

EX ALDERMAN NEWSLETTER 204 AND CHESTERFIELD 149



By John Hoffmann

November 19, 2015

MEN'S ENTERTAINMENT CLUB OPENS IN WEST COUNTY: We ran the photo of the sign being put on the roof about a month ago. It was for the NV Social Life Club at the 17 Nationalway Shopping Center in Manchester, a difficult place to find on the SW corner of Manchester at Highway 141. It opened on November 12.



We have it from reliable sources (delivery men) that the place is going to be a strip club. (Although we doubt there will be actual stripping)

Here is a photo of the staff and an ad from their facebook page:

JustIncredible_Shotz



While the delivery guys claim it will be a strip club, here is what the owners claim it will be:

NV is a Restaurant and Upscale Sports Bar.

Entertainment will vary on different nights from Karaoke to Country/Rock themed evenings, Disco nights, and of course Contemporary Top 40/EDM nights with VIP Bottle Service. NV will have all your favorite sports games and major sporting events as well.

Our Server & Bartender staff is comprised of beautiful ladies dressed in a sexy, flirty manor. Our ladies have years of experience combining top of the line, professional bartending & wait staff skills with their individual fun, up beat personalities.

The NV Girls combined experience, specialty training, and unmatched beauty will be the focal point of our venue. NV will be the new place in which your "Social Life" revolves around!

Nightlife In West County...Finally!

Perhaps now the Missouri Lt, Governor will no longer have to go the East Side in Illinois for entertainment. Except on Tuesdays when they advertise cheap martinis and an all male staff. I have a sneaking suspicion this place will be pushing the envelope of what will be accepted in West County even if it is Manchester. Maybe Manchester will soon be The WEST SAUGET of St. Louis. (For out-of-town readers Sauget, Illinois is a town next to East St. Louis consisting of chemical plants and strip clubs.

Here is one of the owners, Jacob Eldridge, who is also an insurance adjuster for Crawford & Company.



People have trouble finding this shopping center which was built when Woods Mill Road ran next to it before Woods Mill Road was eliminated replaced by the limited access elevated Highway 141. It will be interesting if guys wanting to ogle their waitress will find the place and how much NV Social Life with discounted Jell-o Shots will add to the Manchester Municipal Court caseload.

OCTOBER TOWN AND COUNTRY POLICE STATS:

The following activity was reported by the police department during the month of **October**:

Officer's responded to a total of **1768** calls for service and wrote a total of **238** reports, Including:

107 Vehicle Crashes

39 Criminal Reports

26 Driving While Intoxicated arrests (**2** Felony, **2** Misd, **22** Ordinance)

18 Misc Arrests (Traffic, Fugitive, Failure to Appear charges, etc)

414 Traffic Citations issued (**247** speeding)

Misd

Keischa Harris (out of venue)

Mia Piccione (out of venue)

Felony

Scott Cool (warrants issued)

Kelly Russell (warrants issued)

2015 Police Activity Town and Country YTD Jan-October

867 Vehicle Crashes

496 Criminal Reports*

175 Driving While Intoxicated arrests (11 Felony, 10 Misd, 154 Ord)

337 Misc Arrests (Traffic charges, Fugitive charges, Failure to Appear charges, etc)

4,374 total traffic citations issued

2,995 speeding

* the majority of the criminal reports involved fraudulent Income Tax Filings

TOWN AND COUNTRY RESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY TO HIT AND RUN: Timothy Dolan, 59, of 1870 S. Mason Road was originally charged with Felony Leaving the Scene of an Accident has pled guilty to a reduced charge of Misdemeanor Leaving the Scene of an Accident.



On March 18, 2015 Dolan fled the scene after crashing into a parked car on N. Kirkwood Road one block from the Kirkwood train station. Witnesses reported that Dolan got out of the van, looked at the damage and then drove off. Witnesses were a triple threat. They were able to provide Dolan's description, the description of his van and the van's license number to Kirkwood Police.

Dolan pled guilty on October 29, 2015 and was sentenced to a two-year probation term.

This is not the end of Dolan's legal troubles. Dolan and his wife operate a newspaper delivery service and are being sued by the Post-Dispatch. The next scheduled court appearance in that case is on January 27, 2016.

OH NO NOT AGAIN: It was like Mayor Jon Dalton was back in the pocket of the West County EMS and Fire Protection District. They are back! Yes the talk of a second city owned fire station, this one in Ward 4.

At the combined meeting of the Finance Commission and the Public Works and Storm Water Commission Mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist and Snatcher of Private Property Jon Dalton speaking on prioritizing city projects said the following:



Dalton



The woman he cheated and her lawyer



The Saint he sued

"Is the question of a firehouse in Ward 4 a serious priority question? Of course it is!"

OMG! It is back. The Fire Union and West County EMS & FPD wants to expand.



One in Town and Country is not enough for the Fire District

For new readers, in 2005 Jon Dalton was a paid lobbyist for the WCEMS&FPD. That same year he was working for them, as mayor he signed a \$17.5 million 5-year contract with the Fire Service that cost more than if the city started its own fire department.

Three months after the 5-year contract went into effect, the Fire District sent firefighters into Town and Country going door to door with a petition to annex Town and Country into the Fire District, meaning residents would see a sizable property tax increase. There are no city property taxes and the city was buying fire service from WCEMS&FPD, using sales and utility tax revenue.

