Santa and Mrs. Claus, costumed characters highlights of Mayor’s Tree Lighting Ceremony

Buddy the Elf, a.k.a. Public Works’ Jason Gabathuler, (pictured with Santa and Mrs. Claus at right) along with the princesses from the movie “Frozen,” Springfield Batman, McGruff the Crime Dog, the Danger Rangers were on hand to walk the “red carpet,” take photos with attendees and help Mayor Bob Stephens usher in the holiday season at the Mayor’s Tree Lighting Ceremony Nov. 28 at Mediacom Ice Park. Special thanks to Jeff Cumley and the ice park staff for all of their help with the event and the use of the facility.

21st Annual Turkey Trot 5K Run/Walk draws est. 7,700

An estimated 7,700 runners and walkers registered for Thanksgiving morning’s 21st Annual Turkey Trot 5K Run/Walk, exceeding last year’s registered participation by about 100.

The annual event is one of the largest timed 5K race in Springfield and the largest Thanksgiving Day 5K in Missouri, with proceeds benefiting Developmental Center of the Ozarks and the Springfield-Greene County Park Board Scholarship Fund. The event also serves as the largest one-day food drive of the year for Ozarks Food Harvest.

Overall race winners were Spencer Haik, 19, Best Overall Male at 15:45; and Jamie Vest, 28, Best Overall Female at 18:15.

Overall Masters Division (over 40) winners were Brian Schmidt, 46, Best Masters Male, at 16:57; and Rosie Laughlin, 50 Best Masters Female, at 20:27.

Race results are now posted at parkboard.org, under the Turkey Trot tab.

Following a 48-hour dispute period, medals will be mailed to 1st 2nd and 3rd place age division winners of each age division. Age divisions are 9 and under, 84 and older, and in five-year increments between.
Nearly 10,000 Springfield children are now a little safer thanks to the dedication of a team of Springfield firefighters during October’s Fire Prevention Month. During 16 days in October, 31 firefighters volunteered their time on-duty to visit 37 schools, 464 classrooms and 9,829 students. This is the largest number of students visited in the history of the program.

During their visits, these firefighter educators provided two age-appropriate fire safety lessons to every classroom from kindergarten through fifth grade in the city of Springfield.

In addition to the fire safety lessons, students each received an activity book. These fire safety activity books will allow children to better retain the lessons learned by not only providing follow up activities at home, but also involving the entire family in their efforts to make their homes fire safe.

Students also went home with a smoke alarm survey asking their parents if they have a working smoke alarm and if not, would they like one. Those who indicated they would like a smoke alarm will receive a free smoke alarm that will be installed by Springfield firefighters. All students who returned the survey were entered into a drawing. Winning students received rides to school in a Springfield Fire Engine.
SGF named 2015 Digital Cities Survey winner by Center for Digital Government

eRepublic’s Center for Digital Government and its Digital Communities program in November announced the top-ranked cities in the 2015 Digital Cities Survey. Springfield, Mo. held its place as sixth among cities with populations of 125,000 to 249,000. Last year, Springfield rose four spots to No. 6 from a ranking of 10th in 2013.

“The top-ranked digital city governments in this year’s survey are using cloud services, data analytics and mobile apps—among other technologies—to help citizens interact with government more easily than ever before,” said Todd Sander, executive director of the Center for Digital Government. “These cities are true innovators and we applaud their efforts to increase transparency and open government, encourage citizen participation, and enhance cybersecurity.”

The annual survey recognizes leading examples of cities using technology to improve services and boost efficiencies.

“The Digital Cities Survey focuses on 10 initiatives across four categories: citizen engagement, policy, operations, and technology and data,” said City Manager Greg Burris. “All City departments contributed in one way or another to this success. I would like to thank the Information Systems and Public Information departments, in particular, for their continual and innovative work to leverage our use of technology to better connect our services with our citizens.”

