

# EX ALDERMAN NEWSLETTER 50

April 10, 2012

By John Hoffmann

## AND THEN THINGS STARTED NOT TO LOOK SO GOOD FOR THE DEER:

Had the incumbents and Skip Mange won at the polls on Tuesday April 3, the vote for giving deer \$1,200 hysterectomies would have gone from 6-to-2 to 5-to-3. Instead all the incumbents lost with only Mange winning and the “shoot the deer” vote on the Board of Aldermen will jump to 7-to-1.

Last week’s election was clearly a referendum on deer. Now there is no need to listen to Mariette Palmer and her group demanding costly surveys be done. The voters just provided a survey on deer management.

**DEER ROAD KILL REPORT:** Despite killing 288 deer over four weeks between Christmas and the end of January the deer accident rate continues to climb over last year. In 2011 there were 16 deer–vehicle accidents during the first three months. In 2012 there have been 20 accidents. That is a 25% increase. Here are the accidents for through March:

		MONTH/ DAY	TIME	LOCATION
		January		
1	S	1	1928	SB 141 at Clayton Rd
2	S	5	1022	Mason and Clayton
3	S	8	0102	EB 64 W of 270
4	V	10	0219	WB 64 at Maryville
5	V	17	1946	Town and Country Lane
6	R	19	1733	Mason and Bramblewood Acres

7	S	29	0500	WB 64 at Maryville
8	V	30	2145	SB 141 S of Clayton
		<b>February</b>		
9	V	1	1217	Brighton Woods at Topping Rd
10	V	12	0559	Mason South of Clayton
11	S	20	0857	NB 141 at Ladue
12	S	26	1424	EB 64 W of Mason
13	S	26	1707	WB 64 at 141
		<b>March</b>		
14	S	1	0201	S. Outer 40 East of Mason
15	S	2	1918	Clayton and Chapel Hill Estates
16	V	7	1838	Clayton East of Mason
17	V	19	0454	NB 141 at 64
18	S	23	1431	NB 141 S of Ladue
19	S	26	2208	SB 270 N of Manchester
20	S	31	0204	NB 270 at Clayton

So far in 2012 deer accidents by Ward: **Ward 1: 4 Ward 2: 4 Ward 3: 5 Ward 4: 7**

**LONGVIEW PARKING...COUNTERS BROKE AGAIN:** Last year there was supposed a five month technical survey of the parking at Longview Park. However, the newly purchased counters broke and the study was not completed. Observations by staff, showed a period of time on five days when the parking filled up over five months. Three of the times were associated with Mo Baptist Medical Center functions at the Longview Farmhouse.

The city applied for and received a grant for an engineering study of expanding the parking lot in March. The grant was for \$4,000 from the Parks Grants Commission and the city will have to pay \$16,000 for the rest of the study.

City leaders promised beginning in March the counters would be placed back at the park and another traffic count study would be done. Now we hear the counters are broken again.

**Solution:** I have suggested this before and will again...Place a wide angle digital camera on the top of the Longview barn that would cover the parking lot. It would be easy to zip through the recordings and stop when the lot appeared to be full or near capacity.

If I say anything usually folks like Fred Meyland-Smith immediately come up with a reason not to follow up...in the past it was said this would be an invasion of privacy. What!!! We are looking for cars in parking spaces...not at people's faces or license plate numbers. Plus recordings of public places are not invasion of anyone's privacy.

**THE LATEST LONGVIEW MEETING:** The work session before Monday April 9 Board of Aldermen meeting partially dealt with a report given by Parks Director Anne Nixon. Her report gave a timeline that showed no parking issues in 2008 or 2010 at Longview Park. Nixon gave a long list of reasons for the increase in parking. But there was just one reason that was a constant with the overflow parking issues in 2010 and 2011.

**THE CULPRIT:** The parking problems began in 2010 when Missouri Baptist Hospital began putting on health screenings, health classes and seminars at the Longview House during the day.

Mayor Dalton and Nixon like to claim that these Missouri Baptist Hospital events were community outreach. Do not kid yourself. They are all part of business development. Mo Baptist is trying to get customers, plain and simple. They say that holding the classes at the hospital discourages people from showing up and Longview Park in central located, says Nixon.

**THE PERFECT LOCATION IS IGNORED:** BJC and Mo Baptist bought and took control of the Highway Patrol Property at I-64/40 and Mason Road. The location has plenty of parking and is centrally located. It would be a perfect place for these health seminars and classes. But the problem is Mo Baptist doesn't want it so conveniently located. They want to target the rich people of Town and Country, Ballwin and Chesterfield that use Longview Park.

They really don't want to make it easier for poor people from say North County to find the location for free health services. I am sure people, especially those associated with Mo Baptist will claim otherwise, but I know I am correct.

**SOLUTION:** The city needs to tell Missouri Baptist that the Longview Farmhouse is not suitable for their classes and seminars that draw large crowds should be held at their property on Mason Road and Highway 40.