One of the selling points for being annexed into the Fire District was how they would add a second fire station. However the call volume did not warrant it. At the time they were answering less than 2 fire calls a day, mostly false fire alarms and auto accidents on the interstate highways. They were answering four EMS calls a day mostly to nursing homes, with professional health care providers already on the scene.

Since then both fire truck and EMS calls have actually gone down. There is just a little over 1 fire truck call a day and EMS calls are now slightly under 4 a day.

Most of the population in Ward 4 is off of Conway Road and there are good response times there. The fire truck or ambulance simply go down Mason Road and make a right

onto Conway. The problem areas are a couple of subdivisions off of Ladue Road and the Muirwoods subdivision on the top of the Bellerive Country Club golf course that you have to drive through the City of Creve Coeur on Mason Road to get to.

However even if an EMS response is 7-to-8 minutes you are still just 5 minutes away from the ER at St. Luke's Hospital or BJC West and 10 minutes away from Mercy and Missouri Baptist ERs. The "Golden Hour" to reach a ER is met in 20 minutes anywhere in Town and Country including in north section of Ward 4.

The whole idea of adding a fire house in Ward 4 would mean we would be doubling the fire service contract, because the fire district would double the number of firefighter/paramedics and equipment.

The Fire Union could make a sizable increase in personnel and have promotions for members. There would also be featherbedding. Fire truck calls from both fire house in Town and Country would be less than one a day. Ambulance calls would average less than two-a-day from two Town and Country fire stations. Is that money well spent?

There has been no new housing or retail/office developments in the north end of Ward-4. The truth is that someone or some place will always be the furthest away from the closest firehouse. If somebody wants quick fire truck and EMS responses they need to buy a house close to a fire station. Even that cannot guarantee a fast response time, because if the fire truck or ambulance crew are out of service on another call the response time will be long coming from another fire station for someone living across the street from an empty fire station.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS MISSING ONE THING As far as I have been able to determine there has been no effort to seek competitive bids from adjoining fire districts or fire departments. I don't know how you can claim you got the best deal for residents if you don't seek bids. I wrote one alderwoman on the Fire Contract Task Force if the city would post a RFP or Requests for Bids. I never got an answer. I also question the ethics of any government agency or body that does not seek bids on major contracts that are 40-percent of your annual budget.

SATURDAY AT CITY HALL, IT WAS LIKE BEING ON A CRUISE SHIP, not for me but surely for the alderpersons attending a November 7th Aldermanic Retreat. This used to be required by ordinance to be held in June, but of course who wants to go to a Saturday meeting at the start of the vacation season. So the ordinance was repealed and the 2015 retreat was in November.

The retreat started at 8:30. When I arrived at 8:28 alderpersons appeared to be eating a breakfast provided by the city. Lunch was delivered at 11:30. The feeding schedule was the same as a cruise ship.



Once things started Mayor Dalton sounded more like Family Feud Host Steve Harvey who opens every show with "This is going to be a good one!"

"We have a terrific agenda," announced Dalton at the start of the day. At 8:30 AM I was the lone member of the public, but the crowd swelled to three by 11 AM.



BEST DRESSED FOR 8:30 AM: Back in 2009 when I was on the board of aldermen I remember Fred Meyland-Smith showing up for a Saturday morning retreat wearing two-tone saddle shoes, white pants, a polo shirt and a yellow sweater draped over his shoulders and tied around his neck. He looked like he was sent from Central Casting to play the pompous Judge Smails (Ted Knight role) in a remake of Caddy Shack. That was the year Fred introduced an ordinance at the retreat making it illegal to write anything unkind about a fellow alderman, in an attempt to quiet my newsletter. He had broad support, with one exception. City attorney Steve Garrett pointed out Fred's proposed bill was unconstitutional. This year Fred actually wore his sweater over his head.



There was one person who stood out far beyond everyone else, even the clothes horse Jon Dalton, who some think wears expensive clothes to make up for his lack of height.

The winner for the 2015 Best Dressed for 8:30 AM on a Saturday is LINDA RALLO:



THE AGENDA: The first item was the restructuring of the city's commissions which we wrote about at length in our last newsletter.

The next item was a legal update presented by Ed Shuy of Curtis, Heinz, Garrett and O'Keefe, filling in for City Attorney Steve Garrett. The highlight of Shuy's talk was how he used hypothetical situation to **explain the city's defense to the Westminster Christian Academy's lawsuit against the city** for not passing a Conditional Use Permit for lights and a new sound system on their football field that abuts several subdivisions.

Shuy said in similar cases courts normally depend on several things to uphold cities' decisions not to issue permits or grant variances.

He said that past history with other similar cases are normally not considered as each case is reviewed on its own merits. This would seem to eliminate the CBC football lights along I-64 and the Principia Soccer practice field lights, which are not close to any houses or subdivisions.

Shuy said the written Statement of Facts should contain not the number of residents who were in opposition but the written reason for turning down the applicant. Also any expert evidence given in opposition to the proposal should be included.

The final item of discussion was at the same time the lunch food arrived. It **was the Wirth Property/Town Square Project**. We have been reporting for several years that there is a rumor coming out of city hall that Mayor Dalton would like to buy undeveloped property owned by The Principia School located across the street from the Wirth Property and next to the fire station for a new city hall and make the current city hall and police headquarters an all police facility.

Here is how some of the discussion at the retreat went in that direction:

Jon Benigas: "Would we do the something different if we owned the eight acres across the street from the Wirth Property? Maybe we are talking about something more than that (The Wirth Property)."

