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Detective Charges Racial Profiling

An East St. Louis detective believes his son is the victim of racial profiling and his car illegally searched following a traffic stop in Fairview Heights.

Orlando Ward, Sr. filed a complaint with the Fairview Heights Police Department and the O'Fallon NAACP branch regarding the stop involving his son, Orlando Ward, Jr.

According to Ward, his son was stopped early Sunday morning at approximately 3am. Upon the stop, several police cars came to the scene, along with a drug sniffing canine.

"They made my son take his shoes off and stand out in the cold. They said they were stopping him for a broken light. Fine, but my son did not give them permission to search his car," said Ward.

Ward's son was issued a ticket for violating curfew and warning for his light. Ward said his son was out with friends celebrating following his high school's homecoming.

According to Ward, he received conflicting information when he visited the police station.

"They told me he was speeding and had several lane violations, but the paperwork issued my son didn't say that. They told me there was no police report and I couldn't see video of the stop," Ward said.

"I'm not asking for special treatment. My son is a good kid. We just want to be treated fairly and not have to worry about him or any other child being stopped and illegally searched. We don't want to have to worry about our children being hurt," said Ward.

**CASON DEMANDS APOLOGY FROM CANDIDATE ENYART
BY REGINALD B. RIDDLE**



The O'Fallon Police Department was the backdrop for a press conference held by Judge Laninya Cason early this week as she demanded an apology from Bill Enyart, candidate for U.S. 12th Congressional District and his campaign manager Jason Bresler. According to press information from Cason's camp, during the O'Fallon Homecoming parade on last week, she was physically shoved aside by Enyart while speaking with someone along the parade route. The statement went on to say that she was also harassed by Enyart's son (Alex) several times during the parade. "I know what happened Saturday, the witnesses know what happened on Saturday and Bill Enyart knows what happened on Saturday, she said as 40 supporters stood alongside her during the press conference. I have been bullied and pushed around by the St. Clair County Democratic machine before, but it never got physical...Enyart took it too far." Carlos Huston, a supporter of Cason stated that he witnessed the shove from Enyart to Cason and it happened according to Cason's account. He added, "Bill Enyart's son Alex Enyart continued to circle Cason holding an Enyart sign, it was harassment pure and simple." Speaking to Jason Bresler, Enyart's campaign manager via telephone, he stated that they have no intentions on issuing an apology to Cason because one was already issued for what they are calling "an accidental bump." "On a crowded parade route, people bump into each other all the time because these are low-key fun events for voters to meet candidates at all levels. Bill accidentally bumped into a Plummer supporter, immediately apologized, but somehow between laughing and joking and now, this has become political. This is the type of ugly politics that people in southern Illinois are sick of where something as simple as a parade could become grounds for political gamesmanship," Bresler added. Cason stated that she is confident that the O'Fallon Police Department will conduct a thorough investigation and justice will be served. Cason is a candidate for Circuit Judge to replace Judge Milton Wharton who is retiring this year. At press time, Brendan Kelly, St. Clair County State's Attorney stated, "no charges have been applied for in my office and nothing has been submitted for my review."

Newlywed Killed By Driver In Stolen Car **By Linda S. Lawson**

A newlywed on her way to work was killed Wednesday morning when a man stole a police car and collided with two cars.



Investigators are still working to reconstruct the accident that began with a man being removed from a bus. The victim was 41 year-old Maximillion Quarles-Gaston. Gaston, a newlywed less than two weeks, was working on her PhD in psychology.

The police car was headed westbound at approximately 8:32 am when it collided with the Gaston's white Mercury and another white Ford. It is unclear the direction of the other two cars the suspect hit. It is believed the suspect hit the back of her car which careened her into a utility pole. The occupant of the second car was being treated at a St. Louis area hospital. The woman was died at the scene and the suspect is being treated at an area hospital under police watch.

"Officers responded to a call at 80th and State Streets of a male rider who didn't pay his fare. The officer escorted him off and he ran and jumped into the police car and took off. We are still collecting evidence and information," said East St. Louis Assistant Chief Ronald Ike.

The officer had no intention of arresting the suspect when he jumped into the car with its engine running. It's estimated the driver exceeded 100 miles an hour. Charges will occur within the next several days against the suspect.

Nightclubs and Convenience Marts Charged **By Linda S. Lawson**

In a sweeping step to clean up crime, a special grand jury has indicted the corporations of several East St. Louis nightclubs, convenience marts and property owners to hold them accountable.

