

THE COUNTY CONNECTION

A newsletter written by and for employees of St. Louis County Government
Charlie A. Dooley, County Executive

Summer 2004

Cassandra Johnson

**St. Louis County
Trivia Winner**



“Wow. I am blessed.” Cassandra Johnson, County Counselor, appeared only mildly startled when we surprised her with her prize. She was steadily preparing for court later the same day and had her energies focused. She calmly smiled for her photo and asked what she’d won. When she’d heard she’d answered all the County Trivia questions correctly, she stated she “felt very special today.”

Cassandra will take advantage of her Dierberg’s gift certificate the next time she goes shopping.

See **TRIVIA WINNER**, Pg. 7

Delrena Foster Helping Others Achieve

by Fannie Lindo & Kathy Eller



“I’m still recovering,” Delrena Foster (HS) said, referring to the 8th grade graduation celebration for her son, Matthew. “I’ll give anything a try once, but sometimes it’s only once.”

Delrena was brave enough to chair the PTA committee that hosted the annual 8th grade party, which included food, drink and dancing. “It was a success – the kids barely touched the food, they were dancing so hard,” Delrena said, “but have you seen the new dance? It’s basically jumping up and down. And the clothes! What’s going on with fashion?”

Inspired from that event, Delrena then went on to chaperone a group of graduates at Six Flags, where she ran into participants from the County’s ‘School to Business Partnership’. That seems to be the way Delrena’s life goes: her work and personal lives blend into one commitment – “helping others achieve something in life.”



DELRENA JOINS THE COUNTY Delrena began working for the County in 1979 and has been in the same division ever since. “My division has gone through several program changes through the years. First it was CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act), then JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) and now WIA (Workforce Investment Act)” she explained, “and the focus has shifted, but the overall goal is still the same.”

The *School to Business Partnership* is Delrena’s latest success. The project,

See **DELRENA FOSTER**, Pg. 3

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YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

This issue's feature takes a look at the Public Administrator's Office

By Thomas Arras

I would guess that the Public Administrator's Office is the least known and the least understood government department in St. Louis County. That should not come as a surprise considering that there are only nine employees including the Public Administrator and the office is located on the fifth floor of the Courts Building tucked away in a small hole next door to the Probate court. It is sometimes referred to as the "windowless pit". It is also sometimes confused with Public Works, Public Defender and even the Prosecuting Attorney (the initials are the same). If you ever had lost mail, it may have wound up at this office.

The purpose of the Public Administrator is to provide services to the citizens of St. Louis County in the following situations:

- ① When a person passes away in St. Louis County and there are assets located in St. Louis County to be preserved and there are no known family or friends. In such cases the Public Administrator may take charge of those assets and attempt to locate family and friends. If no family or friends are found, the office may proceed to actual appointment as the personal representative for the estate of the deceased person.
- ② When a person passes away in St. Louis County and friends or family have petitioned to be the personal representative and there is a conflict between two parties seeking to be the personal representative. In such cases the court may request that the Public Administrator be appointed because of the conflict.
- ③ When a person who is living is in need of a guardian and/or conservator and there are no friends or family members who can file a petition. In such cases a state agency, nursing home or hospital will file a petition seeking the appointment of the Public Administrator.
- ④ When a person who is living is in need of a guardian and/or conservator and friends or family have petitioned to be the guardian/conservator and there is a conflict between two parties seeking to be the guardian/conservator. In such cases the court may request that the Public Administrator be appointed because of the conflict.

As you can see, the Public Administrator is an administrator (personal representative or guardian/conservator) of last resort. Friends or family handle most of these types of cases. The Public Administrator is only involved if there is an extraordinary need.

The office does not actively seek these cases. They are presented to the office because there is a need for these services. Once involved, the office takes the responsibility seriously and fulfills the obligation assigned to it.



From left to right: Janet Rotramel, Douglas Levine, Linda Dockery, Michael Cleary, Linda Griffie, Randolph Wall, Thomas Arras, Thomas Carbone. Clara Worsham not pictured

The Public Administrator is no different than any other administrator and the same rules and procedures apply to the office as to any other person acting in the capacity as a personal representative or guardian/conservator.

Handling the personal affairs of another person is a huge responsibility. All activities of an administrator are supervised by the Probate Court. The Public Administrator works very close with the Probate Court to insure that all matters are handled properly. This

becomes even more important for a Public Administrator because he/she is often thrust in the middle of a family fight in which he/she is not a family member. This adversity often times tests the creativity and patience of the Public Administrator and his/her staff.

