



# Provo Insights

by John Curtis

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ProvoMayor.org

Objectives:  
Get to Know the City  
Get to Know Me  
Have Impact

# Get to Know the City

## Mourning Our Loss



I don't remember a day like this since 9/11. I spent the day in somewhat of a haze. It was difficult for me to think of anything but what a loss this is to our community. In the few breaks I had away from the fire I found myself unable to concentrate or do anything but think of the fire.

My first experience of the day was talking to an endless stream of media. I was hesitant to talk with them because I had a knot in my throat. The professionals did a great job of telling the media about the fire. My job was to tell the world why this building was so important to us. I tried my best to tell them about graduations, family pictures, long LDS stake conference meetings, concerts, celebrations, and the endless list of events that tied us all to the building. Even harder to explain is what the beauty, culture, and history of the building means as a symbol of who we are.

As the day is winding down I find myself relaxing and grateful. I'm grateful for the firefighters who worked so hard today. I'm grateful no one was injured. I'm grateful for the experience I shared on the sidewalk all day with so many of you. I'm grateful for the professionalism I saw today from the LDS church. I'm grateful for the Red Cross and so many who brought food and aid to those of us involved. Most of all, I'm grateful for a community that builds and respects a building like the tabernacle.

It has been made clear to me today that Provo is mourning. It's hard to explain but the mourning is not unlike mourning the loss of a loved one. We want our tabernacle back and are prepared to offer up any sacrifice of money and time if that will bring it back.

This Sunday, we will hold a community gathering to remember the Provo Tabernacle at 7 p.m. at the UCCU Events Center at UVU. It will be followed by a free performance of Lex de Azevedo's Gloria: the Life of Christ, Part I, the Nativity. I'll post more details later.

## Veterans Memorial Pool Breaks Revenue Record



The Veterans Memorial Pool had 85,000 visitors and generated \$240,000 in revenue this past season, more than in any other year before. June was also the highest revenue generating month in the history of the pool.

And even more importantly, there were no major accidents or injuries, thanks to our highly trained and professional aquatic staff.

An eight-year-old visitor from Idaho even went to our aquatics facilities supervisor's office to tell her his trip to the pool was "the best day of his life."

What's really interesting is that a few years ago, before the addition of the splash pool, the Veterans Memorial Pool was losing money. The year before the splash pool was added, it only brought in \$59,000, and required a transfer of \$120,000 from the city's general fund. Now it's making money, operating with an \$80,000 surplus.

## Thumpety Thump Thump, Thumpety Thump Thump



One of the first things I noticed about Provo when our family moved back 13 years ago was the "thumpety" ride on University Avenue between just north of Bull Dog Avenue and about Center Street. If you haven't noticed, you are one of the few.

I'm excited to announce that starting the first of June UDOT will begin grinding the bumps down so they no longer cause the thump thump.

The work will last about a month and take place at night. I'm told it will be loud so if you live close, the rest of the city and I thank you for putting up with the noise so we can get a smooth ride.

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2011

## Awful Waffle



Today I stopped in on the grand opening of the [Awful Waffle](#). If you didn't hear about it, I've got good news. The grand opening will last until 11:00 pm tonight.

Okay all you cheap guys out there. Here is the perfect date for tonight.

This is the real deal. Recipes and equipment all from Belgium. I let them order for me and I was served the best crepe I've ever had.

Make sure you check out the waffle grill that Lance carried on his back on the Belgium metro.

I give it four stars and wish them the best

You can find them just south of BYU campus at 815 N. 700 E.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2011

### Come Fly With Us



Here's our press release about the announcement in last night's council meeting (you can read Frontier's press release [here](#)):

#### PROVO AIRPORT LANDS FRONTIER AIRLINES

**Provo, UT**--March 2, 2011--Mayor John Curtis announced in a Provo Municipal Council meeting last night that Frontier Airlines has agreed to begin new service at the Provo Municipal Airport starting in June. The service will consist of a daily 8:30 a.m. outbound and 9:15 p.m. inbound flight to Denver. Connections can be made at Denver to points such as New York, Dallas, Chicago and Orlando. The route will be operated by Frontier's 99-seat Embraer 190. The target date for service to begin is June 20, 2011, with the first flight from Provo Municipal Airport on June 21, 2011.

