

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 9/3/02

File: Information for the FBI on Local Irregularities

Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Selective Enforcement – Jim Allen

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

This memo will just touch on one party that has experienced selective enforcement by officials from the Town of Cave Creek, particularly Usama Abujbarah, the Town Manager, with the apparent blessing of Sorchych and his puppets on the council: Mayor Vince Francia, Vice Mayor Grace Meeth, and Council Members Ralph Mozilo and Jerry Whitmore.

It is recommended that the FBI talk directly to these individuals to understand the circumstances in which the Town prosecuted them (normally in retaliation to a stand they were taking against improper actions by the Town), and to learn about a number of similar situations known to these individuals that were not prosecuted because the landowners in those cases were favored by Sorchych and the Town.

(480) 595-9284

James Allen

Jim is a Cave Creek residence and a homebuilder.

He owns land in an area immediately north of Town that was just annexed in a process completed in early March of 2001. He was one of the landowners who was outspoken against improper actions by the Town in that annexation effort, including improper use of improper pre-annexation development agreements as a club/carrot to drive landowners into signing for annexation. [In early April, both: (1.) referendum petitions were filed with the Town Clerk, and (2.) two lawsuits were filed in Superior Court challenging the annexation.]

The annexation was driven by Sorchych's puppets at Town Hall, Vice Mayor Grace Meeth, Council Members Ralph Mozilo and Jerry Whitmore, and Town Manager Usama Abujbarah, and it received constant press by Sorchych and the *Sonoran News*.

Jim Allen was also, coincidentally, one of the two eyewitnesses to the attack by Abujbarah on Lester Reclin the night of the hearing on the Liz Weideman case.

Needless to say, Jim was attacked by Sorchych and the *Sonoran News* in typically vicious and dishonest articles.

More importantly, Abujbarah had him cited for a criminal zoning violation relating to his residence on Cave Creek. He can reveal the particulars of that situation, but the citation was clearly retaliatory. Abujbarah's conduct (or misconduct) during that prosecution deserves special attention, particularly his back-peddling on an informal agreement to settle the matter.

Abujbarah also he recently told prospective buyers of Jim Allen's property that it did not have legal access (when it clearly did), and that they were going to "run him out of town".

Jim can also tell about hassles he has received on other projects.

In fact, an entire area of appropriate inquiry could be the way unfavored citizens experience undue delays and hassles from the zoning and building departments while favored citizens slide through with no problem. A simple survey of those who have received building permits over the last year or so would reveal this.

File 2488

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 9/3/02

File: Information for the FBI on Local Irregularities

Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Selective Enforcement – Liz Weideman

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

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Michael & Lisabeth Weideman
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Liz Weideman wanted to build a handicapped / pedestrian ramp from her house down into the bottom of Cave Creek but still on her property, and notably across from the Jerry Foster/Don Sorchych home.

Owing to a misunderstanding of initial input from a member of town staff, they thought you could just build the ramp and only go for a permit if someone complained. So they started construction, and were stopped and told they needed a permit.

They then went to the Town and were sent to County Flood Control for its approval. They did everything the county wanted, and asked the county if they had to go back to the Town. While they waited a county employee called the Town Planner, Ron Short, and he said no, they could start. The employee will say so under oath.

They started, and were then stopped again, and threatened with a citation, and then cited even though they were attempting to work on what the Town required. Her attorney told her that the Town's position violated federal ADA laws. In addition, what she requested is not unlike other ramps up and down the canyon.

Sorchych in his paper and Usama Abujbarah as Town Manager both strongly opposed Liz. [Rumor has it that Ron Short, was fired by effectively telling her that the Town's opposition of her efforts was driven by Sorchych and Abujbarah.] In fact, Sorchych's attacks continued through the last issue of the paper.

But she had garnered substantial attention and support in the statewide press and from other handicapped persons, many of whom attended a P&Z meeting on November 14, 2000, that had been continued from a previous setting. [This was where the Lester Rechlin / Abujbarah incident occurred – see other memo.]