The staff of the St. Louis County Public Administrator office consists of highly trained, professional and dedicated individuals. All current employees (except the secretary) have at least ten (10) years of service with the office and/or legal or Probate experience. While not required by the St. Louis County Charter, the Public Administrator has, for at least the past thirty-five (35) years, been an attorney. In addition, there is an attorney that represents the office in court-related matters. There are four (4) Deputies, one of whom specializes in the social service needs of the Wards under the care of the Office. The bookkeeping and accounting personnel are responsible for the accurate and efficient administration of assets of the Estates under the care of the office.

On a personal note, I would like to say that I have never worked with individuals as skilled or as dedicated as the staff of the Public Administrator's Office (no offense to the Probate Court as I was employed there as legal counsel previously for eight (8) years). I know there are times when the pressure of the task at hand can be overwhelming. There are times when you have to let people vent their frustration at you even though you are not the cause of their problem. The staff performs a thankless task without much recognition. To them I say "Thank You."

For more information, call the office at 615-2663 and ask for Tom Arras or visit the Public Administrator's web site at www.stlouisco.com/publicadmin/index.html.

DELRENA FOSTER
continued from Page 1



Delrena's greeting

contracted to the Urban League, partners youths with mentors employed by Southwestern Bell Corporation. "There's a gap between young people and the business world," Delrena explained, "and this program helps them reconnect. Youths with barriers to success don't know what to wear, how to act or what to say in a business setting. By spending time with a businessperson, they are exposed to the basic expectations of the business world and they have a concrete example of what work is actually like."

Delrena measures the program's success by both the youth's feedback and their actions. One program graduate told her that, as a result of the program, he now had a career goal and a specific and concrete idea of what he planned to do after completing his education. In addition, several other youths have begun presenting themselves in an employable fashion, something, they admit, would not have occurred to them to do before going through the program.

DELRENA'S COMMITMENT The job Delrena holds isn't just a paycheck to her – it's a vocation that she is so passionate about, she even named one of her dogs, an Irish Setter, "JTPA," after the ill fated social program. JTPA-the-dog enjoyed a much better fate than JTPA-the-program - it was replaced with WIA in 1998. "JTPA [the dog] ended up living with a friend's father on an island off the coast of Georgia and ate lamb and rice

every day," Delrena recalled.

ONE OF MANY The *School to Business Partnership* program is not the only shining star project housed within the North Oaks Workforce Development offices. The office is actually located in the Missouri Career Center that houses a conglomeration of agencies including the Urban League, St. Louis Community College, the Housing Authority of St. Louis County, Job Corp, MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries, several school districts and related educational agencies, and many others.

These programs assist citizens in the local area to secure employment by assisting with job skills testing, resume review and job searches. The programs also help citizens maintain their newly acquired jobs by providing training on overcoming life skills challenges and distributing transportation assistance information.

Delrena emphasized the availability of resources.

She quoted the recent

story on the news of a bank robber who believed he had no other option to address his life issues but to resort to crime. "He could have come here. We could have helped him get a job," she lamented.

For more information about the Workforce Development Division and the Missouri Career Center, visit <http://www.stlouisco.com/dhs/workforce.html>.

STOP!

Should **YOU** or a **COWORKER** appear on these pages?
For an outstanding accomplishment, hobby or special award?
Contact Kathy Eller (615-5430) to submit a nomination.

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH: HATS OFF TO HEALTH INSPECTOR!



When a man failed to return home after a weekend of hunting, **STEPHANIE (TAFFY) KELLY** (DOH), Public Health Sanitarian, mounted a horse to comb a heavily wooded area where rough terrain made it impossible to use conventional vehicles. As a member of the Eureka Fire Protection District's Equine Search & Rescue Team, Taffy can be called out at any time to respond to such situations. She, and other concerned citizens familiar with horses, along with firefighters, EMS, and police officers, learned special techniques for handling and calming horses during accident or disaster situations. The search team ultimately found the man, who had suffered an aneurysm. According to Taffy, "the most gratifying part is when we're able to help find someone. Without our efforts, the man may not have survived."