On Wednesday, the grand jury requested by State's Attorney Brendan Kelly, returned indictments against Club Posh, Club Rolex, Club 103, and Crown Mart Convenience stores on drug paraphernalia and weapons charges. In June, the same establishments were charged with maintaining a public nuisance.

In June, a joint operation which included the Illinois State Police WAVE detail and agents of the Illinois Liquor Control Commission executed search warrants and inspections of the night clubs which led to the first charges.

The state's attorney's office is also targeting derelict property owners. Charges have been filed against Discount Inn Incorporated, of Skokie, Illinois, today. They have submitted a clean-up plan. Those cases will be referred to the Special Grand Jury.

Homicides are down 30 percent from 2010 and 85 percent down for the summer months from June to September in comparison to 2010.

Woman Shot After Police Struggle

The woman shot by a Centreville officer may face charges after she allegedly struggled with the patrolman that led to her being shot Monday night.

Officers were dispatched to a home involving a domestic dispute in the 4700 block of Piggott Avenue.

In the process of investigating a dispute between a mother and her 24 year-old daughter, the girl who allegedly had a knife. The daughter approached the officers and the struggle began leading to her being shot in the back, according to a statement from Illinois State Police.

She was treated at a St. Louis area hospital before taken to the police station where she is currently detained.

Barnhill Makes Third Appearance On Broadway By Linda S. Lawson

East St. Louis product Hettie Barnhill scored another coup by making her third Broadway appearance in the three years. Barnhill is performing in the much heralded Spiderman musical with a very prominent role.

"Hettie's voice opens the show," said her mother Priscilla Dixon who recently visited her and saw the performance. "She like ten or twelve characters and she's doing everything-singing, dancing and acting. She's flying through the air. It's wonderful," she said.

Previously, she performed in the short-lived Broadway musical Leap of Faith. The show closed less than two months after its premiere, but received several Tony nominations giving her a chance to perform at the awards. She also danced in the long-running Broadway musical FELA.

Barnhill, who is substituting for an injured principal actress, is scheduled to perform through the end of September. Barnhill will still serve as a back-up if the other actress returns to the role. She trained at the Katherine Dunham Center and at the St. Louis Center of Creative Arts better known as COCA.

Man Gunned Down In Washington Park

Investigators are seeking clues into the ambush murder of a 21 year-old man Tuesday afternoon in Washington Park.

According to Washington Park Police Chief Dave Clark, a blue car pulled alongside of Delano Blake at 47th and Caseyville Avenue and opened fire. He was pronounced dead from multiple gunshot wounds. If anyone has any information regarding this case, please call Crimestoppers at 866-371-TIPS (8477). All information will be kept confidential. Any tips leading to an arrest and conviction will receive a reward up to a \$1,000. The reward will also be rewarded confidentially.

Two Charged In Alleged Kidnapping



A Washington Park mother and son were charged for allegedly holding a young girl against her will and farming her out for sex.

The son faces the most serious charges. Steven Elliot Johnson, 24, of the 1400 block of North Kingshighway was charged with unlawful possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver, unlawful possession of cannabis with intent to deliver, unlawful possession of a weapon by a felon, promotion of prostitution and aggravated criminal sexual assault.

His mother, Owida Johnson, 54, of the same address was charged with two counts of child endangerment.

The young woman was 15 at the time she was reported missing from St. Louis in 2010. She escaped to the police station which launched a three-day investigation culminating with the arrests. During that time, she gave birth to a son. The Johnson family is denying the woman was held against her will.

The mother is free on bail, but the son is still being held on a two million dollar bond.

Dorris Davis-Helping Hands Shelter Founder Passes



The name of his nonprofit Helping Hands Shelter, aptly describes Dorris Davis legacy. For years, parents and children with little resources knew he could count on Davis to corral resources to provide them Christmas meals, Easter eggs, and back-to-school supplies. Davis, known for his signature hat and open heart, passed Tuesday after being hospitalized the past couple of weeks. Davis' most recent achievement was his election as a Washington Park Trustee. His organization and shelter has been in existence for decades. Funeral services are pending.

