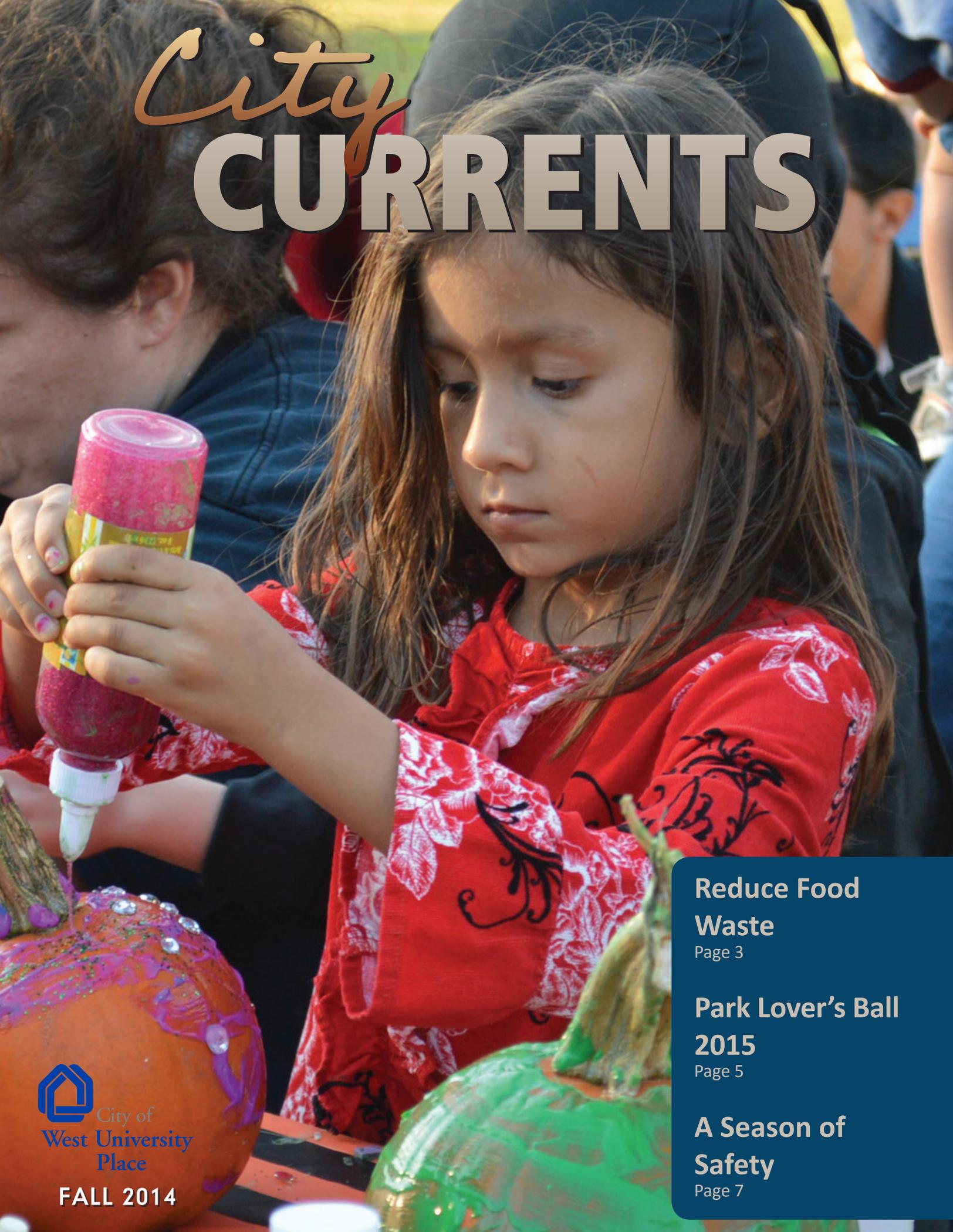


City CURRENTS



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From the Mayor's Desk



Have you ever wanted to know more about your city government? During my time on council and as your Mayor, I have been impressed by the number of people who come to Council workshops and meetings for that reason. I also have known instances in the past where some people chose to run for council without the foggiest idea of how our city government works. There is a need for a way for informing interested citizens about their municipal government. To that end, in October, your city will sponsor the first West U Citizens Academy. In a series of evening meetings, each to cover a different aspect of city government, city departments will attempt to entertain and enlighten those who wish to know more. Our new Communications Manager, Maura Leon-Barber, has created a very informative program that I am sure will be widely popular. So if you want to know more about your city, sign up. There is no cost to you. However, space is limited, so get your reservation in early by visiting www.westutx.gov/academy.

