

# Columbia Quarterly

**CITY OF COLUMBIA**

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



The fall season is knocking on our door and inviting us to step out and enjoy some great, outdoor opportunities. The cool, crisp sights and smells are sure to renew your spirits. Joe Bocardi's, Our House Café, Chateau La Vin, Who Dats, Reifschniders Grill & Grape, Tiny's Pub & Grill, Bully's Smokehouse, City Saloon and Mokka Café all have nice outdoor dining areas for you to enjoy. Live music can be found at several locations as well. Plenty of special events are in store — Songs 4 Soldiers, Art on the Bluffs, FestiFall and the Christian Music Fest — all great excuses to get outside. So grab some friends and enjoy a day or evening out on the town close to home!

October is "Domestic Violence Awareness" month. If you or you know of someone who is on the receiving end of physical and/or emotional violence, threats of violence, abuse and neglect please call the crisis hotline at 939-8114 or (800) 924-0096.

Financially, the city is doing well. We are running on a tight budget, so our department heads are cautious and spending wisely.

I continue to work with the legislators in Springfield -- keeping an eye out for unfunded mandates. I am doing my best to protect our local money and protecting our state and federal funding, and urging federal and state moneys to be used to upgrade our roads.

Enjoy this beautiful fall season, and remember, if you have any questions, concerns, comments or just want to chat please contact me at 281-7144 ext. 109 (office) or 281-5199 (home) or khutchinson@columbiaillinois.com.

Sincerely, Kevin Hutchinson, Mayor



## Electric Aggregation Program

In 2012, voters approved a referendum to allow the City to purchase electric supply on their behalf in order to achieve savings with their utility bills. The City's Electric Aggregation Program has been extremely successful, saving local residents hundreds of dollars since its inception.

This summer is a perfect example of the benefits of the program. Since local customers have a contracted rate through the City's program, residents and small business who participate were not impacted by Ameren's 30% rate increase that went into effect on July 1st. Columbia's 3,206 customers will save an average of \$130 annually since they are locked in at a lower rate. This amounts to a total of \$416,780 in annual savings for the community.



## Sue Spargo Hired as Community Relations & Tourism Coordinator



The Columbia City Council is happy to announce the hiring Sue Spargo, a local resident, for the new position of Community Relations & Tourism Coordinator (which combines two previous part-time positions at the city).

In her new position, Spargo will be responsible for coordinating/organizing/promoting special events, serving as staff liaison to community organizations, coordinating tourism activities on behalf of the City and providing administrative support to the Director of Community & Economic Development on special projects.

Spargo has earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a master's degree in education from McKendree University. Her previous work experience includes employment with the Shiloh Village School District, the Suburban Journals, Famous-Barr, and the DataMax Corporation. She lives in Columbia with her husband, Darrell, and they have three sons—Drew, Brian and Ben. Welcome Sue!

## Grass Clippings - Mulching vs. Bagging

Grass clippings are nature's best organic fertilizer. Plus, clippings are available and they are free! To keep clippings out of landfills and to avoid decaying piles of moldy debris, let clippings fall back to the turf. And, avoid the chore of bagging!

Follow the one-third rule when mowing - never remove more than one-third of the turf stand height in any given mowing. Clippings are mostly water and they degrade quickly. They become a great source of organic matter and add nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and micro-nutrients back to the soil. Studies have shown that clippings decompose and can be available in mineral form for your turf in five days or less.

If the one-third rule is followed, clippings will not accumulate. They will add to moisture retention of the soil and help to regulate moisture loss. Contrary to a common myth, clippings will not contribute to the build-up of thatch. An accumulation of clippings, however, can cause a heating-up process which may contribute to heat stress and disease. That is why following the one-third rule is important.

So, return your clippings to the turf! If you use foliar applications of fertilizer, the benefit is increased. This positive and environmentally friendly practice will benefit both you and your lawn.



Photo courtesy of wphotography

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Monroe County Welcome Center, housed in the renovated Shoemaker School at Gall Rd. (S. Main & Illinois Route 3), is open for the 2015 season. The Welcome Center provides tourist information for visitors to our area -- volunteers are needed.

