

UNAPPROVED CHESTERFIELD NEWSLETTER 18

December 18, 2012

By John Hoffmann

THE DIEHL CASH MACHINE CONTINUES ON... State Rep continues to rake in the bucks running against no one: As we have reported in prior newsletters State Representative John Diehl (Republican-Town and Country) who represents Town and Country and eastern sections of Chesterfield had raised \$1,026,104 through October 27, 2012 while running unopposed since 2008 in both primary and general elections.



Campaign finance reports show that Diehl collected another \$51,897.61 in the days immediately before and after the November election. That puts Diehl at \$1,078,001 of total campaign funds raised since 2008 while running AGAINST NOBODY!

Diehl as usual gave some of these funds to other Republican candidates. Also like other reporting periods his expenses were unbelievable. Keep in mind Diehl's district include Frontenac, Town and Country and Chesterfield. Here are some of his expenses:

\$180.29 for "Travel" to the Crown Plaza Hotel in Clayton. Diehl lives on Clayton Road one block past I-270 and he needs a hotel room in Clayton when he makes that long and tiring 8.51 miles trip from home.

- \$125.88 for "Travel" to the Embassy Suites Hotel in Kansas City
- \$113.96 for "Travel" to the Hilton Garden Inn in Independence, MO
- \$138.33 for "Travel" to the Holliday Inn Express in Osage Beach, MO
- \$102.11 for "Travel" to Double Tree Hotel in Jefferson City, MO
- \$162.98 for "Travel" to Enterprise Rent-a-Car in Kansas City, MO
- \$179.60 for "Travel" to Southwest Airlines
- \$355.60 for "Travel" to Southwest Airlines
- \$102.46 for "Meals" to Café Napoli in Clayton on 11/01/12
- \$1,862.46 for "Meals" to Café Napoli in Clayton on 11/1/12
- \$182.74 for "Meals" to Paddy Malone's in Jefferson City on 11/08/12

Again this is his campaign expense report and Diehl is running unopposed in West St. Louis County, but apparently he is campaigning in Kansas City, Jefferson City, Osage

Beach and Jefferson City. Just like the previous reporting periods Diehl is flying out of town to campaign. Also you get hungry campaigning, but almost \$2,000 for food at Café Napoli in one day has to include some nice wine, don't you think?

If I owned a restaurant located in Diehl's district I'd be a little pissed he was spending so much money to eat out of his district.

As with all of his other campaign finance reports filed in 2012, Diehl continues to spend a lot of money on political consultants. In one month he has dropped another \$10,000 for political consultants to advise him how to run against nobody.

Over the last four years he has spent over \$72,000 for political consultants to run against no one. During that same period of time he also put on a large addition to his house. I'm not saying there is any connection here, but some cynics might wonder if there was a laundering operation here...but of course not me.

DIEHL IN THE PLAYOFFS! Apparently Diehl was able to leave his campaign strategy of running against nobody to his highly paid consultants for a few days and attend Cardinal playoff baseball games and MU football games courtesy of well known lobbyists. Diehl went to baseball games on October 8 and October 18 on tickets provided by John Bardgett, a big tobacco lobbyist in Jefferson City. Another lobbyist provided Diehl with \$140 worth of MU football tickets on October 27.

John Diehl would like you to believe he is a regular guy, but so far in 2012 he has accepted \$4,684 in free stuff from lobbyists.

HERE ARE THE 2013 CHESTERFIELD MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES:

Mayor: With current mayor, Bruce Geiger, deciding not to seek reelection. Current councilmen **Bob Nation** in Ward-4 and **Matt Segal** in Ward-1 have filed for the city's top spot.



Bob Nation



an unhappy Matt Segal at a P-PW meeting

Back in May there was a Public Hearing before a City Council meeting concerning the city setting up a Community Improvement District special 1% sales for the new outlet

mall planned by the Missouri River. (These are called CIDs and are also known as Commercial Improvement District Taxes.)

Residents at the meeting spoke overwhelmingly against the tax, saying it was unfair to other stores and shopping centers that already exist and were paying taxes. Also it was said how in this economy people don't need more taxes. Even a former mayor had a letter read to the City Council against the planned tax.

During the meeting Mayor Geiger and Councilmen Segal and Randy Logan lectured the people speaking on why the tax was a good idea. Geiger telling residents that their opinion was wrong, troubled me...at least until I heard Segal and Logan speak. They all but called the residents stupid morons. When Segal stopped talking someone from the crowded chamber shouted out, "Are you on their payroll?"

Then Councilman Derek Grier joined in with Logan and Segal and also sounded like a jerk.

The heckler had a valid point, especially since I agreed with points being raised by the residents. I wrote a column for Patch where I wrote that the performance of Segal, Logan and Grier reminded me of the musical Camelot when the king sang "What Do the Simple Folk Do?"

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/outlet-mall-opposition-gives-a-show>

The display soured me on all three of these councilmen. I have to give Bob Nation my early endorsement. At last Nation knew enough to shut up and let the people speak even if he voted for the CID tax.