Mayor Dalton: "It is no secret we should not plan in isolation."

Tiffany Frautschi: "One of the slides in Skip's (Ald. Skip Mange) presentation (The first presentation to a neighborhood group of residents of Kings Glen and Crossland Drives) in 2014 showed the 17 acres of Principia Property being bought by the city."

"At the Task Force meetings it was stressed the land across the street would not be discussed. There are residents very much confused."

COSTS:

Frautschi: " We are in a vacuum with no cost estimates."

Linda Rallo: "I have a friend redoing a house. They would redo one thing at a time over five years so they could afford it. Maybe we should do this in stages. There is a news article ranking Town and Country a good place to live. It listed as one of the reasons, 'an abundance of parks.'" (Rallo was inferring there was not a current need for another park as much as trails-sidewalks around town.)

Fred Meyland-Smith: "I'm thinking this (Wirth Property/Town Square) is a bathroom and the overall city is the house."

Benigas: "I like this design. It looks very expensive. I'd like to get some idea of the cost of it."

Gussie Crawford: "I don't think we should rush on this financially."

Lynn Wright: Gussie this board changes. You don't know who will be sitting here in five years.

RESTAURANTS: The Board of Aldermen also discussed how and what kind of restaurants should be on the property, like they have any say in the matter of menu items.

Jon Benigas: "The one thing I miss living here in St. Louis is water dining. (Benigas moved back to St. Louis after living in LA.) I'd like to see us move the restaurant to the waterfront." (The waterfront would be a storm water retention pond that the city would maintain with 6-inches of water during droughts by turning it into a "pool" by filling it with tap water. Benigas can always go to the restaurant on the lagoon in Forest Park or the biker bar on the Mississippi in Grafton, Illinois.)

Linda Rallo: Addressing Town Square Task Force Chairman Skip Mange. "How can you control what kind of restaurants that would go into that building?"

Tiffany Frautschi: "I have found plenty of family style restaurants in the Town and Country area." (She was commenting on some residents saying there is a need for a family restaurant.)

Skip Mange: "Bob Brinkman (retail developer) would love to get a restaurant into that space."

Meyland-Smith: "I'd like the board to consider having one restaurant instead of two. But I do prefer a restaurant to a Nik-Nak shop."

Wright: This is just going to add to all the greatness to our city. Having a restaurant on a lake is a good idea. (If she really wants to have a restaurant on a lake the city will need to buy 50 acres for a lake. Currently the plans call for six inches of water in a pond.)

Rallo: "I like having two restaurants. Like a pizza place and a bistro with live jazz."

Amy Anderson: "It should be one restaurant with breakfast through lunch time that keeps it quiet at night." (Anderson lives in the subdivision next door to the property and joins Skip Mange and Fred Meyland-Smith in wanting some place that isn't too popular.)

If you look at the "costs" and the "restaurant" discussion you see that you have a group of elected officials without any plan or much of a clue.

The confused Skip Mange: At the retreat when the discussion came up about Principia property possibly being purchased across from the Wirth Property, Mange went on a mini-tirade saying he never said anything about the city having a special deal didn't know where people got that idea. It was from people who attended that one neighborhood meeting where Skip brought it up!

EXTRA PATRIOTIC: The Town and Country Board of Aldermen meeting started late on Monday due to the first of two closed executive sessions dealing the Mayor Dalton's Assisted Living Facility. Starting 25-minutes late, Dalton, who had been excluded from the secret session since he was forced to recuse himself took to the dais.

The very first thing he did was eye Susan Crandall who had been attending the meeting and asked her to stand and lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone stood, including all the alderpersons and faced the flag. Afterwards everyone sat down and Dalton started the meeting. Dalton then asked for the City Clerk to conduct a roll call of the alderperson.

It was at this time that the ever patriotic Lynn Wright interrupted Dalton and told him he forgot to have the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Literally she had just said the Pledge 30-seconds earlier. Lynn is sitting next to 80-year-old Alderwoman Gussie Crawford.

Gussie doesn't forget much especially any poke I might have sent her way in a past newsletter. Lynn however is now forgetting what she did 30-seconds earlier.



BEST QUOTES OF THE WEEK: Besides Wright's "You forgot to do the Pledge of Allegiance" there were two other excellent quotes during the week, one of them by Wright.

When presenting the new recommended commissions and the proposed Ambassadors, Wright turned to the staff who were all sitting at a table and said, "You all need some help." At first it sounded like an insult.

The other notable statement came from Police Officer Katie Exline at the Ward-2 Residents Forum held at the Longview Park Farmhouse on Monday morning November 9. Officer Exline was talking about theft of wallets from purses while woman are grocery shopping, which she stated was a "female problem." Katie then proclaimed, "Of course I'm not what you would call a female!"

We think Officer Exline may have been referring that she carries a gun instead of a purse when shopping. But there is nothing Uni-Sex about Officer Exline.



POLICE CHIEF NEEDS INPUT HE IS REQUESTING YOUR HELP...sort of: At the same meeting Police Chief Pat Kranz was taking questions and a woman complained about people in her subdivision that have windows of their car so heavily tinted you can not see them. Pat pointed out the department has tint meters in all the cars and for her to call or email him or his assistant chief and they will have people look for the car.



Chief Kranz asked for more questions and nobody was asking. So of course I decided to help. Thinking that since the chief was willing to crack down on residents with tinted windshields maybe he would have officers at least write some warnings to rich people who violate Missouri law and refuse to put the front license plate on their Mercedes Benz and BMW.

