

The County Connection

Saint Louis COUNTY

A newsletter written by and for employees of St. Louis County Government
Buzz Westfall, County Executive



Health Department Employee "Scrums" Her Way to Nation's Elite Rugby Team

by Ellen Waters

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY congratulates one of its own, Elizabeth (Liz) Reed, who was among eleven American women recently chosen for the U.S. National Women's Sevens Rugby Team! The national team represented the USA at the Lomalviti Sevens in Nausori, Fiji and the Whangarel Sevens in New Zealand in early February 2003.

Liz is a Waste Management Specialist with the Department of Health. She works in the North County Government site office.

Legend has it that the game originated in 1823 at Rugby School (hence the name) in England, when one of the pupils, William Webb Ellis, picked up the ball during a game of soccer and ran with it.

RUGBY IS A FAST-PACED GAME played by two teams whose players score by kicking, passing or carrying the ball over the opponent's goal line. The team that scores the most wins the match.

Rugby in the US is becoming increasingly popular as more people find out about it. All teams are part of a local union,



Liz at work

which is part of a larger territory, and all of this is controlled by the governing body of USA Rugby. Players can progress to a higher level of rugby by trying out for territorial select teams that then participate in the All-Star tournament. This tournament is a way for selectors to see the players and decide whom to invite to National camp.


International rugby revolves around the World Cup, which is staged in different countries every four years. There are annual matches and long standing rivalries between neighboring countries.

There is an annual game between Canada and the USA in a North American Championship match and an annual competition between Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa for the South Pacific championship.

AFTER HER RETURN TO THE STATES, Liz reported on the team's success. "We did very well overall, winning 3 of the 4 games In Fiji. That was a good warm-up for the much more competitive play in New Zealand."

New Zealand is ranked Number 1 in women's rugby. They call themselves Aotearoa Maori and only native islanders are allowed to be on the team, which is comprised of some

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 *What's a Scrum? It's is when a number of team members playing a forward position bind together and push against the forward players on the opposite team. The object is to allow the forwards to beat and bruise each other and give the backs a chance to catch their breath.*

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- Your County Government
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YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

This month's featured department is the Department of Revenue. Read on to find out how assessment is progressing.

PROPERTY REASSESSMENT IN THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

by Robert Bourisaw

With more than 260 employees, the Department of Revenue occupies four floors of the Administration Building, provides services at satellite offices and performs field tasks throughout every neighborhood of Saint Louis County.

During all types of weather, residential and commercial appraisers from the Real Estate Appraisal Section of the Assessment Division measure and review properties for reassessment purposes.

"Teams of appraisers work outside all during the year. The appraisers review properties from the Missouri River in Florissant, to the Jefferson County border in Wildwood, and to the Mississippi River in Oakville," said Acting Assessor Phil Muehlheausler.

The more than 40 residential appraisers and supervisors are responsible for identifying, classifying and assessing the more than 365,000 parcels of residential real estate located in Saint Louis County.

The information gathered from the physical inspections assists the appraisers to estimate the market values of properties for tax purposes.

During 2002, the Saint Louis County Council and the Missouri Legislature changed some procedures involving the physical inspections of properties.

"The residential appraisers get out of their cars at

every property that they inspect. The new Property Access Authorization Form provides the property owner with the opportunity to authorize an appraiser to perform a complete exterior inspection of the property, even if the property owner isn't home," Muehlheausler said.



Residential Appraisal Supervisor Larry Hewlett performs a physical inspection of a house.

Property owners may check a box on the form to either authorize or not to authorize a County appraiser to perform an exterior inspection of all sides of the exterior of any structure on the property.

If property owners disagree with the Assessor's estimate of value on their Change of Assessment notices, they may appeal their values to the Board of Equalization.

In conferences and meetings with the County's residential appraisers during the appeal process, many property owners become concerned with their property tax, and with taxes in general.

