

# No Standing News

Since we have no standing, we stand with those left standing

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Serving the Outlaw City of Missouri

## C.O.R.E. is L.A.Z.Y.

### C.O.R.E. brings Flim Flam to elementary schools.

The Champions of Rolla Education is a foundation established in 1991 by the Rolla School Board and they are accountable to the Rolla School Board if the Rolla School Board wanted accountability, but they don't. They let C.O.R.E. do whatever C.O.R.E. wants to do. The foundation's purpose is supposed to be...*"to encourage the highest educational standards in the Rolla Public Schools and to increase community pride."* The idea, at least this is what we were told, was for the adult board members of the C.O.R.E. Foundation to take the \$100,000 or so a year from the license fee office, raise more money from other adults in the community from memberships and bequests and then decide how to dole out the money, *"to provide financial support for enrichment programs and activities where no other source of funding is available."* This year, however, the C.O.R.E. Foundation board members decided it would be far easier – for them at least - to contract with a professional, **Major Saver Fundraising Inc.**, who would send little children out to raise the money for their own "enrichment." C.O.R.E.'s statement of purpose about encouraging the "highest educational standards" and increasing "community pride" begs these questions: If CORE provides "only enrichment programs and activities where no other source of funding is available," why isn't it available? If a bus trip to Meramec Springs, or a Hot Chocolate Café at Middle School (\$440) 'enriches' "the highest educational standards" why isn't the school board paying for it? Does sending 6 year olds out to peddle gift wrap and discount cards to pay for their own 'enrichment' really increase our community pride?

The Rolla School Board will spend over \$43,000,000 (that's 43 million dollars) this year to educate only 4,000 students. That's \$10,750 per student; more than private school tuition and enough to run the City of Rolla for two years. With \$43 million at their disposal, can't the school board manage a few field trips, some visits to the Pumpkin Patch and other 'enrichment' without exploiting children? Are our schools so poorly equipped and funded that constant PTO fund raising is necessary? Do we pay 91% of our property taxes to the school board to educate children or to provide a child labor pool for capitalists? The answer must be yes to all of the above because fundraising is becoming epidemic and taking up more

school time every year. This year however, C.O.R.E. brought in the slickest marketing act of all.

**The keys to the classrooms.** Enter the Fundraising Wizard **Major D. Hammett II** from Kansas City, Missouri. Major D. Hammett II is a millionaire lawyer and sole owner of **Major Saver Fundraising Inc. "Major Saver Fundraising, Inc.,"** his web site says, *"is a community-oriented corporation dedicated to providing fundraising tools to benefit schools, education foundations, students, business owners and community patrons."* He will set any school district up (and claims he has 80% of Missouri's elementary schools with populations over 3000 in his grip) with a fund raising scheme to sell food discount cards for mostly high-fat fast food. He says the \$10 card is worth "approximately" \$70 which could only be true if he threw in a couple of steak dinners. All he asks is that the Major Saver "representative" be given access to all the small children in our district from Kindergarten to Middle School age so they can use class time for six days to hold sales rallies and collect the cash he and C.O.R.E. are making off the backs of children.

In return for using this underage labor Major D. Hammett II, the millionaire lawyer will give the best elementary sales agent a valuable prize of candy, glitter goo, Super Mondo ball or a Dr. Seuss hat, things that can be purchased for about \$13 per gross from a carnival supply catalog. What does Major Hammett II, the millionaire lawyer with the "community-oriented corporation" get out of all this benevolence? *His cut is 50% (yes, half) of everything the little children earn for him.* Would you give money to any charity if you knew 50% of your donation went to buy some millionaire a bigger limo?

Major D. Hammett II brags that just this year he has sold "around 650,000 cards." That's \$3,250,000 for them and \$3,250,000 for him and he did that with only 26 grown-up paid employees and thousands of unpaid baby salesmen. "After this year we'll have raised just over \$14 million for schools," Hammett said in an interview as he kicked off his expansion into the Texas elementary schools. Is that \$14 million for them and \$14 million for him or did poor Mr. Hammett II only get \$7 million this year?