**FIREHOUSE TO CLOSE FOR REMODELING:** Speaking of the old Highway Patrol headquarters, the City Fire Station on Clayton Road and Mason Road will be closed from June 15 to September 30 while the city does long overdue remodeling to the building. It will move to the old Highway patrol building for three months. The fire station is manned by six people daily, meaning there would be plenty of room for the Mo Baptist meetings at the building.

The year (2008) I was the chair of the Public Works Commission, I became aware of what an awful building the fire station is. The architect made the fire station visibly appealing from the street and a hell hole on the inside. High ceilings made it impossible to properly cool and heat. The all glass bay doors were another heating and cooling nightmare. The acoustics are deafening.

Besides design disasters, after 23 years in use things like emergency generators, bathroom and kitchen fixtures plus bunkrooms needed updating. I have complained about over paid union firefighters, but this building is simply not working as a functioning place even for people making \$90,000 in salary.

The project should cost \$853,460 to complete. There will be added expenses to getting the Highway Patrol building ready as a three month temporary firehouse.

**THE CHURCH SIGN:** Defeated Alder-Dope Steve Fons decided not to show his face for his last meeting. Fons has opposed the LED sign in front of the Trinity Lutheran Church at Clayton Road and Hwy 141. Co-Loser Al Gerber did show up, but Phil Behnen was missing. Since Gerber and Fred Meyland-Smith both recused themselves on this matter it was continued AGAIN due to a lack of a quorum, this time to the next meeting in April, when there will be a new board.

During the work session, outgoing alderwoman Nancy Avioli presented a list of exceptions that the sign could not do, such as use scrolling messages, animation and flashing messages.

**Forcing Government Down the Throat of the People..NO CHRISTMAS COLORS FOR CHURCH SIGNS** While the current church sign only uses black, white or red colors, Alderwoman Lynn Wright, who spoke of having “serious concerns” about the sign, now wanted to take away the opportunity for the Church to use Christmas colors on a sign. She said she wanted to make sure the sign didn’t have a red or green background. I mean what difference does it make?

**DALTON GASSED UP AND READY TO GO:** “There is a concern for the public safety aspect of the sign,” said Mayor Jon Dalton, appearing to be concerned about the public’s safety, while still being a lobbyist for cigarette manufacturers in Jefferson City. Of course similar signs are in front of Parkway West High School and the Manchester Police Station and have not seemed to put the public at risk.

**KEEPING THE MESSAGE SHORT** The topic of how long a message should be on the sign then came up. At the previous meeting Fons wanted the message to change only every two hours. Alderman Jon Benigas said since messages change instantly and are not noticed by the naked eye, he didn’t care how often the message changed.

Alderman Tim Welby made some statement that he was somewhat concerned with messages and so did Wright.

**NEW ALDERMAN DOING HIS HOMEWORK:** Alderman-elect Check Lenz then spoke and said he timed how long you can see the sign if driving down Clayton Road at 35 mph. Lenz said westbound motorists could see the sign 10.6 seconds and eastbound motorists could only see the sign for 6.0 seconds. In other words...WHAT IS THE BIG DEAL?

**DALTON MADE SENSE:** Dalton when asked how long it likely would take to have someone go outside and change the message on an old fashion sign with the black letters. A guess was maybe five minutes. He said he didn’t see why a church or school should be penalized for having a modern sign if they could change a message in five minutes on the old sign. This was some odd logic but made sense.

**THE ELECTION:** The one race that no one thought would be close was the closest of them all. In Ward One, former mayor Skip Mange defeated Dr. Dorothy Cooke by just 25 votes, 230-to-205. Cooke was outraged when former Alderman Kevin Beckman sent out a flier two days before the election listing how stupid Mange’s positions are on deer (he wants shooting and sterilizations.) and the Longview parking issue.

The mailer went out without Cooke's knowledge or approval. Actually she is probably a bigger deer lover than Mange, although that is hard to believe after his huge waste of money in 2000 when as mayor he rounded up deer and shipped them to the country where they died when their organs shut down from stress.

The unwanted mailer, that simply stated "Vote for Dorothy Cooke" without ever giving her position on any issue, probably made the race as close as it was.

Skip calls himself a "patient man" who can reach a consensus. I call him a professional politician who will happily say what you want to hear, unless it has to do with parking at Longview. I see him and Mayor/cigarette lobbyist Jon Dalton being close buddies on issues and I happen to think Dalton is close to evil.

**WARD 2:** Two years ago Al was helped by Tim Welby, who was still ticked off losing to me in 2008 so his kids couldn't wear their "My Dad is an Alderman" t-shirts and then my wife filing a ethics complaint against him when he ran a year later for an unopposed seat. (He was fined and placed on probation for 2-years) Tim and Al lied to people when they went door-to-door. They said Al favored Deer Management. Neither Tim nor Al would tell them that Al wanted to spend \$1,200 per deer for sterilization operations.

Tim also did not bother to tell residents that Al was the president of a local Democratic Township.