"The Assessor's Office establishes an estimate of value for each parcel in compliance with Missouri state statutes. The taxing authorities establish the tax rates," Muehlheausler said.

"Although on some occasions, property owners may become upset with the process, every member of the staff in the Assessor's Office is instructed to respond with courtesy and with professionalism," he said.

NEXT ISSUE: UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI OUTREACH AND EXTENSION CENTER



- Michelle Alexander (BOE)
- Mark Berry (Police)
- John Betts (JS)
- Molly Brawn (Fam Ct)
- Beverly Butera (Police)
- George Cameron (JS)
- Shannan Catalano (Fam Ct)
- James Clerk (JS)
- Patrick Cotter (PW)
- Christopher Court (BOE)
- Edward Crenshaw (Police)
- Ann DeLuca (JS)
- Maura DeYong (DOH)
- Gwen Edwards (DOH)
- Christopher Gilyon (Police)
- Christopher Guinn (Pros Atty)
- Joy Hadley (JS)
- Jeff Hall (Rev)
- Larry Hanebrink (Spirit)
- Rebecca Hauenstein (DOH)
- Justin Holtz (Police)
- Dina Hope (JS)
- Ronee Horton (DOH)
- James Hunter (DOH)
- Amber James (P&R)
- Katie Jennings (BOE)
- Robert Johnson (Fam Ct)
- Reginald Johnson (JS)
- Tammy Johnson (JS)
- Mellani Jones (JS)
- Megan Julian (Pros Atty)
- Michael Kaemmerer (Police)
- John Kainady (Rev)
- Sharon Kehoe (Rev)
- Sara Kukuczka (DOH)
- Michele Lloyd (Rev)
- Dianette McCormick (JS)
- David McDuffie (JS)
- Josiah Merritt (Police)
- Cerece Miles (Rev)
- Don Miller (Spirit)
- Crystal Mohn (Police)
- Junez Moore (DOH)
- Joe Moore (PW)
- Paul Murphy (Rev)
- Patrick Nigh (Police)
- Ken Parks (BOE)
- Rebekah Phillips (PIng)
- Peter Ritrovato (JS)
- La Trina Rogers (Fam Ct)
- Gregory Sanders (Police)
- Brian Schellman (Police)
- John Shelton (DOH)
- James Showmaker (PW)

This & THAT

ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY



Many County employees and their families have been impacted by the recent calls to active duty, though it be a spouse, sibling, child, other relative or friend. To date, our records indicate we have 12 employees in active military service. Our thoughts are with these County families and all others effected by the recent international events.

Welcome - Continued

- Janice Simon (JS)
- David Soper (Police)
- Derek St. Peters (DOH)
- Jill Steinberg (DOH)
- Christy Stevens (PW)
- Melnique Stewart (Rev)
- Albert Swanegan (DOH)
- John Thomas (Fam Ct)
- Jane Turner (DOH)
- Benjamin Valentine (DOH)
- Andrew Warren (Police)
- Eddie White (JS)
- Ezra White (Police)
- Nadia Whitmore (JS)
- John Wilson (police)
- Larry Woods (JS)
- Joy Worn (PIng)
- Sheryl Wright (Rev)
- Fareid Yaakub (Police)

Promotions

- Robert Bourisaw (Rev) - Public Information Coordinator
- Michael Busalaki (Police) – Lieutenant
- Ken Cox (Police) – Captain
- Theresa Dintleman (BOE) – Accounting Manager
- Dave Godar (Rev) - Residential Appraiser Supervisor
- Tim Hagerty (Police) – Lieutenant
- Brenda Hodson (Police) - Police Recruit
- Tracey Johnson (Police) - full-time Police Report Clerk
- Kathy Kelley (BOE) – Election Judge Procurement Officer
- Kenneth Kirgan (Police) – PSD II
- Lori Wrobel (BOE) – Republican Election Judge Supervisor
- Pat McCafferty (BOE) - Election Judge Procurement Officer
- Guillaume Means (Police) – Lieutenant
- Terri Melton (Police) - Intelligence Analyst
- Charles Molla (Police) – Lieutenant
- Janet Rice (Police) – PSD III
- Karen Schaper (Police) - PSD III
- Renee Smith (Fam Ct) - Office Coordinator
- Melissa Smith (Police) - Administrative Assistant
- Melanie Stilson (BOE) - Election Board Statistician
- Veronica Swanson (Police) - PSD II
- Audrey Walker (Police) - Crime Analyst

