

# YELLOW SHEET REPORT

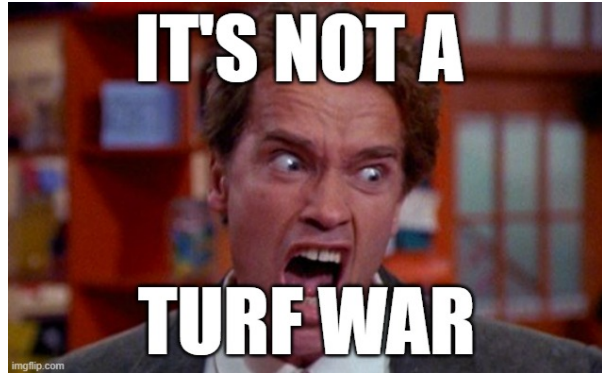
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Wednesday, March 24, 2021

## NEWS NOTES AND GOSSIP

### **GOOD NEWS – WE DENIED YOU 300,000 SHOTS!**

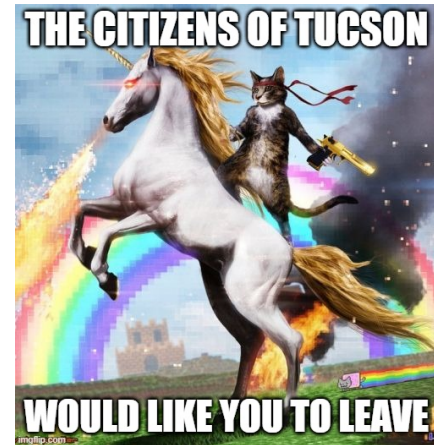
Ducey headed to Pima County today for a victory lap on vaccine distribution just as the press got ahold of a letter from FEMA saying Arizona's reasons for turning down extra vaccines for Pima County were misguided, and the Pima County Board of Supervisors unanimously urged the state to reconsider. Tensions have been building for weeks between Ducey, Cara Christ and Pima County officials over Covid-related federal resources. The county and state are fighting over setting up a federally run site for vaccinations so Pima County can focus on vaccinating not only more individuals, but those in minority communities –



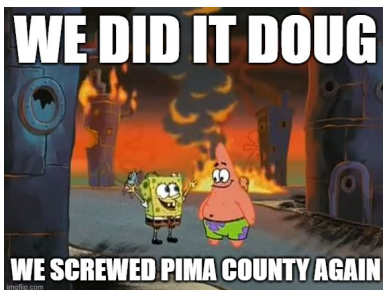
something Pima County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry said the state is lacking. The feds offered to send vaccines to the county that Huckelberry said would be enough to fully inoculate as many as 210,000 people (at his press conference today, Ducey sought to minimize that number, describing it as 6,000 doses, though that is per day for three weeks, plus another three weeks for the second dose, not to mention the possibility of an additional 80,000 single-shot doses). But Christ and Ducey told the feds they didn't want the doses, at least, not if the federal government was going to administer them. They never told the county directly they were denying the resources, Huckelberry said, noting he found out through the press. He said Christ offered a grab bag of reasons for turning down the additional shots, including that "the state didn't have the managerial control or the ability to provide necessary support." But Huckelberry said Pima County didn't need the state's help. "The county has set up five regional vaccination centers without any assistance from the state, so we were fully prepared to assist FEMA in setting up a federal POD in Pima County," he told our reporter today. He said Christ also claimed that the new doses might cut into the state's supply, which Tammy Littrell, the acting community administrator for FEMA made clear is not the case in a letter this week. "I am concerned that our conversations earlier this week did not include the reservations you outlined yesterday when communicating with the press," Littrell wrote, adding that it would be a state-led site that would allow "for state oversight on medical, managerial, efficiency and customer service." She also refuted Christ's argument that the program might require Arizonans to wait four to five hours to be vaccinated. "Concerns for hours-long waits as the norm are unfounded," Littrell said. "We're absolutely perplexed as to the rationale for turning it down," Huckelberry told our reporter today. Some have argued Ducey is essentially waging a turf war with Biden over whether the state or federal government would distribute the vaccines – and thus get credit for saving lives – and Huckelberry didn't disagree with that sentiment. Ducey today addressed the criticism directly, saying, "there's no turf war here." The Pima County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted today to urge Ducey to reconsider, warning that if he "continues to resist allowing FEMA to provide between 220,000 and 300,000 doses of vaccine, the County will ask the Department of Homeland Security to consider directing FEMA to provide the vaccinations anyway." In a press release, the board added that the FEMA PODs "would greatly improve the equity of vaccine provision in the County." Kirkpatrick, who represents Pima County, got in on the fight this afternoon, tweeting that it's "becoming clear that this was a decision based on personal politics rather than made in the interest of Arizonans' health, especially down in Pima County." She called the state's decision "baffling & negligent" and said she plans to reach out to Ducey for answers. "Unfortunately, this isn't the first time our concerns have fallen on deaf ears," she concluded.

