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# Economic Reporter

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

SECOND QUARTER 2012

## Selling internationally: East Valley cities offer free exporting workshop



The East Valley communities of Mesa, Gilbert, Chandler, Tempe, Apache Junction, and Queen Creek are partnering with the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) to present a workshop on April 24, 2012, from 8:30-11:30am entitled “Exporting Makes Dollars and Sense: Practical Tools, Financial Assistance and Key Considerations for AZ Companies Looking to Sell Products and Services Internationally”. The focus of this

workshop will be on educating small and medium-sized Arizona companies about how to become first-time exporters or how to enter new export markets. The topics presented at the workshop will cover marketing and sales strategies, market identification, legal considerations, and financing strategies.

Kevin O’Shea, STEP Program Manager, from the ACA will be on hand to moderate the sessions and present information on how businesses interested in exporting can participate in Arizona’s State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program. The program will be offering a number of services and tools to Arizona small businesses like: export readiness assessment; assistance with market selection strategy; assistance with development of international marketing materials; assistance in identifying actual, potential buyers, agents, distributors, end users, and other strategic partners in international markets; and provide opportunities for companies to participate in sector-specific trade missions and summits.

To register for this free workshop, email [Jennifer.graves@mesaaz.gov](mailto:Jennifer.graves@mesaaz.gov). To learn more about the ACA STEP program, visit <http://www.azcommerce.com/az-step-grant.aspx>.

## Mesa, Arizona shines in Business Facilities awards contest

*Business Facilities Magazine* announced the winners of the 2011 Economic Development Deal of the Year competition. The award recipients were chosen by a blue-ribbon judging panel of industry experts who reviewed submissions for 23 big-ticket projects from across the U.S.

The Bronze Award was snared by the City of Mesa for its success in bringing the world’s largest manufacturer of thin-film solar panels to the Greater Phoenix



area. First Solar’s decision to put the facility in Arizona after a long and highly competitive site search is expected to generate a 10-year economic impact of nearly \$7 billion while creating 1,699 jobs in year one.

“This cooperative regional effort was able to meet First Solar’s unique build-out, utilities, infrastructure and workforce needs — all within an accelerated timeframe,” *Business Facilities* Editor-in-Chief Jack Rogers said. “We congratulate everyone in the Greater Phoenix area who brought this important project to fruition for a job well done.”

Taking the Gold Award was the Kentucky-Ford Partnership working in tandem with Greater Louisville, Inc., for the Ford Motor Co. project and the Silver Award went to South Carolina Department of Commerce for Continental Tire Americas (CTA) new plant in Sumter County.

Details on all of the winning projects in the 2011 Economic Development Deal of the Year competition are provided in the Jan/Feb issue of *Business Facilities* or visit [www.businessfacilities.com](http://www.businessfacilities.com).

## Economic Development Advisory Board

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**William Jabjiniak, Economic  
Development Department  
Director**

*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*

### Recruiting higher education to Mesa: thoughtful and deliberate

Two years ago, the Office of Economic Development conducted research to ensure the pursuit of enhancing higher education would be successful.

Results from the Market Analysis and Feasibility Study revealed strong support in the community from business leaders, residents and other academic institutions to recruit additional higher education resources beyond what was already in Mesa. In particular, people wanted private-sector, traditional four-year institutions, (or graduate programs) that provided unique and complimentary programs to existing institutions.

There was also a desire to recruit universities that centered on liberal arts education or niche-based programming such as engineering or technology. Community members expressed interest in colleges that offered diverse student populations, ranked nationally for quality education and expanded recently nationally and/or internationally for campus development.

The long-term goal for Mesa is to create a downtown campus of higher learning consisting of three to five universities with four-year and/or graduate degree programs aligned with Mesa's industries of Healthcare; Education; Aerospace/Aviation; and Tourism/Technology (HEAT).

Since March 2011, Mesa has hosted more than 15 prospective universities for in-depth community visits and meetings with representatives from Mesa Public Schools, Mesa Community College, other academic institutions, associations and local companies. Already results are being realized.

