

It's Easy Being Green

Peoria Residents Better than Average at Separating Recyclables from Trash

After months of planning, Peoria finished rolling out its curbside recycling program on schedule. All houses received a cocoa-colored barrel by Nov. 9.

So far, according to Beckie Borquez, the Solid Waste Division's recycling and special projects coordinator, almost all Peoria residents are participating in the program -- meaning they have a container and are using it.

"One Willow District resident e-mailed me to say she stood in the driveway jumping up and down when the truck first rolled past her home," said Councilmember Joan Evans. "Another gentleman said that he was not sure about this program, but now he thinks it is great. He feels that his trash is about equally divided between garbage and recyclables."

In its first six weeks, Peoria diverted 21 percent of its solid waste from the landfill -- nearly 1,700 tons of material. The fact that city residents already have eclipsed the goal rate of 15 percent for the program's first 12 months impresses Solid Waste Manager Jesse Duarte.

"This is just a quick snapshot, but clearly we're doing well for the first few months," Duarte said. He hopes to see that diversion rate continue to increase as residents get used to

recycling.

Residents have been adept at figuring out what refuse should go in which bin. Borquez said that, according to the City of Phoenix, which processes the recyclables Peoria collects, "Our contamination level is pretty good -- about 10 percent. Industry standards are about 17 to 20 percent." She said the most common mistakes residents make are bagging their recyclables and including non-recyclable plastic products such as bikes, toys or kiddie pools.

Borquez projects the city will save \$133,000 in landfill fees during the next fiscal year. She also estimates that Peoria will bring in \$375,000 from the sale of recyclable materials.

But early success doesn't mean the work is done for employees in the Solid Waste Division.

"We are still coordinating exchanges from residents that wanted 32-gallon barrels because we had to order more," Borquez said. "They have arrived. We are in the process of calling the residents back to coordinate the exchanges. More residents than we anticipated wanted the 32-gallon barrels, including many from the retirement communities."

The program offers 32-, 60- and 90-gallon barrels for home use. She said residents who would like to



James Davia and his family were the first to receive a cocoa-brown recycling container. Like most Peorians, it didn't take James long to take advantage of the new curbside service.

exchange their barrels for a different size should call 623-773-7431.

Not having enough of the smaller barrels was one of only two major setbacks during the rollout; the other involved a private contractor switching the collection information in two portions of Ventana Lakes.

Peoria will continue its efforts to educate customers about recycling. The Solid Waste Division plans to teach schoolchildren about recycling, have materials at city events, revamp its Web site, send out additional newsletters and possibly produce an educational video.

The city also is in the process of contacting multifamily communities, where participation is at the

discretion of property managers.

According to Borquez, recycling already has begun at two mobile-home parks in the area of 79th and Peoria avenues. "They got 300-gallon barrels, and we provided the management company with information about recycling that it can hand out to residents."

With the curbside program launched successfully, the city is removing the unsightly communal recycling dumpsters from parking lots and parks around town.

For more information on recycling in Peoria, visit www.peoriaaz.gov/recycle or call 623-773-7431

Link Missing No More

Lake Pleasant Parkway to Open in February

By mid-February, a significant gap in the city's road network will be closed when the final section of Lake Pleasant Parkway opens between 95th Avenue and Williams Road.

Completing this section of Lake Pleasant Parkway adds a crucial east-west transportation corridor in the growing area. The road also was designed to serve as a new truck route -- through trucks will be shifted to Lake Pleasant Parkway from other streets like Union Hills Drive and Beardsley Road after legal notice and formal City Council action to amend the truck route ordinance.

Motorists should be alert and use caution on the new roadway and in the area.

Construction of this portion of the road was paid for and managed by Continental Homes, developer of the Camino a Lago project through which the road runs.

As construction crews finish ancillary work, some temporary restrictions may occasionally be in place and existing traffic signs may be changed.

For more information on this and other city construction projects, visit www.peoriaaz.gov/buildingpeoria



CITY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

October

- Approved a pilot program for red-light camera enforcement at select Peoria intersections. (For more information, see the story on page 3.)
- Approved an agreement with the City of Phoenix allowing Peoria to use Phoenix's North Gateway Material Recovery Facility for recyclable materials.
- Authorized approximately \$93,000 for a program review of the Peoria Municipal Court. Program reviews are a comprehensive examination of department operations conducted regularly as part of the city's emphasis on continuous improvement.
- Approved an agreement with the State of Arizona to implement the Safe Routes to School program at Cotton Boll, Coyote Hills and Sky View elementary schools. The program provides safety education, encouragement and incentives for students who walk or bike to school.

