



Dr. Martin Luther King Honored with January 16 Celebration

The Community of Concerned Citizens and the Independence Ministerial Alliance, in partnership with the City of Independence, recognized Martin Luther King Day with ceremonies January 16 at the Truman Memorial Building, 416 W. Maple. The theme for this year's celebration was "The Man, The Times, The People."

The keynote speech was delivered by Deputy Superintendent Dred Scott of the Independence School District. Scott referred to Dr. King's courage and philosophy of using non-violence to help others.



Independence School District Deputy Superintendent Dred Scott.

Diane Kyser, executive director of the Community Mediation Center in Independence, received the 2012 Martin Luther King Jr. Award from the Independence Human Relations Commission.

The celebration featured students from the Van Horn Music Department, who showcased their talent with selected music and vocals.

Taryn Brush, a senior at William Chrisman High School, was the winner of the John Olivarez Essay



John Olivarez presented the Essay Scholarship to high school senior Taryn Brush.

Scholarship. The middle school essay winner was Alex Millard.

Missouri Comets defender Leo Gibson made a special appearance to unveil his new Foundation: Kickin' for Christ, benefiting aspiring young athletes in Liberia. He visited with those attending and signed autographs following the program.



Parks & Recreation Director Eric Urfer with essay winner Alex Millard.

To further complement the evening's theme, midwestern artist Erlene Flowers displayed several of her paintings: a collection of oils, water media, and acrylics.

Sponsors also included The Examiner, Local Investment Commission, and the Independence School District.

Need Help? Use The Action Center

The City of Independence's Action Center is a specialized customer relationship management tool, focused on improving customer service efficiency and accountability. It is a web-based tool developed to centralize citizen communications with the City, and document the resolution of issues and requests.

At one time, the City operated a manned telephone hotline and information desk known as the Customer Information Center (CIC). In 2004, the CIC was replaced with an automated speech recognition system for incoming telephone calls.

In 2009, the Action Center was launched as a supplement to the telephone system, and has succeeded in eliminating much of the delay involved in determining where a request should go.

Advantages

- Request a service, report an issue, or ask a question outside City operating hours
- User requests instantly delivered to appropriate City staff
- Track status updates in real time
- Communicate directly with City employees handling the request

How do I use it?

Visit the City's website at www.independencemo.org. Click on the Action Center button on the City's home page, or use the Online Services menu at the top of any page.

More than 50 popular requests are available, categorized in an easy-to-use menu. If you cannot find what you are looking for, use the option for a General Request for information or services.

Within six months of launch, the Action Center received more than 800 requests. To date, the Action Center has received more than 4,000 requests for service, and the response time between a request's receipt and completion has decreased by more than 27 percent.

Start with the Action Center whenever you have a question or concern.

Indoor Events Beckon for March

Escape the blustery wintry winds in March by choosing one of the many inside special activities planned at tourism attractions. Begin with one of the events at the National Frontier Trails Museum, 318 W. Pacific. Starting at 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, join museum staff for a "Getting Ready" gallery walk. The tour will be repeated on March 8, 15 and 22 and is included with regular museum admission. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors 62 and over, and \$3 for ages 6-17.

Historian Jim Howk will interpret the Oregon Trail in an image drive lecture set for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6 (also free with museum admission). A 90-minute children's workshop, "Wagons Ho!" is slated from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 24. Cost is \$7.50 for ages 6-17 and \$10 for adults. Call 325-7575 for reservations.

Put on your walking shoes and join staff for a "Trails From The Square" tour later that afternoon at 1 p.m. Cost is \$5

and reservations are also required for this tour. Call 325-7575 for details.

"Tracing the Trumans: An American Story" is a long-running special exhibit created by staff of the Harry S. Truman Library, 500 W. U.S. 24 Highway. It opens on Friday, March 9 and will run through December 2012.

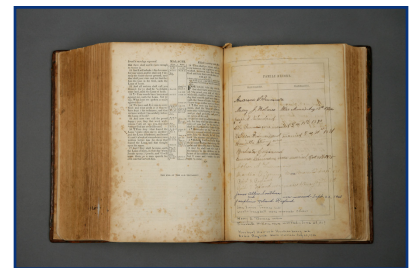
The display explores the ancestors of Harry and Bess through original historical memorabilia – many of which have never before been on display – video programs and hands-on activities.

