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POWER⁰⁸ THE 52 ST. LOUISANS SHAPING YOUR CITY

Who has it? Who lost it? Who paid for it? We're talking about power, of course, that infinitely variable social currency that separates a city's movers from its shakers. Sure, this potent elixir usually contains some blend of wealth, charisma, knowledge and social station, but in truth, power can rarely be reduced to its component parts. Our inner bean counter may search for measurables (How big is the fortune? Who's involved in the project?), but power, real power, relies not so much on a set of quantifiable facts as it does on how those outer particulars commingle with the exquisite architecture of inner character.

It's this X-factor, this ineffable alchemy, that separates a city's political titans from the merely popular, a region's foundational families from the simply wealthy and a state's policy leaders from its army of administrators. How else can we explain a blogger's victory over one of the city's leading developers? Or how the city's greatest dynasty was left exposed to marauding transnationalists?

Of course, power's enigma accounts for both the difficulty and the beauty of ranking those who possess it. There's no science to it, no algorithm we can rely on to churn out an unassailable list of the 52 most powerful people in St. Louis.

Wanting science, we've relied on art, impression and discernment, enlisting the city's keen political observers, the counselors to the

powerful and, best of all, those who've seen power slip from their grasp, to help us construct this current list. We'll be the first to admit that the result is imperfect, and we fully expect an outraged letter or two demanding how (*How!*) we could exclude a certain governor from our rarefied club or why (*Why!*) we've assigned a particular developer to the dustbin of impotence.

But we do not intend this list to be an immutable compendium for the ages. It is a snapshot, rather, of the city's power structure as it exists today. The people we've included on the list are those who've made a significant contribution to (or, depending on your view, detracted from) city life since 2006, when we last submitted the mighty to this little horse race of ours. Much has changed between then and now: We've seen the torrential flow of downtown development slow to a trickle. We've witnessed our beloved MetroLink battered after a failed lawsuit, and of course, we've lost the brewery.

And while many of the city's barons remain ensconced in their aeries of influence, there can be little doubt that our city's power structure has shifted dramatically in the past two years. In some cases, the paupers of 2006 are the powerful of 2008; similarly, some of those once famed today live in infamy.

How steep their climb? How precipitous their fall?

Over the next 21 pages, we will try to answer these questions. After all, it is in our nature to take the measure of man, and if power really is the ultimate aphrodisiac, then by all means turn the page—and prepare to be seduced.

—M.G.

1) ANDY TAYLOR

CHAIRMAN AND CEO,
ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR
(RANK IN 2006: 2)

Backed by buckets of money, Andy Taylor recently parked National and Alamo in Enterprise's garage. Considered an uncommonly nice guy by many, Taylor uses his influence in interesting ways. The company celebrated its 50th birthday with a pledge to plant 1 million trees a year for the next 50 years. The company's charitable foundation (headed by Taylor's sister, Jo Ann Kindle) has dropped oodles of bucks on everything from the symphony to victims of the recent earthquake in China. In 2008 Taylor is co-chairing the United Way campaign with Enterprise alum Doug Albrecht. Their fundraising goal: \$65.5 million.

In 2009: Taylor may be cooking crêpes for InBev: Prior to the Belgian invasion, Anheuser-Busch paid Enterprise \$12.2 million to maintain the brewery's car fleet.

2) REV. JOHN C. DANFORTH

FORMER U.S. SENATOR, MISSOURI,
PARTNER AT BRYAN CAVE LLP
(RANK IN 2006: 1)

He's been called "St. Jack." The name Jack Danforth carries the weight of Pujols' bat, and his moral authority remains—after decades in the scurrilous business of politics—untarnished. Yet there are those who grouse that Danforth has talked big lately but not always delivered. Remember St. Louis 2004? Not much happened beyond Forest Park. Remember all the money he helped raise for schools? Fuhgeddaboutit. Directions have changed. Today the Danforth Foundation allocates 60 percent of its funds to the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. Its second focus is the revitalization of the area encircling the oversized croquet hoop. Does the Arch Grounds Connector Project ring a bell?

In 2009: He will continue his fight for stem-cell research and plant sciences—and a museum on the riverfront—while countering the evangelical muscle within the Republican Party.

