

EX ALDERMAN NEWSLETTER 67

November 08, 2012

By John Hoffmann

DEER CAR ACCIDENTS SOAR: In the winter of 2011-12 we hired sharpshooter to kill 290 deer in Town and Country in an attempt to reduce car-deer collisions, stop property damage and lessen the chances of diseases such as Lyme disease being spread by deer ticks.

How effective was it so far? It is clear there is more deer management work needed in the future. Unfortunately Mayor Dalton has left out deer management from his 2013 budget. Many including some sitting aldermen believe he did this so he can keep a \$24,000 surplus in the general fund, so he can lie to residents claiming he has a balanced budget, since in reality the overall budget is \$2.4 million in the red with road projects coming out of the road budget.

In October there were 17 car-deer accidents compared to 13 in 2011. Currently year-to-date we are ahead of 2011 numbers with 65 accidents so far in 2012 versus 63 in 2011. October is just the start of deer hood ornament season, which will continue through December. There is \$54,000 worth of Deer Control planned beginning in December that will result in no more than 100 deer killed or about 1/3 the amount taken in 2011. It certainly appears as if more is needed. Especially since there is not funding for Deer Management in 2013, despite the former city deer task force and the current deer management manager, Capt. Gary Hoelzer, saying deer control should be done annually.

The first week of November there were five more deer car crashes including one on Hwy 141 involving a Town and Country police car when a deer jumped the median barrier from the southbound lanes into the path of the police car that was going north.

The 17 deer-car accidents in October were in all four wards of the city.

Here is the link to the City's deer accident information.

<http://www.town-and-country.org/uploads/In%20The%20News%20Misc/Deer%20Chart%202012%20%20YT%20D.pdf>

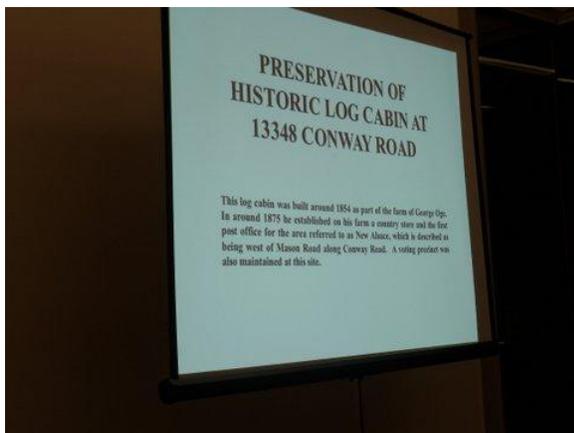
SKIPPY'S FOLLY: At the start of the Conservation Commission meeting, Chairman, Alderman Skip Mange announced he had the mayor's support for obtaining a log cabin located inside a house just sold on Conway Road and to move it to Drace Park.

Of course the 2012 overall budget is a deficit, but the general fund section has a small surplus.

LAWS MEAN NOTHING TO MANGE WHEN SPENDING MONEY IS AN ISSUE:

Mange told his happy crew of Conservation Commissioners that he had already gotten a bid from the builder of the new home going I on the lot.

"I have met with the builder, Monterey Custom Homes and I have a proposal to do this," said Mange committing on taking the log cabin inside the house apart and delivering the logs to Drace Park.



Later in the meeting he did say Monterey Homes had proposed to do the work for \$10,700. Keep in mind Mange is a former mayor and also on the commission is Jim

Havens, a former alderman, who at this meeting could not remember much. Both men had conveniently forgotten that by city ordinance any work over \$7,500 required competitive bidding.

Mange had prepared a bill calling for \$12,000 to be appropriated in the 2012 budget to have the cabin dismantled and moved. (This does not include rebuilding. The entire bill would likely be around \$80,000.) Of course in 2012 the overall budget shortfall was a couple hundred thousands of dollars. In 2013 the deficit for the entire city budget will be \$2.4 million.

Mange wants to store the dismantle cabin logs, some as long as 20 feet, under the porch of the stable in Drace Park.

Over the years we have shown in these newsletters how the city fails to maintain the log house it now has in the Drace Park. The city failed to discover a water line leak that flooded the basement. The basement door is damaged, earlier this year the downspouts were not connected so rainwater pour along the foundation and the windows are in bad shape in need of scraping and fresh paint.