## **IT WASN'T THE WARM WELCOME HE HAD HOPED FOR**

At the press conference today, the Southern Arizona press corps hammered a visibly frustrated Ducey with questions about the denial of the additional federal vaccine doses, and after several questions, Ducey pledged to re-evaluate the denial. When a third reporter pressured Ducey about why he denied the additional doses and whether he would reconsider, Ducey offered a terse one-word answer: “Yes.” By the time a fifth reporter asked about the board of supervisor vote to ask him to reconsider and the FEMA letter saying their misgivings were misguided, Ducey lost it. “I don’t have anything to add. There’s nothing to add on that,” he snapped. Ducey generally repeated talking points about how the state is partnering with the federal government to get shots into arms, making a muddled case for why the state had denied additional resources, and reiterating that the state should administer the shots. After Ducey struggled to explain the rationale, Richard Carmona, the former US surgeon general who was the 2012 Democratic nominee for US Senate and recently joined the University of Arizona staff, stepped in to help. “The reason we can do 3,000 per day is because it’s taken a long time to get up the supply chain and the links for the state to get the vaccine to get the needles in the arms,” he said. “Just dumping vaccines in any particular place where you’re not sure there’s the infrastructure is really a design for failure.” (Of course, FEMA disputed that it can’t set up the infrastructure to distribute the vaccines.) “We have a lot of people say ‘wait, why don’t you try this and try that?’ We understand how difficult it is to actually get a needle into somebody’s arm,” Carmona said.



## **IT'S AN OLD STORY WITH NEW DETAILS**



Pima County has also been fighting with the state in a months-long battle over millions of dollars in reimbursements for Covid-related expenses. Huckelberry said the county expected to receive a reimbursement from the state sometime after Jan 15, but that never happened. The county spent roughly \$50 million on testing before the new year, he said, but it wasn’t until the second federal relief package from Congress that things got heated. Arizona received \$416 million for testing and \$66 million for vaccines. Of that, Pima County expected to receive \$31 million from the state for testing, but Huckelberry said the state made “arbitrary”

decisions to instead allocate about \$100 million of that funding to counties based on population, leaving Pima County far short of its expected allotment. Pima County received \$14.3 million, he said. As far as he knows, DHS has no plans to reimburse the county for testing conducted while the pandemic was at its worst. “We’ll obviously appeal to the CDC to find out what kind of mechanism there is to protect local agencies from arbitrary decisions made by the state,” he said.