RETIREMENT

- ◆ Crisanto Amargo (Sheriff) - 15 years of service
- ◆ Deborah Arington (Police) - 30 years of service
- ◆ Carol Baca (Rev) - 15+ years of service
- ◆ Betty Bimson (JS) - 31 years of service
- ◆ Brad Bomanz (DOH) - 30+ years of service
- ◆ Jane Byrne (DOH) - 26+ years of service
- ◆ Judie Donohue (DOH) - 10+ years of service
- ◆ Louis Dorough (Police) - 29 years of service
- ◆ Lynn Feltmann (DOH) - 24+ years of service
- ◆ Frieda Fixler (DOH) - 29+ years of service
- ◆ Bonnie Fowler (Rev) - 15 years of service
- ◆ Ashvin Gajjar (DOH) - 31+ years of service
- ◆ Betty Grady (Rev) – 15+ years of service
- ◆ Marilyn Holloway-Rodgers (DOH) - 28+ years of service
- ◆ David Jefferson (DOH) - 15+ years of service
- ◆ Denny Kopp (H&T) – 27 years of service
- ◆ Stella Lucy (Rev) - 21 years of service
- ◆ James McLarren (Police) -16 years of service
- ◆ Edna Reese (DOH) - 31+ years of service
- ◆ Joyce Rives (DOH) - 39+ years of service
- ◆ Diane “Dee” Schantz (Police) – 38+ years of service
- ◆ Beverlee Thomas-Kopecky (Rev) - 30 years of service
- ◆ Dennis Walsh (PW) - 6+ years of service
- ◆ Eugene Westermeyer (Police) - 34 years of service

Employment Anniversaries

5 years

- Bennie Adams (JS)
- Vincent Bazzoni (Police)
- Marilyn Behle (P&R)
- Deborah Blanc (Police)
- Sammie Bush (Police)
- Molly Butterworth (P&R)
- Mary Cranor (P&R)
- Timothy Culian (Police)
- Patricia Detch (PInG)
- Theodore Dubis (Police)
- Richard Easley (PW)
- Richard Edwards (PW)
- Jeffrey Fuesting (Police)
- Mark Heseman (PW)
- Chad Hill (P&R)
- Paul Irwin (P&R)
- Doreen Kreutz (P&R)
- Laverne Kroenung (PW)
- Leo Makarewicz (JS)
- Nicholas Milcic (Police)
- Andy Miller (P&R)
- William Munson (Police)
- Myra Perry (JS)
- Stephen Rowland (Police)
- Debra Schaefer (P&R)
- Brian Shanika (Police)
- Ollie Smith (PInG)
- Gabriel Weber (Police)
- Tim Wobbe (P&R)
- Brenda Wood (JS)

10 years

- John Bozarth (Police)
- Alvah Brooks (JS)
- Wilma Chestnut-House (P&R)
- Mark Cox (Police)
- Chris Fialka (Admin)
- Jeanette Gerst (Police)
- Thomas Hawkins (Police)
- Douglas Hearst (Police)
- James Hilderbrand (Police)
- Jeffrey Hoots (Police)
- Kenyatta Johnson (JS)
- David McVey (Police)
- James Molden (Police)
- Richard O'Brien (Police)
- Daniel O'Neil (Police)
- Clay Peeler (Police)
- Dan Phillips (PW)
- Julieann Quattrocchi (Police)
- Curtis Ratlif (Police)
- Jamie Reiter (Police)
- Jack Smallegan (JS)

