



Finally, summer is here! The City has a wide variety of events and activities planned. Check inside for more about those and other useful updates. (In photo, last year's youth rec activities, Huset Park.)

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COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
REDISCOVER THE HEIGHTS

SEE FLIP SIDE FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS

Rapid Graphics Is City's First 'Business of the Year'!

This spring, the Columbia Heights' Economic Development Authority reviewed a list of submitted nominees and selected locally owned Rapid Graphics & Mailing to be the City's first Business of the Year award recipient.

Rapid Graphics has been in the same location at Columbia Heights for 52 years. A lot has changed

since its current owner, Warren Kapsner, purchased the business in 1985.

"We had a dark room and a huge cast iron camera about 10-feet long that weighed at least a ton," Warren said. The camera would shoot negatives that would be used to burn images and text onto metal printing plates. Almost all prints were black



Continued on page 12 *Warren Kapsner behind the scenes at Rapid Graphics*

And the 2023 Outstanding Citizen Award Winners Are...

Mary Tholkes, Adult Category

In her circle she's known as The Garden Lady. But now she has another title to go by.



Mary Tholkes, Columbia Heights resident of more than 40 years, was recently named Columbia Heights' 2023 Outstanding Citizen of the Year, adult category. She was selected by Mayor Amada Márquez Simula and last year's OCY winner

Veronica Johnson from a group of submitted nominations.

Thirteen years ago, Mary established the community gardens at 40th and Jackson.

"That was the beginning of the housing crisis," Mary said. "Quite a few houses had been torn down and turned into empty lots."

She outlined a proposal and leveraged some partnerships to turn those abandoned lots into community gardens that now support up to 22 gardeners. Mary coordinates and oversees the use of the land while also tending to her own two garden plots where she grows and harvests between 500 and 1,000 pounds of produce every year. She donates all of it to the SACA Food Shelf.

Mary retired from her job at Wells Fargo shortly after starting the community garden project. Well over a decade later, she's still going strong, but also keeping an eye out for a successor.

"I've started looking for someone to co-chair with me to teach them the ropes," Mary said. "I'm no spring chicken anymore."

People who want to join the waitlist for a community garden plot or who might be interested in volunteering as the new project coordinator or co-chair may call Mary directly at 763-202-0796.

"I'm honored. And I'm humbled," Mary said of receiving the OCY award. She then repeated the sentiment that nearly every out-

Continued on page 12

Roger Rogne, Youth

Roger Rogne, 16, has lived in Columbia Heights his whole life. He loves the City, he said, but that's no reason to get complacent when it comes to making positive changes.

"This is a very accepting community," Roger explained. "People from any background are welcomed in Columbia Heights. Though we still have a ways to go."

This sense of purpose has pushed Roger to take part in several community programs and volunteer projects. It's the reason he was nominated and selected to be the 2023 Outstanding Citizen of the Year in the youth category (ages 14-18).

At 15, Roger was among the founding 10 members of the Columbia Heights Youth Commission. In March of 2022, his fellow commissioners appointed him to be vice chairperson. They reelected him to the role at the start of the new term.

"I want to see more youth involvement in the community," Roger said. "It's one reason I joined the commission."

In addition to his time on the Youth Commission, Roger volunteers to teach Sunday school two hours a week at First Lutheran Church. At the church, he also helps mentor LGBTQ youth, helped pass a formal resolution to increase more diversity and



Roger at the City's first Youth Commission meeting, March, 2022.

Continued on page 12

Save the Dates for These Free ***SUMMER EVENTS!***



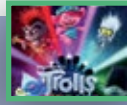
Community Art & Info Fair

June 14, 4-7 pm, Huset Park West. Art vendors, craft sales, info booths, petting zoo, and food trucks! To register as an art vendor, call 763-706-3730 by June 7. To ask about having an info table, call 763-706-3614. Event is near Murzyn Hall and splash pad.



Citywide Garage Sale

June 9-11, all weekend throughout the City. The Citywide Garage Sale returns for its sixth year. Want to get on the locator map? Register your address by visiting www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/garagesale by May 31. Find maps available online June 7.



