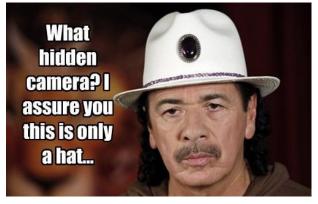
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·NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP·

THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT EXACTLY AS PLANNED

Kelli Ward surreptitiously recorded former AZGOP Chair Jonathan Lines during a meeting and passed the recording to former lawmaker Maria Syms in hopes she would sue Lines for defamation during the hotly contested race for AZGOP chair in 2019. Ward, now a defendant in that lawsuit after winning the chairmanship, wants the lawsuit dismissed. "For the first time, the real story as to the genesis of this lawsuit is being told, a story that is rather remarkable," Syms' attorney, Mark Goldman, wrote in a recent filing to the ongoing defamation suit. A quick refresher is in order: Brophy McGee and Syms



were seatmates running for re-election to the Senate and House in 2018. But Brophy McGee kept her distance from Syms, instead teaming up with newcomer Kathy Pappas Petsas. Syms' husband, Mark, then filed to run as an independent against Brophy McGee in the Senate (though he was later kicked off the ballot after a judge declared a large chunk of his signatures invalid). Mark's entrance into the race put Brophy McGee's seat at risk, and Ducey revoked his support for the incumbent representative over it. Lines, then chair of the state party, sided with Brophy McGee in the LD28 Republican civil war. In January 2019, before his re-election vote, Lines told LD26 Republicans that the Syms family "committed fraud" in attempting to unseat Brophy McGee and that Maria was "convicted and she was ... ordered to pay over \$70,000 of restitution to Brophy McGee." That wasn't true and he later walked it back, saying neither were convicted of fraud, and while Mark was ordered to pay more than \$50,000 in legal fees in the legal battle that kept him off the ballot, he did not have to pay restitution (YS, 1/24/19). The Syms family sued Lines for defamation and that suit has been simmering ever since. Now that Ward has taken over the AZGOP, which is named as a defendant in the lawsuit, she is attempting to get it dismissed. So the Syms family is spilling the beans on what their lawyer described as Ward's scheme to spark the lawsuit in the first place by delivering the secretly recorded audio to Syms "for the express purpose of inducing Ms. Syms to sue both the AZGOP and Mr. Lines for defamation." "Along the lines of truth is stranger than fiction, Dr. Ward not only made this lawsuit possible, she asked Plaintiff Maria Syms to file it," Goldman wrote in a filing last month, a copy of which is included in the documents section (LINK).

BUT DID HE SPIT IN HER EYE?

After Ward won the election and became a defendant, her husband, Michael Ward, called Syms to "alternatively threaten, cajole and try to coerce Ms. Syms to dismiss the lawsuit," according to Goldman. Michael Ward, who once graced the pages of this tipsheet for allegedly spitting in the eye of one of Ward's former supporters ($\frac{\text{YS}}{1}$, $\frac{1/15/19}{1}$) allegedly "went so far as to tell Ms. Syms that he would perjure himself and claim that he delivered the electronic recording to Ms. Syms as to exonerate his wife." But AZGOP attorney Jack Wilenchik said while Ward did pass the recording to Syms, Ward didn't ask Syms to sue. And while her husband, Michael Ward, did contact her to drop the lawsuit, there was no threatening, cajoling or promises to perjure himself. "It's such a silly thing to even allege on its face - why would he perjure himself just to cover whether it was he or his wife that provided the recording?" Wilenchik said.

Page 1 of 8 October 14, 2020

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

Instead, Wilenchik said Syms has been using the lawsuit to "extort" Ward and AZGOP for a position as executive director of the party, a recommendation for the court of appeals or \$400,000. In a statement, Wilenchik said that the Syms family "demanded that the Party pay the Syms approximately \$400,000 and strongly implied that if the Party did not then they would make these claims, in an apparent bid at extortion, which Mrs. Ward and the Party flatly rejected." He said Syms also asked to be made executive director and asked for a recommendation to sit on the court of appeals, in exchange for dropping the suit, "all of which Mrs. Ward flatly rejected because she does not believe in 'quid pro quo.'" "It's been a progressive series of demands," Wilenchik told our reporter today. Wilenchik said as far as he knows, all of those requests happened during



informal settlement negotiations, and are not on paper. He provided an email from Goldman's associate, Jeremy Phillips, in which he offered to "file a full and formal disclosure to all parties and the public." That line caught Wilenchik's eye. "I read that with my lawyer eyes and thought that is extortion. This is threatening to put forward the same stuff you just read in that reply as leverage to settle the case. There's no other way to read this," he said. Syms didn't return a call for comment today.