Now in its 15th year, the Digital Cities Survey is part of the Center for Digital Government’s Digital Communities program and is open to all U.S. cities. The survey focuses on 10 initiatives across four categories: citizen engagement, policy, operations, and technology and data. Responses are reviewed and judged based on a set of criteria and how well the cities implemented technology services across the entire city.

Want to help? Volunteer opportunities available at The Salvation Army

417-862-5509 to let The Salvation Army know when you wish to help.

If you wish to volunteer for the food pantry, to pick up food at local restaurants or in our kitchen or administrative offices please visit salvationarmyspringfield.org and click the “Get Involved” tab.

Dec. 5th: Volunteers are needed to assist with sorting and storing of food and toys that are brought in from the donation drives. There are two shifts available: noon-3:30 p.m. and 3:30-7 p.m.

Dec. 12th: Sixteen individuals are needed to hand out flyers at the two main entrances of each of the local Walmarts for the Fill the Truck event. There are two shifts of four hours each, starting at 10 a.m. and ending at 7 p.m. Please come prepared for the cold as some Walmarts may ask that flyers not be handed out inside the store.

Dec. 14th, 15th, & 16th: Volunteers are needed to assist with the sorting and packing of the food brought in from the food drives and also to assist in the setup and preparation for the family distribution event. There are two shifts: 9:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and 12:45 p.m. to 4 p.m. on each day. This is a family-friendly opportunity as kids can help with the sorting.

Dec. 17th & 18th: Fifty-plus volunteers are needed to assist with passing out food baskets and helping parents pick out toys for their children. Volunteers are needed from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please note that those who wish to sign up must be 18 years of age or older.

Dec. 25th: If you like to help serve the meal on Christmas Day please contact the Harbor House directly at 831-3371, and ask for Betty.

If you are unable to participate in any of these opportunities, and you are not already doing so, you may consider volunteering to ring bells.

Visit registertoring.com or simply type registertoring.com into your Web browser and you will be directed to the site. The Salvation Army will also have thank-you letters to fold and stuff. Please call Reanna at (417) 862-5509 Ext 115 to ask if you can help. For any questions not addressed here please call our office at (417) 862-5509 Ext 116 and speak to Vicky Knight.

Follow the GOLDEN GOOSE

I am honored to pass the Golden Goose on to Lesleigh Horton. In reading the “Lessons From Geese,” I see in Lesleigh the same teamwork that is described in the lessons statement. Lesleigh is uplifting and always encouraging (not necessarily honking from behind like the geese) but always behind the scenes providing the needed information and support as needed to anyone/everyone in need. It is time for Lesleigh to take the lead position or spotlight in this particular case.

Karen Stewart, Public Works and Environmental Services

No matter how busy Karen Stewart is, she always takes the time to assist me in whatever I may need or request. Karen is always pleasant, and makes you feel that you are never a bother to her. She is willing to go above and beyond her duties in guiding the supervisors in Public Works, and Environmental Services in the proper processes and procedures for completing forms correctly and in a timely manner — which proves her dedication to her job and to the City as a whole. Karen always greets you with a smile.

Bonnie Phillips, Human Resources
The Springfield Police Department hosted a combined awards and promotions ceremony for citizens and SPD staff at 2 p.m. on Nov. 17 at the Springfield Art Museum. Staff and citizens were commended for their service, and in some cases, their bravery and extraordinary actions.

SPD Staff Promotions:
- Sgt. Fred Beck promoted to lieutenant.
- Cpl. Dustin Martin promoted to sergeant.
- Derrick Anderson promoted to Senior GIS Specialist.

Life Saving Award:
This award is presented to department personnel who personally save a life, normally involving one of the learned life supporting processes outside of routine measures.

Officer Kelby Dickensheet, Life Saving Award
On Aug. 1, Officer Kelby Dickensheet was off duty and eating dinner with his family at Leong’s Asian Diner. During his meal, Officer Dickensheet noticed a female, Lorraine DellaSandro, appeared to be choking at a nearby table. Officer Dickensheet approached Lorraine and noticed that she was not breathing and appeared to be turning blue in color. Officer Dickensheet took a hold of Lorraine and applied the Heimlich Maneuver, which dislodged a large piece of food from her airway, allowing Lorraine to begin breathing normally. She was checked out by EMS personnel, requiring no further medical assistance. Lorraine later advised that she was not able to breathe at the time and believed that Officer Dickensheet was her “hero” who had “saved her life.” Officer Dickensheet’s actions epitomize the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics and greatly reflect the values of this department.

