



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 02, 2013

Contact: Marli Drum at 803.776.7387

Columbia Animal Services Hosting 12 Hour Adoption Special Today

Today, Monday, December 2, Columbia Animal Services is hosting the Fall in Love Fur-Ever Adoption Special from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. at the animal shelter.

Citizens interested in adopting a pet can spin the Wheel of FURtune to win anything from a discounted rate to a free adoption. No matter where the wheel lands, there will be a winner. This special applies to all pets in the shelter.

The Columbia Animal Services shelter is located at 127 Humane Lane, Columbia, SC 29209 and can be reached by calling 803-776-7387.

To view adoptable pets, visit www.petfinder.com. Give a shelter pet a new home for the new season.

###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 02, 2013

Contact: Tezra Haire,
803.413.9165

City Of Columbia and Richland One School District's "Honor the Dream" Food Drive Begins Today

The City of Columbia, Richland One School District and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation kick off their annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Honor the Dream Food Drive today, Monday, December 2, 2013.

The public is invited to drop off their non-perishable food items at the following locations:

- City Hall, 1737 Main Street
- Charles R. Drew Wellness Center, 2101 Walker Solomon Way
- City Water Customer Service, Washington Square, 1339 Main Street
- City Human Resources Office, 1225 Lady Street
- James E. Clyburn Golf Center, 2091 Slighs Avenue
- Columbia Tennis Center, 1635 Whaley Street
- City Parks and Recreation sites (visit www.columbiasc.gov/parks-recreation/facilities for facility names and addresses)

Donations will be accepted throughout the holiday season, ending on Friday, January 3, 2014.

The food drive is held annually to honor Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of community service and helping others. Donations will be presented to the Harvest Hope Food Bank and will aide those in need in and around the Midlands.

For more information on the food drive, contact City of Columbia Parks and Recreation at (803) 545-3100.

###



We Are Columbia

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, December 03, 2013

Contact: Sara Hollar at 803.545.3860

City Of Columbia to Celebrate Arbor Day at Brennan Elementary School

The City of Columbia is the longest consecutive running Tree City in the state of South Carolina. One of the requirements for Tree City designation is an Arbor Day Program. The goal of the program is to share the importance of trees with elementary school children.

WHAT: City Of Columbia's Arbor Day program.

WHO: City of Columbia Forestry and Beautification Division staff, Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission, the Columbia Garden Club and Brennan Elementary students and staff.

WHERE: Brennan Elementary School
4438 Devereaux Rd.
Columbia, SC 29205

WHEN: Friday, December 6, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

Each year, an elementary school is chosen within the City limits for the Arbor Day Program. Forestry and Beautification staff provides a very entertaining speaker for the program, which is followed by tree planting at the school.

If you plan to attend, please make sure to bring a photo ID to sign in at the school and contact Sara Hollar at 803-545-3860 for more information.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 04, 2013

Contact: Bud Ferillo at 803-413-6475

Arbor Day To Focus on Columbia's Memorial Park

Two community beautification groups have combined forces to an appeal to help replace diseased hackberry trees on South Carolina Memorial Park, Columbia 4 acre downtown park dedicated to the service of South Carolinians in the Armed Forces of the United States on Arbor Day, Friday, December 6, 2013. A tree planting ceremony will take place at 12 p.m. on Friday in Memorial Park.

Keep the Midlands Beautiful and Columbia Green have made grants of \$2,500 and \$1,500 to improve the tree canopy in Memorial Park, with plans to complete the project over the next two years. "We are grateful to these organizations who have helped us through the years replace a large number of aging and diseased trees with long live canopy trees that we will care for with regular pruning and augment with colorful shrubbery," said S. C. Memorial Park Commission Chairman Bud Ferillo.

Future plans call for replacement of all remaining diseased trees, proper limbing of the existing tree stock and improvements in the parking lot, Ferillo said. "We have also replaced the original electric light poles with more attractive poles that are found throughout the city and are grateful to SCANA for a reduced price for them."

The city has vastly improved the professional staff that cares for its parks over the last years and they are revitalizing long neglected parks and improving others, Ferillo said. "The City of Columbia has really stepped up its preservation and beautification of its park system."

