



# Columbia Quarterly

## CITY OF COLUMBIA

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



## Spring 2014

Mayor Hutchinson

Spring is the time for fresh, new beginnings, so what's new in the city? Main Street has a new look, new businesses have opened around town, new homes are being built and the Market Place is now Schnucks. A birthday cake is located at the Monroe County Welcome Center as part of the St. Louis 250 anniversary celebration. Read the article below to find out what that is about. Also, the Commander and Master Chief of our namesake submarine, the USS Columbia (SSN771), will be in town. We will honor them and the crew at a dinner on March 13th at the American Legion Post 581. This event is open to everyone, so mark your calendar to attend and get your picture taken with a nuclear submarine commander — tickets are available at City Hall.

I know we are all ready to get out of doors and enjoy all our city has to offer. "Get out and get involved" — I'm sure you've heard me say that before. Well, Columbia is special because of its great community members. Do some spring-cleaning of your soul and spirit and get more out of your community. Volunteer, help a neighbor, engage a charity, attend a school play or concert, go to the library — see what's happening around your community. Where to start you ask? City Hall, a local church, one of the local civic organizations; call Paul Ellis, Al Hudzik or me and we will get you connected. Columbia keeps getting better because of citizens like you.

Don't forget to visit the city's website ([www.columbiaillinois.com](http://www.columbiaillinois.com)) to check out our upcoming events—if your group has an event planned, feel free to contact City Hall to have it listed on the city website calendar.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns, comments or just want to chat, please contact me at 281-7144 ext. 109, at home at 281-5199 or [khutchinson@columbiaillinois.com](mailto:khutchinson@columbiaillinois.com).

Sincerely, Kevin Hutchinson, Mayor

### Monroe County Welcome Center Takes the Cake!

Thanks to efforts of residents from Columbia, Hecker, Waterloo, Maeystown and Valmeyer, the Monroe County Welcome Center in Columbia has been selected as a regional site for the "Cakeway to the West" campaign.



This month, the group stl250 is installing 250 fiberglass birthday cakes at iconic locations throughout the St. Louis region. Each cake will be activated with a social media app that shares information about the location and awards users points for visiting the cake. It's a great opportunity to raise visibility about each location's history, services and stories. The Welcome Center was selected after receiving an overwhelming number of votes during an online campaign.

Located at Gall Rd. & Illinois Route 3 in Columbia, the Monroe County Welcome Center features displays, exhibits, photographs and other memorabilia from the history of Monroe County and the Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail, as well as visitor services staffed on a regular basis. Five local governments, including the City of Columbia, cooperatively fund, maintain and manage the Center through a multi-jurisdictional Steering Committee.

stl250 is a volunteer-led nonprofit organization created to plan and promote the 250th anniversary of the founding of the City of St. Louis in 1764. Throughout 2014 and in partnership with institutions across the St. Louis bi-state region, stl250 will host events that reflect on the past, celebrate the present, provide a positive outlook for a successful future and increase civic pride throughout the St. Louis region. For more information, visit [stl250.org](http://stl250.org), follow the effort on Twitter @stl250, or check out [Facebook.com/stl250](http://Facebook.com/stl250).



## DISTRACTED DRIVING

Studies have shown that distracted driving is an increasing problem on the roadways throughout the nation. During traffic crash investigations in Columbia our officers are finding distracted driving is becoming much more prevalent as a contributing factor to traffic crashes. Illinois has enacted a law effective January 2014, that attempts to deter drivers from operating a vehicle while distracted by electronic communication devices.