Doing what St. Louis County can't do: Yes as a simple person not working for a large county government I have done something that no one at St. Louis County could do when they hired Collector of Revenue Stacy Bailey only to find out she had not paid her personal property tax since 2008. I will check all the candidates and see if they have paid their real estate and personal property taxes.

Since buying his house on Strawbridge Court Segal has paid his property taxes well in advance every year. He leases his cars and the leasing company has on time.

This year Bob Nation even paid his real estate taxes and personal property taxes faster than Segal.

There have been no lawsuits filed against Segal or Nation.

Nation beats Segal on my PC Grades of Politicians Cars. Nation has a B with a Lexus and a Toyota. Segal has a B- for having two sensible cars and a BMW.

Also Nation is the best candidate when it comes to thick skin. Segal was one of the councilman who complained about coverage by Patch.com under editor Jean Whitney. Nation did not seem to be bothered by coverage that provided two sides on local issues.

In Ward 1 so far only Adelaida Peterson has filed to fill Segal's seat. She is 32-year-old and won the Mrs. Missouri International beauty Contest in 2012. She will compete in the Mrs. International Beauty Contest in July of 2013 in Chicago. She is on record as being a strong opponent to human trafficking, which currently is not an issue inside the city limits of Chesterfield, but who knows what the new Outlet Malls will bring.



She has no lawsuits in her past, owes \$334 on two sensible automobiles (a Toyota and a Dodge mini-van) by the end of the year. Her home on Wellesley Place Drive is still on the tax rolls under the name of Yi Hu.

Ward-2 incumbent Derek Grier is the only candidate who has filed to date. Grier has paid all taxes over a month in advance. There has never had any legal action against him. He gets an A- for PC Correct Autos, as he drives a sensible good mileage low-end Mazda.

Ward-3 has only Daniel I. Hurt of Emerald Crest Court on the ballot so far. Hurt is a former city councilman, serving for 20 years. He lost to Bruce Geiger in the race for mayor to fill the two years remaining on John Nations four-year term. (Nations abandoned his job to take over the Metro Transit, despite having no experience in the transit industry.) Hurt lost to Geiger 3,711 to 3,075.



In the last 12 years Hurt was a month late in paying his real estate taxes once, in 2004. Hurt normally pays his personal property taxes on the last day of the year. He gets an "A" for PC of automobiles owned. He has two 17-year-old models, a Buick and a Mazda, a 15-year-old Jeep and a four-year-old Ford.

There is a race in Ward-4 with Bruce DeGroot and Pari Sheth having filed to replace Nation, both are lawyers. DeGroot has served on the city's planning commission. In a 2008 civil case **DeGroot** had a \$30,000 judgment against him, which he appealed and lost. In 2011 Degroot was six months late in paying his personal property tax bill of \$474.97. In 2011 he paid his real



estate taxes on December 31. He gets an "A" on PC for autos owned, with a 12-year-old Toyota van, a 10-year-old GMC Yukon and a six-year-old Jeep.

Sheth, whose full first name is Paritosh, is a lawyer and has had a problem on paying his personal property taxes on time. He was almost a year late in 2011 on paying \$851 in personal property taxes. In 2006 he was 6 ½ months late in paying \$679 in personal property taxes. He



was 1 ½ years late in paying his 2005 taxes. He was six weeks overdue in paying his 2003 taxes. As bad as Sheth has been at paying his personal property taxes, his real estate taxes have always been paid on time.

He gets a C+ for PC correctness in cars. He has a Lexus and Infiniti (overpriced Toyota and Nissan) and a 2005 Dodge minivan.

This one is a tossup, huh? Both are lawyers...just what we need more lawyers in government. Plus both have had problems paying their taxes on time.

HOW THE NOVEMBER VOTE WENT IN WEST COUNTY: WHERE IS THE MOST CONSERVATIVE PRECINCT IN VERY CONSERVATIVE WEST COUNTY? IS IT IN TOWN AND COUNTRY OR CHESTERFIELD?

Town and Country falls into three different Townships, the most T&C precincts are in the Missouri River Township followed by three precincts in the Creve Coeur Township two precincts in Maryland Heights Township. Chesterfield residents are in the Chesterfield, Missouri River, Lafayette and Maryland Heights townships. Some of the precincts are included with others in the Election Commission results but it gives you a pretty good idea how the voting went in the city.

Looking at the election returns by polling places which included precincts in either the City of Town and Country or Chesterfield we were able to come up with which city was the most conservative.

In Presidential politics Town and Country won by a large margin. Mitt Romney got 72.13% of the vote in Town and Country and just 63.87% of the vote in Chesterfield. However several polling places in Chesterfield were even more conservative than the most right wing voters in Town and Country.

We will start with Town and Country. You might think all the big houses in Ward 4 along Conway and Ladue Roads that include Bellerive Country Grounds and Todd Akin's old homestead would be the most conservative off areas in T&C. You would be wrong.

