

EX ALDERMAN NEWSLETTER 54

June 11, 2012

By John Hoffmann

WIDOW FINALLY PAID \$1.02 MILLION IN EMINENT DOMAIN CASE INVOLVING MAYOR DALTON:

The day after our latest newsletter was sent out that led with the story about Mayor Jon “Snidely Whiplash” Dalton along with other investors and the City of St. Louis, snatching the business and property of widow Opal Henderson I received an email from Chet Pleban’s office. Pleban said the widow, Opal Henderson has finally been paid for the court judgment over Dalton and other investors taking her 60-year-old business through eminent domain so they could build a nightclub district.

They took her property and later got hit with a \$1,000,000 judgment after a jury trial which they appealed and lost and then dragged their feet on paying. After snatching Opal Henderson’s property they never have started construction for the nightclubs.

The Widow Henderson got paid 36 hours after our column in the Chesterfield Patch.com about the lack of payment and 16 hours after it was posted as the lead to our Ex Alderman Newsletter 53.

Dalton’s law firm Lewis-Rice originally represented the City of St. Louis in grabbing Henderson’s property. You have to wonder how much longer Lewis-Rice is going to wait before doing what Bryan-Cave did and jettison Dalton as a partner.

ROBERT HYLAND HELPS POLICE DETECTIVES ARREST BURGLARY

SUSPECTS: The drug rehab unit at the Hyland center at St. Anthony’s Hospital was enough of a draw to get two Town and Country burglary suspects arrested. Town and Country police detectives developed Mark Davenport, 37 and Tanya Quargnenti 33, after jewelry from a May 7th burglary in the 1500 block of South Mason Road was sold to the jewelry store.

On Memorial Day the police received a tip that the suspects would be at the Robert Hyland Center at St. Anthony’s Hospital for a drug treatment appointment. (The Hyland Center is not named after Robert Hyland longtime GM of KMOX radio, but after his father, the former long time physician for the St. Louis Cardinals. The KMOX Hyland was on the Board of Directors at St. Anthony’s for years.)

Two detectives waited for the pair. When the suspects stepped on an elevator so did the detectives and made the arrest. The pair was held for 24 hours at Town and Country PD. Warrants were not issue yet by the prosecutors and the suspects were turned over to the Des Peres Public Safety Department as the duo was also wanted for burglaries in Des Peres.

POLICE OFFICER NAMED IN SEXUAL HARRASMENT LAWSUIT RESIGNS FROM POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Sgt. Chip Unterberg has resigned from the Town and Country Police Department. Sgt. Unterberg was the first named person in the sexual harassment law suit filed by former police officer Shannon Woolsey. According to the lawsuit Unterberg has suspended for one-day for his actions. We have been told that Sgt. Unterberg has taken a job in the private sector. The question is did he walk through the door or did he did a push.

From the lawsuit:

13. On or about September 21, 2003, while on duty, plaintiffs supervising sergeant Chip Unterberg, told plaintiff that he and plaintiff were obviously attracted to each other and should meet for sex once a month.

14. On or about October 29, 2003, plaintiff reported Sgt. Unterberg's conduct, including other sexually explicit and derogatory comments that he had made to plaintiff, to Capt. Gary Hoelzer and Lt. Robert Arthur. Plaintiff was asked to write out a brief statement of the incident and was told that Lt. Rick Kranz, the department designee to handle claims of sexual harassment, would investigate. On information and belief, Lt. Kranz was a good friend of Sgt Unterberg. Capt. Hoelzer and Lt. Arthur assured plaintiff that the investigation would be kept confidential and someone would go over the final report with her.

15. On information and belief, as a result of the investigation, Sgt. Unterberg was suspended for one day and had to attend a class on sexual harassment training.

16. On or about November 1, 2003, plaintiff began being shunned by nearly all the other officers in the department, indicating to her that news of the investigation into Sgt. Unterberg had leaked. Additionally, at or around that time Officer John Nienhaus called plaintiff at home to ask about the investigation into Sgt. Unterberg.

