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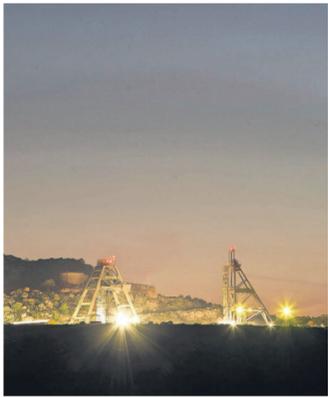
The Resolution Copper land swap has been called a win-win. But for those who love the Oak Flat recreation area, there's a sense of loss.

Oak Flat land deal

» Oak Flat is a recreational area in Queen Creek Canyon about 4 miles northeast of Superior, a mining community of about 3,000 people about 70 miles east of Phoenix.

» Popular with rock climbers, Oak Flat also is a desert riparian area and is considered sacred to the San Carlos Apache, who have held cultural and coming-of-age ceremonies there for generations.

» A controversial land exchange passed as part of a defense-spending bill late last year will allow Resolution Copper Company to begin mining a low-grade body of copper ore located 7,000 feet below Oak Flat.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SCHENNUM/THE REPUBLIC
ABOVE: Lights illuminate nighttime work recently at a copper mine outside Oak Flat near Superior.

TOP: Aaron Collins (top) and Manuel Rangel place a banner on a cliff face.

Economic development vs. the environment. It is the classic Arizona conflict. This time, it is playing out in the high desert near Superior, 70 miles east of Phoenix, where one of the world's largest copper companies plans to start pulling ore from what may be one of the world's largest copper veins. The operation will provide much-needed jobs to the economically struggling region. It will also forever mar a scenic wilderness area that not only is rich in archaeological and cultural history, but is also a bucket-list destination for rock-climbing enthusiasts the world over. Will the jobs be worth it? Many in Arizona's congressional delegation who pushed for the project say they will be. But others say there may actually be more money in developing Superior's scenic and recreational assets. Reporter Bob Young explores all sides of the issue beginning on Page 25A.

Terror hunt hits home: How the trail led to 5 Phoenix men

SEAN HOLSTEGE
THE REPUBLIC • AZCENTRAL.COM

The FBI's investigation of a suspected terrorist cell in Phoenix reaches back more than a decade.

It started with the raid of a London apartment and led to FBI informants, undercover agents and wiretaps in Phoenix. Eventually, the FBI watched five Phoenix men.



A foiled Texas plot left Elton Simpson (from left) and Nadir Hamid Soofi dead and Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem facing charges.

Investigation: A timeline of events. 21A

Many Medicaid-expansion foes get prime state insurance

KEN ALLTUCKER
THE REPUBLIC • AZCENTRAL.COM

More than two-thirds of Republican lawmakers who sued to overturn Medicaid coverage for low-income Arizonans took state-sponsored health-insurance plans that offer more-robust medical benefits than what the average Arizonan gets from private employers.

Records obtained by *The Arizona Republic* show that of the 36 current and former state lawmakers who sued

to halt funding of the Medicaid expansion, 26 enrolled in state-funded health-insurance plans.

Eight of the lawmakers who sued the state over the Medicaid expansion no longer serve in the Arizona Legislature. Of the remaining 28 serving in either the Arizona Senate or House of Representatives, 21 are enrolled in the state-sponsored health-insurance plans.

Arizona lawmakers serve part time,

See **LAWMAKERS**, Page 11A



CHERYL EVANS/THE REPUBLIC

GOP presidential hopeful Donald Trump headlines an event at the Phoenix Convention Center, doubling down on criticism of U.S. immigration and trade policies. 6A

ALSO

Fake-officer case: Pinal County Sheriff's deputies say a 19-year-old man impersonated a police officer and conducted traffic stops in the San Tan Valley area. 14A

USA TODAY

'Sanctuary cities': The high-profile murder of a California woman that police say was committed by an undocumented immigrant has not prompted so-called "sanctuary cities" to change their policies. 1B

INSIDE

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From the Front Page

Terror hunt leads to Phoenix

Continued from Page 1A

Two are in prison.
Two are dead.
Another man has pleaded not guilty to federal charges.

