

# Headlines

News from University Place City Hall



December 8, 2021

## Tributes and Thanks

Before conducting regular business at its Dec. 6 meeting, the U.P. City Council took a few minutes to offer its gratitude to former City Council members for their contributions, capped by a moving video tribute to three who passed away in 2021: Lorna Smith, Gerald Gehring and Ken Grassi.

Mayor Caroline Belleci began with a proclamation and words of thanks to Howard Lee, who volunteered to step up and serve the remainder of Council Member Ken Grassi's term when he became ill. Lee thanked his fellow Council members for their support and encouragement during his tenure and said it was both an honor and a challenge to ensure that Council Member Grassi's vision would be fulfilled. "When I took the assignment, I knew it was going to be daunting because I knew I could not fill Council Member Grassi's shoes," he said. "But thank you for letting me serve."



The Mayor then presented the Grassi family with a formal proclamation to acknowledge the countless contributions Ken Grassi made to the City of University Place since its incorporation in 1996. "Ken contributed so much to this community," Belleci said, her voice cracking with emotion. "I hold him dearly in my heart and can't look at daffodils the same way again: I think of Ken every time I see them. He will be missed but never forgotten."



The tributes then concluded with a showing of a special **In Memoriam video** for the former Council Members Smith, Gehring and Grassi. Filled with images of the three city leaders and memories from their fellow Council members, the video is

a tribute to these dedicated public servants who literally donated thousands of hours of their time and talents to better the lives of all those who live and work in University Place.



*Lorna Smith*  
1937 - 2021



*Gerald Gehring*  
1943 - 2021



*Ken Grassi*  
1955 - 2021

## **What's UP with Biz: Holiday CheerUP! Returns to the Village at Chambers Bay**

Celebrate the holidays in U.P. once again this year when businesses from the Village at Chambers Bay, as well as several from Green Firs, host this year's Holiday CheerUP festivities from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 10 in and around Market Place in the Village at Chambers Bay.



There will be special holiday displays in front of Village businesses that people can enjoy as they drive by while staying safe in their own cars. Santa and his elves will be on hand, there will be holiday music and festive characters and City Council members will hand out goodies from the atrium at City Hall.

Please show your support for our local businesses who have endured throughout the pandemic and add to the festivities by decorating your own vehicle with a holiday theme. Those who attend are also encouraged to bring a toy for the annual Toys for Tots campaign. This is also a chance to admire the University Place Christmas tree.

Again this year, the City Council members held a safe, virtual lighting of the tree but you can watch it [here](#) to get in the holiday spirit and then visit the Village at Chambers Bay for a free, family-friendly holiday outing!

## Santa is Coming to Town!

Wednesday, Dec. 8 from 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Across the street from Station 31, located at 3631 Drexler Drive W in University Place. This will be a drive-through event.

(Drivers, please access this event from Drexler Drive to help keep traffic flowing.)

### What to Expect:

#### Food Drive

A food drive will also be held during this event in support of the Emergency Food Network. Please bring non-perishable items and Santa's helpers will collect them directly from your vehicle. Thank you in advance for your support.

#### Letters to Santa

Bring your letter to Santa with you! He will take all of the letters back to the North Pole and personally answer as many as he can. Don't forget to include a return address so he can write back!

Visit the [West Pierce Fire & Rescue website](#) for more details about this event!



## Chief's Corner: Catalytic Converter Thefts

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) reports that catalytic converter thefts have skyrocketed across the country since the start of the pandemic in 2020. Although we have not seen a huge rash of these incidents in U.P., we have dealt with a few cases so I want to share some information on this crime trend so you can hopefully avoid becoming a victim.

Thieves are targeting the theft of catalytic converters from all types of vehicles. Catalytic converters contain a small amount of one of three precious metals (platinum, palladium, or rhodium) that can be recycled for cash—close to \$250 depending on the amount and type of metal.



Suspects crawl under the vehicle and use electric metal saws to remove the device. This process doesn't take long so if you hear a loud sawing noise that seems unusual, don't ignore it. Investigate and call 911 if you discover suspicious

activity. Even interrupting the theft can help save the victim money. A full replacement is far more expensive than just a repair. Take a look at the graphic for more tips to help you avoid being a victim.

An active, engaged citizenry is part of the reason our crime statistics for 2021 are actually looking very positive. Violent crime is down 36 percent and property crimes are down 7 percent compared to 2020. I realize some victims of property crime do not report their incidents for various reasons, but we need this data to help establish crime trends and show the actual depth of the issue. So I encourage all citizens to report property crimes, even if nothing was taken or if there was only minor property damage.

As always, stay safe and let me know if you have any questions.