Next Al played the Principia card. He and his campaign manager, who looks like a gay Amish guy riding around on his bike in short-shorts who lives on the Principia campus, registered a number of high school seniors living in dorms. They were like zombies, showing up to the polls often with Gerber's name written down on a piece of paper. Al won by 45 votes, with 639 votes cast.

Finally Gerber never updated his website. It is still from march of 2010 and his opponent is still me! If Al is such a math whiz, what is he doing with a website he is not using?

This year in his closing comments at a Candidate forum and in a mailer he continued to attack me. His problem was he was not running against me. He was running against Chuck Lenz.

Chuck worked very hard going door-to-door, which can be a miserable job. He also got help when former Alderman Kevin Beckman, who did a mailer on his behalf which attacked Gerber on the deer issue and on spending. Chuck understands the history of various issues in town and of city finances. Gerber doesn't have a clue.

Finally Gerber was backed by Mariette Palmer. I think people are fed up with Mrs. Palmer and her covey of loons.

Lenz won by 113 votes out of 559 votes cast.

**WARD 3:** If signs could vote, Steve Fons, the Village Idiot and Alder-dope would have won in a landslide. However, I have a feeling that Fons annoyed people to put up his signs and in turn they did not vote for him. The same thing happened in 2008 when I beat Tim Welby, he had twice as many signs in yards but had so ticked off people that they did not bother to vote for him.

75-year-old Gussie Crawford clearly out door-to-door campaigned Fons! Also Crawford is a likable person. Fons isn't! Crawford has been known for years by three generations of people in the area though her work with swimming and the AAU.

Crawford also delivered the "Buick Vote." She got older retired people to vote for her. She clearly understands their issues.

Crawford also took positions on issues. She favors lethal deer management and her property has been used in city deer management programs.

She is against paving more parking spaces at Longview Park. This was interesting because Alderman Fred Meyland-Smith who wants more parking at Longview, still favored Gussie and campaigned for her.

Crawford had signed the petition not to add parking spaces at Longview. I thought Meyland-Smith campaigning for her would cost her votes in the Wheatfield Farms subdivision. However, two years earlier Fons had suggested buying a residential lot across from the park for parking. Apparently his recent turnabout on the issue didn't fool everyone.

Crawford also got heavy support from the subdivisions that border the new Westminster Christian Academy high school. Fons had no problem with Westminster having a lighted football field and said "kids have a right to play football on Friday night." Crawford said consideration should be given to the long term residents over the new school.

She also got help with a mailer that gave her credentials, which included being named a special ambassador by Ronald Reagan to an International athletic games held in

Europe. The flier, sent by Ward-3 resident and former Alderman Kevin Beckman also attacked Fons on his stand on deer.

Crawford has been around the block in life and should not fall under the spell of Dalton or Mange. She will make an excellent alderwoman.

**THE MARIETTE SHOW:** On Election Day at the Good Shepherd Church which is both a polling place for Ward-2 and Ward-3 residents, candidates Chuck Lenz and people working for Gussie Crawford and Lenz simply stood back and watched as Mariette Palmer ticked off voters. Palmer working for both Gerber and Fons would attack voters by getting in their face demanding to know what ward they lived in and telling them who they have to vote for. This approach was not successful. If there was anyone who didn't know who they were going to vote for, Palmer helped them make up their mind...and it wasn't good for Fons or Gerber.

**EMAILS ON THE ELECTION...we left the names of the senders off to save them some grief. This one made me laugh:**

**To:** [johnhoffmann@charter.net](mailto:johnhoffmann@charter.net)

**Subject:** Re: Election Results

It appears the phrase throw the bums out of office has been replaced by throw the wackos out of office!

Just curious, do you think Gussie beat Fons due to:

Folks catching onto Fons act?

Gussie's campaign advertisement with the deer through the windshield?

Fred walking her around & visibly working against Fons?

Ex Alderman's Newsletter?

Lastly, does Big Al have a Math formula somewhere that shows him as the real winner?

So, who is more nervous Mariette or the deer of Town & Country?

**And this one**

**To:** John Hoffmann

**Subject:** my thoughts on the election

This was a water shed election

I am pleased to report that the **Will of the People** on the issue of

deer management now **truly** known.

Candidates with a strong clear position for lethal deer management defeated their incumbent rivals by 60/40 margins.

In the one race without an incumbent where neither seem to favor lethal only deer control, the former mayor and clearly better known candidate came within 25 votes of losing after being painted as favoring non-lethal deer control.

The “nut jobs” of town and country politics are on the wane  
But they won't go quietly.

I think one can expect every kind of effort to rally their troops.  
But truth be told; the evidence is clear; one no longer needs their support to be elected.

And after this election, where none of their favored candidates succeeded, we can call them **the losers!**

**DEER: from the email machine on or about April 1 prior to the election:**

Dear Mr. Hoffmann

Just a quick thank you for your very entertaining newsletters, especially your commentary on the deer control debates, Al Gerber's rants, etc. ...

