



Opening Night Party & Sale

PREVIEW PARTY**

Friday, April 25, 5 – 7 PM

SALE

Sat., April 26, 9 AM – 1 PM

Sun., April 27, 11 AM – 1 PM



Heman Park Community Center – 975 Pennsylvania, University City



New to Our 2025 Plant Sale: A Brittany Brand Micro Pop-Up Shop!

Anne Cummings, BWMS Sustainability Director, UCB Volunteer

UCB has partnered with the Brittany Woods student gardeners since they built their first beds in spring, 2019. Anne Cummings, one of their advisors, believes that “Our quick leap from part-time gardening to a full set of elective classes was possible, in large part, because of the community support we’ve received from U City in Bloom.”



Today, the BWMS Sustainability Program serves 150+ students a semester!

We’ve invited the students to set up a “micro” version of one of their “Brittany Brand” pop-up shops at this year’s plant sale. The students create value-added products from what they grow and produce, and the money is used to support the program. Offerings will include their Best Ever Potting Mix, jams made from fruit they’ve grown, and propagated succulents.

In addition to the plant sale, the students cordially invite you to join them at the following spring events:

“Farming While Black” Documentary-FREE

April 15, 2025 @ U City High School Auditorium
5:30 PM Doors open for a light supper
6:00 PM Documentary film, followed by a discussion with the director. View the Trailer: <https://www.farmingwhileblackfilm.com>

Growing Together Veggie Plant Giveaway and full-scale Brittany Brand Pop-Up Shop!

Tuesday, April 29, 2025 @ Brittany Woods Middle School
5:30 – 7:30 PM

**The Opening Night Party is a special fundraiser for U City in Bloom.
Reserve your place in advance at ucityinbloom.org or purchase your \$25 ticket at the door.

Save the Dates, Upcoming Events



Plant Sale



Memorial Day Run

Very Special Garden Tour, Plein Air Art Festival



U CITY IN BLOOM BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Director.....Judy Prange	Board Historian..... Jane Schaefer
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Memorials

DONOR
LaVerne Ford-Williams
Carol Stubblefield
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Helen and Dennis Fuller
Berit Nelson & Blake Hoel
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Barbara Deiulius
Valarie Miller
LaVerne Ford-Williams
Michael Gross
Susan Rehkopf
Nova Felton
Joseph Rezny
Grover C. Johnson
Gladys Creer
Tony Taylor
Michael Gross
Mary Pearson
Bart and Ellen Brnjac
June King

IN MEMORY OF
Ronnie Lamont Gray
Dalene Tiers’ Father
Thomas Schaefer
Isabel Kimmich Hanlon
Ely Shrauner
Kayr Bock
Sondra Ellis
Bev Frazier
Steven Schmalz
Carolyn Frick
Paulette Carr
Karen Nelson
Darlene Holiday
Shirley Warmbold
Dolores Miller
Bob McCabe
Judith Gross
Mabel Lewis
Kimalon Felton
Barbara Rezny
Geraldine Johnson
Raymond Greer
Beverly Frazier
Judith Stewart Gross
Dr. Robert Wilmott
Daniel White
Sgt. Michael R. King

Bonita Yoder
Andrew Goodman
Sandra Vuitel
Linda Cohn
Terri & Thomas Barry
Jack Breier & John Douglas
Jack Breier & John Douglas
Jack Breier & John Douglas
Mary Granneman
Margaret Woodworth

Surett Thomas
Byrmar & Harriet Goodman
Pat Edenburn
Dalene Tiers’ Father
Thomas Barry
Daniel White
Janet Schoedinger
Paulette Carr
Daniel White
Edward Eisworth

Honorariums

DONOR
Hiram & Cheryl Martin
Catherine Smith
Sandra Johnson
Kathleen Standley
Dick & Mary Ann Shaw
April Davis
Bonnie Brabec
John & Karen Sterbenz
Marian Flowers
George & Barbara Johnson
Mark & Margaret Holly
Mark Winer & David Newman
Vivia McCutcheon & Dennis Droege
Dorothy Kinscherf

IN HONOR OF
Dianan Person DiMartino, birthday
UCB volunteers
Katie Sprung, Trustee
William Thomas
Jesse Gilbertson
Duffy and Jameson
Neighbors on 7300 Stanford
Judy Prange
Delmar Heights Subdivision
Diane Davenport
Tim & Libby O’Connor
Carol & Dan Wofsey
U City pocket Gardens
David & Judy Clifford Anniversary



U CITY IN BLOOM
PO Box 50283
St. Louis MO 63105-5283

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63090



OUR MISSION is to enhance University City through artfully designed public gardens, community involvement, partnerships, and environmental education.

