



FENCE TALK

University Heights Subdivision No. 1

universityheightsonline.com

Luminaria Issue

November, 2023

Progressive Party is Back!!

What could be more cheering near the longest night of the year than the twinkling lights of luminaria throughout the neighborhood? Our annual Progressive Party is held on Luminaria evening, Sunday, December 17. Residents stroll through our illuminated streets and enjoy wine and appetizers at two homes in small groups before all coming together for dessert. Since the City Hall rotunda is not available, we'll gather outdoors to enjoy our sweets and some hot cider at the corner of Radcliffe and Dartmouth/Yale. The Progressive Party is a wonderful way to meet neighbors and connect with old friends.

Here's the schedule for the evening of December 17:

- 5:30 – 6:30 PM: Visit the first home
- 6:45 – 7:45 PM: Visit the second home
- 8 – 9 PM: Dessert at the at the corner of Radcliffe and Dartmouth/Yale
(Outside the home of Susan and Jim DuBois)

We need HOSTS to open their homes the first two courses. The hosts provide some of the food and drink, but guests are also assigned to bring a contribution to one of the three stops. As always, the Association will provide some wine to the host houses. Guests are also welcome to bring a bottle of wine along with their contribution.

Please **sign up by December 10** if you plan to participate. Both hosts and guests should **reply directly** to this dedicated email address: uheightsparty@gmail.com, which will reach **Linda Ballard** who is keeping track of the reservations. She will acknowledge your email within a couple of days – if you don't hear from her, please resend your email, or call or text her (314-265-2897) to be sure she has received your information. **PLEASE DO NOT REPLY ON NEXTDOOR OR TO THIS EMAIL** where it can get lost, but directly to uheightsparty@gmail.com.

If you don't use email, Linda can be reached by phone or text: 314-265-2897.

From **HOSTS**, we need the following information:

- Your name, email address, street address and telephone number
- The number of guests you can accommodate, and whether or not children are welcome
- Since hosts will also be guests for one of the courses and dessert, how many will be attending

From **GUESTS** we need the following information:

- Your name, how many people are attending, and how many are children (and their ages)
- Your email address and telephone number

Couples, and their children, will be assigned together, but everyone else is assigned randomly. If you want to attend with a neighborhood friend, that's fine, but we aren't able to keep a large group of friends together or include people from outside the neighborhood unless they are your visitors from out-of-town. By Friday, December 15, you will receive an email with the addresses of the two homes you will visit. You will be assigned to bring an appetizer course to one of the homes or a dessert to our outdoor gathering.

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Please let Linda Ballard know if you haven't heard received an email by Saturday morning, December 16. If you sign up and for some reason aren't able to attend, please inform your hosts and Linda Ballard immediately.

We hope to hear from everyone as soon as possible. If you are unable to tell us by December 10 that you want to participate, you may still attend the dessert course, however, you will be expected to bring a dessert to share. We love homemade desserts!

Luminaria Night December 17th

Once again, we will celebrate the Winter Solstice in University Heights by illuminating our streets with paper bag candles transforming our streets into twinkling pathways.

Beginning at dusk, and prior to the 5:30 start of the Progressive Party, neighbors decorate their street line, sidewalks, or walkways with Luminaria that the Neighborhood Association provides.

Here's how it works:

Pick up your Luminaria kits (white bags, candles, and sand to weigh down) from **The Shed** at the northeast corner of Dartmouth and Harvard on:

Saturday 12/16 from 10:00 – 4:00, or

Sunday 12/17 from 10:00 -2:00.

The first 10 kits are free if you have paid your association dues (we would be happy to collect that day) and additional kits are available for purchase at \$1.00 each, in increments of 5 or 10. Please do come early as supplies are limited. Your hardy band of UHA board members will be there to meet your Luminaria supplies needs.

Luminaria is celebrated around the world in a number of different cultural traditions, but originated in The Philippines after colonization by the Spanish and was brought to the Americas via the Manila Galleons (an annual trade route between Manila (transporting goods from Asia to Acapulco, Mexico and back to Asia through the Phillipines). One tradition that came along with such trade was the farol or farolitos or luminarias - as these little lanterns came to be known; they even reached as far north in the Americas as what would become northern New Mexico in the US. University Heights has celebrated the Luminaria tradition for several decades.



Fall Picnic Wrap-up

By Peter Burgis (Radcliffe)

On a beautiful fall September afternoon, over 100 University Heights neighbors gathered at Lewis Park for the annual fall picnic. Friends chatted, kids played and ate ice cream, and the Cosmic Cowboys played a couple enjoyable sets.