3) DAVID W. KEMPER

CHAIRMAN AND CEO,
COMMERCE BANCSHARES
(RANK IN 2006: 3)

You'd never know it, but the man who heads one of the region's steadiest banks, the man who chairs the board of our city's most powerful university, the man who helps steer Civic Progress—that man? That man answers his own phone. Everyone knows David Kemper is powerful, but what intrigues is his courtly manner and calm reason. When other banks merged into national leviathans, Commerce kept its own counsel. The result? It is now the largest and arguably most trusted independent bank in the region.

In 2009: He'll guide his bank through the economic crisis and nudge downtown development forward, his influence diplomatic and understated.



▲ 4) DAVID L. STEWARD

FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
WORLD WIDE TECHNOLOGY
(RANK IN 2006: 36)

Talk about connected: David Steward runs a company that is consistently ranked as the most successful black-owned business in the nation. He both hosted President George W. Bush and attended a gala alongside President Bill Clinton and Sen. Barack Obama. Last spring, he traveled to China with a select group of Missourians to explore business opportunities. What's more, he's good at building bridges, even teaching Sunday school for businesspeople. Come to think of it, his whole life is something like Sunday school—only here nobody snickers.

In 2009: Look for his influence on boards—philanthropic, cultural and his own WWT, whose revenue could hit \$3 billion in 2009.

5) CLAIRE McCASKILL ▶

U.S. SENATOR, MISSOURI



Few would call Claire McCaskill cool, but the junior senator's association with one very cool junior senator from across the river seems to have rubbed off. In the run-up to the election, McCaskill, our former state auditor, could be found addressing the Democratic National Convention, and rumors swirled of a possible Cabinet seat in the offing. Claire? Our Claire from Rolla?

Honestly, though, McCaskill's rise isn't such a mystery. In an election year when cross-aisle appeal, especially in a swing state like Missouri, is everything, her sometimes syrupy, sometimes flag-waving—and always, *always* smiling—stump speech emphasized bipartisanship. As she said of Missouri, "We are not a red state, we are not a blue state—we are part of the United States."

That's her story, and it's an American story, gosh darn it. But even though McCaskill—with her curled-under, Betty White hairstyle, big smile and easy bonhomie—may seem a bit matronly these days, we suspect that underneath it all she's still a shark. One must remember, after all, that in 2004 she was the first person to defeat a sitting Missouri governor in a primary, only later to lose her face-off with the one-term boy king, Matt Blunt.

In those early races, McCaskill seemed willing to do or say just about anything to win an election. And despite her rise in status, viewers of her DNC speech couldn't help but notice that something of that unfortunate trait remains.

Still, it takes more than a little mojo to become Missouri's first elected female senator (and one of only two woman senators in the 110th U.S. Congress' freshman class). What's more, McCaskill's early backing of Obama may signal a significant shift among female politicians away from identity politics. Of course, McCaskill's endorsement certainly didn't win her any friends among the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pantsuits. And there's little doubt that Sen. Hillary Clinton, who raised more than \$1 million for McCaskill's 2006 Senate campaign, felt personally slighted by the snub.

It's the sort of move that could cost her when the election-season juggernaut settles back down to earth—unless, of course, a prospective Obama administration were to fulfill speculation and vault her to a high-level appointment.

In 2009: Now that she's a household name, look for McCaskill to reach for even greater heights.



PHOTOGRAPH BY VIRGINIA LEE HUNTER

6) SAM FOX

PHILANTHROPIST,
AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM
(RANK IN 2006: 10)

Since donating \$10 million to Wash. U. for the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, Sam Fox has gone global. President Bush tapped his longtime pal “Foxy” to become the U.S. ambassador to Belgium in 2007. Using a recess appointment, Bush saved his nomination from defeat in the Senate, but not from a senatorial coal-raking over Fox’s \$50,000 donation to the infamous Swift Boat campaign. With Bush’s term coming to a close, Fox should be coming home soon, where as the founder of Harbour Group—not to mention his past roles as SLAM board president and capital campaign chairman at Wash. U.—he can be a powerful force for whatever strikes his fancy.

In 2009: Look for Fox to return to the helm at Harbour Group, his private investment firm, which earned an estimated \$1.3 billion in 2007.

7) MICHAEL STAENBERG

PRESIDENT, THF REALTY

While the slumping housing market has knocked many developers off the map, Michael Staenberg’s THF has only grown, buying parcels from ailing outfits and raking in an estimated \$219 million in 2007. THF (the acronym stands for “To Have Fun”—seriously) has monetary mettle, but Staenberg has social capital, too. Last July, Staenberg, who chairs the Jewish Community Center’s board and also co-chairs its capital campaign, donated \$15 million to the cause—30 percent of its goal. But here’s the kicker: That donation came on the heels of more than \$1 million Staenberg had already bequeathed to other local organizations that year.