November

- Formally dedicated the Peoria Veterans Memorial at Rio Vista Park. The memorial consists of significant U.S. military battles and events throughout history engraved on granite panels.. Veterans' organizations and other community groups can sponsor these panels. For information, call Parks Manager Kirk Haines at 623-773-7120.
- Approved an agreement with the Peoria Diamond Club to provide spring training services through 2013. Members of the Diamond Club volunteer as ushers and sell tickets and programs at spring training games and other stadium events.
- Accepted three grants from the Arizona Department of Homeland Security totaling \$779,320. The money will be used to purchase equipment and pay for staff training to strengthen the city's emergency response and disaster recovery capabilities.
- Approved a \$113,000 contract for design and construction of Sunrise Mountain trail. The trail will wind two-to-three miles up Sunrise Mountain, which is immediately south of the Westwing subdivision near 83rd Avenue and Jomax Road. The trail is scheduled for completion in March 2008.
- Adopted Principles of Sound Water Management. This policy provides guidelines for management and preservation of the city's water system and resources.

December

- Discussed a comprehensive update to the city's design-review standards, which guide the visual and functional design of buildings in the community. The standards will be finalized in a public process over the next several months prior to going back to the City Council for final approval.
- Approved \$94,000 for the purchase and installation of an ethanol (E-85) fuel tank at the city's Municipal Operations Center. More and more vehicles in the city's fleet use the bio-fuel blend that is 85 percent ethanol (made from corn) and 15 percent gasoline. The Gila River Indian Community had awarded an \$80,000 grant to Peoria for this project.
- Amended the city's cable license agreement with Cox Communications so that the Pentagon Channel can be broadcast to Cox cable subscribers across Arizona. In 2005, Peoria became the first Arizona city to broadcast the Pentagon Channel to Cox cable customers within its borders.
- Adjusted the development impact fees paid by residential and commercial developers to offset the cost of extending city infrastructure to serve new growth. The fee on a new, single family home ranges from \$13,014 to \$18,874 depending upon where it is located.

Mayor's Report

Peoria Pushes Pentagon Channel Statewide

Last spring, I used this space to talk about how – and why – the Pentagon had honored our community for its support of the men and women of the armed forces and their families.

Well, Peoria didn't become complacent after receiving the Defense Exceptional Public Service Award, and it's time for a follow-up report. Here, as broadcaster Paul Harvey would say, is "the rest of the story."

One of the initiatives that helped earn us that award was making the Pentagon Channel – the military's version of CNN – available to Cox cable subscribers on one of Peoria's government channels. This simple act helped our local military families stay better informed about the things their loved ones in uniform were doing. It was a good idea – one that screamed to be implemented beyond Peoria.

After months of negotiation with Cox Communications, the City Council in December amended its cable franchise agreement with Cox in a way that will enable the cable provider to offer the Pentagon Channel to its digital subscribers across Arizona. Early in the year, most likely in February, Cox subscribers will see the Pentagon broadcasts move from channel 98 to channel 122, where it will be seen not only in Peoria but also by Cox digital subscribers throughout the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas, each of which includes an Air Force base. By the end of the year, it also should be available in Cochise County, which includes the Army's Fort Huachuca.

I was fortunate to be a city councilmember when we first launched the Pentagon Channel in Peoria. Forging an agreement to make the channel available to a much larger number of people around the state is even better. Thanks goes to the city officials and Cox executives who made this happen, and to the Defense Department for supporting the effort. It is one more way to show our soldiers, sailors and airmen, along with their families, that we appreciate their sacrifices.

Mayor Bob Barrett



CITY COUNCIL District Roundup



Contact the Mayor and Council by calling 623-773-7306.

Council meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Peoria City Council Chamber, 8401 W. Monroe St.

Call the City Clerk's Office at 623-773-7340 for agendas or more information.

Council agendas, meeting minutes, district maps and other information also are available on the city Web site at www.peoriaaz.gov/council

Acacia District – Councilmember Vicki Hunt

While we love what retail sales do for our community's economy, shopping carts from businesses have at times been a problem. An electronic cart containment system was installed at the new Peoria Oldtown Super Wal-Mart during construction. A digitally encoded signal triggers a wheel lock whenever a cart comes within range of the parking lot perimeter. This type of technology helps to manage the stray cart challenge.