Forty five households renewed their annual association memberships, raising a total of \$950 which help fund the association's activities, which include the picnic, the Luminaria, the Progressive Dinner, the lamppost plantings, and more.



Are Speed Bumps In Our Future? *Is 10 Seconds Worth a Life?*

By Myra Vandersall, Trustee (Yale)

Our streets are narrow. Our vehicles are huge. This leads to a probable catastrophe when speeding vehicles meet humans. The speeding issue in University Heights continues. The speeders, especially on Yale and Trinity, are residents, not visitors. What does it take to get them to slow down? Speed bumps, radar guns, radar-controlled “your speed” signs, blow up dolls in the middle of the street, requesting increased police patrols?

For assistance, University City Police Department Sgt. Larry Becton, Bureau of Field Operations, says the police department can place speed trailers Trinity and Yale. Data collected will be analyzed to determine the amount of speeding. Also, street patrols can increase in U. Heights for a while.

Sgt. Becton also addressed the concerns about emergency vehicles and speed bumps. He says they are not a hindrance for fire, ambulance and public works vehicles. Our streets are so narrow emergency personnel drive very slowly in this neighborhood. He also noted that Ames Place has speed bumps and there has not been a problem.

New families with young children have moved to U. Heights and those children are very active, running on the sidewalks, playing with scooters, unaware of cars and trucks. Drivers fail to realize the repercussions of what may happen should a child stumble or run into the street in front of their speeding vehicle. Another hazard is parents who walk with the babies in strollers in the middle of the street, absorbed in their phones and oblivious to traffic behind them. We have sidewalks for that activity.

Anonymity

A motor vehicle insulates the driver from the world. Shielded from the outside environment, a driver can develop a sense of detachment, as if an observer of their surroundings, rather than a participant. This can lead to some people feeling less constrained in their behavior. By the time a speeding resident reaches the end of Yale, the street is barely passable with large vehicles parked on both sides.

Stop

This is not a suggestion. It means stop. Yale and Trinity residents see drivers constantly disregarding the stop signs. When drivers actually stop, this reduces the momentum of continuing down the streets at a faster rate of speed.

What's Next?

How do we as a community protect our residents from harm because of resident speeding? The majority of responses so far have been speed bumps. What are other solutions to curb resident speeding? Is arriving 10 seconds early worth a life?



U Heights Flood Task Force, Notes for Fall 2023

By Don Fitz (Dartmouth)

The Flood Task Force (FTF) has been busy since its creation by the University Heights Association board on January 10, 2023. It had a landmark meeting at University City High School on the one year anniversary of the July 26, 2022 flood that devastated homes on Dartmouth and adjoining streets. Speakers at that meeting included scientist **Dr. Robert Criss, the University City Director of Public Works, and representatives of the University City Council, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD), Missouri State Senate and US House of Representatives.**

The most startling statement at that forum came from MSD Director **Brian Hoelscher** who asserted that debris in the River des Peres (RdP) channel did not contribute to the flooding in University Heights. That comment sparked an email exchange that began with the FTF's asking the MSD Director for evidence that would support his claim. We also asked that MSD provide a plan for clearing and monitoring the RdP. After multiple requests, Hoelscher finally promised that MSD would clear the RdP channel/tunnel a single time in late 2023, but he provided no schedule for ongoing maintenance. He also claimed that we gave a "false impression" of how debris can clog the RdP tunnel.

During this time the FTF continued its work with the **Washington University Environmental Law Clinic (WUELC)** regarding a Pervious Surface bill that would require offsetting the effects of added impervious surfaces to a home or business. We gave a presentation regarding the bill to the University City Stormwater Commission on October 3. On October 17 we worked with the Commission's subcommittee on needed changes to the bill so that it can become law. Please contact us if you would like to join us at the next Stormwater Commission meeting on Tuesday November 7 (3:30 pm) at the Community Center, 975 Pennsylvania 63130.

At an August 27 Site Tour of University City locations where the RdP needs attention, **Susan Armstrong** (who lives in Ward 1) had a great thought: We should ask University City to reduce the total amount of impervious surface a little bit each year. Unfortunately, by the time we got around to realizing we needed to contact the Plan Commission with the idea, the deadline for it to receive suggestions was passed. However, we hope to appear before the Plan Commission to support the Pervious Surface bill. Please contact us if you would like to help with that.

