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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **ST. LOUIS FAMILY TRADITION CONTINUES SEPT. 20-21 WITH 52ND ANNUAL GREAT FOREST PARK BALLOON RACE**

St. Louis, MO - The Great Forest Park Balloon Race, presented by PNC Bank, will return to Forest Park's Emerson Central Fields, Sept. 20-21, 2024. This free two-day event, which includes the GLOW on Sept. 20 and the RACE on Sept. 21, will bring families and friends together for a time of outdoor fun, "wow" moments and lasting memories.

The Great Forest Park Balloon Race is one of the longest-running hot air balloon races in the United States and one of the only races that takes place in a large metropolitan city. The tradition began in 1973 with a handful of hot air balloons and a few spectators. Today, the internationally renowned event welcomes more than 50 of the nation's best hot air balloon pilots and thousands of spectators annually.

Thanks to the generous contributions of event sponsors, including presenting sponsor PNC Bank, Washington University in St. Louis and Blue Moon Brewing Co., this beloved community tradition is free for all to enjoy.

"The Great Forest Park Balloon Race exemplifies the brilliance of this region in so many ways and has something to offer for all St. Louisans," said Michael Scully, PNC regional president for St. Louis. "All of us at PNC look forward to helping bring this remarkable event to life for a community that means so much to us."

The hot air balloons will be surrounded by a festival environment featuring photo opportunities, inflatable games, giveaways, musical performances, fireworks, parachutists and much more. Local food trucks and carnival vendors will offer a variety of beverages and treats to please every palate.

"There's something special about how hot air balloons elicit wonder and make you feel like a kid again, no matter your age. We are proud of the way this annual tradition brings friends and families together to relax outside and create new memories together," said Jessica Stegen, Director of Communications and Event Production for Great Forest Park Balloon Race. "Our 2024 planning team has worked with a renewed focus on enhancing the entire festival experience for the tens of thousands of people who join us throughout the weekend."



Features for 2024 include:

- PNC Grow Up Great® Mobile Learning Adventure - This engaging destination provides the opportunity for parents and caregivers to learn about the importance of early childhood education while having fun with their children.
- St. Louis CITY SC's Street Team will be handing out giveaways and attendees can enter to win two tickets to CITY SC's home match vs. Houston Dynamo FC. Kids can also participate in a soccer activity led by community coaches from CITY SC's CITY Futures platform, which sets out to make soccer accessible to all by bringing free soccer programming to youth throughout the region.
- The Miller Lite Beer Garden will feature a Cornhole Tournament from 1 PM to 330 PM on Race Day - with time for GFPBR attendees to test their skills and learn from the pros beginning at 4 PM
- Performances from the PURINA PRO PLAN PERFORMANCE TEAM
- Dancing with DJ Reggie and other performers on the WASH U Main Stage

View the full event schedule for the Great Forest Park Balloon Race weekend below.

Announcements, answers to frequently asked questions, updated maps and 2024 parking information can be viewed on the event website, [www.greatforestparkballoonrace.com](http://www.greatforestparkballoonrace.com).

Follow The Great Forest Park Balloon Race on social media for real-time updates:  
[Facebook.com/greatforestparkballoonrace](https://Facebook.com/greatforestparkballoonrace)  
[Instagram.com/greatforestparkballoonrace](https://Instagram.com/greatforestparkballoonrace)  
[X.com/gfpballoonrace](https://X.com/gfpballoonrace)

#### **About PNC Bank**

PNC Bank, National Association, is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking including a full range of lending products; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit [www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com).

#### **About The Great Forest Park Balloon Race**

The Great Forest Park Balloon Race is a two-day event held in St. Louis, Missouri - annually celebrating soft landings and family traditions since 1973. It is the second oldest balloon race in the United States and remains a free event for everyone to enjoy. The Great Forest Park Balloon Race was inducted into the permanent collection of the Library of Congress on May 23, 2000. The induction honors the race as a Local Legacy and documents the race as a "meaningful and significant American community tradition."

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**CELEBRATING SOFT LANDINGS AND FAMILY TRADITIONS SINCE 1973.**  
**GREATFORESTPARKBALLOONRACE.COM**





## THE GLOW | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

5:00 P.M. - Emerson Central Fields Opens

- Food trucks, concessions and St. Charles Nissan & Hyundai Family Picnic Areas open! (visit our [FAQS page](#) for more info about coolers and concessions).
- Visit the PNC Grow Up Great® Mobile Learning Adventure PLUS activities from St. Louis Children's Hospital and more!
- Midway concessions, food trucks, inflatables, games and sponsor activities begin

6:00 P.M. - Dance with DJ Reggie at the WASH U Main Stage

6:45 P.M. TO 8:45 P.M.\*\* - THE BALLOON GLOW

- The balloons “glow” like huge fireflies, a truly magical scene, and one not to be missed! The balloons do not launch during the balloon glow but for a portion of the evening (weather permitting), the rope line will be released, and spectators will be invited to walk around to enjoy the view and chat with pilots and crew.

9:00 P.M. - THE U.S. ARMY GOLDEN KNIGHTS PARACHUTE TEAM TAKES FLIGHT

9:15 P.M. - PNC BANK FIREWORKS FINALE

## RACE DAY | SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

1:00 P.M. - CENTRAL FIELD OPENS

- Celebrate 52 years of GFPBR at the WASH U Main Stage
- St. Charles Nissan & Hyundai Family Picnic Areas open
- Purina Children's Entertainment Area opens featuring the Purina Pro Plan Performance Team (performances at 1:15 p.m., 2:30 p.m.)
- Visit the PNC Grow Up Great® Mobile Learning Adventure PLUS activities from St. Louis Children's Hospital and more!
- Midway concessions, food trucks, inflatables, games and sponsor activities begin

3:00 P.M. - THE U.S. ARMY GOLDEN KNIGHTS PARACHUTE TEAM TAKES FLIGHT

3:30 P.M. - OPENING CEREMONIES

4:30 P.M.\*\* - PNC BANK “HARE” BALLOON LAUNCHES

4:45 P.M. (flight window 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM) \*\* - “HOUND” BALLOONS LAUNCH



@greatforestparkballoonrace



@GFPBalloonRace

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