Movies In the Park

Aug 18, E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial, 8:30 pm, Huset Park West
Sponsored by the Sister Cities

Aug 25, Black Panther, 8 pm, Huset Park West

Sept 15, Trolls World Tour, 7:30 pm, McKenna Park
Sponsored by New Horizon Academy



*Free popcorn at
all movies!*



Music In the Park

Music in the Park returns with five concerts in Huset Park East. Unless otherwise noted, all shows are 6:30-8 pm. A food truck will be on site at every show. Find out more at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/events.



Sponsored by Northeast Bank.

June 28, The Changeups • July 12, Pan Dimensions

July 26, Fridley City Band • Aug 9, The Jolly Pops *(for kids, 11 am to noon)*

Aug 23, Steve West and the Northern Stars



Pets In the Park

June 3, 11 am to 2 pm, Keyes Park. Celebrate your furry friends at this inaugural event featuring info vendors, free treats, and popcorn. Email wrottler@columbiaheightsmn.gov by May 26 to ask about participating as a vendor.



City Hall Open House

July 21, 4:30-7 pm, 3989 Central Ave NE. On the City's 102nd anniversary, the public is invited to tour the brand new Columbia Heights City Hall during an informal open house event. Staff and councilmembers will be on hand to answer questions and provide informational materials. Free snacks and refreshments provided.

Public Works Director Takes On Interim City Manager Role

The Columbia Heights City Council appointed Kevin Hansen interim city manager, effective April 14, at their regular meeting March 27. Hansen replaces Kelli Bourgeois, who filled the role for the past four years.

Hansen, 60, has worked with Columbia Heights since 1997 as city engineer and public works director and played a major role in the development of the new city hall, set to open in June. He will be in the interim position through December, at which point the City Council will choose a permanent replacement.

In his new role, Hansen heads the administration department and oversees all other City departments except for police, which is overseen by the mayor.

"Improving the quality of life for the City is what excites me," Hansen said. "The council just completed their 2023 vision and goal setting plans, and I'm eager to work on the short- and long-term goals they developed."

Hansen was responsible for the creation and funding of the City's street rehab zone program, major updates and repairs to City parks, and the planning and development of the new library building on Central Ave, to name just a few of the projects he's led.

Hansen will oversee numerous citywide projects, including the opening of the new City Hall at 3989 Central Ave NE, the groundbreaking of the 4300 Central Ave redevelopment site, the opening of a market-rate apartment building at 820 42nd Ave, and two major street reconstruction



projects for 37th Ave NE and 53rd Ave NE.

Hansen graduated with a bachelor's degree in construction engineering from North Dakota State University in 1985 and received a master's in municipal business management from the University of St. Thomas. Prior to working at Columbia Heights, Hansen was the city engineer for Inver Grove Heights from 1992 to 1997 and has more than 30 years' experience in city government.

Utilities Superintendent James Hauth will take over as interim public works director for a 14-week trial run before transferring the interim role to Streets and Parks Superintendent David Cullen for an additional 14 weeks, at which point a permanent replacement will be considered. Assistant City Engineer Sulmaan Khan will take over as interim city engineer.

Kelli Bourgeois Says Farewell After Nine Years With the City



Kelli Bourgeois left her position as Columbia Heights City Manager April 13 to take on the same role for Bristol, TN. Bourgeois, the first woman to be City Manager for Columbia Heights, had replaced Walter Fehst January of 2019. She was the assistant City Manager from 2014 to 2019.

Bourgeois helped secure the approval of the new City Hall and guided the planning and development of that facility. She also guided the City through the 2020-2021 Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent civil unrest. She oversaw the City's 100th anniversary celebrations in 2021 and worked

with staff to significantly expand the City's events and community engagement efforts. In 2016, prior to becoming City manager, Bourgeois was highly involved in the City's successful campaign to be named an All-America City by the National Civic League.

"I love Columbia Heights," Bourgeois said. "The staff represent the most professional, dedicated and caring group of people I've ever had the opportunity to work with. The community itself is vibrant, engaged, and has definitely embraced with openness the incredible positive changes our City has experienced and will continue to experience. By every measure, Columbia Heights is on an upward trajectory and ready to soar into the future."