DON'T WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT PRIORITIES?

One Republican railbird said it was no secret that Ward had recorded the meeting – there were fewer than a dozen people in the room – and described the situation as "the chickens coming home to roost" for Ward. "That's why the lawsuit was so stupid, she wasn't defamed, there was nobody in the room," the source said. "The only reason it got any publicity was because Kelli Ward ran to Maria Syms with the tape to urge her to sue Jonathan Lines and sue the party." The source said the fact that the AZGOP is fighting the suit during "what could be one of the most cataclysmic election cycles for Arizona Republicans in a generation" is a perfect example of "Kelli's leadership in action, unfortunately." "It's truly incredible that this is where we are in the party. Instead of trying to hold the House and the Senate and keep Martha McSally, we're dealing with the fallout from this," the source said.

JAKE HOFFMAN IS GOING TO PROVIDE US WITH ENDLESS COPY

Presumptive LD12 Representative Jake Hoffman's marketing company, Rally Forge, propped up an independent CD5 candidate named Randall Sand, who faces a significant hurdle in the upcoming election: he doesn't exist. Rather, he is – or was – an invention of Rally Forge, just one of the firm's fabrications in its efforts to promote clients and their conservative messages online that a group of researchers at the Stanford Internet Observatory highlighted in their recent report into Rally Forge (LINK). Sand's profile was one of the many pages that Facebook and Twitter removed as part of their probe into Rally Forge. Those efforts, as the *Washington Post* has since revealed, included paying teenagers to spam pro-Trump, COVID-skeptic messages online across multiple accounts, mimicking the behavior of bots (YS. 9/16). Sand's page shared doctored images of news headlines purporting to be from local press featuring Sand, the Stanford researchers noted. Exactly how Sand – who Rally Forge portrayed using doctored images of a film director named Derrick Acosta – fits into this project, we may never know. However, the mysterious case of Sand shows a sophisticated online operation full of fascinating details. According to the report, which examined hundreds of accounts that Facebook and Twitter identified as linked to the effort, Rally Forge has for several election cycles operated "accounts engaged in astroturfing operations on multiple platforms." Mostly, these accounts, groups and pages were quite small and with limited reach - a mix of fake, sometimes AI-generated accounts and real accounts belonging to Arizona students contracted as part of Rally Forge's work with Turning Point. Some had serious reach: a Facebook page called I Love My Country had more than 120,000 followers at the time of its removal due to its affiliation with Rally Forge.

Page 2 of 8 October 14, 2020

REMEMBER: "THESE ARE REAL KIDS"

Rally Forge also undertook a campaign to support game hunting in Africa, and in general promote a right-leaning view of gun ownership and hunting, Stanford researchers noted in their report, which they humorously titled "Reply Guys Go Hunting." Facebook removed four such pages as part of its investigation, Proud American Hunters, Humankind Society, Let Africa Live, and Hunters for Trump, all pages connected to a pro-hunting lobby group called Inclusive Conservation Group – which receives most of its funding from the Arizona-based Safari Club International, a hunting advocacy organization with political ambitions. The group pushed a narrative – in some cases, framing it as a grassroots sentiment



shared by residents of African countries with vehement debates on hunting laws – that hunting supports conservation efforts and local livelihoods. Accounts operated by Rally Forge would regularly engage with and share content from the pages and boost their messages. In some cases, these were the same accounts that were pushing political messages at other times in the year. Occasionally, the accounts made a total about-face to support hunting. "For example, @RaulJimenez2020, the most prolific user in the Twitter data set, presented as a left-wing, primarily Democratic Socialist persona, and frequently used hashtags like #DemocraticSocialism, #DSA, #UniversalBasicIncome, #FreeHealthCare and #AbolishTheSecond," the report reads. "Created in July of 2018, the account initially focused on pop culture and left-wing politics. In mid-2019, the account shifted to almost exclusively commenting on posts about trophy hunting, wolves, and African leaders and nations that do or do not allow hunting, and pushed for trophy hunting to be viewed as a beneficial practice."