Report Reveals School Improprieties

An internal investigation revealed the the principal of Annette Officer Elementary School, along with two instructional coaches, spearheaded a variety of improprieties during critical testing. Ronald Ferrell, along with two instructional coaches, are accused of prompting student answers, instructing students to change wrong answers, and breaching test information prior to instructions. In March, an investigation was launched following anonymous information of testing irregularities. When state officials came to investigate an intecrom message "Abraham Lincoln come to the office" was a code to alert the staff of investigators. All three are no longer with the district, said Beth Shepherd, spokesperson for the district. As a result, the scores of the school will not be calculated within district scores which will have an adverse effect to the overall district scores.

Homicide Investigation of Ambush Murder By Linda S. Lawson

On Sunday, Rapp Chairs, the son of precinct committeeman RC Clark, enjoyed his family members during a reunion, and complimented his mother, who he affectionately nicknamed Old Girl, on her huge family meal.



"We had a family reunion. He ate, laid down, ate again and teased my mom saying, 'Old Girl, you put your foot in that,'" his sister, Laton Chairs said. Less than twelve hours later Chairs, 35, was declared dead following an ambush shooting. At approximately 1 am August 13th, Chairs was riding with another person in the vicinity of 7th and St. Louis Avenue when a white SUV pulled along side of the vehicle and someone opened fire. The driver sped to the police station for assistance. "The driver ran into the station and alerted the dispatcher of the shooting. He was pronounced dead at the station from multiple gun shot wounds," said East St. Louis Police Detective Marion Riddle. The family is stunned, still attempting to come to grips with the murder and who would want to kill him. "We are just unnoticeably lost. You can go to church and pray, but it is process. You can't prepare this. He wouldn't hurt anyone. He was very select in who he would hang with. He has a small group of friends. We don't know this person who he was in the car with. We know we can't bring him back, but we have not accepted the fact that someone is walking around and he is gone," Chairs said. The murder is being investigated by the newly formed SOS team, comprised of the FBI, state and local enforcement. As the family prays and waits for justice, Chairs says the will remember the their last happy memories. "He had a smile that endured a lifetime and big, brown eyes that would light a room in a second. We always had a good time. We had a darn good time," she said. If anyone has any information regarding this homicide, call Detective Orlando Ward at 558-8525 or call Crimestoppers at 866-371-TIPS (8477).

Local Pride Dawn Harper Takes Silver



Dawn Harper may not have defended her Olympic gold medal from Beijing, but she will leave London with one heck of a consolation prize. She set a personal best in winning her semifinal and then lowered that time in the finals, "finishing second to world champion Sally Pearson of Australia by a mere two hundredths of a second. Harper's silver-medal-winning time was 12:37 seconds, almost two tenths of a second faster than her winning time from Beijing and quick enough to edge fellow Americans Kellie Wells (12:48) and Lolo Jones (12:58)

ESL School District 189 Delays Opening Of Schools

"Jump Start To Graduation" Held As Planned: East St. Louis School District 189 will delay the start of school for one week as teachers report for duty on August 20 and students arrive on August 22. This is a delay from the original start date of August 13 for staff and August 15 for students. "We could have opened on August 15," said Superintendent Arthur Culver, "but we would not have been able to give our students the quality beginning to their year that they deserve. The delay will allow us to have repairs made to Miles Davis and to be sure that necessary staff is in place. Also, there are major air conditioning issues at Dunbar that must be addressed." Miles Davis Elementary School was vandalized during a burglary in July, and extensive repairs are necessary. These will be complete by August 22. Also, the District is working with a State Financial Oversight Panel (FOP) to stabilize district finances and to recall the staff that is necessary for quality instruction. "The Board of Education and the FOP have worked with us to reduce staff in areas that do not directly impact the classroom and to recall the teachers required for quality instruction," said Superintendent Culver. "This extra step was necessary to our long-term financial stability. By making this additional reduction in force, we were able to recall essential certified staff without increasing the budget deficit." As a part of the \$6,000,000 School Improvement Grant awarded to East St. Louis Senior High School, the "Jump Start to Graduation" program is taking place August 6-9. Students who will enter 9th grade on August 22 are attending from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. to meet faculty and staff, as well as to learn about high school expectations and strategies for success. Breakfast, lunch and transportation are provided through the grant. "We will be ready for our students and families," said Superintendent Culver. "Despite the financial challenges that we face, we are committed to high quality instruction and rigorous standards for all of our students."

Ann Jordan Update



The Jordan family will like to sincerely thank you for the continual onslaught of prayers, good deeds and good wishes during our mother's health challenge.