Jaqueline Buck, Executive Director of Keep the Midlands Beautiful, said she is "happy to see our veterans honored with an outstanding facility that has been 27 years in the making. We are proud to participate in this tree project."

Lynn Robertson, President of Columbia Green, said Memorial Park has received funding in the past from her organization. "We want to help them complete the Park Commission's long term vision and make this park a beautiful destination for visitors."

Ferillo said the park contains nine monuments to South Carolina service men and women who served in the wars of the United State from all branches of the Armed Services in the 20th and 21st centuries. "We also encourage families and friends of veterans, living or dead, to plant a live oak tree with a memorial stone containing the name, rank, branch and years of service for \$1000 payable to the City's Parks and Recreation Foundation. We have six such memorial trees in the park now and room for more. We believe that the beginning of the end of war lies in remembrance."

For further information, contact: Bud Ferillo, Chairman, South Carolina Memorial Park Commission, 413.6475.



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2013

Contact: Erika Moore, City Clerk at (803) 545.3043

Municipal Election Commission Meeting

The City of Columbia Municipal Election Commission will meet on Thursday, December 5, 2013 at 10 a.m. at 2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29202 in the Elections & Voter Registration Office to certify the December 3, 2013 Special Election Results.

###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 5, 2013

Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

Mayor Benjamin attends Aspen-Rodel Fellowship

COLUMBIA, SC— Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin is traveling to Aspen, Colorado this week to join leaders from across the nation chosen to participate in the prestigious Aspen Institute's Aspen-Rodel Fellowship program. Mayor Benjamin was one of only 24 "Rising Stars" in Governance chosen for their intelligence, thoughtfulness and willingness to work across party lines to seek solutions to public problems.

"This is a tremendous opportunity to work with some of the most visionary men and women in America as we seek to find creative solutions to our common challenges," Mayor Benjamin said. "This program is a testament to the belief that no obstacle exists that we cannot overcome together and I am truly honored to be a part of it."

Chosen in 2011, this is Mayor Benjamin's final step to completing this bipartisan program focused on transcending political partisanship and focusing participants' attentions on over-arching questions of leadership and governance.

In addition to Mayor Benjamin, members Aspen-Rodel Fellowship, Class of 2011 include:

Beau Biden

Delaware Attorney General

Jase Bolger

Speaker, Michigan House of Representatives

Pam Bondi

Florida Attorney General

Brendan Boyle

State Representative, Pennsylvania

G.T. Bynum

City Councilor, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Emily Cain Minority

Leader, Maine House of Representatives

Brian Calley

Michigan Lieutenant Governor

Brian Cronin

State Representative, Idaho

Matt Dean

Majority Leader, Minnesota House of Representatives

Chris Edwards

State Senator, Oregon

Jessica Lappin

City Councilmember, New York, New York

Rebecca Lockhart

Speaker, Utah House of Representatives

Steve Montenegro

Speaker Pro Tempore, Arizona House of Representatives

Gavin Newsom

California Lieutenant Governor

Gina Raimondo

Rhode Island State Treasurer

Sheila Simon

Illinois Lieutenant Governor

Ashley Swearengin

Mayor, City of Fresno, California

Jill Holtzman Vogel

State Senator, Virginia

Will Weatherford

Speaker, Florida House of Representatives

Jay Webber

State Assemblyman, New Jersey

Anthony Foxx
U.S Secretary of Transportation

Clint Zweifel
Missouri State Treasurer

Marty Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General

For more information on the Rodel Fellowship Program, visit <http://as.pn/rodel>.

The Aspen Institute mission is twofold: to foster values-based leadership, encouraging individuals to reflect on the ideals and ideas that define a good society, and to provide a neutral and balanced venue for discussing and acting on critical issues. The Aspen Institute does this primarily in four ways: seminars, young-leader fellowships around the globe, policy programs, and public conferences and events. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 5, 2013
Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

Mayor Benjamin's statement on the passing of Nelson Mandela

COLUMBIA, SC – Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin released this statement tonight on the passing of Nelson Mandela:

"The cause of justice and equality has lost one of its greatest champion's tonight and I have lost one of my personal heroes.

