



Viewpoint & Opinion

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what 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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Deputies Assn. supports Vasquez

The Pinal County Deputies Association has been in existence in its current form for over 10 years. One of the charter members who helped develop the by-laws, goals and objectives was Mike Reardon. Prior to his vote on the Board of Directors for endorsement he had indicated that he would be supporting Sheriff Vasquez. It was only when he was called for his vote that it was learned that he would be supporting Babeu instead. He has moved away from our established goals and attempted to use the association to forward his own political agenda.

Mr. Babeu has been a peace officer with the Chandler Police Department for about five years. Of that time he has spent only about two years on the road as a patrol officer. To most of us that would barely qualify him as a rookie. Now he wants to take on a department of our size and tell us how we should do our jobs? He has expressed the desire to run for only one term and in the process use our agency as a stepping stone to fulfill his political aspirations.

The primary objective of the association has always been to obtain "Meet and Confer." The association has always understood that regardless of what changes for the better or worse a sheriff may make, in four years the next sheriff can change it all. The goal of the association has been to give the employees legal standing to meet with the sheriff and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors on a more equal footing to address the issues of pay, benefits and working conditions. "Meet and Confer" makes it possible for the employees to be treated fairly in disciplinary and promotions regardless of the politician currently in office.

Sheriff Vasquez understands this and has been instrumental in assisting the Deputies Association in bringing about "Meet and Confer." He has met with the Deputies Association and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors and spoke in behalf of "Meet and Confer." He has entered into a long-term commitment to his employees to assist them in matters that directly concern them in their employment. He was successful in getting 40 new positions within the sheriff's office (even Vanderpool was only able to secure 2 or three and those were obtained by assessing and reassigning existing funding). He put disciplinary boards together that included the association and the Fraternal Order of Police as employee advocates. He has allowed employees to bring employee advocates with them into Internal Affairs interrogations. He made a written two-year agreement with the association to meet with them on a regular basis to discuss and solve problems brought to him.

From the association's standpoint, we have been lucky to have a sheriff like Chris Vasquez. We needed a major change in 2000 from 24 years of a regime that had place our reputation at its lowest point. Sheriff Vanderpool started a process of professionalization that brought us out of that era and caused us to be proud of the agency we worked for. Sheriff Chris Vasquez has continued the process and expanded it with personnel, equipment (computers in the cars) more ID Techs and better training. We have come a long way, and, yes, we still have a long way to go. No one can accomplish a job like this within a single four-year term. We need Chris Vasquez to guide us through the next set of obstacles and stick with us for the long term. He has been committed to us and we will continue to be committed to him.

Yes, we have endorsed Chris Vasquez for sheriff. He has kept his promises to us and we will keep our promise to him.

Aubrey M. Keck
Board of Directors, Pinal County Deputies Association

Lack of compassion

I am just sick about the lack of compassion in AJ. Let me explain.. My cat was chased up a power pole. She cried all night. I didn't get home from work until morning. When I did, all of my neighbors were out to try and find the crying cat. One of my neighbors finally looked up and saw a cat stuck on top of the power pole, and to my horror, it was mine. Rushing into the house I pondered who to call. My first call was to the fire department, who stated, "Sorry, but we can't help you." I called AJ animal control and got voice mail, left an urgent message, but of course, no response. My next call was to Pinal County Sheriff, their response was sorry, but we can't help you. They were nice enough to give me the number to county animal control. So, with a hopeful heart, I called them. They took down the information and said that they would see what they could do and call me back. To their credit, they did call me back within 30 minutes, just to tell me that there was nothing they could do. They didn't have a way to reach an animal that far off the ground, they suggested that I call SRP. I called SRP, the man that I talked to stated that they would not send any help due to the risk to the staff and the cat, but if the cat was still up there for 72 hours, then they may try to do something.

I later found out that my neighbors were attempting to get some help also, but were running into the same brick walls. I tried to put canned food out, that she loved. And a

neighbor tried to help by putting a can of tuna at the base of the pole.

I went to work Tuesday night, when I returned home Wednesday morning, she was still there crying for help. I went to sleep and was awakened about noon by an explosion and a burst of bright light. My cat had tried to get down. (I will spare you the horrific details) Now SRP would do something because it blew a connector and we all lost power.

I am just sick about the senseless loss of a beloved pet, this was totally unnecessary.

There should be a way to help a stranded pet.

Diane Wrona, Apache Junction

Over budget

After reading your last week's *Letters to the Editor* I feel the need to offer support to John Acton. The supporter of Laura Dean-Lytle needs to understand that she is not the most effective and efficient county recorder in Arizona. In fact she may just be the opposite. I have done my own investigating on her time with Pinal County. I was taken back to be find that not only has she been over budget by 19 percent every year. 198 percent for eight years. She seems to have something in common with our city council as they too find themselves over budget it seems yearly to date.

Our current recorder has also been well known for her trip to Hawaii paid by our tax dollars. She and about 20 different persons that work with Dean-Lytle went on this trip for what reason? We need to be informed! We should also question why she does not keep confidential information under lock and key but just in her personal desk. We want answers to these matters Ms. Dean-Lytle. I have investigated John Acton's history within our fast growing county. I have spoken with him about his years of being a peace officer. He is now retired. I understand that he has fought for this country as he is a retired Army Vet. I am also pleased to know that he has registered 500 new voters in the past five years. You'll find no scandals in his past as you will with our current recorder. I know this man to be fair and most importantly honest. Pinal County has been without a effective and efficient County Recorder for many years! Vote John Acton Nov. 4th!

