

Original URL: <http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/apr00/spicecol20r041900.asp>

## For police lieutenant-turned-politician, returning to work not so easy

*Last Updated: April 20, 2000*

### Spivak & Bice



**Cary Spivak &  
Dan Bice**

Milwaukee Police Lt. Lenard Wells is ready, willing and able to go to work.

Too bad nobody seems to want him.

First, the voters turned down his offer to represent the 2nd District on the Milwaukee Common Council, narrowly electing Terrance Herron instead. Then, on the day after the election, Wells took the routine step of applying for reinstatement to the Milwaukee Police Department.

For two weeks, he heard nothing.

Wells said Wednesday he has a sneaking suspicion that Chief Arthur Jones, a frequent target of Wells' criticism, is looking for the ideal job for the outspoken leader of the League of Martin.

"He's trying to find a unique closet with no light, no restroom facility, to put me in," Wells joked.

Jerry Filut, president of the Milwaukee Police Supervisors Organization, said it normally would take only a day or two to do the background checks on an officer returning from a short absence.

"We have five or six lieutenant vacancies," including Wells' old job, Filut said.

Interested in knowing the reason for the inaction, we called Jones' flack, Karen Pride Garvin. She put us on hold. For a while.

### Spivak & Bice Archive

- [A possible Falk candidacy is the talk of the party](#) (5/21/01)
- [Gubernatorial rift rides on leader of pack](#) (5/19/01)
- [Politics helped Green Bay land judgeship](#) (5/14/01)
- [NRA quietly planning convention in Milwaukee](#) (5/12/01)
- [McCallum gets in middle of D.C. spat](#) (5/9/01)
- [Menominee to swap managers of casino plan](#) (5/7/01)
- [Thompson pals quietly met with casino foes](#) (5/5/01)
- [Bucher won't admit he blew his chance](#) (5/2/01)
- [MATC's new chief gets some extra credit](#) (4/28/01)

When she returned, she said, "Lieutenant Wells has been cleared to return to work."

But when?

"He has not been notified of the date," she said.

Less than an hour later - talk about an amazing coincidence - Wells called with an update. MPD had just informed him that he had been cleared to return to work.

But first, he must go back to school.

And so, three weeks before he celebrates his 27th anniversary on the force, after a leave of just four months to run for office, and with an annual pay he estimates at \$60,000, he has to report to the Police Academy on May 1.

For retraining.

**Pumping out the lawsuits:** About a month ago, it looked as if millionaire gas station owner and political fat cat Darshan Dhaliwal had found a cure for his biggest headache. That's when he persuaded aldermen to kill a committee proposal to shut down his Sherman Park Citgo station for 10 days.

The relief, however, didn't last long.

On Wednesday, 31 residents of the Coldspring Park neighborhood each slapped him and his Mequon company with a small claims lawsuit. The neighbors charge that a second Dhaliwal station, the Gas-N-Go Mini Mart at 3308 W. Vliet St., is a neighborhood nuisance.

The technique has been used in other states but never here.

"This group chose not to work through the city because they didn't want a political solution," said Jay Urban, the attorney who filed the lawsuits.

The lawsuits complain about the station's practice of "staying open 24 hours, providing inadequate security guards, allowing bullet-riddled glass windows without repair . . . and other similar situations." These problems created such a hazardous situation that some avoid walking past the station or using the post office nearby.

In suing Dhaliwal, the residents on the near west side are taking on one of the area's biggest contributors to local and state politicians. Dhaliwal's donations to Mayor John O. Norquist and seven aldermen became an issue last month when the council flipped a committee recommendation to suspend the license for the Sherman Park station. Neighbors complained that the station was a magnet for rowdy youths.

The Coldspring Park residents had to cough up \$65 each - roughly 1/13th of Dhaliwal's 1999 contributions to Norquist - to file the small claims suits against Dhaliwal. They seek monetary damages and a court order to fix

- [Memos refer to intricacies of casino plan \(4/23/01\)](#)
- [Search more Spivak & Bice columns](#)

---

Cary Spivak and Dan Bice can be contacted by phone

at 414-223-5468 or e-mail at [sb@onwis.com](mailto:sb@onwis.com).

the problems.

Dhaliwal, for his part, isn't quite as impressed with the neighborhood group's legal dance. He said Wednesday that the neighbors are harassing him and looking to collect a few bucks.

Dhaliwal leases the Vliet St. station to an independent operator. He said it will soon become a Marathon station, meaning the business will have to operate by that company's standards.

Dhaliwal said he's invested more than \$300,000 in improving the property. And, he argued, when residents recently gave him a list of 15 demands, he agreed to all but two. Dhaliwal rejected the claim that those who frequent his gas station are looking for trouble.

"They can look at people and say they are bad people or good people," Dhaliwal said sarcastically. "Maybe they should be the police."

**But he keeps on ticking:** You've got to hand it to Milwaukee attorney Bob Bauman - the guy doesn't give up, no matter how many times he's knocked down.

You'd think that after having a lawsuit against Milwaukee County thrown out by a federal judge, Bauman might give up. You'd think that after unsuccessfully trying to get an aldermanic candidate to persuade his mother, a County Board member, to help settle the case out of court, Bauman would throw in the towel. And you'd think that last month, when a three-judge federal panel rejected Bauman's appeal, it would be the last straw.

Nope. Not for Bauman. Now, he's risking losing the case he filed for Michael Bonds one more time. Bonds, you may recall, was the City Hall employee who in 1997 almost went to work for the county. But before Bonds had a chance to punch in, he made some controversial remarks about race, and the job offer was withdrawn.

Now, Bauman has filed a 13-page brief asking that all 11 appellate court judges in Chicago take the highly unusual step of jointly hearing the case.

Even for Bauman - a perennial political candidate - this one's a longshot.

*Cary Spivak and Dan Bice can be contacted by phone at (414) 223-5468 or e-mail at [sb@onwis.com](mailto:sb@onwis.com).*

Appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on April 20, 2000.