I asked the question if the department was going to enforce Missouri law about having two license plates on your car and added this question, "Is this a difficult offense for your officers to determine that a vehicle does not have a front license plate?" (Maybe if they are having trouble seeing the front license plate is missing, I could ride along and point out those violations. After 30-years in law enforcement my eyes are about the only things that still work well.)



Pat responded to my sarcastic question, saying it was an officer discretion issue and then added his own bit of sarcasim saying that since I'm the only one to complain about this, he does not see it as a problem.

Here is where you come in. If you agree that officers should not ignore Missouri Traffic Law only because the suspect is driving an expensive imported car, send an email to Chief Kranz telling him you think obvious violations of traffic law like no front license plate should be enforced with at least warnings and not ignored. Here is the chief's email address:

KranzPW@town-and-country.org

THE FACES OF CURTIS, HEINZ. GARRETT & O'KEEFE: Let's see the law firm that tried unsuccessfully to strip Ellilsville mayor Adam Paul with a phony-baloney impeachment in 2012 only to have it overturned immediately in the courts is the one that went after Chesterfield Mayor Bob Nation. They also provide city attorneys, prosecutors and judges to cities all over the county, including Town and Country.

Then two weeks ago we found a striking resemblance between the Town and Country City Attorney Steve Garrett and the Uni Bomber.



Steve Garrett



Ted Kaczynski

Then there is Kevin O'Keefe who removed all the Due Process from the Censure of Mayor Bob Nation.



O'Keefe



Spanky McFarland



Ed Shuys is from England and is also a lawyer at Curtis, Heinz, Garrett and O'Keefe and fills in for Garrett at many Town and Country meetings. John Oliver from the Daily Show and Last Week on HBO is also from England.

UNAPPROVED CHESTERFIELD NEWSLETTER 149



November 20, 2015

IN THE WORDS OF COMPOSER HARRY WARREN "AT LAST" BARB MCGUINNESS' APPOINTMENT TO VACANT WARD 1 SEAT IS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL. In what appeared to be an attempt to keep a possible "no" vote from the Special Council Meeting to Censure Mayor Bob Nation, longtime resident and original member and chair of the Planning Commission whose nomination was tabled for six weeks was finally confirmed to the City Council.

Prior to the vote during the citizen's comment section of the meeting, Alan Politte, a former councilman spoke. Politte stated he wanted to talk about "**bricks and drumsticks.**" He said that when McGuinness was the chair of the Planning Commission after the city was formed she would say "Bricks not Wood" meaning the city needed permanent sturdy structures. He went on to say the McGuinness and her husband own the last Velvet Freeze in existence and the drumsticks are delicious. (McGuinness' husband was a former president of Velvet Freeze and they bought the naming rights and continue to make original Velvet Freeze flavors at their store on West Florissant in Jennings.)



Alan Politte



Fresh hand dipped Velvet Freeze drumsticks

CITY ADMINISTRATOR MIKE HERRING CAN'T HELP HIMSELF AND UNABLE TO SHUT UP: Councilman Barry Flachsbart said he was bringing the nomination of McGuinness off the table. Before a vote Mike Herring continued to break a time honor rule in most cities for the city administrator to shut up unless asked a question.

Herring said someone needed to nominate McGuinness. Flachsbart said she was already nominated with a second on October 7 and there was no need to do it again. Herring then wanted to know who seconded the nomination and the answer was Councilman Dan Hurt. Herring said she needed to be re-nominated since Hurt was not present. Flachsbart stated that she did not. The rookie City Attorney, Harry O'Rourke, who has had one blunder after another since being appointed as Interim City Attorney, agreed with Flachsbart and Mayor Bob Nation also agreed and moved it forward. Nation is apparently now Herring's sworn enemy as Herring gave a limp wrist waive to Nation and Flachsbart. The vote was then taken and it was 6-0 for McGuinness' confirmation.



Herring (left) and Nation (right)

COMIC RELIEF: Standing outside the side door to the council chambers for 15 minutes wanting to make a dramatic entrance was one of the two most dangerous persons in Chesterfield. Judge Rick "Let em Loose" Brunk. He was in his robes apparently summonsed in anticipation of McGuinness being confirmed and needing to be sworn in. He was standing in the hall in his judicial robes for 15 minutes.

I was very surprised there was not a drum roll when he pranced into the council chambers. Frankly the City Clerk Vicki Haas can swear in elected and appointed persons and do it a lot more efficiently than Brunk. I have to wonder who calls him.



Hippie Judge Brunk



Barb McGuinness on the dais third from the left.

THE JANE CUNNINGHAM SHOW: Former State Senator Jane Cunningham was present and spoke on how the City of Chesterfield has been breaking State Law by giving employees gift cards at the end of the year. She quoted State Law and then provided seven Missouri Attorney General Opinions from 1955 to 1987 saying as much.

Last year the Council approved \$250 gift cards for the over 200 city employees. Mayor Bob Nation vetoed that as being excessive substituting \$100 gift cards instead. His veto was overridden in February. The gift cards were issued to the employees earlier in November.

In a Finance Committee as the Whole meeting held for 90 minutes prior to the regular meeting, Barry Flachsbart brought up the State Law and said they needed to discuss removing gift cards from the 2016 budget.

After Cunningham's remarks Councilwoman Connie Fults began an interesting dialogue with Cunningham. Fults tried to rationalize that city policy passed by the Council trumps State Law.

