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St. Louis

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HOW SAFE ARE YOU?

Rating Your
Local Police
Department

St. Louis City
St. Louis County
Ballwin
Bridgeton
Clayton
Country Club Hills
Crestwood...



HOW SAFE ARE YOU?

Rating Your Police Department

By Strode Wilder

EDITOR'S NOTE: For reasons that will become obvious below, the author of the following article cannot be identified. It will also become obvious that he is a police officer with considerable experience in dealing with people on both sides of the game of cops and robbers in the greater St. Louis area. We asked Strode Wilder to give us an insider's frank assessment of what our metropolitan police departments are really like. In straight cop talk. With no hedging. We used a rating system similar to that often found in movie and restaurant reviews: four stars for excellent, three for good, two for fair, and one for poor. We have nothing but the highest respect for the office of policeman, and have no intention of holding this office up to ridicule. On the other hand we feel the St. Louis public has a right to know who are the men behind the badge. In every St. Louis community. Are we safe? Well, reader, that may really depend on what subdivision or neighborhood you happen to live in. And even then you can't always be too sure...

The St. Louis County PD is in bad shape. Every year folks around the old courthouse in Clayton take bets as to how many cops will quit.



St. Louis PD ***

The St. Louis Police Department has about 1,900 officers who operate out of nine district stations and the downtown headquarters. The department prior to Governor Teasdale's election was one of the more efficient large departments in the country. Each district has its own detective bureau which used to work jointly with the detectives out of headquarters on everything except vice and homicides. The district captains used to appoint their best men to their district bureaus. The district dicks always worked hard and had a good crime clean-up rate, because they knew their districts well. Most county detectives would prefer working with district detectives than with the detectives from headquarters because the district men could get more done.

Then in 1975, Chief Eugene Camp formed the Tactical Anti-Crime Team known as TACT. The unit was formed to combat muggings of bicyclists in Forest Park by using officers in plainclothes and long hair riding bikes in the park while waiting for a mugger. The park operation was a complete success and TACT began to grow until it numbered over 100 officers who were directly under Chief Camp. The unit then gave up its bicycles and went on the streets looking for drug dealers and stick-up men. Most other city cops considered the TACT officers glory hounds who would steal a case from a

uniform man in a minute. TACT cops were not well liked in the department but they did make a lot of felony street arrests and for the most part were highly effective.

After Teasdale's election and the appointment of a Democratic Police Board, an internal fight began between Camp and Lt. Col. John Dougherty. Dougherty had long been politically active with the Democratic party and was a close friend of a major Teasdale backer. The downtown detective operation was under the control of Dougherty, but TACT officers were under Camp and the district detectives were under the district captains. After the fight Camp was still chief but all detective operations were placed under Dougherty, who immediately cut the size of the TACT unit and stripped the detectives at the district level of much of their power. These moves have probably hurt the effectiveness of the St. Louis PD more than any other thing in the last five years. Even after this reorganization the St. Louis police still have the best robbery and homicide investigators in the metropolitan area.

The largest and busiest district in St. Louis without question is the Third District, with its station house located near the brewery on Lynch Street. The Third is known as a "stick district." If you are ever in a barroom fight in the Third it's a good idea to leave before the cops arrive or chances will be pretty good that your head will meet the end of a nightstick. This is a well-known fact among residents of the Third and there are few complaints against cops, as getting drunk and fighting the cops is a way of life in some neighborhoods in the Third.

The First District, in far south St. Louis, used to be the district where older officers would go to wait out their retirement. But blight in the last five years has hit the First hard and crime is way up.

The Second District, which includes the Hill area, is probably the safest area in the city. The ethnic neighborhoods are still strong and neighborhood associations work closely with the district police. The captains running the Second have always tried to cater to the problems of residents.

The 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th districts are all northside and are all pretty busy districts. The burglary rate in many black northside neighborhoods has reached the point where some observers wonder if it can go any higher. If you live in one of these northside areas and own a television set, you can be assured that there are people on the street who consider your TV as community property.

Cops coming from these districts over the years are conditioned to just answer radio calls. The radio is so busy with calls on some evenings on the northside that a cop can go for eight hours without a break

from calls. If you need the police in north St. Louis don't try to flag down a passing patrol car. Chances are it won't stop. Instead take 20 cents from your pocket, find a telephone that still works and call the police. This process begins a radio call.

The St. Louis Police Department is excellent at handling and solving major crimes such as murder, robbery or arson; but due to the vastness of the city and the large volume of crimes that occur it does have a hard time coping with smaller property crimes such as thefts and burglaries.

St. Louis County PD *1/2

This department is in bad shape. Every year folks around the old courthouse in Clayton take bets as to how many county cops will quit. Men leaving the department say the pay is good but the morale and working conditions are terrible. Superintendent of county police G.H. Kleinknecht created a mild stir last year, after the department lost close to 50 men in six months, by writing letters to Anheuser-Busch and McDonnell-Douglas asking them to stop hiring county cops for security and management positions.

The patrol division is in the worst shape. One officer is assigned to a beat in the unincorporated areas of the county; but due to manpower shortages the beats are huge. In west St. Louis County on a weekend night Creve Coeur police might have five cars on the street, a county cop will be patrolling his beat by himself, and his beat is larger than the city of Creve Coeur.

The problem faced by many county residents is the county's poor response time to calls. Management within the department says bad response time is no longer a problem, but this isn't the case. The response is poor in part because of the large area covered by one officer, but the real reason is probably due to the county's communications room. Often calls will sit in the radio room for five to 10 minutes before they are dispatched to a car. While most people living in municipalities can call the police and expect to see a cop in three to five minutes, persons calling the county for police service sometimes have to wait up to 30 or 40 minutes.

Traffic enforcement is necessary within any police department in an attempt to keep roads safe and to detect motorists who abuse their driving privileges. County cops, however, feel the department uses tickets to judge an officer's productivity. Using tickets to judge productivity usually creates a lot of cheap tickets for defective taillights and license-plate violations. These cheap tickets upset the public and overcrowd court dockets in the associate circuit courts in Clayton, and then the judges get upset.

The Crime Against Person and Rape Units are the best of the detective

operations within the county detective division. If you're a bad-check writer, the county is the place to work. There are only two detectives who handle all the bad checks in the unincorporated area of the county. They can barely make a dent in their workload. The county vice squad also consists of only two cops and it is forced to borrow officers regularly from other units to conduct many of its investigations. The department's narcotic unit is well staffed and works throughout the county, including municipalities. The narcs make a lot of cases every year, but the rap against them is that they are using too many white officers and making marijuana-sale cases in west county while heroin is flowing in and out of north county.

The management of the department has been questioned by officers recently concerning a couple of moves. Last year the cities of Manchester, Des Peres, Ballwin and Town & Country all attempted to annex unincorporated areas of the county. The cities maintain that they can offer stricter zoning and better police protection. The county counters that the cities are just greedy and are making tax grabs. The county police helped in the fight against annexation by taking officers out of areas that are already short of cops and flooding the west county with police cars, thereby increasing police visibility to residents facing an annexation vote.

The other mystery at police headquarters is the superintendent's deployment of Captain Jack Patty. Patty is a cop's cop and has always been popular with the men. About five years ago Patty was taken off the street and placed in charge of the department's record room, which is staffed entirely by civilians. Last summer Patty was the only captain on the department to have his car taken from him in what the department called a gas-saving move. Then last fall Kleinknecht attempted to strip Patty of his police commission and place him in a civilian position. Patty balked and filed suit in the circuit court. Kleinknecht then backed down and Patty kept his rank and pay and was loaned out to the investigative unit at the prosecuting attorney's office.

The busiest people with the department are not the detectives or the uniform men but the personnel division background investigators. With the department almost always being at least 50 men short these people have plenty of work to do. It appears as if the County Council has made their job a little easier. Rather than admit that the department is constantly understaffed, the council has approved cutting the authorized strength of the department by 30 men at the first of the year.

In the last 10 years the county has hired two outsiders with no actual police experience to run the department. Many current county officers feel that it is time

for a cop to run the department.

Ballwin PD **½

Ballwin has an old-time chief and new black LAPD-type uniforms but remains the most underpaid department in west county. The fastest growing west county community has invested heavily in new parks and a public golf course and has been holding back in the area of employee salaries. This has caused the loss of the better policemen to higher paying jobs. The visible uniform force has new cars which are pretty well equipped but the three-man detective bureau drives around in a beat-up Ford Maverick.

Incredibly this town of close to 20,000 has only a one-man holdover cell. It's not saying much for the department to boast on a busy Friday night that they have filled the holdover. The prisoner-processing area for the department is in the basement of the City Hall-Police Department building and until recently it was not unusual to find a policeman booking a burglar with a cub scout meeting going on 20 feet away.