Some of the artifacts featured will be a horse-drawn buggy from the Truman family farm, the 1883 wedding dress of Bess Truman's mother, daughter Margaret's 1926 pedal car, Martha Ellen "Mama" Truman's shotgun, a silver casket nameplate for Harry Truman's grandmother and poppies sent home by Captain Harry Truman from the battlefields of World War I.

Admission is included with paid museum admission, which is \$8 for adults,



Nancy Tyler Holmes, Harry S. Truman's Paternal Great-Grandmother



View the Truman family Bible on display through December.

\$7 for seniors and \$3 for ages 6-15. Call 268-8200 or go to www.trumanlibrary.org for more information.

Two concerts in the Dome and Spire series at the Community of Christ Temple, 201 S. River, are planned this month. At 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 11, "Modern Masterpieces" will be performed by the Spire Chamber Ensemble, which brings together the most talented singers from across the U.S. and Canada. This spring concert will present music of composers Jonathan Dove, Gabriel Jackson, Ola Gjeilo, Morten Lauridsen, and many others. Admission is \$10 at the door.

Sunday, March 25 is the date the Allegro Community Children's Choir returns to the Temple. Heralded as "the voices of angels" by The Kansas City Star, this concert begins at 4:30 p.m. and tickets are \$15. Go to www.allegrocc.org for details on either of these events.

"A Spring Fling," the 25th annual spring fashion show and luncheon at the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, 313 W. Pacific, is scheduled for Saturday, March 17. Lunch is served at noon and the event will run until 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and reservations to 461-3491 are required.

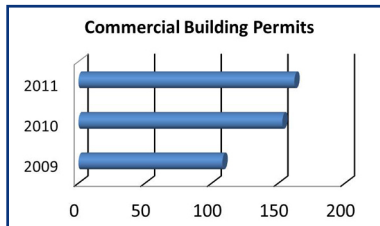
The Vaile Mansion, 1500 N. Liberty, will host a "Gone With The Wind" tea party from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 31. Memorabilia from the movie will be on display, vintage fashions will be modeled informally and harp music will set an elegant tone. Tickets, limited to 75, are \$25 and directions for reservations are available by calling 325-7430.

For information on other events for March, including a concert by Christian recording artists Casting Crowns at the Independence Events Center on Thursday, March 22 and two live performances of "The Snow Queen" at the Puppetry Arts Institute on Saturday, March 24, go to www.visitindependence.com or call the Tourism Department at 325-7111.

Annual Development Report by Community Development

Each January the Community Development Department conducts a review of permits issued in the prior calendar year. Permits reviewed are for new construction, major renovation or remodel and additions. The numbers presented do not include minor repairs or regular maintenance of properties.

In 2011, the Community Development Department saw an increase in Residential and Commercial building permits issued over both 2009 and 2010. This is an indicator of new investment and reinvestment in the community.

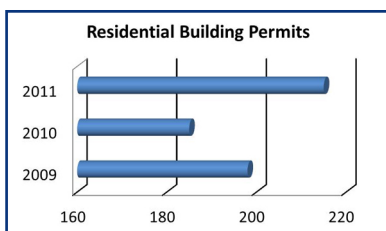


shell buildings, and renovation of older structures.

Examples include the completely renovated and expanded Wal-Mart Supercenter on 39th Street, the new Children's Mercy Clinics East off Little Blue Parkway currently under construction, and the tenant finish of the Bed Bath & Beyond and BuyBuy Baby spaces on Jackson Drive.

Residential Permits were also up in 2011 – 16% over 2010 and 8% over 2009. New construction continues to be a smaller segment of the permits issued while renovations, repairs, and additions to existing homes remains strong.

The market continues to be unpredictable for new development. However, this report is a positive indicator for development in Independence.