Two trash cans along the circle path at Drace were not emptied for four weeks and full of bags of dog poop.



A trash can in Drace Park that had not been empty for 4-weeks.

Now if the city is not maintaining the log cabins it has and can't empty the trash cans, why should we pay to add another cabin?

Mange suggested he could create a village like area with the log cabins and have re-enactors have educational events. Unless they arrive by cover wagon, once the re-enactors park their cars and take the available spaces at Drace's limited parking lot,

where would the public park? Are you going to pave more of the park and turn a very nice passive park into something else?

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE: Skip reported to the commissioners that he met with the Pappas family at their house behind the Mason Ridge Elementary school and learned they wanted to sell their house, a design by Frank Lloyd Wright that was built in the 1950s that sits on a 3.2 acre lot. It was mentioned that the family was thinking of trying and getting at least \$1 million.

“Maybe a heavenly angel will descend on us with \$1 million,” sighed on commission member.

CONWAY ACREAGE: munge also discussed the 18 acre lot and house for sale on Conway Road, that he would like to buy and turn into a park.

Not one member of this commission asked about competitive bidding or discussed the 2013 budget and future budget forecasts. The folks in Ireland and England have a charming phrase about people who are crazy. They say, “Oh he is off with the fairies.” This commission apparently is busy visiting fairies.

THE ELECTION: What was I most interested in when the election results were in? I wasn't that interested in the Presidential returns. If we survive eight years of Bill Clinton and then eight years of “W” (I so wished we could have had Jeb instead of “W”) we can handle eight years of President Obama. It would have certainly shown America's ability to elect someone different, if we had a Black followed by a Mormon in the Oval Office. Now if we can just get someone elected from the group of 51% of the country's population...a woman (other than Hilary...I am still pissed about Travelgate, when immediately after Bill was sworn in Hillary tried and have the White House travel people fired and replaced with travel agents from Little Rock.)

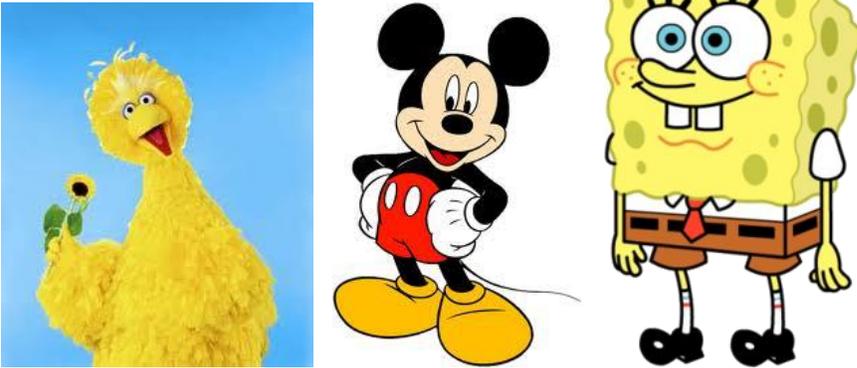
What I was really interested in was seeing who got all the write-ins. The St. Louis County Board of Elections refused to show them.

I notice that several of the candidates who ran unopposed in West County, specifically State Representative John Diehl, (Rep) (who has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars from special interests from Coast to Coast and listed campaign expenses that included trips out of state as part of his campaigning in West St. Louis County) and State Rep Jill Schupp (Dem) of Creve Coeur had a high number of write-in votes. Deihl

had 369 write-ins against him and Schupp had 458. In comparison there were fewer “write-in” votes in St. Louis County for all the state-wide office races.

Unfortunately write-in votes don’t count unless a person declares as a “write-in” candidate 10 days prior to the election. So all the “write-in” votes against Diehl and Schupp are simply lumped together as “invalid votes” and are not tabulated. Damn!

Mickey or Big Bird or Sponge Bob? I called the St. Louis County Elections Commission asking if I could review the write-in votes against Diehl and Schupp. I was told I could only do so with a court order. Why did I want to see them? I was interested in seeing if Big Bird had replaced Mickey Mouse as the top write-in vote getter this year. I’m afraid our newer generation does not grasp the designation of someone or something being “Mickey Mouse” anymore as the cartoon rodent has been eclipsed by such creations as Sponge Bob Square Pants and Elmo.



