

APRIL/MAY 2025

# The Gateway

UNIVERSAL CITY COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

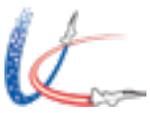


*CoverStory*

# TOP HONORS

UC VOLUNTEERS WIN CHAMPIONS AWARD

BASEBALL LEGEND | NFL INVESTOR



# Universal City Municipal Directory

2150 Universal City Blvd. Universal City, TX 78148

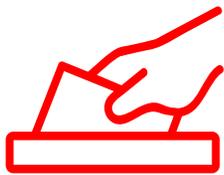
Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## ADMINISTRATION 210-659-0333

City Clerk .....	Maribel Garcia.....	7 4 8
City Manager .....	Kim Turner .....	7 0 5
Code Compliance Officer .....	.....	7 2 5
Communications.....	Kathy Williams.....	7 0 1
Court Administrator .....	Brenda Watkins.....	7 1 5
Development Services/EDC .....	Michael Cassata.....	7 2 0
Finance.....	Christine Green.....	7 0 8
Fire Chief.....	Todd Perna.....	7 8 6
Health Official.....	Anabell Maldonado.....	7 2 7
Permit/Zoning.....	Linda Iglehart.....	7 2 3
Police Chief .....	Johnny Siemens.....	7 5 5
Community Events.....	Brianne Brandenburg.....	7 2 1
Water Billing.....	.....	7 1 0

### Departments

Animal Care & Control .....	210-659-0333	EXT. 700
Fire Department .....	210-659-0333	EXT. 250
Golf Course .....	210-659-0333	EXT. 653
Library.....	210-659-0333	EXT. 048
Parks/Pavilion Rental .....	210-659-0333	EXT. 364
Police Department .....	210-659-0333	EXT. 353
Public Works.....	210-659-0333	EXT. 364



IMPORTANT DATES FOR RESIDENTS:

## UC MAY 2025 ELECTION QUICK FACTS

### April 3

Last day to register to vote for May 2025 Election

**April 22 – April 29**  
Early voting period

### May 3 – ELECTION DAY

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (also last day to receive ballot by mail)  
Go to [VoteTexas.gov](http://VoteTexas.gov) for elections information

UC has two counties – Bexar and Guadalupe (VOTE IN YOUR COUNTY)  
Go to [www.UCTX.gov/May2025Election](http://www.UCTX.gov/May2025Election) for more information on how to vote.

[www.UCTX.gov](http://www.UCTX.gov)



**For EMS, Police  
and Fire Emergencies  
Call 911**

APRIL/MAY 25

# MEETINGS

■ **April 1, 2025** ..... 6:30 p.m.

*City Council Regular Meeting*

■ **April 7, 2025** ..... 6 p.m.

*Planning & Zoning Meeting*

■ **April 10, 2025**..... 5 p.m.

*Economic Development Corporation Meeting*

■ **April 15, 2025**..... 6:30 p.m.

*City Council Regular Meeting*

**April 18, 2025 - .CLOSED after 12 p.m.**

**Easter Holiday/Good Friday**

■ **April 22, 2025** ..... 6 p.m.

*Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting*

■ **April 28, 2025** ..... 6 p.m.

*Board of Adjustment Meeting*

■ **May 5, 2025** ..... 6 p.m.

*Planning & Zoning Meeting*

■ **May 6, 2025** ..... 6:30 p.m.

*City Council Regular Meeting*

■ **May 8, 2025** ..... 5 p.m.

*Economic Development Corporation Meeting*

■ **May 13, 2025** ..... 6:30 p.m.

*City Council SPECIAL MEETING – Election Canvassing*

■ **May 20, 2025** ..... 6:30 p.m.

*City Council Regular Meeting*

■ **May 19, 2025**..... 6 p.m.

*Board of Adjustment Meeting*

■ **May 21, 2025** ..... 5:30 p.m.

*Library Advisory Commission Meeting*



**May 26, 2025 - CLOSED**  
**Memorial Day**

■ **May 27, 2025** ..... 6 p.m.

*Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting*



# LEADERSHIP



**TOM MAXWELL**  
MAYOR



**PHIL VAUGHN**  
COUNCILMEMBER



**BEAR GOOLSBY**  
COUNCILMEMBER



**LORI PUTT**  
COUNCILMEMBER



**BERNARD RUBAL**  
COUNCILMEMBER



**CHRISTINA FITZPATRICK**  
MAYOR PRO TEM



**ASHTON BULMAN**  
COUNCILMEMBER



**KIM TURNER**  
CITY MANAGER

# Rare Snowfall Jan 21, 2025



UNIVERSAL CITY'S



# EGG HUNT

**SATURDAY APRIL 19**

**9 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

**RED HORSE PARK**



**1100 NORTH BLVD. UNIVERSAL CITY TX 78148**

## A Friendly Spring Reminder from your UC Stormwater Division

Our storm sewer system is made up of a series of ditches, culverts, inlets and underground pipes, which collect storm water runoff which transfers to our local creeks.

By collecting and removing the stormwater runoff, our storm sewer system helps to minimize ponding of water in our streets and flooding our homes.

Why is it important to keep the stormwater free of trash and debris?

Trash and debris that is dumped into our storm sewer system will collect and ultimately cause the pipes to clog, preventing stormwater from draining properly. This will lead to high water in our streets and flooding of our homes. Yard clippings, leaves, sediments (loose soils) are a main contributor to filling our ditches, culverts, and creeks that limit drainage.

### Why should you not dump hazardous products down the storm drain?

Chemicals dumped into our storm sewer systems can harm or kill the wildlife that live in the creeks. These chemicals can also leach into our aquifer and potentially make our drinking water unsafe. Hazardous products can be safely disposed of during our Spring & Fall Bulk and Household Hazardous Waste Collection.



### What is Stormwater BMP?

BMP stands for Best Management Practice, which are things we can do to help improve the quality of storm water runoff that reaches the creeks and rivers. Though many BMPs are incorporated during the development process, there are many things that homeowners can do. By implementing BMPs, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings and automotive fluids off the ground and out of the storm sewer. Adopt best management practices to make your community aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly.

You can share these practices with neighbors.

BMPs include:

- Limit fertilizers use and avoid sewage disposal into storm drains.
- Pick up after your pets.
- Limit the use of pesticides.
- Clean vehicles at a wash station or in the grass.
- Do not drain toxic pollutants including oils in the storm drain.
- Do not throw trash into the storm drain.
- Properly dispose of trash/yard waste.



## UC's Volunteer Corps Honored with Governor's Volunteerism Award

**I**f you've attended any Universal City event in the past decade, you've seen them. Volunteers you recognize year after year, committed to making events enjoyable and raising funds to improve lives in our community.

Our volunteer corps includes Parks Partners, Friends of the Universal City Library, Universal City Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (UCCPAAA) and Homes for Homeless Pets.

The level of volunteerism in Universal City rivals that of much larger cities. And it's hard to miss their passion to serve.

Passion and hard work

will soon to be recognized statewide when our volunteer corps is named Community Champions in the Governor's 41st Annual Volunteer Awards at the Governor's mansion in April.

The prestigious Community Champions Award is a partnership between the state and OneStar and the award



“

*Texans truly are generous by nature, and Greg and I are so inspired by the selfless service shown by so many volunteers across this great state. As our communities continue to grow more resilient each day, we are reminded that the true strength of the Lone Star State is found in our people.*

— Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott

ceremony is hosted by Honorary Chair Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott.

Parks Partners organizes events like the Pumpkin Patch which raises funds for dozens of charities each year. Parks Partners also organizes Casino Night and Purse Bingo. They also work diligently to ensure that the Aina B. Blake Dog Park is well maintained for use by area pets and pet owners. Parks Partners uses the proceeds from all of their events to assist with improvements in the City-owned parks. The group has roots that go back to the 60's. President and councilmember Lori Putt

remembers being asked to lead the group after helping to raise \$85,000 for the dog park.

“We thought, O.K. We'll do this for two years and that was 15 years ago.”

The Community Champions Award sets the bar high in the selection process. Documentation has to include examples of the impact of the group, partnerships, fundraising, longevity and any media that educates the broader community.

The Universal City Police Academy Alumni Association (UCCPAAA)

serves the community in partnership with the Universal City Police Department. The UCCPAAA's membership is strong in raising funds through its Casino Night, “This House Backs the Blue” sign sales, and Blue Santa donations. Members of this organization provide safety measures and information at City events. A core group of UCCPAAA members regularly serve as support for Municipal Court operations.

“We started with a small ad (in a newspaper) and things just took off from there,” said UCCPAAA president Bill Fitzpatrick.