In 2009: Look for Staenberg to continue his success. But trouble may be brewing: Rumor has it that some of THF’s higher-ups are seeking greener pastures.

8) PAUL MCKEE JR.

CHAIRMAN AND CEO,
McEAGLE PROPERTIES, LLC

If you’d mentioned Paul McKee two years ago, the well-connected might have known he was behind the WingHaven development. Maybe they’d mention that his son, P. Joseph McKee III, ran the family’s construction firm, Paric Corp. Here’s what they wouldn’t have said: At that moment, McKee was buying hundreds of North St. Louis properties and enlisting political heavyweights to champion a \$100 million tax credit for large-scale developments in impoverished areas. The original bill, which potentially would have given McKee’s company \$12 million a year, was ultimately vetoed by Gov. Matt Blunt, but the episode served as an unsentimental education for us all about how political power is curried and flexed.

In 2009: Look for the tax credit to resurface and for McEagle to move forward on the 600-acre NorthPark project.

9) DONALD SUGGS

PUBLISHER, *THE ST. LOUIS AMERICAN*
(RANK IN 2006: 30)

Urbane, nattily dressed and clearly at home in the boardroom, Donald Suggs is best known as the publisher of *The St. Louis American*, his award-winning African-American newspaper. With a circulation of 70,000 (it’s distributed free at 845 locations) and its controversial but obsessively read weekly column, “The Political Eye,” Suggs’ paper exerts considerable influence within the black community and beyond. As evidenced by the paper’s fierce reporting on the Sherman George controversy, the weekly’s influence is growing as it continues to scoop the increasingly wan and corporate *Post-Dispatch*.

In 2009: Suggs took complete ownership of the *American* in ’06, ensuring that the paper will continue to call ‘em like it sees ‘em. We hold our breath to see whom it will endorse in next year’s city elections ...

10) CHARLIE DOOLEY

COUNTY EXECUTIVE, ST. LOUIS COUNTY

Sure, Charlie Dooley was reelected by an impressive 67 percent. And sure, he governs 1 million residents and oversees a \$500 million budget. But a big part of Dooley’s power comes from his being so darn likable. As county executive, he’s focused on overlooked communities and campaigned to lower taxes for seniors. Meanwhile, his Family Mental Health Collaborative has become a national model. Good-guy image? Certainly. Milquetoast? Hardly. Dooley has also worked closely with McEagle Properties on the 600-acre NorthPark project, which promises the county 12,000 jobs and \$7 billion in revenue.

In 2009: Dooley hasn’t indicated he plans to run for higher office. But negative public opinion over the county’s recycling program means he may have a fight in 2010 to keep the job he has.

11) FRANCIS G. SLAY

MAYOR, CITY OF ST. LOUIS
(RANK IN 2006: 12)

A demoted fire chief. A disgraced top cop. A 14,000-signature recall petition. Business as usual for Francis G. Slay. Complications that would doom most any other pol leave the city’s 45th mayor unscathed, and with nary an opponent in sight, his war chest for the 2009 reelection campaign is reportedly nearing a cool million. With that sort of cash at his disposal, one could be forgiven for thinking Hizzoner’s been selling slats, poster board and markers to the picketers pounding the pavement outside City Hall. One also can’t help suspecting that some thoroughfare will eventually be renamed “Francis Slay Way” in his honor—Market Street, maybe.

In 2009: Slay will be elected to his third term as mayor of St. Louis and, sub rosa, begin dreaming of higher office.

◀ 17) RICHARD BARON

CO-FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND CEO,
McCORMACK BARON SALAZAR



Be it a commercial venue or a suite of well-appointed condos, once a new development is fully up and running, many developers feel their work is done—but not Richard Baron. For Baron, the CEO of McCormack Baron Salazar, a project's completion is only half the measure of its success. The other half—the project's ability to better the lives of the underserved—is harder to judge and harder yet to attain.

"Our focus has been on redeveloping those areas of the city that have been blighted or have fallen into disuse," says Baron, who four years ago received The Urban Land Institute's prestigious J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development. "I'm a '60s guy. That sense of mission never left me."

