

## EX ALDERMAN NEWSLETTER 55

June 26, 2012

By John Hoffmann

### **DALTON WANTS QUARRY PROPERTY FOR POSSIBILEY ANNEXATION BY T&C:**

There was a resolution on Monday night for the Board of Aldermen to propose to be included on the St. Louis Boundary Commission map of property for possible annexation. The area T&C wants to annex is the same pocket of land it placed on the Commission's map in 2000 and 2006. It is the pocket of unincorporated land on both sides of I-270 from Manchester north to the J.J. Kelly overpass.

This would include the old quarry property where TriStar Properties wants to develop a multi-use project that would include condos, a hotel, office buildings and retail space.

In 2006 Des Peres also included the same pocket on their map for future annexations with the Boundary Commission. They are likely to do so again.

However the Quarry development is currently before the County Council for approval. It received approval from the St. Louis County Planning and Zoning Commission in April.

In an article in Friday's Post-Dispatch Mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist Jon Dalton feigned concern that the area is not in any fire district for fire or EMS coverage. Oddly enough the property owners in the area are already receiving fire and EMS services by West County EMS & Fire through a contract...just like Town and Country is!

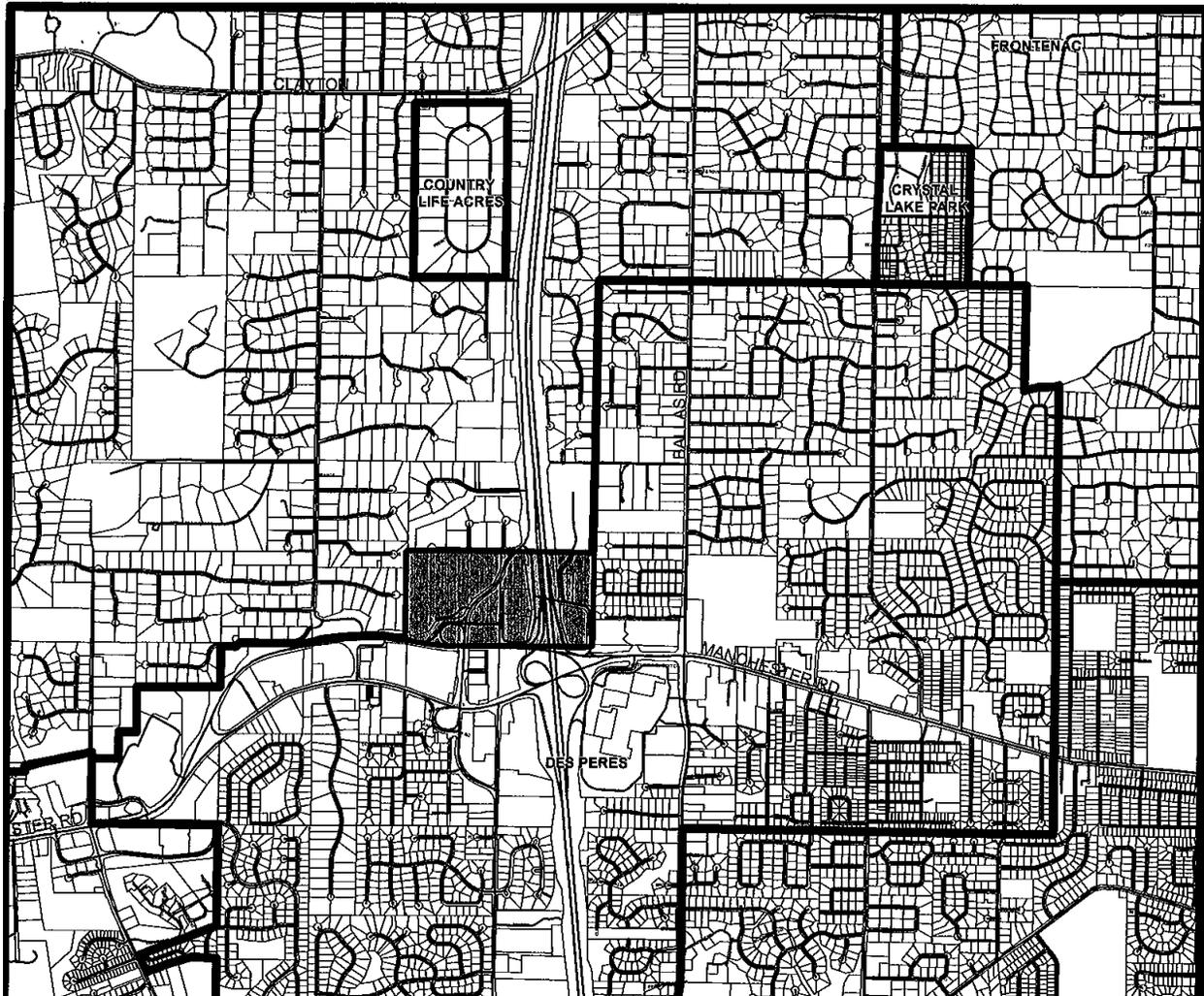
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The proposed plan has two entrances off of Des Peres Road. If this moves ahead and is approved while the land is still in unincorporated St. Louis County there is nothing Des Peres or Town and Country could do to stop it. If the developer wants to stop all annexations all he has to do is what was done in the past. Put a trailer on the lot, move in a registered voter who would vote against any annexation attempt.