The most conservative voting areas in Town and Country are on the east side of the city in Ward-1. Although honestly there is not much difference from the most conservative and most liberal areas in T&C, other than a few percentage points. They all went heavily for Romney and Akin.

With 76.38% of the vote for Romney and 63.42% of the vote for Akin voters who lived in Missouri River Township Precincts 39 & 56 located from Ballas Road east to Bopp Road and including some subdivisions off of Bopp Road in Frontenac win the crown as most conservative. Their polling place is at Special School District Headquarters on Clayton Road.

The voters living along the I-270 service road, Clayton Road from Ballas west across I-270 and in the subdivisions off of the South Forth Outer Road between Mason and I-270 would have won the title of Most Conservative and Most Republican if it had not

been those ultra liberal, tree and Bambi hugging Christian Scientists living in the apartments and houses on the campus of Principia High School.

The most liberal voting area in Town and Country...and it is hard to call them liberal...goes to Missouri River Precincts 3 and 67 where votes from unincorporated sections of St. Louis County between Weidman and Hwy 141 are also included in the election results. This area delivered a whopping 31.32% of the vote for President Obama and 41.87% of the vote for Claire McCaskill. The T&C subdivisions in this area include Manderleigh, Kings Cove, Brookmill and the Willow Bend Apartments. The polling place is the Hindu center on Weidman Road.

Here are the vote totals from T&C: (note how the big vote for Mitt did not transfer to Todd.)

Total from T&C Precincts Obama 2,055 (27.87%) Romney 5,292 (72.13%)
Total from T&C Precincts McCaskill 2,694 (37.46%) Akin 4,199 (58.40%)

The most right wing voting precincts in CHESTERFIELD go to Chesterfield Township Precinct 02 and 28, located in the land of 63005. The polling place is the Monarch Fire Station Number 5. It delivered a 77.96% of the votes for Mitt Romney and 63.35% for Akin. This was a greater margin than even in the most right wing poll place in T&C by 1.5%. It also beat out the most conservative voting precincts in Wildwood and Ladue.

The big difference between Chesterfield and Town and Country is that in Chesterfield some polling places actually voted in favor of President Obama and Senator McCaskill. Obama carried one precinct while McCaskill won at 17 polling places in Chesterfield, representing a lot of precincts.

The liberal precinct in Chesterfield was Maryland Heights 01 voting at the Monarch Fire District Administrative Offices on Olive. Obama won with 52.46%. The second best polling place for Obama in Chesterfield was at the River Bend School where he got 48.44% of the vote to Romney's 51.56%.

I have to think that Jonathan Dine, the Libertarian candidate, getting more than four-percent in most places was a result of Republican voters who could not bring themselves to vote for Claire McCaskill but were not going to vote for Todd Akin come hell or high water. I think this was the case with some Republicans but especially female Republicans.

The overall vote in Chesterfield was:

Obama 10,871 (36.13%) Romney 19,214 (63.87%)
McCaskill 13,622 (46.03%) Akin 14,675 (49.59%) Dine (Lib) 1,293 (4.37%)

TOWN AND COUNTRY

PRESIDENT	Obama	Romney	
All Missouri River Twsp	8,141 (34.48%)	15,199 (64.38%)	
Town and Country Precincts			
MR 3, 4, 59, 60, 67	453 (31.32%)	993 (68.68%)	Hindu Center Weidman Rd
MR 9, 29, 43	312 (30.17%)	722 (69.82%)	Town & Country City Hall
MR 39, 56	102 (23.61%)	330 (76.38%)	Special School District
MR 25, 31, 44, 61	414 (28.01%)	1064 (71.98%)	Good Shepherd Church
MR 48, 66	196 (29.69%)	464 (70.31%)	Mason Ridge School
	1477 (29.24%)	3573 (70.75%)	
All Creve Coeur Twsp	11,219 (52.79%)	9,681 (45.55%)	
CC 20, 21,26 MR 2	262 (24.82%)	817 (75.18%)	Delmar Baptist Church
All Maryland Hts Twsp	8,605 (49.20%)	8,600 (49.17%)	
MD HTS 35, 51, 55	202 (24.24%)	631 (75.76%)	B'Nai Amoona Synagogue
MD HTS 54, 56	114 (29.61%)	271 (70.39%)	B'Nai Amoona Synagogue
	316 (25.94%)	902 (74.06%)	
Total from T&C Precincts	2,055 (27.87%)	5,292 (72.13%)	

SENATE:	McCaskill	Akin	Dine (lib)
All Missouri River Twsp	10,351(44.99%)	11,579 (50.32%)	1,000 (4.35%)
MR 3, 4, 59,60, 67	598 (41.87%)	768 (53.78%)	62 (4.34%)

MR 9, 29, 43	395 (38.68%)	598 (58.57%)	28 (2.74%)
MR 39, 56	134 (31.82%)	267 (63.42%)	20 (4.75%)
MR 25, 31, 44, 61	543 (37.73%)	840 (58.37%)	56 (3.89%)
MR 48, 66	243 (38.51%)	366 (58.00%)	22 (3.48%)
	1913 (38.72%)	2839 (57.46%)	188 (3.80%)