The majority of the house burglaries in Ballwin are committed by local juveniles. According to sources the biggest threat to Ballwin homeowners last year was a loosely knit club of Parkway High School students who thrived on breaking into occupied homes in early morning hours. Also an occasional burglar from Pacific or Eureka will float into town to try his luck. If the drug-addict burglars from the St. Louis ghettos ever find their way past the homes in Ladue, Creve Coeur and Frontenac and get to the Manchester-Ballwin area they will think they have discovered a new gold mine.

The Ballwin Police also have a contract to patrol the white, lower-middle-class community of Winchester, consisting of 2,700 people nestled between Ballwin and Manchester. If a cop in Ballwin starts to get bored on the night shift he can usually count on a family disturbance or a street fight in Winchester.

Bridgeton PD *½**

Bridgeton is the largest city landwise in St. Louis County. With the growth of the city over the years the police department has become better and better. The officers are well paid and when there is an opening on the force the line of applicants is long.

The department has probably the best traffic division in the entire county. The detective bureau also receives high marks. Bridgeton is one of the handful of county departments that uses undercover detectives.

The only question some people have is with the chief of police, who dates back with the city to the days of some fast political wheeling and dealing.

Bridgeton Terrace PD *

Most cities pay police department sala-

ries through their general fund, but Bridgeton Terrace isn't like most cities. Bridgeton Terrace consists of about four streets and if you drive on them you best know where the stop signs are. It's believed that the department has four full-time policemen and 17 part-time cops at last count. Don't let those figures fool you, however. The chief of police allegedly has a nasty habit of handing out police badges and commissions to a lot of his friends. Informed sources claim that most Bridgeton Terrace cops on the department today have not attended a 16-week police academy, as new police officers are required to do by state law.

Believe it or not the city of Bridgeton Terrace does not budget police salaries. Instead the police are paid from the proceeds of an annual dance. As if things weren't bad enough, Bridgeton police officers claim that Bridgeton Terrace officers have a bad habit of dropping the "Terrace" when they identify themselves outside of town.

Clayton PD ***

Most policemen hate, despise and generally don't much care to work the day watch. Besides having all the white shirts in their offices, the cops have to run station errands, handle high-weed viola-

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The Creve Coeur PD is in a state of near chaos. The detective bureau is understaffed and the detective's clean-up rate is not beginning to keep up with the city's soaring crime rate.

POLICE

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tions and take care of servicing the police cars. Clayton policemen are the exception to the rule, however. With an office force of well over 100,000 in Clayton every day the cops get to watch a lot of good-looking women on the streets during the entire day watch.

Clayton offers good pay and requires high educational standards for its officers. The force has a good mix of experienced officers and younger men. Clayton's detective bureau has a couple of the best fraud and bad-check investigators in the county.

Parking spaces on the street in Clayton are at a premium and the department's traffic unit enforces overtime and illegal parking with a vengeance.

Country Club Hills *

Country Club Hills is another one of many tiny north county hamlets. The town is surrounded by the city of Jennings to the north, east and south and by Lucas & Hunt Road to the west. The municipality is just north of the Norwood Country Club.

The police department is located in two rooms in the basement of the city hall, which is a one-story frame-and-brick house hidden back on one of the few streets in town. A few years ago the department had a money safe which sat on the floor in one of the offices with a typewritten sign taped to it stating, "No playing around with the safe without permission from the chief."

The department has two patrol cars, one which was bought by the city and the other which was paid for through donations from local businessmen and residents.

Running radar on Lucas & Hunt is the order of the day around Country Club Hills.

Crestwood PD ****

Chief Mel Lloyd runs one of the best police departments around. When the chief comes to work in the morning and the holdover is filled, he's happy. He likes to think his men are out doing their job.

The Crestwood police offer good pay and benefits to their officers and great working conditions. Morale is high and the force has a low turnover rate. The patrol force is experienced and aggressive. The department has a good traffic division. But the gem of the force is the detective bureau. It's staffed by the best men on the force suited for detective work and the city's clean-up rate shows it.

Crestwood, along with Bridgeton and Florissant, was one of the first departments to start using undercover cops in the county. The use of undercover cops in the large Crestwood Plaza shopping

center has shown excellent results. Professional shoplifters now stay away from Crestwood Plaza. For a while the undercover surveillance team was averaging two felony shoplifting arrests a day.

Crestwood is a good place to live because the police department acts swiftly to stop neighborhood problems such as juvenile larcenies and other juvenile-related offenses before they get out of hand.

Creve Coeur PD **

Five years ago, if a Creve Coeur policeman resigned from the department you could bet that he wasn't going to work for another police department. He'd probably be taking a job with IBM or maybe a teaching position with a college or university, but he wouldn't work for another cop shop. Creve Coeur had good pay, excellent command officers and great benefits. The turnover rate was so low that about the only time a guy would have a chance to get on the department was when the board of aldermen increased the authorized manpower of the force. Morale was high, to say the least.

Then about three years ago the mayor and police board decided it was time for a change in leadership of the department. The most likely explanation for this was that the head of the police force was an effective leader but made a poor public appearance.

The city then made the fatal mistake of advertising nationally for the chief's job and ended up hiring someone from outside the St. Louis area. Suddenly there was a 100 percent turnover within the patrol division. The only officers remaining from 1975 are the ones with too much time and rank in the department.

This has left the Creve Coeur PD in a state of near chaos. The detective bureau is understaffed and the detective's clean-up rate is not beginning to keep up with the city's soaring crime rate.

The kindest thing to be said about the Creve Coeur police department is that it is a fairly large force that offers the residents a good response time for calls for police services.

Des Peres PD **

Des Peres doesn't have a police department per se. It and Town & Country are the only two towns in eastern Missouri which have Public Safety Departments. Public safety officers work 24-hour shifts consisting of eight hours as a police officer and 16 hours as a fireman and paramedic.

The majority of the Des Peres officers work as public safety officers but they do have a small traffic division and detective bureau where the men work 40-hour weeks. Since the first of the year, under a new wage and hour act, the regular public safety officers only work eight to

10 days a month, giving them 20 to 23 days a month off. This has created a small problem. The department is finding it difficult to get any men to work as traffic officers or detectives. In most police departments cops fight over the chance to be placed in the detective bureau, but not in Des Peres. Who wants to work 22 days a month when they could be off for 22 days?

The department is big on physical fitness and is actively involved in Police Olympics competition on the local, state and national levels. When the state and national Police Olympics are held the department is staffed by a skeleton crew. It was widely rumored that two years ago when Des Peres hired an officer away from the St. Louis Police TACT Unit it wasn't for his police skills, but because he was an excellent power weightlifter and Des Peres was weak in that category for an upcoming Police Olympics meet.

On a nice warm fall day it's not unusual to find the fire truck and ambulance at the city park with the men engaged in a touch football game. Besides all this, the pay is great.

Des Peres sounds like a great place to work; but if you live there or own a business there, you'd better make sure you have plenty of insurance.

Ellisville PD **

Under old-fashioned leadership the police department of this west county boom town has no detective bureau. The principal social pastime for young men in this area is driving fast cars, and auto dealers have found that this lifestyle has led to the scavenging of their car lots for parts.

Ellisville is one of the top-paying police departments in all of St. Louis County, thus attracting many experienced officers from other departments. However, there appears to be a certain lack of trust between the ranking officers and the patrol officers. Patrol officers have been tied to their police cars because they are not to be trusted with portable walkie-talkies for fear they will constantly be sitting in restaurants or on weekends hiding out in firehouses watching football games.

With the lack of any detective bureau, homeowners and businessmen in Ellisville have something in common. If they are victims of a crime committed by someone from outside the immediate area there is little chance of any investigation and even less chance that the crime will be solved.

Currently the new mayor of Ellisville does not hold the police department in the highest regard, and there has been infighting between him and the police chief. Apparently officers have been ordered never to pull alongside of each other's cars to talk because this common

practice has been observed in the past by the mayor, who subsequently attempted to bring dereliction-of-duty charges against the cops. According to insiders the mayor-police feud was fueled after the arrest of a friend of the mayor who was involved in a tavern fight and bragged to the cops that he couldn't be arrested because they'd be fired by the mayor.

Ellisville has long been noted for its frequent tavern fights and bar brawls. The force seems to be able to handle these with ease. Probably that's due to having nightly practice.

Florissant PD ***

The Florissant Police Department should be a four-star department. The only reason it isn't is spelled m-a-y-o-r. Sources within the department say things are currently bad with the talk of slowdowns, work stoppages and even strike. Officers were recently told that they were getting 7 percent raises but later found out that the 7 percent was based on their starting salaries and not their current pay.