**“Electronic communication device” means an electronic device, including but not limited to a hand-held wireless telephone, hand-held personal digital assistant, or a portable or mobile computer, but does not include a global positioning system or navigation system or a device that is physically or electronically integrated into the motor vehicle.**

The new law has several exemptions with one being: a driver using an electronic communication device in hands free or voice operated mode which may include the use of a headset. We encourage everyone to read the entire new law by researching “625 ILCS 5/12-610.2”

In order to combat the problem our Officers are conducting “Distracted Driving Initiatives” looking for offenders in areas identified by a higher concentration of traffic crashes. Chief Joseph A. Edwards



## DRUG FREE COMMUNITY

The Monroe County Coalition for Drug Free Communities is a newly formed group of concerned citizens, civic leaders and health, education and business professionals. As stated in its name, the objective of the group is to increase awareness regarding the serious issues of alcohol abuse, prescription drug abuse and heroin in Monroe County. At a recent meeting, Monroe County Coroner Vicki Koerber spoke about these issues and the dramatic increases in drug overdoses in the past three years, including overdose calls for EMS, which have increased by 40% from 2012 to 2013. Other research statistics confirm that this is a growing issue, not only nationally, but right here in our communities. While residents may believe this is a problem that only exists in other cities or counties, prescription drug and heroin abuse is happening right here in our own backyard and it is a growing concern with area youth, young adults and adults alike.

The coalition is working to gain awareness and increase knowledge for signs of abuse, treatment options and support networks available for those experiencing problems or for family members and friends of those in need. Although only in its third month of organization, the group has been instrumental in supporting a public Drug Abuse Forum and bringing together interested parties and available resources. The group is working on the development of key communications tools including a Facebook page, website and logo. Those interested in learning more are welcome to attend the coalition meeting the first Monday of each month at the YMCA at 4 pm.

## ROADWAY/BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION WORK IN 2013

2013 was a very busy year for roadway and bridge construction in the City of Columbia. In the spring the Palmer/Ghent/Quarry road project adding the lane onto southbound Palmer between Old Route 3 and the on ramp to IL Route 3 was completed. In late summer into early winter three major projects were performed. The Valmeyer Road Rehabilitation project removed the existing, deteriorated bridge deck replacing it with a new bridge deck. The Cherry Street Improvement between Main and Liberty removed and replaced the roadway with a new concrete roadway with a storm sewer system and sidewalk. The Main Street Streetscape from Cherry to Oak constructed new curbs and sidewalk, lighting and pedestrian crosswalks. The roadway/bridge projects required either a total closure of the road in the vicinity of the project or had restricted travel widths or limited access in the area of the project. The motoring public and residents/businesses in the vicinity of the projects were inconvenienced. A big thank you goes out to the motoring public and the residents/businesses in the area of the projects for their consideration and patience as the roadway/bridge work was undertaken. The consideration and patience shown allowed the work to move along and ultimately be completed in a timely manner. All projects were completed within the timeframes allowed. The contractors are also commended for working diligently on the projects and getting them completed on time and within budgets. With everyone's thoughtfulness the City was able to rebuild, enhance or improve major roadways/bridges in the City for everyone's benefit. Thanks again for your consideration and patience. It is greatly appreciated.

## WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

KAT Jewelry , Boutique & Gifts 115 W. Gundlach Fine jewelry, women's clothes, shoes & accessories	Roseberry Farms 603 N. Main St. Antiques, books & Collectables
Schnucks 1000 Columbia Centre Retail Supermarket	Roessler & Company 430 Columbia Centre Accounting Office
The Vapor Warehouse 538 S. Main St. Premium e-cigarette store	J&W Small Motors 237 N. Main (Rear) Small motor repair, buy, sell, trade

## UTILITY BILL DIRECT DEPOSIT

Don't forget you can sign up for direct debit payment of your monthly utility bill. This is a free service and can be initiated by completing a direct debit form which is available at City Hall.

## NEWS FROM COLUMBIA CUSD #4



Columbia Unit School District has a lot to celebrate! We are proud of our students and staff:

**CMS Robotics Team** - won the regional competition and competed at the state competition in Champaign. The team earned their highest marks!

**Illinois State Scholars** - Congratulations to 24 high school students who were named State Scholars (top 10% in State of Illinois): Hannah Birk, Ian Boyer-Edwards, Nicholas Busch, Samuel Drennan, Sarah Garmer, Katherine Grindstaff, Emily Harrison, Nicholas Kirkpatrick, Alexandra Leingang, Sean McCarty, Conner McDonald, Emily O'Connor, Jacob Rein, Kristin Rein, Emily Seibel, Jordan Smith, Brian Spargo, Lucas Stehlík, Libbye Tellor, Karlye Thompson, and Kaylee Vanatta.