Get daily updates on Columbia Heights happenings by following us on Facebook @Columbiaheightsmn, Twitter @heightsmn or Instagram @columbiaheightsmn

Visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/enews to subscribe to our monthly emailed newsletter. For questions or concerns about City publications, call 763-706-3614.

Library Program and Activity Highlights

Below is a sampling of upcoming activities at the library. For a full list or more details, visit <https://bit.ly/3kyG6vJ> or call 763-706-3690. Programs that encourage or require registration are indicated by *. Register online or by calling 763-706-3690. For at-home service, call 763-706-3681. Visit columbiaheightsmn.gov/library for additional info.

Summer Reading Program: All Ages***

Sign up at the library and track your summer reading progress! Kids and adults earn a free book upon sign-up. Keep participating to earn an entry into that week's prize drawing. June-Aug. Register at <https://anokacounty.beanstack.org>

Used Book Sale at the Library June 9 & 10

As part of the June 9-11 Citywide Garage Sale weekend, the library will have a variety of used books for sale June 9 and 10 during the Library's regular hours. Fill a bag of books for only \$3! While supplies last.

Adult Programs

Library Book Club

10 am: June 21, July 19, Aug 16

Conversation Circle

Mondays, 5:30-6:30 pm

Thursdays, 2-3 pm (June-July)

For English adult learners.

Author Talk: Jody Lulich*

Wed, June 21, 5:30 pm

Book: "In the Company of Grace: A Veterinarian's Memoir of Trauma and Healing."

Artist Reception: Jeffrey Berger*

Wed, July 12, 5:30-6:30 pm

Botanical Illustrations* **

Mon, June 26, 5:30 pm

Tree ID Workshop (offsite)*

June 29, 5:30 pm, LaBelle Park

Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic*

Sat, July 15, 10 am-noon

Fluid Painting* **

Mon, July 17, 5:30 pm

Monarch Pledge Presentation*

Tue, July 25, 5:30 pm

New: Mystery Genre Book Club

5:30 pm: June 15, Aug 17

NEW AT THE LIBRARY

Read-Along Books for Kids!

Find a new collection of audio-enabled books for children made by VOX Books and WonderBooks. These are physical picture books with built-in speakers.

Kids and Teen Programs

Family Storytime

Mondays, June 5-July 31, 10:30-11 am

Encore at the Library*

Clay Fish, Basic Clay Techniques**

Wed, June 14, 2-3:30 pm

Raptor Center***

Wed, June 21, 2-3 pm

Nature Printmaking, Focus on Fungi***

Wed, June 28, 2-3:30 pm

Sequest Animal Outreach***

Wed, July 12, 2-3 pm

It's Sun-sational! Sun Astronomy***

Wed, July 19, 2-3 pm

Wet Felted Bugs***

Wed, July 26, 2-3:30 pm

Science in the Summer***

Wed, Aug 2, 2-4 pm

Clay Pokemon***

Wed, Aug 9, 2-4 pm

Family Discovery* **

Clay Planter Pots

Sat, June 17, 1:30-3 pm

Of Bees & Butterflies

Sat, July 22, 10:30 am-noon

Family Craft Night* ***

Rock Painting

Tue, June 27, 5:30-6:30 pm

Bubble Wands

Tue, Aug 8, 5:30-6:30 pm

Family Book Club***

Tue, July 11, 5:30-6:30 pm

Teen and Tween

Summer Code Explorers***

Thursdays, June 15, 22, 29, and July 13, 20, and 27, 2:30-3 pm

DIY Teen

Needed Felted Strawberries***

Tue, June 20, 5:30-7 pm

Glass Fusing Sun Catchers & Coasters**

Tue, July 18, 5:30-7 pm

Tie Dye Tote Bags***

Tue, Aug 1, 5:30-7 pm

** This program is funded by the MN Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. ***This program is partially funded with a grant from the MN Department of Education using federal funding, CFDA 84.287, Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV B-21 Century Community Learning Centers. The content of this program does not necessarily represent the policy of the federal Department of Education or the MN Department of Education.