Celebrating Forty Years of U City in Bloom

40 YEARS
...AND GROWING

What holds more promise and hope for the future than digging in some spring bulbs as winter approaches, or planting a young sapling to shade the next generation, or beginning a new garden?

Forty years ago, Mary Ann Shaw, Jane Schaefer, and Susan Hopper decided to plant some Daffodils along a city street to brighten up the neighborhood. This year we celebrate what has happened since that fall day in 1985 when three friends took the first steps towards what became U City in Bloom.

Like the back of our t-shirt says, “People who think they can run the earth should start with a small garden.”

SPRING GIFTING IDEAS

Have you received your IRA requirement minimum distribution requirement (RMD) for this year? Kindly consider directing your IRA custodian to make a distribution directly to U City in Bloom. We would be so appreciative and it may help to reduce your taxable income. *

Name U City in Bloom as a beneficiary under your IRA. It is simple to do, your IRA custodian can provide you with a designated beneficiary form to be completed. Thank you in advance.

*UCB does not provide tax nor legal advice.
UCB tax id: 43-1540073
Address: PO Box 50283
St. Louis, MO 63105-5283

UCB is a 501(c)(3) organization



Give STL Day is May 8, 2025.
Please consider donating to help U City in Bloom fund the purchase of interactive, educational signage for Ruth Park Woods.

Party With the Plants



Raise a toast to our anniversary while browsing the blooms! Our Spring Plant Sale at Heman Park Community Center (975 Pennsylvania) begins with the **Opening Night Preview Party on Friday, April 25, from 5 – 7 PM.** The evening event offers guests first choice of hardy perennials, bright annual flowers, native plants, trees, shrubs, herbs, and vegetables, along with wine, cheese, and appetizers. **Reserve your place in advance at ucityinbloom.org or purchase your \$25 ticket at the door.**

(continued) ►

Party With the Plants

The sale is free and open to the public on Saturday, April 26, from 9 AM – 1 PM, and Sunday, April 27, from 11 AM – 1 PM.

Knowledgeable gardeners will be on hand to advise you as to which plants best fit your particular landscape, be it sunny, shady, wet, or dry. There are scores of varieties of plants to choose from. Give into temptation – try something new, succumb to that unusual plant you don't have in your garden yet. UCB particularly encourages gardeners to be good stewards of our environment and add native plants to their landscape to support our resident wildlife and insects.

Brittany Woods Middle School students in Sustainability Director Anne Cummings' classes will again be at the Plant Sitting area ready to hold your chosen plants for you while you shop for more and then cheerfully carry them to your car after purchase (tips welcome). They will also be selling a variety of natural products they have made from the



plants and vegetables they have grown in the school gardens. Support our future planet warriors!

In the weeks prior to the sale, volunteers divide and pot up perennials from UCB gardens and contributions from local gardeners. *If you have plants to donate, or wish to volunteer to pot plants, contact Linda Fried at lindafriedster@gmail.com. Volunteers are also needed to work during the weekend of the event. Register with Judy Prange if you want to help out: judyprange@outlook.com.* Proceeds from the Sale are used to plan, plant, and maintain the scores of U City in Bloom's community gardens and large planters throughout our community.



Test yourself in a competitive race or enjoy a leisurely jog over the rolling hills of University City in the **51st Annual Memorial Day Run on Monday, May 26**. There's an event and a distance for everyone in one of the area's oldest and most popular races. The 10K begins at 7:30 AM in front of University City Library (6701 Delmar), with the 5K at 7:50, and the 1-mile Fun Run at 9:15. Post-race, enjoy finish line treats including Urban Chestnut Beer for runners over 21. The Memorial Day Run benefits U City in Bloom and our partners, the Green Center and the University City Public Library. **For complete information, and to enter the Run, visit ucitymemorialdayrun.org.**



Curb Appeal: More Than Just Pretty Flowers *(Why your grandma was right about natives)*

Aubrey Puyear, Staff Horticulturist

Forget about perfectly manicured lawns – real curb appeal is creating a unique outdoor space that reflects your personality. It's about weaving together a story with plants, creating a living art piece that enhances your home and the environment.