Liz can tell much more about this.

File 2439

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 9/3/02

File: Information for the FBI on Local Irregularities

Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Selective Enforcement – Joe Seginski

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

This memo will just touch on one party that has experienced selective enforcement by officials from the Town of Cave Creek, particularly Usama Abujbarah, the Town Manager, with the apparent blessing of Sorchych and his puppets on the council: Mayor Vince Francia, Vice Mayor Grace Meeth, and Council Members Ralph Mozilo and Jerry Whitmore.

It is recommended that the FBI talk directly to these individuals to understand the circumstances in which the Town prosecuted them (normally in retaliation to a stand they were taking against improper actions by the Town), and to learn about a number of similar situations known to these individuals that were not prosecuted because the landowners in those cases were favored by Sorchych and the Town.

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J & B SALES CO.
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Joe & Samantha Seginski
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In August of 1995, Joe & Samantha Seginski purchased a one acre lot on the west side of the County Park, in an area that was still in the county.

They purchased the ground as an equestrian parcel since horses are allowed on one acre county lots, and building permits for their home with approved plans that showed a future garage/barn.

Cave Creek was actually annexing the ground, but, because of typically shoddy work on annexation details, a required initial recording of the annexation map and form of petition was not done, and neither Joe nor his seller knew of the annexation before he closed on the purchase or got the county permits.

During construction, Cave Creek took over inspection. In early 1996 Seginski got his electrical and his fencing permits from the Town showing a misspelling of "horse" by saying "3 rail house fence", and then got barn permit based on plans for; "A Seginski Workshop and Barn". During that summer, while still building his house, he poured the slab and foundation for the barn. The block walls were built before barn, and then pipe rail fencing came after the barn. He then completed the barn in 1997.

Later a neighbor from hell named Tom Listing moved in next door. He began to pester the Town with complaints to try to cause trouble for Joe and Samantha. Ron Short, the Town Planner (operating as the "Zoning Administrator"), ultimately gave Joe a decision letter saying he could not have horses because it had rezoned the area to 2½ acre zoning as part of the annexation process (automatically making his a non-conforming 1 acre lot).

FNE2490

However, the rezoning by the Town did not occur within 6 months of the annexation as was required by its own ordinances, so Joe had a valid defense.

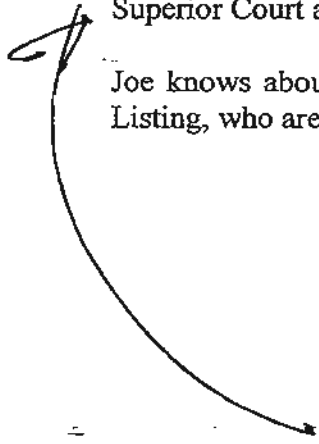
Joe then went through the proper process to appeal the planner's decision to the Board of Adjustment (an unsympathetic group of Sorchych supporters) and then to appeal their denial to Superior Court.

Short then gave Joe another decision letter invoking a bunch of issues, notably lot coverage and setback issues that would not be a problem in either county or Town one-acre zoning, but arose because of the 2½ acre zoning.

He then tried for variances before the same unsympathetic Board of Adjustment, but Town Manager Usama Abujbarah back-peddled on an agreement to remain neutral in return for the variances request, so the BofA only allowed the horses and required him to saw cut the end of his barn for setback and coverage reasons. He properly appealed that decision to the Superior Court as well based on the lack of a timely rezoning.

In a retaliatory action, the Town then filed criminal citations against him despite the fact that the Superior Court actions would resolve the issues.

Joe knows about a number of other property owners in his area, including his neighbor Tom Listing, who are not being prosecuted for similar offenses.



THAT'S WHAT THEY WANT TO DO TO ME.

