



Viewpoint & Opinion

"If you expect to be ignorant and free, you expect something that never was and never will be." — Thomas Jefferson

Letters to the Editor

Deadline for letters to the editor is 5 p.m. on Thursday. All letters and faxes must be signed and must include your residential address and a daytime phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be printed, but are needed for verification of authenticity. Letters to the editor should be 400 words or less, so please keep your comments brief.

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Elliott Fisher on recall

I find Ed Barker's editorial quite interesting concerning the current recall effort. Here is an editor of one of two major papers in the City of Apache Junction and nearby areas. An editor who has created far more news from nothing, then he has reported something. He has come to the aid of his wife Robin Barker, a sitting member of the Apache Junction City Council. A guy that seems to know all the facts and fiction! I actually like Ed. He seems to get the story every week! Only problem is he seems to get it before anyone else. I guess he just hires smarter help. Take, for example, Jill Jones. It seems she, after five years of reporting the facts, could no longer take the fiction, or shall I say friction. I find his take on a properly filed recall effort by as he describes them the "Team" as comical. It seems his most forceful argument is the idea the recall promoters are organized and timely. He continues ranting about the chief of police and his former employees. He seems to think there is cronyism! My goodness cronies in Apache Junction! I can't imagine how he could make such an absurd charge! Is it possible the Apache Junction Trilateral commission of Joel Stern, city attorney, George Hoffman, city manager, and Kathy Connelly, city clerk, have been outwitted by other than a town gadfly? Is it possible a significant amount of the electorate has finally come to the realization who the real cronies are, and done something about it? I sure hope the Pinal County election officials get the recall to appear on the November 4 election or there may be a gadfly in Pinal County District two ointment for four antiseptic years!

Elliott Fisher
Candidate for Pinal County District Two Supervisor
Apache Junction

More on recall

When I read that the recall petitions had been filed, I wanted to see for myself the reason given. All five petitions stated the same thing, "Failure to listen to the citizens." Ladies and gentlemen as far as I'm concerned, this is a lie! Their petitions should have said, "They won't do what I tell them to do."

I've sat and watched a lot of stuff that has gone on and not said a word. In the past 3 years, I have taken the time to get to know and observe the City Council. Whether it was while Doug Coleman was Mayor or now with John Insalaco as Mayor. I have never been disrespected, they have always listened to what I have had to say. There hasn't been a time that I have observed the council that they have never refused to talk to someone. They have always answered my questions or have assisted me to resolve an issue. The same goes for the staff except for one, former Chief Walp. Whenever I've tried to talk to him, he's walked away and that's a fact.

The leader of this recall group issued threats of a recall if Glenn Walp's contract wasn't renewed in December 2007. Through the months since then, I've watched this recall group issue, threats, behave in a disorderly fashion in council meetings, they have told half truths, lies, slander and innuendos about this council. This is the politics of personal destruction as practiced by the mainstream media and Washington elitists. Here this is managed by a couple of former employees who are disgruntled. Strange, just two years ago these two stated that other city employees who made complaints about them were jealous and disgruntled employees.

Why is it that only the mayor and four council members are being recalled? Why this discriminatory behavior? I ask Apache Junction citizens to look into this.

Now those being recalled have grown up here or have lived here for decades. When they were not on the council, they were still active in this community. They contributed positively to this community without calling the news for recognition. This recall group is made up of latecomers to this area. They say they love this community, but they only make disparaging and negative remarks.

Vice Mayor R. E. Eck and I were roommates together at Mesa Lutheran Hospital, he's the one man who got me to come out here. I guess I'm one of the 21 new citizens in this community. How many of you have helped get other people to move out here?

I ask you, "Do you want action or words? Do you throw away a bird in the hand for a couple of yahoos in the bush?"

Wayne Standage
Apache Junction

Jim Stevens on Jim Stevens

Once before the Que Pasa opinion expressed very similar statements as in the July 27th edition. In my response to the earlier statements I questioned Mr. Barker's journalistic ethics and your response was that you did not have to

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Que Pasa?

Paper or Plastic?

