



COLUMBIA QUARTERLY

Your Source for City of Columbia News and Events

Summer/2025



Alderman Niemietz Retires After 28 Years

After more than 28 years of devoted service to the City of Columbia, Alderman Mary Ellen Niemietz is concluding her tenure on the City Council. Known for her steady leadership, deep community roots, and unwavering commitment to preserving and enhancing Columbia's natural spaces, Alderman Niemietz has been instrumental in developing and maintaining the City's parks, green spaces, and trail systems.

Her passion for the environment and community wellness played a key role in the ongoing success and expansion of the GM&O Trail and the improvement of numerous parks across the City. Whether advocating for safer pedestrian routes, supporting tree-planting initiatives, or expanding recreational opportunities for families, her work helped shape Columbia into the vibrant, green community it is today.

As Alderman Niemietz steps away from her official role, she will be succeeded by newly elected Alderman Jason Mayer. The City thanks Alderman Niemietz for her years of dedicated service and wishes her all the best in her next chapter. Her contributions will be felt for generations to come.

Centerville Road Reconstruction Phase 2

The Centerville Road Reconstruction Phase 2 Project is anticipated to begin in late summer or early fall. Baxmeyer Construction, Inc. will serve as the contractor for this phase.

The project includes new pavement, curb and gutter, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and water main installation along:

- Centerville from Columbia to Riebeling
- Columbia from Centerville to the Dead End
- Kremmel from Centerville to Schmidt

Once construction begins, and weather permitting, the project is expected to take 6 to 8 weeks to complete. Residents and motorists are advised to watch for detours and lane closures during this time. Your patience and cooperation are greatly appreciated as these improvements are carried out.

Mayor's Message



Mayor Bob Hill

It's hard to believe how quickly the last four years as your Mayor have flown by—but it's been incredible to see all that we've accomplished together! I want to sincerely thank all Columbia residents for reelecting me for a second term. I'm honored to continue serving this great City and look forward to building on the progress we've made.

One of the achievements I'm most proud of is our ability to upgrade critical infrastructure, initiate much-needed improvements to the City's utility systems, and plan thoughtfully for Columbia's future growth—all while honoring my commitment to hold the line on property taxes. In fact, the City's property tax rate has actually decreased by 7% during my first term. This success is only possible thanks to the continued strength of our local businesses, and new development that expands our tax base, helping to spread the cost of services more evenly.

We also recognize the ongoing concerns regarding the condition of the Valmeyer Road and D Road intersection. Please know that we are actively exploring all options to resolve this issue once and for all—while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and efficiently.

With summer upon us, it's a great time to reflect on what we've achieved and look ahead to exciting developments still to come. It's also the perfect season to enjoy some of Columbia's wonderful community events!

And don't forget—support local! Our businesses are the backbone of Columbia's economy. Let's keep them strong by shopping local and dining local all summer long.

Together, we'll continue making Columbia the very best it can be!

Summer Safety Tips

As summer begins, the Columbia Police Department reminds everyone to prioritize safety throughout the community. Warmer months bring increased activity, so please take extra precautions.



This summer, CPD will be heightening its focus on traffic safety with targeted enforcement in the following areas::

- Speeding
- Distracted Driving
- Stop Light Violations
- Impaired Driving

General Safety Tips

To help keep Columbia safe, we ask residents to take the following steps:

- Lock your vehicles at all times
- Stay alert to potential scams
- Be mindful of increased bicycle traffic
- Report any dangerous or suspicious activity to CPD

Together, we can ensure a safe and enjoyable summer for everyone in Columbia!

Beware of Phone and Text Scams

Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated, and scams via phone (vishing) and text (smishing) on the rise. Scammers may pose as banks or government agencies, in attempts to steal your personal information or infect your device with malicious software.

Stay Safe:

- If a call or text seems suspicious, hang up or delete it.
- Never Click on unfamiliar links
- Contact the organization directly using a verified phone number
- Remember: legitimate companies will never ask for personal information via phone or text.

Welcome to Columbia's New Businesses!

Dusty Dogz Bar and Grill
123 S. Main Street

Domex Properties
201 Southwoods Center

Rustic Rooster Barber
121 N. Main Street

**BJC Medical Group
Convenient Care**
1000 Eleven South 1A

Donut Panic
1005 S. Main Street Unit B

Department of Public Works Infrastructure Projects

The Department of Public Works (DOPW) is undertaking several important infrastructure projects this year to improve safety, function, and longevity of Columbia's roads and utilities.