The L.A.Z.Y. members of the C.O.R.E. Foundation board get the other half of whatever the Rolla school children raise which they then dole out for field trips or "scholarships" so teachers can go to another workshop. Some, but not all, teachers will get a C.O.R.E. "scholarship."

Some, but not all, of the children who hustled the money for C.O.R.E. and Mr. Hammett II will get to go on a field trip. Junior High and High School students who don't have to raise money for C.O.R.E. (Major D. Hammett won't use teenagers because they want to be paid in cash, not candy) will have their education 'enriched' from the labor of their little brothers and sisters. C.O.R.E. will receive approval and admiration from all for their generous donation to education.

Both field trips and teacher's trips, if they are really an educational necessity and not just entertainment, are things the school board is supposed to provide from the \$43,000,000 in public money they spend every year. So why aren't they providing those and whatever it is the PTO moms are always raising money for? Come to think of it, what exactly is all this frantic fund raising for anyway? We don't recall ever seeing any accountability from the PTO's or any specifics about what the money will buy. This is becoming big business at school and a major distraction from education so isn't it time the PTO's and C.O.R.E. disclosed their business income and expenses on the district web site?

We have \$8.5 million dollars worth of grade school construction going on at this very moment. Isn't that enough to provide a comfortable, if not lavish, learning environment? If the board missed some important 'enrichment' in their annual budget why haven't the PTO's been to the school board budget meetings to ask them for whatever 'things' this fundraising is buying so the children can keep their attention on learning instead of on hustling junk?

**What about the perverts?** C.O.R.E. and the Rolla School Board have a serious ethical disconnect when they claim to be "for the children" and then send children out to do fundraising. First, they are facilitating the personal enrichment of a millionaire with no scruples by giving him access to children who are barely out of infancy to use for his business. Second, the district preaches lessons on "stranger danger," they hire a school cop for security, pass harsh "zero tolerance" rules, have closed campuses – all in the name of school safety - then throw the school doors open to commercial promoters. If there is the slightest risk that one child might run into one of the 71 registered sex offenders in the county or one of the many latent perverts that aren't yet convicted and registered sex offenders – and there is more than a slight risk – the board, C.O.R.E. and the millionaire hustler will be responsible no matter what kind of weak disclaimer they try to hide behind.

Oh sure, sure, C.O.R.E. and Mr. D. Hammett II, the millionaire lawyer have tried to cover their collective rear ends on the liability issue by warning the children to "be safe." **Chris Ary**, Hammett's representative for the Rolla district fund raiser told the children, "Only approach people you know and make sure it is okay with your mom and dad first." With that vague stipulation given to grade schoolers – the youngest haven't a clue what danger he's talking about – well, if any child comes to harm it's not their fault is it? The fact is children are more often victimized by *people they know* than by strangers. Working parents don't get home

until after 5:30 p.m. and may have no chance to stop their children from making sales calls instead of doing their homework. Parents who don't want to risk their children or impose on friends and relatives will pay for at least one discount card to sooth an anxious child who doesn't want to be the only one in class with no money to give the nice man who gives away candy and toys. Don't we warn children about strange men who give candy to children?

**School Board lets fund raisers get out of hand.** If you are a school parent, relative or friend or neighbor of one, you know that the opening of school brings out wave after wave of cute little cherubs pleading for you to buy some cheap merchandise to raise money for a "worthy" school project. They desperately want to win a prize, so you buy the cards, gift wrap, magazine subscriptions (many of those never show up) to help the school and the child never suspecting that in the background the biggest beneficiary is a businessman who uses the labor of children to make millions. He will make even more by using the sales information to compile a fresh direct mail list which is then sold to marketing companies who will send you more junk mail.

We're only about thirteen weeks into the school year and there have already been four fund-raisers in some elementary schools. Recently they allowed a Kettle Korn salesman to demonstrate and sell his high-fat product to students for \$4 a bag under the pretense that it was some kind of history lesson. The Pilgrims made Kettle Korn? Gee, that wasn't in the old history books. Another school solicitation had a novel twist. They didn't ask for cash but asked parents to fill out the names and addresses of 20 relatives and friends. The junk catalog company then used the child's name in a personalized plea to each of those unsuspecting people to buy something from the junk catalog. The school got \$2.50 per 20 names for getting parents to violate the privacy of 20 friends and relatives. Parents, next time you get one of those, fill in the names and addresses of school board members, administrators and PTO officers.

