



PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

May 22, 2015

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PAUL'S NOTE

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A while back I put a historical anecdote on my Facebook page. Back in the 1870's, if you were a Tucsonan that didn't have your own well, you could buy water from someone who retrieved it from the springs south of Tucson and brought it into town by wagon. The going rate was a penny a gallon. If you adjust that for inflation, that comes out to \$158.97 per ccf in today's dollars. You'd have been hard pressed to fill a swimming pool without taking out a second mortgage at that rate.

Water is easier to come by for us today, but that doesn't mean that it is cheap by any means.

In fiscal year 2016, Tucson Water expects to spend \$15.9 million dollars on utility costs. This is for power to run wells and pumping sta-

tions, but the bulk of it is so we can store CAP water and replenish our aquifer. In addition, there is \$26.3 million that we are projected to spend on the CAP water itself. Some of this is to pay Tucson's share of the project itself (a repayment period that will last until 2043), but a large part is, once again, to pay for power.

Why so much? The CAP moves 1.5 million acre feet (that's nearly half a trillion gallons) of water per year nearly 400 miles. The spot where the CAP gets its water from the Colorado River is about 500 feet above sea level, and Tucson is at 2600 feet, so most of that route is uphill.

None of this is going to get cheaper for the foreseeable future. And, unfortunately, the CAP as a source is threatened as well. Water levels in Lake Mead have

reached levels that mean that Tucson and Phoenix will both see their allocations cut. This isn't in the far future; it could be as soon as 2017.

This is the reality my colleagues and I were dealing with when we set new water rates on Tuesday night. Rates will rise for some Tucsonans as those that use more than 7 ccf will be moved into a higher "block." Even with the rate increase and all that has to be done to get water to Tucson, we in Tucson are still paying a competitive rate for water.

Tucson Water and the CWAC, the citizens' board that helps set water rates, surveyed seventeen local water utilities in Arizona and found that a Tucson rate payer is paying below the average rate in Arizona. That's after the rate increase. Our friends that are served

PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

by Metro Water are paying twice as much, and the same goes for people in Mesa. Oro Valley, Green Valley, Marana and Sierra Vista all pay more. By the way, a customer in Sierra Vista pays more despite not having to deal with CAP costs.

Am I happy with a rate hike? No. I pay water bills too just like all of you do. I also realize that given we are in a desert community where it takes an awful lot to get us safe, clean drinking water every day, a third of a cent per gallon is a pretty good deal.

Another topic that came up was "amnesty day." I've been working on this idea for a couple of weeks and I'm glad we could get some discussion on it. Right now, the City of Tucson has \$118 million in uncollected fines on its books, and 40,000 arrest warrants for failure to appear in court. My idea is for the city to stage a day when volunteer attorneys, judges and some other support people can be on hand for folks, without fear of arrest, can come and pay off those fines.

We have some movement on the idea, and City Court officials discussed other things that they could do to get fines cleared. We aren't there yet, but we'll come up with a way to get this worked out.

Our fellow Ward 2 resident and San Rafael Neighborhood leader Lenny Porges will be on Jeopardy! next week. Tune in on Tuesday, May 26 on channel 9 at 3:30.

VETERAN'S FRIEND

Veteran's Friend's Mission is to make a positive difference in the quality of life of all senior veterans by providing a free service to inform and educate veterans, their families, and surviving spouses about a special VA pension for which they are often entitled but fail to understand.

VA Accredited claims Representative Robert Dhillon has a 100% success rate in obtaining VA pensions benefits. Join Robert for a free educational briefing where you will learn the truth about Veterans Benefits.

Robert Dhillon, president of REAL Solutions Services, operates Veteran's Friend to assist World War II, Korea and Vietnam wartime veterans and their spouses collect their tax-free VA pension, up to \$25,000 a year, to pay for long term health care.

Dates: June 20

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Ward 2 Office, 7575 E Speedway.

