

A Message from Mayor Pro Tem John Montgomery

By Mayor Pro Tem John Montgomery

We invite you to come see a small exhibit at City Hall showcasing an antique steel combat helmet. A plaque inside the exhibit case describes the helmet as authentic safety equipment worn by West University Air Raid Wardens during World War II. Although our city was far from the front lines, West University Place, like many communities, played its part during the war effort. While some families were affected more directly by the war than others, blackout drills helped to reinforce the notion that, as a community, *they were all in it together*.

This helmet serves as a reminder that our community has endured long disruptions to our way of life before. Like the war, the pandemic has been ubiquitous, touching every home. Sequestered for months, we have all felt the impact of loneliness and isolation from our community. If you have been weathering the pandemic with children at home, you have faced the near-impossible challenge of balancing your career with child care, and education. For healthcare workers on the front lines, the reality of this crisis has followed them home each day, creating tremendous personal strain. In short, the human element of this pandemic has been inescapable, even if you have not been directly affected by the virus. *We are all in this together ...*

As the vaccination rollout progresses, green shoots of hope are emerging. While continuing to monitor public health data, West University Place is gradually returning to the vibrant, socially connected community that it was before. This summer, you will soon see, and hear, our community coming together. For example, the Colonial Park Pool, and Recreation Center gym

and pool, have returned to reservation-less access. Also, Party on the Patio is back, and block parties are being scheduled. Upon invitation, the West U Fire Department will attend your block party to display an impressive new fire engine.

As our city and our lives resume their normal pace, please stop by the Community Center or the Recreation Center to pick up a copy of our long list of in-person youth and senior activities, or click on the “Notify Me” link on the city’s website to be informed about activities that are important to you.

Additionally, our City Council meetings will be returning to their traditional in-person format at City Hall, although online participation remains an option as allowed by the State of Texas. We welcome everyone to participate in our meetings and to make your voices heard.

This year, West U will continue to press forward with its efforts to emerge, to reconnect. While some people will approach this return to normalcy more enthusiastically than others, we must respect the fact that this pandemic has left trauma in its wake for many. Healing will take time. Please continue to look out for each other. Our community started this journey together, and we must emerge from it together as well.

I am honored to have been chosen to represent you as a City Council member, and I look forward to the next two years in your service.