Unfortunately I've missed the more appropriate April 1st date for this missive, but I was wondering if the following had any merit to bring both sides closer together?:

**Replace White Buffalo's real guns with paint-guns, filled with bright luminous paint. Direct the sharpshooters to splatter as many bambi's as possible with the high-visibility green stuff.**

That way:

- They'll be more visible to motorists at night if they run onto the roads.
- Paint-gunned deer could also represent a revenue-generating opportunity. In return for a few dollars, animal-friendly advertisers could have their corporate logo or message applied to this bright green background. Think "VOTE AL GERBER" on the side of a white-tail, visible night and day!
- This advertising revenue could help pay for one or two sterilizations. Or hundred's of them, if the non-lethal group's math is right? And surely they are?
- And, I'm no animal expert you understand, but if I was a male deer looking to mate, I wouldn't find a female deer covered in bright green paint particularly attractive - especially if it also had 'VOTE AL GERBER' shouting at me from its hindquarters. A cheaper, non-medical form of sterilization?

Regards

**PALMER IS AFTER FRED MEYLAND-SMITH:** Mariette Palmer's next project is to get Fred Meyland-Smith to either resign from office or not run in 2013. Here is an email she has sent out:

I am receiving more and more emails from Town and Country residents stating that Alderman Fred Meyland-Smith must be removed from office. The political spectrum is so complete, the number of people involved is so many, and the intensity of feeling so great that I think we can get enough people to City Hall to a Board of Aldermen meeting to attend and to speak to his bullying, his harassment, his stated desire for secrecy, his finger-pointing at others, his hypocritical Code of Behavior, his belief he knows best how he should vote, his statement that surveys make him jaundiced, his efforts at voting in condominiums at what is now Westminster Academy, his efforts to remove Hera Gerber from the Conservation Commission, his hypocritical public humiliation of David Karney, that we can be much more effective in obtaining our goal.

Dennis Fitzgerald made a splendid, erudite presentation asking for Fred's resignation that doubtless shook Fred up, but Dennis was the only speaker to that end. Others asked for apologies, Things then continued as usual. However, if we had thirty or fifty people attend and a solid number to speak, we could change our future. I must have saved half a dozen emails over the years from Fred and others detailing his abuses.

We should bring this project to fruition after the election. Mariette Palmer

I have sent this email to about 28 people. That is a good start right there.

I happen to agree with Mrs. Palmer about the "Code of Conduct" that Meyland-Smith hoped to turn into an ordinance because he did not like this newsletter when it was titled "Alderman Newsletter." The City Attorney had to point out the obvious...Fred's Code of Conduct was unconstitutional.

I have to agree with Fred on trying to remove Hera Gerber from the same Commission where her husband sat as the chair. Also his going after David Karney over Karney's

email under a fictitious name suggesting aldermen should be shot who want deer shot, was over the top, but Karney had it coming.

However over the years if you don't agree with all of Mrs. Palmer's beliefs she thinks you should be removed from office. In other words she is the Queen of the Whackos.

What will happen is she will get one of her weirdo buddies to run against Fred and he will get 70-percent of the vote. If she wants to get rid of Fred, she should just keep her mouth shut, sit back and wait for a normal person from Wheatfield Farms subdivision, to run against him over the expansion of parking at the Longview Park.

**THE FIRST ROUND APPARENTLY FIRED:** during the public comment section of Monday's Board of Aldermen meeting, Traci Cardenas, who lives in the Willowbend Apartments and is behind all the "No Hunting Deer" signs around town, stepped to the microphone.

At first she attacked a citizen, who happened to be at the meeting. She said she was working the polls on Election Day for Steve Fons, when she tried to take a photo with her phone of this person who was campaigning for another candidate. She said the other person took exception to having his photo taken. She then claimed the other person verbally abused her and said things that were "creepy." She continued that Dickie Palmer (yes Mariette Palmer's husband) interceded. Cardenas said she did not call the police over the incident.

Not getting along with another resident outside of a polling place, does not seem to me to be a matter for the Board of Aldermen.

She continued that "not more than 20 minutes later" she approached a woman walking to vote and the woman said she waved her off, saying she knew who she was voting for. Cardenas said the woman walked up to Fred Meyland-Smith and it became clear the woman was his wife.

Her story continues that Meyland-Smith then walked up to her and said, "Strike-One." She said that as her alderman. Meyland-Smith was disrespectful and harassing. She then referred to Meyland-Smith's "Code of Conduct" which she mistakenly claimed as an ordinance.

**MEYLAND-SMITH RESPONDS:** “Miss Cardenas was overstepping her bounds and was obstructing my wife’s ability to enter the school and vote,” said Meyland-Smith.” He added that he will want to speak about this at a future meeting and give the other citizen a chance to speak.

**IN THE PEANUT GALLERY:** Sitting the last row of the Aldermanic Chamber were deer hugging and recently defeated Alderman Al Gerber’s wife, Hera, along with three other women associated with the deer hugging coalition. When Cardenas was done, she and Hera Gerber and the other three walked out together.

