

Heartland Presents Healthy Communities Summit

Heartland Foundation will present the Healthy Communities Summit Tuesday, February 16 from 7:59 to 11:30 a.m. at the St. Joseph Civic Arena. Register for the Summit at www.hfmarket.org The Summit is an opportunity to bring members of the regional community together to hear from national speakers on issues such as poverty and education. These motivational speakers will share their thoughts and experiences and inspire attendees to begin a dialog leading to positive change.

Dr. Anthony Muhammad is an author, speaker, consultant and educator. As a principal, he has turned around failing inner city schools.

Adewale Troutman, MD, is Director, Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness. Dr. Troutman brings thirty years of visionary leadership experience in the diverse fields of public health practice, medical facility operations, administration and education at the local, national and international levels.

Continue the Dialogue with Dr. Peter Benson, President and CEO of Minneapolis-based Search Institute, one of the world's leading authorities on positive human development. at emPowerU, 518 S. 6th Street, St. Joseph, from 1:19 -2:19 p.m. Space is limited to 60 attendees please email erica.ricker@heartland-health.com to RSVP for this afternoon session.

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We have home runs to celebrate: Boehringer, a crown jewel in the world, life science arena committed to St. Joseph...

Public safety, taking care of businesses we have, education and seeking new business are a few keys that will unlock the success for our city's future.

If the economic crunch continues and, heaven forbid, gets worse...it would be a mistake to cut commitments to public services, before cutting cost at Cit Hall.

Raising taxes and fees are not always the right answer to meet a community's need.

With that being said, if and when the time comes when cuts should be made, the citizens should be asked to help decide, who, or what, should be cut. Not the City Manager. Not city staff. Not the Mayor and Council. The taxpayers. Why? Because they are the ones who put up the money and must live with the cuts.

In my opinion, there is no priority within the following concerns, however they should be worked on today. 1) Address the appearance and character of our downtown and inner city ares. 2) Improve open communications. There are still too many "confidential" memos fired off to the Council that suggests the public has no right to know. 3) Focus on city and county led economic vitality and development efforts. 4) Engage in responsible accounting and reporting to our citizens, including cost effective government, growth opportunities and

NAACP Raps Rate Breaks for Industry

The Missouri State Conference of the NAACP on Saturday, February 6, voted to condemn the Missouri Public Service Commission's ongoing practice of allowing the largest and richest industrial power customers to pay electric rates that are drastically lower than the rates charged to the poorest residential consumers.

A resolution approved by the Missouri NAACP during its weekend meeting in Columbia declares "special interest deals over time have allowed the largest rich industrial customers of AmerenUE to pay as little as 3.3 cents per kilowatt hour, while the poorest residential consumer pays 7.7 cents per kilowatt hour."

The Missouri NAACP is urgently calling attention to this shameful disparity in electric rates approved by the PSC because a special-interest group representing the largest rich industrial power customers urged the PSC on Wednesday, February 3, to make the unfair gap between rates even larger.

In its 55-page proposal to the PSC, the special interest group Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers (MIEC) urged boosting residential rates by 13.3 percent, while decreasing the rates of all industrial customers, including extra special treatment for MIEC financial backer Noranda Aluminum with a proposed 15.5 percent rate cut.

In its resolution, the Missouri

business development sanity.

For example, why not use the city's financial contributions hoping for new business to come to help existing businesses already here with a forgivable loan program? If they succeed in growing or expanding their business as clearly specified in their application? The county has been doing this for years.

I am convinced the tenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution strictly prevents the federal government from imposing unfunded mandates on states. Yet, our city and other cities in Missouri have accepted that the EPA's directive to reduce overflows into the Missouri river must be at their city's expense.

In conclusion, public infrastructure improvements, public safety, taking care of the businesses we have, emphasis on education and gaining new businesses are a few accomplishments to making the state of our city even more positive in the future.

The next group of elected representatives of our city residents must be able to take stock of what's best for the taxpayers and not allow themselves to be told what's best for them or the taxpayers they represent. Or allow themselves to be force fed at the city's cafeteria.

Make no mistake about it... St. Joseph will continue to be a place where the family is still the center of attention and the quality of life outpaces the cost of living.

(Editor's Note: Edited for space limitations)

NAACP called on the PSC to "lead and insist on fair and proper negotiations in the AmerenUE rate case to halt and reverse the current practice of placing a larger burden on residential ratepayers than is placed on the wealthiest and largest industrial power consumers." The Missouri NAACP also noted that the state Office of the Public Counsel, which is the advocate for residential consumers in rate cases, "urges the Public Counsel to diligently continue to advocate for just and reasonable electricity rates for the residential consumers it represents."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has a century-old legacy of fighting for economic equality for all people, a fight that is more vital and relevant than ever in our current hard economic times.

Rep. Graves Against Raising Debt Ceiling

The House of Representatives approved a \$1.9 trillion increase in the nation's debt ceiling to \$14,294,000,000,000 or 14.2 trillion. This is the sixth time in the last three years that Congress has increased the debt limit and the single largest one-time increase in history. Graves opposed the measure saying that it simply continued the uncontrolled spending coming out of Washington.

"This Congress has maxed out our credit card," said Graves. "Instead

of finding a way to pay it off, they want to kick the can down the road by borrowing more. We ought to be talking about reducing our debt, not piling more on our children and grandchildren."

Earlier this week, the Obama Administration introduced a \$3.8 trillion budget that would spend \$1.6 trillion more than the government will receive this year. Last year's budget deficit was a record \$1.4 trillion.

"We simply cannot afford to spend \$1.6 trillion more than we have every year," said Graves. "We need to tighten our belt and spend within our means just like Missourians do every day."

H.J. Res 45 passed on a 217-212 vote. It passed the Senate last month and now goes to the President for his signature.



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In an effort to better communicate with our residents, the city of St. Joseph has developed several ways in which to interact with city government. Access City Council or staff using any of the listed methods. You will also find information on city programs and services, meeting schedules, and community events.

City of St. Joseph Website
www.stjoemo.info

City Newsletters
To view the *City Weekly*, visit:
www.stjoemo.info/manager/wir.cfm
To view the *Mayor/Council Update*, visit:
www.stjoemo.info/council/councilupdate.cfm

Government Access Channel
Cable Channel 19 in St. Joseph

24-Hour Message Line
Residents can call the message line at any time.
City staff will respond within the next business day.
Call **279-4YOU** (279-4968)

For more information, contact the office of
Public Information & Communications at 271-4610