Cpl. Chris Nuccio, Meritorious Service Award
Cpl. Nuccio arrived on scene and immediately began life-saving efforts on Officer Pearson by treating his head wound, monitoring his vital signs and preparing him for medical transport. Cpl. Nuccio followed the ambulance to the hospital where he collected essential evidence and photographs while Officer Pearson was operated on. Cpl. Nuccio provided Sgt. Heather Anderson with critical updates of Officer Pearson’s condition throughout his operation and did not leave his side while he was in the operating room.

Sgt. Tonya Price, Meritorious Service Award
Sgt. Price arrived and began life-saving efforts but was quickly redirected to begin setting up a perimeter for the crime scene and the search for the suspect. Sgt. Price maintained and controlled this perimeter for several hours throughout the night and into the morning hours. She was essential in providing updates to Lt. Eric Reece on the location of search teams and any problems or issues that arose. Sgt. Price’s quick actions of setting up the perimeter were essential in the suspect being contained and located inside the perimeter where he was safely taken into custody.

Cpl. Steve Ramey, Meritorious Service Award
Cpl. Ramey responded to the scene where he quickly realized the importance of documenting the scene. He retrieved his camera and began capturing photographs of the crime scene as well as photographs of Officer Pearson’s injuries. Due to his poise and critical thinking in an extremely emotional and stressful situation, Cpl. Ramey was able to capture essential evidence as the scene and Officer Pearson’s injuries that will be of utmost importance if this case goes to trial.

Sgt. Heather Anderson, Meritorious Service Award
Sgt. Anderson arrived on scene shortly after the shooting and also began life-saving efforts on Officer Pearson. She noticed that Officer Pearson appeared to be going into shock and requested that another officer bring her an Ambu bag. She then assisted in giving Officer Pearson extra breaths until the EMS arrived. Sgt. Anderson followed the ambulance to the hospital where she coordinated the collection of evidence. Sgt. Anderson was also essential in receiving and providing updates on Officer Pearson’s condition.

Lt. Fred Beck, Meritorious Service Award
Sgt. Beck responded to the scene and began assisting with life-saving efforts of Officer Pearson. He continually talked to Officer Pearson, encouraging him to remain conscious. Sgt. Beck assisted with removing Officer Pearson’s clothing, bulletproof vest and his duty belt to help speed up Officer Pearson’s medical treatment. After Officer Pearson was transported to the hospital, Sgt. Beck stayed on scene to aid with management of the perimeter, the manhunt for the armed suspect and the security of the crime scene.

Command Commendation:
This is awarded to department personnel who distinguish themselves by a single act or series of actions that impact the community in a positive manner, or significantly improve the ability of the SPD to fulfill its mission. Actions must be creditable, show intelligent and determined effort beyond reasonably expected job performance and must produce documentable results.

Sgt. David Stone, Command Commendation
Sgt. Stone arrived and began helping secure the inner crime scene and coordinate other tasks. Due to Officer Pearson’s condition, Sgt. Stone was sent to Republic, Missouri, to contact his wife, Amanda Pearson. Sgt. Stone contacted the Republic Police Department and asked them to meet him at the Pearsons’ residence. Sgt. Stone ultimately made contact with Amanda where he had the difficult and emotional task of explaining to her that Aaron had been shot and was critically injured. Sgt. Stone then transported Amanda to the hospital and stayed with the family until he was relieved.
Lt. Eric Reece, Command Commendation

Lt. Reece arrived on scene shortly after the shooting and took immediate command of the overall incident. Lt. Reece began making assignments to ensure a multitude of tasks were simultaneously handled to include establishing an inner and outer perimeter and sending officers to follow the ambulance to the hospital and Sgt. Stone to contact Officer Pearson’s wife and transport her to the hospital. Within just moments of making these assignments, Lt. Reece made the necessary chain of command notifications. Lt. Reece remained on scene and in command of the incident for several hours. He did not relinquish his command of the scene until the suspect was located.