All Creve Coeur Twsp 12,927 (62.7%) 6,883 (33.10%) 918 (4.42%)

	McCaskill	Akin	Dine
City of T&C Precincts			
CC 20,21,56 MR2	346 (32.79%)	646 (61.23%)	63 (5.97%)

All Maryland Hts Twsp 10,003 (58.22%) 6352 (36.97%) 792 (4.61%)

City of T&C Precincts			
MD HTS 35, 51, 55	292 (35.52%)	502 (61.07%)	28 (3.40%)
MD HTS 54, 56	143 (38.33%)	212 (56.83%)	18 (4.82%)
	435 (36.40%)	714 (59.74%)	46 (3.84%)

Total from T&C Precincts 2,694 (37.46%) 4,199 (58.40%) 297 (4.13%)

CHESTERFIELD

PRESIDENT OBAMA ROMNEY

All Chesterfield Twsp 6,353 (29.19%) 15,182 (69.76%)

City of Chesterfield Precincts

Chesterfield 02, 28	275 (22.03%)	973 (77.96%)	Monarch Fire Sta 5
Chesterfield 8, 32, 33	345 (25.08%)	988 (74.11%)	St. L Co Govt Center West
Che 10,14, 31,36,Laf 31	485 (33.40%)	967 (66.59%)	Lord of Life Lutheran
Chesterfield 12, 41	306 (35.01%)	568 (64.98%)	Sachs Library
Chesterfield 15, 16	426 (29.27%)	1,029 (70.72%)	Wildhorse Elem Sch
Chesterfield 18, 30	397 (33.41%)	791 (66.58%)	Jewish Comm Center
Che 19, 42, 48, 58	666 (40.98%)	959 (59.01%)	Chesterfield Comm Church
Chesterfield 22, 45	386 (45.14%)	469 (54.85%)	Chesterfield City Hall

Chesterfield 37, 59, 01	283 (22.26%)	988 (77.84%) St. Thomas UC Church
	3,569 (31.58%)	7,732 (68.42%)

All Lafayette Twsp	7,791 (36.69%)	13,133 (61.84%)
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City of Chesterfield Lafayette Precincts

Lafayette 1, Che 44,52	261 (40.15%)	389 (59.84%) Highcroft Elem School
Lafayette 6, 16	448 (38.25%)	723 (61.74%) Parkway Early Child Center
Lafayette 8, 11, 53	329 (28.28%)	834 (71.71%) Parkway West H.S.
Lafayette 12	225 (44.73%)	278 (55.26%) Chesterfield City Hall
Lafayette 14, 33	579 (40.06%)	866 (59.94%) Parkway West Middle
Lafayette 26	35 (29.16%)	85 (70.84%) St.L Co Govt Center West
Lafayette 28, 34	236 (28.39%)	581 (71.61%) Claymont Elem Sch
Lafayette 29	328 (40.59%)	480 (59.40%) Cedar Mill Bath & Tennis
Lafayette 30	303 (41.05%)	435 (58.95%) Highcroft Elem Sch
Lafayette 32	279 (36.80%)	479 (63.20%) Baxter Ridge Clubhouse
Lafayette 37	41 (27.70%)	107 (72.30%) St.L Co Govt Center West
Lafayette 41, 42	389 (29.35%)	936 (70.65%) Kehrs Mill Elem
Lafayette 51, 52	54 (44.62%)	67 (55.38%) Parkway Early Child Center
	3,507 (35.90%)	6260 (64.10%)

All Maryland Hts Twsp	8,605 (49.20%)	8,600 (49.17%)
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All City of Chesterfield Maryland Heights Precincts

Maryland Hts 1	159 (54.26%)	134 (44.96%) Monarch Fire Admin
Maryland Hts 2	267 (46.27%)	310 (53.73%) King of Kings Lutheran
Maryland Hts 3	262 (45.09%)	319 (54.91%) Green Trails Elem
Maryland Hts 4	264 (43.27%)	346 (56.73%) Monarch Fire Admin
Maryland Hts 5, 7, 26	374 (46.81%)	425 (53.19%) King of Kings Lutheran
Maryland Hts 19, 27	437 (48.44%)	465 (51.56%) Riverbend Elementary
Maryland Hts 24, MR 65	222 (41.11%)	318 (58.88%) Green Trails Elem
Maryland Hts 64	146 (39.45%)	232 (60.55%) Riverbend Elementary
Maryland Hts 65, 16	99 (40.24%)	147 (59.76%) King of Kings Luth
Maryland Hts 66	16 (34.04%)	31 (65.96%) King of Kings Lutheran
	2,246 (45.16%)	2,727 (54.84%)

All Missouri River Twsp 8,141 (34.48%) 15,199 (64.38%)