What a mission it's been. Since forming the company in 1973, Baron has focused on developing large-scale, mixed-income communities in the country's urban cores. The firm has worked in more than 30 different cities, developing nearly 15,000 residential units and more than 1 million square feet of commercial space. Not bad for a "'60s guy."

But what really sets Baron apart is the care his firm gives a project once it's built. Through its management wing, McCormack Baron Ragan, the firm ensures its projects are well-run. Meanwhile, the nonprofit arm of the operation, Urban Strategies, partners with community stakeholders to deter crime, enhance schools and generally build community.

He's realized his vision both in organizations such as the Center of Creative Arts (which he founded) in University City and mixed-income housing developments like midtown's Westminster Place.

But his most ambitious project is yet to come: After relocating the city's rail yards, Baron wants to reintroduce Chouteau Lake, a body of water that until 1840 stretched from the Mississippi River all the way to Union Station. In Baron's vision, though, this will be no mere body of water. It will incorporate mixed-use housing and a bike trail system extending from the Arch to the Great Rivers Confluence and will integrate the region's preexisting Metro lines.

"It's a big idea," says Baron, acknowledging the project's challenge. "But there needs to be a real transformational idea in the city—one that's as transformational as the Arch and will create jobs. This is that sort of idea, and it could really galvanize a lot of people."

In 2009: Watch for Baron to move forward with the Chouteau Lake project.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE DEFLIPPO

15) MARK WRIGHTON

CHANCELLOR, WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
(RANK IN 2006: 6)

Chancellor Mark Wrighton continues to raise his university's profile, touring Israel with Mayor Slay and attending a summit convened by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Closer to home, he recently appointed the university's first sustainability czar, as Wash. U. pledged \$55 million to establish a center for sustainable energy research. His achievements have garnered much praise, and earlier this year the *Post-Dispatch* named Wrighton its 2007 "Citizen of the Year." Still, his achievements haven't insulated him from criticism: He was dinged last spring when the university awarded Phyllis Schlafly an honorary doctorate, and students continue to criticize the chancellor's perceived aloofness to campus life.

In 2009: Expect continued institutional growth, but don't hold your breath for better student relations.

16) EMILY RAUH PULTZER

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT,
PULTZER FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS
(RANK IN 2006: 17)

When Emily Rauh Pulitzer opened her foundation/museum, she imagined it as a *gesamtkunstwerk*—a fusion of multiple art forms reinforcing each other. One could argue the term also applies to Pulitzer's many local endeavors. She has a hand in the symphony, SLAM, the Contemporary, Grand Center and countless other organizations. In April, less than three years after earning a cool \$414.5 million from the sale of Pulitzer Inc., she helped fund the launch of the *Saint Louis Beacon*, a nonprofit news site run by veteran *Posties*.

In 2009: The Pulitzer Foundation will continue to build on the recent success of "Dan Flavin: Constructed Light" and "The Light Project." As other Grand Center projects pick up steam, Pulitzer will continue her drive to make the arts district relevant.

ALL SIGNS POINT TOWARD METROLINK AS HIGHWAY 40 CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES AND GAS PRICES STAY IN THE STRATOSPHERE.



▲ 18) LES STERMAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EAST-WEST GATEWAY

Les Sterman's job is complicated during any year: As the executive director of East-West Gateway Council of Governments, he works with federal, state and local governments across eight counties in two states to coordinate a slew of transportation projects. Add to that record gas prices, the headache of Highway 40 and possible cuts to MetroLink service, and you get an inkling of the challenges he faces. Yet through it all, Sterman provides a voice of reason and coherence so desperately needed to navigate the tangle of red tape.

In 2009: All signs point toward MetroLink as Highway 40 construction continues and gas prices stay in the stratosphere. Can we expect to see Metro fulfill its potential and shed its tarnished reputation? We're not betting on it.

POWER08

THE HOW-TO GUIDE POWER PLACES



WANT TO RUB ELBOWS WITH THE POWERFUL? SINCE THE STEAM ROOM AT THE MAC REQUIRES A pricey membership, here are three public spots that will get you closer to the action. Let's start with **Beffa's** (2700 Olive), which clocked in at number 88 on our May issue's "101 Things Every St. Louisan Must Do." A kind of insiders' cafeteria, Beffa's has no sign out front but plenty of character inside. McBride High School class pictures are framed above a large fish tank that rests beside an old jukebox. At Beffa's, regular servers serve regular specials—corned beef, Polish sausage, chicken à la king. But the eaters? Far from regular: A range of area deciders, from politicians to DAs to developers (pushed together, Beffa's tables are big enough for blueprints).