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2011

### First Flight Ticket Giveaway



Who wants to fly with me to Denver?

The start of Frontier Airlines' new scheduled service at the Provo Municipal Airport is just a few weeks away. The first outbound flight is June 21. To celebrate this achievement, thank those involved, explore the opportunities it creates, and SPREAD THE WORD, we're filling the first flight with elected officials, business leaders, travel industry people, and possibly you. We're going to spend the day in Denver and fly back that night. Here are some of the things we'll do together.

We'll eat at:

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2011

### The First Flight



I'm too tired to share the details of today but I will pause long enough to thank the many people who contributed to today's historic flight.

Too many to list by name but on behalf of all of us, thank you to everyone who contributed large and small over the years. We needed all of you to make this happen.

Every detail of our trip was flawless until it was time to depart from Colorado. It seems that the problem of 100 people without luggage had been overlooked. Frontier had to hastily add weight to the luggage compartment in order to obtain the proper balance.

Other than that it was a perfect day!

# Get to Know Me

## Hard Jobs In Provo



I worked with the sanitation guys last week on one of their routes. It was good for me to see how hard they worked and how difficult their job is.



## What's Wrong With This Picture?



The President of the Employee's Association dunks the Mayor with a well placed throw!



I saved the City \$48 today.



I saved the City \$48 today.

When we were planing my current trip to Washington DC we worked as hard as we could to travel inexpensively. Gina found a flight that saved almost \$500 but required me to travel to a nearby airport about an hour distance from my hotel. We spent no small amount of time to determine the cheapest way to get to the hotel. Renting a car was out because of the expensive parking fees in DC. A shuttle service was unpredictable and hard to schedule because of my uncertain arrival time. A taxi was finally selected as our method of choice and we reasoned that even with the high fare it still saved hundreds of dollars over the more expensive but closer flight.

When I landed I stumbled on to a "Super Saver Shuttle" and unable to resist the temptation to save some money I stood in line and found I could get to the hotel for \$48 less than a taxi. After waiting forever my turn was called and I boarded the shuttle. To my surprise I found a young child (about 3 yrs old) in a car seat all by himself. I soon learned it was the son of the driver. The young boy informed me that I could not sit by him and suggested I go to the back of the shuttle. I smiled and picked out the seat in front next to the driver. The shuttle soon filled up and when I reached for my seat belt I found a unique surprise. The belt was tied in a knot holding only the shoulder strap in place, the lap belt having been cut off. As we were pulling way the driver leaned over and kindly pulled the shoulder strap over my head as if the make shift seat belt was really going to save my life. I told him to drive safe.

As we stopped at every hotel in the District of Columbia I watched my young three year old friend with interest. He seemed to run the show and if he had a seat belt it surely wasn't fastened. He barked out commands at his father the driver for coloring books, drinks and gave directions. The van was old and tired but finally I arrived safe and sound and with an extra \$48 of the City's money in my pocket.

## After 28 Years of Marriage I'm Announcing That We Are Officially Split



I'm not sure when I first realized it but today I could ignore it no longer. Today when she cheated on me I had to face reality right in the eye.

It should have been obvious over the years. Sue has a **red** car, I have a **blue** car. She did her undergraduate at the U and mine was at the Y. When she went back to school for her doctorate she chose the U.

The breaking point came in the 4th quarter today. She had promised me that the wife of the mayor would be all BYU but today she smuggled in a **red** Santa hat and pulled it out when the U scored their go-ahead-touchdown.

So here it is. We are officially a split couple. She has come to love the Y and she tries to be Blue but deep down when they square off she is **Red Red Red**.

Ouch. It hurts.

