

Councilman Paul Cunningham's Ward 2 Newsletter

F E B R U A R Y 2 8 , 2 0 1 3

UPCOMING DATES:

- March 5: Mayor and Council meeting, details on page 5
- March 17: St Patrick's day. See page 3 for parade information
- March 23: Little League opening day (page 4)

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PAUL'S NOTE

There were two items before Mayor and Council on Tuesday night that I'd like to talk about. One was gratifying, the other frustrating.

The first wasn't the biggest issue before us, but it was one that I was very happy to be involved in. We approved the Mahalo Properties rezoning at Wrightstown and Brown. The rezoning specifically allows for twelve new luxury style green homes in a desirable area. The project will put Tucson construction workers on the job and will be the least invasive development possible for the area. Usually the situation is that developers and neighbors are at odds. My goal is trying to facilitate the two sides working together. We have had challenging discussions in Ward 2 with regard to zoning in the past, and each time, by having neighbors and developers work together at the beginning of the process, serious issues are avoided. One hiccup, the neighbors were not notified the vote was going to council. I will investigate to see how that process can be changed.

The more difficult issue was pensions. There is a pension shortfall for police and fire, and it exists because we have 325 less commissioned personnel paying into the system than anticipated. Otherwise, we would be right at the same level as other cities. If we could hire and retain more police, it would go a long way to solving the problem.

As for the Tucson Civilian retirement system, we have a serious problem. For people hired before July of 2006, they pay 5% of

their paycheck into the system, while people hired after that date pay 15%. The assertion is that there is a provision in the Arizona State Constitution that protects the so-called "5 percenters." Unfortunately, the only people who have told me this are 5 percenters. I have suspicions that the five percent is more adjustable than they are letting on. It has been stated the fund is expected to increase 7.75% over 20 years, meaning a double in value every seven years. I am not buying that. The last person to guarantee all of his clients 7 percent a year was Bernie Madoff. I think we need to be a bit more conservative. I would like to see the city change our amortization to 20 years and move all employees including the 5 percenters, to between a 7 to 7.5 percent contribution. Those numbers would treat all employees fairly and significantly improve the health of our pension program. Our newer employees would also experience a 6 percent increase in take home pay.

Other issues came up as well. We had a discussion about a city owned property at I-19 and Irvington. The reasons for rejection of the deal with the group that purchased the property are many, but I think we learned an important lesson here.

When the city puts anything out to bid whether it is property for sale or a contract for service, or a request for proposal, if we do not receive at least three bids, we should re-open the bid. This helps avoid any suspicion of impropriety. It also helps prevent any semblance of collusion. I don't think that happened in this case at all, but this served as a reminder that

PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

contracts with only one bidder are unacceptable.

We also moved forward on the Mission Gardens, which I'm happy about as a long time student of local history, and we passed a resolution in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

We are moving forward. Have a happy Tucson weekend.



CITIZENS' COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND COMPENSATION

The 2013 City of Tucson's Citizens' Commission on Public Service and Compensation held its first meeting on January 17 with all seven commissioners attending. The commission completed its agenda and elected its officers. The Commission voted to hold its meetings on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 p.m. Public involvement with the Commission is encouraged and welcomed by either sending emails to the Commission at cityclerk@tucsonaz.gov and/or attending subsequent Commission meetings, which are held in the Mayor and Council Conference Room, 255 W. Alameda Street..

This year's Commission will be holding weekly meetings through March 15, 2013. For more information, visit the City's website about the Commission's proceedings and updates on the agenda and decisions at: <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/>

[boards?board=76](#)

For more information or questions on ADA accommodations and accessibility for these meetings, call Yolanda Lozano, City Clerk's Office, at 791-4213.

DISPOSE-A-MED

The Pima County Sheriff's Department will be hosting Dispose-A-Med events intermittently throughout the year. These events are offered free of charge thanks to a grant provided by the Department of Justice.