AKIN LOST THE WHITE HAIR WHITE WOMAN VOTE: He never any of the black woman vote, but when older more conservative white woman with white or grey hair refused to vote for him it was all over. We would be referring to Todd as Sen. Akin today, if he had kept his mouth shut and not done any talk shows, interviews or debates.

“I have never voted for Claire McCaskill in my life, but I will this year,” a Chesterfield single mom told me in September.

Here is what “JoCo Elephant” posted to the KC Star website after the Akin loss:

How about doing the GOP a favor and starting their own party and leave us common-sense moderate Republicans, who don’t want government dictating to our wives and daughters about their own body, alone?

This kind of sums up the take of most of the Republicans I know.

I mentioned in a newsletter about a month ago that Todd Akin would not carry the overall St. Louis County vote even if he had never done the Jaco Report interview. While Akin was a can't miss in the heart of Snoburbia in West County, there was no way he was going to win in working class areas like North and South County or more liberal areas like Creve Coeur, U. City, Olivette and Clayton.

Here are the St. Louis County-wide results:

McCaskill	332,954	64%
Akin	163,107	31%

If you can't at least come close to winning your home county, you are not going to win a state-wide race. Early on during the returns When Akin lost Greene County and Springfield, MO, Sarah Steelman sitting in as an analyst on the TV stations, gulped and said if you are a Republican and can't carry Greene County it is going to be a long night.

MCCASKILL CONTINUES TO BE UNRESPONSIVE: I have written before how disappointed I have been in the fact the McCaskill's Senate office has refused to respond to written inquiries from constituents, including elected officials and Federal office holders. In 2009 as a Town and Country Alderman I wrote McCaskill on official stationary reference an issue and never heard back from her office. A friend of mine who is a Federal office holder wrote her about a much more serious issue that effected people lives. He never got a response.

During this campaign I called her reelection headquarters and asked to speak to a media representative. I was interested in learning some of the reasons people asked for a partial or full campaign contribution refund. I had noticed in reviewing Federal Election Commission contributions lists for her and Todd Akin a number of people wanted their money back. In the case Akin contributors more people wanted all their money back and in the case of McCaskill it was more often people wanting just part of the contribution back.

I wasn't looking for any dirt. Instead I was curious how this worked and was handled by the campaign staff. I was promised someone would call me back. No one ever did.

I have been familiar with Claire since I was an arson investigator living in Kansas City. As an assistant prosecutor she specialized in arson cases in a town full of mobsters. When she left the PA's office and won election to the Missouri House of Representatives another assistant Marietta Parker took her place and followed in the tradition of Claire of knowing about the problems of prosecuting fire cases and learning to get along with ash kickers (industry name for arson detectives).

Parker later became a U.S. Attorney.

When McCaskill announced she was running for the Senate in 2006 I was disappointed because I always felt she did an excellent job in looking after and protecting Missourians as a two-term prosecutor and as State Auditor. I thought she would make a better Attorney General or Governor. Senators really don't have that much contact with the citizens and seem to lose that focus. That certainly appears to be the case with Claire.

MORE OVER MISSISSIPPI: Voters in St. Louis County favored increasing the State cigarette tax from a lowest in the country 17-cents a pack to 90-centws a pack, still a cheap cigarette tax compared to most states. When you are last behind Mississippi in anything you might be a redneck. In 2012 Missouri decided to join the Confederacy and start playing football against schools from the Old South instead of the Midwest. Now we want to have people from cigarette producing states like North Carolina and Virginia drive to Missouri and fill up their SUVs with cheap low taxed smokes.

What's next? Will they be renaming Jefferson County, Jefferson Davis County?

JUST WHAT I NEED MORE NEW PROPERTY TAXES: The Library District Property Tax increased on a vote of 244,580 58% to 177,262 42%. So just three years after spending more than \$2,000,000 to remodel the main library on Clayton Road and 20 years after the spent tens of millions to remodel the same building they plan to tear it down. This is a stupid tax increase because a bond issue would have done the same thing without giving us a permanent tax increase.

ELECTION ADVERTISING: The run up to election some of the TV and print ads were laugh out loud funny.

COLE MCNARY: In a TV ad Cole McNary, running for State treasurer, claimed he balanced the Missouri budget. The budget belongs to the governor and is approved by legislature. Cole by himself did not balance the budget.