Commercial Permits in 2011 were up 60% over 2009 and up 6% over 2010. This category includes new construction of buildings, tenant finish of existing

Think Spring With Rain Gardens

With spring just around the corner, it's time to start thinking about flowers and ways to help reduce your storm water runoff. It's true that "April Showers Bring May Flowers," but spring showers also bring flooded creeks and storm sewer systems which, in turn, can flood your home. To help reduce storm water runoff, rain barrels and rain gardens are beautiful, fun assets.

Rain gardens are a great addition to any yard and bring beauty and functionality to any home. Pick a low-lying area of your yard where the most runoff flows, but do not put your garden where water tends to pond. Ponding means the soil is slow to absorb water and would most likely drown your flowers. Place your rain garden at least 10 feet away from the house to avoid basement flooding or damage to the foundation. Rain gardens have the benefit of slowing storm water so it can percolate into the ground, and also help to trap sediment and some pollutants.



There are many different types of flowers you can plant in a rain garden. Native plants are ideal and can bring butterflies and birds into your garden. Native plants

are perennials that are great at conserving soil and water. They do not need fertilizer to thrive and are long lasting because they have adapted to local weather and conditions. A few native plants that work in our region include Cardinal Flower, Purple Coneflower, Black-eyed Susan and Prairie Blazing Star.



You may want to consider a rain barrel to water your other gardens or flowers. Rain barrels attach to the downspouts on your home and collect rain water from the roof for later use on lawns or gardens. Making your rain barrel unique is a fun project for the whole family. Home improvement and hardware stores carry spray paint specially formulated to adhere to plastic, which is great to use on plastic rain barrels.

Please visit www.lawrencerecycles.org/pdf/facts-rainbarrel.pdf for a fact sheet on rain barrels and their upkeep or visit www.rainkc.com.

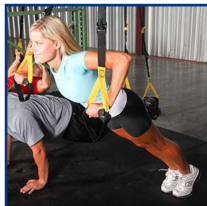
Contact WPC at 325-7711 for a free brochure on how to make a rain garden or a rain barrel, and for a list of 10 native plants for the Kansas City region.

Build Strength With TRX Classes in March

Independence Parks & Recreation is now offering a new approach to exercise.

TRX Suspension Training classes develop strength, balance, flexibility, endurance, coordination and core stability - all at the same time.

Classes are held twice a week for four weeks, and the fee is \$42 per person. All classes will be held at the Truman Memorial Building, 416 W. Maple. Class size is limited, so register early.



Classes are offered from 5 to 6 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays beginning March 5; from 12 to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning March 6; and from 6 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays also beginning March 6.

Call 325-7843 or 325-7370 to enroll or for more information.

Plan Now for New Community Gardens

While spring is still months away, it is never too early to start planning your community garden!

The Independence Health Department in conjunction with the Community Garden Association promotes gardening through education and neighborhood collaboration.

"In addition to providing fresh fruits and vegetables that are key to a healthy lifestyle, community gardens offer an opportunity to build neighborhood identity and a sense of ownership and stewardship," said Health Educator Joan Shover, who oversees the program.

The Health Department has launched 10 neighborhood gardens throughout the community and this spring is working on the newest at the Community Services League facility just off Noland Road on White Oak. The fresh produce from that garden will be available in their pantry for its clients.

According to the American Gardening Association, there are 10 guidelines for launching a successful community garden.

- Organize meetings for interested people
- Form a planning committee
- Identify all resources
- Approach a sponsor
- Choose a site
- Prepare and develop the site
- Organize the garden
- Plan for children
- Determine rules and put them in writing
- Develop a communication process/tool

If you are interested in gardening, either as an individual or as a neighborhood project, contact the Independence Health Department at 325-7185.

Parents University 2012

Workshops & resources for parents and caregivers of children ages infant to 18.

8 a.m. to Noon
Saturday, March 3

Pioneer Ridge Middle School
1656 S. Speck Rd.
Independence, MO 60457

\$5 per person

*Teens welcome too!
Presented by Coalition For Child Safety & Its Partners
www.coalition4childsafety.org

Free Tax Preparation Assistance Available For Seniors

Trained AARP volunteers will assist individuals aged 50+ with an income of less than \$60,000. Call The Palmer Center, 218A N. Pleasant, at 325-6200 to schedule an appointment. Appointments will be set for a date between February 1 and April 17.