**IT IS CLEAR...**that the Cardenas statement was the first attack in the “get rid of Fred” campaign. Perhaps, they are hoping to send Fred’s blood pressure so high that he strokes out.

Also a number of my neighbors reported that Mariette Palmer was in their faces while at the Good Shepherd polling place, so I would not be surprised if Cardenas wasn’t also aggressive in contacting voters. I also sense some sour grapes here, since all of Cardenas’ candidates lost.

**NEXT UP:** The 2013 election will feature the usually aldermanic races, including the seats of Lynn Wright, Tim Welby, Fred Meyland-Smith and Jon Benigas.

The mayor’s race should be interesting, will our current Mayor and cigarette lobbyist Jon Dalton continue to use the mayor’s office to help his career (past and current clients included West County EMS & Fire Protection District, speed radar camera manufacturers, St. Louis County Municipal League, cigarette companies and many others) or will former mayor Skip Mange, use his new seat of alderman to launch a campaign for mayor. Mange is famous for throwing city money down a hole. He says he wants to buy more city park lands and he was the one behind the 2000 deer roundup, where deer were shipped out of town only to die due to “capture myopthia.”

**CITY, PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD AND AKIN FAMILY FARM BEING SUED:** A copy of the lawsuit against the city was obtained and it turns out it is a combination of three writs asking to overturn the City of Town and Country’s rezoning of the Akin Family farm property, where the former home of Congressman Todd Akin was located.

The lawsuit was filed in the St. Louis County Circuit Court by attorney William E. McCurdy, Jr. who lives in Chesterfield directly next to the Akin Property at 13511 Conway Road. The property sits to the west of one of the Akin lots and to the north of

the parking lot of St. Luke's Hospital. The private drive to McCurdy's property is on some of the Akin property.

If you would like to read the suit, just email me and I'll send you a copy.

**SEX DISCRIMINATION CASE MOVES FORWARD:** The salacious sexual harassment suit by former Town and Country Police Officer Shannon Woolsey against the city (read claims in Newsletter 48) has moved forward. The city was served with the suit on March 26 and has a "draft response" date of April 21.

**BARBARA ANN HUGHES DEMANDING RECORDS AT THE WRONG PLACE:**

During the comment section of the Board of Alderman Meeting Barbara Ann Hughes turned in a Sunshine Law request demanding the city provide her with the copy of the sexual discrimination lawsuit. Well, Hughes was at the wrong building. She needed to go to the St. Louis County Courthouse where the lawsuit is on file in the Circuit Clerks office.

Of course she could have read it if she simply looked at our Newsletter 48.

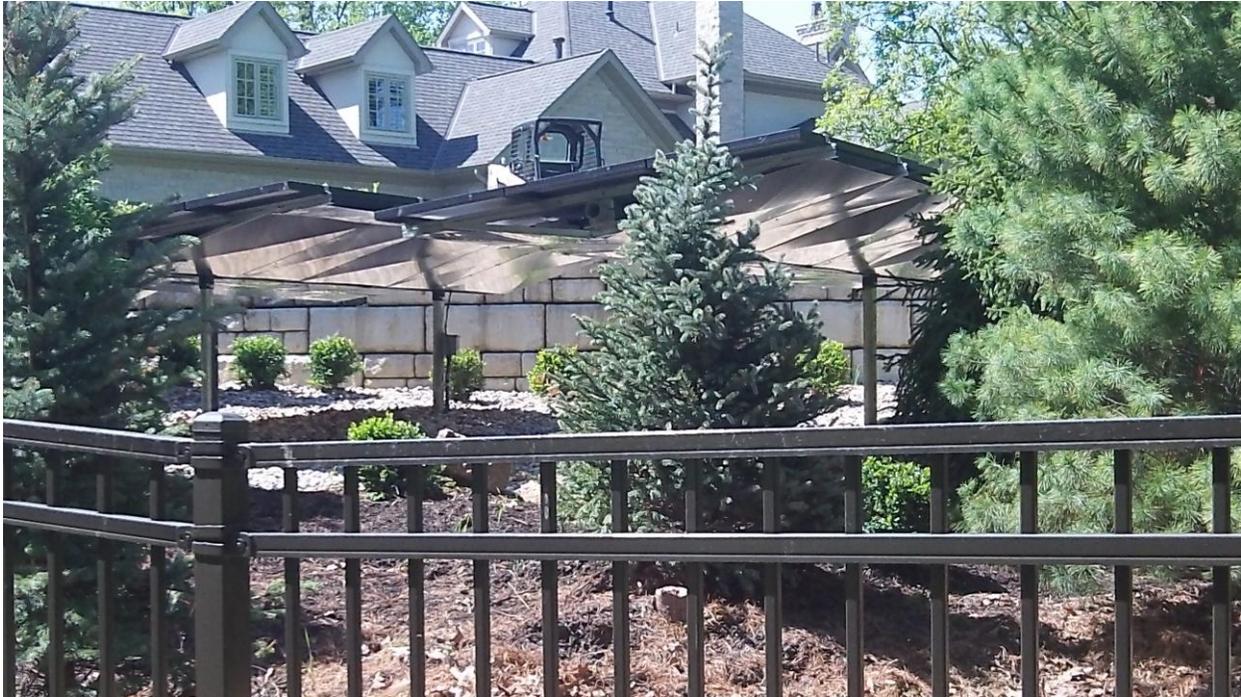
**SECRET MEETING:** At the end of the regular meeting on Monday the Aldermen, including the alderperson-elect, went into secret session. We hope there isn't a new lawsuit.

