

# The Pacer

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## Metcalfe Park Improvements

*What do you think?*

Metcalfe Park, our neighborhood's largest park, is underused. The Parkview Gardens Association is considering enhancements. One idea is to put in pickleball courts. Are you for or against? Or have a better idea? Email the editor: davidlinzee@yahoo.com.

## Opportunities for Teens

*Students and poets*

Applications for the 2023 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

The deadline is March 1 for the 2023 Beverly Hopkins Memorial Poetry Contest. Winners receive cash prizes and publication of their works in the St. Louis Poetry Cen-



*An ice sculptor at work at the Loop Ice Carnival, on Delmar Jan. 21.*

ter's annual chapbook. Open to St. Louis area high school students. No entry fee. Info: stlouispoe-etrycenter.org.

## What Caused Flood?

*Stormwater Task Force reports*  
Climate change is making storms more severe, but the main cause of University City's July flood disaster was "the human factor," Bob Criss of Washington University and the U City Stormwater Task Force told the

City Council at a Jan. 9 study session. Humans constructed undersized tunnels for the River des Peres to flow through. In addition, "we built where we shouldn't have,"

Criss said, in the flood plain. We also paved too much: almost half the area around the river is covered with impervious surfaces, causing more run-off.

U City isn't alone.

River constriction is a common condition in the U.S. The Mississippi is only half as wide as it was in Mark Twain's day. But the River des Peres is the most flash-flood-prone stream in Missouri.

Channelizing it underground may have put it mostly out of sight, but only made it more dangerous. On July 26, 2022, a series of rainstorms followed the same track all night, and the result was a flash flood that caused one fatality and damaged or destroyed 250 properties and hundreds of vehicles.

A new monitoring system was in place, so the flood was well documented. Going forward, Criss recommended



*Fine weather helped bring a big crowd to the Ice Carnival*

## Presidents' Day

### *Holiday closings*

Presidents' Day will be observed Monday, Feb. 20. The public schools, library and City Hall will be closed. Washington University and University of Missouri-St. Louis will be open. Refuse collection will be postponed to Tuesday.

mer) around the end of March. The Department of Parks Recreation and Forestry plans four or five events to celebrate its 100th anniversary to be held in the parks when the weather warms up. More information in the next Pacer.

The City Council announced a public hearing at 6:30 pm Feb. 13 in the council chamber on a revised ward map based on new demographic data. The hearing will probably be available at the time and later on YouTube.

## How Fares U City?

### *Top officials speak*

The Historical Society of University City presents State of the City. This will be an in-person event at the City Council chamber atop City Hall, beginning at 7 pm Wednesday March 16. It's free and open to the public. City Manager Gregory Rose and Mayor Terry Crow will report on municipal accomplishments and challenges. They will take questions. The event will probably be streamed on Facebook; check [ucitymo.org](http://ucitymo.org) for the latest information.

In other City Hall news, Washington U art students have submitted and the Arts and Letters and Park Commissions have approved 3 proposals of works of public art, which will go up in the city parks (for the sum-

improved record-keeping and communications between City Hall and Missouri Sewer District and the public, and strengthening codes for impervious surfaces. It would also be advisable to hire a surveyor to do elevations for the 760 properties at risk of flooding. The information is needed for many reasons, including to prioritize buyouts.

In related developments, Centennial Commons has been closed to the public since the July floods. No date has been set for re-opening the building. The city is hoping the Federal Emergency Management Agency will pay for up to 75% of the needed repairs. City staffers have submitted all the long and complex forms required by FEMA, but have not received a timeline for decision-making from the agency, which has a lot of other disasters to cope with. Heman Park Pool's electrical system was also damaged by the flood. The City hopes it will re-open for the summer, but that's not a sure thing.

## Spring Forward

### *DST is back*

Daylight Saving Time returns at 2 am Sunday March 12. Unless you're a night owl, set your clocks forward an hour before you go to bed. Your phone should be able to figure it out on its own, and you just have to prepare yourself for getting one hour less sleep.