Ironwood District – Councilmember Dave Pearson

Peoria park rangers are important to the security of all of our city parks and trails. With the opening of the pedestrian bridge over New River, near Rio Vista Park, rangers are linked to the trails on either side of the riverbed. This improved access allows rangers to move freely between the park and trails. Near Rio Vista, ranger patrols coincide with school schedules to keep things safe.

Mesquite District – Councilmember Cathy Carlat

When the new section of Lake Pleasant Parkway opens, residents will have a chance to drink in the beauty of our scenic new median project. The ebb and flow of the terrain and the varied textures are meant to bring to mind the waters of our beautiful Lake Pleasant. The lake is memorialized in this streetscape as visitors and residents travel toward this distinctive landmark in our city. This enhancement is a strong statement about the pride we take in our city!

Palo Verde District – Councilmember Ron Aames

The city is nearing completion of a pilot project to stucco & paint walls and add landscaping along the north side of Cactus Road between 84th and 89th Avenues. The city plans to make some of the same improvements on other arterial streets in the coming years. Other beautification efforts, such as a new ordinance that helps eradicate abandoned shopping carts, also are helping. If you spot a stray shopping cart, you may contact the city's Code Enforcement Department at (623) 773-7226.

Pine District – Councilmember Carlo Leone

The Peoria Fire Department held its annual Christmas party for Peoria kids at the community center. Firefighters also passed out gifts at Rosa Linda senior apartments and hosted a pancake breakfast for seniors at Rio Vista Park. The Peoria Police Department held their annual Shop with a Cop program, treating kids to breakfast and then taking them shopping for gifts for themselves and their families. These programs show the consistent concern and dedication of the Peoria Police and Fire departments to the citizens of Peoria.

Willow District – Councilmember Joan Evans

Batter up! Spring training begins Feb. 28th at the Peoria Sports Complex. In preparation for the upcoming season, the facility is being improved. The entire exterior is being repainted, stadium wall padding has been replaced, 1,700 seats are being changed out, the parking lot has been resealed and re-stripped, and light pole banners greet visitors in the area. Game tickets may be purchased online at www.tickets.com or by phone at 800-677-1227.

Round 'Em Up New Ordinance Targets Stray Shopping Carts

There is a new wrangler in old Peoria – bringing in strays that have been loitering around town.

Following a mandate from councilmembers, who receive numerous complaints from residents on the subject, Peoria's Code Compliance Office has hired part-time Code Technician Jon Zitt to round up the stolen shopping carts that have been littering city neighborhoods.

The City Council on Oct. 16 approved an ordinance that, in conjunction with state law, holds retailers responsible for wayward carts. That enables Zitt to round up and impound abandoned carts. Retailers must retrieve them within three days to avoid a fine. After three days, they are fined \$30, plus an additional \$5 per day.

"We all want our neighborhoods to look good," says Palo Verde District Councilmember Ron Aames. "Quickly removing abandoned shopping carts will contribute to the beautification of our city."



Code Compliance Technician Jon Zitt is a one-man posse, rounding up stray shopping carts from Peoria neighborhoods.

Though the program didn't begin until autumn, the city had impounded 510 carts by the end of the year and recycled or scrapped 85. It also had imposed and collected \$560 in fines.

For more information or to report stray carts, contact Code Compliance at 623-773-7226.

Public Safety Training Center Open Peoria Fire Recruits Graduate in First Regional Academy Class



Councilmember Joan Evans (fourth from left) joined Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs (center) and others to formally open the new Glendale Regional Public Safety Training Center.

The 57-acre Glendale Regional Public Safety Training Center is an impressive facility. The two stories of block, steel and glass seen from the street overlook a vast training ground hidden from view behind the center. There is, essentially, a small town back there – and that's where West Valley firefighter recruits learn the skills and teamwork that keep residents safe.

A simulated fire station, five-story drill tower, railroad cars, a 3,800-square-foot home, automobiles, a driving track, underground gas lines and confined spaces present recruits with just about any challenge they could face on the job.

Peoria invested \$5 million in the \$44 million Glendale facility – and seven Peoria firefighters were part of its first graduating class, which completed training on Oct. 13. Alongside them were recruits from the cities of Avondale, Glendale and Surprise – departments that

often work closely with Peoria on emergency calls.