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 9/3/02

File: Information for the FBI on Local Irregularities

Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Lester Rechlin & Usama Abujbarah

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

This memo will just touch on one party that has experienced selective enforcement by officials from the Town of Cave Creek, particularly Usama Abujbarah, the Town Manager, with the apparent blessing of Sorchych and his puppets on the council: Mayor Vince Francia, Vice Mayor Grace Meeth, and Council Members Ralph Mozilo and Jerry Whitmore.

It is recommended that the FBI talk directly to these individuals to understand the circumstances in which the Town prosecuted them (normally in retaliation to a stand they were taking against improper actions by the Town), and to learn about a number of similar situations known to these individuals that were not prosecuted because the landowners in those cases were favored by Sorchych and the Town.

ccmagicbird@aol.com

Lester (602) 292-8665

Roberta (602) 380-1816

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Lester Rechlin

Roberta Toombs

MAGIC BIRD FESTIVALS

P. O. Box 1803

Cave Creek, Arizona 85327-1803

Lester Rechlin, and his lady, Roberta Toombs, have lived in Cave Creek a long time. Lester was once on the town council, and he and Roberta built up a strong business of arts and crafts festivals held in Cave Creek several times a year during the winter months.

Despite a large following of locals and outsiders, they began to encounter opposition a few years back from some of those with political power, including Don Sorchych, especially when they challenged an improper double tax that the Town tried to levy on them and their merchants. The ultimate result was that the Town first limited the number of such events to only 2 per year, and then gave the permits for those events to others.

Lester and Roberta have been very outspoken about these and other actions by the Town, and have come under repeated attack by Sorchych and the *Sonoran News*. On one occasion, Sorchych was literally in Roberta's face when she grew angry and spit in his. The pressure that he brought with the local deputy sheriffs led to her being cited for the act.

When she later entered into a plea agreement, Sorchych lambasted the judge in the press for not throwing her in the slammer. This colorful story must be contrasted against the following story about the attack on Lester by the town manager, and Sorchych's protection of him; (also see memo on Sorchych's influence on Abujbarah).

At a P&Z meeting on November 14, 2000, the Liz Weideman story had come to a head with a hearing that had been continued from a previous setting. (See other memo on selective enforcement.)

FNE 2492

She was attempting to build a handicapped / pedestrian ramp from her house down into the bottom of Cave Creek but still on her property, and notably across from the Jerry Foster/Don Sorchych home. Sorchych in his paper and Usama Abujbarah as Town Manager both strongly opposed her. [Rumor has it that former town planner, Ron Short, was fired by effectively telling her that the Town's opposition of her efforts was driven by Sorchych and Abujbarah.]

But she had garnered substantial attention and support in the statewide press and from other handicapped persons, many of whom attended this continued but crowded hearing.

At the meeting, the commission announced that it would only hear from Liz's attorney, and not from other's present. The announcement got a strong negative reaction from many present, including Lester Rechlin, who said something to her about being railroaded, and then went up to the table where Abujbarah was sitting, and said something to him about the situation, while possibly resting his hands on Abujbarah or his chair, and then turned and left the room.

Immediately thereafter, Abujbarah rose from his chair, and followed Lester out of the council chambers, through two sets of double doors, to where Lester was just walking away on the porch. Abujbarah (at 42 years, 260 lbs. and 6'2") jumped Lester (at 71 years, 165 lbs. and 5'11") from behind, and held him and slammed him up against what was, coincidentally, Sorchych's jeep. He finally released Lester when Lester made a comment about him being a violent person.

Shortly thereafter, Lester returned to the council chambers and proclaimed out loud that he had just been attacked by the town manager. Some time later the deputy sheriffs were called from their office next door, and began to do a mediocre job of collecting evidence or statements.

Early on, Sorchych had rallied his supporters in the room to claim that Lester had assaulted Abujbarah in the council chambers despite contrary statements from others present and the lack of any related sounds on the tape recording of the meeting.