The Welcome Center is open each Wednesday through Friday from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., and Sundays from 2 - 5 p.m.

The Center has full climate control, a telephone, Wi-Fi and access to restrooms. While we cannot offer a wage, we do offer flexible working hours, training, and an incentive program.

Potential volunteers should contact Sue Spargo, Community Relations & Tourism Coordinator at [spargo@columbiaillinois.com](mailto:spargo@columbiaillinois.com) or 281-7144 Ext. 134.



The 2015-2016 school year has officially begun! The return of the school year causes an increase in traffic in the morning, as well as the afternoon. According to recent reports, traffic crashes, specifically traffic fatalities, are up across the country by 14%. Traffic crashes in the City of Columbia have increased by 4% through July with a total of 151 reportable traffic crashes. Injuries related to traffic crashes have increased by 14% with 42 reported mid-year. The Columbia Police Department continues to work with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to obtain grant money which allows the department to conduct additional traffic enforcement in an effort to reduce these numbers. During designated safety patrols, officers specifically focus on violations that we refer to as the "Fatal Five." These violations include speeding, failure to wear a seatbelt, driving under the influence, distracted driving, and traffic light violations. On a daily basis, approximately 90,000 cars travel through our city limits. Our officers are tasked with ensuring the safety of all the passengers in these vehicles. We are asking our citizens to comply with traffic laws as well as report those who are not complying in an effort to reduce the number of crashes in the city. Please be especially careful and observant around our designated school zones. If you have young drivers in your family, please remind them every time they leave your residence about the importance of traffic safety and obeying the traffic laws. Every year the leading cause of teenage deaths continues to be traffic crashes. The men and women of the Columbia Police Department hope that together we can reduce the number of traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities that occur not only during the school year but throughout the year as a whole.

Joseph A. Edwards, Chief of Police

## News from Columbia Unit School District



Columbia Unit School District #4 would like to welcome returning and new students and families to the 2015-2016 school year! CUSD 4 currently serves 2,010 students in Grades K-12.

- The school district would like to welcome two new administrators to the district. Mrs. April Becherer is the new Assistant Principal at Eagleview. Mr. Brad Landgraf will serve as principal for both Parkview School and Eagleview Elementary. In addition, please welcome Mrs. Angie Huels as the new CHS Assistant Principal. Mrs. Huels replaces Mrs. Goacher who is the new Director of Special Education for the school district.
- The district would like to congratulate Mrs. Linda Pickett, CHS teacher and Student Council Adviser, for being elected the National Student Council Adviser of the Year! This award is the highest honor an adviser can receive. In addition, the CHS Student Council earned its sixth consecutive National Gold Student Council Award!
- The Jr. ROTC brought home the 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy from Washington, D.C. as representatives competed in the National Academic Challenge against ROTC programs across the country. Congratulations to Columbia participants Zoe Schmidt, Shelby Crook, and Kaylee Fisk.
- Parents Wanted! CUSD 4 is looking for interested parents to join one or more of the parent associations that support students and programs. Please consider becoming a member of: PTA (Parent Teacher Association), Ag Science Association, Music Boosters, and Sports Boosters. In addition, the Columbia School District Foundation will soon unveil its new website and areas in need of support. Contact information can be found on the district's website or call the district office (281-4772).
- For sport fans in the community, a family season pass can be obtained at the high school office. The cost for the season pass is \$100.00 which will allow family entry at all CMS and CHS athletic events. Go Eagles!

For school district and building information, please access the district's website at [www.columbia4.org](http://www.columbia4.org). Thank you!

### WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

**Connect Hearing, Inc.**  
960 Columbia Centre  
Hearing Healthcare

**A New Identity Group, Inc.**  
840 Columbia Centre  
Protection from home  
improvement fraud

**Vapor Wize (coming soon)**  
970 Columbia Centre  
E-Cig / Vapor Shop

**emi + j (coming soon)**  
113 W. Gundlach  
Retail—Children's Clothing



### LIMB AND LEAF PICK UP PROGRAM FOR 2015

The limb pick up service for Fall 2015 will take place the weeks beginning on October 12<sup>th</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup>. If you have limbs to be picked up please have them by the curb in front of your residence by 6 a.m. on either Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup> or Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>.