Have you noticed that over the past few years the supermarkets no longer ask you if you prefer paper or plastic when they're bagging your groceries?

They just pack everything up in plastic bags. And if you think those plastic bags are free— here's some information for you.

Plastic shopping bags are made from polyethylene, a thermoplastic made from oil. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that somewhere between 500 billion and one trillion plastic bags are consumed each year in the United States.

Less than 1 percent of those bags are recycled because it costs more to recycle them than to manufacture new ones. It costs \$4,000 to recycle one ton of plastic bags, which is then worth about \$32 on the commodities market.

Ocean-going vessels dump more than 8 million tons of plastic bags annually. The bags have been sighted float-



Ed Barker, Editor

ing north of the arctic circle and south to Antarctica. Plastic bags account for about 10 percent of the debris that washes up on America's coastline each year.

Plastic bags "photo-degrade," which means they break down into smaller, more toxic polymers, eventually contaminating soils and waterways. As a consequence, microscopic particles enter the food chain, eventually ending up being ingested by humans.

Would you like to do some-

thing about this situation? Well, you can.

The average family accounts for about six plastic shopping bags each week. That's 24 bags each month, and 288 bags annually. For Apache Junction's 10,000 families, that equals about 3 million bags each year.

That's right. Three million plastic shopping bags each year just in Apache Junction.

China has banned plastic shopping bags nationwide, and saves 37 million barrels

of oil every year as a result. Los Angeles banned them just last week.

If you would like to help cut down on the number of plastic shopping bags, start using fabric shopping bags. You can make your own or buy them. They're sturdy and cheap.

All of our local supermarkets have them. I know Safeway sells them for 99¢. Get a couple of these reusable bags and do something for your planet... and save some oil while you're at it.

The News Opinion Poll

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The polling program is designed to limit each computer to one vote in each poll.

Last Week's Results: Question: Should Congress establish a national speed limit of 55 mph to help conserve fuel?

Yes 28.7%

No 71.3%

This Week's Question: Should the City of Apache Junction ban the use of plastic shopping bags?

Yes No

Kollenborn's Chronicles

Allan 'Hoss' Blackman 1932-2008

By Tom Kollenborn
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Several years ago I wrote an article about a man who changed his life based on what he believed in. This man moved from a setting of seascapes in the east to the southwest. His childhood dream of being a cowboy was finally fulfilled when he moved to Arizona in 1972.

In the fall of 1975 the Arizona desert was a burning inferno with temperatures well above the one hundred-degree mark. Only after sundown did the air begin to cool. It was in my swamp-cooled classroom on the extension campus of Central Arizona College in Apache Junction that I met my first real "Connecticut Yankee". He was dressed in a big Stetson hat, a western shirt, Levis, and pointed-toe cowboy boots. His better than six-foot frame made a real striking figure in a room filled with senior citizens and other students. Momentarily I thought John Wayne had joined my class. At the time I was teaching a special interest class titled "Prospecting the Superstitions." As fall changed to winter on the Arizona desert this "Connecticut Yankee" would forever alter my philosophy about life and why a lot of people move to Apache Junction.

During the many class sessions that followed he was so inquisitive, so charged with enthusiasm, and so sincere about accumulating knowledge on cowboys and the region. He wasn't the typical instructor-student challenger; he wanted to learn everything he could about the Superstition Mountains and the American West. Sometimes it appeared he was trying to crowd a lifetime into a few short months. After our formal introduction I understood the motivation behind his drive to acquire all the knowledge he could. He was a "Connecticut Yankee" in search of a dream, a dream of learning and experiencing the life of a real cowboy. Something he had



Allan Blackman on the trail to Haunted Canyon, c.1978

dreamed about since childhood. Allan Blackman was a man in search of a dream and had forgone his previous lifestyle as a successful Easterner to fulfill this burning desire to go west.

No longer would he do lapidary work, paint schooners on the high sea, or build brass cannons for Revolutionary War re-enactment groups. Allan was an accomplished seascape painter and had oil paintings hanging in thirty-nine states. He traded all this for a chance to prospect for gold in the West and find the legendary cowboy's way of life.

