to realize what a single person contributed to family, to friends, to colleagues and to the community. While all who knew Robert have suffered a tremendous loss, in our hearts there is a void, but in our community, a legacy lives on.



Robert W. Brinton
October 15, 1951 – October 21, 2011





Fiesta District revitalization efforts in full swing

Several projects have kicked off in the City of Mesa's Fiesta District with the goal of creating an economically vibrant, pedestrian friendly, and active, urban destination. Phase I of the Fiesta District Streetscape Project design begins January 2012 and construction will follow in 2013. Included will be street improvements along Southern Avenue from Alma School Road to Dobson Road, intersection enhancements, monument signs and a paseo on the south side of Southern Avenue.

"This public investment will provide the ground work that will stoke the fires for private investment to build onto the pedestrian-friendly sense of place that is the Fiesta District, making it more vibrant and economically viable," said Bill Jabjiniak, City of Mesa Economic Development Director.

The Fiesta District Police substation is also slated to begin construction in 2012. The 34,000 sq. ft. building will have LEED certification and will complete the improvements along Grove and Westwood to be consistent with the Fiesta District Streetscape.

The Fiesta District is anchored by Banner Desert and Cardon Children's Medical Centers, Mesa Community College and Fiesta Mall.

For more information, visit www.mesaaz.gov.

Falcon Field Airport enhances infrastructure

Falcon Field Airport is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the United States and is a valuable air transportation resource to Mesa and to the entire region. More than 780 aircraft and approximately 140 businesses are based at the facility, employing

more than 1,100 people. Aviation contributes more than \$2.3 billion annually to the City of Mesa's economy.

During 2012, nearly \$4.5 million will be invested in Falcon Field infrastructure improvements, much of the capital provided by grants from the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

Construction on runway safety improvements is expected to begin January 2012 and will include reconfiguring a taxiway, adding pavement and elevated guard lights. The improvements are budgeted at \$1.65 million, with a \$1.5 million grant from the FAA and a \$41,250 grant from ADOT covering the bulk of the costs. Dibble Engineering was selected to design the project and Visus Engineering Construction, Inc., of Mesa was selected to perform construction.

Airport pavement preservation projects will begin spring 2012 and is funded by the Airport's operating and capital budgets with assistance from the FAA and ADOT. Project costs are estimated at \$200,000.

Falcon Field also will receive a \$630,000 grant from ADOT to complete a pavement overlay and re-striping of its south runway. The City of Mesa will contribute \$70,000, or 10 percent of the project cost. Work is expected to begin in June 2012 and be completed in July 2012.

ADOT is contributing \$1.8 million to reconstruct and upgrade two ramps for corporate aircraft beginning summer 2012. The \$2 million project will be completed in two phases, the first expected to be completed by August 2012.

For more information on these projects, view recent Construction & Projects Update at http://www.mesaaz.gov/falcon_field/. Click on the News & Events tab.



Mesa Mayor Scott Smith lauded for economic development

As Mayor of Mesa, Scott Smith is credited for his personal involvement to help companies expand and create new jobs. Last quarter of 2011, Mayor Smith was lauded for many of his accomplishments by organizations in Greater Phoenix:



- CoreNet Global Desert Mountain Chapter chose Mayor Smith for the inaugural Corporate Real Estate Excellence Award, created to recognize leaders' commitment, dedication, and support of the corporate real estate industry.

Mayor Smith championed the Form-Based Zoning for the Mesa Proving Grounds that ultimately became a key issue in First Solar's decision to locate in Arizona. Smith was also instrumental in the Air Force Research Lab agreement, one of only a handful of high-classified sites in the U.S., and a foundation for a statewide effort in aerospace research and development, as well as collaboration between industry and university programs. He has also been at the forefront of identifying best practices for the expansion of the light rail system and improvements to the East Valley highway systems.

- The Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) also recognized Mayor Smith for his commitment and dedication to helping advance the region. GPEC presented Mayor Smith with the Outstanding Regional Contribution award for his assistance in securing First Solar's expansion, his work to keep the Chicago Cubs Spring Training in Mesa, and successful efforts to bring jobs to the East Valley.

