

The Pacer

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PGA Special Business District

Apply Now

Deadline looms for PGA Award

Applications for the 2021 Parkview Gardens Association Award are due by April 1. This \$5,000 award is for higher education such as trade school or college. To qualify, you must be a Parkview Gardens resident and a high school senior who has demonstrated the ability to succeed in your studies as well as your commitment to working for the betterment of school and community. Applicants must also show financial need. For more information, consult your high school guidance counselor or call (314) 721-5357

When Will We Swim?

City Council meeting
Impatience was evident as the City Council discussed reopening of recreational facilities including Heman Park pool at a virtual meeting Feb. 22. Stacy Clay (Third Ward) noted that neighboring cities are re-

opening their facilities. City Manager Gregory Rose said that he had authorized hiring new and rehiring furloughed employees for Centennial



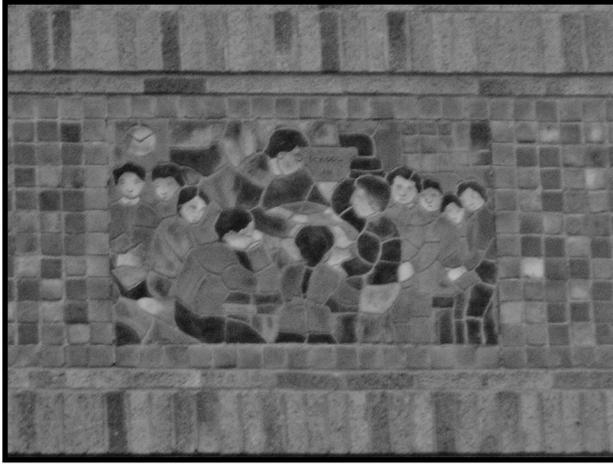
Heman Park pool in happier days

Commons and the pool. He would like to see the Covid-19 positivity rate drop to 5% in St. Louis County before reopening Cent Comm. He added that City Hall is now open for two to four hours daily Monday-Friday but he was reluctant to re-open completely, given the current pandemic risks. Darren Dunkle of Parks, Recreation and Forestry said it takes two-three months to hire staff for Cent Comm, the pool

and golf course. Bwayne Smotherson (Third Ward) asked why the city hadn't started hiring earlier. He expressed concern about summer baseball programs. Rose said,

"Our goal is not simply to open but to open in a safe manner." He is concerned about the city's liability: organizations that want to use our facilities have to indemnify the city. Smotherson said the council should discuss team use of fields in the parks. Aleta Klein (Second Ward) agreed, saying that kids should be able to play sports

in local parks. Mayor Terry Crow said there were bound to be tensions as the city exited pandemic lockdown, but "it's getting to be the season when we're ready to hit the fields." He asked Rose to make a timeline for reopening. Klein said clarification of the insurance issue was urgent. Rose said the Parks Commission will promptly provide recommen-



Delmar School mosaic

dations on protecting citizens.

Tearing Down & Building Up

Ward 2 meeting

Second Ward Councilmembers Tim Cusick and Aleta Klein held a virtual town hall with City Manager Gregory Rose on Feb. 17. Cusick provided an update on local construction. The Opus Group project, a seven- or eight-story residential building replacing the Commerce Bank on Delmar, is on hold. Issue of a demolition permit for Delmar School at 711 Kingsland is imminent. It will be replaced by a Tru Hotel. The doomed building went up in 1913 as U City's first school. Rose is asking the developers to allow removal of its mosaics for preservation. City Hall has accepted a report on Washington University's financial impact upon U City, which states that university-owned properties generate a net deficit of \$1.05 million annually to the city. Rose and Mayor Terry Crow hope to discuss the problem with university officials soon. The Olive/I-170 redevelopment is progressing. The City Council

has approved forgivable EDRST loans. Home-based small businesses are eligible to apply. Details are at uci-tymo.org. The council also passed a TNR (trap, neuter and release) resolution to deal with the stray cat population.

Rose has recom-

mended to the council a Civic Plaza renovation program including \$2 million for water tightening and elevator repair at City Hall, \$15.7 million for the Annex and \$2.3 million for the Trinity building. (The Annex was built in 1904 by E.G. Lewis for his printing presses. It later housed the Police and Fire departments. Trinity was built in 1939 as the public library.) The total of the project is \$20 million. Trivers Consultants recommended \$29 million, but the city is only doing critical work now. This effectively addresses the needs of the Police Department and the Court in line with Ferguson Commission recommendations to separate police and court.

Having police headquarters in the Annex will put it close to the city's Human Resources and Public Works

departments and the City Manager's office. Klein and Cusick support Rose's recommendations. Noting that some wanted a new police building, Klein said that it is possible to house a state-of-the-art police department in the Annex. In 2016, residents voted to preserve and protect the Annex and the rest of Civic Plaza. Cusick added that Civic Plaza make U City unique among the cities of St. Louis County. Rose said that the city cannot both renovate Civic Plaza and invest in other services like street repair. A \$20 million bond issue is needed. If voters reject it, the police will remain in temporary quarters. Rose added that the city has purchased several drones which are used mostly by the police for observing demonstrations and other public safety purposes.