# Top Honors

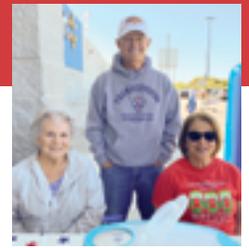
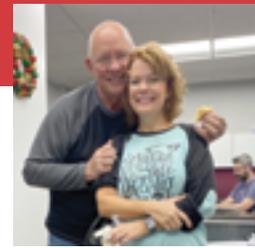
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In the past decade, fundraising amongst the various groups had surpassed more than half a million dollars:

- Funds for medical bills, including spay and neutering, for adopted pets
- Equipment and supplies that support the staff and pets at Animal Care and Control
- Safety equipment for police officers
- Exercise equipment and nutritional snacks for fire and police personnel
- Christmas gifts for struggling families
- Library equipment, technology, and books
- Library programming materials and supplies
- Park playground equipment and shade structures
- Building maintenance, signage, and other miscellaneous projects that support City residents and veterans

Fundraising is notable, but it's the ongoing exemplary commitment to service over a sustained period that Onestar weighs most heavily.

The Friends of the Universal City Library, AKA "The Friends", is a committed group of volunteers that love books, libraries, and library programs. Their commitment to the community is decades long and their dedication is seen each day that the library is open! Material purchases, book binding, cataloging, shelving, computer assistance, and informational services are provided by this active and knowledgeable



group of volunteers. Fundraising for the Friends includes a bookstore, book selling events, Wreaths Across America (honoring those who've served), and a plethora of donations. Catherine Tolbert is the president of the Friends.

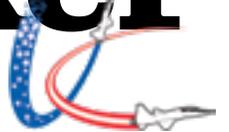
"(Friends) has evolved in that we're more active in community events in general and we added fundraising through Wreaths across America. This is a great group of volunteers," she said.

The Homes for the Homeless volunteers are the heart of the community that focus on the health and wellbeing of the pet population. This group was instrumental in raising funds and community awareness for the construction of a new Animal Care and Control facility and the Aina

B. Blake Dog Park. Their fundraising activities include bake sales, cash collection sites at local businesses, and legacy gifts and donations from pet lovers in Universal City.

Volunteers play a vital role in communities by selflessly dedicating their time and skills to help others. Their commitment enhances lives and fosters connection, inspiring positive changes and hope. In challenging times, they exemplify kindness and resilience, highlighting the importance of giving back. The best part about our volunteers receiving this amazing reward is that they would never seek it out for themselves. Looking to the future, they all welcome the next generation of volunteers. Congratulations to all Universal City volunteers. The Texas Community Champions Award is well deserved!

# A History-Maker

In 

The final days of March ushered in the 2025 Major League Baseball (MLB) season.

When it comes to following the game, few in Universal City can match the knowledge of retired Air Force Major and baseball legend Dick "Lefty" O'Neal.

Growing up in Arkansas, O'Neal says he had a passion for the game as far back as he can remember. He had an equal passion for his beloved St. Louis Cardinals, and always knew big things were ahead.

He was right.

At 17, the pitcher got the attention of the St. Louis Cardinals. When both he and the team agreed he needed more experience, he was off to the University of Central Arkansas. While he didn't make it to the majors, he made history on another path.

People are fascinated when they learn that he's the only white person to play for not one, but two Negro League teams. The Biloxi Dodgers in the Gulf Coast Negro League, and the San Antonio Black Sox of the South Texas Negro League.

Before the Cardinals could take a second look, he was drafted by the military. Just days away from heading to Saigon, Air Force leadership acted on stories they'd



**"LEFTY" O'NEAL 3 YEAR  
AMERICAN LEGION  
PITCHING RECORD**

**32-2 | 10 Shutouts  
6 No hitters**

placed in the baseball Hall of Fame Library in Cooperstown New York in 2009. Its cover features a photo of his son when he was nine (now 39) one of his two children with his wife Harriett.

He was guest speaker at the President Jimmy Carter Historical site in Plains Georgia. He continues to be a sought after inspirational speaker and has an impressive and carefully preserved collection of memorabilia. What surfaces in conversations with him is that through it all, his story is rooted in his faith in God.

"I didn't care what color anyone was. I just wanted to play baseball," he says.

He affectionately refers to his Negro League teammates as his good friends and notes with sadness that attendance at reunions has dwindled because many are gone now.

Since baseball his adventure has continued. His book *Dreaming of the Majors-Living in the Bush* was

"I know every step I've taken was meant to be. And I want my legacy (to those who've never heard of him) is first and foremost perseverance. To never give up. To dream. And always bloom where you're planted."

Not surprisingly, O'Neal has many powerful memories that came to life when we videotaped his story for our upcoming public service channel UC TV. We'll let you know when we have a premiere date.