Nevertheless, there were two eyewitnesses to the attack on the porch. NOTE: One of those witnesses, local contractor, Jim Allen, has since come under heavy attack by Sorchych in the *Sonoran News*, and was then cited for a criminal zoning violation in what looks to be blatant selective and retaliatory enforcement by Abujbarah and Town Hall. (See related memo.)

The Rechlin/Abujbarah story got good local coverage from Mark Monday of the *Foothills Sentinel*, (a very capable reporter hired a few months before):

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Scottsdale, Arizona 85254

O: (480) 488-3436 ext. 105 fax: 488-4779

Mark Monday
Foothills Sentinel

The story was also covered by the *Sonoran News*, and by Sarah Anchors, a fledgling reporter at the *Arizona Republic* whose story on the inside eyewitnesses seemed particularly skewed against Rechlin. and failed to mention that she too was a witness.

After over 4 months of a lackadaisical investigation by the deputies, the deputy county attorney recently informed me (as the attorney informally helping Lester Rechlin as a victim) that they were not going to prosecute either man, despite two eyewitnesses to the attack on the porch.

This failure to prosecute a town manager who followed a citizen from the council chambers and jumped him from behind did not happen in a vacuum.

Whether the Sheriff's Department would cover for a town official is a question that deals with the integrity of our local law enforcement, and is a serious question in light of the following:

1. The Town is not only MCSO's landlord, (and as Town Manager Abujbarah manages the Town's business), but the deputies operate under MCSO's contract to provide police services to the town, so he is also, figuratively speaking, their boss or at least the paymaster who signs their paycheck; and
2. Abujbarah's known supporter and strong ally is Don Sorchych, the afore-mentioned owner-publisher-editor of the *Sonoran News*, (see related file memo on Abujbarah). Note that Sorchych, with his reporter, Curtiss Riggs, are two of the witnesses in the *Supplemental Report* whereby the deputies water down Rechlin's claims through selective interviews from witnesses who claim he assaulted Abujbarah inside the council chambers.

And Sorchych has for years now continually supported the continuation of MCSO providing the town's police force, and even its zoning enforcement (see his 12/6-12/00 editorial, for a recent example), and he has viciously attacked anyone who has even begun to consider the creation of the Town's own police force.

These attacks included both Bernard Buffenstein, an earlier mayor, and the Town's first town marshal, Howell "Hal" Conant, who were proponents of the Town accepting a federal COPS FAST grant.

In one of his earliest sieges, Sorchych was instrumental in a recall of mayor Buffenstein, and the strongest complaint was that the mayor supposedly tried to spring the COPS FAST grant on other council members at a council meeting without sufficient warning. However, someone tipped of Sheriff Joe who appeared himself at the council meeting acting hurt and surprised, and successfully argued to discourage the Town pursuing the grant.

Sorchych also repeatedly presented Hal Conant, while he was still the first town marshal, in an entirely inaccurate light virtually describing him as a wannabe cop with no previous law enforcement experience who was really only hired as a zoning enforcement officer.

In fact, Hal had significant law enforcement in the town of Block Island, Rhode Island, a community that had rebuilt its economy around tourism, and he was specifically hired by prior town manager, Carl Stephani (now at Gila Bend), not for zoning enforcement, but for to be a visible lights-a-flashin' guns-a-totin' sign of local law enforcement.

TD4

Stephani said he wanted Hal to gage community reaction, and to investigate the possibility of building the Town's own police force, particularly since there was a question about whether or not the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors would allow Sheriff Joe to continue such contracts. So the COPS FAST grant was exactly within his job description.

Some think Sheriff Joe Arpaio is politically indebted to Sorchych for these efforts, or, at a very minimum, his local deputies are well aware of them.

NOTE: Hal Conant also later ran for mayor (in 1999), and was excoriated by Sorchych, who falsely accused him of murder in what has led to an interesting civil case by Conant against Sorchych for libel/defamation in Maricopa County Superior Court. The discovery in that case, including 16 hours of surreptitious tape recordings by Sorchych, is something that bears discussing in detail with Hal Conant.