**Monroe County Touchstone Energy Grant Recipients** - Teachers Martha Shelton, Amy Froess and Marilyn Ziegler were chosen to receive \$500 each. Also, teachers Denise Cogo and Martha Shelton were awarded \$250 each by the Illinois Educator's Credit Union. Teachers write grants to fund classroom initiatives!

**Philanthropy** - CCUSD4 makes a commitment toward helping others: \$700 donated by 8th grade boys' & girls' basketball teams to The Patriots; \$1,000 to Violence Prevention; \$1,000 to Siteman Cancer Center, \$898 to American Red Cross; \$450 Hair Cutting at CMS; \$1,592 and gifts for needy families from 6th grade class, food pantry donations from CHS and Parkview, and \$441 to St. Louis Children's Hospital from Eagleview.

**iPad Donation** - Through the Bikers Save Lives program, five iPads and gift cards were donated to special education classes to support individualized instruction.

**ADM Grant** - The school district gladly accepted a \$10,000 grant from Archer Daniels Midland for the new greenhouse at Columbia High School. Grant funds, in addition to the Agri-Science Association partnership with the school district, made it possible to construct the new greenhouse.

**State Bowlers** - Cameron Touchette and Spencer Jerome qualified and competed at the state bowling tournament on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Great job!

**State Music** - The music department escorted four state qualifiers to Peoria last month. Congratulations to Ian Boyer-Edwards, Claire Ryterski, Mady Wetzel, and Brannan Hutchinson.

**Cheer Team** - 1st Place Finish at Sectionals and went to state on February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>! Great job to the girls and Coach Walters and Coach Rose!



### All Roads (Well, Trails Anyway) Lead to Columbia

With the adoption last year of the Explore Columbia bike & pedestrian plan, the City of Columbia laid a framework for development of more non-motorized facilities for residents and visitors. City leaders are also working with regional partners to develop two new trails that will promote local heritage while increasing Columbia's appeal as a place to live, play and visit.

The **Kaskaskia-Cahokia Trail**, considered the first road in Illinois, linked French colonial villages roughly following the route of Illinois 3 today. For the past two years, Columbia Heritage & Preservation Commission (CHPC) chair Dennis Patton has conducted thorough research on the Trail to craft a manuscript and presentation that explains in practical terms the history of the trail and its impact on the area. Volunteers from three counties have been working to help Patton document the trail and promote its vital role in the early history of American settlement in Illinois. In October, the project was one of nine award winners honored by Landmarks Illinois as part of the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards honoring individuals, organizations, and projects throughout the state that represent excellence in historic preservation.

Columbia, Waterloo and Monroe County will soon begin installing signage commemorating the trail as part of an effort that will link historic sites in St. Clair and Randolph counties, too. The idea is to identify the historic route and promote it in like manner to Route 66 and the National Highway elsewhere in Illinois.

The **Mounds Heritage Trail** will connect a World Heritage Site-Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site--to St. Louis to the west and Columbia to the south. This trail will provide a unique blend of historical, cultural, and natural features where visitors can discover not only mounds sites, but museums, historic buildings, cultural landmarks, and more. Following historic markers, visitors will be able to bike or hike the trail, or follow it by car, depending on what pace they select.

The Mounds Heritage Trail is being developed as part of an effort by the Heartlands Conservancy and partners to elevate the Cahokia Mounds to national park status as well as to protect, connect, interpret, promote, and preserve evidences of the prehistoric Mississippian Mounds civilization that once thrived in the region. The effort is being supported locally by CHPC and the Oerter Foundation.