## Krowned Beard & Barber

**S**herrie Wilson has lived in several surrounding communities, but when it came time to select a location for her business she chose Universal City.

Her choice for a partner, highly regarded NFL running back Priest Holmes who had a Super Bowl win with the Baltimore Ravens and holds a place in the Kansas City Chiefs Hall of Fame.

He grew up in San Antonio and in his pre-NFL days and was a key player in taking the Longhorns to the Sun Bowl.

Holmes joined Wilson for the ribbon cutting of their business Krowned Beard and Barber in the Randolph Plaza Shopping Center.

The pair have plans to support the community beyond just doing business here. They've already met with several local officials about developing strategies to benefit our neighbors, primarily children.

Wilson, like Holmes, is highly regarded and has her own line of beard care products to use in the shop that welcomes customers of all ages and hair types.



PHOTO CREDIT: ASSOCIATED PRESS



*Krowned Beard and Barber is located at 902 Pat Booker Rd. Suite A, and is closed on Sunday and Wednesday. We'll keep you posted on this great addition to our business community!*

# Flock Crime Prevention Cameras in Universal City

They've taken communities across the country by storm, and now they're helping to fight and solve crimes here in Universal City. Flock cameras are license plate reader (LPR) cameras that assist law enforcement.

Here's how they work. The Flock system, formed by a technology surveillance company in 2017, can also detect vehicle characteristics. Once entered into the system, information is then cross-checked against state and federal records. The cameras can also integrate with the FBI and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

Universal City Police Chief Johnny Siemens and his department consistently seek out ways to keep the community safe.

"The Flock cameras are important to policing for a host of reasons. First and foremost, changing the way we do business. They've enabled us to recover more stolen property in a shorter period of time than we've ever recovered in any given year outside an anomaly here or there."

Nationally, the system has been used successfully in helping solve crimes like burglaries, hit-and-runs, and kidnappings.

"They're changing things in a way where the victim doesn't feel as victimized.....This is a tool that law enforcement didn't (realize) we needed it. It's a game changer, a true game changer."

“ It’s a game changer, a true game changer.”

— Johnny Siemens, UC Police Chief



# Preparing a Senior for an Emergency

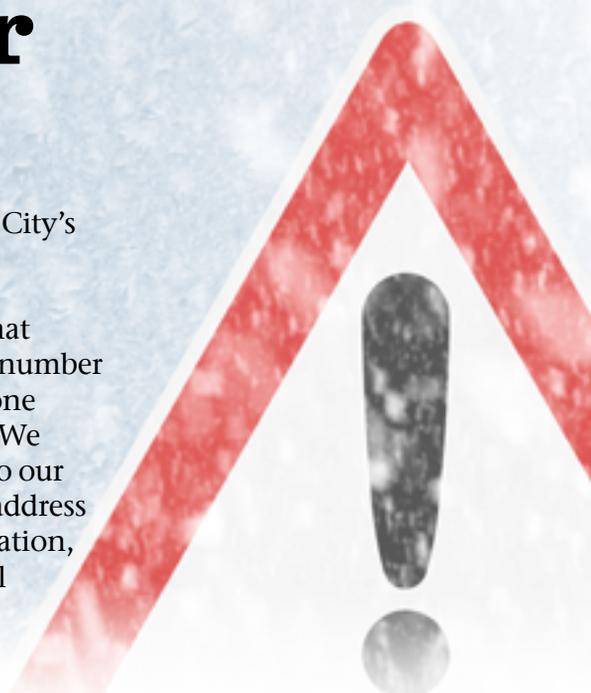
In the past few years we've seen an unprecedented ice storm, record breaking low temperatures and recently a rare snowfall.

Some of our relatives or neighbors who are senior citizens may not be able to perform tasks such as wrapping pipes and plants. Others may not be comfortable with social media. That means they are not getting the free alerts provided

through the City of Universal City's CivicAlert system.

You can help by sending that person's name, home phone number and if they have one, cell phone number to [events@uctx.gov](mailto:events@uctx.gov). We will manually enter them into our system. We don't need their address or any other personal information, or call asking for any personal information.

Protect them from fraud by letting them know that.