As many of you know she suffered a stroke early summer, but we are happy to report she came home on Tuesday. She is steadily making progress in her wellness journey and continue to move forward one prayer and one step at a time.

Your prayers and well wishes mean more to us than we can adequately convey. Thank you for continuing to keep us in your prayers.

Alorton Official Sentenced

Former Alorton street superintendent, Ronnie Cummings, second of several officials caught in a federal sting, was sentenced to a 41-month prison term. Cummings was convicted of possessing a firearm as a convicted felon and lying to federal agents regarding the possession. He previously served time for selling cocaine. The sentence was just short of prosecution request for 44 months. Cummings' defense attorney argued for a 33 month sentence, citing his non-violent nature. Previously, former Alorton and East St. Louis Police Chief Michael Baxton was sentenced to a year in jail. In that case, he took evidence then attempted to blame a fellow officer in the sting. Former Mayor Randy McCullum will be sentenced in August 20th on drug and other charges.

Boyfriend Charged In Cahokia Stabbing



A 43 year-old boyfriend of a woman was charged with first-degree murder and is being held on a million dollar bond. Michael Armstrong of Fairview Heights was charged in connection with the death of 44 year-old Marguerita Harmon. Harmon was stabbed numerous times with her body found by police in her driveway on Saturday. Police made the discovery following a 911 call. Armstrong was present at the officer's time of arrival and was held for questioning.

State Removes East St. Louis School Board

In a unanimous move, the Illinois State Board of Education formally removed the board of School District 189. In an 8-0 vote, they disbanded the board and replaced them with state-appointed members. They were replaced with Sister Julie Huiskamp, Rev. Jerome Jackson, Rev. Ranodore Foggs, Judge Milton Wharton, Karen Davis and Linda Matkowski.

On Wednesday, now former board president Lonzo Greenwood presented their case asking not to be disbanded saying they worked diligently to comply with requests.

State Superintendent Christopher Koch said the decision was not taken lightly.

Al and Flo Jo's Daughter Shines on America's Got Talent



Mary Joyner, the only child of Olympians Al Joyner and the late Florence Griffith Joyner, advanced in competition not for her athletic ability, but for her melodic voice.

Joyner appeared on the nationally televised show, America's Got Talent and progressed to the second round that will take place in Las Vegas within the next several weeks.

While judges and the audience were taken by Joyner's heritage, they were mesmerized by her rendition of Sarah Bareilles' Gravity and gave her a standing ovation.

"I've sat at home and watched this show every season," said Howard Stern. "Some give me goosebumps and some don't. You had me in thirty seconds."

Lead Judge Howie Mandel requested her father to appear on stage when he announced she would also appear in Las Vegas.

It is a little known fact exists that Flo-Jo was known for her predictions. She predicted Mary was the only one that could break her track records and was on her way as a high school track star. Instead Mary chose her mother's other prediction that her child would sing, a talent Flo-Jo didn't possess.

Cut and paste into browser to see performance: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQXy0tdkd-w>

Miles Davis Postage Stamp Unveiled



The legacy of world renowned jazz musician and former East St. Louis resident Miles Davis continues reach greater heights with the issuance of a United States postage stamp in his honor.

The stamp was unveiled worldwide and in East St. Louis Tuesday surrounded by community leaders, musicians and Davis childhood friends.

Lincoln High Alum and trumpeter Anthony Wiggins honored the occasion with a rendition of one of Davis' works. Eugene B. Redmond Writer Association members Darlene Roy and Roscoe Crenshaw recited a special poem celebrating Davis.

"It is an extremely high honor to have the legacy of Sir Miles Dewey Davis be recognized with a commemorative stamp. We thank the U.S. Postal Service, along with all of the fans and well-wishers worldwide, who voiced their support for this initiative," said the Davis Family in a released statement.

"Miles Davis is still taking the name of East St. Louis worldwide with this new honor," said East St. Louis Mayor Alvin Parks.

A second Miles Davis stamp dedication is scheduled in Los Angeles on June 27 at the Hollywood Bowl's Museum Terrace. The dedication will be followed by a Herbie Hancock hosted "Miles Davis Celebration" concert at the Hollywood Bowl featuring Marcus Miller "Tutu Revisited," the Miles Electric Band (featuring Vince Wilburn, Jr. on drums) and Kind of Blue: Jimmy Cobb's "So What" Band.