<u>IF YOU THOUGHT S ALLEN WAS TOUGH ON CRIME...</u>



If elected, LD6 Senate candidate Wendy Rogers wants to introduce legislation to allow drivers to mow down protesters and prevent cities that decrease their law enforcement budgets from receiving state aid, she announced in a Facebook ad (LINK). Rogers has paid Facebook at least \$800 in the past week to promote her 7-point plan for protecting law enforcement, which also includes a former S Allen priority of harshly

punishing anyone who tears down a monument. While still running for office, Allen pledged to introduce legislation to punish anyone who toppled or defaced a monument with 10 years in prison (LINK). One key feature of Rogers' plan, her pledge to make drivers who injure or kill protesters immune from prosecution and civil liability, is recycled from model legislation introduced – but not passed – in several states in 2017. After protests over the Dakota Access Pipeline and mass marches in response to Trump's inauguration blocked streets and freeways in multiple cities, lawmakers in states including North Dakota, Florida, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas and Tennessee introduced bills to protect anyone who "accidentally" injured or killed a protester blocking traffic. Most of these bills died during the regular legislative session; others were quietly tabled after an avowed white supremacist drove his car into a crowd of counter-protesters at the August 2017 "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, and killed 32-year-old Heather Heyer. Arizona didn't jump on the legal hit-and-run bandwagon in 2017, though Borrelli did seek to add rioting to the state's racketeering statutes. His S1142 (riot; planning; participation; racketeering) passed the Senate, but then-Speaker Mesnard refused to hear the measure in the House (YS, 5/31/17).

Page 3 of 8 October 14, 2020

IS SNOWFLAKE A PROTECTED CLASS NOW?

Rogers' 7-point plan for promoting the police includes other unlikely-to-pass measures, including a bill that would "prohibit harassment at restaurants and other accommodations and create tougher penalties for offenders." Not many people are sitting down for meals at restaurants these days, but the early months of the Trump administration featured stories about administration employees including then-Dept of Homeland Security head Kirstjen Nielsen and then-press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders being heckled or asked to leave dining establishments in the DC area. White House adviser Stephen Miller also claimed a bartender followed him out of a restaurant brandishing both middle fingers, prompting Miller to throw away an \$80 sushi order he had just picked up from the restaurant (LINK). Police



officers, including a group of Tempe officers last fall, also regularly report mistreatment at restaurants and coffee shops in social media posts that inevitably go viral (LINK). Rogers doesn't explain what she'd do to create tougher penalties for restaurant harassers, as harassment is now a class 1 misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$2,500 fine. People who file frivolous liens against public officials or government employees with the intent to harass, however, can be charged with a class 5 felony with a presumptive prison sentence of two years.

DEFUND CITIES THAT DEFUND POLICE



Perhaps the part of Rogers' plan that would set off the most alarm bells for cities and towns is her pledge to block state aid for local governments who slash law enforcement budgets. While state revenues look okay, Arizona cities and towns have already cut millions from their budgets because of COVID-19. The Brookings Institution, a liberal think tank, predicted late last month that state and local revenue nationwide would continue decreasing by around 5 percent annually over the next few years (LINK). Law enforcement is the single largest spending category in most cities. In the Phoenix area, police get \$1 for every \$3 in cities' general funds, according to

a summer analysis from the *Arizona Republic* (LINK). Even without growing sentiment around rethinking the role of police in civic life, police budgets already would have been eligible for cuts, just like every other municipal line item. Police reform advocates, meanwhile, are urging cities to shift at least some of their funding for law enforcement to areas like mental health and resources for low-income residents, aiming to prevent situations from escalating to the point where armed police officers get involved. Rogers' vague proposal also appears to go further than other state pre-emption measures. In most cases, cities that pass ordinances that conflict with state laws risk losing state shared revenue if a lawmaker files a 1487 complaint with the Attorney General's Office. But Rogers calls for blocking all state grants and aid to local governments who cut law enforcement budgets.