If you're the eat-at-home type, spend an after-work evening or Saturday morning prowling the aisles of **Straub's** in the Central West End (302 N. Kingshighway). The hand reaching for that container of chicken salad has likely signed a wing-creating check, or thrown a curveball to a Cub, or may soon pen a law against ... stalking people in grocery stores. So close to so many fine residences—the Chase, 4545 Lindell—the CWE Straub's is where the doers do their shopping—at least until The Market at Busch's Grove opens.

We know it's off-season, but here's something to start planning for next year: taking in a Redbirds game in **The Cardinals Club**. Just behind home plate, the "green seats," as they're known, go for about \$175 apiece, which includes parking, a special entrance and free food and drinks before and during the game (delivered to your seat by wait staff). The bad news on this—the tickets are usually presold to corporations and high rollers—is also the good news, as a small number of them resell their tickets to regular Joes, allowing arrivistes to sample the good life amid a sea of more recognizable faces. This past season, we looked up from our jumbo dog to spot the two Teds in a single view. (That's Koplars and Drewes, if you have to ask.) —S.S.

ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN GREIS

40) THOMAS SCHLAFLY

FOUNDER, THE SAINT LOUIS BREWERY
(RANK IN 2006: 29)

When InBev announced it was buying Anheuser-Busch, Tom Schlafly decided to buy InBev. Predictably unsuccessful, Schlafly penned a poem that reads, "You cannot go wrong with a Schlafly Belgian ale / Finally, you can read my lips / This brewery's not for sale." Schlafly's a pesky gnat to those who cross him. Remember when the Saint Louis Art Fair declined to sell his company's brews? He responded with his own art extravaganza—which now is held on the same weekend as the art fair every year. He sits on a number of boards, but Schlafly's deepest interest is in his post as chair of the city's public library foundation and his membership on the library's board.

In 2009: Schlafly will be the same feisty fellow he's always been, expanding his beer empire, fighting for the library and the city, and exasperating his critics.

41) RABBI SUSAN TALVE

FOUNDER, CENTRAL REFORM CONGREGATION

As founder of the city's main Jewish congregation, Rabbi Susan Talve's got real religious mojo. She's established healthcare and child-care programs. She's a social and political connector and a champion of the region's underrepresented communities. A fierce supporter of women's rights (including a woman's right to choose), Talve made a gutsy move last November when she risked the wrath of then-Archbishop Raymond Burke by hosting the ordination of two women priests (who were subsequently excommunicated). Her actions courted the ire of every ecumenical group in the city, but they also proved that Talve is a formidable power in the city's religious community.

In 2009: Look for Talve to continue supporting social causes—regardless of their popularity—as she pursues her higher ideal of service.

42) TOM IRWIN

CHAIRMAN, CIVIC PROGRESS

Tom Irwin learned about politics directing the Bi-State Development Agency, setting policy for the Regional Chamber and Growth Association and working for former Mayor Vince Schoemehl. Civic Progress recognized Irwin's drive and in 2007 asked him to improve the group's visibility and broaden its influence to include regional matters. The organization still lacks visibility—old habits die hard—but its push for a new bridge across the Mississippi is certainly a step in the right direction. Irwin also brought the power of Civic Progress to bear on keeping a bid to end affirmative action off the November ballot.

In 2009: Irwin needs to ensure the bridge project doesn't stall, as well as stop St. Louisans from either 1) rolling their eyes at CP's continued irrelevance or 2) expecting it to solve every problem under the Arch.

POWER08

◀ 51) MICHAEL R. ALLEN

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
LANDMARKS ASSOCIATION OF ST. LOUIS



It was a mystery: A group of shadowy companies was snapping up North St. Louis properties. As many scratched their heads, Michael Allen went to work, thumbing through tax and property records. His findings, which eventually landed on A-1 of the *Post-Dispatch*, were startling: Using a series of LLCs, WingHaven developer Paul McKee was buying hundreds of properties, with plans to radically transform the city's North Side.

Of course, readers of Allen's blog, *ecoabsence.blogspot.com*, knew of McKee's plans long before the city's only daily took notice. Smart, eloquent and sometimes even lyrical, Allen's blog has become something of a virtual salon for the city's preservationist set. What's more, between that online community, his KWMU commentaries, his role as assistant director of the Landmarks Association of St. Louis and his near preternatural ability to ferret out information, Allen has fashioned himself into one of the city's better info hubs.