**No wonder the elementary MAP scores are dropping.** The Rolla School Board, who repeatedly tell us they are "for the children," have abandoned their gate-keeping responsibility by allowing anyone with a sales gimmick to have access to and make use of our youngest and most vulnerable population of children. The board has an open door policy for hucksters but parents must register, state their business and may not go past the office. Why? Are they afraid parents will interrupt a sales meeting?

This is the same school board that in October sat through a discussion of why elementary MAP scores have fallen *below the state average*. Our clueless school board decided the children just had to work harder. How can they work harder? Class time is for attending sales meetings; after school they have no time for homework, they're out canvassing the neighborhood or calling relatives to raise money for C.O.R.E. and Mr. Hammett II, the millionaire lawyer. If they're going to let commercial vendors loose on

our children the least C.O.R.E. could do is strike a better deal; say...rent the kids out for 75% of the gross.

The traditional PTO School Carnival to raise money for the school can be fun for the whole family, but there's a cold blooded calculation to this new type of fundraising that relies on exploiting the innocence of children dazzled by the lure of winning a prize - however worthless the prize may be. In Mr. Major D. Hammett's game the little Major Saver Grand Prize winner will make his friends green with envy when picked up in a limo with a party of favorites and whisked away to a pizza party. Do we want Mr. Hammett teaching our children that Greed is Good - that money buys status? Are these the values they teach in the school's Character Education program, that it is admirable to be a strutting little Donald Trump?

***"Targets families in your marketing area!"*** P.T. Barnum said of suckers, "There's one born every minute." The same can be said about school fundraising companies; they're a growth industry and evolving slicker techniques all the time. You've got to hand it to Hammett the II; he's zeroed in on the perfect combination of human weaknesses and exploited them brilliantly. Parents find it easier to raise money to show they are the "good" school parents than confront the school board about their spending priorities and other educational failures. Principals prefer to have parents busy themselves with fundraising projects otherwise they might start complaining about educational failures. The school board pretends that unchecked fund raisers show parent involvement in their schools but their own communication system is carefully designed to keep the petty concerns of parents out of the executive suite. Members of school foundation boards (the exclusive target of Mr. Hammett II; if your district doesn't have one he has a business "associate" who will help set one up) want to avoid doing the same personal solicitation that they are sending children out to do. Hammett has anticipated any twinge of conscience board members might have by providing the 'be safe' disclaimer and the fiction that participation is "optional."

Peer pressure is not "optional." The younger they are the better pressure works especially if it comes from Hammett's practiced pitchman. Listen to Major D. Hammett explain the six consecutive days of high-pressure tactics starting with the all-school assembly where each little peddler is given his sales packet to kick off the promotion. ***"This is the heart of the Major Saver Preferred Card Program where excitement and momentum builds. Each day, a Major Saver staff member stops by every classroom and collects card orders from students in exchange for fun and educational prizes. Even a single sale qualifies the student for a prize [candy] and the top selling class is rewarded with a special treat...like an all-you-can-eat pizza party."*** An insensitive business plan but very effective. Dickens' reptilian Bill Fagin would turn green with envy.

Fast food places, all fighting for market share, are happy to give away a cheap loss leader because he tells them that his discount card, ***"Targets families in your***

***marketing area. Card buyers are typically parents and grandparents within five miles of your restaurant. Therefore, most end users are families, with an average of three people dining."*** The card user will be forced to buy food for three to get one 'free' sandwich or appetizer. Hey! It really is worth \$70...to them...that's what you'll wind paying to get all the 'free' stuff. Everyone's need or weakness has been played like a violin and the prime targets are "families in your marketing area." Nice.