## **DON'T WORRY, IT'LL GET DONE EVENTUALLY**

Ducey yesterday hinted that the sports betting bills could be moving through the Senate after several stand-still weeks, but dodged questions about where negotiations stand. “I’m briefed by my team daily and we work closely with legislative leadership,” Ducey said on if the bills would be assigned to a committee this week. When pressed, he said he “may know” what lawmakers are planning with his prize legislation, but that he tries to “stay out of the Legislature’s business.” Fann told our reporter today that her plan is to move either Shope’s S1797 (fantasy sports betting; event wagering) or Weninger’s H2772 this week, but she “can’t ever predict what our members will do.” She said she’s working with Gowan to figure out which of

the bills will move forward. Fann also said she is attempting to navigate Gowan's demand for a horse racing provision allowing historic horse race betting (an issue important to Arizona Downs, which is in her district) "to make sure they are not squeezed out of Arizona sports." It's unclear if Fann supports Gowan's historic horse racing amendment, which is viewed as a "poison pill" that Ducey and the tribes have signaled they won't support.

## **THE PERFECT CANDIDATE IS A SANE REPUBLICAN**

Tyler Montague, who was instrumental in the campaign to recall Russell Pearce, had some tips for the campaign to recall Finchem, saying the biggest factor in determining if that effort is serious is whether organizers put up a Republican to run against Finchem. When Democrats set out to recall Pearce, Montague warned them that if they ran "some lefty candidate against him, you're just wasting your time and I'm not getting involved." Democratic organizers took that message to heart, and Montague eventually convinced Jerry Lewis, a former bishop and stake president in the LDS church, to run against the then-Senate president. "The strategy was a slightly more moderate Republican," he said, adding that the same could work in the Finchem recall, so long as Democrats keep the field clear of any Democrats attempting to take on Finchem. "You need an isolated field, and a quality candidate who isn't crazy," he said. "They can be plenty conservative, just not so Finchemy." Montague said the ideal candidate would have backing from the business community, credentials in city leadership, or a background as a prominent religious leader, and maybe a little money to self-fund the campaign. One Republican former lawmaker recently told our reporter that the problem with recalling Finchem is that he is squarely in the mainstream of the modern Republican party – a good chunk of the party actually believes the lie that the election was stolen. But Montague was skeptical that a large plurality of Republicans are on board with Finchem's antics, and anyway, he said, it would only take about a third of Republicans to join with independents and Democrats to defeat him in a recall. That's because recalls, if done right, are essentially an open primary – any registered voter can cast a ballot, and the candidates can all come from the same party. "Finchem in a primary? Ok, he probably wins," Montague said. "But Finchem is screwed in a general election against another Republican." The same isn't true for someone like Bowers, he said, noting that while a chunk of the Republican Party is mad at the speaker for not doing enough to "stop the steal," Bowers has a broader appeal among independents and even Democrats because Bowers "doesn't do weird stuff." "Finchem is just an embarrassment," Montague concluded.



## **BUT REALLY, WE'VE GOT A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN MARK**

Despite having mounted the only successful legislative recall in Arizona history, Montague ultimately doesn't see recalls as a viable way to get rid of the Legislature's radical wing – that, he said, will require a more drastic action. He pointed to proposals like ranked choice voting or open primary voting, which would, at least in theory, often pit partymates against each other in a general election and force the candidates to campaign to broader sections of the population. That would have a moderating effect on partisan bomb throwers from both sides of the political spectrum, Montague said. "Getting [votes from] a majority of a minority would no longer work," he said. Montague noted that consultant Chuck Coughlin is again working on a top-two open primary proposal after voters resoundingly rejected a similar proposal in 2012 ([LINK](#)). Not only would such a system result in "fewer Finchems" it would also mean fewer initiatives, he said, because initiative campaigns happen "when the Legislature doesn't do what the electorate wants." "Right now, the only remedy is a recall and that's such a pain. It costs a lot of money and effort, and it's not an effective check on people who are out of touch," he said.

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## ·WAKE UP CALL·

### **Bill to require clergy to report child sex abuse dies in Senate**

*Arizona Capitol Times*

Her daughter wouldn't have spent the first 30 months of her life enduring violent abuse if a bill a panel of Arizona senators voted to kill under religious pressure today had been law six years ago, a mother told the Senate committee.

### **Senate to consider restriction on school expulsions, suspensions**

*Capitol Media Services*

When it comes to suspending or expelling students, how young is too young?