Page 4 of 8 October 14, 2020

·PRESS RELEASES AND NEWS CLIPS·

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: ARIZONA FIREFIGHTERS ENDORSE ERIC KURLAND FOR STATE LEGISLATURE IN LD23

Scottsdale, AZ — Arizona's firefighters endorse Eric Kurland, who is running in LD23 for Arizona House of Representatives, as their candidate of choice in 2020. The endorsement is made by the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona. The firefighters had previously supported both Republicans in the district by endorsing Rep. John Kavanagh and Rep. Jay Lawrence, and now recognize Kurland as the strongest candidate to fully represent the public safety workers who do so much for our communities and our state.

Firefighters are on the frontlines protecting Arizona's beautiful landscapes as well as our communities, homes, and families. They're also first responders who continue to show up and aid people in emergencies, despite the risks posed by the global COVID crisis. Arizona's firefighters respect Kurland's strong leadership and commitment to our state's public safety workers as well as our economy and infrastructure..

"The Professional Fire Fighters Of AZ are proud to endorse Eric Kurland for the Arizona House of Representatives," said Mike Colletto, Legislative Director PFFA. "We believe he will be a strong advocate in keeping our community safe. He understands how important public safety is to our community!"

As a retired teacher who spent over 20 years working in Scottsdale's public schools, Kurland understands the importance of taking care of those who serve our community, and ensuring they have the resources they need to do their jobs effectively.

"I am incredibly humbled to have the support of the men and women who run towards danger, who jump into wilderness fires, who pull others from burning buildings," said Kurland. "I am committed to protecting the people who protect us. It is well past time that we remove the uncertainty around the long term health concerns of our firefighters. We need to protect them just as they have protected all of us."

"If I am elected to the state legislature I will invest in the public schools their children attend, I will protect their pensions, and I will strengthen the economy that provides jobs and opportunities for all Arizonans," Kurland added. Kurland is running against incumbent Rep. John Kavanagh, write-in Republican Joe Romack, and the reclusive Joseph Chaplik, who is best known for being accused of blackmailing Rep. Jay Lawrence for his endorsement via a lawsuit over Chaplik's tax scandals.

This endorsement adds to an already long list of groups and associations supporting Kurland's campaign. Kurland is a retired public servant with over two decades experience teaching in Scottsdale. Learn more about his vision for a stronger Arizona at kurland23.com.

Biden-Harris Tax Plan Would Help Arizona Families, Create 7 Million More U.S. Jobs than Trump

A recent Moody's analysis concluded that Joe Biden's economic plan would create 18.6 million jobs in his first term – and 7 million more jobs and \$1 trillion more in economic growth than President Trump's plan. Vice President Biden and Senator Kamala Harris used their recent debates to set the record straight on how their economic agenda will help working Americans, painting a strong contrast with Donald Trump's failed policies.

"On the issue of the economy, I think there couldn't be a more fundamental difference between Donald Trump and Joe Biden," **Senator Harris** said during the Vice Presidential Debate. "Joe Biden believes you measure the health and the strength of America's economy based on the health and the strength of the American worker and the American family. On the other hand, you have Donald Trump, who measures the strength of the economy based on how rich people are doing. Which is why he passed a tax bill benefitting the top 1% and the biggest corporations of America, leading to a \$2 trillion deficit that the American people are gonna have to pay for."

"And the truth of the fact is, Joe Biden has been very clear. He will not raise taxes on anybody who makes less than \$400,000 a year," she emphasized.

The Biden-Harris Administration will reverse Trump's tax breaks for the wealthy, and provide more than a dozen middle-class tax cuts for working families to ease the burden of major costs like health insurance and child care. By leveraging \$150 billion in new capital for small business, Biden will revitalize Main Street. With record low labor

Page 5 of 8 October 14, 2020

force participation of 58%, Arizona working families stand to benefit significantly under Biden's proposal. During the first Presidential debate, **Joe Biden** explained, "[Trump's] going to be the first president of the United States to leave office, having fewer jobs in his administration than when he became president. Fewer jobs than when he became president. First one in American history."

In this time of crisis, Joe has plan to create millions of good paying jobs and to give America's working families the tools they need to build back better: "Well, just take a look at what is the analysis done by Wall Street firms points out that my economic plan would create 7 million more jobs than his in four years, number one. And number two, it would create an additional \$1 trillion in economic growth."