**SOLAR PANELS RETURN:** Over a year ago, the Board of Aldermen sided with a very wealthy doctor and against a simply wealthy retired doctor over solar panels. The owners of a new house at the end of Town and Country Lane wanted solar panels, but they did not want to look at them. Instead they wanted ground level panels on the property line with their neighbors in the Essex Point subdivision, which included Dr. Dorothy Cooke.

The feeling of the aldermen was Cooke was against progress. The aldermen acted like they went above and beyond to make sure the solar panels were shield from the sight of Cooke and her neighbors. Cooke wasn't happy and ran for alderman and almost pulled an upset against former mayor Skip Mange.

Cooke appeared at the meeting with photos of how the new homeowners have not shielded the panels. She got an apology from Jon Benigas who said this was not what he had intended when he voted for the solar panels and the Board should find some way to take action against the new homeowners.

Here is one of the photos of the solar panels out of view of their owners, but overlooking Cooke's backyard. Cooke said when she mentioned this to someone at city hall the person suggested she hire someone to work in her yard so she doesn't have to look at the panels.



**MY ST. LOUIS AND CHARLIE BRENNAN'S ST. LOUIS:** In March KMOX's Charlie Brennan had a List of 12 things to do in St. Louis appear in USA Today. Frankly as someone who grew up here versus Brennan, who grew up in Ohio and moved here from a radio job in Boston, I thought Brennan's list was lame. I came up with one of my own and wrote about it in one of my regular columns that appears in the Chesterfield patch.com.

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/charlie-brennan-s-view-of-st-louis-is-different-than-mine>

St. Louis is actually a small town. While talk show hosts in New York and Los Angeles get to make fun of TV and Movie stars, politicians and Rush Limbaugh, we have a limited number of "famous people" to use for satire. That list would include baseball players, politicians and radio personalities, especially those working at the "Voice of St. Louis."

Charlie did not like my list and spent five minutes on Thursday morning telling people how negative I was about St. Louis. Hey, I wasn't being negative about St. Louis I was being negative about whiny Brennan's list: Here is the draft of the column plus a link:

<http://webstergroves.patch.com/articles/charlie-brennan-s-view-of-st-louis-is-different-than-mine>

## **Charlie Brennan's View of St. Louis is Different than Mine**

### **USA Today lists Boston Charlie's 12 things to do in St. Louis**

**By John Hoffmann**

Charlie Brennan, the host of a 2-hour a day radio show on KMOX and host of the weekly talk show, Donnybrook on KETC, recently wrote a piece for USA on 12 things to do in St. Louis. After reading the list, I could tell that Charlie grew up in Ohio and came to St. Louis from Boston.

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/popcandy/post/2012/03/pop-traveler-12-reasons-to-visit-st-louis/1>

**#1** Charlie lists Lambert Field at the top of his list, saying the airport gives a first impression. He also said parts of two movies were filmed there. The AIRPORT! You have to be kidding. The reason movies were filmed there is because it is empty. It is dead! It is also one of the worst airports in the country, ahead of just perhaps the airport in Miami.

My number one spot in St. Louis would have to be **Forest Park**. A world class zoo and an above average Art Museum along with a local history museum is much more memorable than the airport.

**#2** Charlie says seeing Chuck Berry play at his monthly gig at Blueberry Hill on Delmar as a reason to come to St. Louis. Chuck's monthly \$35 a person appearance at Blueberry Hill often lasts less than an hour. Chuck is 85 now and sometimes just isn't feeling well enough for a full hour show. Here is what the Blueberry Hill's website says about the performance: **All shows are general admission. Very limited seating. Anticipate standing.** Paying \$70 for a couple to probably stand in the back and maybe get 30 minutes of show is a good way to get people mad about St. Louis. I'd leave Chuck for St. Louisians and not visitors.

I'd choose the **Mississippi River** as my #2 thing to see in St. Louis. I'd suggest the Riverfront and also do some river watching in West Alton, Portage de Sioux or in Elsah, Illinois. It's free and you can sit.

**#3** Brennan claims **FREE BEER** at The A-B Brewery and Grant's Farm is number three. Since In-Bev has taken over and Budweiser is no longer the local beer, I hate to quibble, but In-Bev has cut the days and even the months that Grant's Farm is open. I'd have this on my list but down a notch at #4.