Why Curb Appeal Matters *(beyond keeping up with the Joneses)*: it's a mental health haven. Studies show that green spaces reduce stress and boost mood. Who needs a therapist when you have a killer garden?

Grandma's Wisdom, the Native Plant Revolution: Remember how she always swore by those "old-fashioned" plants? Turns out, she was onto something. Native plants are the real MVPs of curb appeal.

Eco-Warrior Points: Attract pollinators, improve air quality, and contribute to a healthier ecosystem. These plants are like a five-star hotel for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.



Low-Maintenance Legends and Drought Slayers: Native plants are adapted to our climate, meaning less watering, fertilizing, and general fussing. And there's more time for enjoying your yard instead of working in it!

Level Up Your Curb Appeal, think beyond the typical: Ditch the boring. Experiment with unique plant combinations, textures, and colors. And keep in mind how big everything will get before



you plant. An artsy sculpture, painted garden bench, or even a re-purposed raised bed can add personality. Create a focal point – a spring blooming tree, a vibrant flower bed, or a water feature.

Curb appeal is about creating a space that reflects your individuality and contributes to a thriving ecosystem. Embrace the power of plants, especially our amazing native species. Your wallet, your mental health, and the environment will thank you!

Gardening for Well Being

Jesse Gilbertson, Director of Horticulture

If you've seen me speak or read any of my articles you have heard all about the many benefits of public green spaces. We are lucky to present so many beautiful and accessible gardens in U City and we have seen firsthand how they improve neighborhoods, business centers and our many communities. Property values go up as does development and people gain pride and even become involved in these spaces and when it is seen that they are cared for there is less crime and less litter. There is a softening of hardscapes helping with noise reduction and heat moderation. Environmental and species diversity benefit our local ecology. But we also know to be true, the benefits to personal well-being. Studies have shown that people who have access to and live near parks have greater longevity. Green spaces encourage physical activity and recreation. Psychological benefits such as stress reduction and contemplation and reflection are abundant in these spaces. The sense of a connection to nature has immeasurable benefits. We often forget or dismiss that we are a part of nature too. Some don't even acknowledge that nature exists except as a nuisance. Yet it is right there for all of us to tap into.



But what happens when we actually interact with these spaces and get our hands dirty? Any gardener will tell you that gardening is good for you. Well, it is! It is great for you in a multitude of ways both physically and mentally. Gardening helps maintain strength, mobility and balance and demands dynamic movement as well as simple repetitive movement. You are bending, squatting, twisting, turning, grasping, lifting, and so much more. A typical hour spent gardening burns around 250 to 350 calories. Even on cloudy days there is increased exposure to vitamin D which greatly improves mood.

The mental benefits of gardening are limitless. You are engaged creatively, more focused and there are opportunities for



problem-solving and learning. Being outdoors and in nature has immediate calming effects, making you feel more relaxed, lowering your blood pressure and muscle tension. In her book, The Well-Gardened Mind, Sue Stuart-Smith says, "it also works on us slowly and subconsciously in a way that can be particularly helpful for people suffering from trauma, illness and loss." The boost to the senses helps with symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety and can aid in recovery from illness and injury. I suffered from Seasonal Affective Disorder for years and it went away when I started regularly working outdoors. There are ongoing studies on how gardening can delay dementia and reduce stress and anxiety in those suffering from it.

This year I am dedicating my time at UCB to discover and promote all the ways that our gardens can help with well-being. As a whole our gardens serve the community, but I'd like to explore more about how they affect individuals. Benefits are evident immediately in our volunteers. Many have found deep

friendships and connections with each other and fulfillment in their contributions and purpose. The focus they give to a task at hand is reflective of pure mindfulness. School gardens can lay the foundations for a healthy life and I'm curious about the many students who have benefited

from our efforts at our schools. Senses are engaged and brought immediately to present, each one providing a unique and individual benefit. Green is the first color the human eye sees and in psychological studies is shown to make us more relaxed and positive. What else do our senses bring us? I am excited to dive deeper into the science of our well-being in the garden.

So, if you know a gardener, take notice of the sparkle in their eye and spring in their step. They are engaged mentally and physically with their space, and they carry that with them into the world. If you would like to garden with us and be a guinea pig in our quest to understand the benefits of gardening, please volunteer with us.



