



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Recommendation on Todd George Road and Parkway

September 22, 2020 | City Council Presentation

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

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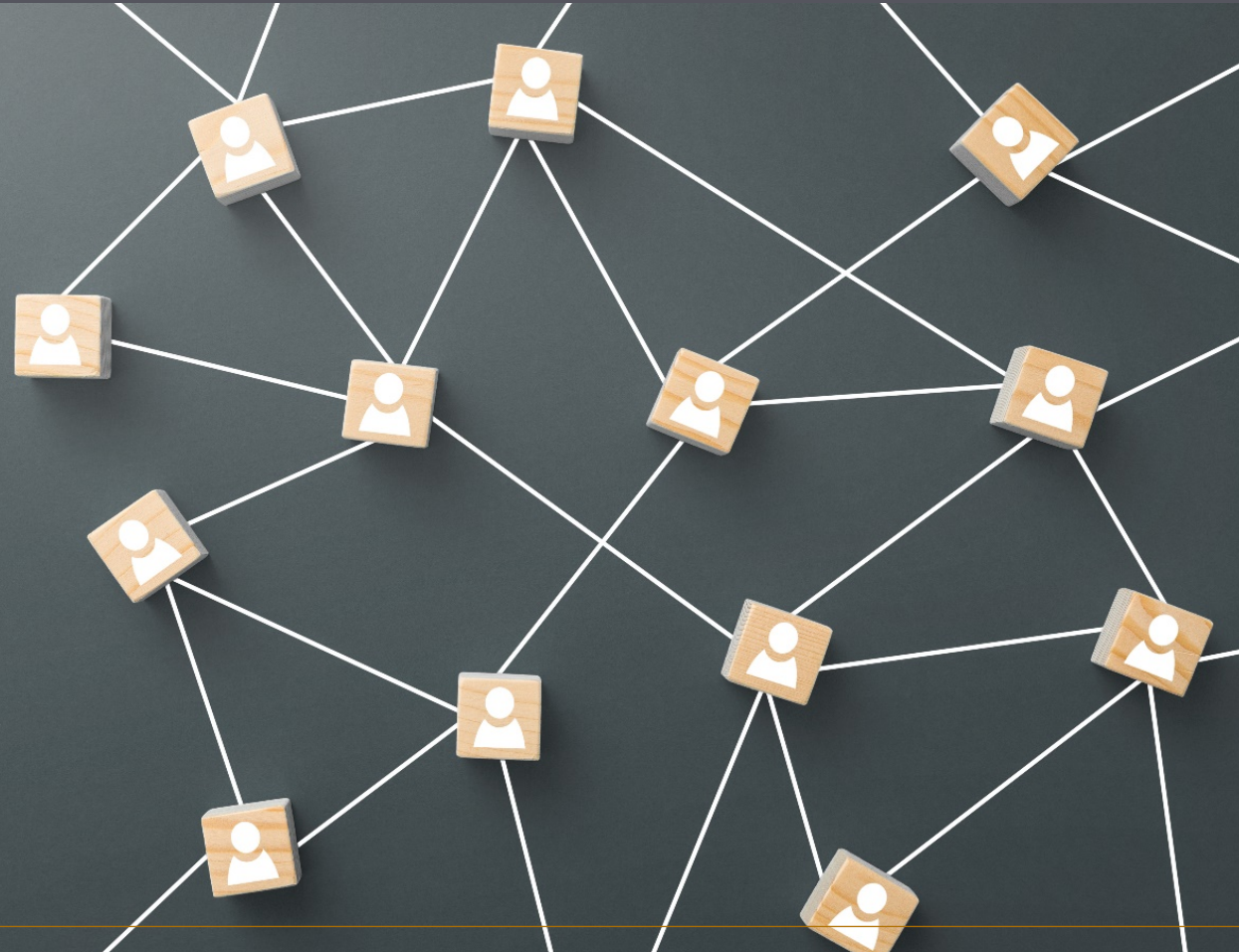
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HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION



MISSION

“It is the mission of the commission to promote mutual understanding, respect and inclusion among all diverse groups represented in Lee’s Summit through increased awareness and communication.”