Also, as one Florissant policeman put it, "The mayor is out of control." The last step in the employment process in Florissant is not an oral review board, as with most departments, but an oral review with the mayor. In the past, officers would have to see the mayor at his office to pick up their paychecks. The mayor's car is equipped with a police radio and it's not unusual for a cop to stop a car late at night and turn around and find the mayor backing him up. God help the policeman who gets out of his car without wearing his hat if the mayor catches him.

Florissant is the largest municipality in St. Louis County and it has the largest police force. The department offers complete police services and even has its own sophisticated criminal suspect and fingerprint computer. The patrol division has a good mix between young aggressive officers and older seasoned veterans. Florissant is blessed with an excellent detective bureau which for the size of the city has a good crime clean-up rate. The department on the whole has good to excellent equipment to work with.

Being as far north as it is, Florissant has an ordinance to cover just about everything except murder and armed robbery. This saves long trips to Clayton for warrant applications at the prosecutor's office and court. Getting arrested in Florissant normally means a visit before the municipal judge.

Frontenac PD **

Frontenac is one of the highest-paying departments in the state. Still, every year officers leave the department to take lower-paying jobs. The turnover rate would be higher but some cops have

become accustomed to their higher standard of living and can't afford to quit. The department is run by a former command officer with the Kirkwood Police Department and with him came many of Kirkwood's rules and regulations.

Every weekday morning Frontenac has at least two officers directing traffic at intersections along Clayton Road. The officers don't really help the flow of traffic that much but city officials think they make a nice appearance to residents and motorists passing through town. In the dead of winter or on a rainy day the patrolmen would rather be warm and dry than make a pleasing appearance for the city fathers. The department has been known to delay answering felony calls until an officer is done waving morning rush-hour traffic down Clayton Road.

The chief has recently begun a new policy that has most of the men wondering if a pay cut with another department wouldn't be such a bad idea after all. Once a month each officer has to come to work in old clothes and wax and buff the floors at the new station. This bothers the men since they are told to get a college education, and they are lectured that they are law enforcement professionals, only to find that the city expects them to also fill in as janitors.

Frontenac, along with Ladue and Creve Coeur, is one of the most popular hunting grounds with local professional burglars. The detective bureau does a good job handling antique and jewelry theft investigations.

Prior to the completion of Plaza Frontenac and other commercial developments along Lindbergh Boulevard, Frontenac was a quite wealthy residential town. Before all the new businesses the cops used to have massive ticket-writing contests between the different shifts. It is reported that in August 1974 Frontenac took in over \$21,000 in speeding fines. The radar guns have cooled off since then, but to a policeman something is still not quite right with Frontenac.

Glendale PD **

The Glendale police have a dreaded way of evaluating their officers' performance. The old "points system." You know: one point per traffic ticket, five points per DWI arrest, 10 points per misdemeanor arrest, and 20 big ones for a felony pinch.

Felony and misdemeanor arrests are hard to come by in quiet Glendale. This means drunken-driving arrests are prized possessions. In 1976 Glendale had around 10 burglaries and about 140 DWI arrests. Neighboring Rock Hill, a little rougher town, that year had close to 120 burglaries and almost 20 DWI arrests. If you're a drunk driver and you are arrested in Glendale, you have just supported your local policeman.

Although Glendale has a unique way of rating its cops, the department is very responsive to residents. The force handles the smallest of calls and always with a smile. The crime rate is low in this mid-county town of 6,000 but the crime-clearance rate is probably even lower.

Glendale is a lot like Warson Woods, but with points.

Grantwood Village PD *

South County observers claim that some years ago Gussie Busch was afraid that Crestwood with its high taxes had its eyes on Grant's Farm for annexing purposes. Lying just to the east of Grant's Farm was the tiny village of Grantwood, which consisted of about two subdivisions. The story goes that to avoid Crestwood's taxes and many ordinances, Mr. Busch allowed Grant's Farm to be annexed into the Village of Grantwood. Thanks to Grant's Farm, Grantwood has a business district—namely, the concession stands at the Bauernhof.

Grantwood's police department consists of one cop and one cop car. Only the mayor and the county police dispatchers know the Grantwood police department's schedule in advance. The village's only officer started as a patrolman and in the last couple of years was promoted to the rank of corporal. He works a 40-hour week and takes the village's only police car home with him. When the Grantwood police force is off duty the county police answer calls in the village.

The village does own a radar gun and needless to say traffic enforcement is the main order of the day. A few years ago few people knew that about 300 feet of the southbound lane of Rock Hill Road between Watson Road and Laclede Station Road was in the village limits. It seemed that the only people who knew were the police force and unsuspecting speeding motorists. It took an irate violator to appeal a village speeding ticket to the county circuit court before a city-limit sign was posted.

Although many village residents like the idea of having their own police department the village is totally dependent on the county police for all investigative and support services.

Jennings PD **

Jennings has experienced the same problems of many north county towns: changing racial makeup of the city, lower property values and higher crime rates. Jennings used to be a good place for cops to work who liked action along with decent pay—until recently. The Jennings City Council in an attempt to slow down the "white flight" from the town passed an ordinance requiring city employees to live in Jennings. Jennings may be a great place to work, but few of the policemen on the force thought it was such a great



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place to live and raise a family. A lot of cops have quit since the ordinance was passed.

Jennings was once the model largertown action police department. The force consisted of experienced hard-nosed cops who liked to work. Most of them have left; a few remain. Recently a young recruit with Jennings who was attending the Greater St. Louis Police Academy left the academy early and went home to change into a suit. From his house he went to the St. Louis County Courts Building and found his way to the second floor, where most of the associate circuit courts are located. The new recruit took a subpoena from his pocket and checked to see which court he was supposed to be at. He then asked a security guard for directions to the court. Once there he sat outside of the courtroom on a wooden bench reading a crumpled-up police report. The young officer was soon joined on the bench by a detective from a west county department. After talking to the rookie for a few minutes the detective asked the recruit what kind of case he had to testify on. The rookie then told him that he had been hired at Jennings several months ago and there were no academy classes open, so Jennings sent him on the street each night in a police car with instructions to answer calls with the other cars and observe how the officers handle things. He then said that he got a call to assist a car at a drugstore where a person was trying to use a stolen credit card. He said that after a few minutes he arrived at the drugstore and waited outside for the other car, but no other car ever showed up. He said he then went into the drugstore and detained the suspect, thinking the other car would be there soon. He finally figured out that nobody else was going to show up, so he did his best in arresting the suspect and trying to figure out how to write up the police report.

Cops all over used to think of Jennings PD as a good "stick" department that was always shaking guns and dope out of cars on traffic stops. Now nobody quite knows what's going on up in Jennings.

Kirkwood PD **

Most police administrators consider the Kirkwood Police Department's internal structure the one to copy. Most experienced cops who have worked in busy areas consider it one of the worst.

There is an unwritten rule within the Kirkwood PD that they will never hire an experienced police officer. They prefer to hire young applicants with no police experience and train them the "Kirkwood way." The "Kirkwood way" expects young officers to tell superiors of any rule infractions committed by other cops, including cops from other departments. Most Kirkwood policemen who have been

around for a while tend to look over their shoulder before doing anything.

Kirkwood officials forbid the bending of rules to catch a crook and the city's crime-clearance rate shows this attitude. The problems of blight and high crime rates appear to have struck Kirkwood hard recently, while neighboring Webster Groves has appeared to be able to hold its own against these problems.

The Kirkwood PD is highly disciplined and punishment for rule violation is usually harsh. Cops from towns that surround Kirkwood don't want to have anything to do with and avoid the Kirkwood Police Department.

The last chief and the current chief are religious men who impress their men with their high morals. About 12 years ago, under the former chief, two officers resigned after they were told they would be fired if they dated any women during their separation from their wives until their divorces became final. Recently another officer left the department under the current chief for similar reasons.

A good point of the Kirkwood PD is its deployment of patrolmen throughout the city. The town has an excellent coverage of patrol cars. The detective bureau is weak but it's graced with one of the best and most respected police detectives in St. Louis County in the form of Cappy Ricks.

When you drive through Kirkwood you'll see sharp-looking, well-dressed and highly polished policemen, but then you can't judge a book by its cover.

Ladue PD ***

Years ago the current chief of police in Ladue ran the department, but his title then was Inspector of Police. Either Ladue wanted to have a European ring to the chief's office or the Inspector kept a close eye on the cops. Back then Ladue had departmental rules forbidding Ladue police officers from living in town and coming into the city during their off-duty hours without permission. Also officers were not permitted to carry off-duty weapons. No real cop ever wanted to have much to do with Ladue police officers.

Some police officers are still prejudiced today toward Ladue cops. However, if one looks at the Ladue PD closely there is little fault to find. The patrol force is mostly young and aggressive. It catches its fair share of burglars. The patrol force also makes a lot of "Visa Checks." A "Visa Check" in police jargon means to stop any black from the city that drives through town, whether or not you have good reason to stop him, and then to find out what he's doing in town. With Highway 40 running through the middle of Ladue, and since the city is well known for its wealth, the town is a favorite with burglars from St. Louis.