Thank You West U Citizens



On behalf of the Mayor and City Council, I would like to thank the West University residents who participated in discussions with the METRO staff over the past two months. Most particularly a thank you to John Cutrer, who invested his time and effort to make sure all of the citizens in the Wesleyan area knew about the METRO plan.

It was wonderful to see the participation of the residents that addressed METRO at a city council meeting and the number of people who sent emails making suggestions to change

this plan. They outlined the reasons that Route 48 should not use Wesleyan under the proposed METRO plan, including that it was only a two lane street, making it impossible for traffic to flow around a stopped bus. The residents also motivated city council to pass a resolution opposing the 48 bus route on Wesleyan, which was done and it was sent to METRO with a cover letter from Mayor Fry.

Apparently the METRO staff and their consultant were listening as when they presented the rerouted plan to the METRO Board on August 30, the 48 bus route is rerouted. As of press time, the final decision was slated for September 25.

This is an example of how government should work. Our mayor and city council want to learn how you (our residents) feel about issues facing us. You can learn more about the upcoming City Council meetings by going to our website www.westutx.gov. Please get involved.

City of West U Officials

City Council Members

Mayor Bob Fry
Mayor Pro-Tem Susan Sample
Ed Heathcott
Joan Johnson
Dick Yehle

City Manager

Michael Ross

General Information

713.668.4441

City Website

www.westutx.gov

REDUCING FOOD WASTE: WHAT TO KNOW, WHAT TO DO

Before providing a series of tips on how to reduce food waste, lets look at some food waste facts. Did you know that in the United States, we waste about 40 percent of all edible food? This means the average American throws away about 20 pounds of food per month, which comes to about \$2,275 per year for a family of four, all this according to the US Department of Agriculture. Growing this food requires an enormous amount of land and resources (25 percent of all fresh water used in the US and \$165 billion just to produce the food that never gets eaten). It also costs an additional \$750 million just to dispose of it. Did you also know that food scraps are the #1 material sent to landfills in the US? These food scraps amount to 14 percent of the municipal solid waste according to the EPA and make up almost 25 percent of the total methane emissions from landfills. And, think about this: it takes up to 2,000 gallons of water to produce one gallon of milk. When you throw out one gallon of milk, you're also wasting those 2000 gallons of water that it took to produce it. Finally, reducing food losses by just 15 percent would be enough food to feed more than 25 million Americans at a time when one in six Americans lacks a secure supply of food. Let's feed people, not landfills!

Here are some tips on how to reduce your food waste:

- **Shop smart.** Plan meals, use grocery lists, shop from bulk bins and avoid impulse buys. Check your pantry and refrigerator for ingredients already on hand.
- **Buy exactly what you need.** When produce is sold by weight, you can buy exactly what you need. Only using half a cabbage? Ask a produce representative to cut it for you. Bulk bins are helpful here.
- **Buy funny-looking produce.** Many fruits and vegetables are thrown away because their size, shape, or colors don't

quite match what we think these items "should" look like. USDA estimates that supermarkets lose \$15 billion annually in unsold fruits and vegetables.

- **Learn when food goes bad.** "Sell-by", "use-by" and "best before" dates are not federally regulated and do not indicate safety. These dates are intended as references for peak quality. Most foods can be safely consumed well after their use-by dates. Don't hesitate to rely on your nose and eyes for guidance. Nine out of ten of us throw away food long before it's spoiled. Plan meals around products that are closest to their expiration.
 - **Use your freezer.** Freeze fresh produce and leftovers if you won't have the chance to eat them before they spoil. Can't finish a loaf of bread before it molds? Put fresh loaves in the freezer and remove slices, as needed.
 - **Check your refrigerator.** Look for tight seals and the right temperature (between 35 and 40 degrees F) to maximize food freshness.
 - **Eat leftovers.** Eat those leftovers from home cooked meals and restaurants. Only about half of Americans take leftovers home from restaurants. They can always be frozen if you're not able to consume them in a few days.
 - **Request smaller portions or split meals.** Restaurants will often provide half-portions upon request at reduced prices. Or, there's the option of splitting a meal with someone else at your table.
 - **Compost.** Composting food scraps can reduce their climate impact while also recycling their nutrients.
- Remember, reducing the amount of food wasted has significant economic, social & environmental benefits.