17. Plaintiff complained to Capt. Hoelzer that plaintiff had been living a nightmare of retaliation while all Sgt. Unterberg got was a slap on the wrist. No one went over the final report of the investigation with plaintiff.

18. Following her reporting of Sgt. Unterberg's sexual advances and other comments and behavior to supervisors, Plaintiff began to experience what she believed were acts of retaliation. She reported these incidents to superior officers. These incidents included. but are not limited to:

- a) defacement of a nameplate on the wall recognizing plaintiff s perfect attendance record;
- b) the envelope containing plaintiffs paycheck being opened in her mailbox; and

C) a box containing clothing from the uniform shop meant for plaintiff had a face drawn on it and the face had been stabbed repeatedly with a knife.

19- On numerous occasions in 2004, plaintiff complained to superior officers that the investigation into Sgt. Unterberg clearly had not been kept confidential and that as a result she was being shunned and retaliated against. Plaintiff was told that nothing could be done and to wait for time to pass for things to get better.

The entire lawsuit can be read in Ex Alderman Newsletter 48 at <http://johnhoffmann.net>

POSSIBLE SADIST KILLER WITH CITY'S CONTRACTOR MAKES SOUTH MASON ROAD SOUTH OF CLAYTON ROAD A BIKE ROUTE. I completely missed this until a Ward 2 resident sent me her observation of a new sign installed by the City's contractor doing the Clayton Road (wide sidewalk) on westbound Clayton Road at South Mason Road. The sign states "Bike Route" with arrows pointing to both NB and SB South Mason Road. Well NB S. Mason Road has good sight lines and the road is wide.

However Mason Road south of Clayton is filled with very real dangers starting with a double blind curve with narrow lanes and shoulders, followed by stretches with no should or deep drainage ditches, drainage ditches filled with rocks and sheer 10 foot drop offs.

Either a moron posted that "Bike Route" sign or a sadistic city contract worker did. The amazing thing when the director of public works responded to my inquiry he said changing the sign so it indicated Clayton Road was the Bike Route and not South Mason was on the contractor's "punch list." Until they get around to it the city will be sending unsuspecting bicyclists from out of the area down the Road of Death or Injury.

A week later the sign was still there. Apparently sending an unsuspecting bike rider into the Valley of Death is okay with the Director of Public Works, Ward-2 Aldermen, the Parks Commission Chair and the mayor. I'm just amazed that the job is too big for our street department worker or the Director of Public Works. If they would just unscrew the arrows it would be better.





I spoke at Monday’s Board of Aldermen meeting as asked if you are now the city of sadistic, sending unaware bicyclists down Mason Road. Craig Wilde was asked when he would remove the sign. A soft and short “tomorrow” was the answer.

WHILE WE ARE AT IT...A BIKE ROUTE? Bicyclists have every right to use Clayton Road and they certainly take advantage of it. But do we need to advertise it as a Bike Route. There is nothing like see 60 bicyclists go through a red light at Topping or fail to yield turning onto traffic service road. A resident told me last week that she had seen a first...a bicyclist on South Mason riding and texting.

DEER CAR ACCIDENTS FOR MAY SLIGHTLY DOWN: In 2011 there were nine deer-vehicle accidents in Town and Country. This year there were only seven. However the year-to-date numbers from 2011 to 2012 are still up with 31 deer killed in car crashes in 2012 versus 29 in 2011 despite shooting 288 deer this winter. Again it appears as if the deer census is a bit off.

