WILSON OUTSHINES WATTS

By Andrew Holden

DARIAN – Yesterday’s Mayoral election ended with newcomer Thomas Wilson winning by a landslide. Incumbent Charles Watts’ popularity has been suffering in recent months, partially due to the recent Police strike (see related story below). Watts originally campaigned on the platform of reforming and rebuilding Darian. After several years in office, the people of Darian still feel they are waiting for this promised reform.

Mayor-elect Wilson comes from the corporate sector and promises to use his business management and cost-cutting skills to streamline Darian’s city government. Supporters of Mayor Watts have voiced their concern that Mayor-elect Wilson will use his position to garner contracts and business deals for his own interests. Wilson’s campaign manager assured the press that this is in fact not true, and Mayor-elect Wilson will be relinquishing control of many of his business assets during his term in office.

Mayor-elect Wilson received a much needed popularity boost several weeks ago when the newly formed Challengers superhero team rescued him. The rescue occurred after two escaped Metahumans criminals, Sulfur and Brimstone, had kidnapped Wilson and held him hostage on the roof of City Hall. The citizens have responded positively to Wilson’s activism for Metahuman protectors. SEE B-2

More Emergency Services Threaten To Strike

DARIAN – Today it was revealed that several more emergency services are planning strikes unless city government meets their salary demands. Almost two months ago, roughly 70% of the Darian Police force went on strike. They argue that their wages are not comparable with other major cities and that the current economy could support higher Police salaries. To this date, these officers have not returned to duty.

Two weeks after the Police strike, the Darian Fire Department suffered from similar walkouts. Currently the Darian Fire Department is operating with 20% of the usual staff.

Mayor-elect Wilson has not yet announced how he intends to resolve this crisis. As a show of solidarity, several members of the emergency hospital services are planning to strike if Wilson does not rapidly put together a plan that will satisfy all parties.

Darian’s neighboring sister, Crescent City, has offered to supply emergency workers if an urgent crisis should arise. However, many are concerned that this

Darian Heights
Highlanders Decapitate Crescent City Commandos

CRESCENT CITY – Tad Hopkins, of Darian Heights High School, marveled the crowd last night in Crescent City. Seven touchdowns in the first half is a new record for the school.

Tad credits his victory to his admiration for Darian Destroyers NFL quarterback Lewis “Lightning” Unger. Team owners Psion Inc recruited Unger, a previously unknown, to play this year. Unger’s shocking

SEE D-2
DARIAN – Not since the early 1970’s has Darian seen such an abundance of Metahuman activity on the scale that we’ve seen recently. Perhaps then it’s no coincidence that once again our city has a band of protectors named the Challengers.

In recent years, the Metahuman team known as The Pack has protected Darian from threats domestic and alien. However, as the Pack’s popularity grew, so did their responsibility. In a recent interview, the team leader, Melee, stated that they have an obligation to the entire world, not just one city. Therefore, we citizens of Darian can expect The Pack’s absence to continue.

In their place, a new band of heroes calling themselves the Challengers has arisen to serve Darian. You would think that being the third group of heroes to be called the Challengers would put an immense amount of stress on these folks. Not so. When asked about the pressure to continue on the legacy of previous Challenger teams, current Challenger Mila was quoted as saying, “Challengers? Who? Oh, you mean us. What’s that? There were Challengers before us? Really? Did they have telephones? Those are neat. Do you have a telephone?” Obviously this group has a sense of humor about their place in the scheme of things.

Appearing only a few weeks ago, the Challengers have already recaptured an escaped Metahuman carnivore, broken up an apparent satanic cult, rescued Mayor-elect Wilson from two Metahuman kidnappers, apprehended a juvenile gang of suspected murderers, and foiled a band of pirate-themed bank robbers.

Felix Flynn, the Challengers Press Agent formerly of Steelgrave Industries, says we should expect big things from these heroes in the future. “The Challengers are truly a team for Darian. They are dedicated to the people of this fine city. The citizens love the Challengers because they recognize real heroes when they see them. Remember … The Challengers – They’re here to help” said Flynn at a recent press conference.

