

UNAPPROVED CHESTERFIELD NEWSLETTER 4

July 11, 2012

By John Hoffmann

WHY I HAVE STOPPED DONATING TO THE RED CROSS: I guess that having been a first responder most of my life as either a cop or fire investigator I'm drawn to the stories of people who have suddenly had their world torn apart.

Among the organizations that you always see at such personal or community disasters are the Salvation Army and the Red Cross and to some extent the Missouri Humane Society, looking after man's best friend and his horses too.

I realize that giving to charities is a very personal thing. If you had a loved one die of a specific disease you are likely to give to a charity that does research toward curing that disease. The same goes go organizations that help children.

With all the suffering and problems in the world I sometimes wonder why someone gives millions of dollars so a museum can buy already existing paintings, but hey who am I or anyone else to tell someone what to do with their money.

The top three charities on my list for modest contributions several times a year are the Salvation Army, Red Cross and local Missouri Humane Society (the national Humane Society tends to want to save every animal in the world, whether it's a deer in the woods or sheep from the farm).

The Salvation Army has very low overhead, responds to natural disasters, fires, provides shelters for battered women, treatment and housing for drug addicts. You don't see any Salvation Army leaders getting rich from their jobs. You could say much the same about Goodwill Industries.

The American Red Cross has done so much good over the years across the country in so many ways. Until recently it was hard for me not to write them a modest check once or twice a year.

My check writing to the American Red Cross stopped and my letter writing began in May. Here is what started it.

In May there was a news article about the St. Louis Regional Chapter of the American Red Cross giving a lifesaving award to Town and Country police officer, Cpl. Chris Moore for pulling a man from the crash wreckage of a burning vehicle on Mason Road almost a year earlier. Moore had already received a number of awards from the city and local fire district. He always modestly said the only reason he got the award is because he showed up first at the accident, otherwise any other officer working would have gotten the award.

But what struck me as strange was the photo that ran with the article. Moore, the hero was not in the center of the photo. Instead Town and Country mayor and longtime tobacco lobbyist Jon Dalton was in the center of the photo.



This did not surprise me. Dalton is a typical politician and can smell a camera with a shutter about to open within 3,000 feet. What shocked me was in the article it mentioned that Dalton is on the Board of Directors of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross is an organization that exists to help people. Here is the list of tobacco companies that Jon Dalton has recently worked for or is still working for as a lobbyist in Jefferson City.

COMMONWEALTH BRANDS Now Imperial Tobacco

USA Gold cigarettes
Sonoma cigarettes
Davidoff cigarettes
McClintock cigarettes

Premier cigarettes
Rave cigarettes
Backwoods cigars
Dutch Masters cigars

KING MAKERS

Checkers cigarettes
Hi-Val cigarettes
Gold Crest cigarettes
Deluxe cigarettes
Ace cigarettes
Checkers Roll Your Own tobacco
Hi-Val Roll Your Own tobacco

LIGGETT GROUP

Liggett Select cigarettes
Eve cigarettes
Grand Prix cigarettes
Quest cigarettes
Pyramid cigarettes
USA cigarettes
Tourney cigarettes
Yours cigarettes
Silver Eagle cigarettes
Bronson cigarettes
Montego cigarettes

PREMIER BRANDS

1st Class cigarettes
Ice Menthol cigarettes
Shield cigarettes
Ultra Buy cigarettes
Wildhorse cigarettes
Superior Snuff
Superior Chewing tobacco

If you check the Missouri Ethics Commission website for lobbyist you will no longer see that Dalton is an active lobbyist for a tobacco company. His last listing was in 2010. The Commonwealth Brands was purchased by the British firm, Imperial Tobacco was his last active “official” client.

Dalton is listed on the Lewis-Rice law firm website as the lone firm’s lone lobbyist in Jefferson City (they refer to lobbyist as a “government affairs specialist”).

To avoid controversy Dalton now lists his last tobacco client, Imperial Tobacco under the name of his Jefferson City office secretary, Shannon Hawk.

Perhaps this is not the first time you have read about Dalton. I mentioned him in two Patch.com columns concerning the seizure of widow Opal Henderson's property and business on South Broadway in St. Louis through the use of eminent domain.

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/west-county-big-shots-still-have-not-anted-up-to-widow-in-eminent-domain-case>

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/land-snatching-just-has-cost-some-west-county-folks-1-million-and-counting>

Snidely Jon Dalton was the driving force behind the Icehouse District nightclub district. It was Dalton's law firm of Lewis-Rice that represented the St. Louis Land Authority in obtaining Henderson's property. Two years later when a St. Louis jury ruled that Henderson was cheated, Dalton and the various limited liability corporations he had formed or joined with did not pay Henderson, instead they appealed the verdict. It was not until five months after the appeal was upheld did the group finally pay Henderson.

Guys like Dalton and Chesterfield's John Bardgett, Jr. who lobbies for Phillip Morris, are doing a great job at keeping Missouri's cigarette tax the lowest in the country, while the Show-me-State has one of the highest smoking rates in the nation.

So by putting Dalton on its board of directors apparently the St. Louis Chapter of the American Red Cross is now approving of cigarette smoking and snatching land from elderly widows.

I looked up the directors of the local chapter and the national Red Cross organizations and wrote letters saying why they no longer would be receiving my modest donations several times a year.

<http://www.redcrossstl.org/AboutUs/Leadership.aspx>

<http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/Governance/Number3.pdf>

To date I have received two letters back from the Red Cross. One was from Gen. Josue J. Robles, President and CEO of USAA Insurance Company and the other was from Cindy Erickson, the executive director of the St. Louis Chapter. Both thanked me for my letters and made no further comment.

Perhaps you would like to send a letter?

TASTE POLICE FORCE REPAINT: The people who rescued an abandoned Dairy Queen from the landscape at 14325 Oliver Blvd near Woods Mill Road in Chesterfield got a little set back on June 15 courtesy the Chesterfield Architectural Review Board. The new owners of KimCheese deli, which is still in the works of getting all necessary permits, painted the place.

That was a big problem. The new owners painted the roof area blue with a yellow stripe. The exact same colors the two Blockbuster stores in Chesterfield used to have. The ARB was okay with the old Dairy Queen colors and even the old blue and yellow Blockbuster colors but not blue and yellow Kimcheese paint scheme.

<http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/chesterfield-board-nixes-ex-dairy-queen-paint-job#photo-10568775>

Let me see...the old DQ colors equaled no business. Perhaps a new color scheme would be appropriate.

Recently Red Lobster had to get permission to change the paint color of their front door and fix some shutters at their location in Chesterfield Commons.

It is amazing that Chesterfield being a Republican strong hold can be so anti-Reagan at times. "...government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem." Well Chesterfield government appears to be the problem for the owners of KimCheese.

TELEPHONE FUN: For those of us on the Attorney General's "No Call List" there is one exception to the law. If you are already doing business with a company they can call you.

That sounds reasonable when you consider that you might want the company that cuts your lawn to call and see if you want the fall fertilization. However that also allows a large national or multi-national company you have an account with to call you. Here is the fun I have been having with one such company that is calling our house regularly. It is always a young woman, possibly not from around these parts but clearly from a boiler room phone bank operation as they don't speak immediately when you first answer. Here is how the calls have been going:

ME: Hell-o

Kyra: Hi, this is Kyra from AT&T.

ME: Kyra, before we go any further please tell me what the letters AT&T stand for?

Kyra: Huh?

ME: You say you are from AT&T. I'm asking you to prove it. Just tell me that the letters AT&T stand for.

Kyra: Click

At last I can use being old to my advantage.

CARTOONS:



