



Mary Cashiola

Mary Cashiola is a Memphian with more than 10 years of experience in local journalism. She is also a non-runner who runs, a former ad agency copywriter, a practicing home cook and an aspiring efficiency expert.

The Early Word: Massive Memphis projects all moving forward; Tigers basketball ... maybe not so much

By [Mary Cashiola](#)

Updated: January 10, 2020 9:04 AM CT | Published: January 10, 2020 6:04 AM CT

Good morning; it's Friday, Jan. 10. Tonight, we have the Grizz taking on the Spurs at FedExForum, and the Elvis 85th Birthday Pops concert with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra at Graceland.

THE NEED TO KNOW

New year, new unit: In the wake of an investigation into a Memphis detective, District Attorney Amy Weirich has created a new unit to investigate officers' conduct. The Daily Memphian reported earlier this week on Detective Eric Kelly's sexual relationship with a murder suspect and his subsequent retirement. By leaving before an investigation was concluded, he walked away with a big check and a nice pension.



Proposed Loews Hotel in Downtown Memphis (Inland Pacific Companies)

Loews about to go high: Construction on the city’s new, 16-story convention center hotel should begin in March. Loews received final approval for the project Wednesday from the Downtown Design Review board as well as City Council approval Tuesday for changes to the drop-off area. Quick. Someone get a “before” picture of the Main Street Mall; it’s never going to be the same.

Our new year’s resolution: Memphis and Shelby County added 82 projects, \$2.7 billion in capital investment and 1,650 new jobs. The area’s economic alliance has similar plans for the coming year, with a goal of attracting 3,800 jobs and \$1.1 billion in capital investment. Have to say: I like the emphasis on more jobs even at the cost of lower investment.

THE NICE TO KNOW



Memphis head coach Penny Hardaway (middle) calls for defensive presser during the Wichita State game.
(Mark Weber/Daily Memphian)

No offense: The latest from the land of Tigers basketball is an ugly loss to Wichita State. As Geoff Calkins writes: “So much for the notion that it was disrespectful of AP voters to drop Memphis from No. 9 to No. 21 in the wake of the loss to Georgia. If that was disrespectful, I don’t know how to describe what Wichita State did to Memphis Thursday night.” Now, he says, comes a test for coach Penny Hardaway.

Warehouse conversion: This sounds like a very special episode of “Fixer Upper,” but St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital is creating new state-of-the-art laboratories out of an existing campus warehouse. The facility will house two groups and is a “cornerstone of the \$1 billion capital expansion on the campus.”

Yep, Union Row, too: Seriously, if this edition of the Early Word has a theme, it’s just the sheer amount investment being funneled into Memphis and Shelby County right now. The Land Use Control Board approved half of Union Row’s first phase Thursday, putting it on track to be approved by the Memphis City Council.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT

While undergoing renovations, East Memphis' Hog & Hominy suffered extensive damage during an overnight fire. But the popular eatery, the second restaurant opened by James Beard Award semifinalists Andy Ticer and Michael Hudman, is promising to reopen "bigger and better." For consideration: A small Brookhaven Circle parking garage under the restaurant?



ICYMI

Odds on the economy: A University of Tennessee economist is predicting a 30 percent chance of a recession in the next two years and said the killing of Iran Gen. Qassem Soleimani “will do nothing to diminish economic growth,” according to a recent Daily Memphian story. Economist Matt Murray said that current warlike events raise “jitters” but shouldn’t cause a recession without a full-scale military conflict or a shock to the system, such as the interruption of oil.

A decade of change: Sometimes it is nice to look back and see how far we’ve come. Feature writer Jill Johnson Piper recently reminded us how much Memphians have changed in the past 10 years, and it’s nostalgia in the best possible way.

E-commerce and the airport: UPS is expanding its operations at Memphis International. The shipping company recently pulled a \$23 million building permit for the expansion, which comes just four years after an \$80 million upgrade at its Swinnea Road facility.

WORKING FOR THE WEEKEND



So-dam Park (left, as Ki-jung Kim) and Woo-sik Choi (Ki-woo Park) star in "Parasite." (Courtesy NEON Entertainment)

Don't forget the popcorn: Do yourself a favor, especially if you're doing Dry January, take it easy and head to the movies this weekend. The Daily Memphian's Chris Herrington notes this week brings us the last burst of awards-season contenders, with "1917," "A Hidden Life," and an encore run of "Parasite" showing.

Hope you enjoyed today's stories! Have a great weekend, and we'll see you Monday!

TOPICS