PS. My thoughts about today's game? The only way to survive is to remind myself, "it's only a game."

## Is the Street Wide Enough?



## Nine People Driving Cross-Country in an Old RV



Yep. It's a Curtis Family vacation.

What does the Curtis family do to get away? This last week we loaded up in our old RV and drove close to 4000 miles. Can that be any fun? I'm smiling because for the first time in a number of years I've had all six of our children with us. We even had our very cool grandson. Only thing missing was the son-in-law and the dog. Almost perfect.



## Meeting Jimmer



So with the success of Jimmer, I was pretty sure I'd never have a chance to meet him again (the first time was last year at the Boys & Girls Club when I asked him who he was). Imagine my surprise when I attended the [Sugar Ray](#) concert at the [Shops of Riverwoods](#) and learned that not only was Jimmer coming, but I was invited to meet him and take a picture with him as well.

I was escorted past a series of raw-meat-eating body guards into a room, and there was "THE JIMMER" in real life. Before I knew it, I had my arm around him and they were shooting pictures. All I needed was a fan blowing my hair and it would've have been exactly like the models you see on TV.

What I remember from the moment was wondering, "Who are these other people, and what are they doing in my picture with Jimmer?"

Seconds later the "other people" in the picture took the stage and I learned that not only did I have my picture taken with Jimmer, but with the entire group of [Sugar Ray](#) as well.

Oh, by the way, Jimmer made [Sugar Ray's blog](#), and I didn't. They're probably wondering, "Who's that guy in our picture with Jimmer?"

Thanks to Brandon Osmond for the photo

# Impact

## Personal Reflections on Provo's Police Department



I've lost a fair amount of sleep over recent incidents dealing with Provo's police. For the last 13 years I have had a close association with hundreds of law enforcement agencies. It's been my opportunity to observe their world from a front row seat across the country and around the globe.

From this vantage point I have learned to respect and trust these men and women who are generally underpaid, often not appreciated and frequently do their job without adequate resources in an environment of extreme stress.

Their culture is unique. Some are attracted to the line of work because they love fighting for justice others find their way into this profession just as any other career but regardless of how they became a cop, they all share this in common, the moment they put on the uniform they agree to live to a high standard. I get this. As mayor I too live in a fish bowl with some waiting for me to be less than perfect.

## The Spouting Water on 900 East



A week ago Tuesday, an air/vacuum valve blew off our 36-inch water transmission line on 900 East at about 2:30 p.m. Our crews had to shut off the 36-inch main as well as all of the water mains that connect into it, which they were able to do without anyone losing water service. Before we could make the repair, however, we had to wait for the water to drain out of 3200 feet of 36-inch pipe through a 1-inch opening. We estimated it would take two to three days, but it took a week. It finally finished draining yesterday. In the pictures above and below, the truck is parked over the manhole because the



[Heather said...](#)

I passed this every day for that entire week :) I wondered how long it'd take, and what was going on. I knew I'd see it on your blog any day now!

I just felt bad for the workers who had to sit in that truck for a week!

APRIL 20, 2011 9:53 AM 



[Em Rob said...](#)

Wow! I was so curious what that was!

APRIL 20, 2011 11:07 AM 



[Suzy said...](#)

thanks for the update! Really appreciate it.

APRIL 20, 2011 12:44 PM 



[pate said...](#)

Driving by that every day left me wondering what was going on too. Thanks for clearing it up.

APRIL 20, 2011 1:23 PM 





Guess the original color? Forest Green

What's the one thing Provo's mayors have sh

They've been walking across the same carpet. I must be a firm believer that our work environment impacts

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# Provo offices get new carpet thanks to Eagle project

Story Discussion Image (2)

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Genelle Pugmire - Daily Herald | Posted: Tuesday, December 14, 2010 12:15 am | 1 Comment

7 retweet Recommend 15 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.



Dex McKell said he had a few ideas in mind for his Eagle project, but hadn't decided on any particular one until his Bay Street leader suggested he help

## But We Didn't Inhale



Today during our Gang Task Force Steering Committee meeting we discussed spice. Here are some facts about spice.