15 years

- Quintella Bonnett (JS)
- Carrie Cassin (JS)
- Jesse Francis (P&R)
- Greg Freivogel (P&R)
- Terry Geigle (JS)
- Ronald Grames (Police)
- Dona Lebbing (JS)
- Mike McGinnity (P&R)
- Mike McKee (P&R)
- Joe Ridings (P&R)
- Kevin Robinson (JS)
- Jesse Salas (P&R)
- Chris Sanchez (JS)
- Thomas Sterr (JS)
- Linda Tensing (JS)
- Ellen Walters (JS)
- Larry Wasserman (Admin)

20 years

- Stephen Adams (P&R)
- Dane Allred (JS)
- Kathryn Brehe (Police)
- Dave Mades (P&R)
- Adam Mcgraw (P&R)
- Barbara Milzark (P&R)
- Ken Peters (P&R)
- Dean Ponticello (P&R)
- Adrian Roberts (JS)
- Cheryl Stone (JS)
- Todd Tate (P&R)
- Audrey Walker (Police)
- Phyllis Walker (Police)

25 years

- Mike Bailey (P&R)
- Bob Dekas (PW)
- Robert Frohne (Police)
- Charles Haas (Police)
- Jim Henley (P&R)
- Cynthia Jones (JS)
- Dave Kasl (PW)
- Charles Molla (Police)
- Rebecca Murphy (Police)
- John Rowane (P&R)
- Bob Schweitzer (P&R)
- Dan Torpea (P&R)
- Donald Tracy (Police)



30 years

- Cynthia Golden (Police)
- Terry Klein (P&R)
- Valinda McPhee (P&R)
- Dave Ruzicka (P&R)
- Bob Schuermann (P&R)

35 years

- Dave Reynolds (P&R)

40 years

- Ken Bratch (P&R)

CORRECTIONS OFFICER LEWIS SAVES INMATES LIFE

On January 24, 2003, Corrections Officer Anthony Lewis responded to a report of an inmate choking on a piece of candy. Officer Lewis performed the Heimlich Maneuver and saved the inmates' life. Officer Lewis works in the Choices Program and has worked for Justice Services since October 2001. He will receive a Director's Citation in June at the annual employee recognition picnic.



ARRIVALS

- Tom Anderson (Police) and his wife, Linda, had a baby girl, Caroline Grace, born February 8, 2003.
- Congratulations to David Corwin (H & T) and wife, Jennifer, on the arrival of Emma Elizabeth Corwin born on September 16, 2002 and weighing 8lbs 14oz.
- Aaron Dilks (Police) and his wife, Kerry, had a baby girl, Zoe, born December 24, 2002.
- Elizabeth Anne is the darling little girl that Mike Flad (P&R) and wife, Loree, along with 5-year-old big sister, Allison, traveled to China in November to bring home. Allison and Elizabeth are both adopted from China. Elizabeth just celebrated her 2nd birthday!
- Bill Harrison (Jud Admin) became a grandpa twice recently: grandson Adriel on 9/5/02 and granddaughter Jaiden on 1/3/03.
- Chris Hildebrand (Police) and his wife Melissa, had a baby boy, Maxwell Christopher, born January 17, 2003.
- Damon Kunnemann (Police) and his wife Cindy, had a baby girl, Isabelle Renee Ann, born January 31, 2003.
- James McCrady (Police) and his wife Monica, had a baby boy, Anthony James, born January 15, 2003.
- Congratulations to Steve McDaniel (P&R) and wife, Pam, on the birth of their brand new baby boy, born in the wee hours of the morn on February 19.
- Judy Meinershagen (P&R) and hubby, Gary, are the proud grandparents of the absolutely beautiful Abigail Elizabeth Chapman, born on October 26.
- Scott Roach (Police) and his wife Angie, had a baby girl, Danielle Taylor, born January 16, 2003.
- Aaron Smith (Police) and his wife, Virginia, had a baby girl, Fiona Elise, born February 3, 2003.
- Melanie Stilson (BOE) gave birth to new son, Sam, on Nov. 29th, 2002.