Tablets, capsules, liquids, and creams will be collected. Metal or glass inhalation aerosol bottles, syringes, and epi-pens will not be accepted. For safety and confidentiality reasons, any items turned over for collection cannot be returned. We do not accept drugs from commercial organizations. For information about the disposal of needles and syringes, please visit the Pima County Health Department (<http://www.pimahealth.org/news/needle.asp>) website.

Our total collected weight for 2012 was 1553 pounds! 2012 was a very successful year and we wish to thank all those who participated in getting these unused or expired drugs off the street.

- April 27, 2013, 10am - 2pm, 4040 N. Oracle Road, (in front of Target)
- May 4, 2013, 8am - 12pm, 7575 E. Speedway Blvd., (down Prudence past fire station)

Note: Do not bring medicines or other medical waste to either location until the date.

UDALL PARK

Seniors will have an opportunity to participate in the Senior Safari Trip at Reid Park Zoo on Thursday, March 7 and from 9:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m. The cost is \$2.00 per person. Sign up at 791-4121.

The Carol West Senior Addition will host a St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on Thursday, March 14 at 1 p.m. The cost is \$5.00 per person and the event will include delicious Irish food and music. Call 791-4121 to sign up.

AARP will be offering tax assistance at Udall Center on Mondays and Wednesdays, thru April 15 from 9 a.m. -1 p.m. First come, first serve basis. Contact 571-9884 for more information.

**ARIZONA
BASEBALL**

The University of Arizona Baseball team will play against Columbia on Friday, March 8 (6 p.m.), Saturday, March 9 (6 p.m.), and Sunday, March 10 (noon). To purchase tickets, call 621-CATS or visit www.arizonawildcats.com



**LEISURE
CLASSES**

The 2nd session of Leisure Classes will begin on March 17. The Tucson Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of fun and interesting programs. Visit www.ezeereg.com to view the Program Guide and Class Catalog. Contact Registration Services at 791-4877 for any questions and availability information.

**FIRST BOOK
BOOK SALE**

First Book of Tucson will be having a book fair on Saturday, March 2 at 10 am at Barnes and Noble on Broadway. Bring your children and enjoy a fun time! Hudlow and Henry schools have wish lists and you can purchase a voucher for the school to receive a "wish book." This is a wonderful way to help a local school and help the students learn the love of reading.



First Book provides new books to children in need, addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy access to books. An innovative leader in social enterprise, each year First Book distributes millions of free and low-cost books to disadvantaged children and the programs that serve them. If your Title I school would like to participate in the program, call CJ at the Ward 2 office, 791-4687.

**ST PATRICK'S
DAY PARADE**

Tucson's annual St. Patrick's Day Festival opens at 10 a.m. Sunday, March 17 at Armory Park, with live Irish music, dancers, entertainment, a children's game area, and food and merchandise vendors. Irish organizations, ethnic and cultural tables will be set up in the park as well. The one hour Parade will begin at 11:00 A.M. at Pennington & Stone Avenue. TucsonStPatricksDay.com has the details.



**AARP TAX
PREPARATION
HELP**

The AARP will be available to help out with tax preparation at several Eastside locations. Walk-ins are welcome at all three locations.

Udall Recreation Center, 7200 E Tanque Verde
520-791-4931
Mondays and Wednesdays, 9 am – 1 pm

Murphy-Wilmot Library, 530 N Wilmot Rd
Mondays and Thursdays, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 9252 E 22nd St
Wednesdays, 12 pm – 4 pm

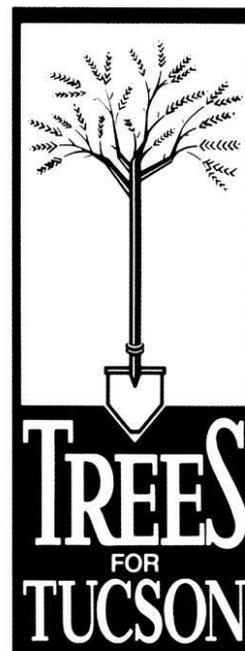
**LITTLE
LEAGUE
OPENING DAY**

Opening day for Sahuaro Baja (Jesse Owens Park) and Tanque Verde Baja (Udall Park) is March 23. It's that time of year again and the parks will be busy with little league play. Come out to the park and support the players!