- Spice is a new synthetic drug being smoked to produce a high similar to marijuana or hashish.
- Utah County recently passed an ordinance against smoking it but not the sale or possession of it.
- Spice is being used as an alternative to marijuana by many who are unaware of the dangers.
  - It is becoming a problem in Provo's schools.
  - The Provo Council is considering taking action.
  - The State Legislature will likely take action on it this session.
- I will be cheering the council onward as they discuss banning this in Provo.

Now ready for this? In the meeting I was told that it could be purchased in a Provo store. Some of us on the committee found that hard to believe so we got in our cars and drove over to the store, walked in, laid down our 6 bucks and bought an ounce of spice.

You can imagine the response back in the Mayor's office when I walked in with my baggy of spice.

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HOT TOPICS: HURRICANE IRENE CONGRESSIONAL VOTING BOUNDARIES JIMMER ENGAGED BRANDON DAVI

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# Provo mayor, drug task force go spice hunting

Story Discussion Image (2)

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Genelle Pugmire - Daily Herald | Posted: Sunday, October 10, 2010 12:35 am | 1 Comment

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Provo Mayor John Curtis and other members of the Gang Enforcement Task Force bought spice to prove how readily accessible the drug is to the public. The photo is of the loose spice

Provo Mayor John Curtis took a bold step outside his office Wednesday and most likely went where no Provo mayor has gone before. He and members of his Gang Enforcement Task Force went across the street, and each purchased an ounce of Spice, a synthetic drug similar to marijuana that is sold legally as incense in Utah County.

Curtis said they had been discussing spice, its effects and legal concerns in their meeting when a Provo police officer on the task force said it was easy to purchase right on Provo's Center Street.

Director of student services of Provo School District Greg Hudnall, Judge Kay Lindsay, the mayor and the officer opened their wallets, and each paid \$6 for an ounce of the flavored drug. "If I remember, I think I got watermelon," Curtis said. "It looks kind of like an

## Ice Piles Up Around Utah Lake



It's not unusual for winter winds to push chunks of ice onto shore at Utah Lake, but a police officer who has worked in Provo for 20 years says he has never seen anything like this before.



Provo Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief, Tom Augustus, walks below a large hill of ice chunks along the east shore of Utah Lake in Provo Thursday, Feb. 17, 2011. During Wednesday's high winds and changing temperatures ice on Utah Lake broke into large slabs and floated on shore closing a portion of a road at Utah Lake. ANDREW VAN WAGENEN/Daily Herald

Buy this photo



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Utah Lake State Park

The Titanic wasn't on Utah Lake on Wednesday, but it would have felt at home with all the floating ice chunks there.

According to Steve Gleason, Provo airport manager, wind gusts of up to 50 mph were blowing across the lake as temperatures were dropping Wednesday afternoon.

"Controllers in the tower saw it, a wave of ice," Gleason said. "It went over the dike and into the moat about 35 to 40 feet high and a quarter of a mile long. I've never seen anything like it."

Gleason said the ice flow onto the dike was quick, lasting no more than four or five minutes.

"This will be one of the last things to melt this summer in Provo," he said. "It's worth a look."

Residents may not get a good look at the ice wall just yet. Provo City closed the road to the dike around the Provo Municipal Airport because of safety issues.

Tom Augustus, fire battalion chief, said ice piles are not unheard of.

"This happens every year when ice gets thin and the wind comes up," he said. "It's just earlier this year. The wind was a little stronger, the ice a little thicker,

Posted in Provo on Friday, February 18, 2011 12:30 am Updated: 3:04 pm. | Tags: Provo, Utah Lake, Weather, Ice, Provo Mayor's Blog.

## The Mega Combined Six Neighborhood Meeting



Thanks to Wade Davis, our only customer

Tonight we held a meeting with a combined six neighborhoods.

The topic was the new proposed recreation center.