Benedictine University (BenU) announced in January, 2012, plans to open its first branch campus in the U.S. outside of Illinois in the fall of 2013. BenU was attractive to Mesa because the University's proposed campus and programming fulfilled many objectives for the City. Most importantly, Benedictine's vision aligned with Mesa's and BenU proved they could deliver:

- Celebrating its 125th year, Benedictine has multiple campuses and more than 40 class sites including China and Vietnam.
- Forbes magazine has named BenU among the top 20 percent of America's colleges for 2011.
- The Chronicle of Higher Education ranked BenU as the seventh-fastest growing campus in the country among private Master's universities between 2004-2009.
- BenU is ranked 12th in the Midwest and sixth in Illinois for Racial Diversity among Master's Universities in the Midwest for 2011 by U.S. News & World Report.

The City of Mesa is proud to call Benedictine University our partner and looks forward to assisting in their growth and development in Downtown Mesa. Visit [www.ben.edu](http://www.ben.edu) to learn more.

### Office of Economic Development and social media mix

Since our last newsletter in January, the Office of Economic Development has launched a more robust social media effort including multiple tweets per day, discussions on LinkedIn and an economic development blog. Please follow us and engage at:



- Twitter @MesaEconDev (1,300+ followers)



- LinkedIn @ City of Mesa Office of Economic Development (350+ members)



- Wordpress @ [www.mesaecondev.com](http://www.mesaecondev.com)

- Find regular updates on [www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic)



*This photo shows the transition of Main Street with Light rail and vertical transit-oriented development.*

## Mesa promotes downtown development

In March, the City of Mesa hosted the first Downtown Development Summit at the Mesa Arts Center. Hosted by Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, the Summit brought together developers, investors and city staff to share the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) vision for downtown Mesa. More than 50 developers attended the event and learned about assets and opportunities currently available in the downtown area. Speakers included Mayor Smith, City Manager Chris Brady and Economic Development Director Bill Jabjiniak.

According to Mr. Jabjiniak, the Summit provided a unique opportunity for Mesa to showcase available sites for redevelopment, to share Mesa’s vision of TOD and to prepare the development community to work in tandem with the City to realize that vision.

The Summit included a networking breakfast, 90-minute formal program, a bus tour of Downtown Mesa and a networking event at Hohokam Stadium. Ten sites were highlighted during the virtual tour and many others were mentioned on the bus tour.

“Light rail is a game changer for downtown Mesa,” Mayor Scott Smith said. “The opportunities that arise when you have available properties, a new form based code and focus on transit-oriented development create an exciting time for our downtown.”

The virtual tour video and the Downtown Development Summit collateral are available at: <http://mesaaz.gov/economic/DowntownRedevelopment.aspx>.

## First microbrewery coming to Downtown Mesa

Desert Eagle Brewing Company, the first microbrewery in Mesa, will open in July at 150 W. Main St. in Downtown Mesa. Co-owners, and Mesa residents, Joe Campbell and Jeff Bryant, have designed the 4,000-sq-ft establishment to accommodate 49 patrons in a tasting room and an additional 50 in a beer garden along Main Street.

The announcement answers the public’s call for a downtown brewery. A microbrewery was one of the top suggestions on the



City’s iMesa website for “community-improving ideas”.

Once the light rail line opens in Mesa in 2016, Desert Eagle will be conveniently located between two stations. Desert Eagle will offer two or three of its own brews with other craft beers.

Visit [www.downtownmesa.com](http://www.downtownmesa.com) for more information.

## World’s largest algae test bed facility opens in Mesa



A new test bed expansion at the Arizona Center for Algae Technology and Innovation (AzCATI) was unveiled in February at Arizona State University’s Polytechnic campus in Mesa.

This unique facility is a hub for research, testing, and pre-commercialization of algae-based products, including biofuels, pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, and other high value co-products. AzCATI provides open test and evaluation facilities for the algae industry and research community, from strain identification to process and techno-economic modeling. It also conducts studies that lead to environmental improvements through carbon capture and wastewater bioremediation.

This new expansion makes it the world’s largest algae test bed facility at any university or national lab and will offer 80,000 gallons of algae growing capacity through a combination of raceways and a variety of photo-bioreactors, additional support space, and processing equipment. This will enable AzCATI to provide additional technical services and enhanced capabilities to their partners and the rapidly growing algae industry.

The ceremony kicked-off with remarks from Gary Dirks, Director, ASU LightWorks and Sethuraman Panchanathan, Senior Vice President for Knowledge Enterprise Development at Arizona State University. Governor Jan Brewer addressed attendees followed by Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, Science Foundation Arizona President and CEO Bill Harris, ASU College of Technology and Innovation Vice-Provost/Dean Mitzi Montoya, and Heliae, LLC President and CEO Dan Simon.