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

May				
25	S	8	0322	SB 270 at Clayton
26	S	11	1924	WB 64 E of Mason
27	S	12	0806	Clayton Near Highland Pointe
28	S	21	0311	NB 141 E of 64
29	V	25	2051	EB Clayton Ramp to NB 141

30	S	30	0335	12300 Block South Outer 40
31	V	31	0115	WB 64 to SB 270

CONSERVATION COMMISSION STILL TALKING ABOUT DEER: I understand that Skip Mange told members of the Conservation Commission that Deer Management was being handled by Capt. Gary Hoelzer of the Police Department and the subject of deer control is not under the job description of the City Conservation Commission. In the next breath Mange suggested maybe he could get the County parks people to allow money donated for deer sterilization to take place in Queeny Park.

The city Conservation Commission is apparently having a tough time accepting the fact the discussion of giving deer hysterectomies is now off the table.

Al Gerber was at the meeting, hopefully with a calculator and a slide rule to come up with some New Al-Math on how spending \$1,200 to sterilize a deer is cheaper than spending \$400 to shoot it and donate the meat to charities.

GREEN TEAM CONTINUES TO GO AGAINST ORDINANCE: Earlier this year the Green Team Commission, where mayor/Cigarette Lobbyist Jon Dalton continues to stockpile liberal former hippies, who he hopes will vote for him...hosted a speaker on raising chickens in your backyard. Of course this practice is AGAINST THE LAW in Town and Country. I suggested they should have a speaker on increasing your gas mileage by ignoring red lights and stops signs.

Now at the next Green Team topic in June will be NEW URBANISM. The green team describes New Urbanism as; “a design movement which promotes walk able neighborhoods containing a range of housing and job types. ... Strongly influenced by urban design standards predating the automobile, New Urbanism reduces traffic congestion, increases the supply of affordable housing, and reins in suburban sprawl.”

Let me get this straight...Town and Country, one of the first cities to create urban sprawl with required one-acre residential zoning, which city leaders brag about...where politicians and residents brag how unaffordable the houses are...where all commercial and retail jobs are at the far outskirts of the city...where the car is king especially if it is a premium gasoline sucking Mercedes Benz or BMW...wants residents to attend a lecture on New Urbanism on how to build neighborhoods with cheap houses on top of each other within walking distance to jobs and schools.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR MASON RIDGE? TRUCK TRAFFIC? The complaint for four years now has been drivers using Mason Ridge Rd as a shortcut to Clayton keep running the stop sign while making right turns. The city just spent a lot of money putting in stop sign with a solar flashing red light. The only problem is you can’t see it.



At this point drivers are already starting to look to the left at WB Clayton Road traffic.

Here is where you can finally see the stop sign:



By this time many shortcut drivers are looking to the left and don't even see the sign. Do you notice how high the sign is? Perhaps Mason Ridge is going to be opened up to truck traffic. **THEY NEED TO PUT A SECOND STOP SIGN ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE ROAD!**

Craig Wilde told me the limbs would be cut back on Monday. At 2:45 the stop sign was still obstructed.

LONGVIEW PARKING BATTLE CONTINUES: There was no large crowd, but the issue of increasing parking at Longview Park was back on the agenda for the work session and for the regular meeting.

In the Work Session Alderman Skip Mange told his usual lies that the plans for one entrance to the east and one exit to the west would make the lot “safer.” As we have said numerous times the current east exit has the best line of sight for oncoming traffic when trying to turn onto Clayton Road and allows the longest reaction time. The west side which Mange wants to make the only exit has the least safe view.

Mange also claims the new parking would eliminate a view obstruction caused by the trail. This is another lie. The view obstruction is caused by the park sign installed by the city when Mange was mayor.

I spoke at the meeting on this issue also and said some people would call Mange’s “safety” and view obstruction” statements “positive spin” while others would call them lies. I happened to fall in the second group.

Making fewer spaces: Mange also said the current plan would call for angle parking spaces on the west side of the tennis court. He admitted that by repainting the spaces, they would **lose FOUR SPACES**.

Green Pavers add green space? Next Mange said “technically” new spaces on the east side of the tennis court made with green pavers that allow grass to grow through holes in the blocks, would add to the total number of parking spaces.