The department has always shown

good sense and placed its best officers in the detective bureau. The detectives have had a good recovery rate of expensive items stolen in residential burglaries and they know most fences in the city that deal in stolen antiques.

The biggest knock on the Ladue police is that they have always had a reputation for writing a lot of traffic tickets to non-residents and for rarely citing a citizen.

Manchester PD **½

In late 1978 the Manchester Board of Aldermen suffered a landslide defeat in its attempt to annex land east of Manchester to almost the Des Peres city limits. One of the complaints heard from the unincorporated area was that Manchester property taxes were too high. So as not to be embarrassed again the Manchester officials decided to cut property taxes. It appears they have focused this tax-cutting program on the police department. Since July 1979, city fathers have eliminated all dispatchers' jobs, sold their eight-month-old radio system, dropped their crime-computer service and sold their radio tower, thus saving close to \$65,000 a year.

To replace these services the city now contracts with Ballwin for dispatching services and crime-computer use. Now without dispatchers, Manchester finds that it can no longer use its new four-man holdover cells as there is not always someone in the police station to keep an eye on guests. To solve this problem Manchester has contracted with Ballwin to use its one-man holdover cell. If someone plans to commit a crime in Manchester or Ballwin he would be wise to do it when somebody is in jail. That way, in case he gets caught, the cops won't have any place to put him.

The Manchester aldermen have also recently cut the police department's motor fleet from nine cars to seven and have reduced the size of the department from 21 men to 19 in other cost-saving moves. The property tax has already dropped by 25 cents.

Another problem which faced the Manchester Police Department is that it had no chief of police until recently. In June 1979 Chief Donald F. Petri was forced to resign after apparently coming to odds with the mayor. It's jokingly rumored that when Petri lost his job so did a press agent. Sources say that Petri wasn't much of a cop but that he was a pretty good politician. When he couldn't get his way with the aldermen he'd use the papers and TV newsrooms and he'd usually win. Petri made many improvements within the police department and bought it from a country hooterville operation to a first-class police department with a traffic division, three-man detective division and a full-time juvenile officer.



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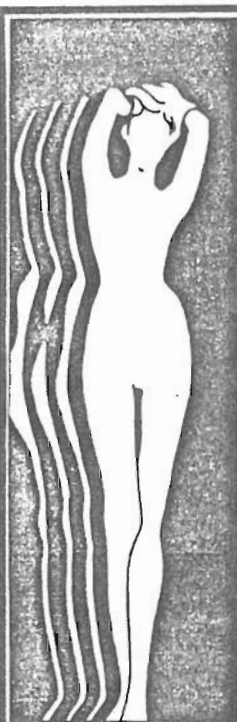
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The department as a whole is a young one with the oldest officer being 40. The patrol officers work a lot of radar on side streets used by motorists trying to avoid heavy traffic on Manchester and Woods Mill Roads. Late at night there are a lot of drunk-driving arrests in Manchester. The crime problem in Manchester is about the same as Ballwin's.

Maplewood PD *

It used to be almost an annual event. The St. Louis County Grand Jury would investigate the Maplewood police and report that the Maplewood Police Department was a bunch of rough guys and that they had to be in order to keep the town safe and for their own survival. The grand jury would always say that there is nothing wrong with the Maplewood force. For the most part the grand jury was right. By offering a lot of low-rent property and cheap apartments, the town had become infested with bums and crooks from the south side of St. Louis and the cops dealt with them swiftly.

In the mid 1970's the cops in Maplewood kept the crime rate down by being a highly visible force throughout town. Their use of what might be called "old-time police techniques" also helped considerably. The police in Maplewood had plenty of work in 1976 with a 25-man department which included a four-man detective unit.

Then in February 1977, while booking a prisoner for passing a stolen money order, a Maplewood detective's gun discharged, killing the suspect with one shot to the head. The detective would later plead guilty to manslaughter. This incident caused the bubble to burst. The police department had been a political hot potato with the town's city council. The new mayor had campaigned to reform the police force, but had been stopped in his tracks by grand jury reports favorable to the department. The mayor now had a field day. Within about eight months only a few persons of the 25-man force were left. The rest had either quit or been fired by the mayor. Some were replaced by either former police officers who had no business being cops or by young kids who couldn't get hired by any other police departments.

The mayor also reduced the size of the force to 15 men, which even then was hard to maintain due to the high turnover rate. The detective bureau was all but eliminated when it became staffed by just one man. These personnel moves within the police department were quickly reflected by a sharp rise in crime and an even sharper drop in the crime-clearance rate.

The mayor and the chief of police appointed by him are now gone, but the police force is a long way from improving itself.

Northwoods PD *1/2

Just a few years ago Northwoods' force was above 20 men. They had three canine officers, four detectives and a good patrol force. That's all changed. Northwoods is bounded by Lucas & Hunt Road, Natural Bridge Road, Highway 70 and the city of Pine Lawn. Northwoods is known for its beautiful homes and quiet residential streets. As urban blight began to move from the city into the north county Northwoods started a program of strict enforcement of housing codes and health and fire ordinances. At first this enforcement program seemed to work, while signs of residential decay began to show in neighboring Pine Lawn. Northwoods appeared to be holding its own. But over a period of time property values started dropping and soon many of the new houses on the quiet streets began to be occupied by drug dealers, stick-up men and rapists who had moved from north St. Louis.

Recently a top heroin dealer involved in the city drug wars moved into Northwoods. Last year three teenagers from Northwoods shot and killed a Pine Lawn grocer and his family during a robbery. Names of crime suspects with addresses in Northwoods are seen daily in the papers. Northwoods is now considered by many as a rough little town.

Policemen on the Northwoods force bailed out when the handwriting was on the wall. Most policemen like to work in high crime areas where there is plenty of action if they are working for a large stable police department. But in the case of Northwoods, the city began to lose tax revenues and as a result annual pay raises became smaller and smaller. The department now has between 10 and 15 officers, depending on how fast they can replace officers that have quit.

The department that used to be the jewel of the north county is now just hanging in there.

Olivette PD ***

Olivette's biggest problem is its turnover rate due to low pay. Olivette city employees claim that the council is cheap and by looking at their pay scales it's hard to argue with them.

The chief of police is a good guy and sticks by his men. The patrol force is young and somewhat inexperienced due to the turnover problem. The detective bureau is considered the strong point of the department by many outsiders. It is headed up by a former railroad detective who is now assistant chief of the department. The true strength of the bureau is Lt. Bob Terry, widely regarded as being among the top county investigators.

It's believed that two year's worth of healthy pay increases could really improve Olivette.

Rock Hill PD **

Rock Hill has been a place for young guys to break into the police business. It's known as a training grounds. The good cops stay for a couple of years, during which time they handle all kinds of calls, and then they go on to better-paying departments. In the last five years the department of 11 men has had a 100 percent turnover. The town's limited tax base is reflected in employees' salaries. Being a training ground wouldn't be so bad if you always hired people who turn out to be excellent cops, but that's hard to do. So the officers that aren't new are usually not very good cops and can't find work elsewhere.

The department's one-man detective bureau is now closed for a while, ever since Rock Hill's detective recently decided that he had enough training and hired on with a higher-paying west county police force.

The quality of police service in Rock Hill all depends on which officers are on duty at the time.

Village of Edmundson PD *

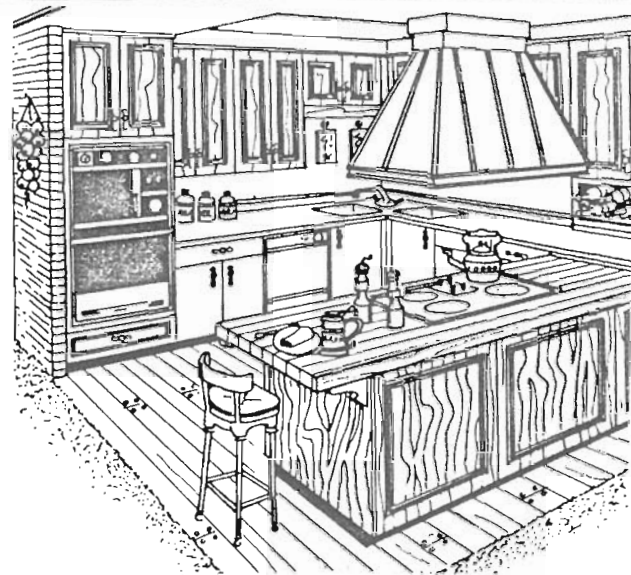
About four years ago the officers of the Edmundson Police Department arranged to have a Christmas party and dance for members of the village's small police force. The Christmas party looked like it was going to be a lot of fun and all the officers wanted to be sure to attend. This caused a problem. If all the officers were at the Christmas party, who would patrol the village and answer radio calls?