## Gas Stoves

### *They're not that bad*

You've probably heard a lot about gas stoves in the media since they became yet another



*Pick a card, any card—an entertainer at the Ice Carnival*

topic for Republicans and Democrats to fight about. So here are the facts: "There is no plan to confiscate the 40 million gas stoves currently in use in America or to issue a federal ban," said *The Week*. Danger to human health and damage to the environment caused by gas stoves do exist, but can be mitigated. Gas stoves in use emit nitrogen oxides, including nitro- gen dioxide, which may trigger or worsen asthma. (These are also climate-warming gases.) Children and adults with chronic respiratory conditions are at more risk. In the long run, induction stoves will probably replace gas stoves, but that's going to take a lot of re-wiring. In the meantime, there are quick fixes. If you have an exhaust fan, turn it on when you're cooking at the stove. Buy an air purifier. Or open a window. Not the most popular idea in February, admittedly.

## Movie-Going

### *Changes on local scene*

When Joe Edwards sold the Tivoli theatre (and other parts of the Tivoli building) to One Family Church last year, there was some talk about resuming film screenings in the theatre, according to KSDK, but this has not come to pass. More recently, the James family sold the Hi-Pointe to Cinema St. Louis, which began showing films on a limited basis in its smaller auditorium, the Back Lot, in late January. These theatres generally showed movies for grown-ups rather than the action-packed, special-effects-loaded, super hero spectacles preferred by teenagers. In national media, the beginning of awards season caused many critics to note that while blockbuster sequels like *Avatar: The*

*Way of Water* had drawn crowds, highly-praised dramas like *The Fabelmans* and *Tàr* had been lackluster box office performers, and to wonder if grown-ups had lost the theatre-going habit during the pandemic, permanently transferring their loyalty to



*Ice sculpture gets a close inspection*

television. For now, the closest movie theatre to Parkview Gardens is the Esquire on Clayton Road, which generally shows blockbusters. To see a film for grownups, you have to go a little farther, to the Chase-Park Plaza Cinema and the Landmark Cinema at Plaza Frontenac.

## Political News

### *Stylish lawmakers*

Last month in Jefferson City, lawmakers began this year's legislative session with a prolonged debate about amending the dress code for women lawmakers, who comprise a third of the state legislature.

They are now required to wear a blazer or similar jacket. Some female lawmakers denounced the code as sexist. It's only fair to note that men have a similar dress code, and it is enforced. A year ago, Republican State Senator Mike Moon got in trouble and had to apologize for wearing bib overalls. The recent blazer debate drew national attention, and at least one member of the coastal elite was impressed by our legislature's conviction that appearances matter. A *New Yorker* wrote to the *New York Times*: "Missouri is often called the Show-Me state, and I guess it is living up to that reputation."

In Washington, a Missourian, Rep. Jason Smith, has been named chair of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee.

Late last year, University City Public Library, along with many other libraries across the state, issued a statement opposing a new rule proposed by Missouri Attorney General John Ashcroft, which would use state funds to pressure libraries to "institute measures to protect minors from non-age-appropriate materials." Ashcroft said, "We also want our children to be 'children' a little longer than a pervasive culture may often dictate." It is quaint to believe that locking up library books is going to make the culture less pervasive. On Jan. 10, the *New York Times* reported that 75% of young people have seen pornography on the internet by age 17.

Polls indicate that most Americans are not enthusiastic about a rematch of the 2020 election. So what sort of

candidate do voters want? The Suffolk Political Research Center concocted a want-ad for president: “Wanted – a 51-to-65-year-old governor with business experience and willing to compromise to get things done. Military experience a bonus.” A 55% majority volunteered the information that gender didn't matter to them. Bad news for Ron DeSantis, though. He's too young.

## Gardening Begins in March

### *New plot sign-up*

Thinking about eating more organically grown vegetables but can't face the high prices? Imagining how nice a bouquet of fresh flowers would look on your table? Promising yourself to keep a supply of fresh or dried culinary herbs on hand? Consider growing your own! The wait list for community garden plots will be open through the end of February. If you live in Parkview Gardens and want a bed, there's still time to call (314) 727-5836. In March garden leaders will meet to allocate beds, which are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants will then be notified whether they got a bed or not.

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### News of the Neighborhood:

- \*Stormwater Commission Reports on Flood
- \*Mayor and City Manager on State of City
- \*What Would YOU like to see in Metcalfe Park?