



# 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 300 words or less, so please keep your comments brief and to the point.**

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### School bus clarification

I wish to clarify the reason Daniel and Crystal Holtz and Crystal's TLC for Kids Childcare sent a letter to the *AJ News* requesting review of a bus stop nearer to our home and business.

It seems that the school district felt that we were asking for special consideration when requesting a bus stop be made that was not a great distance from our home. We wish to make it abundantly clear that this is not the case. We neither demand nor expect that a bus stop be made just for us in this case.

On the contrary we do request fair treatment and adherence to the school board's new policy for the one-mile rule they have implemented. We are 1.12 miles from the school which is indisputable as long as the school board uses the address of the new Four Peaks campus, not the unused old campus. They may have made the mistake of using the old campus for their mileage estimates but that would be foolish and I know they would not make that mistake.

The bus schedulers did inform us that the bus stop assigned for us was at Roundup and Gold streets, exactly ½ mile further away from Four Peaks campus. This "by my elementary math" puts the nearest bus stop 1.5 miles from the school, clearly violating the new policy of 1 mile from the school. These are facts that can be easily verified by anyone with an elementary math-level education. There are an additional three children who live just across the street from us that are slightly farther away from the school than us that are also affected by this modified 1 (1.5) mile rule.

A bus stop could be made a half mile closer to the school and still be outside the new 1-mile rule in this case. This would not violate the new rule and is not in any way requesting special treatment, we are only requesting fair treatment.

Dan and Crystal Holtz, Apache Junction

### Likes McCain/Palin

I am a Navy vet. I'm 65 years old, and have come to the conclusion that the same scare tactics never change. But, if you like paying high taxes, if you do feel like you are not better off than eight years ago, and if you want higher taxes and less money than you did eight years ago, vote for the Obama ticket.

If you think "change" was bad when Carter was elected, just wait and see if you get your wait for Obama and see what you will get. The reason President Clinton did so good is because he had a Republican congress to keep him in check and work with him. Obama will have Nancy and her ridiculous record as leading the congress, to get rid of any money for the military, the border, or our chance to get off the Middle East and South America oil scams.

I'm voting for (a) man we can see his record and past, and understands what we need to keep us safe. Vote for McCain/Palin if want a real change and have some good things to happen to make our country greater again.

M. McLean, Apache Junction

### Fire board candidate responds to news story

My name is Jeff Cross and I am running for the Apache Junction Fire Board. After disparaging and inaccurate remarks made in a recent article in the *AJ News*, I must set the record straight about who I am and what my motivations are for seeking to serve my community.

I have lived in Gold Canyon for six years and I absolutely love this community. When it comes to the Apache Junction Fire District, I believe that our firefighters are some of the finest professionals I have ever seen. However, over the years I have witnessed many actions of the fire board and management staff, which have caused me great concern. Many of us here in the district are deeply concerned with the lack of community input and education regarding fire station placement and design. I do not understand why the board has not provided a citizen bond oversight committee to ensure that the \$9 million we approved is spent in the most efficient and effective manner possible. I want to know why current fire board members do not have e-mail addresses and phone numbers available on the AJFD Web site to make themselves available to answer questions to their constituents. I want to know why Chet Haines, Jim Cowles and Steve Stockton refuse to return phone calls to answer tough budget questions. I want to know why the former fire chief was immediately hired back after retirement by the current board as a lobbyist. Why do we need a lobbyist? What are his qualifications? These are the types of questions I will be asking and I intend to bring answers, which will be in the best interest of our community, not the good-old-boys.

In the recent article in the *AJ News*, Steve Stockton, whom I have never met or spoken to in my life, slandered me and made assertions about a board controlled by a union. What Mr. Stockton fails to say is that he is also a firefighter and union member who took a medical retirement. If you see him, ask to see his union ring. I am a member of the Fire

Fighters Association, much like I am involved with many other community organizations. My only role with the association is that I coordinate an annual drive to raise money for muscular dystrophy and I also coordinate raffles and a golf tournament to raise money for the East Valley Child Crisis Center and other charities. The only things that will control my vote are the input of our taxpayers, my experience and my conscience... Period!

