

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:

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The March ballot

The Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce wants to remind all registered voters of the upcoming city election on Tuesday, March 10, 2009. This election is a local election only, but it has significant ramifications for the City of Apache Junction. The message from the Chamber is first, please remember to vote, secondly please understand the issues on the ballot.

The March ballot has three issues to be decided. First, there is a primary election for the mayor and City Council. Next, there is a vote on Proposition 100, Home Rule. Finally, there is a recall election.

The primary election and recall election can be confusing because if the candidate for mayor and two of the candidates in the recall win the recall election, they will only serve as council members until June 30, 2009. The other two recall candidates will complete the terms of the position. In the primary election, if a candidate receives 50% plus one vote, that candidate will assume office on July 1, 2009, to serve a four-year term. If none of the candidates receives this majority, then there will be an election in May for the top three candidates for mayor and the top six candidates for the two council positions.

From the Chamber's perspective the vote for Proposition 100, Home Rule, is critical for the community. If "Home Rule" is not passed, the city will be required to reduce the city budget back to the level of the city budget in 1980. This will mean the city will have to reduce the budget for 2009-2010 by close to \$9 million. Over the next four years, this reduction will be for approximately \$40 million. I do not believe there are many people who realistically believe that the city can operate on a budget amount that was used in 1980 and provide the level of services this community has come to expect in 2009. A "Yes" vote on "Home Rule" means the city can set a realistic budget to meet the needs of the community. The city must still continue to have a balanced budget and can only spend the revenues that currently collect.

The Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce asks all registered voters living in the city to do your civic duty and vote in the City of Apache Junction election on March 10th. The Chamber asks that if you vote early or on March 10th that you please educate yourself on the issues.

Dr. Greg Wyman
Chairman, Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce

Ballot confusing

Recently, I got the chance to see the sample ballot for the Primary/Recall Election coming up in March. At first glance, the ballot appears to be very self-explanatory and straight forward; it contains a section encompassing the Mayoral race, one for the City Council race, and a proposition. After the section containing Proposition 100, however, is where I think the ballot gets confusing. Each Councilmember has a paragraph explaining why they feel they should not be recalled, after which there is a section to vote on each individual race.

Originally I was under the impression that a non-vote in the recall meant you were not interested in recalling the candidates. I have since found, however, that you must physically vote for each of the current City Council members.

I encourage you to not support the recall effort — it would appear that it is driven by hidden agendas and veiled motivation. A vote against the recall candidates is a vote for our city and the betterment of Apache Junction. We have no business, as a city, encouraging dark dealings and insincere efforts to highjack our municipal government.

When you are filling out your ballot, vote for the mayoral and City Council candidates that you feel will best serve our city; But when you get to the Recall portion of the ballot, I challenge you to do what is in the best interest of our city and vote against the Recall candidates.

Jeanne Mouat, Apache Junction

More recall confusion

First of all great job on the viewpoint and opinion in last week's paper! It was needless to say... eye opening! I have seen a sample ballot for this upcoming election and along with myself and many other in the Apache Junction area are concerned that this will get lost on or confuse voters. This whole mess is confusing! People I've spoken with just think they don't have to vote at all on the recall election and that will mean the existing council stays. Not the case! My fear is that the so called recall team WILL have their voters understanding what to do and how to vote. Is it possible to run an article (with sample ballot) or some sort of piece to better explain to the voters what to do?

Tye Price, Apache Junction

Que Pasa

Good piece in your Que Pasa editorial. I couldn't agree with you more.

Jeffrey C. Rank, Apache Junction

We need heroes

We need the voters of Apache Junction to be the heroes of this great city. There is an election coming up on March 10th and it is imperative that we all vote "yes" on Home Rule.

If this does not pass we are at a loss for many things we dearly take advantage of. The Parks and Recreation is at risk of closing. Which means no one to maintain our parks, no Fourth of July activities, no Easter egg hunts, senior softball, youth sports, adult sports, all at risk. Not to mention the public library. This is vital to the community. The Multi-Generational Recreation Center, all at risk.

The police department will be forced to make many undue cuts. Where does that leave us as a community? The great thing about all this is that we have a chance to save it all with a yes vote on March 10th. Can We count on the voters of Apache Junction to save Apache Junction? Yes we can.

Beatrice LaBelle, Apache Junction

Where's the recall beef?

Since the recall effort started just 2 1/2 months into my term as councilmember (July 2007) the folks executing the procedure have said again and again that the current council has done nothing to bring growth and development to Apache Junction. However, they have offered not one idea or plan on what they would do to convince potential new residents and business owners to settle here. Nor have they said how they would convince outsiders that their massive planned upheaval would suddenly be stabilized if they held office.

I have looked at their Web site and listened to their negative speeches but still see no substance. I would like to use this space to inform the our citizens what I have attempted and accomplished in my not even two years of service to our community.