Of course if 15 cars are parked on the green pavers they aren’t so green. Also Mange admitted “green pavers” are not permitted to be used for “handicapped” spaces. Also you wouldn’t want you kids running across “green pavers” as there would be a trip factor and a chance for a child to land face first against an edge of a concrete paving block.

Doing a 180? A few questions on Longview by Alderwoman Gussie Crawford sounded like she favored the additional parking plan. Crawford signed a petition against the parking expansion during her campaign.

She said she has walked the area and is now waiting for a more in depth car count. The overflow parking days have increased after the Parks Director was told to stop mediating bookings of the pavilion and conference center (glass double wide) and to fully book events knowing there might be parking issues.

Crawford also said she would like to see another public hearing before the final vote for the construction and acceptance of a \$86,5000 grant to cover \$100,000 of work. I don’t see that happening. They had one public hearing where there was overwhelming opposition that the Board of Aldermen has chosen to ignore. I don’t see them going through that again.

Garden Club to hide cars? Mänge also stated that the Mason Ridge Garden Club under the leadership of its self proclaimed president could use plantings to help hide the cars parked in front of the building.

Huh? First he claims he has to remove view obstructions and then he says he wants to install view obstructions. Why would you want plants to hide the view of cars that have to back out of spaces?

On June 25 there will be a second reading to accept the \$4,000 parks grants that will go toward \$11,000 for an engineering study.

I'm amazed that everyone on this Board of Aldermen seems ignorant to the fact that the city started 2012 with an overall budget that was \$300,000 in the red and going into a bigger and bigger deficit due to unplanned legal costs.

The City of Pevely canceled their Community Days fair and fireworks to save \$10,000 and stopped fluoridating the water to save another \$10,000. The smart people in Pevely realize money is tight. Our elected officials have not quite figured that out.

The solution: We could save over \$120,000 in City and County Park Grants Commission money very simply. Erect two signs at Longview Park that state, "If parking lot is full please try nearby Queeny Park with entrances off of Mason and Weidman Roads or Drace Park on Cedar Valley Road off of Clayton Road next to I-270."

NEW HIGH RISE SIGN FOR MISSOURI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER: Also on the agenda was for a new sign to be placed on the south side of the main building on the hospital campus. Mo Bap already has oversized signs facing I-64 and I-270.

What would this sign face? It would shine over the parking lot and the houses to the south side of the parking lot. Alderman Chuck Lenz and I were apparently thinking the same thing when Chuck asked,

"Once the people are on the parking lot don't they already know where they are?"

The rep from the sign company told the board they sign cannot be seen in the summer from I-270, but will be able to be seen in the winter with no leaves on trees. He said there is a dimmer on the sign and a timer so it can be turned off at night so it does not annoy neighbors. If it could annoy people living in house that were there before the hospital was built, why allow it?

Fred Meyland-Smith said he thought the sign was there to welcome people to the hospital. Well that is a load of crap. Those ground signs should be able to do that. Town and country, Creve Coeur, Frontenac, Ladue, Des Peres and Chesterfield all have signs welcoming you to the community that are not lighted and 60 feet in the air.

This is an unnecessary sign. I almost have to think that Mo Bap wants it just to torment Ellie Bush who lives Kirken Knoll and has claimed bulldozing of Mo Bap land next to her house in 2000 has created storm water issues that Mo Bap and the city have failed to address. I know that the water situation has turned her basement into a mold factory at time.

The sign approval was passed unanimously on a voice vote.

THERE WILL NOT BE ANY BRANCHING CHIPPING: City officials have been telling residents since last November that Branch Chipping will return, but just for 2012. Mayor/cigarette lobbyist Jon Dalton's Finance Commission voted against the proposal because the projected city revenue shows the city could only do branch chipping in 2012 and not continue it in 2013 or 2014. But Dalton put it in the budget.