Department Notes



HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC

On May 12, Department personnel sponsored "Charbonier Solutions," an open house at which proposed improvements to a segment of Charbonier Road immediately west of Lindbergh Blvd. were explained. Approximately 100 Florissant citizens attended the forum, and received detailed explanations of three possible improvement projects developed by Highways and Traffic to enhance traffic flow and improve the structural aesthetics of Charbonier Road between Downing Place and Loekes Drive. Within the last half-year, Highways and Traffic have held similar forums on proposed improvements to Baumgartner Road and Hanley Road.

Three veteran members of the Department's Division of Construction recently were honored by the American Public Works Association. **THOMAS P. NEWPORT, SR.**

(Inspections Supervisor), **JOSEPH M. HEENAN** (Chief of Surveys) and **ROBERT D. SHOULTS** (Survey Crew Chief) each received a "Vince Tallo Award" at the APWA's May 20th St. Louis Branch Awards and Recognition Dinner. The award recognizes Newport, Heenan and Shoults for their outstanding, public sector contributions and their 30-plus years of continuous service with the Department of Highways and Traffic.

In late May, work proceeded on the Department's nearly \$900,000 improvement project on Kiefer Creek Road in West County. When the job is completed this fall, Kiefer Creek, from just north of its intersection with St. Paul Road to approximately 300 feet south of Pierside Lane, will sport 12-foot lanes in each direction, a paved, four-foot shoulder on its east side and guardrails on the west. Currently, this section of the road is narrow (driving lanes are only eight feet wide), shoulder-less and anchored on its west side to a relatively steep drop-off that precludes the erection of guardrails. L. Krupp Construction is performing the work under contract.

The existing St. Paul/Kiefer Creek intersection (presently a three-way 'stop' design) will also be reconfigured to eliminate the need for Kiefer Creek Road motorists to stop.

JUSTICE SERVICES

Congratulations to our Employee of the Year – **DEXTER SWIMS**.

HUMAN SERVICES

May's Older Americans' Month gift basket raffles netted \$800 for the Department of Humans Services' County Older Resident

Programs (CORP). Chances for four types of baskets (Bleeding Blue-Gold and Red; The Goddess, Auto TLC, and Dine In/Dine Out) were purchased during a two-week period last month. CORP Director **ROSEMARY TERRANOVA**, assisted by County Youth



The Barnes-Jewish Hospital Mammography van will return to Clayton for the benefit of County Government employees. The American Cancer Society recommends annual screening mammograms for women beginning at age 40. Utilizing the van only takes about 20 minutes.

Call 314-867-3627 to schedule an appointment.

Program employee **RON HILL**, drew the names of the lucky winners: **DOROTHY ERICKSON** (CORP volunteer); **LORI FIEGEL** (Department of Planning); **JOHN SULLIVAN** (Home Improvement Program- South County); and **DR. MARILYN ROBINSON** (DHS Director). CORP hopes to make the gift basket raffles an annual event each May in celebration of Older Americans' Month.

PARKS & RECREATION

GENIE ZAKRZEWSKI, director of the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation, recently left the position to become president and CEO of Leroy Springs & Company in South Carolina.



Genie Zakrzewski

Zakrzewski was with County Parks for eight years, the last five as director. Since Zakrzewski was appointed director in January 1999, the County Park system has grown and improved tremendously, according to County Executive **CHARLIE DOOLEY**.

Get me to the church ... *on time!*

O.J. Guzon and Dr. Anna Ojascastro were stunned to see County offices were closed on the day after Thanksgiving last year. They had planned to pick up their marriage license for their wedding the next day! They contacted their councilman who in turn made the call for help. **KAREN ELDER** (Rev), a supervisor in the marriage license unit, responded by coming into Clayton, opening the office and issuing the license. The wedding took place the next day as scheduled. Great job Karen!



this summer. As a Fannie Mae Fellow, Phil will participate in leadership and organizational management training, and will attend special events designed to promote the development of sound affordable housing policy throughout the country.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
Farewell to **CHRISTOPHER GUNN.**

LINDSEY SWANICK, assistant director of the Parks department, is acting director until a permanent director is appointed.

REVENUE
Farewell to **YVONNE MONROE, KATHY PHILLIPS, PATTY FOZZARD** and **MARCY TABER.**

Congratulations to **JOHN E. FRIGANZA**, the new Collector of Revenue for Saint. Louis County. Prior to being appointed the Collector of Revenue on March 14, 2004, John served as Acting Collector of Revenue for one year.