Directory

CityScene is published monthly by the City Manager's Office, 111 East Maple Street, Independence, Missouri 64050. For information call 325-7019. Web-site address is www.independencemo.org. Follow us at [Twitter.com/CityofIndepMO](https://twitter.com/CityofIndepMO).



Where To Call

The City of Independence has an automated voice-response telephone system. Call 325-7000 and say the name of the person or the department you wish to contact.



Quick Links

- Adopt-a-Street** 325-7602
- Barking Dogs** 325-7213
- Building Permits** 325-7401
- Business Licenses** 325-7079
- Crime Stoppers Tips** 474-8477
- Drop-Off Trash** 325-7623
- Drugs** 325-6272
- Graffiti** 325-7824
- Municipal Court** 325-7239
- Neighborhood Watch** 325-7643
- Park Vandalism** 325-7208
- Potholes** 325-7624
- Report Power Outage** 325-7550
- Street Lights** 325-7535
- Storm Water Pollution** 325-7727
- Utilities**
- Customer Service** 325-7930
- Pay by Phone** 325-SERV
- Payment Assistance** 254-4100
- Weeds, Trash** 325-7193



City Drop-Off Depot

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Second Saturday Of Each Month
New Season Starts March 10!
875 Vista Avenue

From M-291, take Truman Road east approximately one mile, then north on Vista Avenue. Drop-Off Depot is next to the Animal Shelter.

- Trash:** Cars, \$10; Vehicles Larger Than Car, \$15; Trailers 8 Feet or Longer, \$25
- Brush:** Limbs, Firewood, Bushes, Stumps. No Leaves or Grass: \$10/load
- Major Appliances:** \$15 Each
- Batteries & Lawnmowers:** Free
- Tires:** Car, \$1; Mounted Car, \$3; Truck, \$4; Mounted Truck, \$10; Farm/Tractor, \$15

Residential vehicles only, no commercial. No vehicles larger than a pick-up truck. Proof of residency required.

Watch City Meetings On Streaming Video

City Council meetings and study sessions are available as live and archived streaming video on the City's Website, www.independencemo.org

Each live City 7 TV broadcast is available online during the 6 p.m. Monday City Council meetings. An archive of the program is available on the site the next morning for viewing 24 hours a day. Archived videos are available for a few months following their posting. If you would like to purchase a copy of a Council meeting call 325-7762.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor	
Don Reimal	325-7027
City Council Office	
325-7022	
Councilmembers	
Marcie Gragg	District 1
Jim Engelman	District 2
Myron Paris	District 3
Jim Page	District 4
Jim Schultz	At Large
Lucy Young	At Large
City Manager	
Robert Heacock	325-7170

Building a Healthier Independence



Register for a smoking cessation class today!

816.325.7185

Classes start March 6, 2012.

Register online at www.independencemo.org/health

Disaster Preparedness Class February 25

Learn about "Citizen Response - All Hazard" and be ready to help yourself and your family if a disaster strikes. The free class will be held from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Saturday, February 25 at the Truman Memorial Building, 416 W. Maple.

Call the Office of Emergency Preparedness at 325-7167 to register. *You have control - Not the disaster.*



Become a fan of the City of Independence at www.facebook.com.

To follow the City on Twitter, go to <http://twitter.com/CityOfIndepMO> and click the follow button.



Recycling Centers

The City operates two recycling centers. Items accepted at the centers include paper, cardboard, paperboard, steel and aluminum cans, plastic, glass food and beverage containers, toner cartridges and dry cell batteries.

- 35th Street Recycling Center**
- 13600 E. 35th Street
- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fridays
- 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays
- Vista Avenue Recycling Center**
- 875 Vista Avenue
- 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sundays
- 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Mondays



City of Independence

Government Access Television CITY COUNCIL

- 6 p.m. Mondays*
- 10 a.m. Tuesdays
- 7 p.m. Wednesdays
- 2 p.m. Sundays

PLANNING COMMISSION

- 6 p.m. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays*
- 10 a.m. Wednesdays
- 7 p.m. Thursdays

For more information: www.City7.TV

*Denotes live meeting, all others are rebroadcasts.