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer has provided \$2 million worth of discretionary stimulus funds to the Science Foundation Arizona for a new Algae Science Center at ASU.

Tours are available and additional information may be found at [www.azcati.org](http://www.azcati.org).



## METRO Light Rail project update

Valley Transit Constructors (VTC), a Kiewit/Mass. Joint Venture, was selected recently as the team who will continue designing and building the 3.1-mile Central Mesa light rail extension. Parsons Transportation Group, also part of the team, will serve as lead designer.

“METRO transitioned to a Design-Build delivery method to expedite the project, encourage collaboration and take advantage of favorable market conditions,” said Valley Metro CEO Steve Banta. “We are pleased to have Kiewit, Mass Electric and Parsons Transportation Group back on board following their years helping to successfully design and build portions of the current light rail line.”

This decision comes following a nine-month procurement process that sought support from high quality contractor/design teams from across the country. The contract was unanimously approved by the METRO Board of Directors.

### Construction

The first construction activity is utility relocation. A network of underground and overhead utility lines provides services to customers. Those utilities located under the future light rail trackway must be relocated in order to maintain access. The Design-Build contractor will begin the utility relocation activities with the relocation of nine storm drain manholes along the alignment. This work is scheduled to begin in late spring 2012; a more detailed construction schedule will be developed once the contractor is on board. Ample notification will be provided prior to the initiation of any construction activity.

### Business Assistance

Business assistance programs are available now. METRO and the City of Mesa are working together to provide business assistance to support impacted businesses during construction. In conjunction with the city and community partners, METRO offers a wide array of programs to help businesses including

marketing assistance, directional signage and promotional and business assistance strategies. All businesses are encouraged to participate. To learn more, contact Gary Flunoy, METRO’s Business Assistance Specialist.

### Keep Informed

If you have questions or would like to be added to the Central Mesa extension distribution list to receive project updates and meeting notices, please send your contact information to Lisa Procknow, METRO’s Community Outreach Coordinator. Lisa is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist with any issues or concerns as well as keep you informed of METRO’s progress. Once construction is initiated, METRO will begin weekly email blasts to share construction updates. Information will also be posted on METRO’s Facebook and Twitter accounts as well as METRO’s website at [www.metrolightrail.org/centralmesa](http://www.metrolightrail.org/centralmesa).

- Lisa Procknow, *Community Outreach Coordinator*  
602-495-8213 Cell: 623-533-1352  
[lprocknow@metrolightrail.org](mailto:lprocknow@metrolightrail.org)
- Gary Flunoy, *Business Assistance Specialist*  
602-322-4457 Cell: 602-291-7670  
[gflunoy@metrolightrail.org](mailto:gflunoy@metrolightrail.org)

### Next Steps

Several public meetings will occur as construction begins and design continues. Future public meetings and their estimated timeframes are as follows:

- Contractor Meet & Greet Public Meeting: Spring 2012
- Construction Groundbreaking Event: May 2012
- Final Design Review Public Meeting: Fall 2012

## The Value of a Visitors Bureau

– by Michelle Streeter

Across this nation, Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVB) are responsible for marketing destinations to a variety of audiences be it for business or pleasure and many bureaus are finding creative ways to do it. For more than 25 years, Mesa has shined as one of Arizona’s premier tourism destinations and a large part of that is due to the Mesa CVB, a marketing arm of the city that helps promote attractions, meeting space, hotels and an assortment of tourism-related businesses.

“We strive to be interesting and innovative in our pursuits,” said Milt Fort, interim CEO, who helps plan a year-round marketing and advertising campaign promoting Mesa from coast-to-coast. One example is the Mesa CVB serves as a catalyst for event creation in the Southeast Valley and luring in much-valued tourists through sports tournaments. Just this March, the Notre Dame Clover Cup ladies golf tournament was held at Longbow Golf Club. Twelve collegiate-level teams from around the nation

played in Mesa including nine teams that are currently ranked in the top 100 in the Golfweek/Sagarin rankings.



“Athletes live for competition and we are experts at creating a dynamic playing field here in Mesa,” said Sports Development Manager Josh Todd. This year, Mesa’s sports venues received national recognition in Sports Destination Management and Small Market Meetings magazines.

