

County Corruption & Culture

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The R/UDAT report is an 80-page Kingman document. The copy provided to us was said to be the only such duplicate outside of Kingman. Selected pages have been included on our web site. A copy of the full report has been made available to the library at K-Mart Plaza in Havasu and to most members of the local media.

The R/UDAT document emphasized downtown renewal, economic development and job creation for Kingman residents by keeping and expanding county government in the downtown historic district. Centralizing Mohave County Community College administration and programming in Kingman was also an objective. The current crisis on the Havasu campus of MCC is a clear result of the centralization and expansion of MCC management on the Kingman campus. Nothing about this is good for Havasu.

The plan outlined in the R/UDAT report, the intense actions of the county to expand and centralize government and the college administration in Kingman, and the public comments of elected officials; inescapably leaves the appearance of corruption and collusion. In a press release 12-13-03 on the new Sheriff's facility (in reference to the support of Bullhead area supervisor Tom Sockwell) the Kingman area supervisor Pete Byers commented publicly, "And you really owe him (Sockwell) a debt of gratification for the people that live in Kingman." Clearly, that R/UDAT strategy has been supported by Sockwell. Everyone knows that in politics, there's always a "payback." So, the real question has to do with the quid pro quo in all these deals. Look at what's happening on the MCC campuses.

Mohave County is the fifth largest county in the entire USA and larger in land area than New York State. Moreover, there are over 65,000 people living in unincorporated areas of Mohave County, most of which are near Kingman and Bullhead City. If you look at the street maps in your phone directory, the layout of most of these small communities looks like that of the adjoining cities. Mohave Valley, Fort Mohave Mesa, Golden Valley, Butler, etc. are examples. Simply drive through the small community of Crystal Beach just a few miles north of LHC, and you can quickly comprehend what exists in the areas around Kingman and Bullhead City. What's important here is that the voters in those areas have total control of county government and total control over our local community college.

Clearly, these residents of Kingman, Bullhead City, and the surrounding unincorporated areas have a vastly different sense of community and structure of neighborhoods than one will find here in Havasu.

Most people who live in such unincorporated areas do so because it's cheaper and there is less government regulation such as zoning. But, the reality of it all for the residents of LHC is that we help subsidize their governmental and college services with taxes assessed and collected by the county.

Look at the mess they've made with our local MCC college campus. Last year, the MCC board actually gave away 338 acres earmarked for a future Havasu college campus. They are destroying our college transfer program. They are firing the very faculty needed to meet the priority needs of Havasu employers. They are basing staffing and programming decisions on a bogus Clarus study and report. And they totally control it all from Kingman.

Again, we call for a new governance model for the Havasu campus. Using examples common in many other community college systems about the country, working within the flexibility of state law, we want a 13-member local board with extensive powers delegated by the MCC board. We want a budget representative of the funds generated by our campus...including state and federal dollars attributed to Havasu. We want total control of personnel and programming decisions. We know it's possible and workable.

We have expanded our web site to include issues on MCC and our LHC campus in particular. Please log on to our web site www.lakehavasucounty.com