CITY OF COLUMBIA

Columbia Quarterly

www.columbiaillinois.com

208 S. RAPP AVENUE SPRING 2008

From the desk of Mayor Hutchinson

As Mayor of the City of Columbia, it is a privilege to be writing the first article for the new City newsletter. Since becoming Mayor, the newsletter project has been among my top priorities and I am thrilled to see this project realized.

Throughout my term, I have expressed my strong belief that all governmental units should be transparent to the constituents they serve and I have heard many residents say they would like to see City Hall publish a newsletter. I believe this newsletter will help me, as well as the City Council and staff, better serve the public and keep the citizens of Columbia informed.

I like to think of this publication as an extension of the other media the City has already established to communicate with residents—the website, published Mayor's reports, City Hall postings, etc. I believe the aforementioned media serve a great purpose but are unable of achieving one core goal—reaching every Columbia resident. With this newsletter, the City is finally able to provide key information to every household and business in the City.

At this time, the newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis. In between editions, I encourage you to visit the City's website or City Hall if you have questions about any City happenings. I hope you will come to look forward to receiving each edition of the newsletter and will enjoy reading this publication as much as we have enjoyed writing it for you!

Mayor Hutchinson can be reached at khutchinson@columbiaillinois.com or (618) 281-7144 ext. 109

City Meeting Information

- **City Council meetings are held the first and third Mondays of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the second floor Council Chamber at City Hall.**
- **Aldermanic Committee meetings are typically held on the second, fourth, and occasional fifth Mondays of the month.**
- **Information regarding other boards, commissions, and committees and their meeting dates and locations can be found on the City's website or obtained through the City Clerk's office.**

Columbia Recycling Day

The City encourages residents to follow the ICS 2nd grade students' Earth Day "Go Green" theme by participating in the annual recycling event on Saturday, June 7th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the City Hall parking lot..

Several local partners are helping with this event. Nice Twice will be accepting gently used clothing, shoes, furniture, toys and other household items. Reliable Sanitation will provide two special "large item" dumpsters for unusable items (chairs, small tables and BBQ grills, bikes, etc.). Web Innovations & Technologies Services will be accepting computer monitors, TV's, lawn equipment, home electronics and other large appliances (for a small fee).

Free yard sale permits will be issued for sales on June 6th and/or 7th. Curbside pick-up for large items is scheduled for June 10th.

To promote Columbia's recycling program, free recycling bins will be available at the event while supplies last (one bin per residence). A recycling truck for glass, plastic and aluminum will also be available until noon; newspapers, however, are best returned to local school recycling bins. Gently used or new books will be accepted by the Columbia Library.

Hazardous household waste will not be accepted; however, the IEPA will have a collection on old Valmeyer Road at the corner of Lake Road and Rt. 156 on June 7th from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Call Jackie Hausmann at 281-7144 ext. 106 or visit the City's website for additional information.

Mayor Hutchinson enjoys Earth Day "Go Green" festivities with a group of environmentally-minded ICS 2nd graders

Get Involved!

"These boards and commissions are vital to the City…" -Mayor Kevin Hutchinson

The City is always looking for civic-minded individuals to serve on various boards and commissions. Currently, the City's boards and commissions are the Zoning Board of Appeals, Plan Commission, Street Graphics Advisory Board/Architectural Review Committee, Library Board, Heritage and Preservation Commission, Board of Trustees of the Police Pension Fund, Board of Fire and Police Commissioners, and Electrical Commission.

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please contact Theresa Lucas-Stephan at 281-7144 x110 or theresa@columbiaillinois.com. Your name and information will be kept on file. Should a position become available, the Mayor will contact all interested residents for interviews and recommend an appointment based on these interviews. According to Mayor Hutchinson, "These boards and commissions are vital to the City— they review policy, make recommendations, and oversee numerous programs. I am always thrilled when a resident approaches me with an interest in serving the City in this capacity and am thankful for all the members that are currently serving."

CPD Receives Grant

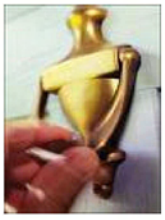
The City of Columbia congratulates the Police Department on a recently awarded grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. The $13,065 grant will assist the City's public safety departments to make energy-efficient upgrades on the Public Safety Complex, resulting in a reduction in utility usage and costs. A special thanks to Deputy Chief Jerry Paul for his work on researching and applying for the grant and for his continued efforts to reduce costs within the City - specifically the public safety departments.

According to City Administrator Anthony Traxler, the City is currently in the process of applying for grants through the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation to improve the energy efficiency of street lights. Traxler indicated even minor improvements in lighting efficiency could result in a sizeable savings for the City.

CPD Warns: Be Alert to Solicitors and Possible Scams

After a long, cold winter, Columbia residents are happily welcoming the spring warm-up. The Columbia Police Department, however, is preparing for the increase of door-to-door solicitors in the area and would like to warn residents to be cautious when sales people show up on their front door steps.

Under the City's Municipal Code, all solicitors and peddlers are required to obtain a permit from the City Clerk's office prior to conducting business in Columbia. Typically, the warm weather means an increase in citations for solicitors conducting business in the City without first obtaining a permit.