This might seem like a real problem to some people, but it wasn't for the folks at Edmundson. They found a young security guard at the Marriott Hotel. The young guard always wanted to be a policeman and he wouldn't mind at all putting on a policeman's uniform and driving about the village streets while the real cops were at their party. Ludicrous, you say? Hardly. That's what happened.

It might seem reckless putting an untrained person out on the streets as the only policeman in town, but at least the real cops told their fill-in to just drive around and be sure not to do anything, especially not to stop any cars.

But while everyone was having a fine time at the Christmas party, our young officer saw what he believed to be a drunken driver. With the public's safety in mind, the guard stopped the driver and arrested him for DWI. Some months later, after the driver had been acquitted on all charges against him, he promptly sued the well-meaning guard and the Village of Edmundson.

The pay scale for police in Edmundson is low, but that doesn't mean there isn't some money to be made. In the past the chief of police in the village has been



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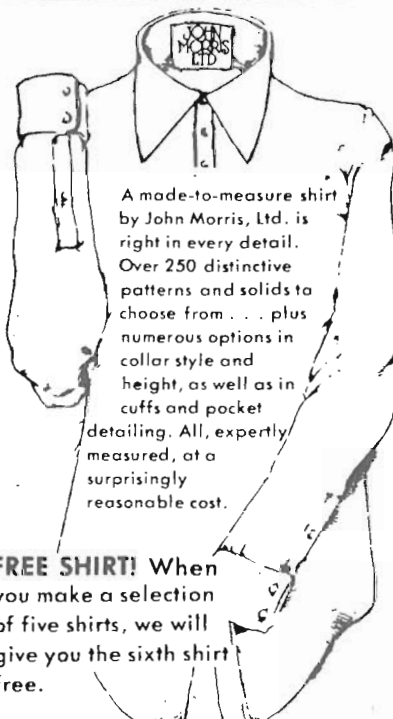
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lucky enough to get hired as the head of security at the large Marriott Hotel, a job which he has handled on his off-duty time.

This summer the St. Louis County Grand Jury investigated the village's police force after reports of missing items from the department's evidence locker.

Warson Woods PD **

Warson Woods hires only experienced police officers. If they didn't, a guy would never have a chance to get experienced. Nothing much ever happens in Warson Woods and the theory is that if something did happen the experienced officer would know how to handle it. The only problem with that is that after doing nothing for so long you get used to it.

Warson Woods has the Warson Village Shopping Center so it can afford to have a seven-man police force. The pay in Warson Woods is excellent and none of the officers has complained of being overworked.

Warson Woods is known in police circles as the retirement home. It's where experienced cops go to retire. The city does have a municipal court that meets once a month, so the cops are expected to write 10 or 11 tickets between them. If you drive through Warson Woods you probably use the busiest street—that's Woodlawn Ave. It has the highest speed limit in town at 30 miles per hour; all the rest of the streets are 20 mph.

If you're a cop in Warson Woods the most action you'll see as a general rule is if you get a call to assist the Rock Hill police or Glendale police when they are shorthanded.

Webster Groves PD **½

Years ago some people wanted to build a large shopping center on the edge of Webster Groves at Watson and Grant Roads. At the time the city council decided that a shopping center would not enhance Webster's image as the "City of Beautiful Homes" and turned down the developers.

This turn of events didn't bother anyone in Webster until recently when the city budget was running in the red for two consecutive years. The Webster Groves PD has begun to lose some of its better non-ranking officers because of low pay.

The patrol force is basically a good one but the deployment of the patrolmen is a mystery. Webster Groves cops are assigned sections of the town for radio assignments but they are allowed to drive at large anywhere in town they please. Many south-end residents complain that the police have forgotten where their subdivisions are.

The chief of detectives in Webster is an excellent investigator and a good administrator but the detective bureau is

not very good. The reason is that the chief of police made a policy that only sergeants could be detectives and that they would rotate into the bureau. Unfortunately, Webster has few sergeants who either want to be detectives or would be any good as detectives.

The police department's juvenile division is a different story. This is probably the finest juvenile unit in the county. Some insiders at Webster believe that the juvenile division solves more crimes than the detectives.

The Webster Groves police have no real traffic division and each officer in the patrol division is unofficially expected to produce four or five traffic tickets a month. Usually either the beginning of the month or the end of the month is a good time to watch your speed while going through Webster. Either the cops are getting their five tickets out of the way during the first of the month or they have put off writing any until the last few days.

Wellston PD *½

It's a shame that the towns with the highest crime rates have to have the worst police departments. In Wellston you'll find a low tax base, low pay, blight all around you and a heavy dose of politics in the police force.

The ability to write a good police report is one of the most important factors in putting a good criminal case together for trial. Unfortunately, there are only two or three cops in Wellston who can write a passable police report.

In all honesty, Wellston is not a safe place to hang around. It's not safe for you, me or the cops.

Woodson Terrace ****

Woodson Terrace is located next to the airport, has a population of about 6,500 and contains many motels that serve the airport. It also has a crackerjack police department.

The chief of Woodson Terrace is a former St. Louis policeman who is known as a cop's cop. A couple of years ago while returning to the office from lunch the chief jumped a couple of burglars. He not only made the arrest but later in court still testified like a street cop. The defendants received convictions for the crimes they were charged with. This may not seem unusual but most prosecutors will tell you they dread it when chiefs of police testify in criminal cases.

The department offers citizens a good patrol force and has an effective detective division. Detectives not only investigate crime reports but also have done a good job trying to keep call girls out of local motels and bars.

For a small town Woodson Terrace gets its money's worth from its police department.

Star Wars

Our January cover story "How Safe Are You?" by the pseudonymous policeman Strode Wilder has generated more reader response than any other story published in *St. Louis Magazine* in recent years. The article awarded a maximum of four stars and a minimum of one star to police departments in the greater St. Louis area and gave an insid-



er's behind-the-scenes look at the personalities and politics at various station headquarters. Phone response was particularly heavy, and calls were generally 3 to 1 in favor of the article. One policeman who phoned said he had worked for two of the departments reviewed and said, "Reading that story was eerie. It was like watching *60 Minutes*." A woman married to a Frontenac police officer said conditions were even worse than we reported. "You should have dug deeper," she said. Another policeman called and irately inquired why his police department was not given a rating. Informed that, because of heavy reader demand a Part Two was now being scheduled for the March issue, he asked if we would please tell him what rating his department was given. "Two," we told him. "Wrong," he said. "One. Have Strode Wilder get in touch with me." We did.

Wilder himself reports that a number of officers out on the street were amazed at how correct all of the information was in the story. But a Webster Groves officer commented

that the reported five traffic tickets a month quota demanded of Webster officers was incorrect. The quota is actually 15 tickets a month per cop.

Our police sources also tell us the story caused many hurried staff meetings at departments receiving low marks. Purpose of the meetings was to formulate replies to the story and to head off upset politicians. It was even rumored that the cover itself had been sent to one department's photo lab to be analyzed in an attempt to learn the identity of the person who posed as our policeman in clown make-up. And trying to guess the identity of Strode Wilder himself (who was not the model for the cover) has also, of course, been a frequent item on the agenda at many departmental roll-calls. Hunches are varied and include ex-cops, detectives who have been reassigned to patrol duty, prosecuting attorneys, college law-enforcement instructors, and even *Globe* and *Post* police reporters. All we can say is that one of these answers is correct.

Perhaps the majority of phone calls, however, came from our readers in University City, all asking to know why their city wasn't given a rating. The answer is that Wilder needed more time to gather information from sources, and we needed more space. Coming up in March are ratings for St. Ann, Hazelwood, Valley Park, Sunset Hills, Marlborough, Richmond Heights, University City, Pine Lawn, Pagedale, Breckenridge Hills, Brentwood and Overland. We won't give out any more advance clues, but we will make this concession to our local U. Citian readership. Your police department earns two stars, and it does have its share of problems.

Khorassan Blues

One of St. Louis' favorite anachronisms is due for a face lift. The Veiled Prophet, having barely survived the seven-

ties, may be changing his tune in the eighties. There will still be the girls, the plumes and the Bengal Lancers but many members of the court are talking about a charity ball next year or the year after. It seems the kingdom is losing face among St. Louis' hoi-polloi and it's difficult to find middle-aged civic leaders who want to masquerade at the pseudo-Mardi Gras.

The crowning of Sally Smith as Queen this year led one wag to quip the entire evening seemed like a Monsanto board meeting. Father Smith is a Monsanto exec.