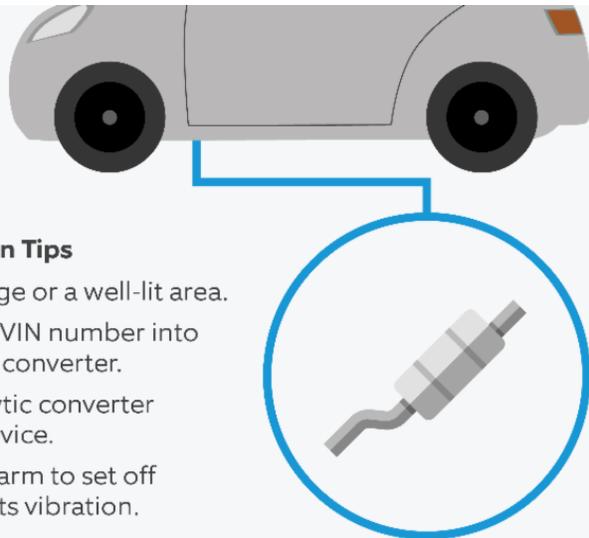
## Prevent Catalytic Converter Theft

### What is it?

- It is a critical component of your car's exhaust system and can cost up to \$2,000 to replace.
- Thieves target it because it contains expensive metals, has a street value of up to \$200, and removal can take less than 1 minute.

### Theft Prevention Tips

- Park in a garage or a well-lit area.
- Engrave your VIN number into your catalytic converter.
- Install a catalytic converter protection device.
- Install a car alarm to set off when it detects vibration.



Source: Allstate

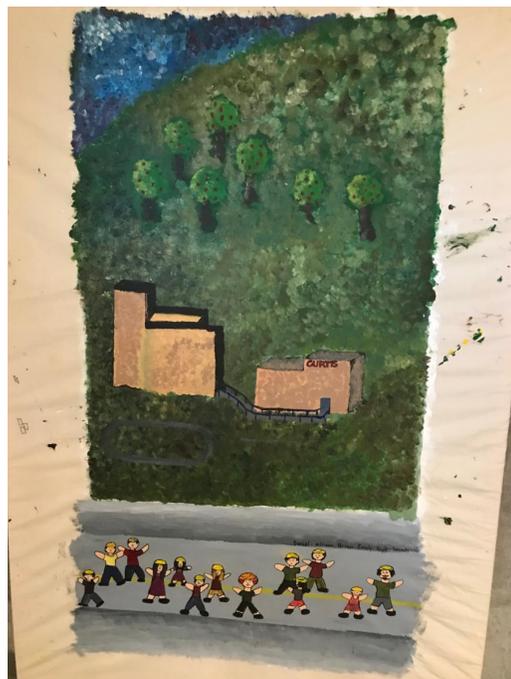
## Can You Identify This Piece of Art?

A piece of artwork found in a storage area has the U.P. Historical Society asking for your help in identifying its origins!

Hopefully, sharing these images will spark someone's memory or perhaps lead to a clue that might put the Society on the right path to finding out from where it came.

The artwork is a school painting of Curtis on canvas cloth, more than four feet tall, painted in 1992. The artists' names are listed, as seen in the photo.

If you have any information whatsoever, please call Frank at 253.301.8578.





## **Serve Your Community: Become a Member of a U.P. Public Safety Advisory Commission**

Do you want to get more involved in your community but are afraid you don't have the time?

The City's Advisory Commissions do not have standing monthly meetings but meet to work on matters specifically assigned by the City Council, either as part of an annual work plan or by separate resolution.

The seven-member Public Safety Advisory Commission currently has an opening. This group advises the City Council on issues related to public safety and also includes non-voting liaison representatives from U.P. Police, Fire and School District.

"This is an opportunity for those who are committed to public safety in U.P. to add their voice—and that of their neighbors—to the discussion," said Jennifer Hales, public safety administrator for the City of U.P. "And for those who have attended our Public Safety academies and forums, this is an opportunity to put the knowledge they've acquired to work."

To learn more and download the application, visit the **City's Commissions and Partners page**.



# PITCH IN FOR PARKS

Tree planting with Santa. Looking to spread and give holiday cheer? Come join Santa in planting trees and shrubs at the new bridge in Chambers Creek Canyon Park. Each Santa helper will receive a free potted tree to take home.