Library Hours

Mon-Thu, 10 am to 7 pm

Fri, 10 am to 4 pm

Sat, 10 am to 3 pm

Sun, closed

Library Closures

May 29 • July 4 • Sept 2-4

3939 Central Ave NE • (763) 706-3690

At-home Service • (763) 706-3681

www.columbiaheightsmn.gov, www.anokacountylibrary.org, Cable Channel 19

Facebook: @chplibrary

“Columbia Heights is a vibrant, healthy and connected City. We are here to actively support the community, deliver equitable services, build and strengthen connections, improve upon our past, and uphold our successes. We strive to be better and ensure Columbia Heights is a great place for everyone, today and in the future.”

—New City Mission Statement, approved April 10, 2023

Council Revises Short-Term Goals and Strategic Objectives

The Columbia Heights City Council met this spring with department directors and other staff to revise the City’s mission statement (see above), short-term goals, and core strategies. The City Council identified six core values about Columbia Heights they would like to uphold and advance when developing policies: 1. Healthy and Safe Community, 2. Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive, and Friendly, 3. Trusted and Engaged Leadership, 4. Thriving and Vibrant Destination Community, 5. Strong Infrastructure and Public Services, 6. Sustainable. With those values in mind, councilmembers and staff created a list of short-term goals they wish to achieve in the next few years:

- Develop architectural and financial plan for replacement of the Public Works building, especially as it relates to other priorities (before structural failure)
- Update Parks Master Plan, develop financing plan, and establish interactive communications about the plans with the community
- Develop Murzyn Hall renovation plan or identify an alternative new community center plan
- Prepare long-term, comprehensive plans for single family homes transitioning to rental, including increased tenant/renter protections and new rental licensing program (following moratorium)
- Update the five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) focusing on long-term maintenance and replacement of existing facilities
- Finalize plans for Central Avenue improvements
- Establish/Re-Establish the City Art Commission, invest in Public Art
- Find external grants and evaluate establishing a city grant program for Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) properties
- Develop a formal process to review goals, develop a system of accountability, and communicate with the public regarding the City Council’s goals and strategic plan
- Build End-to-End communications infrastructure for City buildings and sites
- Educate staff and elected officials on National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Develop and implement integrated online services
- Complete 43rd and Central PUD approval and initiate construction
- Improve and expand code enforcement, evaluate point-of-sale program
- Continue working towards creating a City workforce that accurately represents the community
- Establish centralized translation services for all departments and provide language support services at all public meetings
- Strengthen brand awareness across projects, activities, goals, and at the liquor store



Monarch Festival Is Aug 9, 5-8 pm, in Kordiak Park

The National Wildlife Federation’s Mayors’ Monarch Pledge encourages communities to create habitat for the monarch butterfly and other pollinators and educate residents about how to make a difference. Columbia Heights has committed to the pledge for the third time in 2023. As part of the pledge, the City will hold a Monarch Festival Aug 9 with activities and entertainment celebrating pollinators.



Commission Spotlight

The City of Columbia Heights has eight boards and commissions that advise the City Council on specific policies and make recommendations based on research and staff expertise: The Charter Commission, the Economic Development Authority (EDA), the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), the Library Board, the Parks and Rec Commission, the Planning Commission, the Sustainability Commission, and the Youth Commission. This newsletter periodically highlights each. For this edition, we’re putting a spotlight on the newly created Sustainability Commission.

Sustainability Commission

The City of Columbia Heights is looking for volunteers to join the newly formed Columbia Heights Sustainability Commission. The commission will operate as an official advisory body to the City Council. The Sustainability Commission will replace the City’s Traffic Commission.

Members will recommend and plan improvements and initiatives related to sustainability and advise the City Council on how to best operate the City in an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable manner. The Sustainability Commission will also bring together

different perspectives and expertise to ensure the initiatives are responsive to the needs and concerns of the community.

There are nine open seats on the new commission. The deadline to apply is June 16, with interviews scheduled for the end of June. Find an application online at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/boardsandcommissions.

Email completed applications to sion@columbiaheightsmn.gov by June 16.

