Proposed annexation worriesome to residents

By Derek Jordan  
**The Tombstone Epigraph**

A move to annex some 1,200 acres of land outside Tombstone has some resi- dents worried. They hope the proposal brought forth by private citizens who cur- rently reside on the unincorporated land to the northwest and southwest of the city, was first brought by local Attorney Tombstone City Council in the spring. City Clerk George Barnes.

If successful, the annexation would bring new utilities to the homes in the area, like water. "The annexation is needed in that area," Barnes said. "Right now their only option to the homes in the area, like water. "The annexation is needed in that area," Barnes said. "Right now their only option is to get a well."  

The annexation would also bring more public services to the area. "This area is already permitted by the Tombstone Fire Department, but the city would bring them under Tombstone Police juris- diction also," Barnes said.  

When it comes to getting annexation like running water, Barnes said the initial cost would be more to the homeowners. "The developers would pay the cost of the materials and the installation, but once that's done, then the city would keep it maintained," he said.

"I realize that it could be an over- head, there have been a few developers in the area, the annexation, particularly from the federal land, it's not taxable, their claims in the area leased from the Forest Service of Land Management."

The proposal of annexation is set to go before the city council each year to review the rights to new homes in Tombstone. "It's leased land," Barnes said. "It's leased land because the land that the mining claims rent on federal land, it's not taxable, Barnes said.

As a landholder of federal land, these individuals do not have a voice when it comes to their annexation, although the relationship between Tombstone and firearms is as old as the town itself—beginning in the days of the Cochise War of today.  

According to the FBI's 2008 Violent Crime Index, 67.9 per- cent of murders and 21.9 per- cent of rape cases involved the use of firearms such as handguns, rifles and shotguns. Similarly, the Arizona Department of Public Safety's Crime Report stated that firearms were used in 74.2 per- cent of murders that occurred in 2006 and 28.3 percent of cases involving aggravated assault.

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Crans flock to Elfrida
marshes for the winter

By Ash Friederich

T
wenty miles southeast of Tombstone, the Platte River Valley in southeastern Arizona is a wintering home for the migratory sandhill crane.

Sandhill cranes are characterized by their large size, with long necks and legs and being gray and white in color, they resemble the flying flying-fox. They are known for their distinctive "coo coo" call and are often seen in flocks of hundreds. They are known to roost in large numbers in water bodies such as wetlands and marshes, often in close proximity to humans.

The Platte River Valley in southeastern Arizona is a wintering home for the migratory sandhill crane. The cranes arrive in the valley in late October and stay until early April, spending the winter months there. The valley is home to the Willcox area, which is known for its diversity of habitats, including wetlands, marshes, and remnants of the Willcox Area.

Sandhill cranes have been studied in the area, and researchers have found that they are highly territorial and will aggressively defend their roosting areas. They are also known to be very social, often forming large flocks that can number in the thousands.

The presence of sandhill cranes in the Willcox area has a positive impact on the local economy, as it attracts birdwatchers and other recreationists to the area. It also has ecological benefits, as the cranes help to control the populations of insects and other pests.

Despite their beauty and ecological importance, sandhill cranes face threats, such as habitat loss, disturbance, and predation. Conservation efforts are ongoing to ensure the survival of these magnificent birds.
Collin and Casey are both buried at Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista. 

Krisis S. Lawson had no way of knowing the work she slept with her son, Army Spc. Collin Schockmel, after Christmas would be the last time she would see him alive. He had already been serving in Iraq for six weeks when he came home for two weeks of leave, which he split between his mother’s house in Sierra Vista and his grandmother’s in Texas. “I cooked a turkey dinner and all the kids came home and they hung out,” Lawson said.

Collin’s sister, Emily Schockmel, said they watched movies, talked and went to church.

It took Collin several days to get home from Iraq, but only 12 hours to get back overseas. Collin joked about it with his mother when he called, and asked, “What’s up with that?”

Later that day, on Jan. 16, he died when his mortar-propelled round hit him during a patrol in Ramadi, Iraq. Collin was 19 years old and had not been back to the country more than 24 hours.

The 10 months since his death has taken a toll on his family members, who struggle everyday with mixed emotions of immense pride and untold sorrow.

Lawson was taking online tours of Scotland and thinking about the trip she and her son would take after his deployment when soldiers came to tell her of his death.

She thought they were mistaken. It wasn’t until she wondered how she would tell her mother and her other children that she knew there were those you fought and those others were giving a hard time to,” Lawson said.

“I didn’t know how to fix it, but he thought he could,” Lawson said.

Lawson believes the Army appealed to her son’s need to help people. He was always interested in the Army and had aspirations to go to the West Point Academy but it was his father’s wish that he go to college and be a police officer.

“Sometimes you don’t have control of your life,” she said, her voice trailing off. “I would just hold on to him tight and say, ‘I love you, I miss you. I don’t want you to go.’”

His father, retired Chief Warrant Officer Michael Schockmel, is a motorcycles enthusiast. Typically, they ride with American flags on their bikes to promote patriotism and awareness.

“I would just hold on to him tight and not let go,” Lawson said. “I would tell him to always keep his eyes on his sister and his son, his nephews, his nieces.”

Reggie McClammy, mother of Army Spc. Casey Mellen, on what she would do if she could turn back the clock 5 minutes with her son.

“I cooked a turkey dinner and all the kids came home and they hung out,” Lawson said.

On her keys, she keeps his keychain that he was awarded. They also put up a memorial to her brother. Together, the tags read, “In loving memory of my brother Casey.”

McClammy said they do anything they can to keep Casey’s memory alive. Both she and her daughter love commemorating his life with his picture, a flag and his medals, including the Purple Heart she is really missing her brother. She also misses his smile.”

“People don’t understand they die hurting,” she said. “You don’t get to say goodbye.”

McClammy plans to celebrate her son’s memory on Veterans Day exactly the way he planned to celebrate his return from Iraq — riding a motorcycle. She’ll ride with the Army motorcycle enthusiasts, typically, they ride with American flags on their bikes to promote patriotism and awareness.

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Although the program focuses on kindergarteners in the Tombstone area, Yarbrough says it has contributed to the school's improvement because third grade students are better equipped to read by the time they get to third grade. The test measures the students' growth in the areas of math, reading and writing and prepares them for the statewide standardized test, which is based on the school curriculum for the state's version of the AIMS test (Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards).

Students from third to sixth grade are required to take the test, but it does not count toward their promotion.

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