RESPONSIBILITY

One of 17 responsibilities assigned to the commission by ordinance: “Study, advise and make other recommendations for legislation, policies, procedures and practices of the City and other public entities as are consistent with the purposes of this chapter (Human Relations Commission Mission Statement).”

REPORT & RECOMMENDATION



The commission became aware of community concerns related to Todd George's comments regarding Black Americans including petitions, social media and published media.

At the time this presentation was prepared, a [petition](#) to rename streets honoring Todd George has received over 100,000 signatures.



Given the prominent position Todd George was given by naming a street and roadway in his honor, the commission researched documents to verify community concerns.



Reviewed and discussed information and considered the commission's mission.



Prepared a recommendation to City Council based upon knowledge.

DOCUMENTATION RESEARCH



While there are many published records regarding Todd George, the research in this presentation primarily comes from the State Historical Society of Missouri.

SHSMO

The State Historical Society of Missouri has over 1,100 documents regarding Todd George, indexed for reference. George was mayor of Lee's Summit (1916), a businessman and political activist. The documents on file include numerous newspaper articles, letters to elected officials and letters to editors.

Documents establish that George was a proud supporter of the Confederacy and president of the Sons of the Confederacy for the region. He used his position and namesake to advocate against racial equity and justice. He wrote letters to politicians and governors speaking out against Black people. He wrote essays in contempt of Black people and their desires for equity and justice.

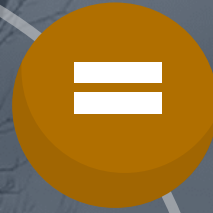
One of the most racist documents was an essay in his file titled "On the Alert."

“ON THE ALERT”

“On the Alert” appears to be an essay written by Todd George in which he states that the negro population is demanding social equality and that he nor his family can ever accept them as social equals.

He ends the essay describing Black leaders as forcing themselves into white society and disturbed that others would think whites would accept the African race as our social and interracial equal.

A full transcript of “On the Alert” is included in council packets.



“ON THE ALERT”



“Not only schools, restaurants, hotels, recreation centers, residence subdivisions and neighborhoods, in fact our present negro population is demanding social equality in every private or public operation whether his presence is desired or not.”

LEE'S SUMMIT. MO.

Words of Todd George

“My father and some of his brothers, having served three years as officers in Confederate armies, and from my very youth lived more than four generations in that atmosphere of southern sympathies and proud ancestry, can ever accept them as our social equal.”

“With this effort to force social and racial equality, I am going to insist that just an average and true American white father and his gracious wife accept my invitation to attend any one of the social events where food, music and dancing are the main features and sit on the sidelines and watch their beautiful, golden-haired blond daughter appear on the floor and dance with a coal black, thick lipped, flat nose, mopsy hair, blue gum, sluefoot negro and accept this as social equality and fully qualified integration.”

“ON THE ALERT”



“

Words of Todd George

“... would-be big negro political leaders hoping for big publicity with all attempts to force themselves into a white society that they are in no way acceptable to a mass majority of the average thinking American white families

... will ever be able to force our big American white majorities to accept the typical African race in this or any other country as our social and interracial equality.”

EVIDENCE "ON THE ALERT" WAS WRITTEN BY TODD GEORGE

Self-reference within "On the Alert," the author states:
"Having been Commander-in-Chief of the John B. Gordon Camp Sons-of-Confederate Veterans here in the Eastern portion of Jackson County, Missouri since the year 1910..."

Lone Jack Battle Centennial Will Be Observed By Service on Museum Site

Plans for a commemoration service on the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Lone Jack August 16 will be completed July 29th at a meeting in the Lone Jack Baptist church. The service will be held on the site of a \$50,000 museum approved last week by the Jackson County Court.

Todd M. George, Lee's Summit realtor who participated in the Lone Jack picnic program last year, is taking the lead in the plans for the commemorative event.

"I guess I am self-appointed," said George, who has lived in the area all of his life. "I suppose I draw part of my authority from having corresponded with the National Civil War Centennial Commission in Washington, D. C. as commander in chief of the John B. Gordon Camp 614, Sons of Confederate Veterans at Independence, a post I have held since 1916."

"The National Commission, appointed to direct observances during the four-year centennial years, has stressed commemorations rather than celebrations," George said. "The point is to bring out true Civil War history for present and future generations."