Apply at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/boardsandcommissions

IMPORTANT CITY CONTACTS

CITY OFFICES.....(763) 706-3600
Administration.....(763) 706-3610

Public Works.....(763) 706-3700
Garbage/Refuse Pick-up/
Recycling.....(763) 780-8464
Refuse Support.....(763) 706-3727

Utility Billing.....(763) 706-3640

Fire Dept. Admin & Info.....(763) 706-8150
Fire Chief.....(763) 706-8152

Police(763) 706-8100

Library.....(763) 706-3690

Community
Development.....(763) 706-3670
Bldg. Permits/
Licenses.....(763) 706-3678

24-Hour Info. Line-Murzyn Hall info., Weather
Cancellations, Directions(763) 706-3737
Murzyn Hall Rental.....(763) 706-3734

Mayor Márquez Simula.....(763) 706-3607
Councilmember Buesgens.....(763) 788-5072
Councilmember Jacobs.....(612) 810-0512
Councilmember James(763) 706-3618
Councilmember Spriggs(763) 706-3617

City Newsletter editor(763) 706-3614

Emergency.....911

MORE INFO AT:
www.columbiaheightsmn.gov



Monte Fronk oversees emergency management with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Tribal Police Department and was kind enough to visit Columbia Heights City Hall to tell a personal story for the Roll Call podcast about his family's experience with human trafficking. This was part of a three-part series on human trafficking available to listen to at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/podcast.

CHPD Roll Call Podcast

The CHPD launched a bi-monthly podcast last year to discuss law enforcement and public safety topics relevant to the community. Visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/podcast to listen, or search for Roll Call on Spotify or Apple Music.



CHPD Social Worker Partners Are 2022 Nightingale Award Recipients

The Canvas Health social worker team received the 2022 T. Nightingale Community Service Award as selected by the Columbia Heights Police Department.

Licensed Independent clinical social workers Eileen Crosby and Erin Buller, along with their supervisor, Jessica Torrey, accepted the honor at the CHPD's annual award ceremony this March. All three work for Canvas Health, the City's strategic partner in administering a co-responder social worker model that started in 2021.



Canvas Health team members Eileen Crosby, Jessica Torrey, and Erin Buller accept the CHPD's 2022 T. Nightingale Community Outreach Award.

This team embraced the program and delivered high quality work on a consistent basis. The grant funded embedded social worker program is funded through the first quarter of 2024. Due to its success, the City and Police Department are exploring ways to extend the program beyond 2024.

The CHPD annually recognizes a member or members of the department and public who made significant contributions, or several smaller contributions, in community policing or service to the community.

2023 National Night Out Is Tue, Aug 1

National Night Out is an annual community-wide event that promotes strong police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer places to live and work. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. For info on hosting/registering your own event, call 763-706-8100.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Columbia Heights Police Department office is open Mon-Fri, 8 am to 4:30 pm. The telephone number is (763) 706-8100. Call 911 in an emergency. The office is located in the Public Safety building, 825 41st Avenue NE. The police department offices are closed on weekends and holidays.

A telephone is located inside the entry doors that can be used after hours to request assistance.

For general information, visit www.chpolice.com, find us on [Facebook.com/chpolice](https://www.facebook.com/chpolice), or follow twitter.com/colhgtspolice.





ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS WANTED

The Columbia Heights Fire Department is seeking new firefighters to join its team. If you're 18 or older, live within 10 minutes of the fire station, and have a valid driver's license, you're eligible to apply. On-call firefighters get paid per call, and also receive hourly compensation for training.

The more firefighters who are on-call, the more comprehensive the department's emergency response can be, which in turn can save lives.

"We're offering training on weekends, during the week-day, and evenings," said Fire Chief Charlie Thompson. "We want to accommodate as best we can. If you want to be a part of a professional and committed close-knit group and you want to do something that gives back to the community, this is a great path." Some trainings even include live house burns (see photo).

To learn more, please call 763-706-8150 or visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/employment.

Having a Backyard Fire? Heed the Red Flag Warnings

On days where it's particularly dangerous to have a recreational fire, the National Weather Service will issue a Red Flag Warning banning the activity. For more about current fire restrictions, visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire.

Strong winds, low humidity, and a recent drought are the major risk factors for recreational fires. Even if you don't see a Red Flag Warning from the NWS, pay attention to the weather conditions and make a common sense judgment before firing up your BBQ or igniting the fire pit. If you choose to have a fire, be sure to have a water source, like a garden hose, nearby. Don't allow the fire

to get taller or wider than three feet. Ensure an adult is supervising the fire at all times. Burn only clean, dry firewood. NEVER burn leaves, building materials, yard waste, trash, or plastics. Keep the smoke as minimal as possible. Fire rings must be located a minimum of 25 feet from all structures, such as houses, and garages, and never on balconies. Enclosed freestanding fire pits must be at least 15 feet away from all structures.