"I was a junior at the University of South Carolina campaigning for student body president when we learned that Nelson Mandela had finally been released and I remember how the gravity and pure joy of that moment washed over all of us. Years later I had the rare opportunity to visit his home in Soweto and the 8' x 7' concrete cell on Robbin Island where he was imprisoned for decades to try and gain a greater understanding of the magnitude of his personal sacrifice and struggle.

"Yet while we mourn this loss with the people of South Africa and freedom loving peoples all across the world, his example of unflinching courage and determination lives on and will continue to inspire us all to stand tall in the face of adversity and to be bigger and better than we ever dreamed possible."

###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 9, 2013

Contact: Public Relations, Marketing & Media, 803-545-3020

City Offices To Close For Christmas Holiday

City of Columbia offices will be closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 24, 2013 and Wednesday, December 25, 2013.

The pickup for garbage and recyclables will operate on a normal schedule.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 10, 2013

Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

Gist and Benjamin Family statement on the arrest of Arthur L. Givens

COLUMBIA, SC – The Gist and Benjamin families issued the following statement on the news that Arthur L. Givens, a suspect in the murder of Donald E. Gist, Jr., was arrested at a home in Charlotte, NC earlier today:

"We would like to thank Mayor Cannon, Chief Monroe and the men and women of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department for their swift action in identifying and apprehending this dangerous criminal so that he can answer for the life he has taken and the pain he has caused our family. We have a long way to go yet, but this is an important step in the right direction not only in helping ease our grief but in making sure that this individual can never hurt another family the way he has ours.

"We would also like to thank the people of Charlotte and Columbia and all those who have offered their prayers and support throughout this ordeal. Your kindness has been a source of strength for us all and we are eternally grateful."

Additional media inquiries should be directed to Michael Wukela at mchwukela@columbiasc.net or 803-413-5052.

###



We Are Columbia

MEDIA ADVISORY

December 12, 2013

Contact: Libby Gober @ 545-3061

Swearing-In Ceremony for City of Columbia Mayor and Council Members

Who: Mayor Steve Benjamin, Elected At-Large
Councilman Sam Davis, District I
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, At-Large
Councilwoman Leona Plough, District IV

What: Swearing-In Ceremony for Mayor and City Council Members. These Council members were re-elected on November 5, 2013

When: Monday, December 23 at 2 p.m.

Where: City Council Chambers, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201

###



We Are Columbia

For Immediate Release

December 13, 2013

Contact: Sara Hollar, Forestry and Beautification at 545-3860

SCE&G To Perform Tree Trimming Activities As Scheduled for 2013

SCE&G will perform tree trimming activities along overhead utility lines in the following neighborhoods for the next two weeks:

Trenholm Buchanan
Kilbourne Park

The trimming will be completed by SCE&G contractors and work will be closely monitored on a daily basis by the City's 4 Certified Arborists from the Forestry and Beautification Division.

The purpose of the trimming activities is to increase safety and reliability of the electric service. SCE&G reports an 89% improvement in reliability in vegetation related outages in areas where trimming is completed compared to a year ago. The trimming guidelines include removing vegetation within 8-12 feet below and beside the power lines and up to 20 feet above the power lines.

SCE&G and their contractors trim in accordance with International Society of Arboriculture guidelines, using ANSI A300 pruning methods leaving good cuts that will generate new growth.

For more information about SCE&G's tree trimming efforts, including helpful tips and suggestions regarding the planting of trees and other vegetation, visit www.sceg.com/treetrimming.

You can also contact SCE&G's 24 hour Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-800-251-7234 or email SCEGContactUs@SCANA.com

For continued updates from the city of Columbia follow us on Twitter [@cityofcolumbia](https://twitter.com/cityofcolumbia) or "like" the [City of Columbia](https://www.facebook.com/cityofcolumbia) on Facebook.

Related Links:

MAPS: [2013 SCE&G Utility Distribution Line Trimming Locations](#)

VIDEO: [Tree Trimming: Safety, Reliability and Healthy Trees](#)

###



We Are Columbia

MEDIA ADVISORY

December 13, 2013

Contact: Pamela Benjamin at 545-3008

City of Columbia Police Chief Search Committee to Hold First Meeting

City Manager Teresa Wilson announces the first meeting of the Police Chief Search Committee

Who: Police Chief Search Committee

What: The Police Chief Search Committee will hold its first meeting.

