



PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

April 11, 2018

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PAUL'S NOTE

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The Center for Disease Control says that three in four kids in our country don't get the recommended amount of recreational time. That means they don't even get one hour of play time per day. Given that, it is no surprise that another study by the CDC reports that 14.3 percent of high school kids are sedentary and that 13.9 percent of high schoolers are obese. Lack of play time also means that kids aren't developing healthy habits, leading to a range of problems later in life from diabetes to heart attacks.

There are many reasons why kids aren't

getting that time. As a city councilperson, there is one part of that issue I can address: making sure that safe playgrounds and ball fields are available in our city's neighborhoods so that kids only have a short walk to play with their friends.

A playground is more than a playground. It's a brain-expander, friend-maker, and muscle-builder. Play is central to a child's ability to grow into a productive adult. It can transform children from inactive, bored, and solitary to physically, mentally and socially active.

As much as I love Tucson, we are near the bottom of the list

when it comes to how much park space we have. The Trust for Public Lands ranks us 85th on their Park Score rating out of 100 cities. The rating includes factors like park land as a percent of city area (2%, which puts us above only two cities) and percent of people living a ten minute trip from a park (17%, 65th on the list). As far as playgrounds go, we have 5 per 10,000 residents, which puts us at 93rd.

Building and maintaining our city's playgrounds has been tough for much of the last decade or so. Most of the money for our parks comes out of the general fund where they compete with other priorities like police and roads. Still, we cobbled together money for

PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

projects in a few of our parks. For example, our office used money from impact fees, sewage line warranty money and a grant from the Tohono O'odham Nation for improvements in Jesse Owens Park. We will be getting a new splash pad at Palo Verde Park after Parks and Recreation secured other funds.

It might surprise you that Udall Park, one of the gems of Ward 2, needs serious help with its playground (the only one in a two mile radius). The equipment is nearly 30 years old and there are parts missing. Luckily, there will be a chance for you to help get some new equipment into Udall Park thanks to a group called Kaboom!

Kaboom! started in 2005 when a group of volunteers built a new playground in Washington DC. Since then, they worked with First Lady Barbara Bush to build a new playground in Mississippi in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and with First Lady Michelle Obama to build one in a stressed neighborhood in San Francisco. They've earned a good enough reputation that they both inspired a Ben and Jerry's flavor ("Kaberry Kaboom") and an entire episode of Parks and Recreation.

Kaboom! works with local communities to help fund playground projects in cities using local volunteer labor. Over the last twenty years, Kaboom! has either built or improved over 17,000 playgrounds. In the past, they have helped fund projects at Swan Park, La Madera Park and Kennedy Park.

They will be coming to Udall Park here in Ward 2 on May 23. We are looking for 75 volunteers and hope to have the playground built in one day.

This project will bring kids in Ward 2 one step closer to having the play-filled childhood they deserve. Currently, there is one existing playground at Udall Park that is more than 28 years old and does not meet the needs of the popularity of this park. Udall Park is a metro park and the ramadas and fields are reserved year-round. New playground equipment will expand play opportunities to the youth in the community by providing them with an age-appropriate area to play in a very active and vibrant park.

There are a couple of things you can do to help. If you'd like to volunteer, you can visit <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/parks/announcement/kaboom-udall-park-playground> to find a link to the online form. Kids can go to that website to vote on playground equipment and the color scheme too. The deadline for that is April 16.

You can also donate to the Parks Foundation. Your donation will help defray the costs of the project as well as to eventually buy a shade structure. You can donate at <http://www.tucsonparks.org/support-our-parks/donations/>

To make this happen, we will need a lot of help from our Ward 2 neighbors. I know that you all will come through.

MEET ME AT THE PARK

Help get Tucson nominated for the Meet Me at the Park Earth Month campaign. If our city gets the most nominations, one of Tucson's parks will receive a \$20,000 grant for improvements. In its fourth year, the Meet Me at the Park Earth Month campaign is a collaboration of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and The Walt Disney Company to help fund local park improvement projects. When you nominate our city, you'll be entered into a sweepstakes to win a GoPro Prize Pack. The city with the most nominations at the end of April will receive the funding. Parks inspire healthy living, help protect the environment, provide access to sports, and bring people together.

Find out how to vote at <https://www.meetmeatthepark.org/>

PALO VERDE PARK SHRED EVENT

Norma Coffman (Fernandez Realty), Drew Dodds (US Lending Team) and Stewart Title are sponsoring a Shred-A-Thon at Palo Verde Park (355 S Mann Ave) on April 21, 9—11am. Beacon Secure's truck will be at the pool to safely dispose of your documents and paperwork.

In addition to paper, you will be able to safely dispose of electronic devices such as computer monitors, CPU/Tower units, laptops, stereos, et cetera.

PARENTS NIGHT OUT AT UDALL PARK

Enjoy three hours of childless free time on Friday, April 27, 4:30-7:45 p.m., while your kids have organized activities with Tucson Parks and Recreation. The event will be held at Udall Recreation Center, 7200 E. Tanque Verde Road. The cost per child (ages 5-11 only) is \$4. The Lorax theme features a showing of the movie *The Lorax*, supervised games, and crafts. Pizza, popcorn, and drinks will be served during the movie and are included in the fee. You must register at Udall Recreation Center by Wednesday, April 25. Please call (520) 791-4931 for registration details. Space is limited.

CAROL WEST SENIOR CENTER

AARP Tax Aid: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9 am—12 pm (Main Building)

The Carol West Senior Addition at Udall features multipurpose rooms, lounge area with TV, computer adult learning center and pool tables. It is located at Udall Park and is open from 9 am to 4 pm Monday thru Friday.

PARKS PROGRAMS

Activity Guide: Tucson Parks and Recreation's Activity Guide for spring 2018 has arrived, and copies are available for pick up at all Parks and Recreation facilities. It can be viewed online at: www.tucsonaz.gov/parks.

The Activity Guide contains complete information on leisure classes, KIDCO after-school, aquatics, sports programs, registration, and the Discount Program. Registration dates are as follows:

All leisure class listings are online at www.EZEEreg.com. Please see the Activity Guide for more information on registration and deadlines. Whether you enjoy being active in slow-pitch softball leagues, want to design amazing jewelry, or get healthy and fit, there truly is something for everyone at Tucson Parks and Recreation. For questions or more information on registration or programs, contact Registration Services at 791-4877.

Parents Night Out: Enjoy three hours of childless free time on Friday, April 27, 4:30-7:45 p.m., while your kids have organized activities with Tucson Parks and Recreation. The event will be held at Udall Recreation Center, 7200 E. Tanque Verde Road. The cost per child (ages 5-11 only) is \$4. The Lorax theme features a showing of the movie *The Lorax*, supervised games, and crafts. Pizza, popcorn, and drinks will be served during the movie and are included in the fee. You must register at Udall Recreation Center by Wednesday, April 25. Please call (520) 791-4931 for registration details. Space is limited.

**PAUL CUNNINGHAM,
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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

**SR. JOSE WOMEN'S SHELTER—Summer items
and clothing, athletic shoes, back packs, tote**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The next Mayor and Council meeting will be on **Tuesday, April 17**. 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>