Purple Heart Award:
This is awarded to department personnel who are seriously injured in the line of duty. The Purple Heart will only be awarded once during an individual’s career. Any subsequent actions deemed worthy of a Purple Heart will be documented with an oak leaf cluster attached to the original award.

Retired Officer Aaron Pearson, Purple Heart

When he arrived in the area, he located a suspect walking eastbound along the north side of Chestnut Expressway. During Officer Pearson’s attempt to contact him, the subject turned and fired several rounds from a handgun. One of those rounds struck Officer Pearson just below his left eye. This wound would later result in the loss of his left eye and damage of sections of his brain which would lead to him receiving a duty disability retirement. Since that horrific day, Officer Pearson has fought hard to rehabilitate himself, and his recovery thus far has been nothing short of miraculous. Officer Pearson’s incredible courage and strength has inspired his brothers and sisters in blue and people from all over the country. Officer Pearson was awarded the Purple Heart for the gunshot injury he received on Jan. 26. He placed the safety and protection of the community and his fellow officers as a top priority. His actions on that day demonstrated his commitment to the community and the Springfield Police Department.

Among the awards that the Springfield Police Department’s Leadership Council handed out this week recognizing the valiant efforts of law enforcement professionals and citizens for service to the community, was an award for Claudia Crighton, one of the City’s citizen resource coordinators.

Crighton received a Citizen Service Citation, presented to those who distinguish themselves in the community by their commitment to law enforcement through being actively involved in law enforcement related activities. Crighton also celebrates 15 years of service this month as part of the Department of Public Information.

Together with colleague Anita Eddy, Crighton directs citizen requests, questions and problems to the departments which can best implement change or provide answers. They field between 75 and 100 citizen service request calls a day, in addition to answering service request emails and greeting walk-up customers.

The Citizen Resource Center, a “one-stop resource center opened in early 2014 on the main floor of the Busch Municipal Building. The center provides a physical space where citizens can work directly with City officials to solve issues affecting the entire community, such as:
- tall weeds or grass
- abandoned vehicles
- dangerous buildings
- traffic and streets issues
- noise disturbances
- trash violations
- signs in the public right-of-way.

Officer in the Community Services Section of the Springfield Police Department nominated Crighton for the Citizen Service Citation.

“Claudia has played a pivotal role in running and improving the operations of the Citizen Resource Center for the City. During monthly meetings, she helps facilitate cooperation of numerous City departments in order to solve problems and complaints brought to the City’s attention by citizens,” said Officer Jason Copley in the nomination form.

“Anyone who ever has the pleasure of having contact with Claudia will always find her with a smile on her face and nothing short of a positive attitude. Her ability to communicate effectively and treat people in a fair manner contributes greatly to the City’s commitment of providing quality service to our citizens.”

A citizen submits a request by:
1. Completing an Online Service Request Form (springfieldmo.gov/ requesttracker.aspx)
2. Filling out the written Service Request Form (PDF) and returning it via e-mail
3. Completing the written Service Request Form (PDF) and returning it via postal mail
4. Information about the concern is entered into a citywide database.
5. The appropriate department(s) gathers information through the shared database and works to resolve the problem. At this point, an inspector may go to the location or property to evaluate the situation.
6. If contact information is provided, citizens will be contacted when their request is resolved.
Looking for old barns to tear down for the lumber to build furniture. We will clear everything from the site as a benefit to the property owner. Please contact Olivia at 417-849-0865.

‘95 Ford Conquest – $15,000 (Ozark, MO)

‘95 Conquest in excellent condition; well taken care of and maintained. New tires, new generator and stove. New batteries. Call Rex or Vera at (417) 818-4586.