In keeping with St. Louis' Southern frame of mind, the Veiled Prophet has not been the most gracious liberal in town. This year he formally opened the kingdom to blacks, but as one loyal member remarked, "It was better before we tried to be what we weren't." Few of the traditionalists at the ball found much to say to their new-found friends.

Just the Publisher's Facts

The New York boys are picking on the *Globe-Democrat* once again. The November-December 1979 issue of *Columbia Journalism Review*, a national magazine that devotes itself to



G. Duncan Bauman

a critique of the country (which took off the *do MORE*, a sir once brande the 10 worst country), r Duncan Bau the *Globe*, I (delayed, th re-written) rising hosp reporters w the *Globe*—now a the Seminex, a reporter for *Courier-Jou*

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by Strode Wilder

In the January issue of St. Louis Magazine we rated 27 of the 62 different police departments in the St. Louis County area. This month in Part 2 we look at an additional 12 departments. The ratings of the 39 departments reviewed are summarized below:

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Crestwood	Bridgeton	Ballwin	Breckenridge Hills
Woodson Terrace	Clayton	Brentwood	Bridgeton Terrace
	Florissant	Des Peres	Country Club Hills
	Hazelwood	Ellisville	Edmundson
	Ladue	Frontenac	Grantwood Village
	Olivette	Glendale	Maplewood
	Overland	Jennings	Northwoods
	St. Louis (City)	Kirkwood	Pagedale
		Manchester	St. Ann
		Marlborough	St. Louis County
		Pine Lawn	Sunset Hills
		Richmond Heights	Wellston
		Rock Hill	
		University City	
		Valley Park	
		Warson Woods	
		Webster Groves	

Part 1 of our police ratings generated an unusually large number of Letters to the Editor. These can be found in the Observer beginning on page 14.

There are probably more vocal critics of the St. Ann PD than any other police department in the St. Louis area.



St. Ann PD *½

There are probably more vocal critics of the St. Ann Police Department than of any other department in the St. Louis area. That's because there are so many former St. Ann cops who have escaped the working conditions which one former officer called "a zoo-like atmosphere." The department is not run by an appointed chief of police but by an elected chief. There is just one man who has won the election for chief in the last 20 years—Maurice McCue.

Most former officers claim that McCue is the reason they left the department. Over the last 20 years McCue has come up with some rather strange policies. For example, in recent years dogs running at large have been a problem in many towns and St. Ann is no exception. The chief, in an attempt to crack down on dogs, offered the men a \$5 reward per pooch brought into custody, since without the reward any policeman worth his salt would ignore an overt dog-at-large violation.

Radios have always been a pet peeve of the chief, according to former employees. The chief forbade the use of any transistor radios in the cars and any officers found listening to John McCormick on KMOX at 3:30 in the morning could expect to face a one-day suspension. The same went for officers caught with pocket police scanners in the patrol cars, listening to

calls from bordering towns. McCue is an isolationist, believing that what happens in St. Ann is nobody's business and what happens outside of town is of no concern to his officers, even if a suspect may be heading toward St. Ann.

Radar units are used only during the daylight hours by order of the chief and many officers claim that the order has effectively turned the stretch of St. Charles Rock Road which runs through St. Ann into a racetrack shortly after the bars close. The chief measures the performance of his patrol officers on how many miles they put on the car each night. Any experienced cop will admit that a rule requiring a certain mileage to be run up on a police car is solved by driving in a large circle around a city's border at a high rate of speed to meet the quota.

Another classic Chief McCue policy stems from the St. Louis County Police Department's annual crackdown on drunk drivers over the holidays. Immediately after the county police began this operation, McCue issued an order for his officers not to arrest any drunk drivers, over the holidays unless the drunk was involved in an accident. McCue's answer to the drunk-driver problem was for the officer to park the drunk's car and call him a nice warm taxi; or if the drunk lived in town the officer was to give him a ride home. This was great for getting votes at the next election, but it didn't do much for the idea of identifying problem-drinking drivers and getting them off the street.

In one incident a couple of years ago, a former St. Ann cop claims that McCue showed a flair verging on the incredible. A motel on Lindbergh Blvd. was on the border line between Bridgeton and St. Ann. The front of the motel was in Bridgeton and the rear parking lot was in St. Ann. One day as a St. Ann patrol car was driving around the building a motorist backed out from a parking space and struck the police car. The accident occurred in Bridgeton and the Bridgeton Police were summoned and they completed an accident report. Even though the accident did not occur in St. Ann, Chief McCue ordered the St. Ann cop to arrest the motorist for destruction of city property and to bring him to the station to post a bail bond. While the motorist was being booked at the station McCue ordered the officer to get an estimate of the damage to the police car. Upon the cop's return with the estimate McCue set the motorist's cash bail bond at the same amount as the repair estimate.

Northwest Plaza is in St. Ann and has long been considered a haven for professional shoplifters. The police department rarely ever assigns any officers to the Plaza and its position on shoplifting is that it is the store's problem and not the problem of the police.

St. Ann's patrol force is mostly made up of young officers who are just hanging in there getting some police experience while they look for other jobs. The depart-

ment has a couple of good detectives out of its five-man detective bureau. The command staff of the department is rated by several former officers as being weak at best.

Hazelwood PD *¼**

Hazelwood is a working-class town where the Ford Motor Mercury car plant is located. The Hazelwood Police Department has grown under the reins of the current chief, Robert Shockey, and is considered by many to be a very progressive department.

The patrol force should be rated as solid with many members coming from other departments. The department also has an outstanding detective bureau, where the dicks spend more time working on cases than goofing off—which isn't the way it is in too many other departments. The department also has a full-time juvenile unit.

Pay and benefits are better than average for the cops in Hazelwood and the working conditions are good. Although Hazelwood has the nickname of "Hasslewood" among other departments, the department is generally fair in dealing with suspects and the general public.

Valley Park PD **½

Lou Brown has been the marshal of Valley Park for as long as anyone can remember. Like Matt Dillon in Dodge City, in Valley Park Lou Brown is the law. Brown is elected as city marshal and also serves as chief of police for this eight-man department. Brown knows just about everyone who lives in town by name and his "good old boy" image works well in this working-class town located in west county along the banks of the Meramec River. If the authorities are looking for a suspect that is a Valley Park resident chances are that Marshal Brown can just call him up and have him turn himself in at the police station.

The department's patrol force can't be considered one of the more highly trained or educated ones in the county but it's very effective in the community. Valley Park is a rough-and-tumble little town known for tough bars and tougher cops.

Valley Park is a good place not to get arrested on a municipal charge as it's famous for one of the seediest and raunchiest holdovers in the county.

Sunset Hills PD *½

Sunset Hills is one of the newest police departments in St. Louis County, having been formed just 10 years ago. Prior to this the city had contracted with the St. Louis County Police for all police services. As the city grew it was obvious that the county cops weren't providing the city with the service that was expected and the city officials decided to start their own police force. Unfortunately, compared to the county police almost anything seemed better than what the city was getting. Things turned out the new local force

Continued on page 10

POLICE Continued from page 78
 didn't improve things much.

Sunset Hills is a town with huge boundaries and a lot of commercial area and many officers from other departments thought it would be just the place to go and get in on the ground floor with a new department. When they got there, they were in for a surprise. The city fathers made the common mistake of looking outside of the St. Louis area for a chief of police to set up their new cop shop. They selected Eric Damm who was an officer from the Lakewood (Colorado) Public Safety Department. Lakewood was a new style radical police department where command officers decided to get rid of the traditional blue uniforms and the term "police officer," in favor of gray slacks, blue blazers and the term "public safety officer."

Damm set up the department as a small-scale Lakewood PSD. The station house was called the "Sunset Hills Community Police Station." The dispatching area was known as the "communications center" and juvenile officers were referred to as "youth affairs officers."

The department was begun with 10 officers which turned out to be about five less than what was really needed. For the first four years it was not uncommon to find only one officer working the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift. With a major interchange

of two interstate highways and strips of taverns, motels and fast-food outlets along Highway 66 and Lindbergh Blvd., the one officer was usually tied up handling calls, thus giving the citizens no patrol coverage and actually less police protection than what St. Louis County had been providing for them.

With such a small force Sunset Hills relied heavily on other nearby departments to assist them in handling their calls. Crestwood Police would assist them often until Damm got into a nasty feud with Crestwood's chief over basic police procedures. After the feud had started there was no hope of mending relations between the two chiefs and Damm issued an order to his men never to request Crestwood officers to assist them. This left only Kirkwood police officers to help out Sunset Hills and according to some insiders you were considered better off handling a tense situation by yourself than having a Kirkwood cop show up.

Another brilliant idea of Damm's, in an effort to save the city some money, was to have South County Tech High School auto repair students do all the repair work on the city's police cars. Needless to say the patrol officers were not too keen on driving cars that a junior in high school had just practiced his brake replacement skills on.