If the plan is passed it will likely impact Des Peres the most through fire/EMS mutual aid. Des Peres crews would be the second in on most calls at the property. The Town and County impact would be to residents near the development on Thornhill Lane.

**Perfect for The Green Team...** This would be perfect according to Green Team movers and shakers Dirk and Ellen Maas, who currently live in subsidized housing on the campus of Principia. It is the New Urbanization! You live in a condo, walk to work at a nearby office, shop at a nearby retail outlet and go to dinner at the 228 room hotel.

**\$\$\$\$**...if this passes the County then both Des Peres and T&C will want it for the potential revenue. But it will cost either city in increased services. Just the small section of I-270 that would be annexed will mean more need for police responses to accidents.



**CITY NEWSLETTER LIES:** The city newsletter arrived the day after the June 11 Board of Aldermen meeting.

On Monday June 11 at the Town and Country Board of Aldermen meeting it was announced there would be no Branch Chipping service this year. At the start of the year mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist Jon Dalton bragged about how his budget included “branch chipping.”

His own finance commission voted against funding for Branch Chipping since it could not be funded in 2013 or 2014. We have a total \$300,000 deficit in the 2012 budget and only had a \$23,000 surplus in the 2012 General Fund account before the city was sued by a female police officer for sexual harassment.

At the meeting it was announced that the city would pay for 4-weeks of lawn or yard-waste pickup made by the city’s three trash collectors. The city would be providing a service that is traditionally paid by homeowners. In other words the city will be paying for part of your trash collection for a month.

**The Lie:** The day after the announcement was made the City’s Newsletter arrived at all the homes in Town and Country. On page 7 the headline read “**The annual Branch Chipping is back...**”

Well that was a lie.

I learned that at the last meeting of the Public Works Commission every member demanded that this service not be called branch chipping, since branches will not accepted and there will be no chipping. It was every member except the chairman, Alderman Tim Welby, who was out of town.

Public Works director Craig Wilde then broke the bad news to the commission. It was too late. The newsletter was already at the printers with an article about “branch chipping.”

**Breaking a rule of journalism:** The Community Relations Commission is suppose to be in charge of the newsletter. They are not. The newsletter is a thankless operation by the mayor and city administrator’s secretary Mary Olsen. The commission appears to only be interested in throwing poorly attended parties at the Longview House.

The newsletter went to the printers with a story that had not been confirmed by fact. A story was written that branch chipping was back when in fact it had not been approved by the Public Works Commission nor approved by the Board of Aldermen.

**BUCK STOPS:** If I had to guess I would say the article was done by Public Works Director Craig Wilde. Why do I say this? The article consisted of six very long run-on sentences in a single paragraph. Craig is a profession engineer, not an English major. He can drive a snowplow, but I doubt if he has diagramed a sentence recently or read the AP Style Book.

If you look for an editorial staff listed for the newsletter you won't find one. So I have to say the person behind the lie is the administration of the city, Mayor Jon Dalton and City Administrator John Copeland because that is where the buck has to stop. If either of them had proofread the copy they should have known the branch chipping was still not a done deal.

**THE NEWSLETTER'S OTHER LIES:** I went back and looked at a city newsletter from 2007. It was amazing. Mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist Jon Dalton only used two pages for his Mayor's Message. That message is now five or more pages. In the current newsletter the mayors pats himself on the back for his excellent commissions.

**Parks and Trails Commission:** Dalton's first kudos goes to parks and the new Clayton Road trail. This is pretty much a lap dog group that often believes money is unlimited for parks and despite their funding coming from the Storm Water and Parks Sales tax, they often act like all the money should go to them.

The real work in getting the trail along Clayton Road (which is in reality a very nice wide sidewalk) goes to Craig Wilde the Director of Public Works.

**Tree Board** Dalton also wrote about the work the Commission does as the city's "Tree Board." Since 2008 I have never seen this group do anything about trees other show up for the Arbor Day sapling give away and vote as requested for necessary tree removal in the parks.

The city needs to have a "Tree Board" to qualify as a "Tree City." However, the "Tree Board" has shown no interest when the tree ordinances are violated or trees are threatened. Trees like other large projects have normally been handled by Craig Wilde.

I have gone back five years and cannot find where an agenda was filed or a meeting held involving the "Tree Board."

**Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission:** This is the commission where Dalton can park city liberals and weirdoes, like Mariette Palmer.

Currently the commission should have 10 members plus a chair from the board of Aldermen. There are currently only five members. In the last year under the leadership of former aldermen Al Gerber the commission saw resignations from members who cited that fact the commission was only discussing deer management which it was instructed not to do by the Board of Aldermen.