Current/Planned Work Areas:

Water Division - Watermain replacement on North Evergreen, Cascade, South Metter Avenue and Quarry Road

Street Division - Concrete Replacement and Oil and Chip Programs - visit www.columbial.gov for updated locations

Sewer Division - General Maintenance including sewer line jetting to help prevent backups and lagoon upgrades

Please drive cautiously near work areas and help ensure the safety of workers and residents alike.

Did you know?

Residents are reminded that the lakes located within Lakefield Place and Burroughs Subdivisions are private property. These lakes are designated for the exclusive use of homeowners within those communities.

Fishing or entering these areas without permission is considered trespassing under Illinois law. We appreciate your cooperation in respecting private property rights.

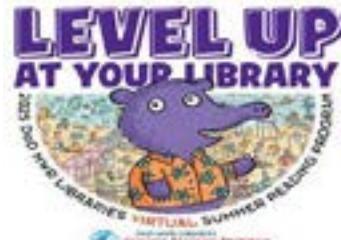
Attention Business & Multi-Family Building Owners

In accordance with Columbia Municipal Code, all entities using an/or occupying multi-family and nonresidential buildings within city limits must visibly screen, physically cover, and enclose all refuse containers that are one cubic yard or larger located outdoors. Please ensure compliance by November 1, 2025, to avoid violations. Thank you for helping keep Columbia clean!

Celebrate Summer at the Library

Looking for fun this summer? Sign up for free events and reading challenges through the Columbia Public Library at columbialibrary.org!

The 2025 Summer Reading Program theme is "Level Up at Your Library." Readers of all ages can participate and win fun prizes donated by local sponsors. Some exciting highlights include:



- Live Butterfly Tent - Made possible by Scott Credit Union
- Teen Minute to Win It Game Night - Sponsored by makers on Main Street
- Puzzle Races for All Ages - Thanks to Monroe County YMCA and Edward Jones

Explore all 70 summer events and register today by visiting the "Events" tab on columbialibrary.org.





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Know Columbia



Upcoming Events & Services

June 22	Music at Metter Featuring The Core Extreme. Bring your friends and lawn chairs. <i>Metter Park 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.</i>	HOURS Mon - Thurs: 9 am - 8 pm Fri: 9 am - 5 pm Sat: 9 am - 4 pm Phone (618) 281-4237
June 22	Hot Rods for Heroes Car Show <i>Historic main Street 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.</i>	Seniors' Club (55+) American Legion in Columbia Thursdays. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
July 4	4th of July Bike Parade & Activities Children parade down Main St. to Metter Park. 10 am - noon. 4th of July Celebration Food, games, and fireworks! <i>American Legion Park 11 a.m. - 11 p.</i>	Butterfly Encounters (All Ages) Saturday, June 21; 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Metter Park .
July 13	Music at Metter Featuring Fanfare. Bring your friends, and lawn chairs. <i>Metter Park 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm.</i>	*Game Truck Party (8-17yrs) Monday, June 30, 5 p.m. & 6 p.m. Metter Park.
August 2	Electronic Recycling For Columbia Residents Only <i>McDannold Drive 8:00 am - noon.</i>	*Puzzle Races (All Ages) Monday, June 30; 6 - 8:30 p.m. Monroe County YMCA.
August 3	Taste of Columbia Enjoy the best food and drink Columbia has to offer. <i>Historic Main Street Time TBD</i>	*Minute to Win It Teen Game Night (11-17 yrs) Wednesday, July 9; 6 - 8 p.m. at the library. * The Wonderful Wizard of Oz Puppet Show Saturday, July 12; 2 p.m. Columbia Library.
September 5 & 6	Songs4Soldiers 12th Annual Benefit Concert. Bolm-Schuhkraft Park	Nolan's Peter Zoo (All Ages) Friday, July 18; 10 a.m. Garden Place Living Center
 Details at www.columbialil.gov/city_calendar or call (618) 281-7144		Foam Gone Bananas Party Saturday, July 26; 10 a.m. Metter Park. *For event details and registration, call or visit www.columbialibrary.org