The ad also said that McNary would end lobbyist gifts. Who would he end lobbyist gifts too? In 2011 and 2012 State Treasurer Clint Zweifel did not accept any lobbyist gifts with one exception. He accepted a \$180 and a \$200 dinner gift from the

Regional Growth and Commerce Association's lobbyist to attend the annual RGCA January dinner as a guest.

In 2011 McNary as a state representative accepted 48 gifts from lobbyists totaling \$2,012. This included 35 free meals, four sets of tickets to Cardinal games, MU football tickets and four golf tournament entry fees. In 2012 McNary accepted \$599 of 27 lobbyist gifts including the same RCGA dinner that Zweifel attended.

McNary has been one of the worst at accepting lobbyist gifts and did a TV ad implying his opponent had his hand out for lobbyist gifts when in fact it was completely untrue.

McNary ads also implied there was a FBI investigation of the State Treasurer, but did not say what it was or when.

ED MARTIN: In Martin's TV ad he said he would reduce the salary and downsize the Attorney General's Office. That might make some sense since the AG's office went after Martin when he was Boy-Governor Matt Blount's chief of staff. If anything the AG's office needs more funding to stop telemarketing fraud, which they have had a hard time keeping up with.

Martin's yard signs proclaim "Missouri Taxpayers for Ed Martin." Which taxpayers are these? It certainly was not the taxpayers who got stuck with a \$1.5 million bill when Martin was Blount's Chief of Staff and disregarded the proper legal opinion of a staff lawyer that the governor's emails were public documents, fired the staff lawyer who issued the opinion and then slandered the lawyer. The ensuing lawsuit cost Martin his job and us taxpayers \$1.5 million.

CLAIRE MCCASKILL: The final week of the senate race featured the McCaskill ad



with Mitt Romney, current senator Roy Blount and former senators Bond and Danforth all saying Akin should withdraw from the race plus John McCain saying he was unfit to serve in the Senate, all in their own words. This was maybe the most effective of all of McCaskill's negative ads.

TODD AKIN: The last week before the election Todd ran an ad claiming that Clair McCaskill's husband, Joe Sheppard used the Senate Dining Room to cut business deals arranged by his wife. That would be great stuff if Akin could tell us when and what the deal was. He couldn't. An earlier Akin ad claimed Sheppard got rich through tax programs voted for by his wife. It turns out some residents of low income housing owned by Sheppard received rent assistance money to the tune of around \$1,200. That would not pay the monthly electric bill at the Sheppard/McCaskill Kirkwood home.

SUSAN MONTEE: Her first ads stated how she would support veterans. The primary purpose of the Lt. Governor is to fill in as the governor if the governor is out of the state/country, dies, is impeached or sentenced to prison. The secondary job is to preside over the Senate if they feel like it. Finally the Lt. Governor sits on a few commissions including the Governor's Advisory Commission of Veteran Affairs. This ad was laughable.

The other Montee ad that got my attention was the one claimed current Lt. Governor Peter Kinder of harassing a striper at a Sauget strip club with unwanted attention. The Lt. Governor later had a photo taken with the same woman who was working at a late night bar he stumbled into at 4am in the Grove section of St. Louis. The ad also mentioned Kinder billing taxpayers for weekend trips to St. Louis (at the Chase Park Plaza). The ad was funny and it was all true.

Where Montee made a mistake was she apparently pointed out good points to out-state voters. Remember you might be a redneck if you vote to keep the state cigarette and chewing tobacco tax at 17-cents. The same would be true if you vote for a Lt. Governor who hangs out at adult entertainment clubs and after hour bars with stripers. Kinder was the only Republican to win a state race other than Mitt Romney.

HOLIDAYS ARE COMING EARLY THIS YEAR: Two weeks before Halloween what did I spy in the refrigerator cases at the supermarket. Why it was Holiday Egg Nog and Custard. What was I supposed to do, give a paper cup full of nog to the trick or treat crowd (who didn't start arriving this year until 7:30...I was afraid I'd have to eat those two dozen boxes of Sour Patch Kids myself. Luckily all but two boxes were gone by the last group at 8:30.).

