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Nuisance sites get new attention

With vacant, eyesore properties sprouting areawide, the city restarts program to get cleanup action



A partially boarded-up home near East 36th Street and South Kino Parkway overlooks what has become a de facto backyard dump. The city has stepped up efforts anew to get property owners, if they can be found, to clean up such messes.

By Carli Brosseau
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Neighbors of vacant homes with towering weeds or scattered debris can turn to the city for help once again.

After a five-month suspension brought on by budget woes, Tucson's Housing and Community Development

Department has resumed its vacant property cleanup services.

But filing a complaint doesn't mean a crew with a lawnmower and some big shovels will be on the way anytime soon. Yet another unpleasant byproduct of the housing bust and recession is that the process for getting any neglected prop-

erty cleaned up can take months.

With foreclosure looming, more and more homeowners have walked away from their homes, leaving an open door flapping behind them. Many owners virtually disappeared.

See VACANT, A6

Streetcar delivery at least 3 mos. late

Ore. manufacturer is new at this; November 2013 rollout still expected

By Darren DaRonco
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The company hired to build Tucson's streetcars is four to six months behind schedule for its first customer, Portland, Ore.

And it has notified Tucson that delivery of the city's first prototype car for testing and evaluation will be at least three months late.

But United Streetcar and city officials still expect those tracks workers are laying through downtown will have trains rolling down them by the scheduled November 2013 startup date.

United Streetcar, a subsidiary of Oregon Iron Works, is attempting to be the first U.S. company in 60 years to build streetcars. Portland and Tucson are its first customers.

However, the company has hit some snags, and has yet to complete its first car. United has struggled with design problems and propulsion system issues for months. With deadlines looming, delivery dates and plans are changing.

Tucson has ordered eight cars. Its prototype car

See STREETCAR, A5

Neil Armstrong, first man on the moon, dies

By Lisa Cornwell and Seth Borenstein
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI — Neil Armstrong was a soft-spoken engineer who became a global hero when as a steel-nerved pilot he made "one giant leap for mankind" with a small step onto the moon.

The modest man, who had people on Earth entranced and awed from almost a quarter-million miles away but credited others for the feat, died Saturday. He was 82.

See ARMSTRONG, A4



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS / NASA

Pedestrian's death, as always, brings back awful memory, lasting lesson in forgiveness

Every time I see the words "struck and killed a pedestrian" in a headline, the memory of a night 40 years ago comes back to me with cold clarity.

It happened again last week, for the fifth time in Tucson this year, after police Officer Chris Fenoglio struck and killed Steven Duane Rodgers, who was walking across Speedway.

Fenoglio was answering a call. His lights were flashing. His siren was wailing.

Rodgers was wearing dark clothes. He was not in a cross-walk.

I know too well what it feels like to experience such a tragedy.



David Fitzsimmons

When I was 16, I had a job working as a carryout at Lucky's grocery store at 22nd Street and Craycroft. It was late and my shift was over. The store manager flipped on the closed sign. I hung up my green apron and jumped into my pinstriped Rambler.

Pulling out of the parking lot, I slipped Carole King into my eight-track and headed home.

She sang to me.

I feel the earth move under my feet

I feel the sky tumbling down

I wound through the dark back streets and turned onto 29th. There were no streetlights.

He was walking home in the dark from his neighborhood tavern. We never saw each other coming.

With the suddenness of a Hitchcock fright he appeared in my headlights in the middle of the street, striding toward me. I gasped and wrenched the steering wheel right.

I was too late.

See FITZ, A4

COMING THURSDAY

Go Go to HoCo

Caliente interprets downtown's homage to all things musical.



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