This commission has trouble getting and keeping members except from Ward-2 where it can be loaded up with people from Principia who don't want to see deer shot. This commission should not be praised it should be eliminated.

**Public Works and Storm Water Commission** This commission has some excellent members but refuses to exert any independent voice. Public Works Director Craig Wilde likes the commission and it will approve anything he puts in front of it and he can hide behind their decision if something goes bad. "Gee, I was just following what the Public Works Commission recommended to the Alderman" is the line Wilde can drop if necessary. So far it has not been needed.

**Green Team Commission** This is the perfect example of a commission that is a dumping ground for liberals who will support Dalton in his next bid for re-election. There are four members from Ward-2 (Principia) and only three other members from the other three wards. The green Team speaker series keeps bringing in speakers on subjects that violate T&C Zoning laws (Chickens in backyards, Urbanized Zoning and Bee Keeping in residential areas.)

**Public Arts Commission:** This commission puts on a nice fall event where plein air painters spend a day painting scenes in Town and Country. The event was my idea when I was made the commission's first chair as a punishment by Dalton in my last year on the board of alderman. The commission has done a nice job of running with it.

However the co-chair is a braggart and a blowhard. Now the commission feels it is a high priority to obtain an outdoor sculpture for the city. Last I heard they wanted to put it next to the firehouse. It would be nice to see projects like this put on hold until the recession is really over and the city budget is back in the black.

**Finance Commission and the Benefits Commission** These are both excellent commissions, filled with people who are experts in the field.

**Planning and Zoning Commission :** Over the years this commission which is required by state law, has done an excellent job and showed an independent streak at time.

**Police Commission:** Here is a completely unnecessary commission. This group of people has no outside knowledge of law enforcement or the criminal justice system. They are spoon fed information by the police department command's staff that is often spun far from reality. The command staff has been maintaining for some time they must have the more expensive model of police cars that go the fastest but get the worst gas mileage for instance. Expensive gadgets and high-tech add-ons are never questioned or denied.

Recently a long time member was kicked off from making inappropriate remarks, unfortunately she had been famous such remarks for over 12 years. It wasn't until she made unkind and insensitive remarks about mentally challenged people that she was finally given the boot.

Another current member routinely asked borderline racist questions concerning suspects arrested for offenses. Some of his questions are ignored by the police command staff.

This commission might be worthwhile if it was filled with knowledgeable people and was willing to be independent from the police command staff. That has never happened and there is no need for it to exist under its current make up. (There is more on the police commission later in this newsletter, where it showed an independent streak and voted down a proposal the cops wanted.)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Dalton should go back to writing two-pages per newsletter and save the citizens some printing costs. After a while most people recognize the 5-to-6 pages by Dalton as being the work of a windbag.

## **POLICE COMMISSION GOES TO THE DOGS**

**VICIOUS DOGS or GOOD PIT BULLS:** The speaker at the Police Commission meeting Stacey Wallach, who is the lone practitioner at the Town and Country Veterinary Hospital at the Town and Country Crossing Shopping Center. Dr. Wallach was a guest of the police command staff. She was there to tell the commission that the breed of pit bulls should not be included in the Town and Country Vicious Dog Ordinance.

**THE BACK STORY...It appears as if the police do not want to enforce the current city ordinance:** Apparently a Town and Country family had a pit bull left with them when their daughter moved out of town. The next door neighbor is insisting that the

city's the Vicious Dog law be enforced. The law included four behavior based reasons to declare a dog vicious such as attacks on humans, killed other domestic pets and other anti-social traits. The fifth reason is if the dog is a Pit Bull.

The cops, Capt. Gary Hoelzer and Capt. Pat Kranz showed the police commission that Ladue, Frontenac, Creve Coeur and Des Peres don't name the breed pit bull in their ordinance and in West County only Town and Country and Chesterfield name Pit Bulls as vicious dogs. Of course they failed to mention all the local cities that are low-income with some serious drug problems have ordinances outlawing pit bulls. This was especially true in Maryland. Communities in Prince George's County where there are serious crimes problems and drug dealing issues have local laws banning pit bulls.

Dr. Wallach, originally from New York moved her practice to Town and Country from Jefferson County. She said she had been active in Pit Bull Rescue and helped adopt out pit bulls. She mentioned that "some country in Europe" showed other breeds as being more dangerous. However she could not name the country...which left her research somewhat lacking. Also the pit bull for years has been more closely associated with the United States than Europe.

**An impressive first meeting** Scott Carothers, at his first Police Commission, did something few commissioners have ever done. He did his own research before the meeting.

He told the doctor that his research using the internet showed that in the last year 72% of fatal dog bite cases in the United States involved pit bulls and since 2005 the number is even higher.

Carothers also brought up the fact that the pit bull bite is three times stronger than any other breed.

