

Wegge Vies for Brentwood Aldermanic Seat

Brandon Wegge said his career in engineering has prepared him for a role on the Brentwood Board of Aldermen.

Posted by [Ryan Martin](#) (Editor) , March 21, 2011 at 09:04 PM



When Brandon Wegge was a boy, his father would drive him to Lambert-St. Louis International Airport to watch planes jump into the sky. He knew he would build airplanes for a living one day, but Wegge, now 36, said he didn't expect his passion for aerospace to prepare him for public service.

Wegge has worked as a structures engineer at Boeing for 14 years. In his current role, Wegge works with engineering teams to resolve issues, reduce

costs and solve other problems, he said.

“The one thing I’m known for at Boeing is going in and helping teams execute better,” he said. “It’s that kind of experience that lines up perfectly with the kind of stuff you have to do on the board: fix problems, take into consideration everything that’s going on.”

Wegge is vying for a seat on the Brentwood Board of Aldermen. He’s running against incumbent Lee Wynn.

Wegge’s entrepreneurial nature dates back to his years as an undergrad at Princeton University. He ran a business building materials to loft beds above TVs and dressers in dorm rooms. As students moved in at the beginning of the semester, the university would allow Wegge to spread his supplies across a parking lot, where he worked into the night. He even slept outside to protect \$8,000 worth of wood.

For his senior design project—the equivalent of a thesis, but tailored for engineers—Wegge worked on a team that built a turbojet engine from scratch.

“I was spending 40 to 60 hours a week in the machine shop second semester,” he said.

Wegge’s engineering career brought him to Brentwood. He lived in Philadelphia for a couple years before moving back to St. Louis for work. His wife, Cari, found their home in a newspaper ad. They rented for two years before buying the home.

“It became pretty obvious it was where we wanted to live,” Brandon Wegge said.

Before they moved in, the neighbors invited Brandon and Cari to a block party. Over the years, neighbors started becoming friends.

“Douglas Court is pretty tight. This is our community right here,” he said. Most neighbors hold keys to each other’s homes.

And while Douglas Court paints a positive picture for Brentwood, Wegge’s initial view of Brentwood wasn’t nearly as favorable.

Before moving in, Wegge drove down Manchester Road and thought he was in a bad part of St. Louis. Many buildings have stood vacant for years because of

flooding issues, while easement and road condition problems persist because the state holds all right-of-way.

“That’s part of the reason I want to get Manchester cleaned up,” he said. He said the road isn’t an accurate portrayal of Brentwood.

One of his campaign messages is to find ways to attract businesses to those empty lots.

“I don’t know what the answer is yet, but it’s going to be a tough problem,” he said. “You have to get rid of the flooding or you have to make it where businesses can handle that.”

Wegge said the city needs to start with the intersection of Hanley and Manchester roads, where flooding isn’t a problem, and work inward.

As for another major issue—the future of the Brentwood Recreation Complex—Wegge said he would vote to keep and update the makeup of the current complex, including the Brentwood Ice Arena.

“I think that’s something different that gives us value,” he said. “The ice rink is something people are really proud of here.”

He doesn’t think the city needs to add a fitness room or indoor water park because The Heights in Richmond Heights, which gives residential rates to Brentwood residents through a parks and recreation agreement, has quality facilities.

But he recognizes the issue will be difficult for the city. “The majority will be unhappy, no matter what,” he said.

Wegge also wants to add a city-owned dog park. He said he has a couple locations in mind that are centrally located and along a walking path.

He said the city is already supportive of dog owners because it provides pickup bags along trails, but he wishes he could walk his dog to an open space. Three years ago, the Wegges adopted their dog, Bernoulli, from the Animal Protective Association of Missouri, where Brandon and Cari both volunteer, but he wishes he could take her to a Brentwood park.

His yearning for a dog park is what originally pushed him to consider an

aldermanic bid. His friends and neighbors agreed that the city should have one, so he decided to do something about it.

And, as Cari Wegge puts it, public service is in Brandon Wegge's blood. Growing up, his father was an associate circuit judge in Jefferson County, and his mother served on a school board. His brother, Forrest Wegge, is the [prosecuting attorney in Jefferson County](#).

"The spirit of serving runs deep in the family," Wegge said.

So he's taking his issues—and ideas—to the ballot box in April. And he'll be sporting orange and black campaign signs; the same colors his family has used in previous elections.

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Brandon Wegge

8537 Douglas Court

PERSONAL: Age 36. Married to Cari Wegge, 34.

OCCUPATION: Structures engineer at Boeing.

EDUCATION: Wegge received a bachelor's degree in science from Princeton University, a master's degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Washington University of St. Louis, and a master of business administration from Saint Louis University.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND: Wegge has served on the Brentwood Board of Adjustment for 1.5 years. In January, he was named Associate Fellow by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He was the president of an engineering council at Princeton.

Editor's note: A candidate profile of [incumbent Lee Wynn](#) ran on Thursday.