Davis stamp is known as a "Forever" stamp meaning it can be used for mailings at any time regardless of whether postal rates increase. At the time of issuance, the Edith Piaf and Miles Davis stamps are being sold at a price of 45 cents each, or \$9 per sheet. According to an East St. Louis postal official, it is not known when the limited edition stamp will be retired.

Three Gas Stations Raided and Fined

By Linda S. Lawson

The owners of three Crown Mart Convenience Mart/Service Stations were arrested and face a total of 57 charges including those associated with drug-related activity and creating a public nuisance.

The early Sunday morning raid headed by St. Clair County District Attorney Brendan Kelly also included a raid on three night clubs. The raid was conducted by Illinois State Police, St. Clair County Sheriff and various other organizations.

Owners, Abusaid "Mike" Majed, 50, of Creve Coeur, along with Mohammed "Steve" Musleh and Shaltaf K. Murad, 40 of St. Louis were charged and released on bond.

They are accused of peddling a variety of drugs ranging from synthetic marijuana to erectile medication. The charges pertain to alleged activities at the River Park Drive, 8301 State Street, and the Collinsville Ave/Martin Luther King Drive locations.

More than \$200,000 worth of assets and drugs were seized from the property. States Attorney Brendan Kelly is seeking the seizure of the stations. Other media outlets have reported a special grand jury may be involved.

Following the raid, Judge Steven McGlynn initially issued an order closing the stores, but allowed them to reopen. Mayor Alvin Parks suspended their liquor licenses after learning of the raid. The next day the owners of the Collinsville Avenue and River Park Drive locations were fined \$1,000 each and their liquor license suspended for 20 days. The owner of the 8301 State Street Mart faced a higher fine of \$2,500 and a thirty-day license suspension. That owner was assessed a steeper penalty because it's his third violation in a year.

Parks addressed citizen frustrations and skepticism that city officials were not aware of illegal activity and accusations of bribes in exchange for favoritism.

"Police officers are in and out all the time. I've done checks. We've always told them they have to abide by the law of the land and do everything above board. We are short staff and we did fall short, but we did the best we could with our resources," he said.

Mayor also adamantly denied accepting money from both the stores and nightclubs owners and providing them favoritism at the expense of the residents' well-being.

"Nothing is more ridiculous than hearing that I'm taking money from the owners," he said. "They have been good corporate sponsors such as giving us money when kids needed to participate in contests or other community goodwill, but any other allegation is ridiculous."

Double Homicide Discovered
Two Children Found Unharmed
By Linda S. Lawson



A man and a woman in what is believed to be a murder suicide were discovered at a home in the 600 block of North 23rd Street. Concerned relatives checked after not hearing from the occupants within the past several days. Two children, ages one and three, were found unharmed. It is estimated the children were unattended for approximately two days. The couple, believed to be ages 23 and 28 years old, had a history of domestic violence, according to East St. Louis Police Detective Orlando Ward.

New Panel Named To Oversee District



Rev. Ranodore Foggs



Rev. Jerome Jackson

A six panel board, four with local ties, were named to replace District 189's current school board the end of June.

Sister Julie Huiskamp, Rev. Jerome Jackson, Rev. Ranodore Foggs, Judge Milton Wharton, Karen Davis, and Linda Matkowski.

In a letter released earlier this month, State Superintendent Dr. Christopher Koch cited a breach by the elected board in honoring the oversight agreement.

Four are entrenched within the community.

Huiskamp, Jackson, and Foggs all have religious roots. Wharton recently retired as a St. Clair County Judge.

Matkowski is a Chicago financial advisor who previously served as a school board member in Carpentersville, IL. Karen Davis serves as vice-chair of Illinois Housing Development Board.

Politician Hermon Betts Passes



Even the hat on his head spoke to the love Hermon Betts held for his city. As he drove himself to the hospital on his final journey, he wore a cap with an East St. Louis logo.

The longtime politician passed Monday at the age of 82 after a lengthy illness.

Politics was engrained in him. Betts ran for numerous offices including a 1979 mayoral run and subsequent other offices including precinct committeeman and councilman. At the time of his death he was vice-chairman of the Planning Commission.

"He probably ran for every office. It was a part of who he was. You can't use his name and not think of politics," said his daughter, Natasha Betts. "It was a part of his identity. He loved it. He talked about how he campaigned for Obama before he was Obama. He would walk into restaurants and barber shops to vote for him and they would say he couldn't pronounce his name. I remember him talking with my grandfather about world events when I was six years old."