Dr. Wallach shrugged off the question, saying "It is statistics versus statistic." This coming from a person who earlier had tried to use her statistics and could not even report what country the statistics were from.

Attorney and commissioner, Allen Allred, who is usually full of himself and has no problems in asking odd questions during meetings, actually made some sense with the following statement.

"We only heard one side of the story. We can't take any action until we hear the other side of the story."

Allred added that the Board of Aldermen that passed the ordinance must have given the subject consideration when the ordinance banning pit bulls was passed and the police commission should respect their work.

When asked, Capt. Hoelzer stated he believed there was only one pit bull in Town and Country. I then piped up from the visitor's seats that there is a pit bull three doors from my house. This caused Capt. Hoelzer to say, "Then we have two pit bulls in town." I think there are more than just two!

By now another commissioner stated, "Where there is smoke there is fire," referring to the number of fatal attacks involving pit bulls versus all other breeds.

**Trying to salvage the day:** Capt. Hoelzer by now stated that he thought the Town and Country ordinance was possibly boiler plate during a revision of the city ordinances.

Hoelzer then made the laughable statement of..."I assume the other cities (Ladue, Frontenac, Creve Coeur and Des Peres) had similar ordinances banning pit bulls but revised them not to be breed specific."

How can he assume such a thing? This caused me to laugh out loud and I noticed that Police Chief John Copeland smiled when I laughed. These affluent cities likely never saw the need to change their ordinances as no one had pit bulls.

**REFUSING TO DRINK THE KOOL-AID** The police commission did not vote to continue the matter. They voted unanimously to table it for no future consideration.

This is very unusual. In the past police commission always vote the way the police command wants. Their decisions in the past have been a result of spoon feeding from police staff. I think that perhaps with new Chairman Chuck Lenz and new member Scott Carothers this commission might become more independent. However, a week later Chuck Lenz suggests the issue is likely to appear again.

## **GREEN TEAM CONTINUES TO WAGE WAR ON THE TOWN AND COUNTRY**

**LIFESTYLE:** We mentioned in our review of The Green Team Commission in the beginning of this newsletter, there are very few people on the Green Team Commission. This was proved out at their Tuesday June 19 meeting. There were only four members present plus the chairman, Alderman Jon Benigas.

Benigas was nice enough to step up and file for alderman and force David Karney off the ballot after Karney's secret email "death threat" to Fred Meyland-Smith incident. So how does Mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist Jon Dalton reward Benigas? He sticks him on this

very odd Commission that is controlled by Dirk and Ellen Maas, residents living on the Principia Campus.

Maas started the meeting talking about how in two days the speaker at the Green Team Speaker series would talk about the new Urbanism, which of course goes completely against Town and Country zoning laws and basic lifestyle.

Maas then stated the next Green Team speaker would discuss beekeeping. He added that she had asked for a speaker's fee since she is coming all the way from Washington, MO, but would settle to be able to sell products at the site of the talk.

Let's see the last three Green Team Speaker topics have been

- \* Raising Chickens in your backyard. ILLEGAL in Town and Country!
- \* Building houses close together on small lots closed to commercial areas (against all T&C zoning laws!)
- \* Beekeeping in your backyard. (Another ordinance violation!)

**MAAS IS SHUTDOWN OVER FREE WEED WRENCH:** Next Maas suggested the city spend \$200 and buy a Weed Wrench which both cuts off honeysuckle plants and pulls up the roots. Maas raved on that they city could lend the Weed Wrench to residents who could rid their property of honeysuckle.

Benigas had finally heard enough and very nicely, like he was talking to someone in a mental hospital, said the city could not do that. When questioned why, Benigas very correctly stated the liability issues would be too great to lend a dangerous tool to someone and have them lop off a few fingers or worse.

Unfortunately I had to leave and miss the last 15 minutes of the meeting to attend the police commission meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Maas announced earlier that they had somewhere to be at 7:30 and would have to leave early. Without them there wasn't a quorum.

#### **BOARD OF ALDERMNE MEETING JUNE 25:**

**DOG PARK TASK FORCE:** Mayor Dalton announced a new Dog Park Task Force to look at creating a dog park at Preservation Park. On the task force will be Lynn Wright as the chairwoman, Alison Barkley, Jo Anna Hagee, former alderwoman Ann Hamilton Stephanie Petersen and Karen Cling. What no men interested in a dog park?

Alderman Skip Mange mentioned that the County Parks has 17-acres north of the ice rink in Queeny Park set aside for a dog park and is hoping to get some assistance in funding from nearby municipalities. Wow, have it for residents to use and hand over the liability and maintenance costs to the County!

Dalton said the task force needs to look at the feasibility of having the dog park at Preservation and joining the County at Queeny.

Dalton mentioned while talking with the mayor of Chesterfield he learned that Chesterfield's new dog park off Baxter Road behind the Dierbergs Store is wildly popular beyond all belief. I have been covering Chesterfield city government for 19 months. They had over 1,000 buy memberships to the dog park and had to increase parking where it is located.