Get Your Permits

Permits may be obtained from the Fire Department located at 825 41st Ave NE, Columbia Heights between the hours of 8 am and 4:30 pm, Mon through Fri.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

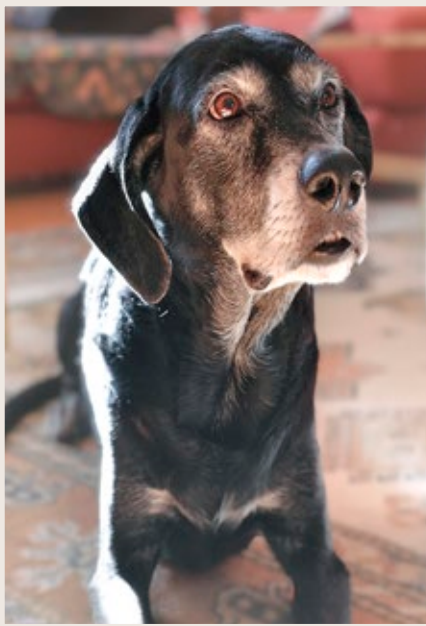
825 41st Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
fire@columbiaheightsmn.gov

Be up to date on activities and regular safety reminders of the Columbia Heights Fire Department by following us on Facebook [@columbiaheightsfire](https://www.facebook.com/columbiaheightsfire).

Non-Emergency: (763) 706-8150

Emergency: Call 9-1-1

Housing Maintenance Inspections: (763) 706-8156
fireinspections@columbiaheightsmn.gov



Be Neighborly, Improve Water Quality, Preserve Public Health: Please Pick Up After Your Pets

We know it's gross to pick up pet waste, but it's even grosser not to. In fact, it's a health risk to both pets and people, especially children.

Pet waste is full of bacteria that can make humans and animals sick. This gets into water runoff untreated and pollutes nearby waterways, or ends up on the bottom of a neighbor's shoe. And it's also an eyesore. **Picking up after your pets is not only safer for the environment, it's the neighborly thing to do.**

When you can, scoop it up and flush it down the toilet. This way you don't use

a plastic bag, and the waste is treated.

If you're not near a toilet, seal the waste in a plastic bag and throw it in the garbage. To be more environmentally friendly, you can buy compostable bags at almost any pet store.

You can also bury small quantities in your yard where it can decompose slowly. Put three or four inches of waste in a hole under at least eight inches of soil. Bury in multiple locations, don't bury near vegetable gardens, and always double check where underground utilities may be buried before you dig.

Adopt-a-Drain Program Improves Water Quality, Volunteers Wanted

Congratulations to Columbia Heights and its residents on winning the regional Community Adopt-a-Drain Challenge for the second year in a row in 2022! Building off of last year, 66 new drains were adopted in 2022. There were 421 reported cleanings and more than 2,000 pounds of debris collected. The competition with Andover, Fridley, and Blaine started again this March and ends in October. To help your local environment, and help Columbia Heights win the Challenge again in 2023, adopt your drain or report a cleaning at mn.adopt-a-drain.org. You can even name your drain!

Debris in storm drains is a contributor to water pollution and increases flooding in streets. It takes about 15 minutes to clear out a clogged storm drain.

Sign up to adopt a drain or find more info at www.adopt-a-drain.org.



Gary C. adopted five drains near his house in Columbia Heights as part of the 2022 Adopt-a-Drain Challenge. His drains are named Classics IV, Me Tarzan You Drain, King of Drain, Crazy Drain, and Drain in Vain.

What You Put On Your Lawn and Driveway Washes Into Waterways

Water runoff from your driveway and lawn washes directly into the storm water drainage system. Storm drains are generally located along street curbs and collect snow melt and groundwater runoff. So **anything you put on your lawn, sidewalk, driveway or parking lot, or any waste you don't pick up, will drain into ponds, lakes, streams, and rivers.** These pollutants harm wildlife and recreation areas.