City of Chesterfield Missouri River Precincts

Missouri River 10, 64	78 (45.61%)	93 (54.59%)	Chesterfield Comm Church
Missouri River 16, 17	240 (30%)	560 (70%)	Bonhomme Presbyterian
Missouri River 18,72	389 (39.77%)	589 (60.23%)	Shenadoah Elem
Missouri River 23,53,73	316 (44.31%)	397 (55.69%)	Parkway Central HS
MO River 52,74,MHT 39	219 (34.76%)	411 (65.24%)	Brookings Park Res Care
Missouri River 55	77 (36.32%)	135 (63.68%)	Bonhomme Presbyterian
Missouri River 68	230 (42.59%)	310 (57.41%)	Shenadoah Elem

1,549 (38.30%) 2,495 (61.70%)

TOTAL CITY OF CHESTERFIELD PRECINCTS:

10,871 (36.13%) 19,214 (63.87%)

SENATE: McCaskill Akin Dine (lib)

All Chesterfield Twsp 8,316 (39.06%) 11,965 (56.20%) 923 (4.34%)

City of Chesterfield Precincts

Chesterfield 02, 28	394 (32.08%)	778 (63.35%)	56 (4.56%)
Chesterfield 8, 32, 33	503 (38.28%)	738 (56.16%)	73 (5.55%)
Che 10,14, 31,36,Laf 31	608 (42.25%)	777 (54%)	54 (3.75%)
Chesterfield 12, 41	383 (44.17%)	446 (51.44%)	38 (4.38%)
Chesterfield 15, 16	572 (39.80%)	806 (56.08%)	59 (4.10%)
Chesterfield 18, 30	514 (43.89%)	604 (51.57%)	53 (4.52%)
Che 19, 42, 48, 58	812 (51.26%)	723 (45.64%)	49 (3.09%)
Chesterfield 22, 45	451 (52.74%)	356 (41.63%)	48 (5.61%)
Chesterfield 37, 59, 01	407 (32.98%)	778 (63.04%)	49 (3.97%)

4,644 (41.72%) 6,006 (53.96%) 479 (4.30%)

All Lafayette Twsp 9,658 (46.48%) 10,087 (48.54%) 962 (4.63%)

City of Chesterfield Lafayette Precincts

Lafayette 1, Che 44,52	323 (49.46%)	304 (46.55%)	26 (3.98%)
Lafayette 6, 16	564 (49.08%)	517 (45%)	68 (5.91%)
Lafayette 8, 11, 53	443 (39.09%)	635 (56.04%)	55 (4.85%)
Lafayette 12	261 (52.09%)	214 (42.71%)	26 (5.18%)
Lafayette 14, 33	687 (48.35%)	690 (48.56%)	44 (3.09%)
Lafayette 26	52 (42.62%)	62 (50.81%)	8 (6.55%)
Lafayette 28, 34	310 (41.22%)	413 (54.92%)	29 (3.86%)
Lafayette 29	385 (47.83%)	373 (46.45%)	45 (5.60%)
Lafayette 30	373 (51.16%)	326 (44.72%)	30 (4.11%)
Lafayette 32	357 (48.11%)	358 (48.25%)	27 (3.64%)
Lafayette 37	55 (37.93%)	81 (55.86%)	9 (6.20%)
Lafayette 41, 42	511 (39.49%)	730 (56.41%)	53 (4.09%)
Lafayette 51, 52	69 (57.02%)	48 (39.67%)	4 (3.30%)
	4,390 (45.89%)	4,751 (49.67%)	424 (4.43%)
All Maryland Hts Twps	10,003 (58.22%)	6,352 (36.97%)	792 (4.61%)

City of Chesterfield Maryland Heights Precincts

Maryland Hts 1	175 (58.92%)	109 (36.70%)	13 (4.38%)
Maryland Hts 2	312 (54.54%)	233 (40.73%)	27 (4.72%)
Maryland Hts 3	313 (53.87%)	239 (41.13%)	29 (4.98%)
Maryland Hts 4	324 (53.55%)	254 (41.98%)	27 (4.46%)
Maryland Hts 5, 7, 26	431 (54.55%)	313 (40.13%)	46 (5.82%)
Maryland Hts 19, 27	512 (57.72%)	328 (36.98%)	47 (5.29%)
Maryland Hts 24, MR65	292 (53.38%)	222 (40.58%)	28 (5.12%)
Maryland Hts 64	159 (42.97%)	203 (54.86%)	16 (4.32%)
Maryland Hts 65, 16	112 (45.16%)	122 (49.19%)	14 (5.64%)
Maryland Hts 66	20 (43.47%)	26 (56.53%)	0
	2,650 (53.57%)	2,049 (41.43%)	247 (4.99%)

All Missouri River Twsp	10,351(44.99%)	11,579 (50.32%)	1,000 (4.35%)
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City of Chesterfield Missouri River Township Precincts

Missouri River 10, 64	83 (49.40%)	78 (46.42%)	7 (4.17%)
Missouri River 16, 17	319 (40.48%)	439 (55.71%)	30 (3.81%)