When: Monday, December 16, 2013 at 1 p.m.

Where: Earlewood Park, 1111 Parkside Drive (Administration Building)

The Police Chief Search Committee will serve as an advisory committee during the selection process for the City of Columbia's Police Chief. The Committee will serve in an advisory capacity only. The Committee will be discussing matters related to the selection of a Police Chief. The meetings will be held in executive session.

###



For Immediate Release

December 18, 2013

Contact: Connie Lucius at (803) 545-4268

Advertisement of Vacancies for the Commercial Revolving Loan Review Board

The City of Columbia is accepting applications for the Commercial Revolving Loan Review Board. Individuals applying for this board must be a Community Banker.

The purpose of this committee is to review and approve/disapprove applications for loans from the City of Columbia Commercial Revolving Loan Fund.

The term of office is two (2) years.

All applicants must reside within Columbia city limits.

Deadline – Applications are due no later than January 10, 2014, 5 p.m.

For applications and more information contact Connie Lucius at (803) 545-4268 or send a request to cflucius@columbiasc.net. You can also visit our website at <http://www.columbiasc.net/boards> to download an application.

###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, December 19, 2013

Contact: Kim Mitchell at 803-545-3100

Main Street ICE to Host Winterfest

Santa will hit the ice at Main Street ICE's Winterfest on Saturday, December 21, 2013 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Boyd Plaza.

Winterfest will feature skating with Santa, live entertainment, face painting, ice sculpting, holiday craft exhibitors, an ugly holiday sweater contest and food and drink vendors. Winterfest is perfect for the entire family.

The rink is currently operating on special hours to coincide with local school districts' winter break schedules. Special hours as follows:

Monday -Thursday, 12 - 9 p.m.
Friday, 12 - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Main Street ICE will be open on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24 from 12-6 p.m. and will be closed on Christmas Day. Normal hours will resume on Thursday, December 26.

Normal skate fees are \$10 for adults and \$8 for children ages 12 and under, as well as for seniors (55+) and active duty military. Skate rentals are included in the fees. Reservations are available Monday - Thursday only, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for groups of twenty or more.

For more information on Main Street Ice or for group reservations, contact City of Columbia Parks and Recreation at (803) 545-3100.

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For Immediate Release

December 18, 2013

Contact: Connie Lucius at (803) 545-4268

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###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 23, 2013

Contact: Kim Mitchell at 803-545-3100

Main Street ICE to Host WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival

Ring in the new year at Main Street ICE's WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival on Tuesday, December 31, 2013 from 4-10 p.m. at Boyd Plaza. The rink will stay open until 12 a.m. on New Year's Eve.

The WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival will feature rides, games, karaoke, craft exhibitors and food and drink vendors. There is a one price skate of \$8.

The rink is currently operating on special hours to coincide with local school districts' winter break schedules. Special hours as follows:

Monday -Thursday, 12 - 9 p.m.
Friday, 12 - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The special operating hours will end on Friday, January 3, 2013. The regular hours of operation will begin on Saturday, January 4, 2014 and are as follows:

Monday -Thursday, 4 - 9 p.m.
Friday, 4 - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Main Street ICE will be open through Monday, January 20, 2014.

Normal skate fees are \$10 for adults and \$8 for children ages 12 and under, as well as for seniors (55+) and active duty military. Skate rentals are included in the fees. Reservations are available Monday - Thursday only, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for groups of twenty or more.

For more information on Main Street Ice or for group reservations, contact City of Columbia Parks and Recreation at (803) 545-3100.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 23, 2013

Contact: Virginia Bedford, (803) 546-1482

Columbia's Riverfront Lights Up for the Holidays

Columbia Parks and Recreation Foundation along with City of Columbia Parks and Recreation will celebrate the holiday season with **Christmas on the Congaree**. This spectacular display of lighted Christmas trees will be at the new Coble Plaza at Riverfront Park, 211 Gervais St., behind EdVenture Children's Museum, December 2 through the 31, from 6 to 10 p.m. nightly.