At the work session on Monday night, Alderman Tim Welby announced his Public Works Commission solved the problem of getting the job done for only \$50,000, since it cost \$85,000 three years ago when it was last done. This of course means Public Works Director Craig Wilde came up with a plan that the Commission was spoon fed and approved.

It does not include branch chipping. If you remember in the past you could put limbs and branches by the edge of the street and a crew in a large truck and a wood chipper would come along and turn the branches into sawdust. That is not what is going to happen now.

This year the city will pay your trash company to pick up YARD WASTE four times in November. That is not branches. That is yard waste, such as leaves, grass and twigs and sticks that are packaged per your trash haulers requirements. This is a big difference from branch chipping.

Government going where it shouldn't: This is a perfect example of government going where it has no business. In the past there was not a regular or common service for branch chipping. That involved more than what a resident does on a weekly basis. It is a fair government service. But now the government will be paying for something your trash hauler offers weekly. This is not the role of government.

Fairness? Next if I have a different trash hauler than my neighbor, there could be two standards for "Yard waste" pickup. One hauler might take more than another. How is that fair. If it is a government project it should be the same for everyone.

This is a boondoggle and the Finance Commission was right to vote against. Plus it is not going to be what it was advertised. This is a Tim Welby Bait and Switch.

CLAIRE MCCASKILL THROWS A FUND RAISER AS IF KIRKWOOD IS THE SAME AS HOLLYWOOD: Here is a column I wrote for the Chesterfield Patch you might enjoy. Apparently Claire is thinking people will pay between \$500 and \$10,000 to have brunch at her Kirkwood compound as if it was George Clooney's Malibu beach house.

Sometimes I think Claire McCaskill Belongs to the Wrong Party

From the campaign donation requests the McCaskill people must be going after Republicans

By John Hoffmann

Back on March 19 I wrote a column about Senator Claire McCaskill sending me an invitation to a late lunch of snacks at a downtown hotel. To attend I could pay anywhere from \$500 to \$2,500. <http://chesterfield.patch.com/articles/my-personal-politics-don-t-follow-party-lines>

I have to admit that I have always like Claire. She was a young girl in Houston Missouri and then in Lebanon, Missouri. She finished high school in Columbia, Missouri, where her mother was on the city council and her father served in the Governor Hearnes' administration.

I guess what I like the best about Claire is that she worked her way through college and law school. One of the summer jobs she had was as a waitress at the Lake of the Ozarks. Claire never used her law degree to make a lot of money. She was always working in government. She got rich the old fashion way. She married it.

In the March 19 column I commented how both myself as a then elected official and a neighbor of mine who is an appointed Federal official wrote Claire about two separate matters affecting Missourians. We never heard back from Claire or her office.

The next thing I heard from Claire was the letter in March for the \$500-to-\$2,500 "late lunch snack" with her.

Back in 1989 when she was a state representative out of Kansas City Claire helped me on an article I was writing for a national magazine on DWI reform. I must have remembered that in 2006 when we moved back to Missouri. Maybe I sent her a \$25 campaign contribution and that is why I'm now on her mailing list.

Last week I got an invitation to attend a Saturday brunch at what is called “Claire’s Home Kirkwood, Missouri” but is actually her compound if you have ever seen the place.

To attend this “bunch” the invitation asks for a contribution of between \$500 and \$10,000. Maybe for \$500 you just get the scrambled eggs and hash browns but for \$10,000 you also get the fresh squeezed orange juice, carved roast beef and a desert.

The invitation says once you send in the money Claire’s address will be given to you.

HA! I don’t need Claire’s address, I already know it. When we have out-of-town company I always drive them by the house on Twin Springs in Ladue and then Claire’s Kirkwood house to show them two of the largest houses in St. Louis County.

Here is what I don’t understand. Sen. McCaskill is a Democrat. She is a person of the people, and the candidate who will get the union vote. But she is having “Late Afternoon snacks” for \$500-to-\$2,500 and brunches for \$500-to-\$10,000. Isn’t that Republican campaign pricing?