She hopes his life's message serves as a lesson that everyone's opinion, no matter what station they find themselves in life, deserves to be recognized.

"He wanted to note to all the people who want their voice to be heard that it doesn't matter how much money you do or don't have, that you have to fight. All the little hurdles didn't get his way."

Besides politics, Betts variety of businesses lend to a renaissance spirit having co-owned Chic cab company with his former wife, owned an employment agency in the 70's, and worked as a cosmetologist. He also worked as a disc jockey for various events including as a regular at Club Illusion until his last gig this past Friday.

"He was a strong man, had the best smile, and always laughter. He was self-sufficient and wanted to take himself. He didn't want to feel sick. He wanted to be a part of life. He wasn't ready, but he knew," she said as she now wears his Mason ring around her neck. "There just wasn't enough time to do everything."

After even after life seemed already gone, he still found a way to acknowledge his zest for it.

"He fought it even until his last breath. He had stopped breathing, but his heart was still pumping fifteen minutes afterwards. His life was full."

Memorial services are tentatively scheduled at Mt. Zion Church on Friday at 11am pending family travel arrangements.

Former and Current Alorton Mayors Under Fire

By Linda S. Lawson



The present and former Alorton mayors, along with two city trustees are accused of conducting clandestine meetings to fill the mayoral vacancy.

Alorton Mayor Treymella Johnson, Randy McCallum are charged with four counts of violating the Illinois Open Meetings Act. City trustees Perry Young and Dorothy Crockett face five counts each of the same charge.

McCallum resigned in February after pleading guilty to a number of crimes including siphoning city money and dealing crack cocaine.

St. Clair County State's Attorney Brendan Kelly charged the four met prior to McCallum's resignation to select Johnson for the vacated seat. No such meeting can occur without a public 48-hour notification.

If convicted, each misdemeanor count carries a potential 30 day jail sentence and/ or a \$1,000 fine.

Baby Needs Liver Transplant



A one year-old girl with a beaming smile needs a hand from her community. Kaylin Mayne has Biliary Atresia, a rare life-threatening liver condition that leaves her in need of a transplant. It is a rare occurrence, approximately one in every 10,000 to 20,000 births.

Kaylin's father, Andre Mayne, is searching for ways to help his child. Family and friends are rallying to help the Mayne Family.

Currently a fund has been established and supporters are seeking donations for a benefit and silent auction being held Saturday June 16, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Grand Marais Golf Club House 5802 Lake Dr. in East St. Louis, Illinois. "It has been very difficult. My wife is pregnant and I have a four year-old son. Kaylin doesn't know what is going on and is always happy. Not being able to help her is very hard," he said.

Kayla's mother, Kimyda hopes their experience will raise awareness of African-American organ donations.

"People should be aware only three percent are donors. Most people don't think of it until something happens," she said.

For more information regarding the fund and upcoming auction, please contact Asia Coleman by phone @ 618-207-5701 or visit our Facebook Page at: <http://www.facebook.com/Praying-for-Kaylin>.



Former Police Chief Sentenced

By Linda S. Lawson

Former Alorton and East St. Louis Police Chief Michael Baxton was sentenced to a one year prison sentence for stealing x-boxes during an undercover sting.

At the time of the indictment, Baxton had resigned from Alorton to be rehired as the East St. Louis chief. What he didn't know was federal law enforcement already had videotaped evidence of him taking the games from an automobile in a reported carjacking case.

After initially denying the theft and falsely implicating an undercover officer, Baxton plead guilty once he was confronted with videotaped evidence.

Defense attorney John Gara, who called Baxton a friend, advocated for probation saying his public scorn served as a just punishment.

"This destroys his career, destroys his name and a lifetime of work is thrown out the window. They'll be able to laugh at him and shirk at him and say, 'There goes Michael Baxton the bad cop.'"

Gara believes Baxton will not re-offend.

"It would be incomprehensible to me that he will be before this court again," he said.

Although Baxton cooperated with authorities, Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Weinhoef argued for 18 to 24 months

" He was charged to serve and protect and set the standard for his community. What we also find troubling is he falsely blamed another fellow officer for a crime he didn't commit," Weinhoef said.

