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July
2016

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City Manager's **Spotlight**



TERESA WILSON
COLUMBIA CITY MANAGER

Taking A Stand for our Kids: Creating the TASKforce at Home

How do we take current events and bring them into the living room? How do we make a safe space for children to talk about race relations? As parents, how do we teach our children to trust again?

Spearheaded by Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, the City of Columbia in partnership with the SC Courage Campaign, Homeless No More, Richland County Public Library, EdVenture Children's Museum and the Community Relations Council presented, "Taking A Stand for our Kids: Creating the TASKforce at Home," a town hall that covered the topics of race relations, current events and community policing as it relates to children and starting the conversation at home.



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City Manager Teresa Wilson was a panelist for the event, held on July 21 at EdVenture Children's Museum, 211 Gervais St. After the event, the Richland County Public Library had children's books on display for parents that wanted to further the conversation at home.

Wastewater Team Wins National Water Heroes Award



City of Columbia Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant staff, Ashley Dove, James Foust, Adrian Martin, and Brandon Wilcox, were selected by the Water Environment Federation (WEF) for its national 2016 Water Heroes Award for responding bravely during Columbia's historic October 2015 flood.

The Water Heroes Award recognizes an individual or group who goes beyond the call of duty during an emergency situation to continue protecting the public and the environment and who raises the status of the wastewater industry in the United States. Dove, Foust, Martin, and Wilcox will be honored during WEFTEC®, the Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference September 27, 2016, in New Orleans.

In October 2015, South Carolina was hit by a three-day, 1,000-year rain that caused devastating flooding in the Midlands. Throughout the event, staff calmly managed the wastewater that was surging through the 60 million-gallon-per-day rated plant. At one point, they maintained inflow of 156 million gallons in one day, a level not seen before in the plant's history. Concerns about the reliability of a nearby dike prompted the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to recommend staff evacuate and shut down the plant. However,

L:R: Brandon Wilcox, Adrian Martin, Ashley Dove and James Foust

Dove, Foust, Martin, and Wilcox placed concern for public wellbeing and other staff above their own safety. They agreed to stay at the plant to maintain the system. Had the plant been evacuated and shut off, raw sewage would have poured into the river, surrounding neighborhoods and city streets, and drastically impacted Columbia's citizens. Throughout the crisis, regulatory compliance was maintained at the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant, and no sewage was spilled into the river from the plant.

Ashley Dove is the 2002 Water Environment Association of South Carolina (WEASC) Water Operator of the Year. James Foust recently won the 2015 WEASC's Wastewater Operator of the Year.

Drivers Cautioned to avoid Flood-Prone Streets and Intersections

The City of Columbia urges drivers to use caution during severe weather. The following streets and intersections are prone to flooding during heavy rain events. Please avoid these areas during and immediately after heavy rains.

Main & Whaley	Monroe & Maple	Wheat & Pickens	Harden & Calhoun
Gervais & Laurens	Two Notch & Read	Heyward & Ravenel	Franklin & Marion
Blossom & Henderson	Wheat & Amherst	Pickens between Wheat & Green	Franklin & Sumter
Blossom & Saluda	Adger & Devine	Barnwell & Pendelton	Columbia College & N. Main
Harden & Santee	Wheat & Sumter	Harden & Read	Bull & Laurel

Disclaimer: Locations above are places known to be flood prone. Actual flooding locations will depend on storm strength, duration and location.

Safety Tips:

- If you encounter a flooded street or intersection, turn around; do not attempt to drive through it. Water may be deeper than it appears and can hide many hazards (i.e. sharp objects, washed out road surfaces, electrical wires, chemicals, etc). A vehicle caught in swiftly moving water can be swept away in a matter of seconds. Twelve inches of water can float a car or small SUV and 18 inches of water can carry away large vehicles.
- Stay away from storm-damaged areas to include damaged or downed trees and power lines to keep from putting yourself at risk from the effects of severe thunderstorms.
- Continue to listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or to local radio and television stations for updated information or instructions, as access to roads or some parts of the community may be blocked.
- Help people who may require special assistance, such as infants, children and the elderly or disabled.
- Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.
- To assist with keeping the storm drainage system working properly, do not place yard debris and other items next to drainage structures.

If you notice a storm drain which is blocked by debris, please notify the Public Works Street Division at 545-3780 during regular business hours and Customer Care at 545-3300 after 5:00 pm and on weekends. An alternate non-emergency number is 803-252-2911. For emergencies please call 911.

For additional safety tips on driving when streets are flooded, visit <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/water/tadd/>.

Parks and Recreation Department Opens Outdoor Fitness Center at Riverfront Park

The City of Columbia's first outdoor gym was installed at Riverfront Park, 312 Laurel St. The Riverfront Park Fitness Zone features seven pieces of strength and cardio equipment.



The fitness zone includes:

- 1- 4-person pendulum
- 1- 2-person wheelchair accessible chest press
- 1- Lat pull down and vertical press
- 1- 3-person static combo
- 1- Rower
- 1- 4-person leg press
- 1- Single elliptical cross trainer

Located near the granite wall and before you reach the park's footbridge, the outdoor gym is free and open to the public to use during the park's operating hours Monday through Sunday from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

As a Let's Move! Gold Medalist City, the City of Columbia continues to provide opportunities for citizens to live healthy and active lives. The fitness equipment was installed in one of the City's most popular parks to run, walk or ride a bicycle.