Also arriving at the house on Halloween was the first Christmas Card of the year. It was from the Salvation Army which is good in a way since Hurricane Sandy hit, I will likely send one check to them for local services and one for Hurricane Sandy Relief.

I always used to give a donation to the American Red Cross after a disaster and at least once a year. Despite all the good the Red Cross does, that practice stopped for me once the St. Louis Region of the Red Cross put Town and Country mayor Jon Dalton on its board of directors.

Dalton is a longtime cigarette lobbyist in Jefferson City. He is also the principal person behind using eminent domain to snatch the business and property of Opal Henderson on South Broadway for a private business venture. Dalton and other investors wanted to build a nightclub district south of the ballpark. They wanted Henderson's salvage yard, a business she had been running with her late husband since 1948, for a parking lot.

Henderson would not sell for the low ball price Dalton and friends offered. Dalton's law firm Lewis-Rice represented the St. Louis Land Authority in obtaining the property through eminent domain. Henderson sued and won a \$1,000,000 judgment that was eventually paid six years later.

So the American Red Cross is famous for helping people, but here is a guy on their Board who represents generic cigarette makers and snatches a widow's property. He isn't helping people. He is helping to kill them and steal their land. I'm sorry as long as he is on the Board of Directors I can no longer write a check to the American Red Cross.

THE NEW DONNYBROOK: I was more than a little miffed while watching Donnybrook on October 25. The host Charlie Brennan started and then continued an argument with panelists Bill McClellan, Ray Hartman and Wendy Wiese, defending Robert Archibald the director of the Missouri Historical Museum.



Brennan's main job on the show is to introduce topics and not argue with panelist. After everyone had their say on the debacle going on with the sweetheart land purchase from former board member former Mayor Freeman Bosley for four times its value, with no appraisal and after Archibald knew the land was contaminated, Brennan started sticking up for Archibald. A new 10-minute agreement ensued. Brennan also stuck up for having former Senator

John Danforth getting involved in the affair as a consultant after his law firm Bryan-Cave was paid \$100,000 in connection with the land transaction. Even Alvin Reid jumped in joining others saying Danforth had a clear conflict of interest.

Donnybrook founder and longtime moderator Martin Duggan did it the right way. After the subject was discussed by the panel, if he didn't agree he'd say so and then announce the next subject. Spending 10 minutes of a 25 minute show starting arguments is uncomfortable television. The job of the moderator is to move the program on, not to stop it in its tracks.

FIVE YEARS LATER: Back in 2007, my wife, Diana took a two week trip to the Canadian Rockies to paint. During that time I hired the Tommy Money Orchestra, an 18-piece big band with vocalist Debby Lennon, an adjunct vocal professor at Webster University and the principal vocalist at St. Clement Church on Bopp Road. The Tommy Money Big Band was made up of Air Force musicians, some recently out of the Air Force like Money and others still with the Air Force Band on their day off.

It was for our anniversary.

At the time the economy was good. The band cost \$3,000. A tent, tables and chairs in the backyard was \$800. Kendrick's catering was some more. Being a guy, I bought the deserts at the Hostess/Wonder Bread Store on Manchester. How was I to know West County adults would turn up their noses at Zingers.

I invited 200 people and about 100 showed and came and left during the evening. The most present at any one time was maybe 90! There were a lot of empty chairs.

During the afternoon, I thought I had everything covered. The one thing I forgot to do was to take a photograph of the band on our back deck.

Tommy Money left town and took a job as a high school music teacher and band director in Louisville. The band might get together once a year for a country club date here or in Louisville.

On Sunday October 28 I found out the band was playing in Godfrey, Illinois at Lewis and Clark College. It might not be the same as being on my deck but I finally got my photo of the Tommy Money Big Band.



If you would like to hear the Tommy Money Orchestra just use this link and you will hear five songs. The vocalist isn't Debby Lennon, the sound is all Tommy Money.

<http://tommymoneyorchestra.com/>

FOR JAZZ FANS: It is getting to be hard to hear good jazz in town unless you want to pay through the nose at the Sheldon when they bring in out of town talent for \$50 or more per ticket.

Every Wednesday night around 9:30 I head to Sasha's on DeMun in Clayton. Trumpet jazz dude Jim Manley and Chris Luppy Swann on the piano was the paid talent. But on most Wednesday nights musicians from as far away as Maryville, Illinois and Warrenton show up and sit in from 9:30-to-11.