## 11 CHAMBERS CREEK CANYON - KOBAYASHI PARK

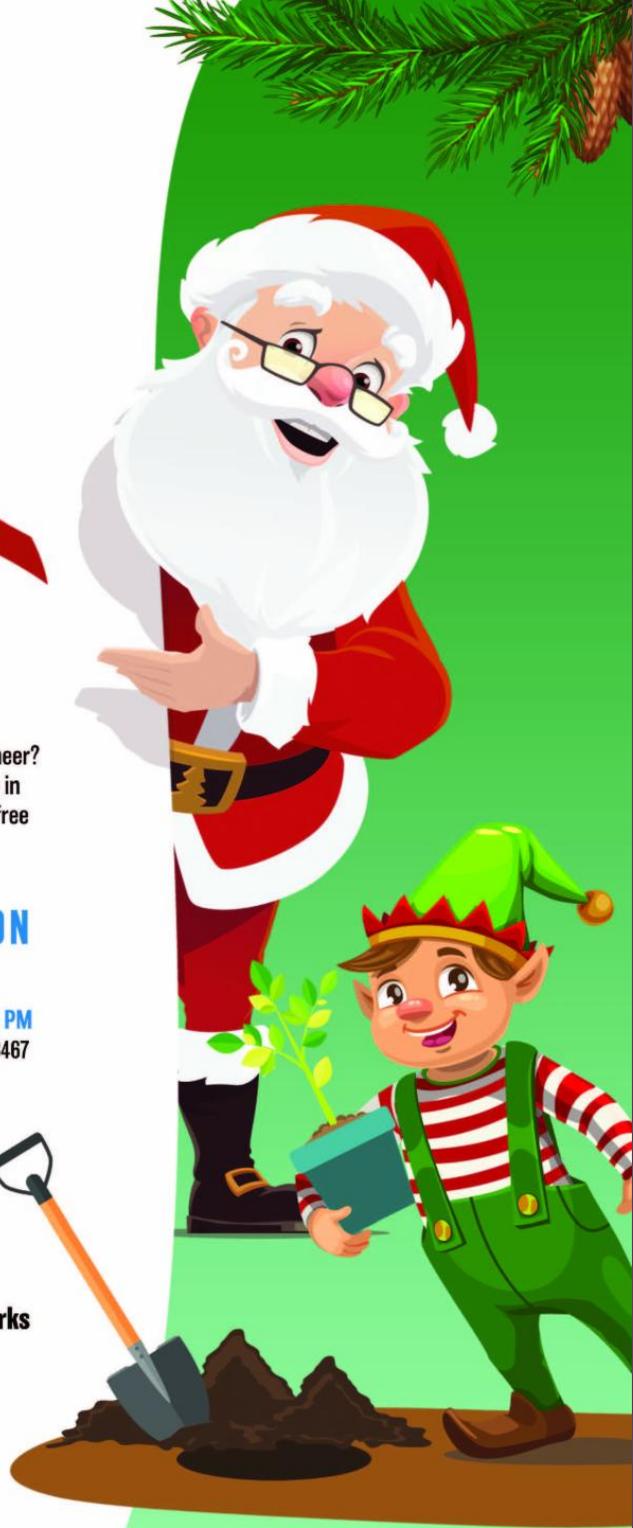
DECEMBER  
SATURDAY

9:00-10:00 AM | 10:30-11:30 AM | 12:30-1:00 PM  
6420 CHAMBERS CREEK RD W, UNIVERSITY PLACE, 98467



Pre-registration Only. Sign up  
for one or all time sessions.

[www.piercecountywa.gov/parks](http://www.piercecountywa.gov/parks)



**Do Your Part and Get the Shot**



You may be the person we are looking for!

View current job opportunities at [www.CityofUP.com](http://www.CityofUP.com)

**WE WANT YOU ON OUR TEAM!**



## Flashvote

Have you signed up for FlashVote? It's not too late!

Surveys take less than a minute and give participants an opportunity to weigh in on issues within our local community.



**Sign up now to take part in upcoming surveys!**

# UNIVERSITY PLACE HYBRID CITY COUNCIL MEETING



**Dec. 20, 2021 Meeting  
Cancelled**

[WWW.CITYOFUP.COM](http://WWW.CITYOFUP.COM)



## COVID-19 Resources

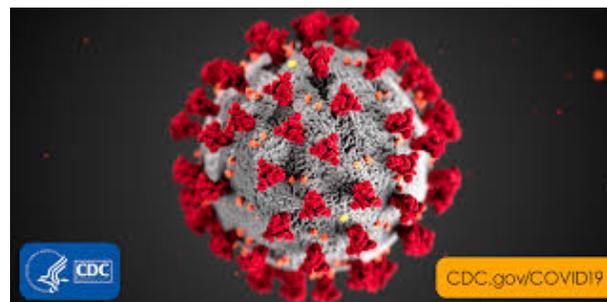
Looking for specific information related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Here's a list of official sources of information on which you can rely:

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control** – Pandemic facts and information

**Governor's Office** – Details about efforts and legislation specific to Washington

**Washington State Department of Health** – Updated statistics and testing data



## City Hall Holiday Closures

### CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAY, DEC. 24 AND WILL CLOSE AT NOON ON THURSDAY, DEC. 23. CITY HALL WILL REOPEN ON MONDAY, DEC. 27 AT 9 A.M.

### NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAY, DEC. 31 AND WILL CLOSE AT 3 P.M. ON THURSDAY, DEC. 30. CITY HALL WILL REOPEN ON MONDAY, JAN. 3 AT 9 A.M.

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**Mayor Caroline Belleci**



**Mayor Pro Tem  
Steve Worthington**



**Council Member  
Javier Figueroa**



**Council Member  
Kent Keel**



**Council Member  
Edward Wood**



**Council Member  
Denise McCluskey**



**Council Member  
Stan Flemming**