Its regional class makeup is a big plus for the new center.

"Having this academy locally allows us to train with the other West Valley departments who we regularly respond to calls with," says Larry Rooney, Peoria deputy fire chief. "We start building those personal and professional relationships right in the academy."

Previously, Peoria and the other West Valley departments sent their recruits to the Phoenix academy, but Glendale's new regional center offers many advantages—not the least of which is its proximity to Peoria. Located on Glendale Avenue east of El Mirage Road, the facility is about two miles from Peoria's southernmost station.

"It's great to have the training close by. Our fire companies can complete their required training and still be back to Peoria quickly if they are needed."

City Hopes Cameras Make Scofflaws See Red

Peoria's red-light cameras are up and running.

The enforcement system is operating at two intersections -- 83rd Avenue & Union Hills Drive and 91st Avenue & Bell Road – with four more to come. Each has signs alerting motorists to the camera enforcement.

"Our goal is to change driving behavior at these locations and make the intersections safer," says Police Chief Larry Ratcliff.

Concerned about the number of red-light runners, the City Council approved photo enforcement Oct. 2, entering into an agreement with Redflex Traffic Systems Inc.

"The City Council is committed to making our intersections safer," says Dave Pearson, councilmember for the Ironwood District. "Red-light cameras have been successful in other communities, and we expect the same in Peoria."

The intersection cameras will snap photos of vehicles that run red lights so police can cite them. There is no speed enforcement capability.

Why the urgency? The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that in 2005 alone, nearly 9,200 people died and approximately 1 million were injured in intersection-related crashes. A 1998 survey by the Department of Transportation and the American Trauma Society found that two out of three Americans see someone running a red light at least a few times a week, some even once a day.

The leading excuse given for red-light running is neither frustration nor road rage, but rather "being in a hurry."



Cameras installed at Peoria intersections in 2008 will help nab red-light runners.

Peoria's use of red-light cameras is a one-year pilot program that the city has the option to renew four times. Redflex will provide the equipment and staff needed to operate the photo system. The city will pay the company \$33 for every paid citation. Redflex operates more than 1,000 systems nationwide.

Under the system, the cameras will photograph vehicles entering the "box" – the area within the alignment of both streets – after the light turns red. Violators who are cited face a \$214 fine. Vehicles already in the box, having entered under a yellow light or simply waiting to turn left, won't trigger the cameras. The system also is designed not to photograph cars making legal right turns on red.

There is a 30-day grace period, during which those photographed are receiving warnings, from the time the first cameras activated.

New Building Opens on Municipal Campus

Many City Service Counters Have Moved; But Some Remain at City Hall

Employees from five departments – Community Development, Community Services, Engineering, Public Works and Utilities – have started doing business in Peoria's new Development and Community Services Building, located on the northeast corner of 85th Avenue and Mountain View Road (on the city's municipal campus).

The parking lot and main entrance for the two-story, 75,000-square-foot building are on the west side, facing 85th Avenue.

Other customer service functions, including water and garbage billing and setup, sales tax and business licenses, and the city's passport application office, will remain in City Hall.

Now open for business at the Development and Community Services Building:

- Building permits, plans and safety (Community Development Dept.; first floor)
- Engineering plan review (Engineering Dept.; first floor)
- Parks and recreation programs (Community Services Dept.; first floor)
- Planning and zoning (Community Development Dept.; first floor)

Staying in City Hall:

- Passport applications (City Clerk's Office; first floor)
- Public records (City Clerk's Office; first floor)
- Sales tax & business licensing (Finance Customer Service windows; first floor)
- Water & garbage payments (Finance Customer Service windows; first floor)

February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- TV Feb. 5** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV Feb. 7** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.
- TV Feb. 19** City Council Study Session, City Hall Pine Room, 4 p.m.
- TV Feb. 19** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV Feb. 21** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 23** Spring Training Fan Fest 2008, Peoria Sports Complex (16101 N. 83rd Ave.), 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- TV March 4** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV March 6** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.
- March 14, 15** Peoria's Festival of the Arts (see ad below)
- TV March 18** City Council Study Session, City Hall Pine Room, 4 p.m.
- TV March 18** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV March 20** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.
- March 22** Dolly Sanchez Memorial Easter Egg Hunts (see ad at right)
- TV April 1** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV April 3** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.

