

September 23, 2012

Mr. Kevin Burke
Manager, City of Flagstaff
211 West Aspen Street
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

RE: In support of the Jim Cullen Mountain View Memorial Park Proposal

Mr. Burke,

As one of Jim Cullen's sons my father instilled the life values of family, faith, and integrity gained by adhering to moral principles from a young age. He also understood the importance of providing positive experiences through sports and education to support children in their most important years of development as they begin to make choices in life.

When my father moved our family to Flagstaff, with three young boys, he had the foresight to know that structured opportunities would be a building block in developing the character, work ethic, compassion, and empathy he desired for his boys. This was the catalyst in developing youth athletic programs in the city and partnering with people who could help provide those opportunities.

Jim Cullen was directly involved in the development Flagstaff Youth Hockey and Flagstaff Youth Football in the early 1970's. He was also active in the Cub Scout organization, Flagstaff Youth Baseball, and Flagstaff Youth Figure Skating by providing not only his personal time but monetary assistance to help provide opportunities to the families and children that could not afford equipment, travel, or fees. My father's concern was not how much it cost but that cost should never be a factor for any child! Although we could probably calculate the number of meetings, practice games, and events my father took my siblings and I over the years, I could not begin to tell you how many children were able to take advantage of these programs because of his passion to help everyone he came in contact with.

These programs continue to exist and thrive today providing children positive interactions with adults through constructive and supervised participation for thousands in the city of Flagstaff. I am proud, knowing that my father was a direct and influencing factor in their development. It was obvious that one of my father's principles was to help people in need, leading to the very well known fact that he was an exceedingly giving person without the need for any thought of recognition or gain.

Growing up around my father I always thought that his community service was his effort in maintaining the various communication systems for the Police, Fire, and Sheriff; heading out at all times of day for basic maintenance or emergency service in the middle of the night atop Mount Elden. I was always amazed as a child at night when my father would leave at 1:00 AM in a blizzard to go to the top of the mountain thinking he was a superhero with the ability to withstand freezing temperatures and blistering winds each and every time he went out. It is a fond memory I had as a youth thinking he must have a secret uniform he concealed under his clothes, not able to reveal his true identity, not even to me!

It was later in life that I was able to comprehend that my father's true community service was helping families in need and disadvantaged children. This came to light one cold winter morning in the early 80s when I stopped by my father's shop on my way to class. The original topic was to go over the secret hand signals that he was to convey to me while I was playing in that evening's football game, I can explain that another time, however immediately upon my arrival I discovered that the topic had changed, he was getting ready to provide a different set of instructions. On his way to work that morning he had noticed a family out of gas and camping in their station wagon along side of Route 66 and there was absolutely no way that he could go throughout the day without getting this family some help. My father took money out of his wallet, gave it to me with specific instructions to return to the

family's location with the funds to provide the man and his family food and gas. The young couple and kids thanked me whole heartedly for the help and at that point I understood that under my father's stern business profile was a gracious and generous person. The lesson that day was not only to provide assistance to families in need but to teach me the compassion and empathy needed to recognize this on a daily basis and how to take action. That day he not only helped the family in need but many more as he taught me to be more like him.

This was his typical generosity and it extended throughout several charities for children, countless hours of donated time, and personal contributions to help local youth. One of my father's favorite and passionate activities was being involved with Toy-For-Tots, providing Christmas contributions for underprivileged children. He enjoyed this charity because in his words, "it was the real deal", no administrative cost were ever incurred, and if the fund raisers came up short the members covered the costs out of their pockets; Santa always made it to town.

Another one of his community support efforts, in conjunction with other Sunnyside businesses, was to organize a Spring Break Program for the kids that were not able to get a spot in the City provided program. This program provided five full days of activities with meals and transportation. The program ran for eight years and was amazingly successful with little to no recognition need for those who were responsible.

Because of the countless hours of community service and his selfless service in the Northern Arizona region, my father was awarded the Chapel of the Four Chaplain's Legion of Honor Award in 2005. This recognized my father for modeling the giving spirit and unconditional service to community, nation, and humanity. Other members include, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, James Carter, and Ronald Reagan as well as deserving military personnel, veterans, and civilians that exhibited those same characteristics that were so important to my father.

From winter jackets, athletic programs, summer opportunities for underprivileged youth, and dental and medical for children, my father helped others with his time and generosity until the day he died, September 26, 2010. I support the Jim Cullen Mountain View Memorial Park proposal. I would encourage you to contact me directly so that I may have the opportunity to express to you in person the positive effects my father had on me, my friends, and the children of Flagstaff not only now, but in future generations with the lessons he instilled in all of us.

On behalf of the Cullen Family,



Tony S. Cullen
Principal, Flagstaff High School
928-699-0486