RSVP: 495-0045

PUTT-ING KIDS FIRST

Blair Charity Group's Third Annual Putt-ing Kids First fundraiser will be the last night of the Arizona Basketball Academy summer weeklong camp Friday June 5 at Golf N' Stuff. All the attractions of this family fun park will be open from 5pm to 10pm for free play with purchase of admission.

Enjoy unlimited free play of two 18-hole courses of Miniature Golf, Lit'l Indy Race Car Go-Karts, Bumper Boats, Lazer Tag, Batting Cages, and all of the non-redemption video games like Pac Man Smash Air Hockey and Batman's Driving Game. Additional attractions include live DJ, Face Painters, Balloon Artists and Jumping Castle!

Putt-ing Kids First brings Tucson's best "Eats" right to you by hosting more than half a dozen local restaurants and caterers within the park. Enjoy tasty sample portions in addition to sweet treats like Cotton Candy and salty eats like popcorn provided free with purchase of admission.

This Family Fun Night is filled with plenty of activities for children and adults alike. The silent auction and event raffle return to offer up great finds and hot deals for all. Adults in particular can enjoy a new and improved exclusive hang out. Introducing the Putt N Pub! Enjoy samples of Tucson's finest brews, some adult eats, and games tailored for the 21 and over crowd.

ITN GREATER TUCSON

Do you have the DRIVE to help people? Our seniors need your help!

Winter visitors are great volunteers and now is the time that they take all of their precious volunteer hours back to their 'home' communities. ITNGreaterTucson needs YOU more than ever!! Our seniors still need to go places and we can take them there with your help. Volunteer to drive once a week for the next few months and help keep our seniors active! Even people who take the bus other times of the year can't wait outside during the hot summer months, increasing the ever-growing demand for drivers. Please help by volunteering to drive between now and September. We will work with your schedule, just tell us what works for you!! Please contact Kathy or Bob at 520-209-1645 or visit our website at www.itngreatertucson.org

PARKS PROGRAMS

Spring Swim Schedule: The Spring Swim schedule for Udall Park and Ft. Lowell Park started April 1st. Contact the Aquatics Division at 791-4245/791-5352 or visit <http://www.tucsonaz.gov/parks/aquatics#hours> for pool locations and swim schedule.

Summer 2015 Program Guide and Class Catalog: The Summer 2015 Program Guide and Class Catalog is available. The catalog can be picked-up at all Parks and Recreation facilities. It can be viewed on-line at www.ezeereg.com Contact the Registration Office at 791-4877 for additional information.

Tucson POPS Concerts: The Tucson POPS Concerts will take place on May 24, 31 and June 7 and 14. Concerts start at 7:00 p.m. at the DeMeester Outdoor Performance Center in Reid Park. There is a limited amount of seating at DeMeester which fills up quickly. Please bring chairs or a blanket.

The Arizona Symphonic Winds Concerts: The WINDS Concert series will take place May 23, 30 and June 5. The program will take place at the Lazslo Veres Amphitheater in Udall Park. Concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. Please bring a chair or blanket.

Summer Road Races and Track and Field: Summer Track and Field events will be held at Roy Drachman Stadium near Plummer & 15th every Tuesday from June 2 through July 15. Summer Road Races will be held each Thursday from June 4 thru July 16 at various parks around Tucson. For more information, call 791-4870.

Onsite registration for both events begins at 5:45 pm with the competition starting at 6:30 pm. Registration is \$3 for children and \$4 for adults. Ribbons will be given to the top finishers. For details, please call 791-4870.

Facility Closures: All Parks and Recreation facilities will be closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

**PAUL CUNNINGHAM,
CITY COUNCIL, WARD 2**

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Remember to like
Paul on Facebook!

Please bring these items to the Ward 2 Office
for the following charities:

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perishable
Items**

**DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers**

**TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals
and Families in Need**

LIONS CLUB—Eye Glasses

**DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—Ballet/
Dance Equipment**

CASA MARIA—Plastic bags

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The next Mayor and Council meeting will be on Tuesday, June 9. 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>