When corporate business planners seek out destinations to bring employees together, they see the Southwest as an attractive choice that will ultimately result in high attendance. Mesa CVB staff markets convenience and value over competing destinations in Greater Phoenix. “Items like free parking, complimentary breakfast buffet, free wi-fi access and room incentives really do make a difference,” said Meetings Development Manager Pam Williams. “When you combine the added value with accessibility for attendees coming through Phoenix Sky Harbor and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, Mesa is a solid choice.”

The bureau even goes so far as to monitor the migratory patterns into Arizona and in 2010 concluded a year-long passenger survey with Behavioral Research Associates at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The goal was to find out who is traveling to Mesa and the Gateway region and where they are going once they leave the tarmac. One of the most resounding results found that 26% of out-of-state visitors would not have ever come to Arizona if it weren’t for Allegiant’s service from their hometown. This percentage represents an estimated \$37.6 million of new economic impact for the East Valley alone.

These are just a few ways the Mesa CVB is helping generate interest and awareness of Mesa and its many tourism attributes. For more information on Mesa as a tourism destination, go online to [www.VisitMesa.com](http://www.VisitMesa.com) or visit the offices at 120 N. Center, inside the Mesa Chamber of Commerce, and request their 2012 Official Mesa Visitors Guide.

## Crescent Crown Distributing marks opening

Owners and executives from Crescent Crown Distributing, Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, Mesa City Council members and invited guests held a ceremonial ribbon cutting ceremony in February for Crescent Crown’s new Mesa warehouse facility at 1640 W. Broadway Road, between Alma School and Dobson.



The 335,000 sq. ft. warehouse is the second new facility opened by the company in Greater Phoenix in the past three years. The facility will service Crescent Crown’s East Valley business with approximately 400 employees and over 60 sales and delivery routes. This new building represents about 60% of the company’s total business in its Maricopa and Pinal County marketing area. It will be the corporate headquarters for the Arizona operations of Crescent Crown.

### Teamwork saves time

“Thanks to our partnership with the City of Mesa’s Mayor Smith, the City Council and the Economic Development Team who worked diligently to streamline the planning and construction process. That cooperation allowed us to complete this critical project from ground breaking to completion in less than 12 months. This miraculous feat would never have been possible without the unwavering support of the City of Mesa,” said James R. (Bubba) Moffett, Jr., President of Crescent Crown.

### Energy efficiencies

The new warehouse will utilize a 600 kilowatt roof-mounted solar array providing over 1,000,000 kilowatt hours of solar-generated electricity per year. This clean energy production will have a significant impact on the environment, saving 40.4 million pounds of CO2 emissions over 25 years, which is the equivalent of planting 470,000 trees or taking 3,300 cars off the road. The new building will also utilize many of the energy efficient features including LED lighting, motion detectors for light switches, variable drive motors for the HVAC system, plus many other ecological advances. The Company will also continue to run the two Hybrid delivery vehicles at these locations.

Crescent Crown is one of the top ten largest beer distributors in the country. For more information, go to [www.ccdaz.com](http://www.ccdaz.com).

## Arizona bioscience sector sustains strong job growth

Neither the recession nor the subsequent economic doldrums have impeded the growth of Arizona's bioscience sector, a new report shows. During the post-recessionary period of 2009-10, bioscience jobs increased by 7.4 percent, compared to a 1.8 percent decline for the state's overall private sector, according to a new performance analysis of Arizona's bioscience sector, commissioned by the Flinn Foundation.



The annual study by the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice found that since 2002 Arizona has outpaced the nation in generating bioscience jobs and firms, and in winning National Institutes of Health grants, the gold standard for biomedical research funding. Even venture-capital funding was on an upswing in the past year.

Since Arizona's Bioscience Roadmap was launched in 2002, bioscience jobs in the state have grown 41 percent to a total of 96,223,

versus 11 percent growth for the nation as a whole. Those jobs pay average annual wages of \$55,353, 29 percent higher than the overall average for private-sector wages in Arizona.

### Defining Mesa's role in the bioscience arena

The report's release comes at an opportune time for Mesa and the positive growth helps solidify the City's intent to recruit additional bioscience assets. According to Bill Jabjiniak, Mesa Economic Development Director, bioscience is an established sector in Arizona and it is time to carve out a niche for Mesa for the next 10 years of development.