## CIVICREADY



### IF YOU LIVE IN UNIVERSAL CITY BE PREPARED.

#### SIGN UP YOUR SENIOR FOR CITY ALERTS



#### UNIVERSAL CITY NOTIFICATIONS

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE NEWS & UPDATES FROM UNIVERSAL CITY

#### EVENTS

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & SPECIAL EVENTS

#### CITY COUNCIL

NOTIFICATIONS OF CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS & AGENDAS

#### PUBLIC SERVICES

INTERRUPTIONS/CHANGES TO WATER/UTILITIES, WM WASTE COLLECTIONS, ROAD CLOSURES



SIGN UP AT [WWW.UCTX.GOV/ALERTS](http://WWW.UCTX.GOV/ALERTS)



# UNIVERSAL CITY SPRING 2025 BULK CLEAN-UP

## DATES:

APRIL 3 - 6

APRIL 10 - 13



## BULK ITEMS

Dumpsters are available for Universal City residents to dispose of bulk household items. Proof of residency is required.

No commercial dumping permitted. No TVs or computer monitors accepted.

## HOURS:

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



## HAZARDOUS WASTE

Hazardous materials can be dropped off any day of the clean-up. Motor oil is not accepted.

Please visit [www.UCTX.gov](http://www.UCTX.gov) for complete list of accepted items.

## LOCATION:

PUBLIC WORKS

256 KITTY HAWK



## BRUSH CHIPPING

Public Works will not accept brush at the yard. 30 mins of free chipping service is available by appointment during the clean-up dates.

Call 210-658-5364 to be put on the list when your pile is ready.

 [uctx.gov/cleanup](http://uctx.gov/cleanup)

 210-658-5364



UCLibrary

# Events & Programs

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

**STORYTIME: Read, Sing, and Learn together!**

• **PRE-K**

**Tuesdays - 10 am**

Pre-K Storytime is appropriate for children ages 3-5 years old and their caregivers. Registration is not required. 10 a.m. on Tuesdays in the Meeting Room

• **TODDLER**

**Tuesdays - 11 am**

Toddler Storytime is appropriate for children ages 2-3 years old and their caregivers. Registration is not required. 11 a.m. on Tuesdays in the Meeting Room

• **BABY STORYTIME**

**Wednesdays - 10 am**

Baby Storytime is designed for our youngest library users (birth to 25 months) and their caregivers. Join us for songs, stories, and rhymes that strengthen infant-caregiver bonds and support early brain development. Registration is not required. 10 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Meeting Room

## **TINKER TUESDAYS**

**Tuesdays - 4 pm**

Join the fun at UCPL and learn to 'tinker' with crafts, LEGOs, games, and STEM projects! This program is designed for school-age children ages 6 and up. Registration is not required. 4 p.m. on Tuesdays in the Meeting Room

## **READ WITH THERAPY DOGS**

Children can practice their reading skills by reading to a trained therapy dog in a quiet, relaxed setting. Reading aloud helps improve fluency, comprehension, and confidence. Each child will sign up for a specific reading time. Our furry volunteer is a great listener! Registration is required, and time slots are limited.

• **R.E.A.D WITH JETT**

**4/19 & 5/17 • 11 am-1 pm**

Register for a 30-minute time slot by calling the library at 210-659-7048 or stopping by the Circulation Desk. *(April 19 is tentative pending a possible Easter holiday closure.)*

**4/5 & 5/3  
11 am-1 pm**

• **PAWS TO READ WITH TEDDY**

Register for a 15-minute time slot by calling the library at 210-659-7048 or stopping by the Circulation Desk.

**SPECIAL EVENT**

**FRIENDS OF  
THE LIBRARY  
RUMMAGE SALE**

**Saturday - April 12  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Fill a bag of books for just \$2, and browse the rummage sale for great finds!

**ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT  
THE UNIVERSAL CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY.**



## ADULT PROGRAMS

### YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR GAMES (BINGO)

Open to Senior ages 60 and up only. No registration required. Held in the Meeting Room at 1 p.m.

- Friday, April 4
- Friday, April 11
- Friday, May 9
- Friday, May 16
- Friday, May 23
- Friday, May 30

### CRAFTY CREW

Coloring, drawing, scrapbooking, crocheting, knitting, and everything in between! Bring your own craft project to work on and connect with other crafters for creative focus, inspiration, and great conversation. This program is designed

4/9 & 5/14  
11 am-1 pm

for adults 18+. No registration required. Held in the Meeting Room at 1 p.m.