Go to www.ucityinbloom.org/volunteers/

Marcescence – a Botanical Mystery

Christopher Gibbons, Staff Horticulturalist



Have you ever wondered those eerie outside rattling noises? Or why you are still seeing dead and dried leaves hanging on to oak, beech, hornbeam, and witch hazel trees long after other trees have shed their leaves in the fall? It is a phenomenon I had been asking myself about since diving into plants a couple of years ago.

Learning more of nature's secrets is the key to my joy. I like oak trees for several reasons including their sheer size and characteristic leaves. As winter went on, I couldn't help but wonder why some of those leaves still hold on until spring. My curiosity lead me to dig for the answer to this interesting tree phenomenon.

What is this unique trait called? The answer is "marcescence," from the Latin "to wither," the act of leaves shriveling and drying up from lack of moisture.

There are different theories as to why trees might hold on to their leaves through winter. One is that the dry leaves shield and protect the spring buds from being eaten by hungry wildlife. The leaves also can provide protection from intense winter weather. It's pretty cool that trees have developed these defense mechanisms! In the spring, the leaves from these trees will fall providing a second round of mulch for the forest floor.



NatureScapers

U CITY IN BLOOM

News From the Woods
Barbara Brain and Kathy Freese



The weather has not been kind to our restoration efforts in Ruth Park Woods this winter. Extra cold temperatures and snow have kept us out of the woods for most of 2025 so far. We knew at the outset

though, that this would be a very long-term project and at least the invasives have been sleeping during our absence.

For obvious reasons, NatureScapers tend to focus on areas of dense invasive infestation but it's heartening for us to step back occasionally and assess the progress we have made during the past four years. Many acres that were once dense with unwanted invasive species are now clear and there are encouraging signs of regeneration. Areas that we have worked on are unrecognizable since the bush honeysuckle is gone, the wintercreeper has been beaten back and new native trees, shrubs and perennials are settling in.

Many of the plants installed last year were purchased with the St. Louis Audubon Society's Cathleen Creley Grant funds awarded to U City in Bloom specifically for the woods project. Jesse purchased seeds from Prairie Moon Nursery that we mixed with compost and hand broadcast into several areas of the woods. In autumn last year, we planted grasses and flowering plants obtained from Missouri Wildflowers Nursery (a wonderful place to shop for Missouri native plants) in two areas of the woods, at the entrance to the pavilion and at the west intersection of the

loop trails. Both areas are very visible to anyone walking the trails so keep a lookout for new blooms this spring. Jesse was also able to buy trees and shrubs from Hartke Nursery that we planted late last year in an area along a newly created trail close to the river. Now that it's no longer densely covered by bush honeysuckle, this area has become one of our favorite places to work and the trees and shrubs planted here will add to the diversity of plants that will benefit birds and other wildlife.

While walking in the woods this morning, I disturbed a Great Blue Heron, a majestic bird that I had never seen in the woods before.



And, in October last year, a couple of birders identified a Spotted Towhee in the woods. That was a rare sighting, and I like to think of it as an indication that our restoration efforts are paying off.

We have also made use of a zero-cost method of creating additional habitat in this part of the woods

by forming woody debris into large brush piles and a couple of long, meandering dead hedges. These add interesting sculptural elements to the space, make good use of huge amounts of woody debris and, more importantly, benefit wildlife.

With the weather is improving, I hope you make a point of taking a walk in the woods. You may be lucky enough to see a Great Blue Heron or Spotted Towhee.



To volunteer, please visit www.ucityinbloom.org to sign up on our volunteer page



U City in Bloom's 40th Anniversary, Garden Tour and Plein Air Festival, Sunday, September 28, 2025, 1 – 5 PM, Reception and Plein Air Art display and sale following, 5 – 7 PM at the Community Center, 975 Pennsylvania.

Gardens and History of U Heights #3, West Portland, the Theodore Link Historic District, and Phoenix Heights. Wander through these historic neighborhoods, visit beautiful gardens, and learn the fascinating history of this area. Also learn how U City in Bloom grew from 600 daffodils along Pershing Avenue at Jackson into the thriving community organization it is forty years later.



Clip & return for tickets to Plant Sale Opening Night Party, Friday April 25, 5 – 7 PM, Heman Park Community Ctr.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Number of Tickets _____ @ \$25 each Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

I am unable to attend but would like to donate \$ _____

Make checks payable to: U City in Bloom, Mail to PO Box 50283, St. Louis, MO 63105-5283

Reservations online: ucityinbloom.org, or call: 314.725.8243