ICYMI: What Day 1 Could Look Like If Health Care Law Is Repealed

Supreme Court Will Hear Health Care Repeal Lawsuit on Nov. 10

PHOENIX — As appointed Senator Martha McSally and Senate Republicans rush Judge Amy Coney Barrett's nomination to the Supreme Court, the <u>fate of health care</u> for millions of Americans is at stake.

Barrett has been <u>highly critical of current health care law</u> that provides critical protections for 3 million Arizonans with pre-existing conditions, as well as other coverages and protections for millions more. According to *NBC*, if the ACA were repealed:

- "As many as 133 million people could lose protections for a pre-existing condition.
- "Roughly 11 million Americans covered through the ACA exchanges could lose their insurance.
- "About 12 million adults covered through state-based Medicaid expansion could also lose coverage.
- "And roughly 2 million young adults under 26 on their parents' insurance could be kicked off the plan."
- "Martha McSally promised Arizonans she would protect people with pre-existing conditions, but if she votes to confirm Barrett, she would be giving a lifetime appointment to someone hostile to the health care law," said **Niles Harris**, executive director of Honest Arizona. "McSally must vote against Barrett's confirmation and keep her promise to stand up for the health care of Arizonans."

"Latinos for Mark": Over 75 Arizona Latino Community Leaders Endorse Mark Kelly for Senate

Today, the Mark Kelly for Senate campaign announced "Latinos for Mark," a group of more than 75 Latino community leaders from across Arizona, including elected officials, small business leaders, activists, and educators endorsing Mark Kelly for Senate. Supporters praised Kelly's understanding of the issues that affect the Latino community, like lowering health care costs, making sure all workers benefit from economic growth, protecting Dreamers and providing them with a path to citizenship, and ensuring all young Arizonans have access to a quality education

"Our campaign is about Arizonans — having conversations with folks across the state and understanding the challenges that they face. Every conversation reminds me of what is at stake in this election like defending pre-existing condition protections for 2.8 million Arizonans, creating a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, and getting help to families who are struggling to make ends meet during this pandemic." said Mark Kelly. "It means so much to have the support of so many Latino leaders throughout Arizona who recognize the need to elect people who will listen and make decisions based on what is right for Arizonans."

Kelly will be joined today by a number of those leaders for a virtual roundtable discussion about the impact of the pandemic on Arizona's Latino communities and the need for independent leadership in Washington to rebuild our economy while ensuring it works for everyone.

Read what Latino leaders have to say about Mark:

View the full list of Arizona's Latino community leaders supporting Mark Kelly HERE

Page 6 of 8 October 14, 2020

Anti-Equality Extremists Kelli Ward And Chadwick Moore To Speak At Trump Pride Event

PHOENIX — Today, the Trump Campaign announced an upcoming LGBTQ-focused "Trump Pride" event in Phoenix, Arizona. Among the featured speakers is Chair of the Arizona Republican Party, anti-LGBTQ extremist Kelli Ward and far-right provocateur Chadwick Moore.

Kelli Ward has consistently supported and voted in favor of legislation that would give businesses a license to discriminate against LGBTQ people. She even called for the impeachment of U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch after Lynch filed a complaint alleging North Carolina was discriminating against transgender people, following that state legislature's passage of the notorious HB2 in 2016.

Chadwick Moore <u>denied that the Trump Administration banned transgender people</u> from serving in the military (they did). Moore <u>claims that the story of Stonewall is a lie</u>, saying it was "transformed into yet another vehicle of social marxism. Moore said in February that "<u>there is no such thing as a gay child</u>," and he is on the record <u>attacking</u> transgender people for their looks and calling Michelle Obama transgender.

"The mere presence of anti-equality extremists like Kelli Ward and Chadwick Moore at this Trump Pride event is proof that his campaign's LGBTQ outreach is a sham," **said Arizona State Director Bridget Sharpe.** "Their extremism and anti-equality actions are rivaled only by the dangerous and destructive policies the Trump-Pence administration has perpetrated against LGBTQ people over the last four years. Nobody who knows the history of these extremists can listen to a word they say and believe they are an allies in our fight for equality. The Trump-Pence record is nothing to be proud of — it has actively endangered LGBTQ lives while we still have so much to accomplish. Starting outreach in mid-October will not cut it, and LGBTQ and pro-equality voters will send Trump and Pence packing in November in favor of true allies and champions of equality in Joe Biden and Kamala Harris."