"We are going to spend the next few months identifying how Mesa can play – and win – in this industry. We already have great healthcare assets including award-winning hospitals, medical education and training institutions, and biotech research and development at ASU Polytechnic. We need to determine how to build on that infrastructure to expand Mesa's existing assets and to attract new companies," said Jabjiniak.

The \$109 million Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center in Gilbert is expected to be a catalyst for development opportunities in

Mesa. And the recent expansion of the Arizona Center for Algae Technology and Innovation (AzCATT) at ASU Poly is also likely to spur advances for partnerships between the University, the City and the private sector.

### Potential exists in key areas

According to recent data, the number of Arizona bioscience firms increased by 27 percent from 2002 to 2010, compared to 20 percent growth for the U.S. as a whole. At the end of 2010, the state had 867 bioscience establishments across five industry subsectors: agricultural feedstocks and chemicals; drugs and pharmaceuticals; hospitals; medical devices; and research, testing, and medical laboratories.

Research, testing, and medical laboratories remain Arizona's largest subsector, with 436 establishments, a 49 percent jump since 2002. That subsector also pays the best annual wages in the biosciences, on average nearly \$62,000. With respect to regional strength, the Flagstaff metropolitan area has seen a 98 percent increase in medical-devices jobs since 2002, led by W.L. Gore and Associates.

Currently Mesa is developing the biosciences business development plan in cooperation with Mesa's Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) Healthcare Subcommittee. EDAB meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month.

For additional details, contact Betsy Adams at [Elizabeth.adams@mesaaz.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.adams@mesaaz.gov) or 480.644.3534. Visit [www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic) and [www.flinn.org](http://www.flinn.org).

## Arts and culture build a vibrant community



A large national study by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), released in 2006, showed that those involved in literary, arts and cultural pursuits volunteer at more than twice the rate of those who don't. The study of more than 17,000 adults showed, according to then-Chairman of the NEA Dana Gioia, an important correlation between arts access and strong communities: "Healthy communities depend on active and involved citizens. The arts play an irreplaceable role in producing both those citizens and those communities."

This study suggests that arts help build communities that will take care of their needs, solve their problems and rally around their schools and community organizations to make them strong.

Humans live in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, where the great idea, the next innovation, and the inventive solutions to problems are essential to make businesses, communities and governments more successful. By their very nature, arts and culture activities—whether letting the imagination run wild in the exploration of visual and performing arts, discovering and exploring the processes of scientific discovery through hands-on, experiential activities—help us see a bigger world with more possibilities. They empower people of all ages to think and see in new ways, and to connect ideas from different disciplines.

“The ability to be creative and think critically is not only important in child development and for expanding the horizons of our citizens. Having access to activities that stimulate our creativity is essential to attracting young people and creative thinkers to live and work in our communities. To keep our talent, to attract the new talent we need, a vibrant and engaging arts and cultural sector is essential,” said Cindy Ornstein, Director of the Department of Arts & Culture for the City of Mesa and Mesa Arts Center Executive Director.

Residents are fortunate in Mesa to have cultural exceptional assets that rival those of much larger municipalities: Mesa Arts Center, the largest multidisciplinary arts center in the Southwest U.S., with award-winning venues and programs; Arizona Museum of Natural History, the state’s leading institution of its kind; and Arizona Museum for Youth, a unique national model for an interactive art museum for families. These City-owned, downtown institutions together served over 530,000 visitors last year, and are on track to significantly exceed that number this year.

Add the Mesa Historical Museum, Southwest Shakespeare Company, East Valley Children’s Theater, and many more cultural organizations based in Mesa. These organizations partner with schools, businesses and community organizations to enhance the quality of life for residents and the companies that call Mesa home. Visit [www.mesaaz.gov/mesaartscenter](http://www.mesaaz.gov/mesaartscenter).

## Mesa’s Business 2 Baseball event scores

Mesa’s Business 2 Baseball (B2B) event series in March was a tremendous success for the City of Mesa hosting more than 350 attendees (up from 250 last year) from Mesa businesses, the broker and developer community and prospects considering Mesa for expansion.

The fifth annual B2B Chicago Cubs Spring Training networking events were presented by **Hunt Construction** and **Populous** at Hohokam Stadium, March 6, 8, 28 and 30. Companies developed new and existing relationships, met the Mayor and City Council,

and learned about Mesa’s business development opportunities.