- ◆ Photographs taken by Glen Curcio (Admin) will appear in the June and October 2003 issues of *Missouri Life Magazine* in stories on the Jewel Box and Bellefontaine Cemetery.
- ◆ On December 16th, Officer Joseph Ellis (Police) received a Meritorious Service Citation for successfully talking a suicidal woman off of the superstructure under the Blanchette Memorial Bridge.
- ◆ Mike Klady (P&R) received the Community Service Award from the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Webster Groves Chapter, for his extraordinary work at Fort Belle Fontaine. The objectives of the DAR are historic preservation, promotion of education and patriotic endeavor. Great going!
- ◆ It may not be human but it is his baby: Don McCann's (P&R) sweet 1965 Corvette Stingray Coupe was chosen to represent the 1960s at the 50 Year Corvette Display during the 2003 St. Louis Auto Show at the America's Center in January.
- ◆ On December 16th, Officer Tim Rehagen (Police) received a Distinguished Service Citation for successfully evacuating nearly 40 residents of the Autumn View Gardens Assisted Living Center in the City of Ellisville after the building caught fire.
- ◆ Myesha Walker (H & T) completed the classes to receive the ESDP certificate.
- ◆ Joy Worn (PInG) Appointed to CPC, 2/27/2003 7:58:46 PM City of Florissant, MO - Joy Worn, of N. Jefferson in Ward 6, has been appointed to the Citizens Participation Committee by Councilman Goldstein at the February 24 City Council Meeting.



Good Bye Employee - - - Hello Volunteer

by Shirley Eisenreich

On March 5, Carol Martin was presented with a beautiful certificate from the American Red Cross for her co-coordinating twenty-five + Blood Drives for St. Louis County. The certificate read "In Grateful Appreciation to Carol Martin For your outstanding dedication and support of the Missouri-Illinois Blood Services Region and its lifesaving mission....Together, we can save a life".



Carol receiving her award from Collette Houchen

Carol has worked tediously during the last six years of her twenty-nine years of employment to provide blood drive participants with incentives to give blood. Pizza, Krispy Kreme donuts and Bread Company enticements have been used to increase participation, as well as occasionally throwing in Red Cross T-shirts.

Carol will be retiring from St. Louis County Department of Health on April 11 and she thinks this Blood Drive will be her last. Boy will she be surprised when we call her back to volunteer and once again to work side-by-side with Norma Kruse, her co-coordinator!

GIVE BLOOD.....GIVE BLOOD.....GIVE BLOOD.....GIVE BLOOD.....GIVE BLOOD



Liz Reed - Rugby Player

from page 1

of the top players in New Zealand. "We managed to tie them," Liz said, "which was a big step up from last year, when they defeated us 41-7."



Liz with the ball

"The second game was close: we lost 12-7. We won our last two games and ended up 3rd place in the tournament. Although we didn't win the tournament, our coach was really pleased." Anyone interested in a play-by-play description can visit www.usarugby.org and look under recent news.

LIZ BECAME INTERESTED in rugby her freshman year (1993)

"I joined a sorority and they encouraged us to join another activity. I saw a poster for rugby, went out to practice, and fell in love with it. Strangely enough I quit the sorority because I was too busy with rugby!"

Liz played rugby with Mizzou through college and then briefly in North Carolina before returning to St. Louis. Currently she plays for a local club, the St. Louis Sabres. Rugby runs in the family - her husband and brother-in-law play for a local club and both of them played at Mizzou for the men's team.

"**WE ARE VERY PROUD OF LIZ,**" said Jacquelyn A. Meeks, Director of the Department of Health. "She is a true testament that hard work and commitment can pay off."