Some of their supporters say investigators unfairly targeted the men because of their faith. The bureau's investigations, detailed in hundreds of pages of search warrants, witness statements, court records, FBI case notes, wiretap transcripts and testimony, tell the story of five Phoenix men who drew the attention of the FBI.

Hassan Abu-Jihaad, imprisoned

The trail began nearly 12 years ago and 5,200 miles away, court records show, in December 2003, when British officials raided the London flat of a man they long suspected of supporting al-Qaida.

Among the seized records that caught investigators' attention was a floppy disk containing classified movements of U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf. The disk came from a computer in Phoenix, records show.

The computer belonged to a man named Paul R. Hall, who arrived in Phoenix from Southern California in the mid-1990s. He worked at United Parcel Service and began attending the Islamic Community Center near Interstate 17.

In 1997 he changed his name to Hassan Abu-Jihaad.

Eight months later, he joined the U.S. Navy. In 2000, he married an 18-year-old woman, and they later had two daughters. Abu-Jihaad was assigned to a destroyer, the USS Benfold, given a security clearance for secret documents and sent to the Persian Gulf.

Transcripts of FBI wiretaps and other records show that the long deployments and money worries wore on Abu-Jihaad, who was honorably discharged in 2002. But while in the Navy, he e-mailed the webmaster of an Islamist site the movements of his battle group, and other sensitive information, investigators later learned.

In Phoenix, Abu-Jihaad started buying jihadist propaganda films, including footage of Russian soldiers being executed in Chechnya. He got them from London-based Azzam Publications, where he posted his support of the speedboat bomb attack that killed 17 sailors on the USS Cole in 2000, court records show.

Abu-Jihaad's life in west Phoenix spiraled. His wife left him in 2005, and he



ROB SCHUMACHER/THE REPUBLIC

Authorities search the Phoenix apartment of Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi, one day after the pair were killed while trying to carry out an attack on a cartoon contest in Garland, Texas.

reported financial hardship, according to court records.

But he had met someone with a similar background.

Derrick Shareef, imprisoned

At the mosque, Abu-Jihaad met a drifter from Chicago, who converted to Islam and took the name Derrick Shareef.

Abu-Jihaad invited Shareef to share his apartment. They lived together in 2004, when the FBI listened to them on wiretaps.

The government taped the men plotting to attack a military recruiting station in Phoenix and Navy installations in San Diego, transcripts show. Agents recorded them talking about buying automatic rifles.

Shareef was with Abu-Jihaad when, in 2004, he read media coverage that described the 2003 raid of the London apartment and implicated a former military enlistee with sharing military secrets. The article didn't name him, but Abu-Jihaad cried.

Transcripts and FBI case notes indicate he grew paranoid. He started destroying records. Plans for an attack sputtered. Shareef started wondering if Abu-Jihaad, his mentor, was losing his nerve.

That's what — according to wiretap transcripts — Shareef unwittingly told an undercover FBI informant after the two roommates grew apart and Shareef, disillusioned, moved back to Illinois in

5 men who drew FBI scrutiny

Name: Hassan Abu-Jihaad, 39
Birth name: Paul R. Hall
Status: Serving 10-year prison sentence. Convicted in 2008 of disclosing classified national-defense secrets.

Name: Derrick Shareef, 30
Alias: Talib Salam Ibin Shareef
Status: Serving 35-year prison sentence. Pled guilty in 2007 to attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, in a plot to blow up a mall near Chicago.

Name: Elton Simpson, 31
Alias: Ibrahim Ryan
Status: Killed May 3 in Garland, Texas, while trying to carry out an assault on a Mohammed cartoon contest.

Name: Nadir Hamid Soofi, 34
Status: Killed May 3 in Garland, Texas, while trying to carry out an assault on a Mohammed cartoon contest.