Please contact Angela Huggins by call or text at 417-576-8502.

• 10 inch custom subwoofer enclosure for a Mazda RX8 asking $250.00
• GE 18 cube fridge less than 6 months old, moved no longer need it, asking $325.00

Golf Clubs, 3-PW, SW/UW, bag and driver. $75, call 417-849-0865, ask for Phil.

Matching cloth sofa ($200.00) and loveseat ($150.00) or $250.00 for both. Beautiful bone white French style loveseat with matching pillows ($200.00).

Large L-shaped simulated cherry office desk with beautiful matching hutch from office depot ($250.00). Contact Joe at 343-3117.

Solid oak entertainment center with pull-out swivel television holder and lots of cabinet space and built to last a life time ($250.00). Nice stylish light pink chair w dark hardwood legs ($50.00). Full sized mattress with cover, box spring and metal frame ($50.00). Contact Joe at 343-3117.

2004 Mercury Grand Marquis, 4.6L V8, motor is strong, transmission is smooth. Has damage to front of car. Repairable. Asking $1,000 cash. Call (417) 425-6557, leave msg.

City Council to call for new Animal Issues Task Force to evaluate use of breed-specific language in ordinances

A resolution planned for the Dec. 14 City Council meeting agenda will call for a new 12-member Animal Issues Task Force that will serve as a sounding board for City Council’s Plans & Policies Committee for one year as the committee researches and addresses the issue of breed-specific language within the City's ordinances.

This iteration of the task force will not be asked to address any topic the first Animal Issues Task Force has already addressed via its report to City Council.

After six months, task force members will be asked to analyze and provide a written report on the effectiveness of the recently adopted Nuisance and Vicious Dog ordinance. The task force will also serve as a resource to the City Council for any other animal-related issues that may arise.

Up to three members of the original Animal Issues Task Force that was formed in 2012 are eligible for appointment to the new task force. Members will be selected by City Council’s Public Involvement Committee once a diverse pool of applications has been received by the City Clerk’s office.

To apply, visit springfieldmo.gov/boards and click on Apply to Serve or visit the City Clerk’s office on the fourth floor of the Busch Municipal Building, 840 Boonville, to fill out an application.

Why did City Hall sport a mustache in November?

You may have noticed that Historic City Hall sported some stylish facial hair in November. In an effort to promote Movember, a national effort to get men talking more about their own health, Springfield-Greene County Health Department and the Fire Department (whose administrative offices are located on the first floor) partnered with Public Works to install a 3-foot by 6-foot mustache on the face of Springfield’s most famous building.

Employee Bazaar raises more than $880 for Employee Crisis Fund; raffle winners announced

Thank you for everyone who helped, the vendors who participated, and those who shopped at the Employee Bazaar. The event raised more than $880 for the Employee Crisis Fund!

Raffle Winners:

• Pam Long, Licensing - Scentsy Gallery Gift Basket
• Sally Payne, Workforce - Soap, Lotion, Oil Gift Set
• Tina Treat, Law - Jamberry Wraps and Manicure Bottle
• Nikki Crisp, Finance - Necklace
• Jana Maclachlan, HR - Plexus Trial Pack and Shaker Bottle
• Theresa Slagle, Licensing - Minion Hat
• Bambi Rosa, Health - BIB
• Ruth Clayton, PW - Chiefs Ornament
• Debbie Moore, 911 - Pillow Cases
• Claudia Crighton, PIO - Welcome Bear
• Nicki Woods, IS - Scentsy Gift Basket
• Zim Schwartzte, 911 - Painted Gourd
• Susan Smith, BDS - Dish Set
• Casey Kellner, PW - Coconut Flour

Be a below-zero hero at Polar Plunge

The Polar Plunge offers a chance for you to come out of hibernation, grab some friends and take a dip in frigid winter waters to raise money for a great cause — the Special Olympics.

