

CITYSOURCE

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Your source for City news and information



Volunteers of the Month — The Scavone Family



The Scavone Family

Many volunteer as a way to help an organization and for the personal satisfaction that comes along with making a difference in the community. For November volunteers of the month, volunteering is something for the whole family to experience.

Ed and Gina Scavone encouraged their children to learn the importance of service at a young age by volunteering for the City of Columbia Youth in Action program. Since then, the Scavone family has spent numerous hours volunteering and encouraging others to do so. Through their work recruiting Boy Scouts and adult leaders from Troop 708 to help with the Tree Keepers Program and volunteering as a family for STAT (Street Tree Assessment Team) through the Public Works Department, the Scavones have truly made volunteering a family affair.

“Volunteering for Columbia has been a wonderful experience for my family,” said Gina Scavone. “The City projects are always so organized and every opportunity has been a great learning experience.”

Low-interest loans are available for energy efficiency projects

Save money and energy when you partner with Columbia Water & Light! The Super Saver Loan program helps electric customers finance energy efficiency improvements that might be suggested for customers participating in the Home Performance with Energy Star program. You can save money on your utility bills now and pay for the improvements with a fixed, low-interest loan.

ELIGIBLE ITEMS:

Energy efficiency assessment, air conditioner, heat pump, insulation, air sealing, windows and doors

INTEREST RATES:

If you borrow the money for up to three years, the interest rate is 1 percent, four to five years is 3 percent and six to ten years the rate is 5 percent.

You and Columbia Water & Light—a Powerful Partnership.

ColumbiaPowerPartners.com
info@ColumbiaPowerPartners.com
874-7325



Web Page Did You Know



Winter registration at Parks and Recreation opens Nov. 10 when the new Leisure Times activity guide will be online at www.GoColumbiaMo.com/ParksandRec. Check it out for information on holiday events and how to keep your New Year’s resolutions!

Help your neighbors in need — donate to utility assistance

CASH AND HELP

Can you imagine choosing between buying food and paying your utility bill? It is not an easy choice for many Columbians. You can help by filling out the contribution slip on this month’s utility bill return envelope for the CASH and HELP programs or fill out the online form. These programs were established to help seniors, the disabled and families with children pay their utility bills.

CASH and HELP assistance programs often run out of funding on the first week of the month. By giving a little extra, to one or both programs, you can help someone in our community.

874-7380
www.GoColumbiaMo.com/Finance/Forms/cash-help.php

Donations to the program are tax deductible. All money donated to the program goes to help those in need.

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City of Columbia
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MAYOR
Bob McDavid

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

First Ward	Paul Sturtz
Second Ward	Jason Thornhill
Third Ward	Gary Kespohl
Fourth Ward	Daryl Dudley
Fifth Ward	Laura Nauser
Sixth Ward	Barbara Hoppe
City Manager	Bill Watkins



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Help provide holiday toys for Columbia’s youth

Get in the giving spirit this holiday season! While out shopping, please pick up an extra gift for a needy child for Parks and Recreation’s annual toy drive. Toys can be dropped off at the Armory Sports Center (701 E. Ash) or the downtown Parks and Recreation office (#1 South Seventh Street).

Toys and monetary donations will also be accepted through Dec. 17. Cash, checks or credit cards are accepted. A letter of receipt for tax purposes will be provided for your generosity. Call 874-7460 for more information.

Holiday Events at Parks and Recreation

SANTA HOTLINE

- Only on Dec. 4

Children between the ages of 3-10 can call the North Pole from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. They will have the opportunity to speak with Santa, Mrs. Claus or an elf and personally give them their Christmas lists. Call 874-7473 or 874-6335 only at the specified times.

CITY KWANZAA CELEBRATION

- Douglass High School
- Saturday, Dec. 4, 2-5 p.m.

Celebrate this African-American holiday based around developing positive families and communities. The event includes community awards, entertainment and a holiday feast.

Call Parks and Recreation at 874-7460 for more information.

Christmas holiday

City offices will be closed Friday, Dec. 24, in observance of Christmas. However, residential refuse and curbside recycling collection will run on regular routes that day. The landfill will be open Dec. 24 but will be closed Dec. 25. Contact the Solid Waste Division at 874-6291 if you have questions. City buses will operate and parking meters will be enforced on Dec. 24; there will be no bus service on Dec 25.