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Howell "Hal" Conant II
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Sorchych's attack on Conant is in sharp contrast to his absolute silence about an incident that occurred at the residence of Conant's mayoral opponent, Vince Francia, the current mayor. (See related file memo.)

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 9/3/02

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Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Town Manager – Usama Abujbarah

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

In recognizing Sorchych's influence at Town Hall, it is important to understand his relationship with Usama Abujbarah, the town manager.

Abujbarah was initially hired by the Town as an associate planner, and immediately became known as Sorchych's "mole" in town hall.

In fact, other town staff members would privately tell how he would openly call Sorchych to report information such as meetings with outsiders immediately after the outsider had left but in the presence and earshot of the staff member who had been at the meeting. He apparently made it clear that he was unafraid of retaliation from other staff members because of his backing from Sorchych. They were generally not fond of him because he was tardy, did not work hard, and often made a mess of matters.

Later, when town manager Kerry Dudek left, he was appointed as interim town manager, and then awarded the permanent position, with no real qualifications for the position.

The selection team was dominated by Sorchych's puppets, including: Vice Mayor Grace Meeth, Councilman Ralph Mozilo, P&Z or Board of Adjustment members George Ross and Lucy Kastelic (who recently changed her name and was elected as council member Shea Stanfield).

Susan Svetak and ex-mayor Dick Bartholomew, both dropped out of the process because of the stacked deck. Councilman Dean Brewer can also confirm this, and give details about a certain meeting where the selection process was established and numerical values were added, and they then wanted to start all over because he still did not make the list.

Dean Brewer
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Abujbarah's conduct and statements on all matters at town hall of interest to the FBI will be worth checking into. He is known to say the most astounding things to people who go into town hall. For instance, he recently told prospective buyers of Jim Allen's property that it did not have legal access (when it clearly did), and that they were going to "run him out of town".

Abujbarah's attack on Lester Rechlin is also very important, and will be addressed in another memo, but it is important to remember that Jim Allen is one of the two eyewitnesses to that attack.

Some have expressed concern about Abujbarah's background as a possible Muslim insurgent based on some article in the *Sonoran News* that I am not familiar with. I do not know if any national security issues are present, or if Sorchych has something to hold over Abujbarah's head.

FNE 2496

Hebets & Associates, P.C.

File Memo

Date Printed: 8/30/02

File: Information for the FBI on Local Irregularities

Date Prepared: 4/6/01

Re: Town Mayor – Vince Francia

Prepared by: Noel J. Hebets, Attorney

At the end of the memo on Lester Rechlin and Town Manager, Usama Abujbarah, I discussed Sorchych's relentless attacks on anyone who threatened Sheriff Joe Arpaio's retention of his contract with the Town of Cave Creek to provide its law enforcement. As I explained, this included attacks on Howell "Hal" Conant while he was working as the first Town Marshal, and later, in 1999, when Hal ran against Vince Francia for the position of mayor through false accusations of murder that have led to the current libel suit in Maricopa County.

In contrast, Sorchych has remained entirely silent on an incident that involved Francia, and would be just as strong of a basis to eviscerate him. I discuss this incident not to raise a question of criminal activity by the mayor, but to question whether or not Sorchych uses this as a constant threat that keeps Francia in line.

In ___ Francia's teenage stepdaughter was apparently ending a relationship with a young boy her own age, and he was taking it very hard. The stepdaughter said she had seen him hanging around the house as she boarded the bus for school in the morning. When she returned she immediately grew suspicious, and walked around the yard only to find his body on the ground.

The report by the deputy sheriff describes it as an apparent suicide by a .22 rifle found on the ground nearby, and describes an entry wound without tattooing in the rear of the head, and an exit wound right next to the eyelid. [Now visualize trying to shoot yourself in the back of the head with a .22 rifle that leaves no powder marks and travels in a level trajectory through your head.]

