

the ultimate party Presenting Sponsor: Food Sponsor: Entertainment Sponsor: **THE ULTIMATE PARTY**
FRIDAY, NOV. 13, 2015 • 4PM-10PM
KINO SPORTS COMPLEX
 Buy Tickets at www.ThePartyTucson.com



[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Local news](#) / [Northwest](#)

Gym for Parkinson's patients is growing

Respond: [Write a letter to the editor](#) | [Write a guest opinion](#)



Kelly Presnell / Arizona Daily Star

Dennis Dierking goes through a cool-down stretch with the rest of the class following their workout at the PWR!Gym, 134 W. Fort Lowell Road, on March 18. The gym offers physical therapy along with exercise classes for people with Parkinson's disease.

[Buy Now](#)

March 27, 2014 12:00 am • [By Brittny Mejia For the Arizona Daily Star](#)

0

A little more than two years have passed since a small gym, sandwiched between a church and discount grocery store on West Fort Lowell Road, opened for people with Parkinson's disease.

What began with only 40 members has since expanded to 100. And the need is growing.

Close to 250 people a year are newly

About the hike

The Fourth Annual Bowden PWR Hike is planned for April 13. Go to www.pwr4life.org/bowdenhike to register for the hike or make a donation.

Find out more

For more information about the PWR!Gym call 591-

diagnosed with Parkinson's in Tucson alone.

5346 or go to www.pwr4life.org online.

[x]

according to the National Parkinson Foundation.

"We are maximized out on space. We have no office space and no physical space," said

Becky Farley, CEO and founder of the Parkinson Wellness Recovery Gym — or PWR!Gym — and CEO of Parkinson Wellness Recovery, a nonprofit that sponsors the gym. "There's such more need than we're serving."

Farley said she hopes to expand the gym, at 134 W. Fort Lowell Road, with more programs and staff by Sept. 1 and double the space to develop outreach and train other instructors in Southern Arizona.

Before Farley opened the gym, she developed a therapy program for those with Parkinson's disease. However, she soon realized therapy wasn't enough and she needed to develop a comprehensive approach.

The exercises focus on big and fast movements and on improving function. Challenges for those with Parkinson's include getting out of a chair and standing up from the floor, and the purpose of the gym is to help members practice these skills as well as other coordinated movements.

The gym also provides physical therapy and consultations for people with Parkinson's.

It's \$75 a month for a gym membership.

Farley said the gym has people from all over the U.S. and Canada coming to get help — and dozens of people from here and elsewhere have gone there to have a physical therapist develop a home exercise regimen for them.

Farley eventually hopes PWR gyms will open all over the country.

"People don't know how much they can do, so you've got to put them in those situations where they discover it," she said. "We provide more than just the exercise — we try to provide them with a lot of education and a lot of empowerment."

Tim Bowden, a professor emeritus of cellular and molecular medicine at the University of Arizona, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease seven years ago and began physical therapy with Farley shortly after. He credits the gym for his ability to continue the activities he loves.

"I think it shows that people with Parkinson's can be physically active and can do challenging things with training and appropriate exercise programs," he said. "I don't think I could have done this without the gym training."

For the past four years, Bowden and his wife **Diane** have been working to raise funds for the gym through their Bowden PWR Hike. The money from the hike helps fund the group classes and is the only official source of fundraising, Farley said.

This year's April hike is different in that there are three distances offered for participants: a 1-mile, 4-mile and 10-mile hike at Catalina State Park. Also this year more of the participants have Parkinson's.

Nathaniel McMullen, professor emeritus of cellular and molecular medicine at the UA, was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2011 and joined the gym shortly thereafter. McMullen is participating in the 4-mile PWR Hike and said he hopes it will result in increased funding for the gym.

McMullen said the gym has helped provide him power over Parkinson's.





"I think the biggest benefit is the feeling of control over the disease," he said. "I don't have to

passively accept it and its limitations and its effects on my behavior. I can actually actively participate in combating the disease and degeneration of my motor system. It's a very positive influence over my life. ”

Brittney Mejia is a University of Arizona journalism student who is an apprentice at the Star. Contact her at starapprentice@azstarnet.com

Copyright 2015 Arizona Daily Star. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Tags [Gym](#), [Hiking](#), [Parkinson's Disease](#), [Tucson](#), [National Parkinson Foundation](#), [Parkinson Wellness Recovery Gym](#), [Becky Farley](#), [Tim Bowden](#), [University Of Arizona](#), [Nathaniel McMullen](#), [Catalina State Park](#)

	<p>American West Mystic Shado... Genuine leather construction. Tribal-inspired design with silver stud acce...</p> <p>\$216.60 SHOP NOW</p>		<p>American West Zip-Around An... Protect your favorite boots while traveling with this stylish boot bag b...</p> <p>\$258.40 SHOP NOW</p>
	<p>American West Amber Waves ... Hand-rubbed leather construction. Lacing and spot concho details. Cot...</p> <p>\$207.10 SHOP NOW</p>		<p>Montana West Western Aztec ... Designed with beautiful floral embroidery. Turquoise stones on th...</p> <p>\$42.74 SHOP NOW</p>

sheplers.com

	<p>Join Our Team http://jobs.thementornetwork.com/arizona</p>	
--	---	--