Letters were presented from two former assistant state attorneys that spoke highly of Baxton and his work with them. It was also noted he aided in helping find witnesses for appellant cases and that he served on the Cahokia school board.

Baxton, visibly shaken, took several minutes before addressing the court.

"I'm not here to blame anybody. I don't blame the U.S. Attorney's Office. This is me. I take full responsibility. I apologize to this court and the community.

Baxton however did not publicly apologize to the undercover officer who he attempted to frame when confronted. It was one of several factors weighed heavily in the judge's rendering.

Federal Judge David Herndon made key distinctions between something normally considered a low-level crime and the seriousness of it involving a member of law enforcement.

"I find it interesting the nature and circumstance of the offense. The very unusual occasion and nature of this crime pails in comparison to the circumstances of the offense. There was no sign of nervousness or hesitation. This was not a person new to this. This defendant has not been an honest cop for awhile. The problem is there or more sides to this person and these were the bad acts of an immoral person," Herndon said.

The judge cited the 1989 expungement of two previous charges of theft and burglary as evidence of continuing pattern.

"This is the sum of history repeating itself," he said.

Herndon noted such acts ultimately affect the stability of the town.

"When town's law enforcement is corrupt, all those who go through that town must be able to trust that town is safe. They cannot trust that," he explained.

In addition, Baxton must also pay \$2,200 in fines and assessments, along with serving a two year probation.

ESTL Kappa Chapter Sweeps Provincial Awards!



PRESS RELEASE - The East St. Louis Alumni Chapter (ESTLAC) of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. recently attended the fraternity's North Central Province Council meeting in Madison, WI on April 12-15, 2012. During the awards ceremony, the critically renowned ESTLAC made an historical showing by winning the Website of the Year, Guide Right Program of the Year (mentoring) and Chapter of the Year (medium size) Awards for the 2011-12 fraternal year. The ESTLAC sincerely thanks the community for your continued support of our events and programs as the ESTL Kappas assist in serving the needs of the greater Metro East area! - Jason F. Ray, Chapter Polemarch

Help Police Locate These Individuals

Illinois State Police and East St. Louis Police are requesting the public's assistance in locating two Persons of Interest in the Brandon Davis Homicide. Davis was shot in the rear of Denese's Place located at 218 Collinsville Ave in East St. Louis on September 24, 2011 at approx. 2:00 am. He later died at a St. Louis Hospital from his gunshot wounds. Akeem A. Haynes is 27 years old, 5ft 7 in and weighs approx. 175 pounds. Chaz S. Moses is 28 years old, 5 ft. 7 inches tall and weighs approximately 170 pounds. Both subjects are Persons of Interest in the investigation. If contact is

made, please contact Special Agent Mike Swindle of the Illinois State Police at 618-979-8481 or contact CrimeStoppers at 866-371-TIPS (8477) . **Read more**

Superintendent Addresses The Public



Depicting School District 189's current financial picture as "deplorable", the man behind its complete overhaul and sweeping changes, stepped from behind a veiled image and addressed the decisions being made for an academically and financially sound foundation.

Approximately 150 people attended the community organized event to learn more about the plan of servicing 7,000 children.

Culver, who described himself as a straight shooter, called both imminent personnel cuts and school closures imperative to stop a hemorrhaging budget deficit of approximately 6 million dollars for both this and next school year.

Marvin and Katie Wright Observe 60th Wedding Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Wright celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on March 21, 2012 at St. Louis Tony's Five Star Restaurant. Mr. Wright is a retired educator. Dr. Katie Wright is "semi-retired", still serving as an educator, writer and as a community volunteer in several agencies and organizations. Mr. Wright is well known in Veterans' of Foreign Wars circles, having served as a Quartermaster and Commander of VFW Post 3480 and as a member of several community agency boards. Both Marvin and Katie have won recognition for many endeavors, including the Dr. Katie Harper Wright Elementary School having been named for Katie. Their daughter Virginia Kay Jordan is an educator, as is their granddaughter Diana Kaye Jordan.

Illinois Police Seek Information

Illinois State Police and East St. Louis Police are requesting the public's assistance in locating two persons of interest in the homicide of Brandon Davis on September 24th in the rear of Denese's Place.

Judges Face Off In November Election

By Linda S. Lawson



Voters will decide whether St. Clair County Judge Laninya Cason or Judge Zina Cruse will fill the 20th Judicial Court Circuit seat vacated by retired justice Milton Wharton.

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