After eight years of Chief Damm the

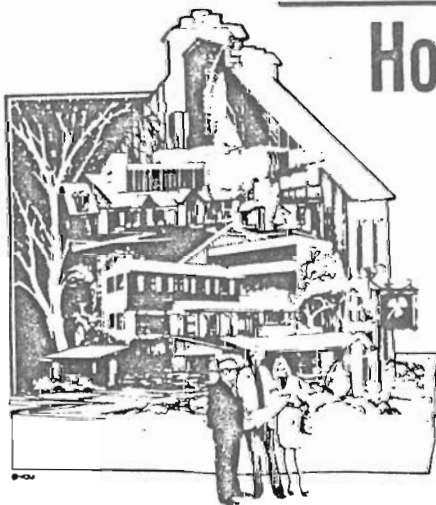
city had seen enough as the turnover rate at its new department was unbelievably high and Sunset Hills and Eric Damm went their separate ways. Instead of hiring a street-wise administrator to run the department, the city promptly hired a sergeant from the Kirkwood Police Department who had been a public relations officer for the last 10 years and the situation remains status quo.

With low pay, a high turnover, no detectives and low morale, Sunset Hills is near the bottom of the list with most experienced cops.

Marlborough PD **

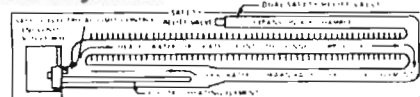
If your speedometer is broken and you are a bad judge of how fast you're going, Marlborough is a good place to avoid. Traffic enforcement is a high priority in the Village of Marlborough, located along old Highway 66 at the south end of Webster Groves.

Marlborough is well known for other things besides the town's red hot radar guns. Marlborough Bowl was the home of a national television bowling show hosted by Jack Buck in the early 1960s. Also within the town's borders is the Coral Court Motel, which first put Marlborough on the map in the early 1950s when the suspects in the Bobby Greenlease kidnapping-murder case were arrested there and where allegedly all



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\$200,000 of the money vanished between the motel and a St. Louis Police district station while in the custody of St. Louis Police officers.

For being such a small town, Marlborough has quite a few felony calls for the police to handle, thanks to a couple of apartment complexes, numerous roadside taverns and several motels that rent rooms by the hour. The pay for the village's cops is low, but the turnover rate on the seven-man force would be much higher than it is now if the chief of police was not so well liked by his men.

The important thing to remember about Marlborough is that when you're driving and you spot a Marlborough city limits sign, also be sure to notice the speed limit sign right above it.

Richmond Heights PD **½

The Richmond Heights Police Department is known for two things—cheapness and keeping what some consider a very low profile in their lower-class high-crime area. The patrol force is basically pretty good and consists of experienced and aggressive officers. The chief of police is a very likable guy, but many observers feel that he has bent to city hall pressure in police matters too many times and thus has lost some control over the department. The detective bureau, however, must receive low marks.

After the 1977 incident where a sniper shot and killed one man and wounded two others at a Richmond Heights synagogue, the Richmond Heights police called in the major-case squad to investigate the shooting. According to major case squad rules the department requesting the squad must furnish gas and meals for the squad members assigned to the case. For the first two days the major case squad detectives were fed Pringle potato chips and Pepsi. The squad commander was forced to threaten to pull the squad off the case if food was not provided before Richmond Heights would open a charge account at a local restaurant. During the investigation the murder weapon, a rifle, was traced to a person living in Dallas. The squad planned to fly two investigators to Dallas to follow up the trace on the gun, but they were forced to delay the trip, as the city fathers were not too keen on the idea of buying the plane tickets. The city first went to the synagogue where the murders occurred and asked for donations for the air fare. They were turned down. They then went to a local business association and were again turned down. Finally the city bit the bullet and came up with \$700 for the tickets.

Richmond Heights has a poor lower-class black neighborhood in the southern end of the city, known as "The Hill." According to officers from neighboring departments a police presence in this area is almost nonexistent as it has been

Richmond Heights' policy to overlook certain violations, such as open gambling and liquor law offenses, to maintain peace within the neighborhood and to keep residents away from the city hall with police complaints.

The three-man detective bureau has heavy case load but many outside consider the bureau's work to be rather shoddy. A good example of this was when a 20-year-old Berkeley youth was identified by victims from two St. Louis robberies, one in Rock Hill and the other in Richmond Heights. St. Louis and Rock Hill detectives had cleared the youth of any involvement in the robberies the same day of the line-up by checking his alibi and by giving him a polygraph test, both of which showed he was telling the truth when he said he had no involvement in the robberies. The Richmond Heights detectives who were handling the case, however, would not listen to the St. Louis or Rock Hill detectives and obtained a warrant against the youth on the strength of the mistaken identification in the line-up. The kid was charged with armed robbery and spent over two weeks in the county jail, being held on a \$50,000 bond. The Richmond Heights detectives even refused to interview the youth, which is normally standard procedure, claiming they had already cleared the case and obtained their warrant. Luckily, later Brentwood and Rock Hill detectives arrested the real suspect who turned out to be a look-alike for the kid from Berkeley.

Another time, a Richmond Heights detective took a crime victim to county police headquarters to view mug shots. The county officer who was going to show her the pictures was shocked after she had asked her to describe the suspect and the victim replied, "Well, like I told the other detective, I really only saw the back of his head."

The bottom line to the Richmond Heights PD is that residents living in the affluent west end receive four-star service but those people living on the east side of town are lucky to get two-star treatment.

University City PD **

The St. Louis Police Department has nine districts within the city. For years some people have considered University City as the tenth district. University City cops even wear uniforms that are almost identical to those worn by city police. A former University City cop who wrote a police novel in 1974 centered the story around the fictional 13th Police District of St. Louis, but what he was really describing was U. City.

Years ago U. City bordered the fashionable west end of St. Louis and the department was run as any other affluent suburban department, offering many services to the residents and having to spend little time on crime problems. Unfortunately, the character of

University City has changed with time, but the police department has not kept up with that change. The northern half of U. City faces serious problems due to urban decay and the crime rate is incredibly high.

The police department is one of the largest in the county with 70 men on the force. The patrol division is faced with a heavy work load from radio calls and the uniform officers in recent years have become basically crime-report writers, with little time to do immediate follow-up investigations as there is usually another radio call waiting to be answered. The detective division is by far the weak spot within the department. The department uses the old-fashioned method of promoting older officers to the detective bureau. Many of these officers have been around so long that they don't really put all they have into their job. Others who do show an interest in their cases just aren't cut out to be investigators. All one has to do is to sit in on some pretrial hearings involving U. City detectives to find out that their work is unthorough at best. In defense of the detective bureau, they do have an extremely heavy case load to contend with.

James Damos is the longtime chief of the University City Police. Chief Damos is a strong believer in replacing the nightstick with officers trained in understanding human behavior and the art of human communication. However, many of his officers maintain that heroin addicts who are arrested holding up a dry cleaners or breaking into an elderly woman's apartment are not very receptive to these new approaches and understand the logic of a nightstick much better.

University City is a big town where burglaries and crimes of violence are everyday occurrences, and where the police department could stand some room for improvement.

This review rates the U. City PD through December 31, 1979. As of January 1, 1980 the University City Police began an experimental program known as "Team Policing." Team Policing consists of groups of officers who are responsible for certain areas during specific time periods. Each team is expected to respond to a report of a crime, write the original offense report and then handle the entire investigation. This concept eliminates the central detective bureau as each team appoints officers as team investigators. Team Policing has been in operation for some time in the 7th District of St. Louis and has shown some success. It has also been tested by several county municipal departments in the past and ultimately dropped.

In all fairness to U. City, Team Policing needs at least a year to work out all the bugs.

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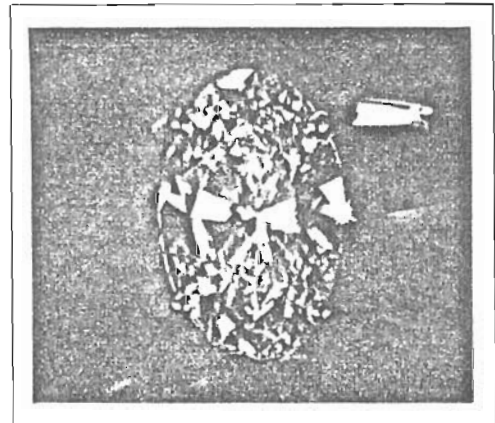
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Pine Lawn PD ** 1/2

There are about six municipal police departments in the north county that are known as ghetto departments since most of their cities resemble a St. Louis ghetto neighborhood. Pine Lawn is considered by many to be the best of the "ghetto departments." Pine Lawn has a good mix of black and white officers and they all seem to get along with each other. The department started a detective bureau in 1979 and the officers running the bureau have done some outstanding police work in the last year.