The same report is also devoid of any mention of Vince Francia, then a council member, as the stepfather or landowner. And the autopsy report reads like little more than: "Yup, he dunnit to hisself." It does not refute the description of the entry and exit wounds in the deputy's report.

The story never hit the paper in any detail, and, again, Sorchych has remained entirely silent.

Near the end of the 1999 Conant vs. Francia mayoral election, a local woman wanted the *Foothills Sentinel* to run a letter that questioned the imbalance of Sorchych's repeated accusations of murder by Conant and Sorchych's silence about this incident at Francia's house. Francia got word of it, and went to see Cheryl Duncan, the publisher/editor of the paper at the time, trying to discourage her from printing it. Cheryl can definitely be trusted to talk to, and she not only researched the background to the story, but also visited with the dead boy's parents.

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Cheryl Duncan Dudgeon

Francia has also made comments in the last several months that he was afraid the story would surface again in the spring 2001 elections.

Again, this is not to raise suspicion of criminal conduct by Francia. Both children were known to be "Goths" at the time, a click known for their morbid interests.

But it does raise the question of whether or not Sorchych can use this as a club to hold over Francia's head. It also raises the question of the shoddy police work done by the deputy sheriffs, and the possibility that they deliberately sanitized the report to keep Francia's name out of it.

ENC 2497

There is hearsay, however, from a jeep tour driver about a jeep tour ride at Spur Cross Ranch where Sorchych supposedly told one of the wealthy doctors in Southwest Sands, LLC, (the owner of the largest piece of undeveloped land in down town Cave Creek), that:

b. In reference to Abujbarah: "When we are done with that sand nigger, we will get rid of him." and

a. "If you help us buy Spur Cross Ranch, we will let you have a destination resort here, and whatever you want downtown."

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February 9, 2001

FBI

Re: Don Sorchych / Sonoran News / Selective Enforcement by the Town of Cave Creek

Dear Sirs:

I am an Arizona native, an engineer and 24 years an Arizona attorney, with the last 9 years living and working here in the Cave Creek/Carefree area.

During the last 6 of those years I have observed Don Sorchych (or "Sorecheeks" to those of us who do not care for him), as the psychotic owner/publisher/editor of the *Sonoran News* establish what one local journalist with a Pulitzer prize calls: "a tyranny of the press". Masquerading as a newspaper, the *Sonoran News* is his junk/hate mail tabloid that is placed at no charge into post office and mail boxes even though many many citizens would have the US Post Office refuse it if we could. He viciously, personally, dishonestly and repeatedly, i.e. relentlessly, attacks anyone who would oppose him, not just in his column, but through "articles" written by himself or his "reporters", particularly Curtiss Riggs.

There is a good reason that our freedoms of speech and the press are listed along with our freedom of religion in the first amendment – the first portion of the Bill of Rights. These are our most important freedoms. And nothing makes *freedom of the press* do its work better than *competition in the press*. But the other local paper, the *Foothill Sentinel*, is one of about 2 dozen small town newspapers owned by a Yuma family that generally focus on who made eagle scout. Over the last few years, they had one good editor come and go and one good reporter, but both lacked the backup from the home office necessary to get the job done.

As a result, Sorechych's paper dominates the local news and continues to harm our community at the most critical moment of its growth by refusing to report the full truth or the real news or allow full open honest and considerate debate and discussion of the many critical issues at hand. Through his relentless and personal attacks on those who would speak out against him, our destiny is now controlled by his sick hatred and those who fear it.

Sadly enough this has allowed him to garner enormous power over this community, especially over the Town of Cave Creek. In the last council election, only a few weeks ago, 9 candidates ran for 7 seats, and his 6 puppets were elected to all 6 of the seats they sought, including mayor. Most of the people sitting on the Board of Adjustment and the Planning & Zoning Commission likewise owe their position to him.

