



PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

March 8, 2016

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PAUL'S NOTE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Palo Verde Resource Center	2
Saguaro National Park	4
Parks Programs	4
What to drop off	5

At our meeting on Tuesday night, we got a rundown of the current budget situation. Working on the budget will occupy a great deal of our time at the council table for the next few months.

In summary, things are not great yet, but they are better than they were in my first years of being in office.

Budget time is never easy, and it's even worse with revenues down and our friends at the state legislature hungrily looking at revenue shared with the cities as a way of solving their own budget woes. One of our biggest budget items, and one we can do little about as a council, is the over \$62 million

we pay out to the state's public safety pension system.

There are a series of changes that will be before Arizona's voters in May, but it will remain a large cost for our city's taxpayers.

Michael Ortega, our new manager, has done a lot to help our budget situation. He came up with an inducement to encourage employees near retirement to do so early, and 110 took him up on the offer. This, combined with the ongoing hiring freeze, has the potential to save us \$18.4 million each year. By the way, one of the employees to take that early retirement worked in our office. All of our departments, even council offices, will be mak-

ing do with fewer employees. Even the city manager will be working with two fewer executive assistants.

Other ideas that Mr. Ortega has been implementing, under the direction of my colleagues and I, are using the Santa Cruz County jail for city prisoners and moving the graffiti abatement program to Environmental Services. The graffiti abatement move alone will save \$1.6 million and the Santa Cruz county move will save us \$300,000 in boarding costs to Pima County.

I brought up vehicle replacement, particularly with police vehicles. Last year, we replaced 40 police cruisers at a cost of \$1.6 million. This is

PAUL'S NOTE, CONTINUED

only a fraction of the fleet and this year, we are looking at doing more of the same. The question I have is, would we be better off leasing police vehicles? Several manufacturers have deals with other cities to do this resulting in lower costs. With the lower cost, we would be able to replace the bulk of our fleet, leaving fewer of our officers having to drive the older vehicles. The manager and his staff will look into it.

We are not out of the woods yet by any means, but Tucson is moving in the right direction.

It's Rodeo Days and Ward 2's Plaza Palomino, at the corner of Swan and Fort Lowell, is having a celebration this Saturday February 27.

The folks at Plaza Palomino are billing it as an arts celebration, and local artists will have their work featured from 10 am until 5 pm. There will also be beer from Nimbus Brewing Company, Whiskey Del Bac tasting with Hamilton Distillers, and Three Wells spirit tasting. Because it's Tucson, there will also be food trucks.

Local musicians will be on hand too. There will be performances from the Bill Ganz Western Band, Mariachi Herradura and others. Former mayor Bob Walkup will be judging a western wear contest. There will also be activities for the kids. For more information, visit plazapalomino.com.

PALO VERDE RESOURCE CENTER

Palo Verde Family Center, housed at Palo Verde High School, 1302 S Avenida Vega, offers seminars, workshops and classes.

Check out the February Calendar of Activities at Palo Verde for the schedule of classes offered this month.

Special Seminars and Workshops at Palo Verde during February 2016:

Triple P: Free for parents of 0-5 year olds.

Parenting Wisely: For parents of 12-19 year olds.

Mi Vida: una serie de talleres en español a mujeres que estén interesadas en conocer los recursos de nuestra comunidad para fortalecer y estabilizar sus vidas.

For more information about the center, call 584-7455.

All year, the center will host events and classes open to the community. Please come by.

SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK

The National Park Service is celebrating its 100th birthday in 2016 and Saguaro National Park is celebrating with events scheduled throughout the year.

For additional information and updated details on all events, visit our website:
<http://www.nps.gov/sagu/getinvolved/2016.htm>

This week, NPS staff from across the state of Arizona walked in the Rodeo Parade with our hometown of Tucson.

Mark your calendars. On March 1, the park celebrates its 83rd birthday and the Centennial Saguaro cactus, located in the park's east district in front of the visitor center. Planted in 1966 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service, this cactus is believed to be 100 years old. Join us, Intermountain Regional Director Sue Masica, and local highschool students for cake and a look forward to the next 100 years. Special presentations about the history of the NPS will be held at 11am and 2pm, and staff will be available to help you plant your own saguaro seed to take home until 2pm. 3693 S. Old Spanish Trail, Tucson, AZ 87530

On March 6th, from 10am until 5pm, Saguaro National Park and Western National Parks Association will hold a birthday celebration that only happens every hundred years. The Park's west side location (Tucson Mountain District) will host special interpretive programs planned throughout the day, a kid's corner hosting children's book author Sylvia Long, mini hikes down into the washes and saguaro plantings to take home. Join us at 11:30 a.m. for an exclusive performance by the award-winning Mariachi Aztlan de Pueblo High School. Food will be available for purchase from 11:30 a.m. to 1pm. This event is being co-hosted by the Western National Parks Association and Friends of Saguaro National Park. Red Hills Visitor Center, Tucson Mountain District (west) 2700 N Kinney Road, Tucson, AZ 85743

Watch for more information and we hope to help you Find Your Park this year.



CAROL WEST SENIOR CENTER

Tax Aide: AARP free tax aide is offering services at Udall Center on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 am to 12 pm through April 13, 2016.

Rodeo Luncheon: A Rodeo Luncheon with musical guest performance will be held on Thursday, February 25 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The event is sponsored by AccidentCare. The cost is \$5.00 per person. For more information, please contact the Carol West Senior Addition, 791-4121

PARKS PROGRAMS

Eggstravaganza: The 15th Annual Eggstravaganza will be held on Saturday, March 27 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mansfield Park (2000 N 4th Ave). The free family event will include fun carnival games, egg hunt, prizes and the Easter Bunny.

Spring 2016 Leisure Classes: Session II of Spring classes begin March 20.

Summer 2016 Activity Guide: Watch for the Summer Tucson Parks and Recreation 2016 Activity Guide which will be published on Monday, April 18, 2016.

The Activity Guide will have complete information on classes, programs, aquatics, and registration. The guide can also be viewed at www.ezeereg.com.

Contact Registration Services at 791-4877 for more information or questions.



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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, March 8**. 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>