We have also coordinated Flood Discussion Group events on the fourth Wednesdays of each month. On August 23 the Group heard about the origin of MSD by **Dan Sherburne**, former Research Director for the **Missouri Coalition for the Environment**. Then we delved into the brush-off we got from the MSD Director and the need for a sign-on letter stating our views.



On September 27 the Flood Discussion Group heard from **Rebecca Hankins** who is the Partnership Manager of **Forest ReLeaf of Missouri**. She spoke on "*What Do Trees Have To Do with the Climate Crisis, Flooding, and Heat Islands?*" She also covered the environmental racism of communities of color having less tree cover. I explained the psychological effects that trees have a calming effect on hyperactive children and a healing effect for hospital patients who view trees from their windows.

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Katherine Rose, who is the Communications and Engagement Coordinator for **DePave Portland**, spoke to the Flood Discussion Group on October 25. She covered “*What Does Excess Paving Have to Do with the Climate Crisis, Flooding, and Heat Islands?*” She also addressed environmental racism and described how pervious surfaces can absorb more flood water. Katherine described projects of DePave Portland and hinted at the need to have a DePave St. Louis or perhaps a DePave University City.



If you can attend the November 7 meeting of the Stormwater Commission, can help work with the Plan Commission or would like to receive invitations to the Flood Discussion Group events, please send an email to Don Fitz at fitzdon@aol.com

Tunnel Clean-up News

By Anil Pillai, Trustee (Dartmouth)

Darin Girdler, Director of Public Works of U City, informed us that MSD’s contractor would start cleaning the tunnel starting Monday, Nov 6th, and the entire process might take a couple months and will extend to Skinker on the east for now. They will start by building an access drive from the end of Harvard Ave to the tunnel entrance for their heavy equipment to roll over the land. It should not impact the access to the Shed. As we get more info, we will be sure to pass it on.

Here’s a link to Bryce Gray’s article on the clean up in the Post-Dispatch:

https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/crews-to-clear-debris-piled-in-river-des-peres-tunnel-after-months-of-concern/article_a31be016-7841-11ee-a203-2fb5df81ee7d.html

St. Louis Sports Trivia! How Many Can You Get Right?

By Peter Burgis (Radcliffe)

1. In which year did the Cardinals win their very first World Series title?
2. This Summer High School grad was the first black tennis player on the U.S. Davis Cup team and won three Grand Slam titles
3. Wayne Gretzky dubbed this native of Alberta, Canada the greatest goaltender in the history of the game. In his first season in St. Louis, this player played 79 games, 76 of them consecutively—both Blues records.
4. Which City SC player scored the winning goal in the 86th minute of the team’s first ever MLS game?
5. What Cardinals first baseman won the World Series with the team in 1982, earned 11 Gold Glove awards in a row and is also known for his two cameo appearances on Seinfeld
6. This East St. Louis, Ill., native won three gold, one silver, and two bronze Olympic medals, and was named by Sports Illustrated For Women as the Greatest Female Athlete of the 20th Century.
7. Since 1960, 3 professional American football teams have played in St. Louis. Name them.
8. Who is the Florissant-born midfielder who played for SLU in college, played 67 times for the US, and had a 166-game career in MLS including one season with the hilariously named Kansas City Wiz?
9. t CityPark stadium, fans in the supporters section taunt opposing players with a song about City SC goal-keeper Roman Burki getting “in their head” after he makes an amazing save. It is sung to the tune of what song from what band?
10. This Blues defender had his #2 jersey retired in 2006 after scoring 452 points over 613 games with the team. Name him.

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Halloween in the Heights

By Claudia Moran (Amherst)

Halloween was *grrreat!* (That's the sound of teeth chattering!) Oh well, the brisk weather felt a little more Halloween-y than last year. The Great Pumpkin had scores of decorated houses to choose from. Among the notable ones were the impressive driveway skeletons on Princeton, the creepy stop sign skeletons, and the friendly skeleton family welcoming kids to their stoop. We still had lots of trick-or-treaters in spite of the cold. Many of the costumes were hidden under coats and jackets. We did notice an Elsa or two and a ton of Harry Potter and Pokemon characters.



Our favorite jokes this year:

What is the tallest building in the world?

The library - because it has thousands of stories!

How does a zombie eat a handful of popcorn?

He eats the popcorn first, and he saves all his fingers for last.



Welcome To Our Newest Neighbors

We've had a few changes in our neighborhood over the past few months, including the addition of several new neighbors. Big neighborhood welcome to our newbies!!