According to recent surveys conducted by the Human Rights Campaign and Hart Research, LGBTQ issues have robust support among likely voters in Arizona, anti-equality attacks launched by some Republicans are falling flat, and support for transgender people is strong.

Captain Scott Kelly Launches New Digital Ad Campaign Encouraging Arizonans to Make a Plan to Vote Early

Today, the DNC is launching a new digital ad campaign featuring retired astronaut Captain Scott Kelly encouraging Arizonans to make a plan to vote early this year.

In a 30-second direct-to-camera video, Kelly educates Arizona voters on their multiple convenient and easy options to vote early this year, including voting early in person as well as returning their requested ballot by mail, in person, or at an official drop box.

"Ten years ago, I was living in space during a critical election year. You might guess that since I was orbiting the Earth, I wouldn't have been able to vote. Well, you'd be wrong. In fact, I made my plan and voted from space," says Kelly in the ad. "So there's no excuse for you this election. Arizonans have many easy and convenient options to vote early this year, by mail or early in person."

The new ad campaign will reach individuals who are likely to be early voters through digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Hulu, and YouTube across Arizona.

The spot will direct Arizona voters to IWillVote.com/AZ – the Democrats' voter participation website – to learn to learn about their different options to cast their ballot and make a plan to vote today.

The DNC and Biden campaign recently rolled out <u>new features</u> on IWillVote.com that help voters easily request and return their ballot by mail, as well as learn important information about the voting process in their state as they make their plan to vote. The site is also completely accessible in Spanish at <u>VoyaVotar.com</u>.

WATCH HERE:

Rep. Kirkpatrick Office Hosts COVID-19 Task Force, Concerns of Eviction Rise

Page 7 of 8 October 14, 2020

AZ02 Weekly Task Force Shares Frontline and Federal Updates

(TUCSON, A.Z.) – The Office of Rep. Kirkpatrick released the following statement on this week's COVID-19 Task Force meeting. Since May, the task force has had weekly conference calls to discuss the economic and health impacts of COVID-19 throughout Southern Arizona and provide federal updates.

The weekly agenda includes an introduction from Rep. Kirkpatrick's legislative and outreach team with federal updates on healthcare, small business and labor policies. After congressional policy updates, the industry-wide group takes turns speaking about their organization's experiences on the frontlines and share areas of need.

On this week's Task Force call, labor leaders raised concerns about the upcoming expiration of the governor's moratorium on evictions. The executive order issuing the moratorium was extended in July, and is currently set to expire on October 31st.

"I've said it before, and I'll say it again: we cannot afford a homelessness crisis amidst a global pandemic and national economic crisis," said Rep. Kirkpatrick. "Additionally, Arizona has had record-breaking heat this year. Arizonans simply cannot survive outside of their homes. It's time for our state leadership to once again extend this moratorium." "I'm so appreciative that members of our community continue to take time to speak to Rep. Kirkpatrick and her staff," said Outreach Director Billy Kovacs. "This week we gained insight into struggling nonprofits, and we were updated on the small business relief grant program. We can better serve our district with these critical briefs." Members of the task force include Vice President of Tucson Medical Center Julia Strange, State Representative Dr. Randy Friese, Associate Professor & Program Director, Public Health Policy & Management, Dr. Joe Gerald, Pima County Health Department Director Dr. Francesco Garcia, Chiricahua Community Health Centers Director Dr. Jonathan Melk, Cochise County Health Department Director Carrie Langley, Copper Queen Hospital CEO Robert Seamon, El Rio CEO Nancy Johnson, Southern Arizona Veterans Hospital Director Jennifer Gutowski, Tucson Metro Chamber Director Amber Smith, Local First Arizona Director Michael Peel, Pima Council on Aging Director Mark Clark, Southern Arizona Leadership Council CEO Ted Maxwell, and Tucson Mayor Romero's Chief of Staff, Elaine Becherer.



"For the first time, the real story as to the genesis of this lawsuit is being told, a story that is rather remarkable."

- Mark Goldman, attorney for former lawmaker Maria Syms in her defamation suit against former AZGOP Chair Jonathan Lines

Page 8 of 8 October 14, 2020