



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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Likes Mary Shope for supervisor

Recently I had an opportunity to chat with Mary Shope when she came to my door while campaigning for Pinal County Supervisor. Mary was open and responsive to my concerns about Pinal County government. In my role as fire chief for the Queen Valley Fire District, I appreciate her focus on public health and safety.

As someone who resides in an unincorporated part of our county I am really concerned about public safety. We must rely on our County Sheriff's Office for our security. Mary is committed to working with the sheriff on improving the efficiency and quality of service we receive. I saw that commitment first hand during the PCSO Law Enforcement Citizens Academy Training that we attended in 2003. Mary will work to improve response times and any additional training that our law enforcement professionals deem necessary. Mary will work to ensure that staffing levels continue to grow to meet the demand of our growing population.

Mary Shope realizes that keeping us safe is one of the most important jobs a County Supervisor does. Mary is an honest person with the background, experience and commitment necessary to be a real asset to our Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

I urge everyone to vote for Mary Shope for Pinal County Supervisor.

Cecil Fendley, Chief, Queen Valley Fire District

Eight is enough

I am writing to express my support for Barack Obama. After eight years of a Republican president, we need a new direction. George W. Bush and John McCain have led us into an unnecessary war, ruined our economy, and destroyed the reputation of the greatest country on earth. Barack Obama has lived the American dream, and will ensure our children can do the same.

Kristina Butler, Apache Junction

Supports Quick Trip site

I'm appalled that our city council is once again harassing businesses that want to bring jobs to our community. Having a QT (Quick Trip) at Baseline and Ironwood would employ more people in Apache Junction and affect traffic in the area very little if at all. Competition is good! This isn't the first time our city council has harassed QT. The first time it was over power lines. I'm just sick of the leadership we have in this city. I wouldn't blame QT if they moved on to other areas like the county island.

If they're going to reject businesses coming to town then begin with dollar stores and check cashing "stores"!

We finally get a nice strip mall across from Walmart and what's the first thing to go in ... dollar and thrift stores! We don't need any more dollar stores!

AJ is NOT Sun City and never should be! Ask people in neighboring communities about AJ and all they know is we have tweakers and trailer park; there is a definite negative stigma we have to overcome.

The problem with this city is that very few if any residents work here and we have retired people pushing all the buttons (snow birds and trailer parks). People get up in the morning, drive away, and spend the bulk of their money during the day in the neighboring communities where they found decent paying jobs. If this city really wanted to be forward thinking it would encourage infrastructure to build office parks and better internet infrastructure so that our community would be an attractive option for companies like Google and office-oriented businesses. We still have a lot of untouched dirt in town and we'd be a prime location if we had the infrastructure and an accepting attitude toward such companies in our city government.

When we have a thriving economic base in AJ we can have all the luxuries other communities have like a bus system and a downtown people won't just drive through. Please let's stop harassing decent companies and instead encourage more to come here.

JD Austin, Apache Junction

Martyn endorses Babeu

I am proudly endorsing Paul Babeu for Pinal County Sheriff. Pinal County is America's fastest-growing county and although we currently have capable leadership in our Sheriff's Office, I believe that Paul Babeu is the best choice to lead the PCSO into the future. Paul's background of leadership, management, and education, combined with his well-articulated vision for the future, lead me to this endorsement. Pinal County is changing. We are on the cusp of a population/economic surge that has never been seen in the history of our state. Although we will develop responsibly and with controlled purpose, our law enforcement must keep pace. I'm confident that under Paul's leadership, the PCSO will stay ahead of the community's needs as we move into the future and take our rightful place as one of America's

finest counties. Paul Babeu is the future of our PCSO. He represents bold, competent, visionary leadership.

Pinal County currently has an amazing group of employees and volunteers who represent the finest qualities of law enforcement and community service. I believe their talents and dedication will flourish under the leadership of Paul Babeu. Paul represents the brightest future for Pinal County and that is why I am endorsing Paul Babeu for Sheriff.

Bryan Martyn, Gold Canyon
Candidate for Pinal County Supervisor, District 2

Benoist for mayor?

In his letter to the editor, I see that Mr. Noel Benoist is considering running for mayor and for cleaning house. I personally believe Mr. Benoist is undoubtedly a man of courage. Why else would someone put himself in line for probable and more than likely ridicule?

I think I should list at least 10 items that convince me that Mr. Benoist is qualified for the mayoral position!

•1 •2 •3 •4 •5
•6 •7 •8 •9 •10

Now, for cleaning a house, that might be another story!

Charles Bunten, Apache Junction

Dark skies

Last week my wife and I had the privilege of visiting Steamboat Springs, Colo. During this visit we learned that the town got its name in the 1820s when some French explorers coming up the river heard a chugging sound that they thought was a steamboat. As it turned out, the chugging sound was being made by a natural spring. If you are thinking of going to Steamboat Springs to see and hear this natural phenomenon for yourself, forget about it. As incredible as it seems, this natural wonder was allowed to be covered up by a railroad in 1908. In this day and age it is difficult to fathom such primitive and short-sighted behavior. We are so much more sophisticated today.