"Yes, we have State Laws on this but we have city policy that layer over that," said Fults.

"You mean layered under that don't you," asked Cunningham.

"Yes" responded Fults.



forth.

Cunningham and Fults going back and

Cunningham said it doesn't say much for the City's legal advice or the staff to allow the city to break the law for a number of years with the gift cards. A crowd in the chambers cheered and clapped when Cunningham left the podium.

Article III, Section 39(3), Missouri Constitution, states

"The general assembly shall not have power:

* * *

(3) •.. To grant or to authorize any county or municipal authority to grant extra compensation, fee or allowance to a public officer, agent, servant or contractor after service has been rendered or a contract has been entered into and performed in whole or in part; •.. "

POSSIBLE LAWSUIT BY RESIDENTS AGAINST THE CITY: Chesterfield resident Jane Cunningham, current Director on the Monarch Fire Board and former State Senator is not done with the City of Chesterfield yet. Cunningham has expressed surprise, shock and disappointment on the City Council's hiring of lawyer Kevin O'Keefe without obtaining a contract or even fee schedule in dealing with the censure of Mayor Bob Nation. She is also none too happy about city's staff prolonged refusal to communicate with Nation, which is a reason for his outburst in July and the staff's refusal to provide city records in response to Missouri Sunshine Open Record records requests from the public and reporters. She put City Administrator Mike Herring as the person most responsible for failing to follow State Law and city ethics.



versus



On Saturday Cunningham sent out an email to supporters in Chesterfield suggesting she is considering suing the City and is looking not for financial support, but people to join in the lawsuit. Here is a portion of the email:

2) Join me in one or both law suits: One to require the city to comply with state law on city governance that they are arrogantly breaking. Two - Hold the City's feet to the fire to not pay an illegal \$17,000 bill. The law (432.070 RSMo) states that if the Council did not have a signed contract with their "Investigator" before the work was done, the City Council cannot pay him. We expect his bills will be around \$17,000. The Council has such an inadequate attorney, apparently they were unaware of this law or ignored it the way they are doing a lot of things. Since a generous donor is picking up the actual legal fees if the suit moves forward, we will only have to pay court filing fees of about \$300 for each case. If we have a lot of people and only chip in a little each, we can get this city to correct its expensive and illegal wayward ways. It is more important that I have the names of Chesterfield taxpayers to join me in the suits even if you can't chip in. There may be others who would like to donate to the cause anonymously. **LET ME KNOW IF YOU CAN HELP IN ANY WAY WITH THESE EFFORTS.** Our taxes have been paying for this nonsense.

LETTER TO EDITOR AT POST-DISPATCH SAYS IN A FEW WORDS WHAT WE TOLD IN SEVERAL HUNDRED David Banks of Chesterfield did a very nice job of summing up the real reason behind the Censure of Mayor Bob Nation for swearing in a closed department head's office.

Politics behind mayor's public flogging

Based upon Tony Messenger's column "Profanity can't be tool of the powerful " (Nov. 8), we've not heard the last of the Mayor Bob Nation story.

After hearing comments about a political motivation during Wednesday's public flogging, I went home and found an old mail advertisement for his opponent, whom he beat in the last election. Interestingly, there is a picture on that mailer of those endorsing his opponent. It includes three sitting council members who judged him on Wednesday, also the spouse of a fourth member who sat in judgment.

Two others in that picture rose and spoke against the mayor during public comment at the meeting, one of which said the mayor would be easy to beat next time. Political motivation? Could be.

David E. Banks • Chesterfield

NEWEST HIPPIE GROCERY STORE OPENS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY: A city full of millionaires, but where the overpriced Straubs store has not seen an increase in revenue for years, just got its second high dollar hippie style "natural food" grocery store to join Whole Foods. Don't forget there are Lucky's Markets not far away at Clayton and Clarkson Roads and Manchester and McKnight Roads, plus there are Trader Joe's.

Fresh Thyme opened the first week of November in the Manchester Meadows Shopping Center. It fills the space formerly occupied by Petsmart that had been vacant for six years. Now the largest empty spaces in the shopping center are the former Wal Mart store, Sports Authority and United Missouri Bank building.



The first thing I immediately noticed was that Fresh Thyme employees talked the "natural food" talk, but were not covered in tattoos or body piercing like their counterparts at Whole Foods and Trader Joe's. They also sold A-B beer products, but only sold Coke and Pepsi products by the individual serving bottle. The only item on shelves that I had seen in "regular" supermarkets was "Paul Newman's Own" snacks.

The one thing that really surprised me was that the deli was all Boar's Head meats and cheeses. I thought Schnucks had an exclusive deal with Boar's Head.

I found that while parts of the Salad Bar looked good, there was no Iceberg lettuce (my wife claims is all water with no nutritional value) which is my favorite. I asked an employee if they had run out of Iceberg lettuce and was nicely told that it is not on the salad bar.

I did buy a small container of potato salad with egg along with a bag of cheddar cheese potato chips. I was disappointed. I took three bites of the potato salad and gave up. My wife said she'd finish it. She didn't. Same with the potato chips.



The deli counter is all Boar's Head meats and cheeses, just like at Schnucks.



Don't look forward to taking home a big salad of Iceberg lettuce from the salad bar.

Des Peres and West County Center want to make you shopping experience as dangerous as possible: What is missing in this picture. If you said a Stop Sign you'd be right...but wait a minute...