John Friganza

On April 16, 1970, John began his career with Saint Louis County Government in the Collector's Office as an Account Clerk. John has spent his entire career working in the Collector's Office, and over the years he has worked in the positions of Accountant, Accountant Senior, Assistant Collector of Revenue and Manager of Accounting. Prior to working for Saint Louis County, John served in the United States Air Force as a General Accountant Specialist.

PLANNING
The Planning Department came together to send a care package to Lance Corporal Anthony J. (TJ) Minden of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. He is from a local reserve unit currently stationed in Iraq and is brother to Community Development Director, **PHIL MINDEN**. TJ, who thought the box was "awesome", shared his goodies with everyone. They in turn are convinced his family is in the mafia because of all the stuff he gets! Phil sends out his sincerest thanks to everyone who donated and to **DARLENE RICH**, Housing Manager, who organized the drive.

PHIL MINDEN, the Director of the Office of Community Development in the Department of Planning, received a fellowship from the Fannie Mae Foundation to attend a three-week session at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard

SPIRIT AIRPORT
Volunteers are needed! Spirit Airport is gearing up for the 13th annual County Fair and Air Show, which will be held over Labor Day weekend. This year's fair will feature the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, the Aeroshell Aerobatic Team, and a number of military aircraft demonstrations and fly-bys. The U.S. Army Golden Knight Parachute Team will open each day's show. In addition to the air shows, this year's attractions include one of the largest static aircraft, displays, the historic Double Vee Tuskegee Airmen AT-6, world-class carnival rides, interactive exhibits, Anheuser-Busch world famous Clydesdales, Faust Park's Historical Village, Bud Work, Kids Town, and Purina Farms petting zoo, as well as live concerts and breathtaking fireworks displays. The Fair and Air Show benefits the Children's Miracle Network, which equally benefits Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital and St. Louis Children's Hospital.

SUE HENDRICKS and her husband hosted three citizens from Ludwigsburg, Germany, for eight days as part of the Sister Cities program between St. Charles, Missouri, and Ludwigsburg, Germany. This trip was planned to concur with the Lewis and Clark Celebrations. Sue's guests were able to enjoy the new Foundry Arts Centre in St. Charles, the Jefferson Memorial Expansion Museum, the Arch, Union Station, Grant's Farm, the Osage Indian Exhibit at the St. Louis Art Museum, and a four hour yacht cruise up the Mississippi River. They ended their week with a well-conducted tour of Spirit of St. Louis Airport given by **JOHN BALES**, Deputy Director of Aviation at Spirit Airport. The guests were amazed at how clean and new everything at the Airport appeared and were delighted with their visit.

Farewell to **TOM POLESEL**. He is leaving to help run his family's business, Villa Antonio Winery in Hillsboro, MO.



Sue Hendricks, John Bales and German guests

Anniversaries

35 Years
Rick Fox (Plng)

25 Years
Karen Cronk (Admin)
Sidney Hirsch (Spirit)
Kenneth Reed (JS)

20 Years
Jerry Kramer (JS)
Jessie Riddle-Rush (JS)
Lance Smith (JS)

15 Years
Torey Parker (Admin)

10 Years
Mary Archer (Admin)
Florette Hampton (Admin)
Peggy LaJeunesse (Plng)
Robert Lampson (JS)

5 Years
Paige Detering (PA)
Dale Hood (PA)
Phil Minden (Plng)
Susan Petersen (PA)
Shapell Rice (JS)
Darlene Rich (Plng)
Donald Schneider (PA)
Sheronica Todd (JS)
Jennifer Tuckett (Admin)
Cleveland Tyson (PA)

NEW GHP ID CARDS



In June, GHP will issue new member ID cards. For improved security and privacy reasons, GHP will no longer use Social Security Numbers to generate a Member ID number. They will now use a system created number. The cards will reflect this new number. Watch the mail for your new card and a letter explaining the changes in more detail.

RECYCLED GOLD

Over the past 3½ years, **JOE STORZ** (HS) has worked with the Love A Golden Animal Rescue to place over 150 Golden Retrievers from rural eastern Missouri in new homes in the St. Louis area. Each June, the agency sponsors a reunion picnic to renew Golden and human friendships.



Joe Storz and friends

RETIREMENT



BILL PECHA (JS) will retire June 1, 2004 after 23 years with the department.