Allen started his crusade early, when as a teenager he began researching City Hospital and sending articulate letters of protest to the *Post-Dispatch*. Now 27, he's as passionate as ever about the built environment, and at least three kinds of power have layered themselves onto his thin, pale frame: the power to spread ideas, the power to make connections and the power to unearth secrets.

Savvy and tenacious, he's already a thorn in Jack Danforth's holy side, protesting the limits of the "lid" plan and demanding, in that quiet, disarming but very clear way of his, other options, including a Memorial Drive parkway. He and his colleagues made a push to get Chuck Berry's home on the National Register of Historic Places, and he's fighting brick thievery as well as suspicious fires in St. Louis Place. He almost single-handedly derailed McKee's plans for North St. Louis, and he's fiercely protective of Old North, where he's restoring a house.

Deceptively mild and bookish, Allen has a surprising grasp of Byzantine city politics and feuds. Watch for the slight curl of satisfaction in his lip when he announces some new political development; he'll have known about it weeks earlier and perhaps forced its curve.

In 2009: When Allen tilts at windmills, they turn out to be turbines. Now he's galloping into distressed neighborhoods in North County and the Metro East, ramping up his media presence and bringing younger blood to old historic preservation fights.

48) THOMAS GEORGE

CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

As a stellar jazz pianist, award-winning scientist, editor and visiting professor at Seoul's Korea University, it's hard to imagine how Thomas George finds time to man the helm at UM-St. Louis. Yet that's precisely what he does, raising funds by the boatload and remaining deeply involved in the community. George chairs or serves on the board of nearly 20 St. Louis organizations and has greatly expanded the university's donor base—even as he reserves time for research, performances and mingling with students in his trademark uniform of T-shirt and shorts. We wish more university administrators displayed such *joie de vivre*.

In 2009: Look for a new general manager at KWMU following Patty Wente's very public ouster. Also in the cards: a potential KWMU move to midtown's Grand Center.

49) SHERMAN GEORGE

FORMER FIRE CHIEF,
ST. LOUIS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Sherman George can't go to lunch these days without someone stopping by his table. "You fought the good fight," they tell the retired George. Then comes the inevitable question: "When are you going to run for mayor, Chief?" It wasn't supposed to end like this. But then came that sticky conflagration of race, promotions and a standoff with City Hall. Ultimately, George retired after being demoted to deputy chief. But in the bizarre calculus of city politics, George—now viewed by many north of Delmar as a noble alternative to what they see as Room 200's machinations—has seen his political power grow since leaving the department.

In 2009: Expect George to support the causes and candidates he believes in, but don't hold your breath for a mayoral bid.

50) JOYCE MEYER

FOUNDER, JOYCE MEYER MINISTRIES
(RANK IN 2006: 46)

After making *Time's* 25 Most Influential Evangelicals list in 2005, Joyce Meyer's holding on for all she's worth. And apparently, she's worth quite a bit—or at least her ministry is. Preaching the so-called "prosperity gospel," the evangelist attracted federal scrutiny in 2007 when Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, instructed Meyer and five other televangelists to submit information about their personal finances. The investigation is ongoing—but Meyer's ministry has reportedly made a good-faith effort to provide information and institute internal reforms in advance of the review's completion.

In 2009: Look for Meyer, the author of more than 70 books, to continue her streak on *The New York Times'* bestseller list and continue expanding her ministry and outreach abroad, regardless of the investigation's outcome.