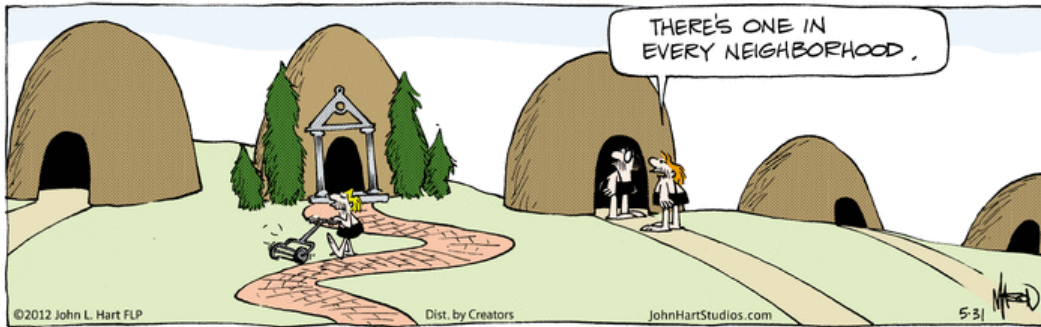
If I had \$500 laying around, I would probably give it to the Salvation Army before a political candidate, but I would be curious to see the spread for this brunch.

If seems to me that a good Democratic would be inviting people to a cookout. Claire could have a hot dog and soft drink or beer lunch at her house for \$25. She could buy the stuff at Sam’s Club or Costco...well she would have someone else buy it since those places have non-union staffs. A can of Coke is about 37-cents. A can of beer at Costco would be maybe 65-cents. The hot dog, bun, relish and paper plate would run you maybe \$1.40.

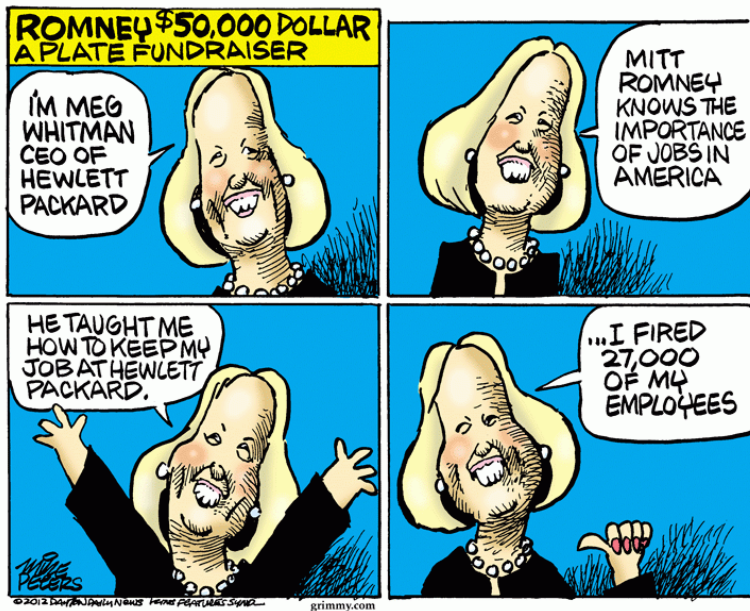
That is a 1700-percent profit against a \$25 contribution. You could run 50 people through every hour between 12 noon and 5pm.

If you think back to Old School Democrats like Frank Skeffington from the novel and movie, The Last Harrah or Richard Daley in Chicago, the Democratic politicians weren’t asking people for \$2,500 for a lunch snack or \$10,000 for bunch. Instead they were buying the voters beers and shots at local bars.

CARTOONS:



The next three from CBC grad, Pulitzer Prize winner, Washington U commencement speaker and son of Charlotte Peters:





VATICAN BANK SCANDAL