My third top thing to do in St. Louis would be to **go to a Cardinal's game**. I know that major league baseball is played all over the country. There are a number of new "old style" stadiums that don't make Busch Stadium III that unique. It is the fans that are different. The local baseball fans are so loyal, but they nice while still being fanatics. An out-of-towner wearing a cap of the visiting team doesn't have to worry about a beating when leaving the ballpark.

**#4** Brennan claims the **MUNY Opera** is a reason to come to St. Louis. The Muny features play revivals. You can see local rivals or touring stock companies that appear all over the country during the summer. It is special for us growing up here, but not for those passing through. If you want to see a Broadway Show go to New York.

I put the free beer at the **Brewery and Grant's Farm** at four on my list.

**#5** The **Old Courthouse** is in the five-spot on Brennan's list. If the visitor is coming from the East Coast or the South they have old courthouses all over the map.

I really think a special sight, even if you are not religious is the art work and mosaics in what we old St. Louis folks call the "**New Cathedral**" on Lindell and what the archdiocese calls the Cathedral Basilica.

**#6** Brennan mentions **The Hill** as where Joe Garagiola and Yogi Berra grew up. I hate to point out that Joe has lived for 30 years in Phoenix and Yogi has lived for 60 years in New Jersey. Charlie does also mention St. Louis style pizza.

I agree if you are going to be here you need to try the **local favorite food**. However, I would not require you to go to the Hill to get a **pizza covered with Provel cheese**. I'd suggest any Imo's or Farotto's in Rock Hill or a Talayna's Pizza which you can also get at the Frontenac Grill.

**#7** Ted Drewes is Number 7 for Charlie. I agree, but frozen custard is not that unusual. Three things make Drewes special. The buildings are the original items dating back to 1930. The devoted following with people driving from all over the metro area for overpriced ice cream. Finally there is the secret ingredient. During World War II there was sugar rationing across the country and Drewes could not get enough sugar to make the frozen custard. So Ted's father would send him out to the stores to buy honey, which was not rationed, to add to the custard. After V-J Day the honey remained in the recipe.

**#8** Brennan somehow ties **Tennessee Williams** working in a shoe factory which is the same building where the **City Museum** is now located. That building and St. Louis in general caused Williams to become deeply depressed and write depressing plays. To avoid kid's snot and screams at the City Museum try the **Science Museum**. If you want more kids, try the **Magic House** in Kirkwood. If you are a guy or have boys in tow skip all of this and go directly to the **Museum of Transportation** on Barrett Station Road...if you are an adult couple, women to **Shaw's Gardens** and men to the Museum of Transportation to see the trains, cars, trucks plus a couple of airplanes.

**#9** Brennan's ninth recommendation makes me think he is a repressed Catholic, who came here from Boston. Charlie suggests people head to the **History Museum** in Forest park for the **Woman's Underwear Exhibit**.

My ninth place suggestion is to take a drive and see how the other half lives. **Go visit the people with "old money."** **Go out to Ladue and Huntleigh** and to the end of the road of every street that has a sign that says "No Outlet" or better yet "Private Street."

**#10** Charlie recommends trying the **Celebrity Restaurants of St. Louis** and then mentions them as being J. Buck's and Mike Shannon's. If Joe Buck and Mike Shannon are your two biggest celebrity restaurant owners, perhaps you would be better off not mentioning this category at all. Brennan does mention Crown candy.

My favorite celebrity restaurant would have to be Jack Parker's joint. It doesn't even have the owner's name. It's **O'Connell's Pub** at Kingshighway and Shaw. O'Connell's was an early landmark in Gaslight Square, across the street from the Crystal Palace on Boyle Avenue. Parker would send bagpipe bands out into the streets late at night. O'Connell's was the last place to leave Gaslight Square and its interior is remarkably similar to the original location and includes some of the same furniture.

**#11** Brennan has rapper **Nelly** as the 11<sup>th</sup> attraction to St. Louis. Like Charlie knows his rap and hip-hop. What are the odds of anyone landing at Lambert Field and then catching up with Nelly to listen to some anti-social rap?

Me, I would suggest seeing some of the local musicians who sing songs that don't have lyrics that rhyme with "sucker." **Anita Rosamond** comes to mind. For the price of a drink or a cheap meal you can watch Anita and her "guest" performers do three straight hours of songs and fun. <http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/singer-provides-big-entertainment-in-west-county-on-a-limited-budget>

**Dean Christopher** <http://www.ratpackandmore.com/> or the **Charley B Trio** do Rat Pack selections regularly in the area while **Jim Manley's** trumpet jazz can be heard two or three times a week. <http://jimmanley.net/>

**#12** Charlie finishes his list telling folks to go to **Clayton** because **it is the hometown of Vincent Price and Kevin Kline**. Talk about skewing old! Vincent Price died in 1993. His biggest films were Laura in 1944, The Ten Commandments in 1956 and The Fly in 1958.