WEST U ARTS & JAZZ RECESS



Time to play and support the arts! Students from local elementary, middle, and high schools will perform before local Queen of Jazz, Kristine Mills, takes the stage. Grab a bite to eat, browse art exhibits created by talented local artists and head to the Recess Zone for arts and music workshops, games, and activities galore. It will be a day of creativity, inspiration, and family fun!

DATE/TIME: Saturday, November 8 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
LOCATION: Colonial Park, 4130 Byron Street
SPONSORS: Monogram Residential Trust, Kroger, Arts Institute of Houston
ADMISSION: Free

Many art exhibits will be for sale, proceeds benefit Houston Arts Alliance and ArtsHound.com. For questions or interest in participation please contact Myra Johnson at mjohnson@monogramresidentialtrust.com or call 859.536.0748.



MOVIES IN THE PARK

Date: October 17 & October 24

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Colonial Park Pavilion, 4130 Byron Street
Grab your picnic blankets or lawn chairs, bring the family, and enjoy an outdoor movie shown on a huge inflatable screen! The movies are complimentary and refreshments will be available for purchase.

Green Lantern

October 17, Rated PG 13

Brave

October 24, Rated PG



Full Moon Fest

The West University Place Parks & Recreation Department will host their second annual Halloween celebration, Full Moon Fest, at **5:30 pm on Friday, October 17**, at the Colonial Park Pavilion,

located at 4130 Byron. Join us for an evening of pumpkin decorating, face painting and costume contests. The costume contest will be for different age groups so make sure the whole family comes in their spookiest attire. Stay after the event and enjoy the featured movie "Green Lantern" as part of the Movies in the Park series; showing begins at 7 pm!



West University Health & Wellness Fair

The West University Parks & Recreation Department is dedicated to promoting healthy bodies and minds. Join us to learn about health, from prevention to care, with interactive stations, informational tables and healthy food tips. The event will be held on **Wednesday, November 5, from 10:30 a.m. – noon**, located at the West University Place Recreation Center, 4130 Byron.

Swim with Santa

Anyone can get a picture with Santa on a sleigh, in the mall, or even in the snow, but not too many people can get a picture with Santa underwater! You can be one of those lucky individuals on **November 15, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.** at the West U Rec Center. To make this event even more memorable, you will receive a gift bag to go with your photo. So, come out to get a unique and memorable photo of you swimming with Santa and his elves. The fee is only \$10 with preregistration and \$35 on the day of the event. For more information on registration for this event, contact the West U Recreation Center at 713.662.7420.

Biggest User Contest

Need motivation to stay fit this holiday season? Let us help you! Starting November 1 through January 3, we'll reward the person with the most dedication to staying fit. Earn credits each time you come for a swim, run, weightlifting or personal training session, or any West U fitness program. The person with the most credits will get a prize!

To enter the contest:

Register by contacting the West U Rec Center

Must be West U Resident

Must have an active West U Rec Center membership

The winner will be announced on January 8, 2015.

Santa's Night Out

Need a break from the kids? Let the West U Rec Center help! On **December 12 and 19**, let the West U Recreation Center team entertains the kids while you enjoy a night out on the town or finish last minute shopping. Santa's Night Out begins at 5:30 p.m. and ends at 11 p.m.

Register your children by December 5 for this fun-filled night full of activities that include swimming, movies, arts, crafts, games & tons of FUN! Of course, all activities will be in the spirit of Christmas to help get the kiddos excited for the upcoming holiday. Registered children need to be between the ages of 5 and 11 years old. Bring your swim suits, a towel, a change of clothes, and a BIG SMILE! The fee is \$35 for West U residents and \$40 for non-residents.

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Come one, come all! Get into the holiday spirit with the 26th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony as the City of West U heralds the season by lighting the Christmas tree. Join us with your camera in front of the Community Building, 6104 Auden, on **Monday, December 1**.

Activities will start at 5:30 p.m. and the ceremony of lighting of the tree will start at 6 p.m.

Santa will be available for photos at the end of the ceremony!