National Night Out 2016 Kick Off Photo Gallery



City of Columbia and Mayor Benjamin join Wells Fargo, NeighborWorks® America and Origin to launch \$4.1 million NeighborhoodLIFT® program for homebuyers in Richland and Lexington Counties



On Wednesday, July 13, Mayor Steve Benjamin, Wells Fargo, NeighborWorks® America and Origin announced a \$4.1 million local homebuyer program that will provide matching down payment assistance grants up to \$7,500 for eligible Richland and Lexington County homebuyers. Wells Fargo's **NeighborhoodLIFT** program – with down payment assistance grants and homebuyer education – helps mortgage ready homebuyers make homeownership more affordable, achievable and sustainable.

The **NeighborhoodLIFT** event takes place July 29-30 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, where prospective homebuyers may qualify for up to \$7,500 in matching down payment assistance to purchase a home within Richland or Lexington County. Prospective homebuyers are encouraged to register to attend the event at www.wellsfargo.com/lift or by calling (866) 858-2151. In addition, prospective homebuyers will be able to take advantage of homebuyer education sessions and preview featured homes available for sale in local neighborhoods. Wells Fargo will collaborate with Columbia NeighborWorks® America and its network member Origin to implement the program.



City Opens Misting Stations to Help Citizens Stay Cool During Extreme Summer Heat

To assist the community in staying cool during the extreme summer heat, the City of Columbia has set up misting stations in several of the City's parks. Misting stations will be in operation from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., when the heat index reaches 90 degrees or higher, at the following locations through Labor Day, Sept. 5, 2016:

- Owens Field, 1351 Jim Hamilton Blvd.
- Rosewood Park, 901 South Holly St.
- Hyatt Park, 950 Jackson Ave.
- Woodland Park, 6500 Olde Knight Parkway
- Martin Luther King, Jr., 2300 Greene St.
- Finlay Park, 930 Laurel St.
- Riverfront Park, 312 Laurel St.

The City of Columbia also operates two outdoor swimming pools, an indoor pool and splash pads/spray pools. For hours of operation at these locations, please visit www.ColumbiaSC.net/parks-recreation.



To stay cool in the summer months, the Columbia Fire Department encourages citizens to follow these heat safety tips below:

- Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperature changes.
- Be aware of both the temperature and the heat index. The heat index is the temperature the body feels when the effects of heat and humidity are combined.
- Discuss heat safety precautions with members of your household. Have a plan for wherever you spend time — home, work and school.
- Know those in your neighborhood who are elderly, young, sick or overweight. They are more likely to become victims of excessive heat and may need help.
- If you do not have air conditioning, choose places you could go to for relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day (schools, libraries, theaters, malls).
- Ensure that your animals' needs for water and shade are met.

For more information on heat safety tips, please call the Columbia Fire Department at (803) 545-3700.

Columbia Police Department Kicks Off Annual Fan the Heat Program

Summers sizzle in the "Famously Hot" City of Columbia so, to beat the heat, don't forget about Fan the Heat. The Columbia Police Department kicked off the annual Fan the Heat program in early June. Fan the Heat is a program designed to help the citizens of Columbia stay cool during the humid summer months and since its inception in 1995, it has assisted more than 7,000 Columbia citizens. The program is primarily designed for senior citizens, residents with medical concerns/disabilities and families with small children.

Eligibility requirements include:

- Citizens must be 55 years-old or older, or if a person has a respiratory problem or a major illness, he or she can bring in a doctor's statement regardless of age to receive assistance.
- Citizens must provide name, address, and telephone number (to ensure that the fan or air conditioner is delivered to the correct address)

The Columbia Police Department will be collecting fans, air conditioning units and financial contributions from now until **Wednesday, August 31**.

Donations can be dropped off at CPD Headquarters located at #1 Justice Square at any time. Citizens who wish to make a monetary donation can make a check payable to: The Columbia Police Foundation. (Note "Fan the Heat" Program on the check.)

If a citizen needs assistance from the Fan the Heat program, they can call the Crime Prevention Unit at 803-545-3555; or CPD's Telephone Response Unit at 803-545-3500.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Held at Elmwood/Roy Lynch Park

The City of Columbia celebrated the opening of Elmwood/Roy Lynch Park during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday, June 18.

City leaders and staff, members of the Junior League of Columbia and the Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association as well as Elmwood Park residents were there to celebrate the completion of the first phase of the project.

Renovations included a new splash pad/board game plaza, shade pergola, nature-themed playground and walking path.

The second phase, which includes installation of a butterfly garden and shelter, is scheduled to be completed in the fall.

Elmwood/Roy Lynch Park is located at Lincoln and Abbeville Streets.



About Teresa Wilson

Teresa Wilson is the City Manager for the City of Columbia, SC. For more details on the City Manager, visit ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager. For more information about the City of Columbia, visit ColumbiaSC.net.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!

All my best,

Teresa Wilson



We Are Columbia