I'd suggest visitors go to **Affton, an area that produced John Goodman and Jon Hamm**.

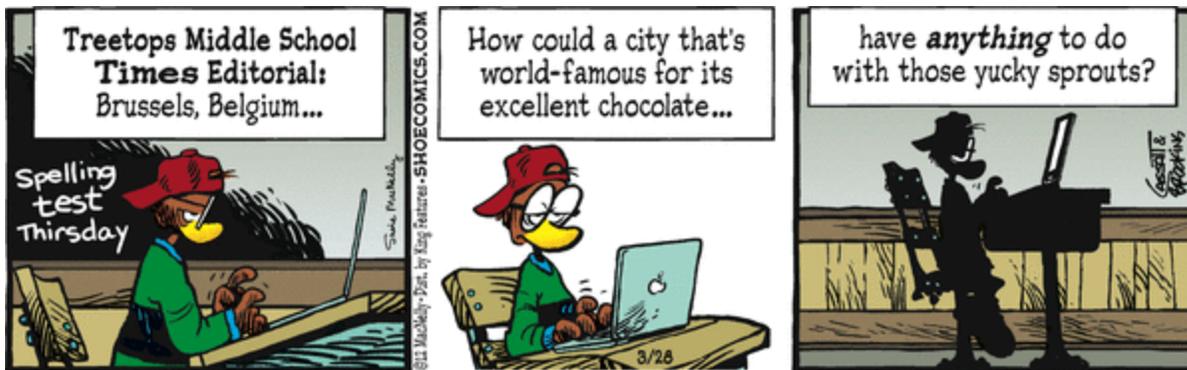
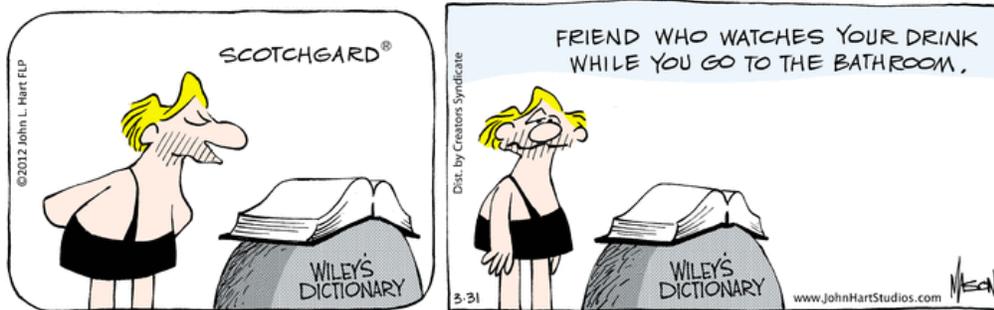
Or better yet go to the Calvary Cemetery, where **General William Tecumseh Sherman** is buried. Sherman was not born in St. Louis, but did live here at the start of the Civil War and despite living in New York at the time of his death wanted to be buried here.

Charlie also did not mention all the top ten categories where you can find St. Louis listed; Murder (usually Between #1 and #5 competing with New Orleans, Washington, DC, Camden, NJ and Philadelphia), Sexually Transmitted Diseases (#1), Best Tasting Tap Water (#1 2007), Worst Place for Asthma Suffers (#6), Most Dangerous Cities (#4), Most Toxic City (#8), Best Hospitals (#8), Worst Men's Health (#1) and recently #1 in reported cases of Flu.

**MADE ME LAUGH** In a filing with the St. Louis County courts, a lawyer from a well known downtown law firm wrote that 21-year-old Ivy League college senior "unknowingly refused" to take a breath test after his arrest by the Ladue Police on New Year's morning and his license should not be revoked for one year.

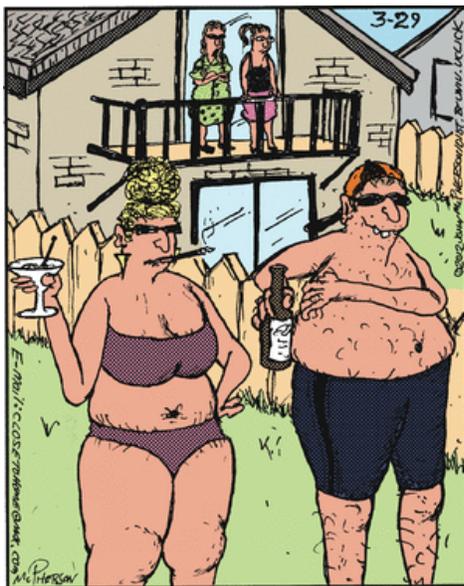
Wow, I thought those Ivy League guys were supposed to be smart, especially seniors!

CARTOONS:





**"I TOLD you, I saved a ton by getting your meds from an online pharmacy in the Amazon. Now turn around."**



**"Well, there's proof of global warming. We're not usually grossed out by the Mosbys until mid-April and it's only March."**