Allan was born during the "Great Depression" on February 27, 1932 in Bridgeport, Connecticut and graduated from high school in Stamford on June 6, 1950. As a child he traded his piano lessons for art lessons and by the time he was fourteen he had his first one-man art show at the Stamford Museum. He sold ten of his thirty clipper ships and seascape scenes that day. His oil paintings found their way into banks and homes in thirty-nine states of the United States. Allan continued to paint and sell his work throughout high school.

His first introduction to the West was when he was four years old. All dressed in cowboy attire he would ride his tricycle around his parent's living room while absorbing the music of Montana Slim who sang each morning on Radio WOR, New York City, about 8:15 a.m. His mother used to say the only thing he would sit still and listen to

was a cowboy singer. From this point on Allan grew up dreaming of being a cowboy and living the cowboy's way of life.

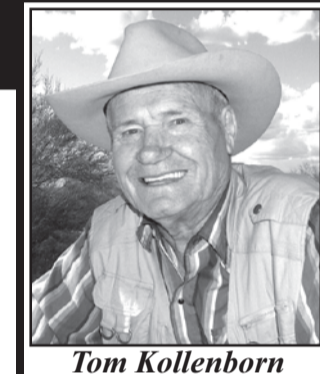
The beginning of World War II, when our nation was at its greatest turmoil, Allan passed time at the movie theater watching Tom Mix, Gene Autry and a host of Hollywood cowboys who were his heroes. It was from these characters Allan's first impressions of the West came. However, nothing stirred him as much as the film, "Lust for Gold", starring Glen Ford and Ida Lupino in 1951. This film incorporated as one of its basic themes the legend of the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine in the Superstition Mountains of Central Arizona. Now young Allan had both the West and lost gold to nurture his desire to see the West.

Allan joined the United States Army in 1951 shortly after high school. He served a tour of duty in Germany and was honorably discharged in 1953.

Blackman was employed as a tool-die maker at the Pitney-Bowes Company. He worked his way up to foreman by 1967. Allan had an excellent job, a beautiful home in West Redding, Connecticut and a wonderful family. In his West Redding home he continued his art and developed his lapidary skills and work. He traded oil paintings for uncut stone to finish and polish. During the twelve years he worked for Pitney-Bowes he continued to develop his painting ability for seascapes.

Allan planned a vacation in 1968 to San Antonio, Texas, but instead traveled to California. It was on his return trip from California he stopped in Wickenburg, Arizona, the "Dude Ranch Capital of the World." It was here, he met his first cowboy. A man he could talk to about the West and the life style here.

Early in 1972, after a severe winter of rain and a problematic asthmatic condition of his son, Bruce, he decided to move to Arizona. This un-



Tom Kollenborn

usual set of circumstances prompted Allan to ask for a transfer to Arizona from Pitney-Bowes. Company officials arranged a transfer for Allan. The Blackman's sold their house that day and by October 10, 1972, Allan was finally living the legend he had dreamed about. He was only forty years old.

Allan always believed "cowboys were the swash-bucklers of the desert." As he settled into his new life it was a learning experience. He changed from a station wagon to FWD pickup. He had to learn cowboy talk and special cowboy skills just for his personal satisfaction. He read just about everything he could about cowboys, the West and lost gold.

Blackman first moved to Mesa, Arizona on one acre of land. On this land he had his horses, goats, and sheep. The first two horsemen he met were Gary Hunnington and Joseph Bailey. Allan learned his basics from these two men. They hauled their horses out to the Superstition Wilderness and rode to various destinations. This Connecticut Yankee thrived on the Wild West and the legends of Superstition Mountain.

Allan lived in Mesa eight years before moving to Apache Junction. He claimed meeting me in October of 1973 broadened his knowledge of the West, the Superstition Wilderness and the life of the cowboy. He was sincerely dedicated to learning about the legends and stories of Superstition Mountain. Blackman and I rode in the mountains for ten years together. He often volunteered to work for Bill Bohme in the eastern end of the Superstition Mountains during roundup. Royce Johnson, Bill

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