FRIENDS OF WEST U PARKS:



This highly anticipated event was another sell out as campers geared up and pitched tents under the stars. Friends of West University Place Parks Fund, Inc. and the Parks and Recreation Department hosted its eighth annual campout on September 27 and 28 on the fields surrounding West University Elementary School. The Cheng Family and the Gilder Family, along with all of the wonderful volunteers, insured that it was a fun and memorable event. Highlights of the campout included a giant slide, Putt Putt golf, Kid Fish, and star gazing just to name a few. Thank you to ALL of our underwriters,

sponsors, and in kind donors, plus the many volunteers and staff who have made the event possible. Thank you especially to our top underwriters for the event:

- Direct Energy
- Frost Bank
- Conway MacKenzie, Inc.
- The Holt Family
- Anonymous – In Loving Memory of Jamie Gilder
- Goode Company Taqueria
- Cammarata Pediatric Dentistry
- Maggie Y. Garza - Keller Williams Realty
- Old Republic Title
- The Gilder Family
- Presmer

For a complete listing of the generous underwriters and sponsors and for more information on the event, please visit www.westuparks.org. Fathers & Flashlights continues to be a very popular and successful fundraiser for Friends of West U Parks.

24TH ANNUAL PARK LOVERS' BALL

The 24th Annual Park Lovers' Ball will be held on February 7, 2015, at the Omni Hotel. Event co-chairs Michele and Charles Still, Adrienne and William Vanderbloemen, and Christi and John Young are making plans to create an unforgettable fundraising evening full of fun and surprises. The gala will honor long time parks supporters Sue and Gary Hanna. Be sure you have February 7, 2015 marked on your calendar and look for your invitation to arrive in the mail in early January. Meanwhile, please visit www.westuparks.org or call 713.662.7430 for information on becoming an underwriter, sponsor, auction donor, or to volunteer.

While Fathers & Flashlights and Park Lovers' Ball are the largest Friends events, there are other opportunities for

involvement. Friends fundraising continues year round with the stork program, business partnerships, memorials and honorariums, pavers, benches, and tree sales. For more information, please visit www.westuparks.org or call 713.662.7430.



Deeply Rooted

PARK LOVERS' BALL 2015



Replacement of Lift Pumps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Contractor R+B Group completed the removal and installation of 2 lift pumps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant located on North Braeswood Drive in Houston. This project was completed the last week of August. The new lift pumps are direct manufacturer replacements of the original pumps with one major modification: the set of pumps are constructed with stainless steel cylinder and screw flights.

The pumps that replace the coated carbon steel pumps are anticipated to have a life of 25 to 30 years and came at an installed price of \$1 million. Given a near double life expectancy, the cost of moving to stainless steel is a good move. The original pumps were placed in service in 1982 and were replaced in 1998 following failure of the internal screw sections that were failing and causing a serious inefficiency in operations. This same condition caused the city to move forward with the replacement. The previous two sets of pumps averaged a life of 16 years each.

Automated Meter Reading

The Contractor Aqua-Metric along with their meter installation company Utiliuse completed the installation of the radio network in August and began installation of the new meters in early September. Radio Read Meters are being installed at each home and business then connected to the radio network for automatic meter reading.

Over the six months of the meter installation, a new meter will be installed at your home or business and once completed, meter readings will be collected and transmitted over the radio network. This will allow for short term leak detection and high usage alerts for customers.

The project will include an internet customer portal that will allow customers to view usage within 24 hours of the water passing through the meter. The internet customer portal will include the ability to set up usage alerts that send emails to the customer. The site will also have tools for charting and graphing the water use data in hourly increments. This will provide a great tool for assisting our customers with water conservation and to better control the water usage and the bills.

Storm Sewer – Buffalo Speedway Outfall to the Poor Farm Ditch

Scohil Construction, contractor for the storm sewer pipe repair at the outfall to the Poor Farm Ditch, started work on the project in mid-August and is nearing completion. The Project includes rebuilding two 20-foot sections of pipe that was originally constructed in 1942. The pipe was originally constructed as a monolithic pipe, meaning it was built in place and not transported in sections and then buried. The repair is also monolithic as that is the best method by which to match the existing pipe and the outfall structure.



Ruskin / West College Rehabilitation Project

Metro City Construction, contractor for the Ruskin/ West College Rehabilitation project, has mobilized and began construction. This project will replace a pre-1939 cast-iron water main, upgrade the storm sewer system and install new road pavement in the area. The project includes the 3800 and 3900 blocks of Ruskin Street and the 6700 block of West College.