**Commemorative Brick Paver Program**  
Looking for a lasting gift? Honor family and friends with an engraved commemorative brick at Metter Park or the Monroe County Welcome Center (Shoemaker School House). A brick is an excellent opportunity to acknowledge accomplishments, and remember and honor loved ones -- creating a lasting memory. Order forms are available at the Clerk's Office or on the City's website [www.columbiaillinois.com](http://www.columbiaillinois.com) – permits & applications.



### BUDGET TIME

The City is in the process of preparing the budget for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2014 and ending April 30, 2015. At Committee of the Whole meetings from now until mid-April, City Administrator Al Hudzik and Accounting Manager Linda Sharp will discuss various components of the budget. Topics covered will include projected revenue, projected expenditures, capital projects, equipment purchases, cash flow projections and fee schedule adjustments. The budget will be posted for public inspection in early—mid April.



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## Upcoming Events

**USS COLUMBIA DINNER & RECEPTION** March 13, 5:30-9:30 pm:  
Meet the Commanding Officer and Chief of the USS Columbia. Music by the Sofa Kings—American Legion.

**TILE WALL ART & PET ADOPTION**  
March 15, 2-4:30 pm: Welcome Center

**TRIVIA & SILENT AUCTION**  
March 15, 7 pm: Benefiting St. Paul's 1874 Historic School—Lutheran Hall.

**MOUNDS PROJECT PRESENTATION**  
March 19, 7 pm: at the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville

**MOUSE RACES:** March 22, 7 pm:  
CVFD Scholarship Fund—Turner Hall.

**ICC 5K/1 Mile Run/Walk:** March 29, 9am: Immaculate Conception Church

**A CAUSE FOR PAWS**  
April 5, 5:30 pm: Helping Strays Dinner Auction—The Falls.

**MO CO EXPO:** April 10, 6-9 pm:  
Business expo, Music by Silverback, prizes and fun in store—American Legion.

**EASTER EGG HUNT**  
April 12, 10:30 am: For kids 10 & under at the City Park sponsored by Century 21.



### HISTORIC MAIN ST. BUNNY sHOP:

**April 12—13:** Free Easter egg with purchase at participating businesses (while supplies last). Each egg contains a special coupon or prize.



### CITY WIDE YARD SALE

**April 25 & 26:** 80+ yard sales in town—Map/directory available April 24.

### REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE EVENT

**April 26, 10 am—2 pm:** Collecting gently used clothing, toys, home décor, recycling appliances, electronics, paper shredding & more—HS parking lot.

### VISITOR SEASON KICK-OFF

**May 1, 4 pm:** Dedication of plaque from the County School Assoc. of America—Monroe County Welcome Center.

### COMMUNITY DAY TO FIGHT LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA

**May 3:** Yard sale, bake sale & car wash events benefiting the fight of these cancers.

**MOMS ON MAIN:** **May 10 & 11:** Find a perfect gift for Mom. Free flower with purchase at participating businesses (while supplies last) - prizes & special discounts.

### LARGE ITEM TRASH PICK-UP

**June 3:** Residential curbside pick up.

### MUSIC AT METTER

**June 8, 6-8 pm:** Vintage country & upbeat bluegrass by Highway 15. Sponsored by George Weber Chevrolet & Maverick Technologies.

### LIBRARY EVENTS



#### BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY DAY

**March 15:** Fun giveaways all day. New library card members (grades K-12) will be entered into a special drawing for a \$25 gift card.

**MEET THE AUTHOR** **April 10, 7pm:** Communist concentration camp survivor Elizabeth Walters discusses her book "Barefoot In The Rubble".

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

**April 14—17:** Food for fines, items will go to area food pantry.

#### CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

**May 12—17:** Stop by during the week and let your child pick a book to keep.

#### SUMMER READING 2014

"Paws to Read" a reading program is for everyone. Stop by between June 1—July 26 to see some of the things you could win.

#### LIBRARY FACTOID

Your library card can be used at any public library in the State of Illinois.

[www.columbialibrary.org](http://www.columbialibrary.org) — 281-4237

### ELECTRONICS & APPLIANCES RECYCLING

**March 15, April 19, May 17**  
**8 am—1 pm:**  
Public Works parking lot