Oh there it is. I guess planting a tree with extensive foliage covering the front of a stop sign is a good idea. (Photos taken end of October)

Then there is this:



Not only is it next to impossible for a fire truck crew to hook up to a hydrant facing away from the street, now the shopping center has hidden the fire plug with bushes and a vine wrapping around it. This hydrant is in front of three restaurants. Let's see there are never any fires at restaurants, are there?

THANKSGIVING AT THE MALL: Last year I posted this classic TV clip a week after Thanksgiving. My apologies! Here is the "As God is my witness, I thought turkeys could fly" clip from WKRP in Cincinnati:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lf3mgmEdfwg>



RESTAURANT REVIEW: Grassi's in Frontenac. Okay there are plenty of restaurants in Frontenac, but there are no fast food joints. Maybe the closest you can get to that is Grassi's at 10450 German Blvd. If Conway Road went straight across Lindbergh Blvd from Ladue to Frontenac instead of jogging one block to the south, it would be where German Blvd. is now.

Grassi's is two blocks from Lindbergh. You cannot see it from Lindbergh. It is in a non-assuming frame building and offers mostly reasonable price Italian food for lunch or dinner.



It is a combination of cafeteria style and table service. You get a tray, your silver wear and napkins. If your order includes an Italian salad you get that while in line. The rest

of your meal is brought to your table, not all together, but when the food is ready. I like that. There is no high tech ordering. On our second trip the woman taking the orders literally screamed them out so not only everyone in the kitchen could hear it, so could everyone in the dining room.

We made two trips to Grassi's. The first one was salad and sandwiches. I went for the most expensive thing on the menu, the Angus Steak sandwich for \$11.50. The sandwich was on toasted garlic cheese bread. My wife went with Chicken Parmigiana at \$8.90. We shared her salad so I substituted fries with my order.

My steak sandwich was excellent. The meat was tender and I didn't have to leave any fat or grizzle on the plate. The bread was very tasty but did not take away from the favor of the steak.



My wife said her sandwich was tasty and had no complaints. The chicken was tender and moist. Perhaps there was a bit of of an overdose of red sauce with the chicken and cheese.



While the salad bowl looks small, they cram a lot of salad into it. Unless you are part rabbit you really don't need to upgrade to a large order.

The French fries (\$3) were above average and had the taste of "double" fried potatoes plus they had seasoning. My one complaint being a person that likes ketchup with my fries was that they only had the little packets of ketchup to go with a very large order of fries. Now I am a fat guy and as good as the fries were, I could not eat them all. I would suggest having someone to share them with.

Our next trip involved Lasagna (\$9.49), a side of Pasta Alfredo (\$4.79) and a pizza. On our prior visit we were told they had "St. Louis style pizza." That turned out to be only partially true.

I ordered a 9-inch two topping pizza (\$8.77). When it arrived it was not in squares, but was in slices. On my first bit the cheese pulled away from my mouth leaving a white string bridge back to the slice. The cheese was not St. Louis style Provel, but a combination of provolone, mozzarella and provolone. Frankly the pizza was fine, but it certainly was not St. Louis Style other than being very thin crust. However, I would order it again.



The pasta Alfredo was interesting. It was a large serving for a side order. The pasta was not noodles and was instead shells. This was good as I did not spray any sauce onto my sweatshirt wrapping noodles around a fork. However, the order did not pass the Olive Garden test, as it did not meet the quality of the Olive Garden's side of Pasta Alfredo. Also the sauce had more of the consistency of milk gravy. That is not to say I did not like it. Much as the fries from a week earlier the serving was large and even as a fat guy, I was unable to finish it.



My wife complained that the Lasagna (not pictured) was a little short on meat. The highlight of the meal was actually the toasted cheese garlic bread. This was really good.

The other thing I like is that they put substance ahead of style. None of the furniture matched. I like that even if the last place I saw like that at was Katie's which I hated.



Grassi's isn't cheap like a Subway sandwich, but it certainly isn't overpriced like a lot of "Italian" places tend to be. It definitely doesn't fit the image of most overpriced restaurants in Frontenac. Some things are better than others but the overall experience was pleasant and I would go back.

THANKSGIVING TURKEY: I'll mention this because I know about 150 people from Chesterfield, Ballwin and Ellisville took advantage of this service last year.

Buy your turkey and then take it to Charlotte's Rib on the NW corner of Clayton and Kehrs Mill Road and they will cook it for you.



UPDATE: As of the end of business on Friday November 13, one week after a County Enforcement Inspector placed a Stop Work Order a major alternation to his Wildwood home, Metro West Fire Chief Mike Krause still had not obtained building permits from St. Louis County.