[Fortunately, he has not yet seized such power amongst the more genteel and retired citizens of Carefree where he has only one of his puppets was elected to the council and another failed. Likewise most of those sitting on the citizen boards or commissions are not under his control.]

FNE 2499

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March 6, 1996

VIA FACSIMILE AND US MAIL
(602) 488-2021 fax: (602) 488-6216

Editor & Publisher
SONORAN NEWS
6812 East Cave Creek Road #1
Cave Creek, Arizona 85331

Re: Sewage Treatment Plant

To the Editor and Publisher of the *Sonoran News*:

Since its inception, in my attempt to patronize other growing local businesses, I have left each weekly issue of your paper prominently displayed in the lobby of my Cave Creek office, and I have read it myself more consistently than I have ever followed any other paper. In addition, and over the same time period, I have casually asked many local people, visitors to my office, and friends of mine, what they think of the paper, always doing my best to sound neutral so as to hear what they really think on their own.

Collectively, the answers and uninvited comments I have received from many people over this time have begun to take the form of a growing trend, that has become more than simply discernible over the last few months. In fact, the answers and comments have come to focus entirely on one single point, that being your editorial "style" and the role you have assumed as the mayor's watchdog.

For example, just this past weekend, while dropping my daughter off to visit old friends who live in Tatum Ranch, I saw your paper on the coffee table, and simply said: "Hey, you get our local paper, do you read it?" Having never heard me speak of such local issues before, their immediate answer was to question the true intent of your continual coverage of the mayor.

Since I think this trend could be of much importance to the future of your paper, and since I suspect you have a forest for the trees problem here, (maybe your sunglasses are the polarized kind), I want to suggest a step you could take to see if any particular view of your paper exists in such a magnitude as to dictate a change in its editorial or reporting styles.

FNE 2500

In fact, the step I would recommend is to withdraw momentarily from your constitutional right to editorialize and focus on what some consider the duty of a community newspaper – that is to report the opinions of the community. Specifically, I would suggest you publish a questionnaire that could be used to survey the opinions of our local community on a number of the issues you have covered, and your approach in doing so. You could then share the results of this opinion poll with all of your readers as I am sure their interest would spark a jump in sales of your paper.

A few ideas might help to insure the neutrality and effectiveness of this survey:

First, you could allow room for your readers to actually provide comments when they feel the answers given are insufficient.

Second, you could allow your readers to either sign their questionnaire or leave it unsigned to protect their anonymity.

Third, you could ask your readers to send their completed questionnaire to some trustworthy and neutral organization – (let's say, the other local newspaper?) -- for tallying and publication of the results.

Finally, or maybe first, you could even ask someone who is known to not always share the views of your paper – (let's say, the mayor?) – to provide a good portion of the questions. For example, you might ask if he/she wants to consider questions such as these:

1. Do you think the *Sonoran News* publishes too many “negative” or derisive, divisive, and polarizing editorials and news articles, and do you think it does a good job of and serving as a community newspaper and promoting a community spirit?

2. Do you think the name *Sonoran News* is too generic and bland, and what do you think of the name *Scorchy News*?

3. (This question for advertisers only.) From an overall standpoint are you comfortable with the editorial approach of the *Sonoran News*, and has it ever made you consider withdrawing your advertising business?

4. Do you think the *Sonoran News* should provide a little less of what its editor calls “My View” and a little more of what the community considers as “Our View”?

5. Do you think the editor of the *Sonoran News* can objectively editorialize or report on people or issues in which he has a personal interest, and would you want him to “report” on you?

6. If you were involved in a newsworthy but controversial event would you rather read about it in the *Sonoran News* or another local newspaper?

7. Do you think the editorial style of *Sonoran News* is maybe just a little too vindictive, vitriolic, vicious, and vengeful, and does the editor's approach ever seem a little like a vendetta?