**LONGVIEW PARKING:** The bills to accept the \$4,000 County Muni Parks grant to go toward the \$15,000 engineering study passed 8-0 as did entering into a contract with Sterling Engineering.

**WRIGHT CALLS FOR THE STOP OF CAR COUNTING:** Alderwoman Lynn Wright and Parks Chair called for Public Works Director Craig Wilde to stop counting cars using the parking lot. She said new data showed that 42 times since April the parking lot has filled up at least once in a day. She said retrieving the data from the counters was requiring Wilde to use three hours a week.

Jon Benigas then mentioned that since the city had spent \$11,000 on the car counters we should continue to use them.

Last summer using a visual check only, the parking lot according to Parks Director Anne Nixon was never close to being filled. Nixon blamed it on the hot weather. Hot weather is coming and I think Wright wants to end car counting at Longview before it shows there is no real parking issue there.

Tim Welby then piped up that if the board approves the engineering contract they should discontinue the car counting. Yes, why would you want your own independent car count? Last year they all said the car count was extremely important from April to October then the equipment broke. Apparently this year it is not important.

**WEAR THEM DOWN:** None of the people opposing the parking lot expansion were there. After attending a public hearing where the opposition from all over town was 17-to-2, only two spoke in favor of extra parking and one of them was from Creve Coeur.

The opposition majority attended several regular board meetings and even the County Muni Parks Grants Commission. No one was at Monday's meeting. I think Skip Mange, Lynn Wright and Fred Meyland-Smith successfully wore them down and convinced them their feelings didn't matter..

**YARD WASTES COLLECTION:** Phil Behnen showed some guts and voted against the resolution to provide free yard waste pickup in November.

"Why are we paying for a service most of our residents already have," asked Behnen.

Tim Welby in support of his resolution to pay trash haulers to pick up yard waste in November in place of the old branch chipping program sounded stupid as usual.

"Let's call it Yard Waste Awareness month," said Welby. Yes maybe Welby could wear little light brown ribbons made of dead grass on his lapel to bring attention to Yard Waste Awareness Month.

**SIGHT EM'S** The chamber was almost empty for the regular meeting. State Rep. Sue Allen was there and sat with Mariette Palmer for the entire meeting.

**DO YOU FIND THIS CREEPY TOO?** I am talking about the constant airing on Channel 4 of promos with morning anchors Claire Kellett and Andre Hepkins. First Claire was staring into Andre's eyes telling him how she wants to get him to let loose and explode...his laugh all the way from his toes.

A few weeks later Hepkins is telling Kellett how he was driving around her hometown, Webster Groves and wanted to take photos of her high school (Nernix Hall). Sounds like Andre is stalking Claire plus hanging around an all girls Catholic High School.

What's next? Will the KMOV camera catch some conversation between Claire and Andre from a downtown hotel after some afternoon delight? I hope not. I have seen enough already!

**CHANGES AT THE POST-DISPATCH:** **Jerry Berger**...yes the former Globe-Democrat and Post-Dispatch gossip and man about town columnist has his own website...reported that his replacement at the PD, **Deb Peterson** has been moved to the editorial department for the summer and will be writing editorials. Her Saturday column will be suspended.

**Jake Wagman**, political writer is also leaving the PD to do political consulting. I have enjoyed Wagman's "Inside Politics" features that often showed lavish gifts showered on state legislators by lobbyists.

Jake was the victim of some of the worst "badge heavy" police action in recent years. A couple of years ago Jake was covering a Public Forum sponsored by Congressman Russ Carnahan at a south county public school. Wagman was standing on a sidewalk videoing a Tea Party supporter being attacked. The cops told Wagman to leave and he said he was out of their way on a public sidewalk and staying put. He was then arrested.

The charges were later dropped, but the County Police showed on that night they were sworn to uphold the Constitution of the Under States except the darn first Amendment. Here was someone from the "Liberal Press" documenting a person from a "right wing" group be assaulted and the police department's response and he gets arrested!

**A CASE OF IRONY:** For the second time a sweet family pet has caused me a severe injury.

The first time was in the fall of 1995. My wife had not come home after work as she was working on a sculpture project after work. I got home after dark at about 7pm. Our dog, "Lady" needed to go for her nightly walk.

Lady was adopted from the Montgomery County Maryland dog pound. We had asked to be called if they had a Springer Spaniel. A couple months later they called and asked us to come over and look at "Lady." She was a little bit Springer Spaniel and a lot Border Collie.

Our house backed up to a 44-acre County Park that featured a pond and a nice stream.

I was still in my police captain's uniform. I attached Lady's leash went out to the backdoor to the gate in our fence that opened into the park. As soon as we entered the park, some ducks and geese on the pond started quaking and honking and the 75% of Lady that was a Border Collie was off pulling hard in attempt to get somewhere she could herd something.

There were a few tree branches down and as I was being pulled toward the pond there was a SNAP. It wasn't a branch, but instead was my right foot. The cast on my foot meant I could not drive my car or a police car for six weeks. I was off work and dog walking until the first week of December.