We expected a good turn out and pulled the full contingency of Mayor, Council Members, Department Director, Assistant Director, Neighborhood Police Officer, Deputy Mayor, Division Office Assistant and Council Office Assistant.

Guess how many came?

Nevertheless we did a great presentation. Wade and the other empty chairs were very impressed.

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## Provo mega meeting for rec center draws one resident

Story Discussion

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Genele Pugmire - Daily Herald | Posted: Saturday, October 16, 2010 12:30 am | (7) Comments

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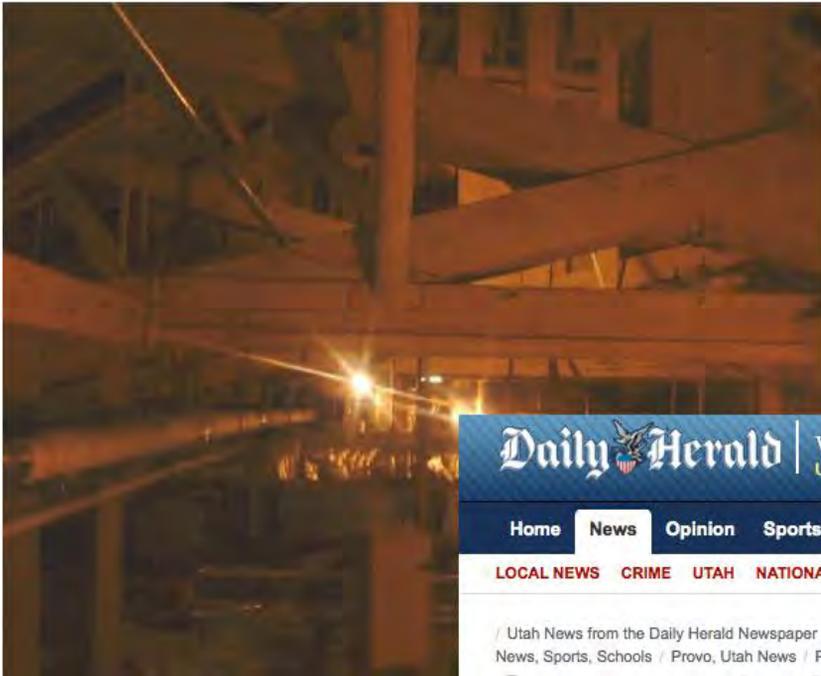
City officials expecting interested residents to show up to a presentation on the proposed new rec center got a bit of a reality check Wednesday. A six-neighborhood "mega meeting" to discuss the center on November's ballot was organized, 250 chairs were set up, and a handful of city staff, the mayor, and council members Cynthia Dayton and Rick Healey showed up with PowerPoint presentations in hand. Only one person, Wade Davis, showed up.

### Related Links

Provo City

Davis showed up at Rock Canyon Elementary School and heard the 45-minute presentation on the new facility. He had his own question-and-answer session as well.

"It is always incumbent on us to try," said Mayor John Curtis. "I don't get concerned if they don't show up. It doesn't lessen the opportunity to try."



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## Cameraman's photo vital in tabernacle fire investigation

Story

Discussion

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Jim Dalrymple - Daily Herald | Posted: Friday, May 6, 2011 11:34 pm | No Comments Posted

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**PROVO** — On Dec. 16, as crews were busily preparing the Provo Tabernacle for a Christmas concert, a curious BYU Broadcasting camera operator with an interest in architecture visited the building's attic. The camera operator, Scott Morgan, briefly looked around at the trusses supporting the historic structure and then, before he left, snapped a quick picture with his cellphone.

Though Morgan didn't know it at the time, that picture would become the last image of the tabernacle's attic and, more importantly, a vital piece of evidence in the investigation into the blaze.

Provo fire marshal Lynn Schofield said that the investigation began as soon as crews appeared on the scene. But he explained that the scope and severity of the event posed serious challenges.

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“Even though I’ve never met him, I feel like we are friends.”

*Quote from a blog reader*