Danger Man, Challengers frontman and son of Darian philanthropist Jackson Steelgrave, has been spending time recently in San Francisco negotiating contracts on behalf of Steelgrave Industries. Meanwhile back home, the Challengers haven’t been bored in his absence. Individually the members have been responsible for stopping several petty thefts and cracking down on drug dealers in the Valentine district of Darian.

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE
**RISING TO THE CHALLENGE (continued from previous page)**

Danger Man, with his enhanced physical abilities, has been very open with his identity and powers, while several other members of the team remain shrouded in mystery. Mr. Improbable, the newest member of the group, seems comfortable with the press and the spotlight; however, his abilities are still unknown at this time. Flynn identified the remaining three members during the aforementioned press conference. Conduet, with her amazing strength and endurance, has a quiet demeanor and some other shocking powers that Flynn was hesitant to discuss. Next to nothing is known about timid mystery girl Mila, however, Flynn was willing to admit that she’s the Challengers secret weapon. Finally, there’s Alley Cat, whose name is fearfully whispered in the seedier sections of Darian. Thanks to his unerring skill with a bow, Alley Cat has made his mark on the cowardly street criminals of Darian.

With their astonishing powers and commendable dedication, the Challengers are gaining rapid support from the citizens of Darian. These heroes have a long road to travel to earn the respect given to such teams as the Justice League and the Titans, but they’ve already proven that they are prepared to rise to the challenge!

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**VIGILANTES IN CRESCENT CITY?**

**CRESCENT CITY** – The Crescent City Police Department have reportedly stumbled across numerous already captured criminals throughout the past month. These individuals, most with prior convictions, have been discovered bound to lampposts clutching condemning evidence of their crimes. Sources inside the force suggest that the CCPD have been keeping this information under wraps for fear of copycat vigilantes.

One captured felon told the police he was apprehended by a duo consisting of a clown and a walking statue. The CCPD have been investigating every possibility, even going as far as determining whether this supposed clown might be the infamous “Joker” of Gotham City. The Darian Daily will be keeping its readers informed as this story develops.

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**HOMELESS GO MISSING**

**DARIAN** – Several regulars of the Nelson Homeless Mission, in the Nelson Bayside district of Darian, have recently been reported missing. Darian Police dismissed these reports due to the very nature of transient individuals. If you have any information regarding missing homeless people, please contact the mission at 555-4683.

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

- United States President Lex Luthor is meeting this week with Prime Minister Tupelo of Biayla. Hopes are high that the U.S. and this Middle Eastern nation can reach a peaceful trade agreement.
- Darian Police, in conjunction with the FBI, are still investigating the disappearance of “Black Betty” and her flying Spanish galleon. Betty was the apparent mastermind behind the recent series of bank robberies in Darian foiled by the efforts of the heroic Challengers. To no avail, investigators have reviewed flight information recorded by local airport radar, as well as Air Force tracking station data. No records apparently exist of the galleons flight over Darian.
- The Elizabeth Calhoun Center for Humanities in Darian announced yesterday that it will be hosting a touring exhibit of Ancient Egyptian artifacts. The exhibit should open within a few months.
- The suspected murderers of local minister John Smith will face the first day of their trial today. District Attorney David Anthony feels there is compelling evidence that will result in a conviction for the two suspects and their accomplices. All are minors, however, the two main suspects are being tried as adults for their crime.

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**THERE’S A NEW SHOW IN TOWN**

**By James Dalemore**

**DARIAN** – Carlton Minno, a.k.a. Top Hat the Extraordinary, isn’t your everyday birthday party magician. In fact, he claims to be a master in his trade. After recently returning to Darian, Top Hat gave a special demonstration for this reporter. I must admit he certainly lives up to the name “Extraordinary”.

While he initially came across like a runaway Jim Carey character, he quickly demonstrated he had the skills to back up his claims. I honestly expect to see Carlton Minno headlining soon at various local nights spots. Oh yeah, his levitating illusion will amaze and confound you.