In April, **RON HALBACH** (H&T) concluded his 28-year career with Highways and Traffic. A longtime manager of the department's Division of Design and most recently an engineering consultant, Halbach was honored by his co-workers with a catered lunch, speeches and gifts. "My main goal here was to help the residents of the County and to help my Department," Halbach noted. "And I'd like to think I was at least a little bit successful in that."



Amy Cendroski (Rev)
Patricia Gramke (DHS)
Sandy Griffin (Rev)
Mark Hubert (Spirit)
Barbara Kellner (Rev)
Amy Retzinger (DHS)
Andrea Weber (Rev)
Terri Williams (Rev)

NEW

Congratulations to **MARK ELLERBECK** (Rev) and his wife upon the birth of their son, Luke Eric on April 21, 2004. Luke weighed in at 6 lbs., 11 oz. and was 19.5 inches long.

SHARON HOWARD (JS) welcomed first grandchild Taylor Howard.

STEVE O'BRIEN (PA) and wife, Angie, on the birth of a daughter, Skylar Katherine.

DAVID TRUMAN (PA) and wife, Amy, on the birth of a son, David James.

KIMBERLY WENOM (PA) and husband, Michael, on the birth of a son, Austin.

ARRIVALS

NEW

ARRIVALS

EMPLOYEE VOICES

Think you know your Division of Personnel staff?
Bet you don't know ...

"... that I love to cook and have over 100 cookbooks. All my friends and co-workers think that I eat out all the time. Okay, so I DO eat out all the time, and okay, so I haven't had a kitchen for the past few months because I'm renovating it, but all that aside, I love to experiment with recipes and new taste sensations, when I have the time. When I finally finish the kitchen, I'm going to have a huge "cook-fest". Anybody want samples?" **FANNIE LINDO**

"... that I'm a licensed Embalmer and Funeral Director. Before coming to the County, I spent 13 years in the field. I still keep my license current - why, I don't know." **DAVE CLINE**

"... that I am a "professional" volunteer. I am a member of two national service organizations - Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. & Top Teens of America. Through them, I've worked with the Komen St. Louis Affiliate Race for the Cure (finish line, crowd control or the food line), the March of Dimes Walk-A-Thon (food line), Bikers For Babies (worked the crowd for donations), the United Negro College Fund Walk-A-Thon (food line and cooked hotdogs) and the Dr. King Holiday Celebration at Powell Symphony Hall (usher) - just to name a few!" **ADRIANNE MANN**

"... that I do custom art glass and stain glass windows." **DANA HUTCHINGS**

"... that I've gone digital. I now bring in digital pictures of my 11-month old, Joey, every Monday to share with my coworkers. They are very patient (perhaps patronizing?) with me. Want to see the latest? I have 30 new ones!" **KATHY ELLER**

"... that I like to visit cemeteries. I've been hooked on genealogy research for many years and cemeteries are often a wealth of information about families. Once my daughter and I visited an abandoned family cemetery in Kentucky on a farm and had to wear boots and be armed with shovels, rakes, bug spray, and be on the lookout for snakes to try to find tombstones from the civil war days." **MARIAN MCCREARY**

"... that I fence. I took fencing classes here in Clayton, and won a first place in a tournament for regular and electrical fencing. Engarte!" **SUE SOBELMAN**

"... that I have been singing in rock & roll bands since I was fifteen. My favorite type to sing is Rock & Roll and Rhythm & Blues. I have performed with many famous St. Louis musicians, including Marcel Strong, Max Baker, and Tom Maloney. My sixteen-year-old son, Andrew, is fast becoming quite an accomplished guitar player. It's great to see the tradition continue." **KATHLEEN JAYCOX**

"... that I farm on a joint venture with my father and brother-in-law. We grow corn, beans and wheat. Also, we raise beef cattle. When we are not farming, I love to go fishing with my father. It's a great way to relax." **APRIL SCHUETTE-WILSON**

"... that I am a former host of the cable series "Heritage Lives". After my father passed away in 1991, I assumed his role as host of the award winning series. Before working in front of the camera, I worked behind the scenes as co-producer and film editor." **STEPHANIE KENNEDY**

"... that I get up at the crack of dawn to go to the gym and run at least three times a week. Not lift weights or attend aerobics - just run, run, run - around a tiny track that takes 17 laps around to go one mile." **CAROL FLOOD**

"... that I've done weird and unusual things. I am a Talent Statistician for college football and basketball for ESPN Sports, an avid gardener, have visited Hawaii on seven occasions and I know all state capitals, presidents, and terms of office in order." **KIRK MCCARLEY**

