

The Pacer

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and the Parkview Gardens Special Business District**

PGA Meets

What's next for neighborhood?

The semi-annual meeting of the Parkview Gardens Association and its associated special business district will begin at 6 pm Tuesday Oct. 16, upstairs at University City Library, 6701 Delmar. After a review of last year, activities will be planned for the coming year. Elections will be held. Community representative Michael Donovan and Washington University representative Steve Condrin are up for reelection as boardmembers. If you live, work or own property in Parkview Gardens or the East Loop, you're invited to attend, meet the officers of the association, and take part in a lively discussion of the area's present and future. The PGA is responsible for the light pole banners, extra-bright streetlights, flower and vegetable gardens, and other amenities. The neighborhood improvement group, consisting of landlords, businesspeople and residents, was founded in 1980. Membership is \$25 a year. You don't have to be a member to attend the annual meeting.



More Time for Fun & Learning

Programs at Flynn Park School

Unleashing Potential (formerly Neighborhood Houses) is holding before- and after-school programs at University City elementary schools including Flynn Park. The programs offer fun and supportive activities including literacy, fitness, character education and



Unleashing Potential holds programs for children at U City schools.

homework help. Morning hours are 7-8:30, afternoon 3:30-6. Programs are now enrolling and applications are available online at upstl.org. The Parkview Gardens Association will provide scholarships for children who live in this neighborhood. A parent pays only \$15 per child for a morning pro-

gram, \$20 for evening program, \$25 for both, per child.

U City Events

Searchlight shines, artists paint

It has been six years since the searchlight atop City Hall shone. On Sept. 20, the only person who knows how to operate it, Bill Kaufman, will switch it on. The Historical Society of University City is sponsoring a Searchlight Party that evening at 7 pm. The event is open to all; tickets are \$5 in advance at the library or on the night at the door. The audience will gather in the City Council Chamber on the fifth floor of City Hall and hear a talk about the light's long history (it was installed by E.G. Lewis in 1903) by Jim Kirchherr of Channel Nine. Then Kaufman will climb the spiral staircase to the roof to turn on the light and play it over Civic Plaza and the Loop. Light refreshments will be served.

U City in Bloom holds a Plein Air Art Festival Sept. 23. Artists will be at their easels all day in the heart of U City (between Delmar and Olive, Hanley and Pennsylvania), painting gardens, schools, houses and public buildings. Their works will be displayed and available for purchase at a party at the Community Center in Heman Park



Ballooning has always been big in St. Louis

from 5 to 7 pm, where food and drink from local restaurants will be served. Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased online at ucityinbloom.org.

The Sutter-Meyer Farmhouse, U City's oldest structure (built 1872), will hold a free open house the following Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4: Sept. 23, Oct. 7 and 21, Nov. 4 and 18. The house is located one block north of Olive at 6826 Chamberlain Court

By Balloon from St. Louis

Our long history

The Great Forest Park Balloon Race is scheduled for Sept. 14-15. This will be the 45th celebration of the popular local event. But St. Louis's connection to ballooning goes back much further. In 1906, James G. Bennett offered a cup to the winner of an international aeronautical race. Promoters of the event chose St. Louis as starting point because it is so far from the oceans. Balloon-

ists, having only partial control of flight duration, and no control of direction, prefer to stay away from vast expanses of water. On October 21, 1907, a hundred thousand St. Louisans gathered in Forest Park to watch the competitors lift off. The American, Hershey, sprung a leak and had to come down on the shore of Lake Ontario.

The Frenchman, Le Blanc, made it all the way to the Atlantic coast of Delaware, setting a time-in-the-air record of 44 hours. But the prize was for covering most distance, and it went to the German, Erlboch, who touched down on a New Jersey beach 876 miles from St. Louis. University City had its own connection to balloon racing. Captain John Berry was a prominent racer whose backers included E.G. Lewis. In fact, one of his balloons was named for the city.

Free Video

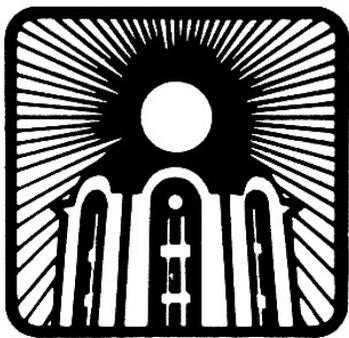
A Bridge Too Far

Scanning the DVD shelves of U City library to help you save money. Robert Redford announced his retirement recently, causing the editor to think back to the 1970s, when he was Hollywood's brightest star. You can see him in his youthful glory in this 1977 movie, but you'll have to wait for his first appearance, because every other prominent actor of the decade is also in the movie. Back then, Hollywood studios believed that the way to guarantee a profit on a big-budget picture was to fill the marquee with famous names. Watching this film, you get to see actors playing scenes together for the only time in their careers: Michael

