



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 4 p.m. on Thursday. All letters and faxes must include your name, residential address and a daytime phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published, but are needed for verification of authenticity. Please keep your letters to 300 words or less.

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Five supervisors law

Last July the Arizona Legislature passed and the governor signed into law House Bill 2101, which allowed Pinal County to increase its board of supervisors from three to five members starting in 2010. Those in favor of the law believe the immediate increase of two supervisors would help address the enormous growth in Pinal County, particularly the unincorporated areas like San Tan Valley and Gold Canyon where county government is the only source of representation and protection. Opponents to HB 2101 believe there is no need to change the law since Pinal County's board of supervisors will already increase to five members in either 2012 or 2016. One of the opponents, the county Democratic Party chairman, filed suit claiming the law was unconstitutional and demanded the county to pay \$25,000 of his attorneys' fees.

A hearing was held before a Maricopa County judge that granted the Plaintiffs' request to enjoin the county from increasing the board of supervisors to five in 2010 and awarded the Plaintiffs attorneys' fees. This ruling is not surprising since no one attempted to defend HB 2101. Not only did the Pinal County Attorney refuse to defend the law but the Arizona Attorney General failed to show up. Where was the attorney general? Arizona case law dictates that the attorney general is the appropriate party to defend the constitutionality of Arizona law. This was a case in which the attorney general's office should have appeared and defended the law.

The plaintiffs made two main arguments. First, they argued that it is unconstitutional to have a special election for two new supervisors for a two-year term. In Arizona we frequently have special elections. In fact, in 2006, Pinal County held a special election for our sheriff, and he was elected to a two-year term. No one ever questioned Sheriff Vasquez's two-year term. The second argument by the plaintiff was that the new supervisor districts would have a large population disparity. This may be correct but what about last year's election of the county supervisors where we had huge population disparity between District 1 and District 2. According to the Central Arizona Association of Governments, in 2008 there were almost 150,000 people in District 2 and only about 80,000 people in District 1. Certainly no one is arguing that last year's election of the county supervisors was unconstitutional. If the disparity issue is a true concern, then the county supervisors (who have the authority to do so) should have adjusted the supervisor districts prior to last year's election.

There are plenty of Pinal County residents who are for and against this change. The tragedy here is not that Pinal County will have to wait to elect two new supervisors but that those who were in favor of the change were never represented in court. Those in favor of the law successfully solicited the Arizona Legislature to change it; however, when it was time to defend the law they were left unrepresented in court.

Daniel Washburn, Apache Junction

Thanks from 'Children First'

Our sincere thanks to all those that took the time to participate in the AJUSD's recent override election. It is reassuring to know that so many people are interested in improving the education of our children. The schools have done as much as they can to utilize the funds they have been given by the state without sacrificing quality.

To those on the Children First Committee thank you for donating your time in behalf of the children. You deserve the gratitude of the residents of our community for the many hours you spent in hopes of improving education. Without your efforts this issue of educational funding and the procedure of granting these funds would not have been brought to the attention of the community. Thank you!

Dana Sinelli, Apache Junction
Chairman, Children First Committee

What you voted for

To all the voters who voted "no" on the Apache Junction Unified School District's Maintenance & Operating budget overrides...when the school district no longer has the money to continue in its joint funding venture with the City for the pools, skate park, tennis courts, ball field, etc. at Superstition Shadows Park or the Little League ball fields at Superstition Mountain Elementary school and the city has to close or cut back hours for these facilities or other P&R facilities or activities...don't cry FOUL, that's what you voted for.

To all the voters who voted "no" on the AJUSD M&O budget overrides...when the school district has to take drastic measures and possibly close a school because of lack of operating funds...don't cry FOUL, that's what you voted for.

To all the parents who have children in the AJUSD, who failed to vote on the M&O budget overrides...SHAME ON YOU. When this "no" vote directly affects your child in

a negative manner...don't cry FOUL, that's what you get for failing to vote.

To all the senior citizens who voted "no" on the AJUSD M&O budget overrides...when the children of Apache Junction and Gold Canyon receive a less than adequate education or drop out of school, then make less income than they possibly would have and consequently pay less into the Social Security system...when there's less money coming into SS and you receive less and less, or stop receiving that money to supplement your retirement...don't cry FOUL, that's what you voted for.

To anyone who voted "no" on the AJUSD M&O budget overrides...when children drop out of school because of overcrowding, lack of funding, other inadequacies and inequities; and then have nothing constructive to do and end up breaking into your house and steal you blind... don't cry FOUL, you get what you vote for.