"For that reason, I am suggesting a dignified commemorative program—rather than a

picnic," he declared.

George and Jim Shawhan, cousins, will supervise ground arrangements, George said. He also stated that Mrs. Roy Williams, president of the Lone Jack P.T.A., and Mrs. Orville Lovett, Lone Jack, will head up committees to be named July 29.

Ed Spencer, who lives north of Pleasant Hill on Highway 7, will furnish flowers to decorate the graves of both Union and Confederate dead. Spencer has bought a new Union uniform, George said, and he will take part with George in the services. George, with his flowing white hair and white goatee, which he has worn many years, makes a picturesque and authentic Confederate soldier in his uniform of the Southern army.

A number of clubs, the Jackson County Historical Society and the churches are cooperating in plans for the service, which will be completed at 2 p.m. Sunday. Jackson County Superintendent of Schools Homer M. Clements, a native of Lone Jack, will give the commemorative address it has been decided.

The ground on which the museum will be built is old public park land platted in 1854 and adjoins the cemetery. The museum will be built on a rectan-

Explore Possibility Of Garden Club Here

Five Pleasant Hill women met Monday night at the Yermie & Jones Real Estate office to explore the possibility of forming a garden club in the city.

Those who may become the nucleus of the club are Mrs. Joan Harris, Mrs. Juanita Ripley, Mrs. Anna Ray Jones, Mrs. Hazel Myers and Mrs. Claudine Larimer. They are approaching the idea from the standpoint that many persons here would like to know the identity of flowers and bulbs and would like to study them. They believe that such an organization can further the best interests of Pleasant Hill.

Persons interested are asked to call Mrs. Harris during the day at 987-3536 or Mrs. Larimer at 987-2420 at night.

Attempted Theft Leads to Chase And a Capture

Two young men were being held Wednesday at the Cass county jail in Harrisonville for investigation in connection with

Kansas City Star | December 11, 1910
Identifying Todd George as Commander of the John B. Gordon Camp No. 636, Sons-of-Confederate Veterans

Plattsburg Leader | July 26, 1962
Quoting Todd George's statement of serving as Commander since 1910

A SON OF GEN. FORREST HERE.

Confederate Veterans, Sons and Grandsons Sought by Organizers.

If you are a Confederate veteran, the son of a veteran or the grandson of a veteran, two men at the Hotel Baltimore—N. B. Forrest and Seymour Stewart—would be glad to see you today.

Mr. Forrest is the grandson of Nathan Bedford Forrest, lieutenant general of the Confederate Army in the Civil War. He is adjutant general of the United Sons of Confederate Veterans, with headquarters in Memphis, Tenn. Mr. Stewart lives in St. Louis and is Missouri commander of the organization. Together they are making a tour of the state organizing new camps and giving what aid they can to camps already organized. They have just started camps at Springfield, Joplin, Carthage and Nevada, and soon will organize at Webb City and Neosho. They leave tomorrow to visit Lexington, Higginsville, Marshall, Fayette, Columbia and Fulton.

The John B. Gordon Camp, No. 636, is the Kansas City camp. It was organized last May with a membership of twenty-eight. Todd M. George of Lee's Summit is commander and C. G. Hodges lieutenant.

LETTER TO MISSISSIPPI GOVERNOR BARNETT

OCTOBER 1962

As well as signing off as “An old Kentucky born Rebel” in the letter to the governor, Todd George clearly states his intolerance for social equity.

*“Don’t think for a moment but what millions of qualified citizens here in our U.S.A. are about fed up with the powers of our Federal gov’t first encouraging n***** freedom riders to go south and try to (illegible) our insides falling in line with every n***** trouble maker in this land to force our acceptance of social equality with their much superiority is most unbelievable in this already troubled world. To trace the negro ancestry no further back than the introduction of black naked creatures captured by Dutch scavengers from the jungles of Africa and sold as merchandise to our own Federal gov’t that accepted slave trade until our southern states finally got the worst of it and at this time are attempt(ing) to place the offspring of Hamm are an (illegible) of the Caucasian quality tracing back through sciences and (illegible) before Bible scripture or the birth of Christ so I’ll (illegible) this shock and assure you that both you and the majority of the good helpers in the state are not alone in your struggle to defend our rights and beliefs as U.S.A. citizens against a power or political vote grabbing in an effort to help a one family clan to assume dictatorial powers that is already having the effect of dividing the American people regardless of the present two party system striving for power. Most of my George relatives have long been citizens of your state. Their father along with mine both fought with the Confederates to the bitter end.*”