### **Senate panel approves community college aid**

*Capitol Media Services*

Financial help may be in sight for recent high school grads who find themselves a few bucks short of what they need to go to community college.

### **DNC asking federal appeals court to void ballot-order system**

*Capitol Media Services*

The Democratic National Committee and its allies are ask a federal appeals court to void a ballot-order system they say gives a built-in – and they contend recurring – advantage for Republicans.

### **Recreational marijuana sales race ahead, but industry equity falls behind**

*Cronkite News*

Sales of recreational marijuana are surging at Arizona retailers that, after selling medical marijuana for nearly a decade, now accommodate a crop of new customers the state estimates could push revenue to \$1 billion in two years.

### **Drought conditions create potential for early, widespread fire season**

*Herald-Review*

Fire managers with the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management say current conditions continue to line up for another potentially active fire season across all corners of the state.

### **This Week in COVID: Deaths Dropping Sharply, Pima Feuding With State Health Officials**

*Phoenix New Times*

It's Tuesday, March 23. More than 837,000 Arizonans have contracted COVID-19 and more than 16,700 have died as a result.

### **Live in the Phoenix Area? Here's How to Get Vaccinated**

*Phoenix New Times*

Starting today — Wednesday, March 24 — all adults are eligible to be vaccinated in Maricopa County.

### **Redistricting commission begins potentially rocky process of selecting attorneys**

*Arizona Mirror*

At least on a preliminary basis, the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission will use the state procurement process to review prospective legal counsel, which would require it to do most of its work behind closed doors.

### **Intel investing \$20B into two factories in Arizona**

*The Hill*

Intel is investing in new chipmaking plants in Arizona as it struggles to keep up with competitors in the high-tech manufacturing field.

### **Arizona Senate's election audit is looking more absurd by the day**

*Arizona Republic (Opinion, Laurie Roberts)*

With each day that passes, Arizona Senate President Karen Fann's plan for an audit of the 2020 election just looks more ridiculous.

### **As Boulder mourns, the Arizona Legislature works to protect ... guns**

*Arizona Republic (Opinion, Laurie Roberts)*

While the nation mourns not one but two mass shootings in a week, the Arizona Legislature is working on a bill that would offer broad protections. To guns, that is.



**Republicans are hurting themselves if they block legal status for ‘Dreamers’***Arizona Republic (Opinion, Robert Robb)*

An overrun southern border gives the GOP the upper political hand on immigration. But blocking legal status for ‘Dreamers’ could reverse that.

**Another gunman used an AR-15-style rifle to kill. Why are they still legal?***Arizona Republic (Opinion, Elvia Diaz)*

A gunman with an AR-15-style rifle killed 10 in Boulder, Colo., including a police officer. What is it going to take to ban these type of rifles?

**We didn’t help get Kyrsten Sinema elected so she could ensure Senate gridlock***Arizona Republic (Op-ed, Misha Linnehan and Graham Rigby)*

We asked voters to support Kyrsten Sinema so she could make progress on big issues, not stand in the way of it by supporting the filibuster.

**No, that’s not just a harmless stereotype. Asian Americans know this all too well***Arizona Republic (Op-ed, Editorial Board)*

Asian Americans don’t need a hate crime designation to know hate was involved in recent killings in Atlanta and Phoenix. We shouldn’t either.

## •PRESS RELEASES•

**Supervisors ask Governor Ducey to reconsider FEMA vaccination POD denial**

PIMA COUNTY, March 24, 2021 – The Pima County Board of Supervisors March 24 voted unanimously to approve a Resolution asking Gov. Doug Ducey to reconsider denying permission for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to set up COVID-19 vaccination PODs in Pima County that would fully vaccinate up to 200,000 people. Additionally, the Resolution states that if the governor continues to resist allowing FEMA to provide between 220,000 and 300,000 doses of vaccine, the County will ask the Department of Homeland Security to consider directing FEMA to provide the vaccinations anyway.