TREES FOR TUCSON

Trees for Tucson is kicking off its spring planting season! Visit www.treesfortucson.org or call (520) 791-3109 for questions and to obtain an application for low-cost desert adapted shade trees for your home or community project!

The Tucson Botanical Gardens, in cooperation with Trees for Tucson & City of Tucson are presenting a new Certificate in Urban Forestry Program (9-week course, from February 26-April 23, 2013). This course is \$220 for nonmembers, \$195 discounted rate for TCB or TBG members! Sign up today, more information can be found at their website.



**SSGT JONATHAN DAVIS,
USMC**

Flags at city offices were at half staff this week for Staff Sergeant Jonathan Davis, a United States Marine from Kayenta, Arizona. Davis was killed in Helmand Province, Afghanistan and is the first marine to be killed in action this year.

Davis was recipient of the Purple Heart for previous service, and won two high school basketball championships for Kayenta.



**SOUTHERN
ARIZONA RED
CROSS**

The news this week of a Ward 2 family of four left homeless after a fire has highlighted for many of us the important day to day work that the Southern Arizona Chapter of the American Red Cross does.

If you would like to donate so that they can continue to help families visited by disaster, you can visit their web page.

S H R E D - A - T H O N

2013 will mark the 6th year the Pima County Sheriff's Department has provided this valuable service free-of-charge to the community. All confirmed event dates are on Saturdays, and all shredding events will run from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

- April 6 at Casas Church- 10801 N. La Canada Blvd.
- September 14 at Kino Sports Complex- 2500 E. Ajo Way
- November 16 at Empire High School- 10701 E. Maryann Cleveland Way

**K O M E N
S O U T H E R N A R I Z O N A**

One in eight women reading this will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

These are your friends, your neighbors, your relatives, the people you brush up against at the grocery store or the car wash.

The mission of Komen Southern Arizona is to spread the word that early detection of breast cancer saves lives.

By taking part in the Race for the Cure on March 17, you'll be saving lives too. The money we raise on Race Day is turned into grants to diagnose, treat and educate women and men. And for every dollar raised, 75 cents net stays right here in our community.

So join us on March 17 for our Race for the Cure, for the first time on the UA campus.

This year's Race for the Cure will be extra special. It's the 15th anniversary race, and Olympic silver medalist and UA undergrad Brigetta Barrett heads up the event as Honorary Race

Chair. Brigetta's mother is a breast cancer survivor.

The 15th Anniversary Southern Arizona Race for the Cure will take place on Sunday, March 17, 2013 at the University of Arizona campus.

Register online at www.komensaz.org, or paper registration forms mailed by request. For more info call 520 319 0155.

M A Y O R A N D C O U N C I L

The next Mayor and Council meeting will be on March 5. Regular Session starts at 5:30 pm following an afternoon study session. There is always a short call to the audience before the business portion of the meeting. Council chambers are located downtown at 255 W Alameda. The agendas for the meetings are posted online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>.



“Please allow me to put the spotlight on Mr. Cunningham. We had encountered a lot of disagreements with our neighbors. We reached out to Mr. Cunningham who along with his staff...welcomed us with open arms. Mr. Cunningham assisted and educated us along with our neighbors on how to ‘play in the sand box’ together to achieve a win-win situation.” - Chito Sappalo, Mahalo Properties

We're on the web!
Cms3.tucsonaz.gov/ward2

F E B R U A R Y 2 8 , 2 0 1 3

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Please bring these items to the Ward
2 Office for the following charities:
THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perish-
able Items
DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers
SAAF—Personal Hygiene Products and Per-
sonal Care Products
TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals
and Families in Need
ICU—Eye Glasses
DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—
Ballet/Dance Equipment