Visitors can expect to see an array of wonderfully decorated Green Giant Cedar Arborvitae trees along the Columbia Canal and the Congaree River. **Christmas on the Congaree** is open to the public. Admission is free.

This festive community event is being supported by local contributions made to the Columbia Parks and Recreation Foundation. These contributions are designed to provide funding for inner-city youth to participate in summer programs being offered by City of Columbia Parks and Recreation. Programs offered will allow youth to take advantage of skill-building opportunities to include reading, math, and science enrichment, as well as, cultural arts and outdoor experiences (i.e., kayaking, fishing at Riverfront Park and horseback riding).

Columbia Parks and Recreation Foundation (CPRF) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization.

For more information on this event, call Virginia Bedford at (803) 546-1482.

###



We Are Columbia

MEDIA ADVISORY

December 23, 2013

Contact: Erika Moore @ 545-3045 or Libby Gober @ 545-3061

**Legal Swearing-In Ceremony for City of Columbia Mayor and Council Members to be Held on
December 23, 2013
Public Swearing-In Ceremony and Reception Scheduled for January 3, 2014**

Please see details below regarding the legal swearing-in ceremony for the Mayor and 3 members of Columbia City Council. The legal swearing-in ceremony is being held in order to comply with laws that require that the re-elected Mayor and City Council members be sworn into office before January 1, 2014. A public event is being planned for January 3, 2014 (see details below).

Details for December 20, 2013:

Who: Mayor Steve Benjamin, At-Large
Councilman Sam Davis, District I
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, At-Large
Councilwoman Leona Plough, District IV

What: Swearing-In Ceremony for Mayor and City Council Members. These Council members were re-elected on November 5, 2013

When: Monday, December 23 at 2 p.m.

Where: City Council Chambers, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29217

Details for January 3, 2014:

Who: The City of Columbia's recently re-elected Mayor and City Council Members, the City's Executive Management Team, City staff, and community stakeholders.

Mayor Steve Benjamin, At-Large
Councilman Sam Davis, District I
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, At-Large

**Councilwoman Leona K. Plough, District IV, will be out of town and will not be able to participate.

What: The City of Columbia's Mayor and City Council Members, who were recently re-elected, will be sworn in during a public ceremony and a reception will be held for community members. The reception

will begin immediately following the swearing-in ceremony and it will be held in The Gallery at City Hall (first floor).

When: Friday, January 3, 2014 at 5 p.m.

Where: City Council Chambers, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29217

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 23, 2013

Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

Mayoral Inauguration set for January 3rd

COLUMBIA, SC — Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin invites everyone join him and his family as he takes the oath of office at the City of Columbia's Mayoral Inauguration ceremony to be held at City Hall on Friday, January 3rd.

The ceremony is scheduled to begin promptly at 5:00 PM and will also feature the inauguration of and remarks by Council Members Tameika Isaac Devine and Sam Davis all of whom were re-elected along with Mayor Benjamin on November 5. Councilwoman Leona K. Plough will be out of town and will not be able to participate.

**WHAT: Inauguration Ceremony for
Mayor Steve Benjamin
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine (At-Large)
Councilman Sam Davis (District 1)**

**WHERE: City Council Chambers
City Hall
1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC**

WHEN: 5:00 PM on Friday, January 3, 2014

The ceremony will be followed by a brief reception.

For additional information, please contact Michael Wukela at 803.413.5052 or via email at mcwukela@columbiasc.net.

###



We Are Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 26, 2013

Contact: Public Relations @ 545-3020

City Offices To Close New Year's Day

City of Columbia offices will be closed on New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1, 2013.

All garbage and recycle routes will remain on schedule.

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City of Columbia Press Releases

December 29, 2013 – January 4, 2014

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 30, 2013

Contact: Kim Mitchell at 803-545-3100

Main Street ICE to Host WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival

Ring in the new year at Main Street ICE's WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival on Tuesday, December 31, 2013 from 4-10 p.m. at Boyd Plaza. The rink will stay open until 12 a.m. on New Year's Eve.

The WOW! New Year's Eve Carnival will feature rides, games, karaoke, craft exhibitors and food and drink vendors. There is a one price skate of \$8.