The one officer on the force who is a legend is Captain Fred West, a tall, thin middle-aged black man who is the night-watch commander at Pine Lawn. West has a very high-pitched voice and speaks softly but is known by the local hoods up and down Natural Bridge Road, and he is never challenged by any of them on the street. West is also considered by many courthouse observers as one of the best cops from north county when testifying in court. A young defense lawyer might try to make West look like a fool on the witness stand, but he'll only try once.

Pine Lawn does have a turnover problem since its tax base is in poor shape and employees' salaries are low, and because the area is not a very pleasant one to work in. The crime rate in Pine Lawn is way up, with shootings, stabbings and hold-ups everyday occurrences, but the police department has done a good job and has been able to keep its head above water so far.

Pagedale PD * 1/2

The police department is a political hot potato in Pagedale and it's very important for a cop to know whom to arrest at a brawl that started out as a community street dance; or which alderman to arrest when a fight breaks out during a city council meeting between the elected officials. Pagedale is a classic example of "it doesn't matter how qualified you are at promotion time. What counts is who you backed for mayor in the last election."

Pagedale is located along the St. Charles Rock Road just west of Wellston and blight has hit the town heavily in the last five years. Pay for policemen is low and employee benefits and working conditions equal the level of the pay. The crime rate is up in this town, and the question is "Are the cops up to doing anything about it?"

Breckenridge Hills PD * 1/2

In the Village of Breckenridge Hills the chief and all the patrolmen have something in common at the end of each budget year—they both start hitting the Maalox. In most police departments an officer is hired and must serve his first six months or first year on probation and then is a full-time member of the depart-

ment. While on probation an officer can be fired for no reason at all but once he is off probation the department must show cause for dismissing him from the force.

The Village of Breckenridge Hills has a way around this problem in case they want to get rid of an experienced officer. Every officer by ordinance is reappointed to a yearly commission as a police officer and his job is considered a political appointment. This makes some officers think twice before writing a ticket or arresting certain people in town. For example, this summer a patrolman issued several tickets to a person with political influence. The tickets were issued into municipal court and were dismissed. With the chief's approval the officer reissued the tickets into state court in Clayton where the summonses could not be fixed. This stand for one's principles was costly, as both the chief and the cop were dismissed a short time later.

This north county community is known as a little third district. The place is a rough town with a lot of working-class taverns along Woodson Road and St. Charles Rock Road. Due to the uncertainty of officers' jobs every year officers with experience, education and training usually will not be found in abundance on the force in Breckenridge Hills.

Brentwood PD **

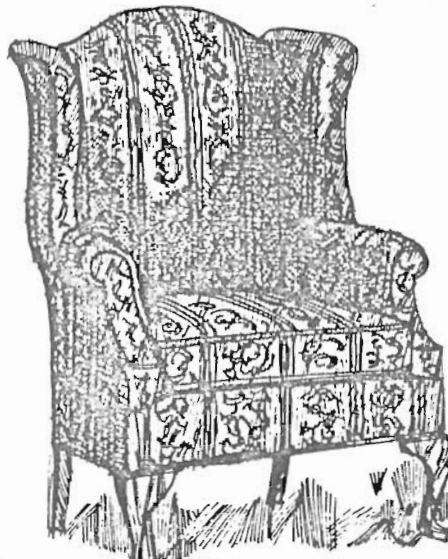
The Brentwood Police Department is a lot like a small suburban restaurant that was really good when you first went there but was awful on your return visit five years later. In the last several years the best and most experienced patrolmen have quit the Brentwood force and have either gotten out of police work or have taken police jobs outside the St. Louis area.

The current chief, according to present and former members of the force, shows no leadership ability at all and it appears as if the department is now being run by the mayor and the police board. Rumors around the station say that next year when the chief reaches his optional retirement age he will be forced to retire by the board of aldermen who did the same thing last year with the assistant fire chief.

Six years ago when H.U.D. was subsidizing the rent of low-income tenants at the Audubon Park Apartments, Brentwood had an upsurge in serious crimes and began expanding the police department. After adding extra men the force had a good balance of good, experienced officers and well-screened aggressive new officers. The department also had a hard-working four-man detective unit. The department's big mistake then was that when the force was expanded there were no promotions for the senior officers who had been there 10 years and had done a good job. Over the next few years they became disgusted and started to quit, morale plummeted and

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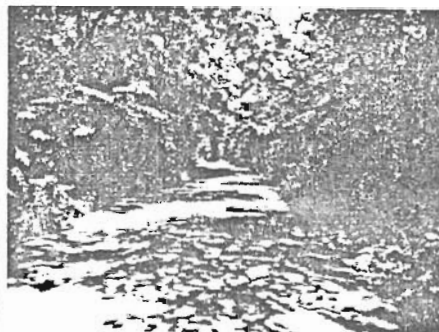


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younger officers began to go to newer west county departments.

In the last two years two separate things happened that have changed the direction of the police department. The Audubon Park Apartments were sold and the new owners began canceling the leases of low-income tenants and started to remodel apartments into condo units. This caused a sharp drop in the crime rate. Officers could no longer make easy arrests in the apartment complex and there was no longer a need for as many cops to write crime reports involving apartment residents. Now when a cop would quit he wouldn't be replaced.

At this same time the assistant chief of police quit to take the chief's job in St. Peter's. When he left it became obvious that he had been running the department instead of the chief and there was suddenly a leadership void. Then came a split between two factions of patrolmen who supported different people in the upcoming promotions. Each faction claimed to have dirt on the other and they both threatened to expose each other's dirt to the newspapers if their man didn't get promoted. The department that had been famous for stopping cars in "Birdland" was now known for the men backstabbing each other.

Things might change but only when someone is found to run the department. Until then most cops in Brentwood will be keeping a low profile.

Overland PD ***

If it wasn't for low pay Overland would probably be one of the better police departments in the county. However, the turnover problem is not good in this north county community. The crime rate in Overland is high but the police department copes with it pretty well and is blessed with an experienced detective bureau. Their longtime chief has remained fairly popular with the men over the years, but his inability to secure decent pay raises has hurt the department.

Overland's patrol force is made up of mostly young new cops just getting started in police work, but luckily the department has good supervisors on the street who look over the newer policeman.

For the small amount of money the city spends on the department, the police force does an excellent job. □



impression that this was going to be a serious expose. Instead, it was your usual slipshod, elitist, and thoroughly unprofessional job. I refer particularly to the section regarding the Village of Edmundson, in which you dragged out half truths regarding previous administrations.

It is not so bad that your facts are wrong and you imply present conditions for past occurrences, but when you attempt to veil your story as a serious expose, you merely solidify your growing reputation as an untrustworthy source of information about St. Louis.

FRANK J. VATTEROTT
Attorney for the Village
of Edmundson

Working at a business in Des Peres we have had exceptional help from this department. Their response time for calls, whether they be for police, fire or ambulance, has been immediate.

Dealing with the Des Peres Public Safety Department frequently, I feel that they are very aggressive and qualified in what they do.

If the reports on the other departments were done with as much inaccurate research as Des Peres, I think a terrible injustice has been done to some fine departments.

BETTY ULLMAN
St. Louis

Your article in the January issue, "How Safe Are You," was the most disgusting article I have ever read. I can't understand how a magazine can get away with writing such lies and trash. A magazine that would put a picture of a police officer on the front page with a clown face on should be horse-whipped and stoned.

I have been married to a police officer for 12 years and that picture on your magazine was the biggest slap in the face to all police officers of the City and County.

The one part concerning the

Des Peres Department of Public Safety was nothing more than a bunch of lies. I am married to the Des Peres Officer you said was supposedly lured away from the City Tact Unit. All I can say to that is bull! Your anonymous police-officer writer should have done a little more research on this one. The reason he left the tact unit was because he was sick & tired of all the political b.s. in the unit, and the entire city police department.

MRS. ANTHONY J. DICANDIA
Fenton

I would like to offer the following information to correct a misconception which was printed in your magazine in the January, 1980 issue regarding the Olivette Police Department. As the City Manager of the City of Olivette since February of 1978, I have completely revamped, in cooperation with our police chief, our entire Police Depart-

ment. The police problem in Olivette is not the turnover or low pay in our police department or any other department, as our turnover is practically zero. I feel we have no police problem. In the last two years, to my knowledge, we have lost only three police officers.

Salaries have been increased over 42 percent and now the range for our patrolmen is higher than almost any community our size in the county and ranks very close to the top or near the top range of most other departments...

We have new weapons, new uniforms and other equipment that was requested and purchased.

There is uniformity and to the best of my knowledge, we have a high department spirit.

We are proud of our department and thank you for the three-star rating, and upon review of my letter, which is factual, you may even see fit to give us a four-star rating.

JEROME S. FELDMAN
City Manager
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