"Time and again, Mayor Smith has demonstrated his commitment to improving the region's economy by taking an active role in securing high-quality jobs in the City of Mesa," GPEC President and CEO Barry Broome said. "GPEC is grateful for his efforts not only in working to craft a quality business operating environment for local companies, but also to raise the region's national profile as a leader with the U.S. Conference of Mayors."

For more information, www.mesaaz.gov.

New businesses open in Downtown Mesa

Within the square mile bounded by Mesa, Country Club, University and Broadway, there has been a net gain of 33 new businesses since July 2011.

Currently there are 5,247 daytime employees in Downtown Mesa.



Some of the new businesses include:

- Beth Quinn Designs, LLC , 56 S. Center
- Catholic Children's Company, 111 W. Main
- Heat Sync Labs, 140 W. Main
- Horning's Accounting & Tax Service, 246 W. 1st Ave.
- Kerry's Second Hand Treasures, 310 S. Macdonald
- Monsterland, 18 W. Main
- Professional Medical Transport, 222 E. Main
- Southwest Plastics, 255 S. Serrine
- Super Bee Auto, 264 E. Broadway
- Tai at Bladz, 120 S. Mesa

For more information, visit www.downtownmesa.com.

New Councils at Mesa Chamber of Commerce offer benefits

Mesa's business community is growing in size and diversity and the Mesa Chamber of Commerce is positioned to serve as key catalyst in 2012.

The Mesa Chamber recently launched a new organizational structure to better reflect the size of the Mesa business community, to increase the influence of business and to provide more opportunity for involvement.



Otto Shill

Replacing Committees, nine new Councils include Business Expansion, Business Advocacy, Business Growth, Business Promotion, Business Leadership, Business Quality of Life, Business Benefits, Management Stewardship and the Mesa Chamber Foundation.

"The new Councils provide a means for Mesa businesses to bring their issues and challenges to the Chamber of Commerce," said Otto Shill of

Jackson White and 2012 Chairman of the Mesa Chamber Board of Directors. "By working together, we can collectively solve problems and allow for more growth and opportunity."

Over the past year, the Chamber's membership has increased and will continue to grow. By involving more companies and organizations to tackle significant and substantive issues affecting business, the Chamber can also be a more active partner with the City's economic development efforts providing support, direction and vision.

Information on the new Councils may be found at www.mesachamber.org.



Young adult career center opens at Mesa Library

Maricopa Workforce Connections Young Adult Career Center opened October 18, 2011 at Mesa Public Library, Main Branch, 64 E. 1st Street, (Center and 1st Street), Mesa.



“Maricopa Workforce Connections has an outstanding reputation for helping at-risk young adults obtain

their career and educational goals and the career center they will operate here in Mesa will continue their track record,” Maricopa County District 2 Supervisor Don Stapley said.

The career center is open Mon-Fri, 1-5pm, and offers job seeking skills to young adults, including completing applications, building a resume, interviewing skills, career decision making and obtaining necessary training and certificates for a successful start. They will also work with other community partners to find solutions to eliminate barriers to success in education and employment.

“The Mesa Library continues to reinvent itself with various partnerships to help with career placement and Mesa Counts on College has also been instrumental in making this career center a reality, bringing tremendous opportunities to our young adults,” said Mesa-Vice Mayor Scott Somers.

Obtaining a career center for young adults in Mesa was one of the goals of the Mesa Counts on College Initiative established in 2010 through a \$3 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Visit www.mesacountsoncollege.org.

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport reports banner year

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (Gateway) experienced a benchmark year in 2011. Allegiant announced new nonstop service to Minot, ND; Appleton, WI; Duluth, MN; Las Vegas, NV; and San Francisco-Oakland, CA. Spirit Airlines announced new passenger service to begin in 2012, with flights to Las Vegas, NV; Dallas / Ft. Worth, TX; and Ft. Lauderdale, FL and additional continuing service to 28 other destinations. A recent economic impact study, conducted by Arizona State University, estimates each flight brings \$27,470 into the Arizona economy.

During Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks, Allegiant operated about 90 flights per week between the carrier’s 32 destinations and Mesa. “That’s \$2.5 million in spending coming into the



Valley each week. So, adding cities, increasing flight frequencies, and another carrier, is exciting news for local businesses and communities,” said Lynn Kusy, Gateway Airport Director.

To gear up for the increase in passenger service, Gateway broke ground on Phase II of the Terminal Expansion project (additional 30,000 sq. ft. and two gates) and completed the 2,700-space Ray Road parking lot. The Phoenix gift shop, Paradise Bakery & Café, and Copper Plate – an American Grill, joined Arizona Highways gift shop and Flightline Market in the newly opened Phase I of the Terminal.

For additional details, visit www.phxmesagateway.org.

Mesa Arts Center Store gets new look, new layout

The MAC Store went dark this past summer, only to open its doors in September as a new, Cooperative Artist Gallery run by the 56 artists who dream, mold and perfect the unique art featured for sale. Local artists staff the store.

The MAC Store is located at the Mesa Arts Center, One East Main Street. Store hours are Tues.-Wed., 10am–5pm; Thurs.-Sat., 10am–7:30pm; Sun., 1–5:00 pm. The store is also open during many major theatre performances and festivals on campus.



For more information, contact Marcia Wenbert, at MACFAC.committee@gmail.com or 480-644-6515.

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www.mesaaz.gov/economic

EVENTS

JANUARY

12

East Valley's Governor's Breakfast
Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa
1011 West Holmes Avenue, Mesa | 7-9 am

16

Martin Luther King Holiday
City offices closed

26

Mayor's Breakfast
Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa
1011 West Holmes Avenue, Mesa | 7:30 am

**Arizona Research Development
Tax Credits Program**
Mesa Chamber of Commerce
120 North Center Street, Mesa | 2-4 pm

FEBRUARY

14

100th Anniversary of Statehood

20

President's Day Holiday
City offices closed

21

Internet Marketing
Mesa Chamber of Commerce
120 North Center Street, Mesa | 1-3 pm

28

GOP Debate
Mesa Arts Center
1 East Main Street, Mesa | 6pm

MARCH

4

Cubs Spring Training Games Begin

31

4th Annual Falcon Field Open House
4800 Falcon Drive, Mesa | 9 am-3 pm



Allegiant expands service to California and Nevada



Allegiant announced new nonstop flights between Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and San Francisco Bay Area via Oakland International Airport beginning January 18, 2012. Flights will operate six times weekly.

Also announced are additional flights to Las Vegas for a total of twelve (12) flights weekly beginning January 11, 2012.

For more information on the 32 destinations Allegiant serves from Phx-Mesa Gateway, visit www.allegiantair.com.

Arizona SciTech Festival 2012 features Mesa



The Arizona SciTech Festival showcases Arizona as a national leader in science, technology and innovation through a series of events during February and March 2012. Spearheaded by the Arizona Technology Council Foundation in partnership with Arizona State University and Arizona Science Center, the celebration offers kids and adults a range of science, technology, engineering and math-related activities including creative exhibitions, demonstrations, tours, workshops and concerts in a variety of locations including several venues in Mesa, AZ.

Visit <http://azscitechfest.asu.edu/> for events, dates and location information.

Staff Profile Marquisha Griffin



Marquisha Griffin is the Management Assistant for the City of Mesa Office of Economic Development. As a Management Assistant, Marquisha is involved with managing the administrative professionals, developing the department's administrative budget, and managing certain areas of the day-to-day activities.

Marquisha earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Arizona State University and a Master's in Public Administration from Keller Graduate School of Management. Marquisha most recently served as a Council Assistant for the City Council Office and currently holds an elected position as councilmember for another municipality. Prior to that, she worked for the Mesa City Court as a Court Clerk.

A native to Missouri, Marquisha relocated to Arizona with her husband Joe and their three children in August of 2002. Beyond her family and work experiences, Marquisha has enjoyed a variety of opportunities to expand her knowledge and skills, both academically and professionally by serving on several local, regional, and national boards and committees. She hopes to one day fulfill her dream of writing a book and starting a foundation that focuses on women and children.

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