Many of Mr. Hammett's fellow capitalists are ex-superintendents or former teachers who know how to penetrate school systems. These businesses hook up with MSBA and other education associations as "partners," "affiliates" or exhibitors at their conventions. They contribute money and host cocktail parties and luncheons for superintendents and board members to promote their enterprise and get inside our elementary schools.

***Cure for solicitation fatigue.*** No one does a background check of these promoters. The school board has established no criteria for screening them or holding them accountable. The board has a "don't bother us" policy on fund raising that allows anyone to conduct any commercial activity in the schools as long as the principal says it's okay and the school gets a cut of the action. That's about as laissez-faire as a school board can be. They would probably be puzzled to find that many schools (the 20% Hammett can't sign up) permit NO fundraising because they believe school is for education and they know they have no right to invade family time, which they hope will be spent helping with homework. Family privacy...homework...how quaint.

The Better Business Bureau among others has measurable standard for controlling the worst of the growing mob of "charitable" fund raising corporations. We suggest the board use some of the BBB criteria which we have adapted for local use:

***POLICY: 1. All fund raising plans must be submitted in writing for the School Board's approval. (Let's see how they like being solicited by all the solicitors.) 2. Parents must give prior written consent for their child to participate. 3. No commercial fund raiser or local sponsoring organization will be permitted to apply for board approval without first submitting, at least 60 days before the planned event, audited financial statements which will show: the actual or anticipated portion of the purchase price that will benefit the school (e.g., 5 cents will be contributed to ABC school for every XYZ company product sold). 4. Such information shall be disclosed in all marketing materials used at the point of solicitation. 5. The district will retain 10% of total gross sales for 90 days after the project is completed which the district will use at its sole discretion to reimburse consumers who receive defective, shoddy, or misrepresented products. 6. No company shall be approved that does not pay Missouri income taxes to support public schools and other public services. 7. No fund raising project shall last longer than three days. An even better school policy would be this one: "No school fundraising will use or employ students or be discussed or conducted in classrooms***

during school hours or on school property. No more than one School Board approved fund raiser will be permitted for each building during the school year and that shall be held after school hours.”

target we suggest you send the following note or something similar to C.O.R.E. board members: **Marla Stevenson, Julie Kaczmarek, Sandy King, Vicki Brown, Paula Lutz, Joni Stevens, Suzanne Vaughan, Caren Whites and Jon Wilsdorf, % RSB, 500A Forum Drive.**

**Speak up “for the children.”** To protest the school district and C.O.R.E. making your child and family a marketing

*Dear C.O.R.E.*

*In addition to the 91% of my property taxes that already go to the school district to educate children, I have enclosed \$5 for the fourth school fundraiser in only 13 weeks. Instead of paying \$10 for a discount card, which would cost me \$70 to use but only \$5 of which will be passed through CORE and then back to the schools, I prefer to cut out the middleman and give the money directly to \_\_\_\_\_ school so the small child who begged me to ‘help’ him win a prize of non-nutritional candy or a “Super Mondo ball” (whatever the hell that is) will not be disappointed. Notice I have deducted the \$5 which would go to Mr. Major D. Hammett II, the millionaire lawyer who should be ashamed of himself.*

*P.S. I am not including my name and address for you to pass on to Mr. Hammett II to sell to another marketing firm. Thanks to your other three fundraisers I’m getting plenty of junk mail.*

*Sincerely,  
Fed Up with School Fundraising*

How did we find out about Major Hammett II, his sales methods and his business connections? We did it the same way we found out the school board was selling the Main Street property to the Porn King of the Midwest, we Googled him. It took less than 20 minutes of mining the

Internet to find out everything but his shirt size. You would think after the Porn King fiasco some highly paid executive in the school district or on the C.O.R.E. board would learn to Google wouldn’t you? Well they might have if they really cared more “for the children” than “for the money.”

**Major Saver Fundraising Inc.:** <http://majorsaver.com/restaurant.htm>  
**Mo Highway Patrol list of Registered Sex Offenders in Phelps County:**  
<http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/PatrolDivisions/CRID/SOR/SORPage.html>

**NSN POLL:** Go to the NSN poll to vote on school fundraising and use the comment button to express your opinion at:  
<http://www.nostandingnews.com>

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