Or are we? Pinal County contains another natural wonder that is being assaulted bit by bit, on a daily basis. Every time an outdoor light is installed where it is not needed, or is brighter than it needs to be, or whose light is not directed at the ground, this natural wonder recedes a little bit more into the realm of distant memory. I am speaking of the majestic Milky Way; our home galaxy that dominates the fall sky—for those who are lucky enough to live an area where the sky is naturally lit by the stars and planets, rather than washed out by poorly designed, or poorly installed, artificial lights.

It is not too late for Pinal County to save this natural wonder. Policies that promote the thoughtful and intelligent use

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

Yes 36.8%

No 63.2%

This Week's Question: In your opinion, which major political party will deal most effectively with the current financial crisis in the U.S.?

Democratic Party

Republican Party

of light can be implemented and enforced. Future generations need not be left to wonder at the primitive shortsightedness of those who occupy the current space of time. Log into www.darksky.org to learn more and get plugged into this issue.

Keith J. Krueger, Gold Canyon
Section Leader, Pinal County International Darksky Association

Tucson police endorse Sheriff Vasquez

The Tucson Police Officers Association has proudly, and without reservation, announced their endorsement for reelection of Sheriff Chris Vasquez of Pinal County. The association stated that Sheriff Vasquez's support of public safety issues, county employees and his commitment to Pinal County is deeply appreciated.

Larry A. Lopez, President
Tucson Police Officers Assn.

Likes Martyn for supervisor

Bryan Martyn is the right person for District 2 Supervisor. He's conservative and a Christian. Brian is retired military, well-educated and a family man native to our community.

Letters to the Editor
continued on page A-5

Kollenborn's Chronicles

The Lost Dutchman Mine Story, Part II

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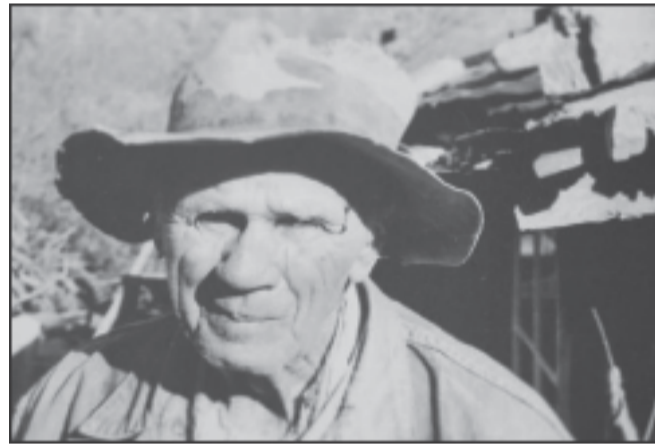
The Lost Dutchman Mine was named after Jacob Waltz, an old German prospector mistakenly called the "Old Dutchman." He allegedly discovered a rich gold vein in the Superstition Mountain region east of Phoenix.

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.

The heat and humidity was stifling, but the three adventurers continued walking and leading their pack animals.

According to Hermann Petrasch they camped the next evening in Needle Canyon, at least he thought it was. Years later Hermann said they might have camped in East Boulder Canyon on the western side of Black Top Mountain that third night. The next morning they were up at sunrise again and climbed a steep ridge to a pass and walked down into a deep canyon. They could see the pointed peak old Jacob had talked about. It was here they set camp for the next three weeks as they searched the area with their clues.

Spirits were high among the three very amateur adventurers. But the tortuous summer heat and humidity soon took its toll. Toward the middle of the second week it was impossible to search except in the very early morning or late evening. At the end of the third week the three ex-



Hermann Petrasch at his cabin on Queen Creek.
Photo by Carl Boderick.

plorers collapsed from exhaustion and lack of food and water. The search for Waltz's mine was abandoned and the three returned to Phoenix exhausted, defeated and unsuccessful. A local newspaper, the *Arizona Weekly Gazette*, noted the expedition with the following excerpt on September 1, 1892, "A Queer Quest, Another Lost Mine Being Hunted by a Woman."

This prospecting venture reduced Julia Thomas to financial ruin. She and the Petrasches were destitute, having no source of income or a place to reside. Julia soon departed company with the Petrasches and married a farm laborer named Albert Schaffer on July 26, 1893.

At Schaffer's encouragement Julia produced maps using what information she could remember. She became very resourceful and began producing excellent maps illustrating how to locate the lost gold mine of Jacob Waltz. These fraudulent sheets of paper were probably the first maps to the Dutchman's Lost Mine.

It is also quite apparent that



Tom Kollenborn

when a packhorse pulled his riding horse over backward along Hewitt Canyon in 1938. Hermann eventually settled near the bank of Queen Creek in the area of the Martin Ranch. The Martins looked after Hermann for many years. The Martins would take Hermann to the dances in Superior where he would play his fiddle. Old Hermann could really play the fiddle. Hermann had a host of friends including my father.

Newspaper reporters, authors, and magazine writers visited him from time to time and many articles were written about Hermann and his search for the old "Dutchman" mine.

My father and I visited old Hermann Petrasch on Queen Creek in October of 1952, during my freshman year in high school. I was more interested in baseball than I was lost gold mines at the time. He told us he was ailing a bit, but was still willing to talk with us. Hermann never complained about his aches and pains, he just endured. Herman Petrasch passed away on November 23, 1953.

I would like to clear something up about an old photograph taken of Hermann Petrasch in Queen Creek with a gold pan and shovel.

see Kollenborn, A-5

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