Name: Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem, 43
Birth name: Decarus Lowell Thomas
Status: Jailed and facing 10 to 16 years in prison on charges of conspiracy, lying to federal agents and transporting weapons across state lines. He has pleaded not guilty.
The case: A grand jury indicted him on June 10 on charges of helping Simpson and Soofi plan the attack on Garland as well as traveling with them to the desert near Phoenix to practice using assault rifles.

2006.

Shareef wanted to blow up government or public buildings, he told the informant. He started making plans. Shareef and an undercover FBI agent negotiated a fair price for "pineapples," Shareef's code to describe hand grenades. He wanted to plant them in the Cherry-Vale Mall near Chicago.

But the pineapples were duds, and in December 2006, the FBI arrested Shareef and charged him in the plot. He pleaded guilty to attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

Meanwhile, the bureau's case against Abu-Jihaad intensified as he was getting to know another man facing struggles.

Elton Simpson, dead

Elton Simpson and his family had moved to the Valley from Illinois when he was 12. He attended Washington High School in Phoenix, where close friends recalled him as funny, easygoing, and popular.

Simpson came from a "world class" family and "was always a well-rounded individual," said Aaron Marner, his best friend growing up.

Simpson was a gifted basketball player, but a back injury in college ended his dreams and "left him in limbo," Marner said. He transferred to Phoenix College and dropped out in 2004, the same year he converted to Islam at age 20. He took the name Ibrahim and attended the I-17 mosque.

He also worked at the UPS facility with Abu-Jihaad. The FBI started to notice the two socialized a lot.

In March 2007, the FBI first interviewed Simpson. They asked him what he knew about Abu-Jihaad.

Simpson told agents little about Abu-Jihaad, other than that he thought he was "a good brother."

That month, the FBI arrested Abu-Jihaad. He was charged with passing secrets and material support of terrorists. In 2009, he was convicted of the espionage charge, acquitted of the terrorism charge and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Since 2005, the FBI had cultivated an undercover source named Dabla Deng, according to court records and testimony. The FBI asked Deng to go to the mosque and befriend Simpson.

Deng was paid \$132,000 over the next few years, playing the role of eager acolyte while Simpson filled the role of

Continued on Next Page



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From the Front Page

Spanning more than a decade

Continued from Page 20A

teacher.

Deng wore a wire and often met at Simpson's north Phoenix apartment. More often, they would share a meal at Kabob Palace on 27th Avenue, six blocks from the mosque. FBI agents watched. And took notes.

Deng turned over 1,500 hours of recorded conversations. A lot of it was banal.

Of the 1,500 hours, the FBI culled eight minutes as evidence.

In May 2009, Simpson told Deng, "It's time to go to Somalia, brother."

"I'm telling you, man. We gonna make it to the battlefield," Simpson said. "It's time to roll."

He told Deng to sell his car to pay for the travel, adding, "That's a plane ticket right there. Bye-bye America."

Three weeks later, Simpson was taped discussing "the permissibility of doing the martyrdom operations," about "how they gonna use the car with bombs on it."

By fall, he was discussing plans to attend madrassa, or Muslim school, in South Africa and how the school was just a front to reach Somalia.

Federal agents grew concerned that Simpson was verging on action. They interviewed him again, but he denied that he planned to leave the country.

The FBI had already discovered Simpson had a plane ticket to South Africa and a visa application to enter that country. Agents asked him to name the school he was going to. He refused, telling them the FBI could figure it out themselves. Simpson was arrested a week later and charged with lying to a federal agent.

"The investigation was initiated against Mr. Simpson because we had reason to believe that Mr. Abu-Jihaad was in the process of attempting to set up a terrorist cell in Arizona. We feared that Mr. Simpson was part of that cell," FBI Special Agent Jeffrey Hebert testified in federal court in 2010.

In March 2011, a judge found Simpson guilty of making false statements and four months later sentenced him to three years' probation.

Nadir Hamid Soofi, dead

Simpson's circle grew even as life after his conviction got trickier.