Saturday, Jan. 30: NEW LOCATION! The Plunge will be held at Ski Shack Cable Park in Springfield this year. The freezing temperatures might not sound attractive, but a huge event full of music, crazy costumes and loads of laughter can get anyone in the mood for a cool dip. To let you in on a little secret, you are only in the water for a few minutes, but you have a lifetime to brag about your bravery! You only have to raise a minimum of $75 and you have the chance to earn cool prizes for fundraising. Grab some friends and form a team or be a hero all by yourself. However you choose to do it, you’ll be freezin’ for a reason! Registration is now open. Using a secure system, you can create your personal fund-raising page and email your friends and family. If they won’t join your team, ask them to support you by donating! somo.org/plunge.

The Park Board’s holiday activities began Thanksgiving weekend and continue in December, including:

Free Ice Skating at Mediacom Ice Park Saturday, Dec. 12, 6-7 p.m., 5-6 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 19, 4-30-5-30 p.m.; and Christmas Day, 5-6 p.m.

Candy Cane Lane, drive-through light display at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, open Friday and Saturday nights, Dec. 4-19.

Christmas at the Gray-Campbell Farmstead, an old-fashioned celebration with carols and sweets, Sat., Dec. 5, 1-3 p.m.

Breakfast with Santa and Friends, Sunday, Dec. 13 at the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center.

SPARC Winter Break Program, activity-filled weekday fun during Winter Break for kids ages 5-12 at Oak Grove Community Center.

Park Board offers holiday activities through December

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To: Jen Meloy, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator and Kristina Webster, 9-1-1 Shift Supervisor

On Oct. 29, Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP) Troop D requested emergency back-up for an unknown situation in Springfield. Kristina was the call-taker who entered the call quickly. Jen was the dispatcher who got help on the scene almost immediately! Doreen, MSHP Communications, called in to express her appreciation for the rapid response to assist their troopers.

To: R. J. Woolard, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator

On Oct. 31, Strafford Police were looking for a suspect in a burglary that occurred in Springfield. R.J. found the suspect’s address through the Department of Revenue without the officer requesting the information. Officer Kevin McCown, Strafford Police Department, expressed his gratitude for R.J.’s diligence and complimented him on his good work.

To: Jim Rayle, 9-1-1 Shift Supervisor and Dave Garrett, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator

On Nov. 1, Officer Steve Purdy, Willard Police Department, attempted to locate a missing juvenile. Jim Rayle, Greene County Municipal Dispatcher, offered to use a K-9 to assist in the search. Dave Garrett, Greene County Fire Dispatcher, offered to dispatch the fire department to help search and get them in route. Officer Purdy called in later to say thank you for the assistance.

To: Officer Shawn Clemens, Springfield Police Department and Danielle Allen, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator

On Nov. 5, Danielle Allen, 9-1-1 Telecommunicator, received a “check well being” call. The caller was out of state and worried about her daughter after her daughter had been in a domestic situation with her boyfriend. After Officer Shawn Clemens, Springfield Police Department, was unable to locate her daughter at the address given, he left a voice mail for Lisa, the 911 caller. Lisa was able to contact her daughter by phone later. Afterward, Lisa re-contacted 9-1-1 Emergency Communications and expressed her appreciation for Officer Shawn Clemens dealing with the situation and very grateful for speaking with Danielle Allen about the situation.

Why do you do what you do?
I have always enjoyed governmental accounting and budgeting and I am able to do both in my current position.

What’s the best part of your job?
Working with my colleagues at the Parks department. I work with a great group of people that are passionate about their job and making a positive difference in the community.

What’s the coolest thing you’ve done in your career?
By far, it involved taking some groups of Weller Elementary School kids to the Tower Club for a very nice lunch. We have done that a few times as part of the local chapter of the Association of Government Accountants and you cannot believe how good you feel about seeing those kids getting so excited to have a “fancy” meal and how appreciative they are.

What gives you satisfaction?
Watching my son, Isaac, play baseball and my daughter, Lauren, ice skate.

What do you admire about this organization?
The implementation of the inBalance program to improve employees wellness.

What’s something that Springfield as a city should strive for?
Economic growth and prosperity on the north side of Springfield.