### BOOK BUDDIES

Monthly book club for adults 18+. No registration required. Held in the Activity Room at 2 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 16 at 2 p.m.**

Book Selection:

*Sex on the Moon* by Ben Mezrich

**Wednesday, May 21**

Book Selection:

*Heard That Song Before:*

*A Novel* by Mary Higgins Clark

### TASTEE TABLE

5/21 • 1 pm

Pick a recipe from this month's featured cookbook and bring your dish to share at this charming garden tea party! Enjoy live music by cellist Christina Trongone from 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. RSVP is required. Stop by the Circulation

Desk for more details, and to select your recipe. Finest tea-party attire encouraged! This program is designed for adults 18+

## FAMILY PROGRAMS

### PUZZLE PALZ

4/19 & 4/19  
5/3 & 5/17  
11 am

Are you ready to challenge yourself and have some fun?

Join us for Puzzle

Palz, a special program at UCPL designed for puzzle lovers - including puzzles, crosswords, and Sudoku! Held in the activity room.

*April 19 is tentative pending a possible Easter holiday closure.*



## TASTEE TABLE SPECIAL EVENT



# Whispering Leaves Societea



## Wednesday May 21

### 1 p.m.

### Universal City Public Library

## RSVP REQUIRED

FEATURING LIVE MUSIC BY CELLIST  
CHRISTINA TRONGONE 12:30-1:30 p.m.

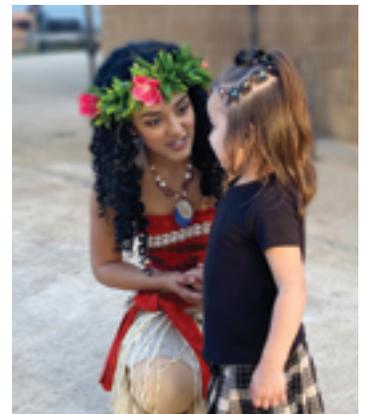
PICK A RECIPE FROM THIS MONTH'S FEATURED  
COOKBOOK AND BRING YOUR DISH TO SHARE AT  
THIS CHARMING GARDEN TEA PARTY!

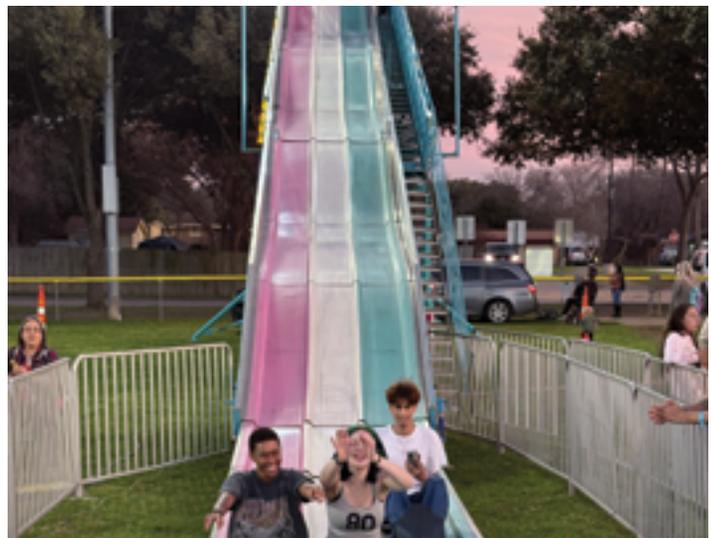
UCPL ADULT PROGRAM  
SELECT YOUR RECIPE AT THE CIRCULATION DESK  
TEA PARTY ATTIRE ENCOURAGED

UCCommunity

# Out & About

## Snowfest 2025





Taxes

Bookkeeping

Audits



Armstrong,  
Vaughan  
& Associates, P.C.

941 West Byrd  
Suite 101  
Universal City, TX 78148  
**210.658.6229**

Certified Public Accountants

[info@avacpa.com](mailto:info@avacpa.com)

[www.avacpa.com](http://www.avacpa.com)

UCCommunity

# Out & About Purse Bingo

Parks Partners Purse Bingo was a huge hit again this year. Some great sponsors came through to support the event and this year organizers were able to purchase top-of-line designer brands. If you didn't snag a ticket, these purses are what you missed!

See you next year.



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DESIGNER PURSE BINGO



2025

SPONSORS



# The Future of Universal City



**Get involved at [UCvision35.com](http://UCvision35.com)**

# THE GATEWAY

City of Universal City  
2150 Universal City Blvd.  
Universal City, Texas 78148

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PERMIT #1030  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

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### Improve Your Sleep with Laser Sleep Therapy

Laser Sleep Therapy allows the airway to open. This non-invasive procedure helps reduce snoring by gently tightening the tissue of the soft palate and stimulating the production of collagen.



**DR. CHRISTINA GONZALEZ**

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LASER SLEEP THERAPY

  
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