Also in the article, Jim Cowles is quoted saying that the candidates support a 14-percent pay hike for the firefighters. Again, I have never met or spoken with Mr. Cowles and I have never spoken a word to anyone about pay raises for the firefighters. How these men can make such blatantly false statements as public officials is proof positive of why the good old boy leadership of this fire district needs significant change to ensure we can have open, honest and accountable leadership for the AJ Fire District.

So let's start right now with a new accountable and transparent fire board. My e-mail address is UgotJC@live.com and my phone number is (480) 861-7831. Please call me with your input about the AJFD.

Jeff Cross, Gold Canyon  
Candidate for Apache Junction Fire District Board

### Re: Upcoming Fire Board election

My name is Mike Weaver and I am running for one of the three seats on the Apache Junction Fire Board in the election on November 4. I am seeking this office because I believe in serving my community to help make it all that it can be. As a resident of Gold Canyon, I have seen first hand the public relations problems that are the result of a fire board, that has not effectively communicated or connected to their constituents. I will work to change this.

My priorities as a member of the AJFD Board are very simple:

1. The highest level of public safety for the residents of the entire fire district— when tragedy strikes we need the responders to get to us quickly and to have the proper equipment to help us.
2. The most effective and efficient use of tax-payer dollars - we need to implement new procedures such as an organizational strategic plan, independent financial audits, review of district credit card use rules and citizen oversight for the bonds to ensure fiscal responsibility. The Apache Junction Fire Board and administration oversee a significant expenditure of our tax-dollars. I will be an ambassador for the taxpayer to ensure maximum value for our investment.
3. Significantly improved communications with the community, the district has not been seen as an organization that effectively communicates to residents, the media or its employ-

## The News Opinion Poll

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**Last Week's Results:** *Question:* The seventh anniversary of the terrorists attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 just passed last week. For some lesser crimes seven years is the statute of limitations. Are you angered that Osama bin Laden has never been apprehended?

Yes  82.8%

No  17.2%

**This Week's Question:** Do you believe the national economy is going to get better in the next 12 months?

Yes

No

ees. We need to make this a transparent organization by maximizing use of the department public information officers, holding meetings in the community for residents and providing up to date information on the AJFD Web site. Residents have not been adequately informed of reasons for major decisions, such as fire station placement or design to ensure their integration into the community until it is too late for citizen input to have any real effect.

After extensive interviews and discussions, I have been endorsed by many of my neighbors, the community's police officers, paramedics and firefighters. I am so heartened that all of these folks believe in me and I promise that I will be a strong and accessible community advocate if I am elected to the AJ Fire Board. Two current board members, Jim Cowles and Steve Stockton made negative comments that purported to represent my position in the last edition of this paper. The motivation for these comments were a mystery to me as I had never met these men before they made these statements; however it makes it clear why we need change on the AJ Fire Board.

Mike Weaver, Gold Canyon

### More on the fire board

My Name is Sean Newton and I am one of so many former

**Letters to the Editor**  
continued on page A-5

## Kollenborn's Chronicles

### Origin of the Lost Dutchman Mine Story

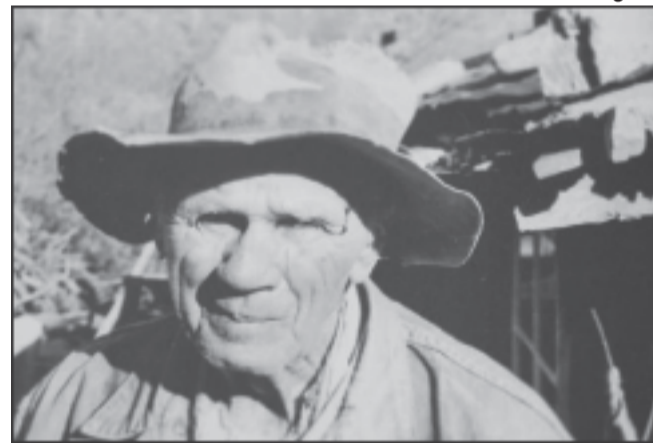
By Tom Kollenborn  
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The Superstition Mountain has served as a beacon to treasure hunters and the curious, attracting them from around the world. Fortunes have been made and lost in the search for the Lost Dutchman Mine, however, the mine has never been found. Some claim the majestic beauty and tranquility of the region is the only treasure man will find in the Superstition Wilderness Area.