Missouri River 18,72	486 (51.81%)	415 (44.24%)	37 (3.94%)
Missouri River 23,53,73	399 (56.51%)	285 (40.37%)	22 (3.12%)
MO River 52,74,MHT 39	294 (47.65%)	306 (49.59%)	17 (2.75%)
Missouri River 55	87 (42.23%)	115 (55.82%)	4 (1.94%)
Missouri River 68	270 (51.23%)	231 (43.83%)	26 (4.93%)
	1,938 (49.06%)	1,869 (47.31%)	143 (3.62%)
TOTAL CITY of CHESTERFIELD:			
	13,622 (46.03%)	14,675 (49.59%)	1,293 (4.37%)

JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS...THE WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT GIVES US A TRDITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAROL STORY, COMPLETE WITH SCROOGE, MRS. CRATCHIT AND TINY TIM:

I have to admit being a product of the Webster Groves School District from kindergarten through high school I was more than a little embarrassed of the lunch lady being fired from the Hudson School in Rock Hill for slipping a poor kid some hot lunches, instead of a cheese sandwich.



I normally expect stupid management policies and wasting money coming from the Rockwood School District and sometimes the Parkway School District. However WGSD used perfect timing just before Christmas in not immediately stepping in and stopping the firing of lunch lady Dianne Brame to make matters worse. This created a perfect public relations nightmare and turned the kind act of a lady who was more concerned with a poor kid getting a hot lunch once in a while over her job. They also created a modern day version of The Christmas Carol.

Of course a manager with Chartwells (the company with the contract to provide lunch room service for the Webster Schools) is clearly in the role of Scrooge. Instead of three ghosts visiting them, it was two television news reporters and a newspaper reporter.

The Webster Groves School District also plays a part in this mess. First from a PR stand point, they should have jumped on this after getting the first whiff of trouble and forced Chartwells to hire Brame back. Instead they issued a statement claiming Brame did not work for the school district, but a contractor and it was out of their hands.

They then made things worse by saying how Brame was offered to demotion and transfer to another school. This allowed Brame to tell the press how her husband recently died and how she lost her house and now car and has to take a bus to work and that Hudson School is the only one along a bus line. (The car she lost was a 21-year-old Ford.)

Mrs. Brame lives in an apartment off of Manchester near the commercial area that routinely floods in the City of Brentwood.

Mrs. Brame is clearly in the role of Cratchit.

Scrooge: What give a square of soggy lasagna, a spoonful of tossed salad and a 2 inch by 2 inch piece of peach cobbler to that boy who didn't pay his \$1? What do you think this company is; some charity?

Ms. Cratchit: Sir, everyday some children are out sick with colds and the like. We always have some extra food that we have to throw out. He is a poor hungry boy.

Scrooge: Well, then throw it out! We can't have Chartwells looking like Federal handout program! We set rules and they will be followed.

So even though Mrs. Brame got her job back the next day after the bad press hit the fan it has come at a cost. If you Google the event, you will see newspapers and websites as far away as London have run the story.

For five years in the 1970s I was a cop in Rock Hill. There were three Webster Groves School District elementary schools along Manchester Road, Schall School at Manchester and Rock Hill Roads, Hudson School one block off Manchester (behind the Walgreen's store) and Warson Woods Elementary two blocks off Manchester on Bennett Drive and Flanders Avenue. Now just Hudson serves the same area the three used to draw students from.

In statements to the press the WGSD has said that Mrs. Brame should have notified someone at the school about the problem with the boy not being signed up for a free

lunch program should have been on to that problem and the blame should not be transferred to the lunch lady.

A RECENT EMAIL TO THE CHANNEL-2 NEWS PEOPLE...WHY DON'T TV NEWSPEOPLE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE?:

How can one of you reporters be standing in front of an elementary school in the middle of Rock Hill, MO and tell viewers that she is live from Webster Groves?

St. Louis is made up of communities. If TV news operations claim to be providing "local news" they ought to know where they are being local from.

I would expect one of the young kids working at KSDK to make mistakes like this. It is sad when it is KTVI.

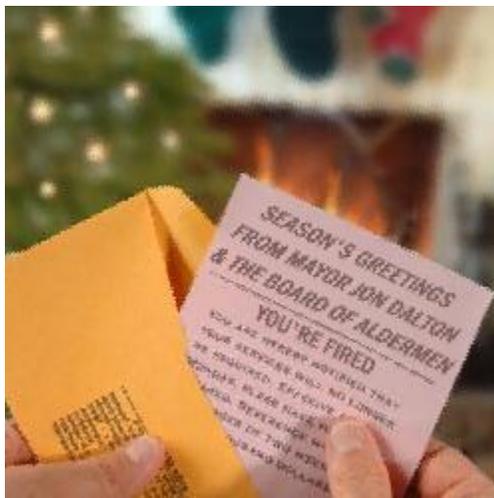
You claim to have a segment titled "My Neighborhood" but your reporters don't know which neighborhood they are in.