The CPD also warns of potential thefts or other crimes. According to Deputy Chief of Police Jerry Paul, "Residents should exercise caution when dealing with solicitors. We don't want to be alarmists—we just want to remind everyone to be skeptical of any person you don't know who shows up on your doorstep. In years prior, thefts have been reported in connection to door-to-door solicitors."

The CPD advises residents never to allow solicitors into their homes—whether for a sales presentation or if they ask to use the restroom. Children should also be reminded of how to react when approached by a stranger.

Elected Officials and Staff

Elected Officials

Mayor:	Kevin Hutchinson		
Ward I:	James Agne	**Ward III:**	Gene Ebersohl
	Fred Stumpf		Brad Oberkfell
Ward II:	Jay Unnerstall	**Ward IV:**	Mary Ellen Niemietz
	Dan Row		Candace Hejna
City Clerk:	Wes Hoeffken		

Staff (extensions are for main City number, 281-7144)

Administrator:	Anthony Traxler	Ext. 122
Chief of Police:	Joe Edwards	Ext. 425
Engineer:	Ron Williams	Ext. 107
Acct. Manager	Linda Sharp	Ext. 112
Comm. & Econ. Dev. Director	Paul Ellis	Ext. 118

Unsure which ward you live in? Visit www.columbiaillinois.com/wardmap or stop by the City Clerk's office to obtain a copy of the City ward map!

Staying Informed with Email Alerts

Staying informed of the City's happenings has never been so easy! Through the City's website, residents can subscribe to a free email alert system.

Currently, the City has two separate alert lists—a general information list and an employment list. Just think of the convenience of having road closure information, changes in trash pick-up schedules, meeting notices, and community event information emailed to you! Or, if you've ever been interested in a career in local government, consider signing-up for employment alerts.

With email alerts, the City is able to broadcast important information to hundreds of citizens in mere seconds—all the registered residents have to do is check their email accounts. Interested residents should visit www.columbiaillinois.com/alerts and register for email alerts. It's free, easy, and one of the simplest ways to stay current!

To learn more about the "Notify Me" feature of the City's website, contact Theresa Lucas-Stephan at 281-7144 x110

Main Street Façade Program Changing the Look of Main Street—One Building at a Time

Estes Financial (102 S. Main) "before"

The product of many years of hard work are finally visible. Based on a previously obtained grant, the City's Main Street Façade program provides an incentive for Main Street property owners to perform renovations and updates on their structures.

Estes Financial "after"

Under the façade program, property owners who perform specific improvements to their property can receive reimbursement of up to 50% the total project cost, currently not to exceed $2,000. Numerous Main Street property owners have already performed the renovations and received reimbursements.

If you are a Main Street property owner and are interested in participating in the façade program, please contact Paul Ellis at 281-7144 x118 or email him at pellis@columbiaillinois.com.

The City would like to gauge interest in a Citizens Academy. The purpose of the Academy would be to provide residents with a well-rounded and thorough explanation of their local government, the various City departments, and the responsibilities of these departments and key staff. If you would be interested in participating in the Citizens Academy, please contact Paul Ellis at 281-7144 x118 or email him at pellis@columbiaillinois.com.

Please look to the City's website or future editions of the Columbia Quarterly for additional information and scheduling.

City Council Recognizes Renovation Efforts

(photo courtesy of Corey Saathoff)

At their May 5, 2008 meeting, the Columbia City Council recognized Mr. Gregg Crawford for his numerous Main Street Renovation projects. Mr. Crawford has initiated several renovation projects in downtown Columbia and the Council asked him to attend the meeting so they could extend their gratitude for the dedication he has shown to the vitality of Columbia's Main Street and downtown.

Here, Mayor Hutchinson is shown presenting Mr. Crawford with the Council's Proclamation, declaring the first week of May 2008 "Gregg Crawford Week" in Columbia.

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

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Upcoming Events

Spring and summer are always busy seasons in Columbia. Mark your calendars for these exciting events:

Safety Town 2008
The Columbia PD will conduct two Safety Town sessions this summer. The first session is June 23-27 and the second is July 7-11. Participants must be entering kindergarten or first grade in the fall. For more information, please visit www.columbiaillinois.com/safetytown or call Det. Karla Heine at 281-6616 x440.

Columbia Recycle Day
June 7th—see front page article for details.

Large Item Pick-Up—June 10th

4th of July Celebration
The American Legion Post 581 will again host an Independence Day celebration, complete with fireworks at nightfall.

Music at Metter Park*
The City is pleased to continue this concert series. Stop by, get something to eat at a local organization's food stand, and enjoy the different sounds of great local bands. All concerts are from 6-8 p.m. but show up early to get a great seat on the lawn in front of the bandstand!

June 8th—Larry Haller's Two Star Final
June 22nd—San An Tones
July 6th—Dynamic Combo
July 20th—Raven Moon
August 3rd—Moreland Drive (5-6 p.m.) and Blues Racket

Columbia Daze—August 15th &16th
This annual event includes a parade, festival, lots of food & fun. Look to the City's website and the local newspapers for updates as this event gets closer!

Residents enjoy a movie in Metter Park during the summer of 2007

Movies at Metter Park*
Please look for future updates on this fall movie series in Metter Park.

**Metter Park is located next to the Public Library, near the intersection of Metter Ave. & Cherry Street*