It is the responsibility of a child's mother and father to provide their child with adequate food, clothing and housing; but, as a citizen of Apache Junction, of Pinal County and the State of Arizona, it is our responsibility to ensure that ALL children receive an adequate education in adequate facilities. As such, I pay my fair share of taxes because someone paid for my education, like someone paid for your children's education. By choice, I have no children; but, again, I have paid my fair share to educate your children for the past 40 plus years that I have worked. I retire soon and will continue to pay my fair share...and I won't cry FOUL because as a responsible citizen I want OUR children to have a chance at being the best educated in our county and the state of Arizona.

But, thanks to the "no" votes on the AJUSD M&O budget overrides our children AND our community both will now suffer the consequences. For this, I do cry FOUL

Tess Nesser, Apache Junction

Supervisor Martyn

I received quite a few e-mails and one rebuttal to my LTE a couple of weeks ago, "Question Authority, Always." Mostly people thanking me, but also a couple of people saying that I (actually everybody but them) have the facts wrong on the re-districting issue. The purpose of my LTE was not to set the re-districting facts straight, I know I didn't have all of them, my only interest on that issue is that we get it right, and people, all of the people, are represented fairly (something the libs are always screaming about a.k.a.: ACORN) and it looks like we will in 2012. The intent of my LTE was to set some things

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Last Week's Results: Question: Would you approve of President Obama sending 40,000 additional troops to Afghanistan next year?

Yes 36.4%

No 63.6%

This Week's Question: What is your opinion on the importance of getting a H1N1 Virus shot this year. Are you planning on getting the shot, or not?

Yes, I will get the H1N1 vaccination

No, I will not get the vaccination

straight with a BOS member, mainly his inaction.

Bryan Martyn was not present at that hearing, therefore, his constituents were not represented. I liken his behavior to that of Jeff Flake this year when he was absent at Cap and Trade vote, therefore I was not represented and the outcome, well, it could have been different. That is what I called Martyn out on, that is why I wrote the LTE, his bad judgment in not being there and his reaction when I challenged him on that point.

The other part of my LTE, about the rangers (Arizona Rangers) addresses some observations at a recent event that led me to believe there was some cronyism going on between them, Martyn, and Babeu. I can't stand cronyism, purist form of corruption there is, and always goes unchallenged because there is always an element of power and threat associated with it, which I certainly felt at the event in question.

When I asked Martyn, Babeu, and the rangers if the rangers had any more right than I to open carry in an establishment where alcohol was being served, I got no response, actually Martyn's response was, "Have a nice day." I know

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Kollenborn's Chronicles

Read the Chronicles archive at www.SuperstitionMountain.info

The Origin of the Dutchman's Lost Mine Story

By Tom Kollenborn
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The Superstition Mountain has served as a beacon to treasure hunters and the curious around the world. Fortunes have been made and lost in the search for the Lost Dutchman Mine, however the mine has never been found. Many claim the majestic beauty and tranquility of the region are the only treasures 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.

A man named 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.

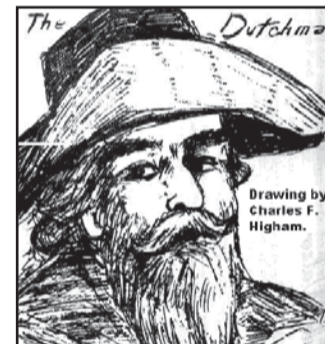
Carl Gottfried Hermann Petrasch was born in Hengersdorf, Germany on the 24th day of April, 1864. Hermann arrived at the Port of Entry, New York, New York in the spring of 1869. He had left Germany with his father Gottfried when he was only five years old. Herman accompanied his father to the town of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

and around the Superstition Mountain area. Petrasch did not apply for United States citizenship until October 1938.

Hermann 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 him and Julia Thomas 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 as 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 Superstitions. 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.



A drawing of Jacob Waltz, there are no known photographs.

Julia and Rhinehart tried to put the pieces together after old "Jake's" death. 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 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 a 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



Tom Kollenborn

wagons tracks. These wagon tracks lead northeast toward Superstition Mountain and the Goldfield mining area; however crossing washes became very difficult for their overloaded wagon.

Somewhere along this route the group realized they had to abandon the wagon. They spent their next night under the cliffs of Superstition Mountain, some say near the entrance of Monument Canyon. At sunrise the next morning they were packing up their two horses and decided to walk toward the northwestern end of Superstition Mountain. Julia was searching for La Sombrero, the pointed peak she said Jacob Waltz had told her about. 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, "We might have camped in East Boulder Canyon on the western side of Black Top Mountain that third night. The next morning we were up at sunrise again and climbed a steep ridge to a pass and walked down into a deep canyon. We could see the pointed peak old Jacob had talked about. It was here they set camp for the next three weeks as they used their clues to search the area.

Next week, Part II

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