Caine and Elliot Gould, Laurence Olivier and Liv Ullman, Sean Connery and Dirk Bogarde. The oddest couple of all are Gene Hackman and his Polish accent. After a long struggle, the accent trounces the actor. Fittingly enough, for this is a movie about defeat. It's autumn 1944 and the Allies, emboldened by recent successes and eager to put an end to the war, mount a complex and daring operation in the Netherlands. They end up handing the Germans their last victory. The producers spent a fortune staging tank battles and paratroop drops, and the spectacle is very impressive, especially when you remember that CGI was in its infancy back then. Another fortune was spent on the uniforms. Most of the stars are playing senior officers, so we get a WW2 fashion show featuring camo in every pattern and berets in every color. The spiffiest figure is Caine as an Irish colonel in an emerald-green ascot. The movie does a good job of unfolding the complicated battle clearly, but it is awfully long. Despite all the stars, box-office returns were disappointing, probably because, unavoidably, the Nazis beat the Allies. The big hit of the summer of '77 was, of course, *Star Wars*. It demonstrated that if you got away from planet Earth to an imaginary galaxy, you could mount much more exciting battles and ensure that the good guys won. Hollywood has tended to shy away from real history ever since.



John Hendrix



Historical Society lives up to its logo by switching on searchlight

Library Events

All at U City Public Library

6701 Delmar (314) 727-3150

Sept 15 Free Health screenings at 9 am

Sept 18 Classics Book Club discusses Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* at 7 pm

Oct. 1 John Hendrix introduces his book *The Faithful Spy*, about Dietrich Bonhoeffer in World War II, at 6 p.m.

Oct. 6 The Weavers Guild demonstrates weaving, spinning, knitting and other crafts from 1 to 4 pm

TIF Gets OK

Big Olive Blvd. Project advances

On Aug. 23, at its fourth and final public meeting on the Olive/I-170 proposed development, U City's Tax Increment Financing Commission gave the project the go-ahead on a 10-2 vote. The development is a mixed commercial-residential center by Novus Corporation of Webster Groves. The auditorium at the Senior High School was only half-full, but speakers on both sides received loud cheers from their supporters. A slide show of empty buildings, crumbling pave-

ment, broken windows, cracked walls and overgrown weeds along Olive backed up the city's contention that the area is blighted and TIF-eligible. Councilmember Stacy Clay announced that he would hold regular meetings starting in September in the Third Ward to talk about economic development. He said that issues facing the Third Ward were declining property values, increased vacancies and diminishing quality of life. The proposed development would help on all three fronts. Gentrification was a problem in places like Seattle and San Francisco but very unlikely in U City.

The commission wanted to hear first from citizens who had not spoken at previous meetings. Most supported the proposed development. Critics commented on the lack of a Community Benefits Agreement which would spell out Novus's commitments. They asked how they could be sure the developer would repair the infrastructure problems shown in the slideshow, or blamed the city for allowing them to exist. Others warned of displacement of residents and businesses. Supporters characterized the opposition as purely negative, with no one putting forward alternative solutions to Third Ward problems. One supporter said that residents have been fretting about Olive for years, and here at last was a chance to do something. Another said the proposal had flaws, but advised, "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good." This development would support local householders in improving their neighborhoods; without it, power would pass to absentee landlords. Homeowners in the proposed construction zone said that Novus had made them attractive offers for

their houses which they were eager to accept. Residents of areas other than the Third Ward said they thought the development promised to benefit the whole city. Sales tax revenue from the big box stores could make up for property tax revenue being lost every time tax-exempt Washington University bought property. The stores would also bring more jobs to the area. Some felt that U City was on a downward trajectory, which the development could change. Another citizen said that this type of project, a mid-sized, mixed-use development, has done well in the metropolitan area, pointing to one by the same developer at Manchester and McKnight boulevards. Several speakers praised the careful work of city officials.

The Olive/I-170 project now goes before the City Council. If approved, the city would provide \$70 million in tax breaks for a \$190 million development. The first \$10 million in revenue would be earmarked for community improvements.



Rachelle L'Ecuyer

Loop News

Golfing on Delmar

Parkview Gardens Association welcomes Rachelle L'Ecuyer, the new executive director of the East Loop Community Improvement District. In other Loop news, Joe Edwards has announced plans for Magic Mini Golf, across from the Pageant. It will include an indoor 18-hole miniature golf course, basketball, shuffleboard, a bar and a 16-foot high Ferris wheel from the Muny. The opening date is yet to be announced.

davidlinzee@yahoo.com

Parkview Gardens Assn.
830 Vanderbilt Avenue
University City MO 63130

News of the Neighborhood

Inside:

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- *See the U City searchlight shine