The Lost Dutchman Mine was named after Jacob Waltz, an old German prospector mistakenly called the "Old Dutchman." He allegedly discovered a rich gold vein in the Superstition Mountain region east of Phoenix.

Hermann Petrasch was probably one of the most persistent seekers of Waltz's mine. You might say Hermann was the "father of all modern Dutch hunters." Hermann and his brother Rhinehart began their search for the mine with Julia Thomas in the summer of 1892.

Carl Gottfried Hermann Petrasch was born in Hengersdorf, Germany on the 24th day of April 1864. Hermann arrived at the Port of Entry, New York, New York in the spring of 1869. He had left Germany with his father Gottfried when he was only five years old. Herman accompanied his father to the town of Whatcom, Wash. Herman's father traveled widely throughout the West, first Washington, Montana, Colorado, and finally to Arizona. Hermann lived in Arizona almost 60 years and most



Hermann Petrasch at his cabin on Queen Creek.  
Photo by Robert L. Garman.

of those years were spent in and around the Superstition Mountain area. Petrasch did not apply for United States citizenship until October 1938.

Hermann Petrasch arrived in Arizona shortly after the death of Jacob Waltz in October of 1891. He came to Arizona at the request of his brother Rhinehart. Rhinehart wanted Hermann to assist Julia Thomas and him in the search for Waltz's gold mine in the Superstition Mountains. Rhinehart claimed that he and Julia had the clues to locate Waltz's rich gold mine.

Rhinehart Petrasch had been residing in Phoenix for some time and helped Julia Thomas with her business. Some historians believe Rhinehart became a close associate of Jacob Waltz in his final days at Julia's residence on West Jackson Street in Phoenix. Rhinehart learned a few meager clues during this period some believe, but not enough to find the mine. Waltz may or may not have mumbled out any clues in the final days of his life. If any clues were given out, surely Waltz would

have given them to Julia, his caregiver during his long illness.

As the end became apparent for the "Old Dutchman" he called Julia and Rhinehart to his side, some say, and gave them the final clues to his rich gold mine in the Superstition. This would have been fine, but Julia and Rhinehart had been celebrating a bit too much and their minds were a little foggy. This they would regret when they wandered aimlessly in the mountains searching for Waltz's mine.

Julia and Rhinehart tried to put the pieces together after the death of old "Jake." Their first decision was to find another partner they could trust. Julia accepted the idea of inviting Rhinehart's brother Hermann to join them in the search for Waltz's mine. Hermann was living in Colorado at the time.

Early in August of 1892, shortly after Herman Petrasch's arrival in Phoenix, Julia Thomas, Rhinehart and Hermann Petrasch began to organize their expedition to search for the Lost Dutchman Mine. Julia Thomas had



Tom Kollenborn

purchased a team, wagon, and camping gear for their expedition into the Superstition Mountains. The group departed Phoenix before sunrise on August 11, 1892, with little fanfare. The party moved slowly along the old Tempe-Lehi Road. They spent their first night at Marysville Crossing. The next morning they turned southeastward toward Superstition Mountain and the desert flatland west of the mountains. The second day of travel eastward across the desert toward the western face of Superstition Mountain proved difficult until they found some wagon tracks. These wagon tracks lead northeast toward Superstition Mountain, but crossing washes became very difficult for their overloaded wagon.

Somewhere along this point the group realized they had to abandon the wagon. They spent their next night under the cliffs of Superstition Mountain. At sunrise the next morning they were packing up their two horses and decided to walk toward the northwestern end of Superstition Mountain. Julia Thomas was searching for La Sombrero, the pointed peak she said Jacob Waltz had told her about.

**Next Week, Part II**

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