John Hoffmann

The Hudson Elementary School is four blocks from the City of Ladue. It is also much closer to Warson Woods and Glendale than it is Webster Groves. Getting the small stuff right is no longer important to many members of the media.

OTHER GREAT ST.LOUIS COUNTY SCROOGE STORIES OF RECENT PAST:

2009 Town and Country: Mayor Jon Dalton's budget for 2010 called for the layoffs of three women employees on January 1, 2010. When the decision was made in November of 2009, Dalton was giving two subdivisions close to \$10,000 for "beautification projects" at the entrance of their subdivision. One of the subdivisions was the Bellerive Country Club grounds, which consists of huge houses owned by multi-millionaires on a golf course.



Dalton was okay with firing a single mother who had worked for the city for eight-years, plus a top rated police dispatcher and a recently promoted police clerk and at the same time to hand out discretionary funds to millionaires to pay for projects on private property. (None of the fired workers were voters in Town and Country.)



St. Louis Post-Dispatch columnist Bill McClellan wrote about this and framed the column in the form of a new age Christmas Carol. McClellan did a telephone interview with Dalton about the layoffs. Dalton made the mistake to comment what great reception his cell phone had as he was on a ski lift in Colorado. Well, this just added to the “Have and have-nots” conflicts in McClellan’s column as Bill mentioned where Dalton was while the women were in a panic trying to find new jobs.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/scrooge-crossroads-in-town-and-country-stl-sunday/article_0aeacc74-0ab1-54d3-8916-fdc85a62d8c4.html

I had gone through Dalton’s budget and found about \$150,000 in items that could be cut that would have saved the jobs. Bill showed up at the next Board of Aldermen meeting to hear the debate on my replacement budget, which went down to defeat on a 6-2 vote.

At the meeting Alderman Fred Meyland-Smith contacted McClellan to tell him he did not like his first column and the fact he mentioned that Dalton was on a ski lift when they spoke. He called McClellan “unprofessional.” Dalton had complained that newspaper coverage of personnel matters were “undignified.”

Bill’s next column pointed out his exchange with Meyland-Smith.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/in-search-of-elusive-christmas-spirit/article_aa0852e4-2753-5f6e-8d0c-0c086eed620c.html

The Town and Country Board of Aldermen had a chance to remove that Scrooge image, but apparently enjoyed their new role so much that they laid off two police officers a few months later, despite a \$17,000,000 surplus in the city’s budget.

2011 Charlie Dooley threatened to close County Parks and lay off Park Department employees. This appeared to be a ploy by Dooley to get a new park tax passed. I looked at the budget and was able to find at least \$1.75 million that could be easily cut to save park jobs and as much as \$5 million. The cuts started with three jobs which paid over \$300,000 that went to people associated with the County Democratic Party, the Dooley reelection campaign or a relative of Dooley’s campaign manager. The jobs were created during a “hiring freeze”



Dooley and his chief aide Gary Earls had also said the County would have to sell off the elk and buffalo in Lone Elk Park.

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/help-redo-the-2012-county-budget-and-save-a-park-or-two>

Public outrage caused the layoffs to be reduced and no parks were closed and the Elk and Buffalo still have a home at Lone Elk Park.

A year later while working on the 2013 budget the Dooley administration admitted there is now funding for the entire County Parks Department.

2011...Here is another one that like the lunch lady being fired...made news around the world. St. Charles Mayor Sally Faith upholding the firing of Laura Coppinger, who played the Sugarplum Fairy in the St. Charles Old Town District for the last six Christmases. Here is what I wrote about it for Patch.com.

Sugarplum and Other Fairies

An email exchange over the Sugarplum fairy leads to more questions than answers.

By John Hoffmann

Sometimes I cannot keep my opinion to myself. I recently got hooked on the articles, Bill McClellan's column and television news reports on the Sugarplum Fairy incident in St. Charles. I know this isn't specifically about Chesterfield, but Sugarplum Fairies are part of all of us.

Laura Coppinger for six years performed in the Old St. Charles business district as the Sugarplum Fairy. This year the city decided to hire the Christmas performers as part

time city employees instead of using a contract service. This meant they need to take a required city drug test.



When Coppinger went for her drug test she filled the cup with her urine, then deposited the rest of her urine in the toilet and did what we all do. She flushed. She was told by flushing the toilet her sample could not be accepted and she would need to wait several hours and give another sample. Upon hearing this Coppinger let out an expletive deleted or perhaps several. Apparently the drug testing company called the St. Charles Human Resources department upset over Coppinger's vocal opinion and she was told she would not be offered the job.

Lots of bad publicity then flowed in the direction of the City of St. Charles. Mayor Sally Faith made a statement that the city could not hire a person who used such inappropriate language.

Now I have no idea what Coppinger said, but have worked for 30 years for city and county governments, I cannot believe it could be any worse than what is said daily in St. Charles by at least some of the 112 cops, 80 firefighters, not to mention the street department and sewer employees. If Mayor Faith started getting rid of city employees for uttering some vulgar language on occasion very little services would be performed by city employees because they would not be very many of them around.