Business 2 Baseball 2012 was co-sponsored by **Southwest Gas; Downtown Mesa Association; SRP; CenturyLink; Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau** and **DWL Architects**. The City of Mesa appreciates the sponsors’ support!



**business2baseball**

For information about future event sponsorships, please contact Jaye O’Donnell at **480.644.3457** or [jaye.odonnell@mesaaz.gov](mailto:jaye.odonnell@mesaaz.gov).

## Regional economic development organization launches new website

The Greater Phoenix Economic Council recently launched its new website, [www.gpec.org](http://www.gpec.org) with features including investor highlights, in-depth community pages and spruced-up news and events. The new site features a digital platform that detects when a user is logging in from California and serves up a different front page, data and workforce sections customized to the California market. GPEC is also on **Twitter, Facebook** and **LinkedIn**.

## More passengers choosing Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport



Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport’s (Airport) Charles L. Williams Passenger Terminal is being stretched to its limit as the Airport has been accommodating record crowds over the past few months. In 2011, the Airport accommodated 250,557 total passengers from January 1 through March 31. This year, the Airport anticipates a 44% increase in traffic over the measured period. The Airport accommodated 210,594 passengers in January and February and expects 150,000 more for March. In addition,

Gateway’s newest air carrier, Spirit Airlines launched new daily service to Dallas Fort Worth on March 22, with continuing service to Fort Lauderdale. From Fort Lauderdale, passengers can continue travel to the Caribbean and South America.

Additional flight information may be found at [www.phxmesagateway.org](http://www.phxmesagateway.org).

## City of Mesa Office of Economic Development

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## EVENTS



### APRIL

24

**Export Workshop**  
"Export Makes Dollars and Sense"  
8:30-11:30 am  
Dobson Lecture Hall  
Mesa Arts Center  
One East Main Street  
[www.azcommerce.com](http://www.azcommerce.com)

27

**Mesa Chamber of Commerce**  
**100th Annual Leadership Awards**  
5-9 pm  
Hilton Phoenix-Mesa  
1011 W. Holmes  
[www.mesachamber.org](http://www.mesachamber.org)

### MAY

9-11

**Arizona Association of Economic  
Development 2012 Spring Conference**  
Hilton Sedona Resort  
90 Ridge Trail Drive  
Sedona  
[www.aaed.com](http://www.aaed.com)

30

**Memorial Day**  
City offices closed

### JUNE

29-30

**Arizona Celebration of Freedom**  
6-10 pm  
Main Street, Downtown Mesa  
<http://www.azcelebrationoffreedom.org/>

## Riverview Golf Course closes to make way for Chicago Cubs Spring Training Facility

The City of Mesa closed Riverview Golf Course March 18, 2012 and Riverview Park closed April 2 to begin pre-construction work on the future Spring Training home of the Chicago Cubs and Arizona State University (ASU) baseball. In September 2011, the Arizona Board of Regents approved a proposal for ASU to enter into a lease agreement with the Cubs to share the facility.

Initial work will focus on boxing and removing many of the existing trees that will be eventually replanted with the Cubs project. In addition to removing the trees, archeological, fish removal, and geo-testing will occur over the next several months in preparation for mass site grading to begin mid-summer. It is anticipated that details surrounding the design of the stadium and other aspects of the project will begin to be unveiled to the public in April. First pitch at the new facility for the Chicago Cubs is slated for Spring Training 2014.

For more information, visit <http://www.mesaaz.gov/BetterMesa/cubs.aspx>.



## Boeing celebrates 30 years in Mesa!

On Friday, March 23, Boeing of Mesa celebrated its 30th anniversary. The Mesa site is the headquarters for the company's unmanned systems and home of the production line for the AH-6 Light Attack and Apache Attack AH-64 helicopters. As part of the celebration, Boeing unveiled its Wall of Honor containing the names of its employees who have served in the military. The newly constructed monument has 699 names on it right now, but has space for 4,000 names. Ground was broken on the former Hughes Helicopters, Inc. (later McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Systems) plant in March 1982 and has grown over the last three decades to employ approximately 4,700 people, making it one of Mesa's largest private employers. Congratulations Boeing - here's to another 30 years in Mesa!



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AND



[@MESAeconDev](https://twitter.com/MESAeconDev)