FEMA approached Pima County two weeks ago about the prospects of doing a mass vaccination effort in Pima County, providing up to 6,000 doses a day of Pfizer vaccine for three weeks, plus another three weeks for the necessary second shots. FEMA also offered the possibility of another two weeks of one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, up to 80,000 doses.

The County Health Department and FEMA were ready to begin vaccinations March 31, however, under federal rules, FEMA needs the permission of a state’s governor before conducting operations. FEMA is already in Pima and other state counties providing staffing assistance at vaccination sites. (Photo is of a FEMA staffer at the Count/City of Tucson vaccination POD at Tucson Convention Center).

Pima County learned of the governor’s denial via statements made by Dr. Cara Christ, the state’s health director, at a press conference March 19.

If the FEMA-supported vaccination PODs are allowed, the County and FEMA will provide the vaccinations at the Kino Sports Complex Event Center, 2805 E. Ajo Way, and at the city of Tucson El Pueblo Center, 101 W. Irvington Road.

The focus of the vaccinations will be specific census tracts and zip codes with low vaccination rates. Many of those areas have mostly Hispanic and African American residents. The FEMA PODs would greatly improve the equity of vaccine provision in the County. If demand for vaccinations from the targeted communities wanes, the Health Department would open the PODs to vaccinate anyone in the County age 16 and older.

**Pinal County Infrastructure Bill Passes Senate Appropriations with Additional Funding for Gila County Project**

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – The Senate Appropriations Committee on Tuesday approved [HB 2394](#), sponsored by State Representative David Cook, with an amendment that added funding for the Hill Street project for the City of Globe in Gila County.

The [amendment](#) to the bill adds \$1,169,400 to complete the Hill Street corridor project, improving circulation within the City of Globe and access from US Highway 60 to the downtown business district and main economic areas within the community.

**“I appreciate the support of the Senate Appropriations Committee for HB 2394 and its additional funding for the City of Globe,”** said Representative Cook. **“These are near shovel ready projects that will quickly provide an economic engine for Pinal and Gila Counties, as well as new, well-paying jobs for rural Arizonans.”**

HB 2394 was already approved by the House in February, appropriating \$4 million to pay for a tier 2 study of the proposed North-South Corridor highway project that would improve transit in the Pinal County region. The bill provides \$750,000 to the County to supplement a local match to acquire over \$15 million in federal grant money to fund road and infrastructure improvements which would increase access to the area around the Nikola Motors plant.

*David Cook is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 8, which includes areas of Pinal and Gila Counties.*

### **Promise Arizona, CHIRLA Call on AZ Senators for Immigration Reform**

**PHOENIX, Ariz.** – Community leaders from Promise Arizona and other immigrant rights groups plan to meet with staff members for Arizona Senators Mark Kelly and Krysten Sinema as part of the March to Victory: Relay Across America, which passes through Phoenix on Thursday, March 25. The relay is part of a nationwide effort to demand a roadmap to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented immigrants, especially as the nation continues to battle the ongoing pandemic, and highlight the need for inclusive COVID-19 recovery for all.

To that end, Promise Arizona and other community leaders will meet with staff of Senators Mark Kelly (D-AZ) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) to demand they do their jobs and support legislation that protects and creates a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

“We are grateful to live in a great nation,” said Petra Falcón, executive director of Promise Arizona. “Let’s live up to the promise that we are all created equal and protect families by honoring working people. Essential workers who toil for their families in jobs many will not do should be included in the relief measures provided for all workers.”

The day will begin with “Passing the Torch” at the PAZ offices, 6436 S. Central Ave., with representatives from the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles. That will be followed by an in-group meeting with the senators from the PAZ offices, followed by a car caravan to Sen. Mark Kelly’s office departing at 11 a.m. and a procession from Sen. Kelly’s office to Sen. Sinema’s office. Visit <https://bit.ly/2PqR4Y1> for full schedule.

