

MIZZOU

The magazine of
the Mizzou Alumni Association

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Around the Columns

Buses to get splash of color

Above the front headlights, two tiger eyes peer out into traffic. Black, gold and white paint cover the sides, and a curvy striped tail emerges from the rear bumper. All of Columbia's new public buses will sport this Mizzou-themed look, starting with three that will arrive in fall 2011.



Columbia's new city buses will sport a Mizzou theme, which was designed by Brendon Steenbergen, BA '99. The new paint job will appear as the current fleet is replaced.

"With respect to the other two colleges in town, the University of Missouri has the largest footprint and the largest impact on the city," says Mayor Bob McDavid, MD '72. "The ability to have new buses with a Mizzou color scheme was in everybody's best interest."

For more than a decade, people have been asking: Why would Columbia city buses be painted red and blue, the colors of Mizzou's rival? Mike Alden, athletic director, says when he arrived here in 1998, he spoke with several campus and city government employees about this issue; none had an explanation. Internal conversations about the buses continued, though the city was unlikely to pay for a new paint job.




Then, as Columbia was gearing up for Homecoming 2010, Alden read a *Columbia Daily Tribune* article during his morning workout. The Federal Transit Administration had earmarked \$2 million to replace six of Columbia's aging buses. Alden contacted City Manager Bill Watkins, BS PA '74, MS '76, to revive the bus color conversation. Several campus staffers compiled ideas, and Brendon Steenbergen, BA '99, creative director of BigFish Creative in Columbia, created three possible black-and-gold bus designs.

"It was kind of like the planets, sun and moon finally lined up at the right time," says Jackie Jones, vice chancellor for administrative services, who helped relay Mizzou's proposals to

Columbia's Public Works Department. On Dec. 6, 2010, the Columbia City Council approved the project. The new Tiger motif will be phased in as current buses are replaced.

“The fabric of Columbia is represented by the Katy Trail; by Ninth Street and its eclectic shops; by Shakespeare's, Harpo's and Booche's,” Alden says. “There are certain identifying marks of Columbia, and Mizzou is certainly part of that fabric. That crossover will now be reflected in something as basic as the color they paint the buses.”

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Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 | Phone: 573-882-5916
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Last updated: Feb. 15, 2013