52) ALBERT PUJOLS

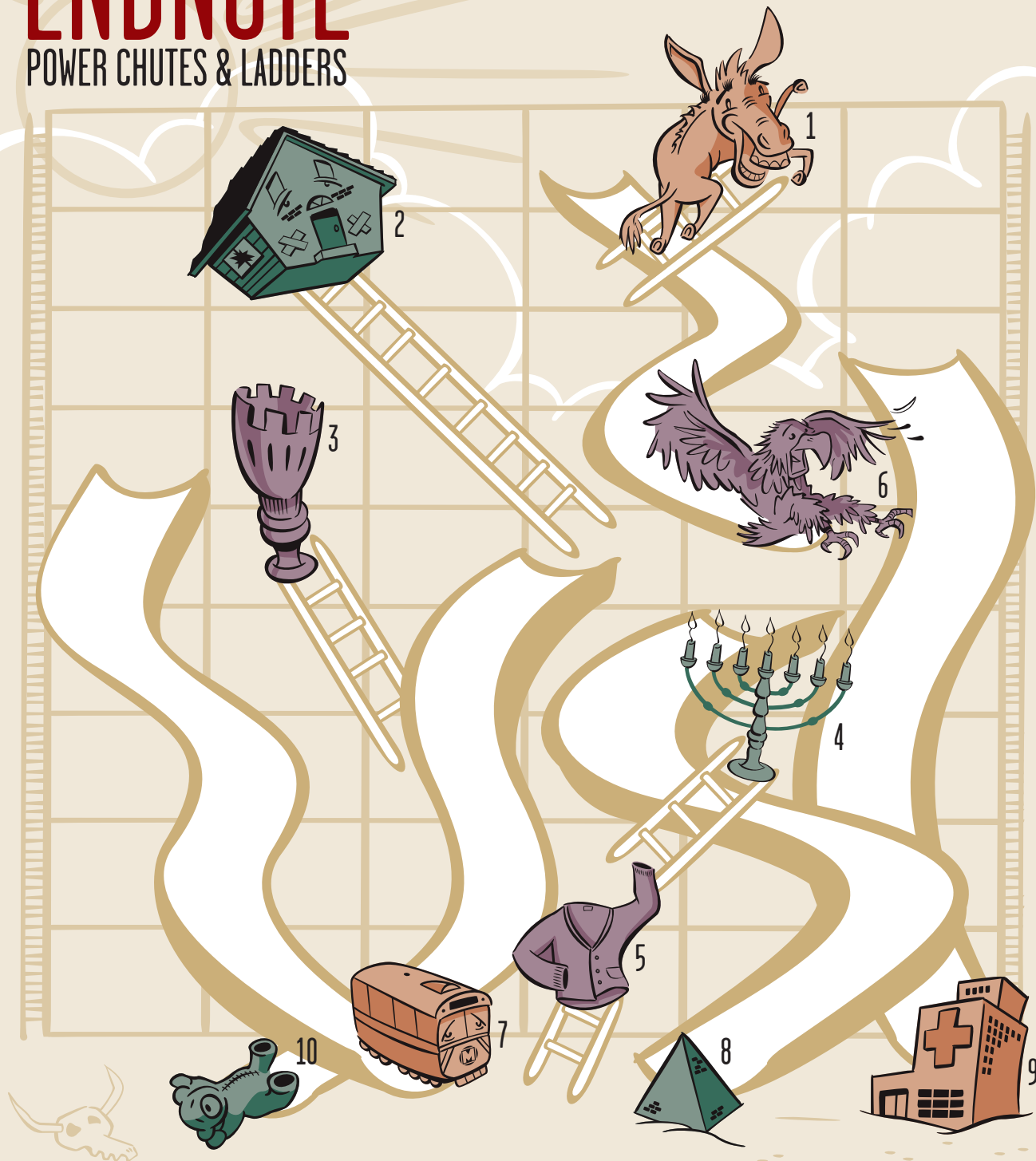
FIRST BASEMAN, ST. LOUIS CARDINALS
(RANK IN 2006: 26)

Despite the Cards' ups and downs this season, *El Hombre* continued to put up Hall of Fame numbers and pose a threat each time he towered over the plate. For a Cardinals Nation in need of stability, fans and players need look no further than first base—as long as Pujols stays healthy. Off the field, he continues to make his mark with the Pujols Family Foundation and Pujols 5 Westport Grill.

In 2009: When next year's All-Star Game rolls into Busch Stadium, we can only hope that the world's gaze falls on No. 5, not on the current eyesore to be known someday as Ballpark Village.

ENDNOTE

POWER CHUTES & LADDERS



LADDERS

1. Claire McCaskill: First stop the DNC, next stop ...
2. Paul McKee: What's a nice county developer like you doing in North St. Louis?
3. Rex Sinquefeld: Money, politics, chess.
4. Susan Talve: Faith without fear.
5. Michael Allen: Old boy politics, meet the blogosphere.

CHUTES

6. August Busch IV: Honey, I lost the brewery.
7. Larry Salci: Off the rails.
8. John Steffen: A pyramid collapsed.
9. Mary Jean Ryan: Shadowed by Tersigni's Ascension.
10. Build-A-Bear: Fraying at the seams. ●