So the latest dog related injury was last Friday night. My wife and I had gotten home around 11:30 after listening to a jazz quartet in Webster Groves.

On Saturday morning my wife was scheduled to join a group doing plein air painting in western Franklin County. I went to my office to work on this column. Our two dogs were laying at our front living room windows watching for deer.

**Here comes the irony part.** About an hour later, Sadie, our loudest barker, let out two preliminary low barks which indicates a number of very loud barks are about to follow. I jumped out of my chair and headed to the living room to let the dogs out or quiet them down.

In the hallway I tripped on the schooched up throw rug. I stumbled forward for about 12 feet before the law of gravity took effect. As I screamed on the floor waking my wife I was hoping my shoulder was merely separated but fearful it was broken. A trip to the hospital ER on a Friday night was necessary.

We arrived a little after 1am and left a little before 5 pm. We left the 24-hour Walgreens with a bottle of Oxycodon at about 5:30. My wife was finally asleep at 6 o'clock.

So in an attempt to keep the dogs from waking my wife, I had my wife up all night causing her to miss her painting outing.

**A LITTLE UNDERSTANDING:** I promise with a broken right arm and shoulder there will be more than the usual amount typos in the two newsletters I produce. Your understanding is appreciated. If by October or November there is still a higher than usual number of typos please start complaining or ridiculing.

**DORA THE EXPLORER AWARD:**



The Dora the Explorer Award goes to real estate agent Sam Hall and Laura McCarthy Real Estate for running a large ad in the Sunday Post-Dispatch (June 17). The house was listed in Creve Coeur at 900 Town and Country Estates. A tag line on the ad was “Proudly selling St. Louis’ Finest Homes and Most Coveted Addresses.” Perhaps Laura McCarthy and Mr. Hall should take a local geography course and learn that 900 Town

and Country Estates is NOT IN Creve Coeur. There is a clue as to what city the street might be in from the street's name. An ad in the Town and Style Magazine had the correct city listed with the house.

**FIRE CHIEF CHANGE:** Dave Frazier the fire chief at West County EMS & Fire Protection District has been demoted to Deputy Chief of Logistics. That is an interesting title. Sounds good if you are in the Army's Quartermaster Corps, but it is one I have never heard before in the fire service. Logistics used to mean "moving stuff." I hope Frazier starts moving some resumes or applications.

There were a couple of rumors as to the demotion of Frazier and the "U word" as in "Union" came up more than once.

Frazier was chief when the fire district in 2006 immediately after signing a 5-year \$18million contract with Town and Country had uniform firefighters go into T&C neighbors getting residents to sign petitions for a ballot issue to be annexed into the Fire District. This would have caused considerable hikes in property taxes, a fact never mentioned by firefighters. Frazier has also allowed uniform firefighters to work polling places on bond issues.

Frazier is being temporarily replaced by Deputy Chief Jeff Sadtler, who came to the District seven years ago from the Mehlville Fire District which has been embroiled with union controversies for some time. Sadtler was hired as a paramedic/FF and was promoted to Deputy Chief in 2010.

Sadtler was at the Monday Board of Aldermen work session meeting. I made it just as he was saying how West County EMS & FPD would be doing a national search for its next chief. If you believe that I have a vacation condo in East St. Louis to sell you.

Just look at Monarch in Chesterfield. They had a "National Search" for their district that has a very active airport, five fire stations, does water rescues and operates ambulances. Who did they just hire? They hired a guy who was a strong Union man who was the chief of the old Wellston Fire Protection District, with only one firehouse and no ambulances. I don't think they even have a McDonalds in the district!

I'd bet on a similar hiring with West CO EMS & FPD.

**DRIVING WHILE BLACK:** The latest police statistics on the racial makeup of persons stopped by area police departments is out. Missouri still requires all police departments to file reports with the attorney general. Police Commission chair Chuck Lenz had

placed the report on the recent agenda. Police Chief John Copeland pointed out that over 80% of the drivers stopped for traffic violations are not residents which means the study from the AG's office is flawed. Copeland has a point, but also tacitly admitted the local cops spend too much time on the interstates and rarely do traffic enforcement of city streets.

Here is a recent column I wrote for the Chesterfield Patch on the topic. The column was slanted for Chesterfield readers, compares results between Town and Country, Ladue, Chesterfield and Pine Lawn.

## **The Tale of Four Cities and Traffic Stops**

### **Chesterfield comes out very good when looking the AG report**

By John Hoffmann

The statewide law calling for racial data on everyone stopped, whose vehicle is search and who is arrested can be a waste of time and money. This is especially true in rural areas of Missouri where there are no Asians, Hispanics and few blacks. Even with some police departments in metropolitan areas the data can be useless in determining if a department are making what is known as "Driving While Black" or DWB traffic stops.