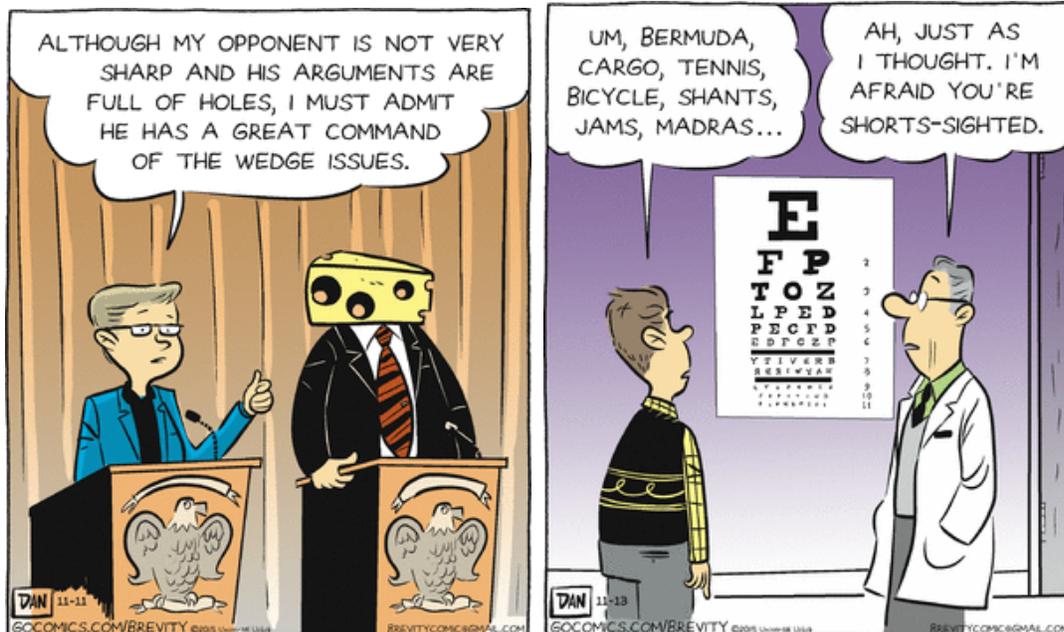


MUSIC: Dean Christopher was on his game on a rainy Monday night for Rat Pack Monday at the One-19-North in Kirkwood. At one point Christopher followed two women whose husbands went to get the cars outside and tried to hail an invisible cab from the nonexistent Kirkwood Cab Company, like he was on the streets of New York. He went from Sammy, Frank and Dean to Louis Armstrong and for a second time Elmer Fudd. He had the musicians and the customers laughing.

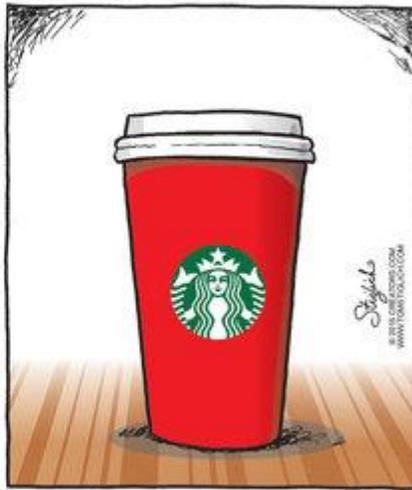


Next week we will list a number of Christmas concerts in the area.

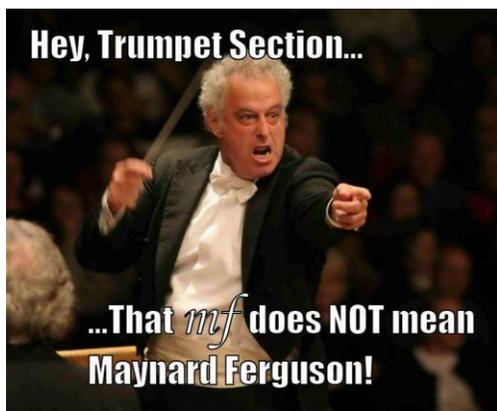
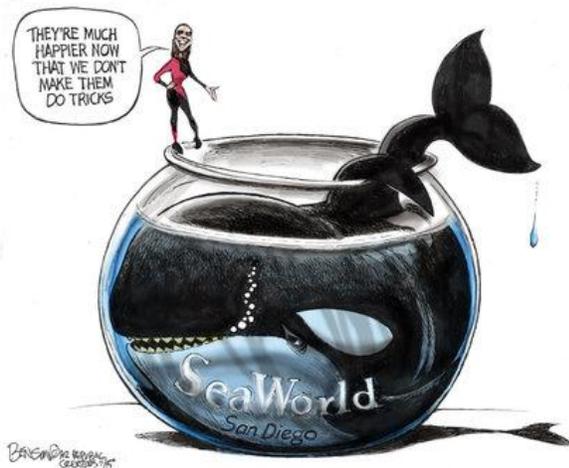
CARTOONS:



WHO POSES a GREATER THREAT to CHRISTIANITY?



STARS



I don't necessarily agree with all the cartoons this week but I wanted to show those readers who are Mizzou fans what is appearing in papers across the country.







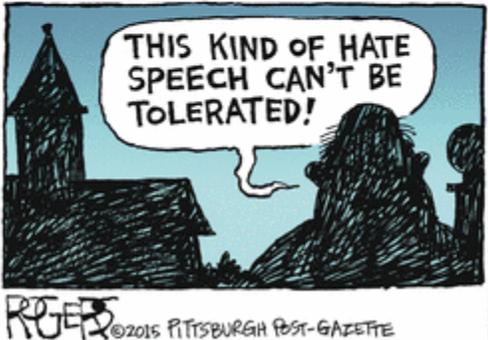
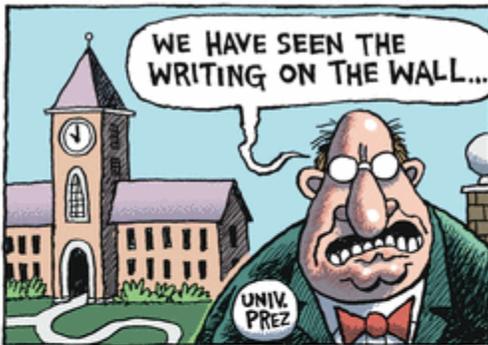
Mike Lester WashingtonPostWritersGrp
11-11-15