Last week I sent an email to the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce and sent a copy to Mayor Faith. I mentioned that I planned to skip going to St. Charles this year at Christmas time because of what the city is doing to a person who perform well for the last six years over an isolated incident.

Here is part of an email I received from Mayor Faith:

*"This individual chose to use extensive profanity numerous times with medical facility staff and again continued this language with the City Human Resources staff. The City received a complaint from the facility with regard to her conduct. In fact, I would go even further in underscoring that we would not hire anyone to work for the City of St. Charles who behaved in such an unacceptable manner. **So, as a***

prospective employee of the City, she was never fired, as she was never actually hired to participate in the 2011 festival. “

In turn I sent mayor Faith this email:

Thanks Mayor for the response.

However since the actor was not a city employee I don't believe this would be a personnel matter. You have to hire them before everyone can hide behind the "personnel matter" banner. I hate to see you fall on your sword and hurt yourself politically and St. Charles in the eyes of the Metro area by not saying what happened if it would tell a different side of the story. I think this story has reached the point where the Citizens of St. Charles would probably like to know.

Thanks again for the reply.

John Hoffmann

My point was, you can't comment on something and say in writing that the person said terrible things but then say you can't say exactly what they said because it was a personnel issue, when the person is not an employee.

I got this answer from mayor Faith:

John,

Well, it is a "personnel matter" because it happened between this person and our personnel. For now, that is all I can say. I hope in time you will understand and eventually agree with the decision.

In the meantime, I hope you continue to enjoy all the holiday festivities that we have to offer because I think this is a great City.

Thanks,

Sally

Now Mayor Faith says because someone said something to a city employee she can't say what it was. That is interesting, since police and fire department reports are open public records and quote people talking to city employees all the time.

This would have been a perfect situation for Mayor Faith to mediate, obtain a written apology from the Sugarplum Fairy to the people at the testing company and the human resource folks. Give the fairy a letter of caution attached to her employment. Put the drug testing contractor on notice to post signs informing people not to flush the toilet or lose the city's business.

I recently spent a couple of weeks with couples from Ireland and England. They used the phrase “they are away with the fairies” to nicely describe some people others might referred to as crazy, delusional or difficult. On this matter I think Mayor Faith is maybe away with the fairies.

2012: And that brings us to last week with the Lunch Lady firing.

THE FBI REPORTS A THEFT OCCURS EVERY 15 SECONDS...WHY CAN'T RICH KOSTER MAKE THEM QUIT CALLING ME WITH THIS RECORDED SALES PITCH?

Have you gotten the recorded sales pitched for an alarm system that states with “The FBI reports that a theft occurs every 15 seconds...? I get them two and three times a week. The calls are the same, but my Caller-ID shows different names and telephone numbers for every call.

They keep coming despite the fact I have been on the Missouri No Call List from day-one. The keep coming even after I hit “2” for “put me on your no call list.” They keep coming despite my constant complaints filed with the Missouri Attorney General’s Office.

How difficult is it for the State of Missouri to shut down this broiler room operation?

CARTOONS:







Milton Bradley releases the 2013 edition of The Game of Life.

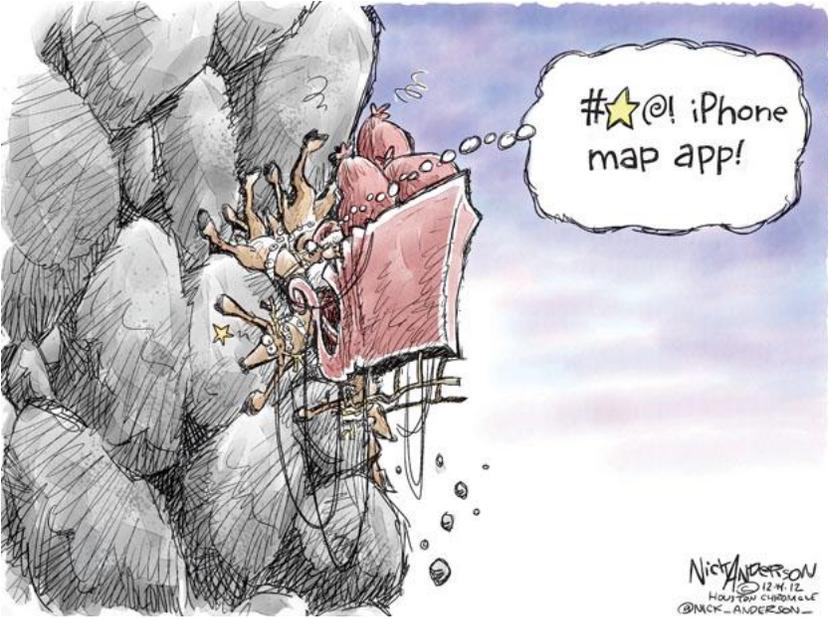


"And, it's just minutes away from the airport."

CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN McPHERSON





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