With that recent release by the Missouri Attorney General's Office of the 2011 data of traffic stops, we looked at four area departments; three along I-64 and the fourth along I-70. In that review Chesterfield looked the best. <http://ago.mo.gov/>

**CHESTERFIELD** A 1.0 Disparity Rating by the Attorney General's Office mean the number of people of a specific race stopped by the police matches the local population of that group. In Chesterfield the amount of Whites stopped versus population is at 1.02 which almost matches the census figures perfectly.

The disparity number for traffic stops involving blacks is not close to the census figures. In 2011 in Chesterfield the number was at 2.89. However it was the first time in a decade the disparity number was below a 3.0. It is also a low number compared to other department.

But Asian and Hispanic drivers being stopped are well below the local census figures with a 0.38 for Asians and a 0.31 for Hispanics.

The AG's office disparity ratio compares these figures with a statewide average which is ridiculous method. You need to compare the figures against a county wide average. The metro areas have higher minority populations while over all statewide totals will skew to a large white driving population. Other traffic stop data does give County wide numbers also

Out of 9,963 traffic stops in 2011; 8,758 or 88-percent involved whites. 84.6-percent of Chesterfield population is white. 723 stops involved black drivers or 7.2-percent. The black population in Chesterfield is about 2.6-percent.

Chesterfield has both large retail and commercial areas that draw people from the region for jobs and to shop. Whites represent 72-percent of the St. Louis County population and blacks represent 21-percent. Throwing these numbers into the mix it appears you are most likely to be stopped by the cops in Chesterfield if you are white.

County wide 33-percent of all drivers stopped by the police for traffic violations are black. This makes the 7.2-percent number in Chesterfield look good.

**PINE LAWN** You can see how screwed up these numbers are when you look at another municipality. Pine Lawn in North County is has a 96-percent black population. But their disparity number for traffic stops of white motorists is at 16.45 while the number for black drivers is only 0.78.

While Pine Lawn's white population is 1.3-percent the traffic stops of whites is at 23.4-percent of all stops. There is a simple reason for this and it is money. A small stretch of the westbound I-70 lanes are in Pine Lawn. The city generates much needed revenue by heavily enforcing its section of I-70. Politically for Pine Lawn elected officials this is good because most of the high dollar traffic citations are not going to local residents, but to out- of-towners on I-70.

While Chesterfield Police patrols and responds to accidents on I-64 they do not run radar on I-64. They leave that to the Highway Patrol and the St. Louis County Police Highway Safety unit.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY** Speaking of cities where a lot of out-of-towners get traffic citations, down the road in Town and Country the disparity number for white drivers is 0.97 and for blacks is 4.60 or twice that in Chesterfield.

Town and County elected officials like to brag how residents don't have to pay a city property tax. They don't tell you the city makes up the difference with heavy traffic enforcement on the interstate highways.

In 2010 54-percent of the accidents in Town and Country were on divided highways, but 82-percent of the traffic citations were written on the interstates and Highway 141.

Eighty-five-percent of all traffic stops in T&C were white drivers. Twelve-percent were black drivers. Eighty-seven-percent of T&C is white and 2.6-percent is black. But considering T&C does heavy enforcement on I-270 these numbers aren't that bad.

**LADUE:** The disparity numbers in Ladue are very high. For whites the number is 0.87 and for Blacks the number is 16.89. That is worse than the disparity number for Whites in Pine Lawn.

Eighty-two-percent of all traffic stops in Ladue involved White drivers. 15-percent of all stops involve blacks. Only 1.0-percent of Ladue residents are black. This is the lowest rate for blacks in over a decade by the Ladue Police. In 2006 23-percent of all traffic stops in Ladue involved black drivers.

For years Ladue police have been accused of making Driving While Black traffic stops. In the January 1980 issue of St. Louis Magazine I wrote a two-part article profiling local police departments. <http://johnhoffmann.net/Howsafeareyou.pdf>

In that article I wrote how Ladue cops in the 1970s on the midnight shift would refer on the radio to stopping blacks who had not committed a traffic violation as "Visa checks."

More recently Larry White, a retired captain from the Missouri Highway Patrol was hired as the Ladue Police Chief. He was fired in less than two years. He sued over the firing, claiming the mayor and councilpersons had told him they did not expect Ladue residents to receive traffic tickets or be arrested for DWI. Ladue residents caught drunk driving where expected to not be charged but driven home. White claims he was told his officers were to stop blacks driving in town.