The rink is currently operating on special hours to coincide with local school districts' winter break schedules. Special hours as follows:

Monday -Thursday, 12 - 9 p.m.
Friday, 12 - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The special operating hours will end on Friday, January 3, 2013. The regular hours of operation will begin on Saturday, January 4, 2014 and are as follows:

Monday -Thursday, 4 - 9 p.m.
Friday, 4 - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Main Street ICE will be open through Monday, January 20, 2014.

Normal skate fees are \$10 for adults and \$8 for children ages 12 and under, as well as for seniors (55+) and active duty military. Skate rentals are included in the fees. Reservations are available Monday - Thursday only, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for groups of twenty or more.

For more information on Main Street Ice or for group reservations, contact City of Columbia Parks and Recreation at (803) 545-3100.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, December 30, 2013

Contact: Samantha Yager at 803-545-3020

Free Financial Seminar Hosted By Community Development

The City Of Columbia's Community Development Department will host a free financial seminar for the public on Saturday, January 18, 2014 from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m.

Topics of discussion will include:

- Banking - Purpose of a Bank and how banking should work for you
- Savings- Importance of Savings and creative strategies to save on a limited budget
- Budgeting-Budgeting Activity and Reviewing the Overall Picture of your budget
- Building Credit-How to build a solid financial background
- Types of Loans- Smart ways of borrowing and is borrowing a smart way of building your wealth
- Repairing Derogatory Credit-How to repair damage that has been done to your credit
- Credit Scams-How to recognize unlawful collection activities
- Fair Housing Laws-Equal rights for all - Housing discrimination is illegal

The free seminar will be held at the Earlewood Park Community Center, located at 1113 Parkside Dr.

All those interested should call 803-545-3373 and ask for Felicia Wilks, Tracey Brown or Bryan Graves.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, January 2, 2014

Contact: Public Relations, Media & Marketing at 803.545.3020

City Of Columbia to Host Tax Credits and Incentives Workshop for Local Business Owners

The City Of Columbia, the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc., the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce and RetroTax have partnered to host a tax credits and incentives workshop for business owners on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, located at 930 Richland St.

This workshop is designed to educate business owners on tax incentives that are available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Renewal Program. Businesses can claim these incentives for 2013, and up to 3 prior years.

"We are very excited to partner with the City of Columbia and the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce for this workshop," said Alan Newcomb, CEO of RetroTax. "At this event, we aim to ensure the local businesses in the Columbia-Sumter Empowerment Zone receive every available tax credit and incentive to which it's entitled. We look forward to helping them reduce their tax liability while demonstrating our commitment to excellent customer service."

To benefit from this specific program, the business must be located within the Columbia-Sumter Empowerment Zone. The zone includes a majority of Columbia's business districts. Business owners can check the physical address online at www.hud.gov/crlocator.

The workshop is free and open to all business owners. Online registration is available [here](#) or visit the City's website at www.columbiasc.net.

For more information, please contact the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. at 803-733-8438. For more information on Chamber membership, please contact Jennifer King at 803-733-1121.

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About RetroTax

Established in 1996, RetroTax® helps businesses navigate complex legislation associated with finding and securing federal and state tax credits. These tax credits can be based on geographic regions in which your business operates, or on the demographic characteristics of your employees. In addition to finding and acting upon current and retroactive program eligibility, RetroTax® helps businesses establish policies and practices to create greater opportunities for receiving additional tax credits in the future. For more information, please visit www.retrotax-aci.com or call 317-925-0553.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 2, 2014
Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

City Inauguration Ceremonies Tomorrow

COLUMBIA, SC -- Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin invites everyone join him, his family and his fellow members of City Council tomorrow at City Hall for the City of Columbia 2014 Inaugural Ceremony.

The ceremony is scheduled to begin promptly at 5:00 PM and will feature the inauguration of and remarks by Mayor Benjamin as well as Council Members Tameika Isaac Devine and Sam Davis all of whom were re-elected on November 5.

The Citizen's Inaugural Reception will be held immediately following the ceremony.

All events are **free** and **open to the public**.