He had a hard time finding work. He would sometimes sleep on the floor of the mosque because he had nowhere to stay. At the mosque, he met Nadir Soofi.

Timeline of events

The FBI's investigation of a suspected terrorist cell started more than a decade ago with a raid in a London apartment and later drew the agency's attention to five Phoenix men. The following accounts are based on the federal investigations, detailed in hundreds of pages of search warrants, witness statements, court records, FBI case notes, wiretap transcripts and court testimony.

2000: Al-Qaida-backed attack on USS Cole kills 17 sailors. Hassan Abu-Jihaad later posts support for the assault on a London-based publication's website.

2002: Abu-Jihaad is honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy.

2003: Abu-Jihaad becomes friends with Derrick Shareef. Federal authorities learn in December from a London police raid that Abu-Jihaad had e-mailed movements of his Persian Gulf battle group and other sensitive information.

2004: Elton Simpson converts to Islam, takes the name Ibrahim and attends the I-17 mosque. The FBI listens on wiretaps to Abu-Jihaad and Shareef, saying the two plotted to attack military recruiting stations.

2006: Undercover agents arrest Shareef and accuse him of trying to buy grenades he hoped to plant in the CherryVale Mall near Chicago. Shareef later pleaded guilty to attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

2007: Abu-Jihaad is arrested on federal terrorism and espionage charges. The FBI interviews Simpson for the first time.

2008: A Connecticut jury convicts Abu-Jihaad on charges of providing classified details of American fleet movements to a website accused of assisting al-Qaida. Abu-Jihaad is later sentenced to 10 years in prison.

2010: The FBI arrests Simpson on suspicion of lying to agents about his plans to visit Africa.

2011: Simpson works at Cleopatra Bistro Pizza, a business owned by a man who also attended the I-17 mosque, Nadir Soofi. A federal judge finds Simpson guilty on the charge of lying to agents and sentences him to three years' probation.

2012: The FBI seizes Decarus Lowell Thomas' computer and a storage device while serving a search warrant at a home he shared with others. Thomas says the storage device wasn't his. A forensic search of the devices uncovers Global Islamic Media Front, a document the FBI said is used by extremists to evade authorities.

2013: Thomas changes his name to Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem. Muslim leaders have said he sporadically attended the I-17 mosque and was last seen there with Simpson.

Jan. 7, 2015: Gunmen storm the office of the French publication *Charlie Hebdo* and kill 12 people as revenge for the magazine's depictions of the Prophet Mohammed. The FBI alleges that Simpson, Soofi and Abdul Kareem were inspired by the attack.

February 2015: Organizer Pamela Geller announces plans to pay \$10,000 to the winner of the first annual Mohammed Art Exhibit and Contest to be held in Garland, Texas.

May 3, 2015: Simpson uses Twitter to announce the planned assault, creating the hashtag #texasattack. Hours later, Simpson, 31, and Soofi, 34, are killed as they attack the venue.

June 11, 2015: FBI agents arrest Abdul Kareem, 43, after he is indicted on felony charges of conspiracy, lying to federal agents and crossing state lines to furnish weapons for the failed gun attack. Abdul Kareem pleads not guilty.

Soofi gave Simpson a job at his north Phoenix restaurant, Cleopatra Bistro Pizza, and the two roomed together in Soofi's North 19th Avenue apartment.

Soofi was born near Garland, Texas, and lived in Pakistan for a time before at-

tending a university in Utah and later moving to Phoenix.

Soofi struggled to keep his family and his finances afloat.

In 2012, a California company sued the restaurant, claiming Soofi had pirat-

ed pay-per-view sports broadcasts. The court ordered Soofi and the business to pay \$2,000, and he got out of the pizza business.

Months later, Soofi entered a custody battle for his son.

In September 2014, Soofi's ex-wife won custody of the boy, plus about \$500 in monthly child support.

The case scarred Soofi, according to Elizabeth Singleton, who met him when he volunteered at a Phoenix non-profit to help the homeless and mentally ill.