I organized a discussion with then Gold Canyon Business association representative Bryan Martyn and Goldfield Ghost Town creator Bob Shouse about the possibility of pooling our resources to showcase what Apache Junction has to offer. This process is still on the table.

I brought to a council work session the idea of lowering development fees north of the 60 for infill and new growth. I think this will happen in the next year.

The obvious one that everyone sees is the Focal Point/Centennial Park project in front of the former Grand Hotel property. While this is a "feel good," "sense of pride" project, it

Kollenborn's Chronicles

Read the Chronicles archive at www.SuperstitionMountain.info

Two Soldiers' Lost Mine

By Tom Kollenborn
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The tale of the Two Soldiers Lost Mine has been around since the turn of the century and continues to appear in stories about the Lost Dutchman Mine and the Silver King Mine. Sims Ely mentioned the story in depth in his book *The Lost Dutchman Mine* by William Morrow & Company, New York, N.Y., 1953.

According to Ely and others, the story goes something like this. Two soldiers were mustered out of the Army at Fort McDowell in 1879. The young men decided to hike across the Salt River and through the mountains to the Silver King Mine where they hoped to gain employment. The reason they choose to hike across this country was to save money. Somewhere south of the Salt River in a rugged canyon that was in view of a tall pointed peak, they found an old Mexican mine and dump. They believed it to be a Mexican mine because of the small tunnels that were only large enough for a man to crawl into on his hands and knees.

The young soldiers, fearing Apaches in the area, spent only enough time to fill their packs with what they thought was high grade gold ore. They then departed the area and hiked up the drainage of Tortilla Creek then down into Randolph Canyon and eventually into what is known as Fraser Canyon today.

They eventually made their way to the southeast, finally arriving at the Silver King Mine. The first person they talked to at the Silver King was Aaron Mason. Mason at the time operated the Silver King Commercial Mercantile Store. They told Mason their



Old U Ranch barn which served as the ranch house when Marlowe owned the ranch.

story and showed him the samples of gold ore they had. Mason immediately suggested he would grubstake them if they would go back and locate the mine and claim. The two soldiers decided to rest and wait for a while before making any deal with Mason. After a couple of weeks they decided to take Mason up on his deal. They planned on returning to the site of gold ore and staking a claim with all three of their names on it. Mason grubstaked the soldiers and they left town. Mason never heard from them again.

There are many stories as to what happen to the soldiers. Some claim they never found a gold mine and used Mason grubstake to make it to California to prospect for gold along the American and Yuba Rivers. Others believe the soldiers were murdered before they found their way back to the rich old Mexican mine and dump.

Another story that associates itself with the Two Lost Soldier's Mine occurred just east of the old Bark Ranch (Quarter Circle U Ranch) in Pinal County. Matt Caveness built the old stone house (barn) at the Bark Ranch in 1877. The

is also important because it will be the window dressing to whatever future development goes in there. Also, because of my asking the landowners to donate to our project, a new dialogue was opened that had been dormant for months previous.

You've probably also read about my effort to try to have the city take over ownership of the Rodeo Grounds. This would be a tremendous boon to our economy. Even under the current lease agreement however we have plans to make it into more of a destination point and a usable equestrian center than it is now. The entire Valley [with the exception of Queen Creek] is trying to expel their horse people and events. We should be welcoming these and showcasing them. It is a shame that the Rodeo Grounds are used only twice a year.

The third important project that I am working on is the East entrance to the city. This idea was actually ridiculed by one of the recall team members. The problem is this...approx. 300,000 people attend the renaissance festival every spring. When they leave they get on the very inviting freeway on their way home and don't come over to our community with their dollars. My goal is to widen the Northern turn by adding a lane and putting signage there that will

Letters to the Editor
continued on page A-5



Tom Kollenborn

him the military buttons were clear indicators of a mustered out military person. Anyone else could be accused of being absent from duty.

Bill Finch, Arizona State Brand Inspector, told several stories about the grave along this trail across Bark's Basin eastward toward Coffee Flat and Reid's Water. This was the main trail through the mountains to the Silver King Mine. The entire trail was not suitable for a wagon once you entered Fraser Canyon just beyond Reid's Water. A team could turn down Whitlow Canyon and make its way out through an area called the Milk Ranch and eventually to the Silver King Road. However, it was a much shorter route up Fraser Canyon and into Hewitt Canyon and eventually over the ridges to the Silver King mine on horseback. Prospectors, miners and horsemen often used this route in the 1880's.

The story of this grave became a mystery in itself over the years. Eventually the grave returned to nature and was very difficult to recognize. William T. Barkley showed me the grave site in 1959 while we were working cattle in the east pasture of the ranch. I doubt very much I could find site today, but I probably could come within two hundred feet of it.

To this day the missing soldiers are still a story that attracts interest when it comes to tales about the Superstition Mountains and the Lost Dutchman Mine.

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