CONGRATULATIONS, LIZ!!





Department Notes



The **BOARD OF ELECTIONS** in Maplewood is sporting a new paint job, thanks to Public Works — the first complete makeover since moving to Maplewood in 1994. The spreading of the off-white was handled by painters par excellence Becky Tison (PW) and Matt O'Brien (PW). With the new paint came a new phone system. The election office was integrated into the St. Louis County 615 network over the Presidents Day holiday weekend by Vickie Barela (Admin) and Frank Meade (Admin). Our main information number is now 615-1800. Call us, we're lonesome! We also have newly reapportioned township lines, courtesy of an edict of the legislature last spring and a lot of help from Planning. BOE Directors of Elections Judy Taylor and David Welch have been spending time of late in Jeff City advising Missouri Secretary of State Matt Blunt on legal and administrative matters involved with bringing Missouri into compliance with the U.S. Help America Vote Act of 2002.

Old Man Winter has been a stubborn foe for the **DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC's** snow operations personnel this snow season. By the first week of March, employees responsible for clearing ice and snow from over 3,000 lane miles of road had responded to 15 major storms – compared to only seven for the previous season. Consequently, 12-hour shifts have been almost commonplace for employees in both H&T and P&R, whose workers plow, maintain vehicles, load salt, and handle the office work necessary to keep the region's roads clear and safe in the wake of winter's frequent '02/'03 rampages. "It's been a pretty challenging winter, but we're professionals, so you adapt yourself and do what you've got to do," reported Operations foreman Jeff Heine (H&T). "It's like the movie "Groundhog Day" over and over again," explained Scott Macaulay (H&T), who drives a plow blade-mounted pickup truck. On the positive side, Heine and Macaulay both observed that while the sheer number of winter storms has been considerable, the severity of the individual storms could have been worse. Added Macaulay: "They're coming at us left and right but we're knocking them off fairly quickly."

The **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES'** Office of Family and Community Services provides the names of reputable individuals who offer reasonable rates for home repair work. The Home Care and Repair Program is offered through the County Older Resident Programs (CORP) to Saint Louis County citizens who are 60 years and older. For more info, call 615-7446, TTY 615-7457, if north of Highway 40 or 822-0370, TTY 615-4001, if south of Highway 40.

JUSTICE SERVICES will be celebrating National Correctional Office's week May 4-10. There are many events planned for the week.

COUNTY POLICE Report Lowest Crime Rate in 29 Years. Serious crime in the areas under protection of the St. Louis County Police Department has decreased. Index crime statistics comparing 2002 to 2001 in unincorporated St. Louis County, and the municipalities served by County officers show an overall reduction of 6.1 percent. This year's reduction adds to an overall 16.3 percent decrease over the past five years.

PARKS & RECREATION's Museum of Transportation was recently presented the James D. Bradley Distinguished Service Award from the Society of Automotive Historians. MOT received the award for its dedication to preserving America's transportation industry.



From left, Don C. Musick III, vice president of TMA; Genie Zakrzewski, Director of County Parks and Recreation; Jim Schild, publisher of Auto Review; and Jim Schloeman, president of TMA.

The **DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**, Office of Community Development (OCD), was awarded a \$2.1 million grant from HUD for lead-based paint hazard control. Funds will be used to provide grants to property owners to eliminate health hazards caused by the presence of lead-based paint in homes occupied by children under the age of 6. This is the third grant that has been awarded to the County by HUD for lead-based paint hazard control. Over the past year, OCD completed the last of 145 units funded under a \$1 million grant received in 2000.

On May 10, 2003, **SPIRIT AIRPORT** will again be hosting Youth Aviation Day in conjunction with the Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagles program. A free airplane ride with a licensed pilot for youth 8-17 years old, ground school, weather school, and other aviation education, County Police helicopter and other airplanes on display, free soda, food, games and more are planned. Flights are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis for the first 400 children with parent's permission. Register by calling 636-530-9386.