The Relay Across America will consist of community-led efforts, made up of in-person and virtual events, and will begin in Washington March 17, with subsequent events planned in nearly 30 states through May 1. The relay aims to unite communities throughout the nation in calling for a humane immigration system that protects the 11 millions undocumented immigrants, including essential workers, DACA and TPS holders, and those who don’t currently have a pathway to citizenship.

[FIRM Action](#) and the members of the [We Are Home campaign](#) demand swift follow through and decisive action.

More on the Relay Across America here: [firmaction.org/march-to-victory](http://firmaction.org/march-to-victory)

**WHAT:** The March to Victory: Relay Across America immigration action

**WHEN:** Thursday, March 25

**WHERE:** Visit <https://bit.ly/2PqR4Y1> to see the day’s itinerary

**WHO:** Promise Arizona, Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles

### **Supervisors permit County to seek contracts to transport asylum seekers**

**PIMA COUNTY, March 24, 2021** – The Board of Supervisors authorized Pima County administration to enter into contracts to provide transportation to asylum seekers released by federal agencies within the county to the Casa Alitas Welcome Center.

The vote was 4-1 in an emergency board meeting on March 24.

County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry said costs are expected to be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Border Patrol station in Ajo has been releasing asylum seekers to a nonprofit agency – the International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA). With no shelter facilities in Ajo, ISDA has been contacting Catholic Community Services to arrange transportation from Ajo to Casa Alitas.

Individuals and family asylum seekers are also being released in Yuma, with the City of Yuma and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) paying for buses to Casa Alitas.

Huckelberry said that, unlike in the 2019 surge, federal agencies are not transporting asylum seekers directly to emergency shelters and are currently allowed to drop off individuals within 35 miles of their substation.

Casa Alitas, operated by Catholic Community Services, opened in August 2019 in order to shelter asylum seekers, at the County's former Juvenile Justice Facility, which was remodeled to serve as temporary housing. Asylum seekers typically spend about 48 hours at Casa Alitas before being sent to sponsors elsewhere in the United States.

Huckelberry said that Casa Alitas was able to accommodate 7,555 individuals from August 2019 through February 2021. Capacity at the shelter, previously at 300, is at about 65 due to COVID-19 distancing protocols.

All asylum seekers receive a rapid test for COVID-19 upon arrival.

### **Arizona State House Committee Approves Voter ID Bill as Part of Voter Suppression Blitz**

An Arizona State House committee has approved SB1713, a drastic voter ID law that adds new requirements to the vote by mail process. From here, the bill will head to a floor vote in the Arizona State House. Because it has been amended, it will then need to go back to the State Senate before final passage.

Despite an amendment, the bill continues to put onerous barriers in the way of people trying to exercise their right to vote. As amended, the bill will require voters to submit their date of birth with their mail ballot, along with either their driver's license number or their voter registration number. This will impose a serious burden on the tens of thousands of Arizona voters who lack a driver's license, along with increasing the risk of identity theft. It will create unnecessary confusion among mail voters who have been voting the same way for years, as well as creating costly administrative difficulties for election officials.

This bill joins dozens of voter suppression and anti-democracy proposals currently being considered by the Arizona state legislature, including bills to restrict voting by mail, impede voter registration, gut the grassroots ballot initiative process, and criminalize protest.

In response, Progress Arizona Executive Director Emily Kirkland released the following statement: "SB1713 is a voter suppression measure, plain and simple. And it's part of a full-on assault on democratic ideals and institutions currently underway at the Arizona state legislature. We are determined to stop these bills, and we ask every Arizonan to join us in fighting to protect the future of our democracy. Our lawmakers have a responsibility to protect our sacred right to vote--they must reject SB1713 and all other anti-voter measures. "

# “QUOTE OF THE DAY”

**“We’re absolutely perplexed as to the  
rationale for turning it down.”**

- *Chuck Huckelberry, Pima County administrator, on Ducey  
and DHS’ decision to forego FEMA’s offer of hundreds of  
thousands of shots for the county*