Be prepared for winter weather

Winter is just around the corner. The Columbia/Boone County Office of Emergency Management cautions you to be ready. Being prepared could mean the difference between life and death.

Make sure to have enough basic supplies at home for you and your family for up to 96 hours. Medicine, food, water, batteries, blankets and cash are vital in an emergency supply kit. It is also important to have an NOAA Weather Radio for the latest weather information.

Have blankets and food in your car in case you are stranded. Also, check your car’s battery, fluids, brakes and wipers before winter hits. Prevent water from forming in your gas tank by keeping it full.

“Winter Weather Awareness Day” is Wednesday, Nov. 17. The Office of Emergency Management has publications available addressing winter preparation. These materials are available by calling 874-7400, or by accessing the OEM page of the City’s website at www.gocolumbiamo.com/EM.





Holiday travel tips

With the holiday travel season upon us, Columbia Regional Airport reminds travelers to plan ahead and allow extra time to ensure a more enjoyable travel experience. If your schedule is flexible, avoid peak travel days. In December, the two days preceding Christmas and the day or two after are typically busy. The earlier or later you can travel, or travelling on the holiday itself, will usually result in better prices, less wait time and better seat options. If you're not locked into vacation days mandated by school or work, being flexible with your travel dates can be a great cost-saving strategy.

When flying out of Columbia Regional, please arrive at the airport **one hour** before your scheduled flight to ensure all flight arrangements and security measures are complete. **The ticket counter closes 30 minutes prior to departure, and the airline will not issue boarding passes or check baggage less than 30 minutes prior to departure.** If possible, check in online and acquire your boarding pass at delta.com before you head to the airport. Checking your baggage online will also save you money.

For information about traveling out of Columbia Regional, go online to www.FlyMidMo.com. Book your tickets at www.delta.com or by calling Delta at 800-221-1212.

**Why drive when it's so easy to fly
Columbia Regional Airport!**

FY 2011 Budget Wrap-Up

On Sept. 20, the Columbia City Council approved a \$383 million City budget for FY 2011, which runs Oct. 1, 2010 - Sept. 30, 2011. Council members spent hours listening to public input and giving due consideration to the City's financial plan.

The City began three-year projections for the "general fund" portion of the budget in 2008. At about \$76 million, this portion of the overall budget is most dependent on tax dollars. Most of the rest of the \$383 million comes from utility revenues. Projections showed that FY 2012 would be the toughest year and that 2010 and 2011 budgets needed reductions to avoid a fiscal crisis in 2012.

The FY 2011 budget is \$383 million compared to \$464 million in FY 2010. Most of this 17.4 percent drop can be attributed to last year's one-time expenditures for the new sewer plant, purchase of one-fourth of the Columbia Energy Center and purchase of the COLT Railroad Transload Center. The budget includes about \$2.9 million from fund reserves.

To balance public safety against other discretionary expenditures, City Council held social services, arts and parks at nearly current funding levels while adding seven public safety employees: four in Fire; one in Police; and two in Joint Communications. The adopted budget includes funding to fill four Fire vacancies and to create a two-person fire company primarily responsible for medical emergency response. This was accomplished by eliminating contingency funds, holding wages, cutting travel and training and modest cuts in Fire operations.

The Council authorized a 2 percent electric utility rate increase and also took cost-containment actions (see the approved budget at GoColumbiaMo.com):

- No tax or user fee increases;
- No across-the-board raises for City employees;
- Reduced City car allowances;
- One employee layoff, elimination of two vacant positions in Law and Courts and four unfilled Fire positions.

OUTLOOK FOR 2012

In FY 2012, budget reductions in the \$1.5 - \$2 million range (or 2 - 2.5 percent) are needed to keep reserves at a fiscally responsible level. The City faces some important issues.

Over the last 10 years, the City has added more than 100 miles of new streets without adding any employees to maintain them. By 2012 or 2013, the current transportation sales tax will be unable to keep up with the costs of providing current levels of street maintenance and also fund airport and bus subsidies.