Bridget Sievert, 6971 Dartmouth

Daryl (Liz) Kinz and Anna Kinz, 6936 Cornell

Kathleen Allen, 6978 Cornell (*Actually, Kate just moved from 722 Yale.*)

Micah Buck-Yael, 734 Yale

New neighbor, Anna Kinz, is the owner of **Poots Provisions**, a small-batch home bakery. Her amazing baked goods are available at our Farmers Market and at *pootsprovisions.com*. If you are a new neighbor and would like to share an interesting fact about yourself with the neighborhood, please let us know. AND, if you see new neighbors moving in, or simply moving trucks in the neighborhood, please let **Don Fitz** (Dartmouth), 314.727.8554 *fitzdon@aol.com* or **Claudia Moran** (Amherst), 314.974.6383 *c.gracemoran@gmail.com* know as they are the coordinators of our Welcome Packets, so that they can get one to our new neighbors to help them get settled into their new home and new neighborhood. And you could always bring them a lasagna. Thank you!



Ellie Horn getting to know the new neighbors.

ANSWERS: St Louis Sports Trivia

Q1: 1926

Q2: Arthur Ashe.

Q3: Grant Fuhr

Q4: Joao Klauss

Q5: Keith Hernandez

Q6: Jackie Joyner-Kersey

Q7: The Cardinals, Rams, and BattleHawks

Q8: Mike Sorber

Q9: "Zombie", by the Cranberries

Q10: Al MacInnis

How did you do?

0-2 Beer leaguer

3-5 Minor leaguer

6-8 In the majors!

9-10 World champion

Your 2023-2024 Neighborhood Association Dues

Dear Neighbor:

The University Heights #1 Association is a voluntary organization dedicated to enhancing the sense of community among our residents. Our mission is to bring us together with regular communication, fun activities, neighborhood beautification, and to facilitate interaction between busy families. These activities are led by a group of elected neighbors that form its all-volunteer Board.

- We publish FenceTalk quarterly, chock-full of information and general interest to the neighborhood. Look for it in your email inbox.
- We distribute and maintain the neighborhood directory for all who wish to share their contact information – please see attached document in this email if you are new to the neighborhood and wish to be included in the email list (used only sparingly to publicize events) and the street directory.
- We are proud of our beautiful tree-lined streets and maintain the hanging floral baskets and entrance marker garden at the corner of Yale and Delmar.
- The Fall picnic and concert in Lewis Park is a fun family event, with live music, tables to linger at, and free beer and ice cream for all.
- During the winter solstice, we distribute luminaria kits to all, and will reprise the progressive dinner this December - a perennial favorite event in the neighborhood that will be back in 2023..
- Each spring we host an annual meeting for the neighborhood at large – a great time to meet your new neighbors, get up to date on what’s going on around us, and hear a report from our trustees.
- Check out our website: www.universityheightsonline.com

All this activity comes with a nominal annual membership fee of **\$20.00 per household**. We hope that you will use this opportunity to join! Thanks for supporting our great community in the 2023-2024 fiscal year!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email, if different from or in addition to the neighborhood directory: _____

Annual Membership for March 2023 to Feb. 2024	\$20.00
Optional Contribution to help support neighborhood activities	\$ _____
Optional Contribution for the University Heights Scholarship**	\$ _____
Total Submitted	\$ _____

Please make your check payable to University Heights Association, Inc.

Mail or drop off to: **Peter Burgis**, Treasurer, 755 Radcliffe Avenue (peterburgis@outlook.com)

If you prefer to make your payment online, please be sure to include your name and address as part of the Venmo or PayPal process.

Venmo: @University-Heights or PayPal: uhgtsassoc@gmail.com

**At our annual meeting on March 9, 2021, we passed, and the Neighborhood Association approved a resolution entitled: Apology for Racism in University Heights, documenting our apology for historic racism in our neighborhood, especially regarding housing restrictions. We began to explore ways to repair the damage caused by previous generations. The University Heights Neighborhood Association Scholarship is a direct outcome of that document. It is a \$1000.00 scholarship awarded to a University City High School graduating senior who is continuing their education past high school.

You can find the complete **Guide to Life in University Heights Subdivision No. 1**
in the *News From Our Trustees* section here:
<https://universityheightsonline.com/fencetalk>

Many thanks to our Current Trustees:
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University Heights Association (UHA) Board of Directors (the neighborhood association representing our community)

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