For the fourth year in a row, no discrepancies were found during the **SPIRIT AIRPORT's** FAA Safety and Certification inspection.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI OUTREACH AND EXTENSION CENTER invites county employees and the public to an open house from 3 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, May 21 to meet Dr. Elson S. Floyd, the new University of Missouri System President. The event will be held in Room 1012, 121 S. Meramec. Faculty, staff and volunteers from the Center also will provide information about programs and resources related to business, community development, consumer/family economics, continuing education, environmental quality, horticulture, housing, human development and family issues, labor education, nutrition, and urban youth. University Outreach and Extension helps improve people's lives with educational programs and research information from the University of Missouri and Lincoln University. For more information about Extension, call 615-2911, or visit outreach.missouri.edu/stlouis.

Employee Voices

Even though it seems like winter will never end, spring is just around the corner. To speed it on its way, we asked employees to share their best warm weather vacation memories. Enjoy reading them - and think warm and sunny!

“For me, the most memorable vacation with just with my husband and me, excluding our three kids. For our 20th wedding anniversary, we spent ten long days in Alaska. I mean long days since there was 24 hours of daylight while we were there! We flew into Anchorage in the month of June and were really surprised at the large colorful flowers blooming there. We saw hundreds of sea otters, were surprised when a huge block of glacier fall into the sea, took the Midnight Express double deck train, viewed the peak of Mount McKinley through parted clouds, viewed a bald eagle’s nest about the size of a Volkswagen Bug, and were impressed by an intricately beaded coat of fur now in the Smithsonian Institute. We toured an island on the river where a lady who had won the Iditorod race not once but twice, trained her dogs. It was truly the trip of a lifetime, and way more than I had ever expected.” **Linda Warden (Pros Atty), Paralegal**



“The best warm weather vacation I’ve ever had would have to be when I was little. My dad used to do Indian carvings and we would go to Santa Fe, New Mexico for an art show. He made it into a family vacation. Imagine 5 kids and 2 adults in an Astro van. It was fun. We left a week before the show was scheduled and ended up camping in the mountains in Colorado and doing some trail riding. I’ll never forget how cold it was when we got up in the morning and we layered on clothes. Then as we drove down the mountain we shedded the layers at it got warmer. It was a wonderful, fun-filled family vacation.” **Diane Schuchmann (Admin), Office Specialist**



“The best warm weather vacation I have had was when my wife and two kids went to up-state New York in August. The state is beautiful that time of year and Niagara Falls is breath-taking.” **Bob Wind (Admin), Budget Analyst**



“Until last September, I had dreamed of taking a trip to a foreign land, but the trip always eluded me. That is until a last minute cancellation on a tiny tour to China meant I could travel for almost a song. I flew 1st class from Los Angeles to Alaska, stopped for two hours in Anchorage, then

flew straight through to Beijing (Peking). Eight of us spent the next three weeks having the adventure of our lives. We traveled from the East Coast of China throughout North Central China, into the Gobi desert and the mountains bordering Kyrgystan and Pakistan. I climbed to the top of the Great Wall of China, took overnight sleeper trains, shuttle airplanes, rick shaws, rode camels, traded with Ugar shepherds for necklaces carved out of Yak bone, and took baths in wooden tubs filled with hot tea. The picture is me on a horse in a Mongolian costume beside a lake near western Mongolia.” **Donia Dymek (HS), Secretary**



“My favorite vacation was spent with my husband, Kevin, in Hawaii on the island of Maui. It was a true paradise with lush tropical plants and flowers, rainforests, fantastic waterfalls and natural pools and warm trade winds. We listened to the relaxing sounds of the water hitting the shoreline, explored the road to Hanna and swam in the seven sacred pools. We saw tropical plantations, sugar cane fields, and Haleakala, the world’s largest dormant volcano. We took scenic drives along the coast, swam in hidden coves, snorkeled and swam with the turtles. We went to a traditional Hawaiian luau and took a romantic catamaran cruise. We shopped in the quaint shops, toured historic Lahaina, toured art galleries, and just relaxed watching the sunset. Maui has it all! What a wonderful experience.” **Linda Cendroski (Rev), Fiscal Services Assistant**