Recently Canadian Russ Macklem, who just moved to St. Louis, has been sitting in on trumpet. (His fiancée' is a member of the St. Louis Symphony) He is outstanding. Here are a few photos from different Wednesday nights at Sasha's.



Left to right: Brice Peyton (Rt 66 Jazz Orch) Russ Macklem, Zack (Rt 66 Jazz Orch) and Jim Manley. To the far left not playing is Russ's fiancée, Vanessa, a trombonist with the St. Louis Symphony.





Jim Manley will have a seven piece jazz group at Jazz at the Bistro on November 9 and 10th with shows at 7:30 and 9:30. Here's a little secret, go to the 7:30 show and if the 9:30 show is not sold out you can move upstairs and catch a second set, which is often a little different at no extra charge.

CHESTERFIELD'S SORE BUTT PLAYHOUSE: Of course we are talking about the Dramatic License Productions Playhouse located in the Chesterfield Mall (across from Houlihan's). This Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday are the final performances of *Moonlight and Magnolias*.



This is a three act play about the rewriting of the screenplay for *Gone with the Wind*, where writer Ben Hecht, just hired replacement director Victor Fleming and studio head David O. Selznick were locked in an office over five days to rewrite the entire screenplay of *Gone with the Wind* after Selznick had shutdown production.

Dean Christopher, who is probably best known in St. Louis for his Rat Pack musical



shows that used to sell out the old Finale nightclub in Clayton, played Hecht. Christopher, the lead vocalist at the Unity Church on Butler Hill Road, who is famous for his Christmas Shows, showed his acting range playing a Jewish activist writer.

Kent Coffel of Chesterfield carried the third act with his facial expressions alone. Coffel sold the audience on his portrayal of action director Victor Fleming. While Christopher got lots of early laughs, Coffel got the longest laughs after the intermission.

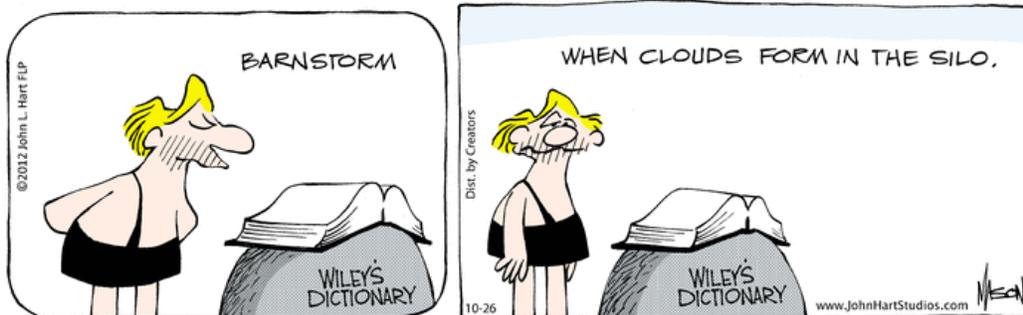


Left to right, Cooperstein, Christopher and Coffel.

Local Architect with PGAV Destinations Dave Cooperstein who helps designs zoos and large museums by day and acts on local stages at night, played Selznick. Probably in a combination of the script and Cooperstein, the Selznick character came off in more of a slapstick performance which proved to be the weaker of the three leading roles.

The Dramatic License Productions Playhouse seating area is right on top of the stage. There is no bad seat as far as the view goes. They are all bad seats as far as your butt is concerned. The seating area is on wooden risers with rows of folding chairs. After the first hour an intermission is required just so you can stand up and rub your butt. Price for two hours of live entertainment was \$25 a person. The play performed at the Loretta Hilton small stage would likely cost twice as much. However the seat would certainly be more comfortable. If you haven't had a chance to see a play recently (like since you had kids or when you quit going to the Munny in the 1970s, like me) this would be a fun way to get back out. The dress code for the shopping center playhouse is "casual." Plus there is no traffic mess or Highway 40 closures to deal with since the playhouse is in the center of the Western Section of Snoburbia.

CARTOONS:





Once again, the Zaadler twins dazzled the neighborhood with their creative costumes.

CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN McPHERSON



A West County Witch



“Look at her, the snob! First the Teflon cauldron and now THIS!”