Oct. 2nd, 1962

Hon. Gov. Ross R. Barnett

Jackson, Miss

Dear Governor,

Don’t think for a moment but what millions of qualified citizens here in our U.S.A. are about fed up with the powers of our Federal gov’t first encouraging n***** freedom riders to go south and try to (illegible) our insides falling in line with every n***** trouble maker in this land to force our acceptance of social equality with their much superiority is most unbelievable in this already troubled world. To trace the negro ancestry no further back than the introduction of black naked creatures captured by Dutch scavengers from the jungles of Africa and sold as merchandise to our own Federal gov’t that accepted slave trade until our southern states finally got the worst of it and at this time are attempt(ing) to place the offspring of Hamm are an (illegible) of the Caucasian quality tracing back through sciences and (illegible) before Bible scripture or the birth of Christ so I’ll (illegible) this shock and assure you that both you and the majority of the good helpers in the state are not alone in your struggle to defend our rights and beliefs as U.S.A. citizens against a power or political vote grabbing in an effort to help a one family clan to assume dictatorial powers that is already having the effect of dividing the American people regardless of the present two party system striving for power. Most of my George relatives have long been citizens of your state. Their father along with mine both fought with the Confederates to the bitter end.

Believe me sincerely,

An old Kentucky born Rebel

Todd Menzies George

Age 84

TODD GEORGE PARKWAY

TODD GEORGE ROAD





STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS



VISION

A vibrant community ensuring the finest quality of life for all generations.



MISSION

To enrich lives in our community through collaboration, creativity and commitment.



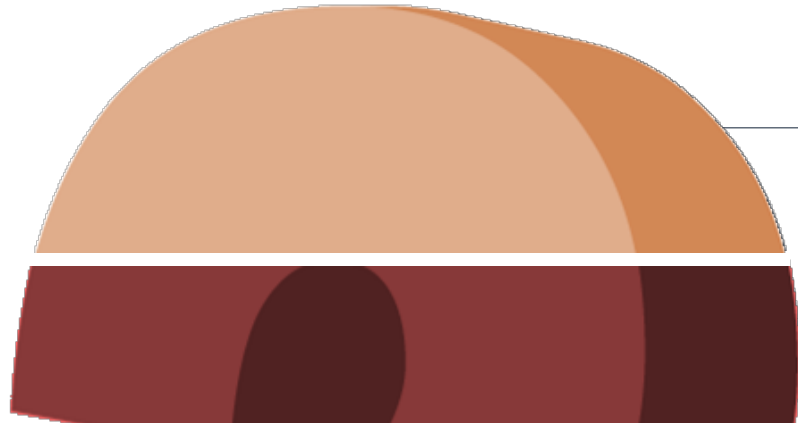
CORE VALUES

SERVICE EXCELLENCE
aim high & deliver.
We are committed to quality in all we do.

be responsible.
We are innovative and use our resources wisely.
STEWARDSHIP

do the right thing.
We are transparent, ethical and accountable in our actions.
INTEGRITY

THE QUESTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Todd George was a vocal opponent of racial justice and fought to maintain Confederate ideals of white supremacy and segregation through the country's Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. His views were on the wrong side of history, both then and now.

The name "Todd George" on our trafficways memorializes the man and his bigotry.



Now, in 2020, we are called to consider who we are, what we believe, and what can we do to demonstrate our shared values, community culture, and positive intent for the well-being of citizens and reputation of Lee's Summit.



With knowledge of our history and deep pride in our Lee's Summit community, we have an opportunity to make a choice.



- Do we honor Todd George and what he stood for?
- Do we honor our friends, neighbors, colleagues and the values in our hearts today?

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION

The Lee's Summit Human Relations Commission recommends that the Lee's Summit City Council begin a process to select an alternate name for "Todd George Parkway" and "Todd George Road."