WHAT: City of Columbia 2014 Inaugural Ceremony

Mayor Steve Benjamin
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine (At-Large)
Councilman Sam Davis (District 1)

WHERE: City Council Chambers

City Hall
1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC

WHEN: 5:00 PM on Friday, January 3, 2014

For additional information, please contact Michael Wukela at 803.413.5052 or via email at mcwukela@columbiasc.net.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2, 2014

Contact: Victoria Kramer (vlkramer@columbiasc.net) at 545-3227

City to Host Fats, Oils & Grease Workshops for Commercial Kitchens

Columbia, SC – The City of Columbia will host two training sessions on managing fats, oils & grease in commercial kitchens on:

- Tuesday, January 7th from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM at the Lourie Center (1650 Park Circle), and
- Wednesday, January 8th from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Martin Luther King Jr. Park on Greene Street.

Managers and owner/operators of commercial kitchens should attend. The two training sessions will focus on fats, oils & grease management to meet City sewer and stormwater regulations.

Attendees will learn about:

- Recent changes to the City's fats, oils & grease regulations;
- Grease traps, grease interceptors and other grease capturing devices; and
- Best management practices for handling fats, oils & grease in commercial kitchens.

City regulatory staff will also be on hand to answer any questions about the City's fats, oils & grease inspection program and stormwater inspection program.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2, 2014

Contact: Jerre Threatt @ 803-545-3216 | jfthreatt@columbiasc.net

**CITY RECEIVES \$20,000 IN LOCAL & FEDERAL GRANTS TO HELP STABILIZE
HISTORIC HOMES IN THE GRANBY MILL VILLAGE**

Columbia, South Carolina – The City of Columbia’s Planning Division recently received two \$10,000 grants to fund the Granby Mill Village Stabilization Program, a preservation initiative designed to stabilize historic mill houses located within the boundaries of the Granby Mill Village Historic District. The grants were awarded by the Richland County Conservation Commission and the National Park Service. The National Park Service grant will be administered through the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

The Granby Mill Village features the largest collection of architecturally similar buildings in the city, of which most were built in the 1890s. The area is listed nationally in the National Register of Historic Places and locally as an Architectural Conservation District. The goal of the Granby Mill Village Stabilization Program is to repair building components that have failed due to water infiltration. Typical projects will include roof repair, window and siding rehabilitation, and structural repair. By strategically focusing on stabilization repairs, the program will serve as an intervention tool to save houses from further deterioration and restore structural integrity.

The program will be divided into Level I and Level II projects based on the amount of private investment. A minimum investment threshold of 20% of the grant amount from individual property owners will be required. Level I projects will require a minimum investment of \$1,200, of which \$1,000 will be reimbursable upon completion and final approval. Level II projects will require a minimum investment of \$2,400, of which \$2,000 will be reimbursable upon completion and final approval. The grant program will have the potential to impact up to 20 individual buildings with a total investment of at least \$24,000.

Applications for the Granby Mill Village Stabilization Program are available at the City’s Planning Division and the City’s website. The application deadline for the program is January 31, 2014. Stabilization efforts will take place between March 1, 2014 and May 30, 2014. Contact the Planning Division at 803-545-3216 or jfthreatt@columbiasc.net for more information.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2, 2014

Contact: Michael Wukela @ 803.413.5052

City Inauguration Ceremonies Today

COLUMBIA, SC -- Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin invites everyone join him, his family and his fellow members of City Council tomorrow at City Hall for the City of Columbia 2014 Inaugural Ceremony.

The ceremony is scheduled to begin promptly at 5:00 PM and will feature the inauguration of and remarks by Mayor Benjamin as well as Council Members Tameika Isaac Devine and Sam Davis all of whom were re-elected on November 5.

The Citizen's Inaugural Reception will be held immediately following the ceremony.

All events are **free** and **open to the public**.

WHAT: City of Columbia 2014 Inaugural Ceremony

Mayor Steve Benjamin
Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine (At-Large)
Councilman Sam Davis (District 1)

WHERE: City Council Chambers

City Hall
1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC

WHEN: 5:00 PM on Friday, January 3, 2014

For additional information, please contact Michael Wukela at 803.413.5052 or via email at mcwukela@columbiasc.net.

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