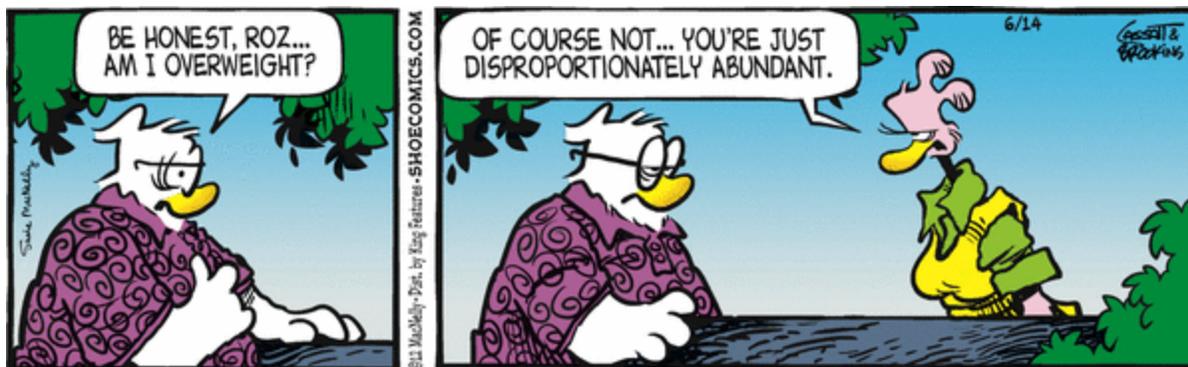
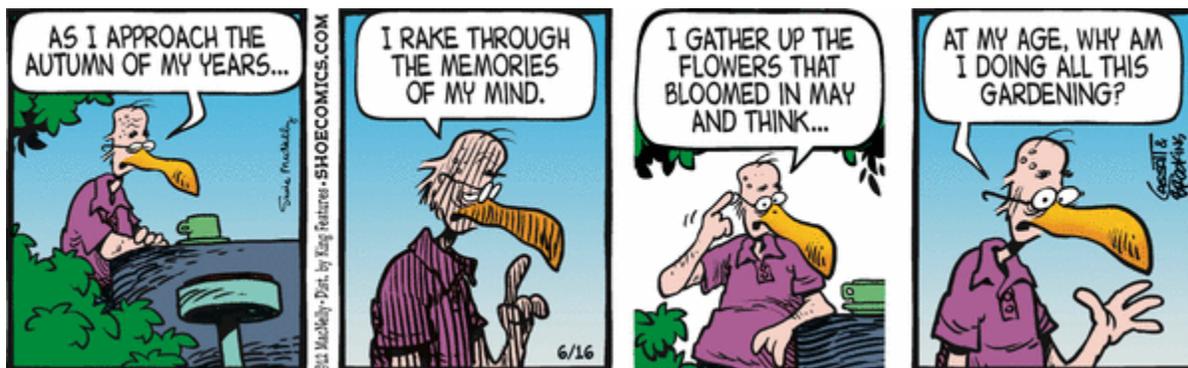
White has been losing in court, not on the facts but on technicalities involving Missouri Sovereign Immunity case law. The lawsuit is alive only because it is being appealed.

But something good has happened in Ladue since the lawsuit was filed. The disproportionate numbers of black drivers stopped while still remarkably high are coming down.

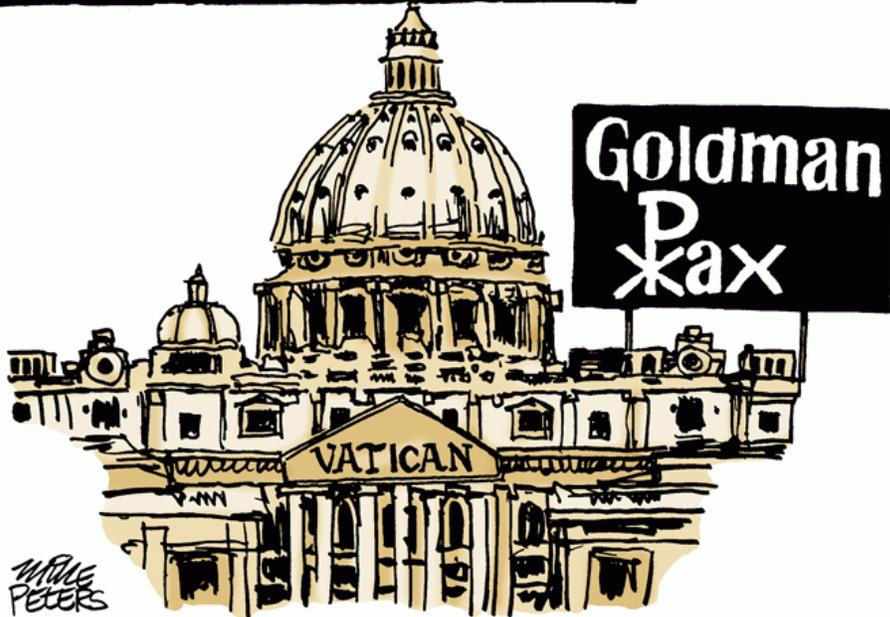
After reviewing West County police traffic stop data it shows that Ellisville, Ballwin, Manchester and Creve Coeur have slightly better disparity numbers than Chesterfield. Meanwhile Town and Country, Frontenac, Des Peres and Ladue all have high numbers involving black drivers.

A close review of the data showed no problems with the Chesterfield police and that the data often but not always gives an inaccurate view of the facts.

### CARTOONS:



# VATICAN BANK SCANDAL



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