The leaf pick up service will begin on Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup> and continue until Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. You may place your leaves by the curb but not in the street at any time. Continual sweeps will be made through the city to pick up the leaves. It is recommended (if possible) you cover the pile(s) of leaves so they do not get wet which makes the leaves difficult to pick up. No leaf pick up will be done prior to October 26<sup>th</sup> or past December 4<sup>th</sup>. Piles of leaves shall be free of grass clippings, limbs, branches and twigs, acorns, gumballs or anything other than leaves. The leaf vacuums cannot pick up these types of items.

If you have any questions about the leaf and limb pick up service please do not hesitate to contact City Hall at 281-7144.



City of Columbia  
208 S. Rapp Avenue  
P.O. Box 467  
Columbia, IL 62236

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## Upcoming Events

For more info call 281-7144 or visit [www.columbiailinois.com](http://www.columbiailinois.com)—calendar

**Electronics & Appliances Recycling**  
(3rd Sat.) - Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21 8am-noon DOPW Parking Lot, collecting electronics, appliances, batteries & more!

### Songs4Soldiers

**Sept. 12, 4-11pm:** Featuring performances by Pettycash Junction, Super Majik Robots, Where's Charlie? and Superjam. Kids's zone, food & beverage vendors—benefiting combat veterans at Bolm-Schuhkraft Park. (Rain date Sept. 13)

**Art on the Bluffs Art Walk**  
**Sept. 19, 10am-6pm:** Art Du Soleil will be the sight of various artists, demonstrations, student gallery, kid's area, food, drinks & music on Main St.

**St. Paul UCC Craft Fair**  
**Sept. 19 & 20**

**FestiFall Sept. 27, 1-6pm:** Music by the Smash Band, food, wine tasting, unique merchandise and kid's fall fun at Metter Park!



**Christian Music Fest**  
**Oct. 4, 1-6pm:** A variety of Christian & Folk music by local churches, food & drink vendors and activities for the kids.

### Witches Ghoulish Night Out

**Oct. 8:** Adult witches costume contest, shop, food & brew — a wicked good time on Main St!



### Tree Limb Pick-Up

**Weeks of Oct. 12 & Oct. 19**  
Place limbs (only) near curb by 6 am.

**Halloween Hi Jinks**  
**Oct. 24, 10am-12:30pm:** Participating businesses on Main St. welcome trick-or-treaters.

### Leaf Pick-Up

**Oct. 26 through Dec. 4**  
Place leaves by curb (not in street). Continual sweeps will be made.



**Scare Square & Pumpkin Glow**  
**Oct. 31, 5:30-7:30pm:** Trunk-or-treating & more for the kids! Enter/vote for your favorite glowing pumpkin.

### Veteran's Day

**Nov. 11, 11am:** Ceremony at American Legion.



**Holiday Hunt Nov. 21 & 22:** Aim for great deals for the holidays; chances to win nice prizes too!

## LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

### Babygarten \*

**Meets every Tues., 10am**



A fun and interactive session where you can make new friends and have fun. We will share songs, stories and rhymes. Ages 4—18 months.

### Lego Story Time

**Meets every Tues., 4pm**

Come build a love of books. All ages.



### Library Friends Pre-K \*

**Meets every Wed., 9:30am**

Ages 3—5.

### Story Hour \*

**1st & 3rd Thurs., 10am**

Share stories, rhymes and crafts. Ages 3 1/2—5.

### Tot Time \*

**2nd and 4th Thurs.**

**2 Sessions—10am & 10:45am**

Ages 18 months — 3 1/2 yrs.

\* Registration Required

### Halloween Hoopla

**Oct. 26, 11am Ages 3-5**



### Friends of the Library Meeting

**Oct. 26, 7pm**

Our Friends group helps to enhance the public library's collection and services. Please join us, there's always room for you!