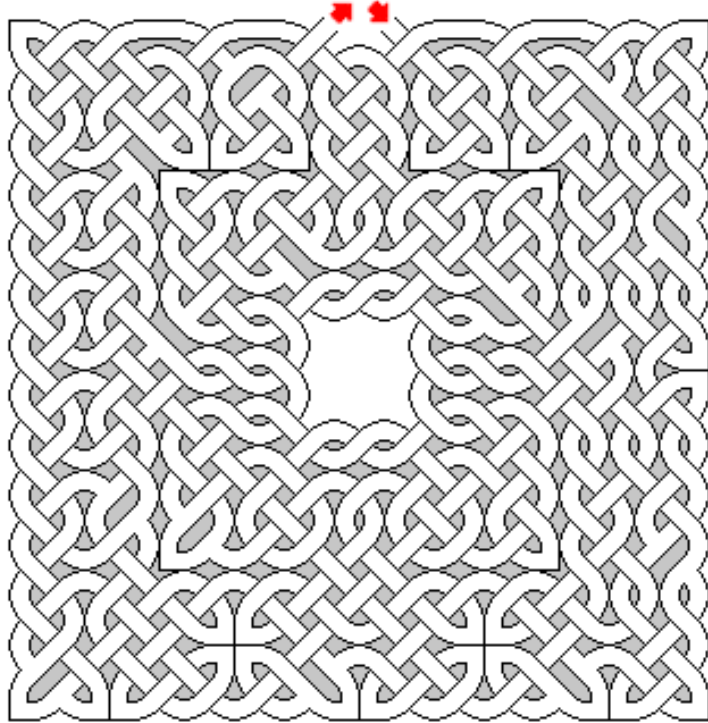
TRIVIA WINNER
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Here are four other submissions we received that deserve honorable mention. These submissions also answered all trivia questions correctly, but Cassandra was the closest at guessing how many merit system positions are at the County.

- Dick Hrabko (Spirit) Mike Zlatic (DOH)
- Rick Sides (BOE) Jeannette Hook (Cty Clk)

**If you were unexpectedly gifted with an afternoon off,
how would you spend it?**

Submit your answer to the Division of Personnel
by July 2nd to be included in the Fall Issue.



Maze

**GET OUT YOUR PENCILS
- AND ERASERS!**

Find your way through the maze and submit your entry to the Division of Personnel by July 2nd for a chance at a prize.

Name: _____

Department: _____

Contributing Editors

- Dick Bauer*
 - Laura Berry*
 - Cindy Davies*
 - Johnita Grimm*
 - Sue Hendricks*
 - Diane Hirson*
 - Jeannette Hook*
 - Barbara Hughes*
 - TeeJay Jaedemann*
 - Gail Ottolino*
 - Sharon Remaklus*
 - Tricia Rodgers*
 - Ellen Waters*
 - David Wrone*
- Thanks to everyone for another great issue!*
- Kathy Eller & Fannie Lindo*

St. Louis County Trivia Solutions

Who was the first St. Louis County Executive? This question was much trickier than we anticipated! The first official leader of County Government was Jim McNary whose title was 'County Administrator.' The first person to hold the title 'County Executive' was Gene McNary.

- How many County Council Members on the Council? **Seven members.**
- What year was the first County Charter Adopted? **1950**
- How many pay periods are there in a year? **26**
- Who is responsible for the passage of the ordinances that govern the operation of the County? **The County Council**
- If you needed a building permit, what department would you obtain it from? **The Department of Public Works.**
- St. Louis County covers an area of how many square miles, within 5 miles? **524**
- How long is the term of a Civil Service Commissioner? **Four years**

- Who is the current Director of Planning? **Glenn Powers**
- How many merit system employees, within 50, work at the County? **Again, this question was unintentionally tricky. There are 4,597 total County positions listed in the 2004 Budget. However, only 3,230 (as of 5/26/04) are merit system positions.**



Glenn Powers

What is a merit system? It's defined in the Civil Service Rules as "a system of personnel administration for the appointment of all County employees and appointive county officers, except as otherwise provided in the Charter, on the basis of merit ascertained as nearly as practical by competitive evaluation process and for the retention of employees and officers on the basis of merit and ability." Practically speaking, it protects government employees from political influence and structures personnel administration, including competitive hiring and fair employment practices. Appointed positions, Police employees and Board of Election employees are examples of employees not covered by the merit system.