Lisa ©2015 11-13 Dist by Wash Post Writers Group

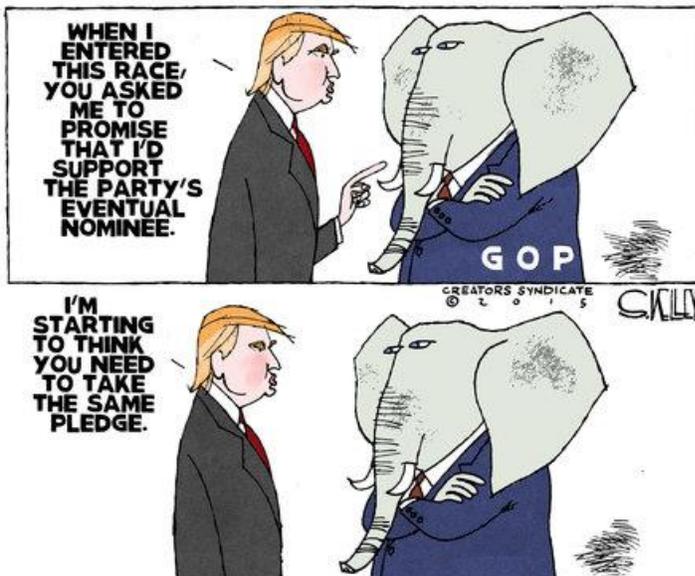


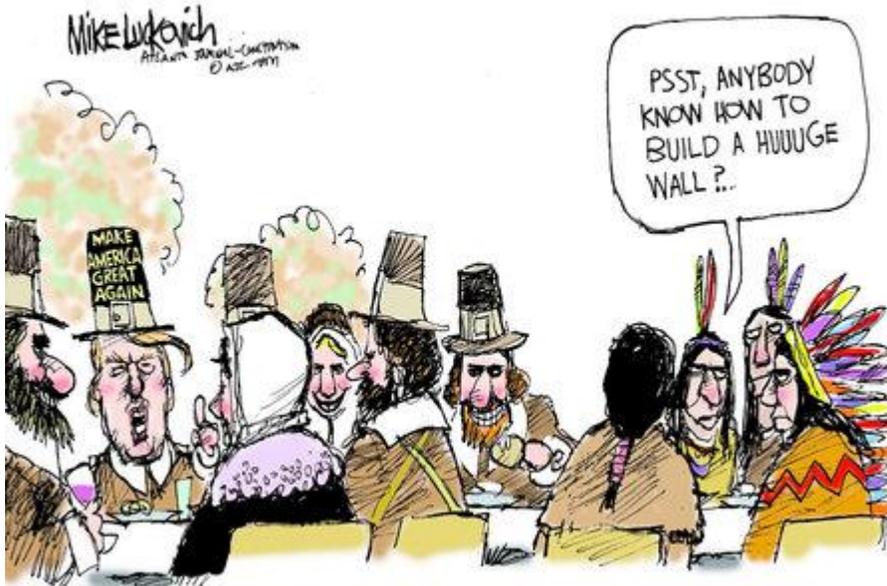
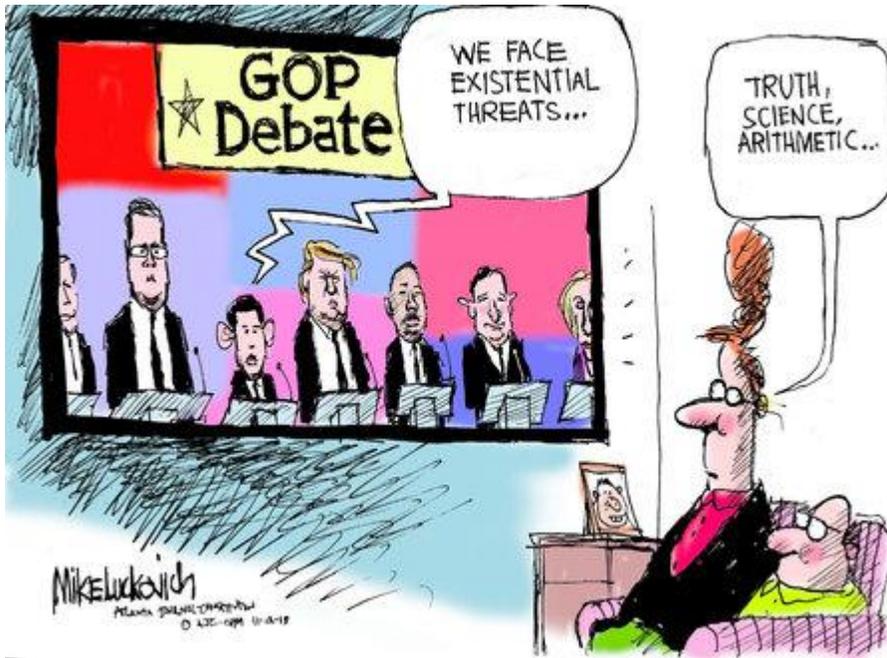
Anybody Seen the College President?



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NOV. 22: THE DONALD AND HILLARY CO-ANCHOR SNL'S WEEKEND UPDATE. RATINGS SOAR.

