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ENJOYING VARIETY AND A VIEW ON UNION HILL *SHARON THOMPSON*



Credit: FROM SHARON THOMPSON ATB Union Hill-Thompson

It has been said that variety is the source of joy, the soul of pleasure and the very spice of life. That may well be the reason that so many residents of Union Hill find living here ideal.

Variety and contrast abound on the Hill. Situated in the middle of the city, tucked away between 29th and 31st streets, and Main Street and Gillham Road, our neighborhood still offers abundant green space. Although we are within several blocks of Crown Center and Martini Corner, as well as a short drive or ride on the MAX from the Country Club Plaza and the Power & Light District, we are also in touch with nature.

We enjoy beautiful plantings in our common areas, including the recent addition of a rain garden. Nearby Penn Valley Park and the rolling hills of Union Cemetery are perfect for walks, and several neighbors have created a pocket park where we can gather to

socialize or simply relax among the trees and flowers.

Union Hill is a surprise to many, including those who find it only by coming to our annual garden tour in early June. Because it is not a drive-through neighborhood, we enjoy a relatively quiet spot amid the city's activity. Of course, we do hear the occasional siren on Main, festivals at Crown Center and Rockfest in Penn Valley Park — all of which remind us that we are part of a vibrant community.

In addition to Union Hill's varied environs, we residents appreciate the eclectic yet cohesive architecture of the neighborhood. With housing ranging from Queen Anne Victorians to new town homes and apartments, the neighborhood has an ambience of uniqueness and sophistication that avoids the beige sameness of many suburban areas.

Our urban setting is not without the benefit of camaraderie, however. Young professionals, couples, singles, children and older residents — some retired — blend to create an interesting mix. Dogs, walked daily by their owners, eagerly greet one another as well. Many of us share close friendships, and most of us have more than one neighbor who can be called upon to water the plants, pick up the newspapers and feed the cats when we are out of town.

For 17 years I've made Union Hill my home. My contentment is caused in great part by the time I spend on my deck visiting with nearby neighbors and enjoying the dynamic and ever-changing view. The downtown skyline, the family of foxes in the cemetery, the Blue

Angels and the Thunderbirds overhead on air show weekends, fireworks at Liberty Memorial or Union Station, and incredible sunsets and cloud formations all provide endless entertainment from my home on the Hill.