"He was expressing some of the difficulties when the relationship ended that he was not having enough access to his child," Singleton said. "The thing that stressed him the most was his relationship with his son and his ex."

Soofi's relatives said he was a devout Muslim, but never a radical. Still, the two roommates, Soofi and Simpson, died outside a rally in Texas. Investigators believe they had help plotting the attack.

Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem, awaiting trial

In the last few years, possibly as early as 2012, Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem entered Simpson's world.

Abdul Kareem was born in Philadelphia in 1971 as Decarus Lowell Thomas. He moved to metro Phoenix in 1996.

His early years in Arizona were troubled, court records show. Between 1997 and 2005 he had two felony DUI convictions and a felony disorderly conduct. Court records indicate he also used cocaine and marijuana. In 2009, he was shot and treated for post-traumatic stress.

He started a Phoenix cleaning and moving business called Git-R-Done Moving Services in 2007. His family said it turned his life around and he stayed out of trouble with the law. The business kept him working seven days a week.

"That meant a lot to him. He had his piece of the American Dream, his piece of American pie," James Newman, his younger brother, said.

By late 2012, Thomas had embraced Islam. He changed his name in January 2013 and legally became Abdul Kareem at age 41.

Newman said he never met Soofi or Simpson and knew nothing about them. He did say that his brother had a habit of falling in with the "wrong crowd."

The FBI believes that happened again at the I-17 mosque. Abdul Kareem from time to time volunteered to shampoo the carpets there.

See TERROR, Page 22A



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From the Front Page

“The investigation was initiated against Mr. Simpson because we had reason to believe that Mr. Abu-Jihaad was in the process of attempting to set up a terrorist cell in Arizona.”

JEFFREY HEBERT, FBI SPECIAL AGENT

Terror

Continued from Page 21A

The last time was six to eight months ago, a mosque leader recalls. On one occasion, Simpson pitched in.

The FBI knew about Thomas in 2012, before he changed his name to Abdul Kareem. That year, according to federal court records, the agency seized a computer that belonged to him and a memory stick he denied owning.

FBI Special Agent Dina McCarthy testified in court in June that the devices contained extremist propaganda and training materials. She cited al-Qaida literature, plus primers on how to evade government detection and how to justify the mass murder of civilians.

Abdul Kareem lived with Simpson and one other man in the summer of 2012, according to a government pretrial motion that was unsealed after *The Arizona Republic* and other media organizations petitioned the court.

The attack and the investigation

On Jan. 7, ISIS-inspired gunmen blasted the Paris offices of satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in retaliation for a published cartoon depicting the Prophet Mohammed. They killed 12.

That day, U.S. prosecutors allege, Abdul Kareem, Soofi and Simpson talked about replicating the attack on this side of the Atlantic.

What the three men didn't know was that Pamela Geller, a critic of radical Islam, was planning a cartoon contest to protest the attack. In February, organizers announced they would hold the event in a Dallas suburb.

Soofi, Simpson and Abdul Kareem started planning, acquiring semi-automatic rifles and going out to the desert for target practice, according to federal court records. Abdul Kareem's lawyer declined to comment on the allegations but in court last month cast doubt on the strength of the government's case.

Simpson had been communicating on social media with known ISIS leaders, FBI Agent Stewart Whitson said in a request for a search warrant two weeks after the shooting.

Using a Twitter account called

How we did the story

For this story, reporter Sean Holstege reviewed hundreds of records and talked with acquaintances of the men, as well as official sources. He examined legal records — including testimony of federal agents — in U.S. District Court and Maricopa County Superior Court, filed in the cases of Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem, Hassan Abu-Jihaad, Derrick Shareef and Elton Simpson. Those court records include some transcripts of wiretaps the FBI had used while monitoring some of the men. He also reviewed business records and family court records.

“Sharia is Light,” Simpson responded, “when will they ever learn,” to a tweet from a Somali-based suspected terrorist who called for an attack similar to the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre.