Special concerns include phosphorus fertilizers, petroleum products, salt, other chemicals, garbage, and sediments from erosion. Federal and State environmental laws have resulted in more stringent regulations concerning pollution from storm water systems. Local governments may incur large fines if they do not have an active program to reduce storm water pollution.

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Public Information Session Is June 14

The Public Works Department conducts a required public informational session on the SWPPP (Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program) annually. This year, it will be held June 14 during the Art and Info Fair in Huset Park, 4-7 pm. The City of Columbia Heights has developed a SWPPP

plan in response to Federal and State regulations concerning the quality of water entering streams, rivers, and lakes from storm water drainage systems. At this event, the public will have the opportunity to ask questions and give input and comments on the SWPPP.

Water Quality CCR 2022

A copy of the Water Quality Consumer Confidence Report is available at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/ccr, or call 763-706-3700 for a paper copy.

Consider Spring Cleaning Reuse Options

If you're cleaning out your house for summer, please consider your reuse options. Columbia Heights and other local vendors provide many free reuse opportunities to properly donate, sell, or reuse most household items:

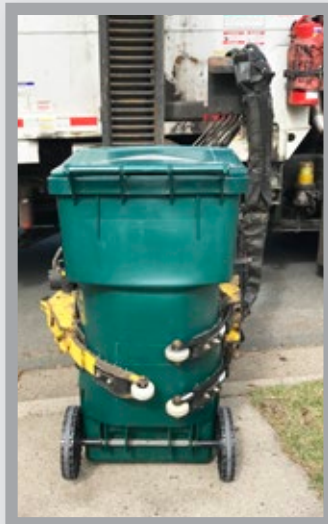


Garage sales are a great way to get rid of unwanted items without trashing them. The next citywide garage sale weekend is June 9-11. Visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/garagesale for more about getting your sale on the locator map.

- Columbia Heights Recycling Center, 3801 Madison St NE, visit columbiaheightsmn.gov/recyclingcenter
- Curbside Appliance (1 free/year), electronics (\$20 flat fee) and FREE Mattress Recycling, call 1-763-706-3727 for a pickup
- Fix-It clinics, visit www.AnokaCountyMN.gov/fixit
- Household items, clothing, and furniture donations, visit columbiaheightsmn.gov/reuse for listings of donation vendors
- Anoka County Household Hazardous Waste Facility, 3230 101st Ave NE., Blaine MN 55449, call 763-324-3400
- Anoka County yard and tree waste sites 13285 Hanson Blvd NW, Coon Rapids, or 7701 Main St., Lino Lakes
- Citywide Garage Sale, June 9-11 (see page 3)
- Spring cleaning packets available at City Hall or online at columbiaheightsmn.gov/reuse. Or call 763-706-3700 to order.

Robotic Arms Used for Curbside Pickup

Haulers use trucks with mechanical arms to collect trash and recycling. They use these trucks in the alleys, as well. Please place your cart out where the arm can reach it and allow some space between the carts. Refuse pads are a convenient way to accomplish this and the City will add these, by request and at-cost, to the annual concrete work schedule. Contact Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov for specifications and pricing.



Walter's Recycling & Refuse/Haulstar Sanitation

Trash and Recycling Service: 1-763-780-8464; Email service@waltersrecycling.com

City Refuse/Recycling Info

Visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuseandrecycling or call 763-706-3727
Online request form: www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refusesupport
Refuse service levels and rates at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuserates

Go Green For National Night Out: Tips for Ways to Reduce Block Party Waste

Reduce & Reuse

- Serve food and beverages in washable or compostable containers. Use reusable utensils or ask guests to bring some.
- Limit the use of paper napkins and towels (use washable napkins and towels).
- Offer straws only when requested.
- Consider a reusable banner that doesn't include the event year and date.
- Prevent food waste by requiring RSVPs or not cooking too much food ahead of the event. Plan for storage or donations of leftovers. Info at: SavetheFood.com.

Compost

- If not using washable dishes consider certified compostable products with a BPI logo.
- Put out containers to collect food waste. Simply roll out your yard waste/organics cart from your home (see below to order).
- Make sure your organics collection containers are well-labeled so attendees know where to correctly place items. Call Public Works for free signs.
- Borrow event organic bins from Anoka County Recycling and Resource Solutions, contact information below.