Pension and employee health insurance costs are ongoing concerns, and the mayor has appointed a pension task force to look at the issue.

Many senior employees are, or will be, eligible for retirement, so stepped-up training for current employees is a priority.

Growing the economy and developing good jobs is critical.

While the budget remains tight, Columbia has avoided the truly deep cuts suffered by many communities. With the help of strong elected leadership, dedicated residents who serve on boards and commissions and a professional group of administrators, Columbia will continue to weather the economic challenges.

14th Annual Columbia Values Diversity Awards

Help celebrate diversity in the community by nominating an individual, family, organization or group for the 14th annual Columbia Values Diversity awards. The awards are designed to show appreciation for those who have had a significant impact promoting diversity and cultural understanding.

The Columbia Values Diversity awards will be presented at the 18th annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration on Thursday, Jan. 13. The awards will recognize those whose work exemplifies the life and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by fostering individual dignity, racial equality, understanding, peacemaking and solving problems through non-violence. One individual/family award and one organization/group award will be presented.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, Nov. 30. Nomination forms are available by calling the Division of Human Services at 874-7488 (v) or 874-7356 (tty) or on the Web at www.GoColumbiaMo.com (Go Word: GoDiversityCelebration).

COLT bridge makes traveling safer

Motorists traveling north of Columbia on Highway 63 now have a smooth, less hazardous route. The federally funded Columbia Terminal Railroad (COLT) bridge over Highway 63 was completed in October for \$3.8 million. In the 1980s when upgrades to Highway 63 were being planned, the Norfolk and Western reported that they were going to abandon the rail line serving Columbia so an overpass was not built. Columbia industries needed rail service so the City of Columbia purchased the rail line in 1987. Both rail and highway traffic has increased 400 percent since the 1980s thereby presenting safety problems with the rail crossing.



The City of Columbia and the Missouri Department of Transportation studied various options to make the Highway 63 rail crossing safer. Lowering the speed limit was researched, but it was found that motorists were not slowing down enough to make a difference. Other options such as adding lanes or using a recycled bridge were also studied. In the end, it was found that the best solution was to build a new bridge.

Nominees sought for Lang Volunteer Award

Columbia residents are invited to nominate a City volunteer for the 2011 Howard B. Lang Jr. Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. The award honors an individual who has made a contribution to City government.

The Lang Award is made possible by Leo Hill, a past city manager who worked with Howard Lang when he served as mayor of Columbia. Hill wished to honor Lang for his service to the City through this award.

Nominees may take on any volunteer role that benefits the City: a board, commission or task force member, elected official or volunteer with any of Columbia's City departments. The recipient will be chosen based on his/her impact, initiative and length of service. Nominations will be accepted through Jan. 14. The recipient will be announced and honored in the spring of 2011.

Application forms and other details will be posted on the City's website. Learn more by contacting the Office of Neighborhood Services at 817-5050.

Parks & Recreation CALENDAR

Register online!

www.GoColumbiaMo.com

Call 874-7460 for more information.

DECEMBER 2010

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| 3 | Santa's Splash and Dash, ARC, 4 - 9:30 p.m., pre-register, \$20 per child, \$15 per additional child |
| 4 | Santa Hotline, children ages 3-7 call 874-7473, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. only |
| 4 | City Kwanzaa Celebration, Douglass High School, 2-5 p.m., free |
| 4-5 | Christmas at Maplewood, Maplewood House and Boone County Historical Society, www.maplewoodbarn.com |
| 31 | First Night 5K Run/Walk, Flat Branch Park, 4 p.m. |
| 31 | First Night 2011: Again from the Top!, The District and Stephens College, 7 p.m. to midnight, admission button is \$8 for ages 8 and over, \$10 at the door |

Boards and Commissions

The City is accepting applications for the following:

- Community Services Advisory Commission
- Finance Advisory & Audit Committee
- Firefighters Retirement Board
- Police Retirement Board
- Public Communications Resource Advisory Committee
- Special Business District Board

Application deadline is noon, Dec. 3. Applications and current vacancies for City boards and commissions are available online at www.GoColumbiaMo.com or at the City Clerk's Office. Call 874-7208 for information.