Lisa Day, Apache Junction

Editor's note: As a point of factual clarification, citizens are reminded that state law requires all Arizona cities to operate with a balanced budget. The City of Apache Junction has never been over budget and, according to public records, had income of more than \$1 million over expenditures for the last fiscal year.

Supports Kibler

I wanted to mention that there is another very important office up for election and to tell you why I support Terri Kibler for the Central Arizona Water Conservation District Governing Board. Terri Kibler is very concerned about our high property taxes in Pinal County and she will work hard as a board member to keep the Central Arizona Project taxes low on our property tax bill. Terri has been an Arizona Resident for 29 years and an avid supporter that we have flowing ac-

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Last Week's Results: Question: Do you favor Photo Radar for ticketing speeders in Pinal County?

Yes 65.4%
No 34.6%

This Week's Question: Will the state of the economy effect your normal spending habits this coming holiday season?

Yes **No**

cess to clean healthy water from the Colorado River and wants to continue to protect Arizona's Water Rights.

Please join me in voting Terri Kibler for Central Arizona Water Conservation District.

John Fillmore, Apache Junction

A little gas

Any connection between our suddenly oh so "cheap" gasoline and the upcoming presidential election?: DUH! Romans kept the slaves happy with bread and circuses...we are easy...just let us buy gas a little less!

Evelyn Stringham, Apache Junction

Veteran's Day

Apache Junction Veteran's Day Celebration will be held on Sunday, November 9, 2008 from Noon - 2 p.m. There will be patriotic music, special presentations, free lunch and give-a-ways. Come join the fun as we salute and honor the Veterans of the Armed Forces of our community. Located at Apache Junction Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1650 S. Ironwood Drive, Apache Junction, 85220. For additional information please call 480-982-0221.]

Barbara Martinez, Apache Junction

Supports CAC Bond

Public Safety is a big focus of the mission of Central Arizona College (CAC). For me, this is one of the biggest reasons I'll be voting yes on Question One, the CAC bond question.

The Central Arizona Regional Law Officers Training Academy (CARLOTA) is located at CAC's Signal Peak

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Kollenborn's Chronicles

Cave of Gold Bars

By Tom Kollenborn
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One of the earliest stories remembered around here about a cave full of gold was the story that emerged in 1934 when Charley Williams came out of the Superstition Mountains with a pocket full of nuggets. He claimed he had found a cave with a pile of gold nuggets just inside the entrance. He further claimed he bumped his head so hard he was disoriented for a couple of days before he could find his way out of the mountains. Charlie said he wandered around the Superstition Mountains lost for several days. A search for Charley Williams, a World War I veteran, was organized by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. Charley Williams eventually wandered out of the mountains unharmed. Williams' gold was confiscated by the United States Government and was later proven to be dental gold.

This story was followed by a tale of gold bars buried near the Massacre Grounds. A prospector named James Baxter spent a lot of time prospecting the area between Superstition Mountain and Garden Valley area. Generally speaking, this was an area within a two miles radius of the old First Water Trailhead. Baxter claimed he was guided to the cave by a blue light emitted from the cave. Bob L. Ward confirmed



Bob Ward (l) searched for treasure in the Superstitions for more than 30 years. Robert S. Jacob (r) claimed he had a cave in Squaw Box Canyon with some 20 metric tons of gold in it.



Baxter's story on several occasions, but said he never saw the cave or the gold bars. Baxter, after several years in the desert around Superstition Mountains, moved back to his home state of Washington emptied handed with no gold bars.

Every since the middle of the 1930's there have been stories circulating around Apache Junction about a cave in the Superstition Mountains filled with gold bars. This story may have originated with a man named John Hallenberg in the late 1930's. John always talked about a cave located on Bluff Springs Mountain filled with gold bars. He was convinced the story was true and he had a map pointing to the direction to this so-called Cave of Gold. John tells a story about the time he was hiking along a narrow ledge and

spotted a small cave. He bent over and could feel cool air coming from deep within the Earth. He inspected the cave closer and found it to be large enough to crawl into. Several days later he returned to the cave site with a rope and two flashlights. He was determined to explore the cave. As he climbed down into the cave he found all kinds of old writing which he said was not petroglyphs. He thought the writing was Hebrew or something similar. Like many of the stories about the Superstition Mountains this was what I call a one-man story. A one-man story is a tale without any witnesses or any method of verification.

There is another tale about a cave full of gold bullion that emerged in the circles of treasure hunters in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The story



Tom Kollenborn

centered on a man named Harry France or LaFrance. Dale Howard, Tracy Hawkins and Ernie Provence often talked about France discovering a cave filled with gold near Black Top Mesa or Weaver's Needle. Bob Ward, a well known treasure hunter in the area, talked about a cave filled with gold bars and a man named Harry France. Allegedly they claimed the source of this gold was the Jesuits. Of course Dr. Charles Polzer, a Jesuit historian at the University of Arizona debunked any stories associating Jesuit missionaries with gold or silver mining in the Southwest. Still, traditional treasure hunters continue to talk about buried or lost Jesuit gold in their narratives. It has never been decided whether Harry's name was France or La France.

The most elaborate tale about a cave filled with gold bars must be credited to Robert Simpson Jacob or "Crazy Jake." This cave allegedly was located in or near Squaw Box Canyon just east of La Barge Canyon and north of Charlebois Mountain (Black

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