Refuse Holiday Schedule

- **Memorial Day, May 29**, *delayed all week*
- **Independence Day, July 4**, *delayed Tue-Fri*
- **Labor Day, Mon, Sept 4**, *delayed all week*

Sign up for a yard waste/organics cart, get a free bag of compost! Email publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov to order your cart. For bulk pickup, call 763-706-3727.

Anoka County Recycling & Resource Solutions

Call (763) 324-3400 or visit www.anokacountymn.gov/recycle

Columbia Heights Recycling Center

3801 Madison Street NE, Columbia Heights
Open Saturdays, 9 am to 1 pm. Closed some holidays
www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/recyclingcenter

Rapid Graphics, Continued From Page 2

and white. “Lots of chemicals. Type-setting, manual layout, design work. If we needed to print a photo, that was a major deal.”

In the mid-90s, Xerox digital printers became available and Rapid Graphics invested in one.

“That was the start of it,” Warren said. “Now we have seven digital printers. Now we can print anything.”

And they do. With a staff of five, Rapid Graphics runs print projects for local organizations and individuals as well as for major national companies, including Medtronic. Brochures, envelopes, photographs, books, newsletters, postcards, signs, you name it—and always from the same building on Central Avenue just north of 40th.

The business recently made headlines in the local papers and on KSTP 5 for its creative holiday display. Over the last three years, the November/December window display at Rapid Graphics has featured a three-dimensional diorama and collage of world religions and cultural groups with placards and designs representing Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, atheism, Judaism, LGBTQ groups, and BIPOC populations, to name a few.

“I wanted to bring a little more understanding, a little more history to these ideas and organizations,” Warren said. “You can build trust and friendship when you learn more about other groups and cultures, when you start understanding people better. That’s what we’ve got to do.”

The Business of the Year Award will be an annual recognition like the Outstanding Citizen awards. Nominations for 2024 will be accepted starting this fall. Check back at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/business for updates.

Congratulations, Rapid Graphics!



Mary Tholkes, Continued From Page 2

standing citizen winner shares: “I don’t feel I do anything more than many other people do in the community.”

That’s maybe because she surrounds herself with other volunteers and community partners. In addition to her garden work, she chairs the outreach committee at Community United Methodist Church, organizes backpack food donations for children in need through the Every Meal program, and leads environmental education initiatives. She also recently spent five years volunteering for her church’s refugee resettlement program helping to support a single mom and her five children as they found their footing. That doesn’t even come close to covering all of it.

Mary summed up her community involvement philosophy in one sentence: “I just feel the need to leave the world a better place than when I came.”

We thank you for your service, Mary. Congratulations!

Roger Rogne, Continued From Page 2

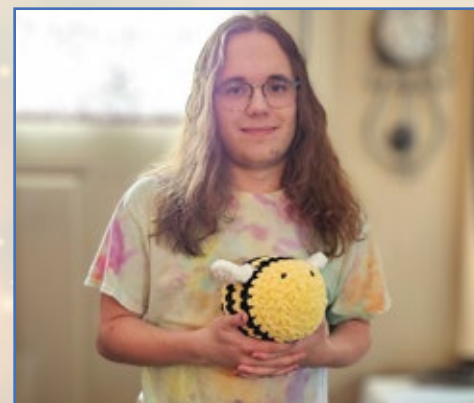
inclusion for marginalized groups, and volunteered with the church youth group to sort food donations for giveaway at SACA Food Shelf.

During the first Columbia Heights Pride Festival, Roger volunteered to scoop free ice cream for attendees. Last year, he was a vendor at the event, selling his homemade crafts. Roger is often seen crocheting bees and other little creatures he sells or gives away (see photo below).

Outside of Columbia Heights, Roger is the treasurer of the student council at Lionsgate Academy in Shoreview. At the school, he helps plan events, fundraisers, and youth leadership enrichment opportunities.

After graduation, he said he hopes to study art education in college and become a teacher.

Thank you for being so involved in your community, Roger. Congratulations!



To find out more about the Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award or to nominate someone, visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/outstanding. For more about the Business of the Year, visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/business.