West U Public Works hosted a pre-construction meeting for the resident in this area on August 26. Eight residents were in attendance to receive information regarding the project.

For more information on any public works project, please visit the city website at www.westutx.gov and visit the Public Work Department page to find a link to the projects website.



FOR THE Love of SAFETY!

This is the season to be jolly, but it is also the season to be wary of burglars, thieves and other holiday grinchers. Nothing can ruin the holiday spirit faster than becoming the victim of a crime. With the hectic nature of the holiday season, it sometimes can be tempting to take shortcuts on safety tips. But criminal activity doesn't take a holiday. So, honor these friendly reminders and make this a season to be safe.

SAFETY WHEN SHOPPING

- ◆ Always keep your children close to you.
- ◆ Do not shop alone.
- ◆ Never take more money than you need to make your purchases.
- ◆ Be discreet. Don't flash your money when paying for items.
- ◆ Pay with a check card or credit card.
- ◆ Be aware of your surroundings.
- ◆ Don't leave any purchases or purses unattended.
- ◆ Don't overburden yourself with packages.
- ◆ Carry your purse close to your body.

HOME SAFETY

- ◆ Never leave your children alone. This is the primary rule!
- ◆ Lock your doors and windows when you leave home.
- ◆ Don't display holiday gifts so they're visible from a window or doorway.
- ◆ When you're not home, turn on some lights and leave a radio on.
- ◆ Leave drapes and curtains in a normal position.
- ◆ Mark your valuables with your driver's license number.
- ◆ Pick up mail and newspapers so your house does not appear to be unoccupied.
- ◆ Never give information about your home over the telephone.
- ◆ Always call police to report any suspicious activity.

SECURING YOUR AUTO

- ◆ Always lock your vehicle.
- ◆ Use anti-theft devices, if you have them.
- ◆ Don't leave any packages or valuables inside the vehicle.
- ◆ Approach your vehicle with your keys out and ready to use.
- ◆ Park your vehicle in well-lit areas.
- ◆ Keep your vehicle in proper working order.
- ◆ If something seems wrong, get help from security or call the police

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| | DATE | EVENT | TIME | LOCATION |
|------------|------|--|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| OCT | 17 | Full Moon Fest | 5:30 p.m. | Colonial Park Pavilion |
| | 17 | Movies in the Park; Green Lantern | 7 p.m. | Colonial Park Pavilion |
| | 24 | Movies in the Park; Brave | 7 p.m. | Colonial Park Pavilion |
| | 25 | Fall Heavy Trash Day | 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Public Works Maintenance Facility |
| NOV | 1 | West U & Bellaire Recycles Fest | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Loftin Park, 5100 Laurel |
| | 5 | West University Health & Wellness Fair | 10:30 a.m. - Noon | Recreation Center |
| | 8 | West U Arts & Jazz Recess | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. | Colonial Park |
| | 15 | Swim with Santa | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. | Recreation Center |
| DEC | 1 | Christmas Tee Lighting Ceremony | 5:30 p.m. | Community Building |
| | 12 | Santa's Night Out | 5:30 p.m. - 11 p.m. | Recreation Center |
| | 19 | Santa's Night Out | 5:30 p.m. - 11 p.m. | Recreation Center |

FALL HEAVY TRASH DAY!

Get ready to clean out your home, recycle electronics and donate usables at this year's Fall Heavy Trash Day.

When: Saturday, October 25
Time: 7 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Where: 3826 Milton (West U Public Works Maintenance Facility)

Items that are not accepted for regular curbside trash pickup, such as bricks, concrete, junk iron, lumber, etc. will be accepted. Goodwill will be on site to accept usable items, such as, clothing, household items, jewelry, linens (no stains or tears), furniture (no tears or stains), sporting goods, bed frames with all hardware, and working bicycles, working TV's and stereos. **E-Waste Recycling** - the city will be accepting e-waste, such as, computers, printers, cell phones, surge protectors, and uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) to be recycled. To learn more, please visit www.westutx.gov/trash. The event is open to West U residents only (proof of residency required).

RECYCLES FEST



Save the Date

What: Join the cities of West University and Bellaire at the annual Recycles Fest. Donate and recycle items while enjoying kid's activities, food trucks, speakers and more.

When: Saturday, November 1
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Where: Loftin Park
 5100 Laurel
 Bellaire, TX

For more info, follow us @CityofWestU or www.westutx.gov