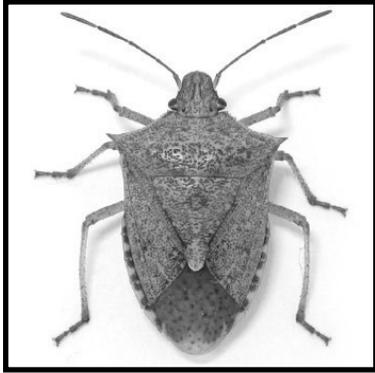
Insect Infiltrators

Stink bugs awaken

Have you noticed little gray-brown bugs crawling sluggishly around your apartment? If so, capture them (it isn't difficult) and take them outside. Swatting them is not recommended. They got their name because they omit an unpleasant odor when crushed, and PETA wouldn't want you to



Opus Group proposal for 6630 Delmar



Brown marmorated stink bug

kill them anyway.

Their official name is brown marmorated stink bugs. They are an invasive species from Asia that came to America in the 1990s. The ones you're seeing snuck into your apartment last fall and found cozy hiding places. Warmer temperatures and longer days have awakened them, and they are stumbling around in search of fruit and leaves. They can fly, and sound nasty when buzzing around, but they don't bite or sting.

The time to prevent infiltration is late summer. Seal cracks around windows, doors, and baseboards and replace damaged screens. For the present, all you can do is eject them as they reappear. Stink bugs have little to recommend them, but I've noticed that when I dump them outside and they land on their backs, they extend their long rear legs and perform a flip as graceful as an Olympic gymnast's.

Pigeons

Urban birds in decline

Here at the Nature Desk in the Pacer newsroom, we're wondering what's happened to the pigeons of Parkview Gardens. Rock pigeons, to give them their full name, have always

been a feature of this and other urban neighborhoods, perching on telephone wires in long lines, sheltering under the eaves of buildings, walking around our lawns and alleys. We've been looking around, but in the last few weeks we haven't seen a single one. Pigeons don't migrate, so they won't be returning like the swallows to San Capistrano.

A Google search reveals that other publications have covered the pigeon decline in their area. The Berkshire *Eagle* noted a dearth in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 2018. The state ornithologist confirmed population decline but hadn't heard of any diseases that could have caused it. A reader asked the Philadelphia *Inquirer* what had happened to the pigeons of downtown in 2019. The number of pigeons in the Midwinter Philadelphia Bird Census had dropped dramatically. Scientists speculated that raptors were preying on them: mainly peregrine falcons, Cooper's hawks, and red tail hawks. Hawks are seen regularly in Parkview Gardens. In 2020, a German animal rights group voiced concern that pigeons were starving because the pandemic had emptied the streets of people, and pigeons live on food people discard.

Many urban dwellers don't miss pigeons and their droppings. But it is unsettling to remember that what was once the most common bird in the world, the passenger pigeon, became extinct in 1914. A Cornell University study in 2014 estimated that since 1970, the total bird population of North America has dropped 29%. But most

of us thought the hardy rock pigeon would be the last to go.

Creative Kids Compete

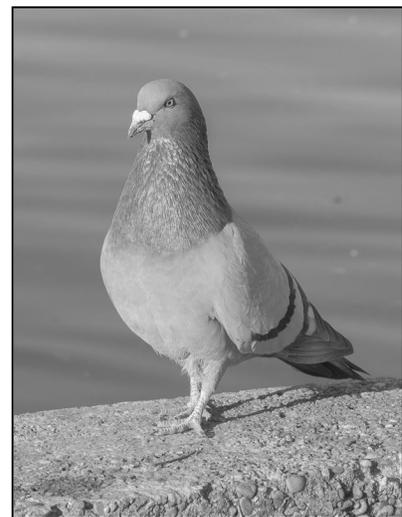
State bicentennial holds contests

2021 is the 200th anniversary of Missouri's admission to the union, and the state is offering opportunities to creative 9th through 12th grade students throughout Missouri. The University of Missouri – Columbia Information Technology, Digital Storytelling and Film Studies programs invite all high school students to take part in technical and creative competitions that celebrate Missouri's Past, Present and Future. Submission deadline is May 31, 2021. All students in grades 9-12 who live in Missouri are eligible. More information is at missouri2021.org

Spring Break

For some

Not everybody is going to Florida. There will be no spring break at Washington



Rock pigeon

University this year because of concerns about increased transmission of COVID-19 due to travel. Instead the university will offer instruction-free days during the semester to allow for rest and personal time. The University of Missouri-St. Louis holds its break March 28-April 5. It's March 20-29 at the School District of University City

City Hall News

Recent announcements

Bulk trash pick-up dates in our area are April 12-16. Furniture and appliances are accepted. Electronics are not. The website universitycityloop.com offers news on Delmar restaurants, stores and other businesses, a calendar of events, and gift cards. The city's 2020 annual report is available at ucitymo.org

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News of the Neighborhood:
*City Council discusses reopening
*2nd Ward discusses police station
*Apply for PGA Award