Hours before his death, Simpson used the account to announce the Garland attack.

Simpson used the online identity Ibrahim Ryan, his conversion name, according to the search warrant.

FBI agents traced IP addresses to Simpson's Twitter account and to several accounts used by ISIS leader Junaid Hussain, according to the search warrant affidavit. Hussain asked that Allah reward Simpson for the attack and used the hashtag Simpson created, #texasattack, in later tweets about the assault, court records show.

Agents, in the court request for the search warrant, said it would yield evidence identifying “any co-conspirators, terrorist representatives or potential terrorist recruits.”

The FBI questioned Abdul Kareem days after Soofi and Simpson were killed in the Garland attack, and he was arrested about a month later. He has pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiracy, transporting weapons across state lines to commit a crime and lying to federal agents.

Agent McCarthy laid out the government's case. Much of it was based, she testified, on two people: a confidential witness who was at the target practice,

and a confidential informant who was paid \$500.

Prosecutors called Abdul Kareem “off-the-charts dangerous.” Defense attorney Dan Maynard called the case “all smoke and mirrors,” built on the word of an unreliable jailhouse informant.

Abdul Kareem's brother, Newman, watched the court drama.

“I don't understand how our government could paint such a negative picture,” Newman, 39, said. “He's just another scapegoat. It's really hurting my family. It's really breaking us down.”

His brother was “a full-blooded American into baseball and barbecues,” Newman said. “He's no terrorist.”

The aftermath

The FBI's interest in associates of the five Phoenix men continues.

Days after the Texas shooting, agents started looking through Simpson's and Soofi's social-media accounts to determine who they communicated with and to establish the roommates' network of associates.

The FBI said in its May search-warrant request for those records that the bureau was looking for evidence of “any co-conspirators” and “potential terrorist recruits” in Simpson's circle.

About the same time, FBI agents returned to the I-17 mosque to show photos of people the agents believed to be Simpson's associates. Mosque president Usama Shami and other Valley Muslim leaders said as many as two dozen photos were shown.

Abdul Kareem was named in a federal grand-jury indictment that also mentioned other unnamed co-conspirators. His arrest was largely based on an unnamed confidential witness the government said was privy to plans for the Texas attack.

“The indictment alleges that Kareem, his co-conspirators Elton Francis Simpson and Nadir Hamid Soofi and others planned to attack and disrupt the Muhammad Art Exhibit,” government prosecutors argued in an unsealed June motion.

The government has not disclosed what FBI agents found when they searched the men's apartment after the Texas shooting.

Albuquerque paying \$5M to settle high-profile shooting suit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBUQUERQUE — The city has agreed to pay \$5 million to the family of a homeless man who was fatally shot by Albuquerque officers last year in a case that has helped fuel major reforms within the police force.

The settlement was announced Friday by an attorney representing the family of James Boyd, who was killed during a March 2014 standoff in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains where he had been illegally camping.

At one point during the hours-long incident, Boyd pulled out two knives and threatened to kill officers. Video from an officer's helmet camera showed police fired on Boyd, who authorities say was schizophrenic, as he appeared to be preparing to surrender.

The incident sparked angry demonstrations around Albuquerque, with protesters calling for reform after numerous police shootings.

Boyd's family filed a lawsuit in June 2014.

A special prosecutor announced last month that two police officers will be charged with second-degree murder in the case. The two officers have denied any wrongdoing, but each could face up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

Even before Boyd's death, the U.S. Justice Department had been investigating the Albuquerque Police Department over allegations of excessive force. Federal officials harshly criticized the department but reached an agreement with the city to improve training and dismantle troubled units.

Shannon Kennedy, a lawyer who represented the Boyd family in the lawsuit, said in a statement that “the family sought justice to ensure that what happened to Mr. Boyd never happens to anyone else, and they believe the city is taking necessary steps to ensure officers are provided adequate training, supervision and support and that Mr. Boyd's death changes policing for the better in Albuquerque.”

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