- April 3, 10, 17, & 24** Peoria Performances, (see ad below)
- April 5** Pioneer Day Festival (see ad below)
- TV April 15** City Council Study Session, City Hall Pine Room, 4 p.m.
- TV April 15** City Council Meeting, Council Chamber, 7 p.m.
- TV April 17** Planning & Zoning Commission, Council Chamber, 6:30 p.m.
- TV April 23** City Council Budget Study Session, Public Safety Admin. Bldg. (8351 W. Cinnabar Ave.), 3:30 p.m.
- TV April 25** City Council Budget Study Session, Public Safety Admin. Bldg. (8351 W. Cinnabar Ave.), 3:30 p.m.
- TV April 29** City Council Budget Study Session, Public Safety Admin. Bldg. (8351 W. Cinnabar Ave.), 3:30 p.m.

The Council Chamber, City Hall & City Hall Amphitheater are located on the Peoria Municipal Campus (8401 W. Monroe St.).

TV Broadcast live on Peoria's Channel 11 (on Cox & Qwest cable), and rebroadcast throughout the week. Visit www.peoriaaz.gov/channel_11 for schedule.

Dolly Sanchez Memorial Easter Egg Hunts

Saturday, March 22

New Location!
Sunrise Mountain High School
(21200 N. 83rd Ave.)

8 a.m. to noon

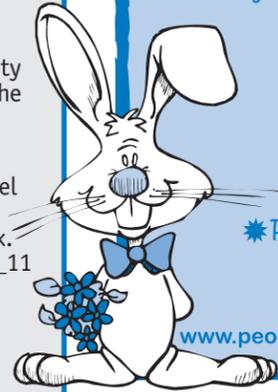
Admission: Free
with donation of canned food for St. Mary's Westside Food Bank

Join us for:

- * Candy Hunts for eight different age groups
- * Make & Take Crafts
- * Games & Entertainment
- * Petting Zoo & Pony Rides

More info:
623-773-7198

www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents



PEORIA Performances

Music under the stars at the Peoria City Hall Amphitheater
8401 W. Monroe St.

Bring your blanket, cushions, snacks and refreshments to these free concerts. Shows start at 7 p.m.

Apr. 3 Mary Petrich Jazz Quartet

Apr. 10 Sun City Grand Beach Bums (Music of the 50's & 60's)

Apr. 17 8-Tracks (Rock & Roll)

Apr. 24 CTS (Rock & Roll)

No glass containers or alcohol are permitted in the amphitheater. Please leave pets at home.

Info: www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents or 623-773-7198

Peoria's Festival of the Arts

SECOND ANNUAL

Friday, March 14, 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Saturday, March 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fine Art • Juried Art Exhibit • Gourmet Food
Wine Tasting • Library Fest • Live Entertainment

Peoria Municipal Campus (8401 W. Monroe St.)

Free Admission

Info: www.peoriaaz.gov/specialevents or 623-773-7198

PEORIA'S PIONEER DAY FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 10 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

OSUNA PARK 10510 N. 83RD AVE.

ENTERTAINMENT, CRAFT VENDORS, PARADE,
MAKE-N-TAKE CRAFTS, GAMES, PETTING ZOO & PONY RIDES

FREE ADMISSION

INFO: WWW.PEORIAAZ.GOV/SPECIALEVENTS OR 623-773-7198

City of Peoria Telephone Numbers

ALL NUMBERS ARE IN THE 623 AREA CODE

AM/PM Program 773-7137	Library (Sunrise Mountain Branch)..... 487-5150
Building Inspections 773-7225	Mayor and Council Offices 773-7306
City Attorney's Office 773-7330	Parks and Recreation..... 773-7137
City Clerk's Office..... 773-7340	Peoria Job Hotline 773-7105
City Manager's Office 773-7300	Peoria Municipal Court 773-7400
Code Compliance 773-7162	Planning and Zoning 773-7200
Community Center..... 773-7436	Police (non-emergency)..... 773-8311
Community Development 773-7200	Solid Waste Billing..... 773-7160
Dial-a-Ride 773-7435	Solid Waste Collection 773-7431
Fire Department (non-emergency)..... 773-7279	Street Maintenance..... 773-7432
Graffiti Hotline 773-7094	Water Billing / Service 773-7160
Library (Main)..... 773-7555	Water Leaks..... 773-7433



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the city's electronic newsletter,
at www.peoriaaz.gov/e-news

RSS feed now available! Info: www.peoriaaz.gov/news

PEORIA FOCUS

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