“The best warm weather vacation I ever had was a 10th wedding anniversary cruise. We sailed from Ft. Lauderdale on Holland America’s Maasdam with stops at Cozumel, Grand Cayman, Ocho Rios, and Half Moon Cay (HAL’S private island). Highlights of the trip were visiting Mayan ruins at Tulum, swimming with stingrays in Grand Cayman, climbing Dunn’s River Falls in Jamaica, and a day in paradise at the private island (best in the Caribbean). The ship was beautiful and food delicious and plentiful. We plan on returning later this year.” **Tony Schott (Spirit), Chief Mechanic**



The County Connection - Spring 2003

BURSTING COLORS OF SPRING

by County Parks Staff

Spring will – hopefully – soon spring upon us, and that means flowerbeds around the County Government buildings will soon be bursting with color. Especially alive with color are the numerous boxes, pots and gardens surrounding the County buildings in downtown Clayton: the Administration building, Memorial Park; the Justice Center; County Police headquarters; the 121 Meramec building and the Health building; all the bus stops scattered throughout these streets; and even out at the Family Courts building.



PLANTING BULBS IN THE FALL - The Parks' horticulture staff begins in the fall planting bulbs – 7,250 bulbs, to be exact – typically after the first frost has hit and the last of the summer flowers have been pulled from the beds. These bulbs are the first flowers we typically see and bloom in April and May.

PLANTING ANNUALS IN THE SPRING - The staff then plants annual flowers – 4,050 plants are planned for 2003 – right after the last frost has hit,



A black-and-white photograph can't do justice for the soon-to-be brimming-with-color boxes, pots and gardens, as in Memorial Park in 2002.

usually in mid-to-late spring. As the bulbs begin to wilt, the annual flowers take root and come to full color brilliance throughout the summer.

MAINTAINING - Planting is the easy part when you consider the maintenance involved for all those beds with all those flowers:

watering three times a week, removing dead blooms twice a week and weeding and fertilizing once a week.

As soon as spring is here, go outside for your break, lunch or whatever and take pleasure in the beautiful, colorful gardens. And if you see Parks staff out in the beds, give them a green thumbs-up for doing all the work!

Reading While Driving?

This issue's puzzler is for those of you multi-taskers who decipher vanity license plates while speeding down the highway. Try your hand at these and send them to the Division of Personnel by Friday, April 11th.

Name: _____ Dept: _____

Interpret These: Who would have this on their car?

CNTA4IT

DOGDR

W84ME

MAKULAF

2L82W8

FLOSBOY

CADRMN

URBUSTD

H20UUP2

ACHOODR

KPASA

PAZAREV

HEALTH FOR WEALTH - NEW INTRANET FEATURE

Have you visited Health for Wealth on the Intranet yet? This new feature, launched in January, represents an effort to stir up a greater awareness of the County's health insurance dilemmas and offer practical solutions and ideas as to how we can better regulate the costs. The first edition looked at the current state of the U.S. health insurance industry and specifically the St. Louis County Government plan. The second issue examines the prescription drug dilemma. New topics will be introduced periodically over the coming months. Please take time to visit Health for Wealth often.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS COUNCIL

St. Louis County recently formed an Employee Wellness Council. As the cost of health insurance continues to rise, employee wellness has become a major consideration for most large organizations, including St. Louis County. Employees representing thirteen departments held their first meeting in late February. During the coming months, the Council will meet monthly to provide input and assist in planning activities and events that will focus on getting employees healthy, keeping employees healthy, detecting and preventing illnesses, and providing health information. Watch for more details soon!!

For more information or to make a contribution, contact:

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**Saint Louis
COUNTY**