

SIS students earn  
trimester honors



Golf dream team  
picks announced



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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER

## Wilmington 209-U preps for back to school

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The students in Wilmington School District 209-U were technically back in session this week. But students will make the official return to the classroom in just a few days.

After starting off the week with a teacher institute and remote planning days, school is back in session today (Jan. 6) for all students, but as remote learning only.

All students in the district will participate in remote learning through Friday, a revised schedule that the district decided to implement prior to the start of winter break. Schools reopen for in-person learning on Monday, Jan. 11.

District 209-U was one of just a few districts in the region that was

able to return students to the classroom for face to face instruction back in August.

During last month's meeting of the Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent Kevin Feeney told members of the board that the district had done well while weathering the storm of the novel coronavirus during the first half of the 2020-2021 school year.

"As a whole we've done really well this school year in keeping the numbers low," Feeney told members of the school board on Dec. 14.

Feeney said the district ended the semester with four active cases, two students and two staff members.

"As a whole, we had 59 staff and students out the entire school year, which is really very good considering everything and the environment... We

are adjusting our calendar when we come back in January, we're going to take that first week in January and go fully remote... That will get us away from the holidays a little bit more, almost like a quarantine that we can help keep staff and students safe until they come back on the 11th."

Over the summer, the district created its back to school plan, which outlined how in-school instruction would take place.

Guidelines in that document, which will continue into the second half of the school year, include:

- Mandatory face coverings for all persons over the age of 2
- Capacity limits of 50 people per space
- Social distancing to be observed as much as possible
- Temperature checks and/or self

certification that students are symptom free

- Increase in cleaning and disinfecting

Each of the district's four schools will continue to limit the number of outside visitors.

Passing periods at WMS and WHS will remain staggered and hallways will be marked for appropriate traffic flow.

At all school buildings, a separate nurse's station is established for students who are identified with a fever or potential COVID-19 symptoms.

Since the beginning of the school year, the district has received around \$230,000 in federal CARES funding earmarked for COVID-related needs and expenses.

"It's helped us with hiring two remote learning teachers, an addi-

tional nurse, equipment, PPE, technology has been huge for us, we definitely needed it," Feeney said.

In an email home to families, the district also reminded parents and students of additional early student dismissals scheduled for the second half of the school year.

Starting on Wednesday, Jan. 27, students will be dismissed early on each Wednesday afternoon up until Spring Break in late March.

Students will be dismissed at noon from Bruning Elementary, 12:15 p.m. from Wilmington High School, and 12:20 p.m. from Stevens and Wilmington Middle School on each Wednesday through March 24.

Other than those days, the district will continue with regular in-person learning for the second half of the year.



Photo by Eric Fisher

WILMINGTON CITY TRUCKS were out early Saturday morning plowing the streets have a second round of snow over the holiday weekend. The forecast for the rest of the week calls for highs above freezing and little or no chance of snow through Sunday.

## Municipal, school board races set for April 6 election

Three to vie for mayoral seat in Wilmington

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

After the consolidated election takes place in April, the makeup of the Wilmington City Council is guaranteed to look different than it did one year ago.

Candidates for the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election filed their petitions with the city last month.

Of the four current aldermen whose terms expire this year, only one is seeking reelection. Mayor Roy Strong will also seek reelection, taking on two challengers.

In Wilmington, there are four 4-year alderman seats, one 2-year unexpired alderman term, the 4-year mayoral term, and the 4-year clerk term on the ballot in April.

The expiring terms are:

- Mayor (incumbent Roy Strong)
- Alderman First Ward (incumbent John Persic)
- Alderman Second Ward (incumbent Floyd Combes)
- Alderman Third Ward (incumbent Lisa Butler)
- Alderman Fourth Ward (incumbent Frank Studer)

Persic, Combes and Studer are not seeking reelection.

Also on the ballot is the 2-year unexpired term of Fourth Ward Alderman Jake Tenn, who resigned on Nov. 4.

SEE ELECTION, PAGE 2

## Regional positivity rate hovers around 10%

Illinois nears 1 million total COVID-19 cases

STAFF REPORT

As the COVID-19 virus continues to spread throughout the country, all of Illinois remains under Tier 3 resurgence mitigations.

On Tuesday, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) reported 6,839 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in the state, as well as 126 additional deaths, including three in Will County.

As of Jan. 2, the test positivity seven day rolling average for Region 7, which includes Will and Kankakee counties, is at 10.9%.

In Will County alone, that average is 12.3%.

Between Dec. 23 and Jan. 2, the regional average for all of Region 7 has fluctuated within a 1% range, hitting its lowest point on Dec. 26 at 9.9%.

The region hit its lowest average back in June, when the rate hovered around 3.7%.

The rate began to rise steadily in October, starting the month at 5.5% before peaking at 20.7% on Nov. 16. With some fluctuations, the data shows the rates have slowly declined since mid-November.

Currently, Region 7 has had 11 consecutive days of test positivity below 12%, 11 days where medical/surgical bed

SEE COVID, PAGE 2



## Winter wonderland

First storm of the season blows into town

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

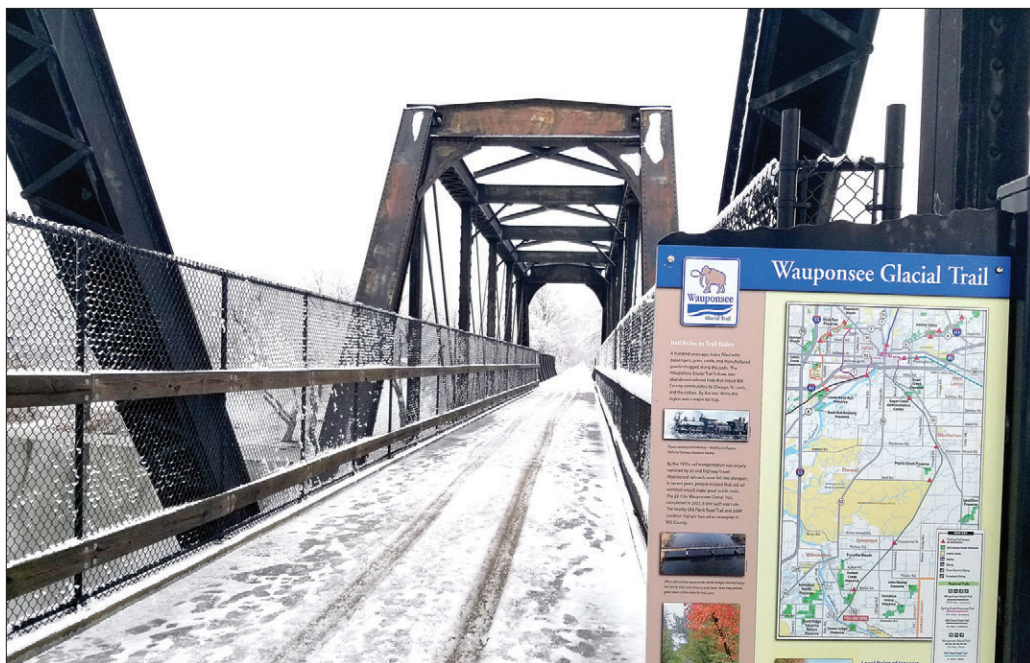
The year 2020 couldn't leave without leaving one last mess behind.

The first big winter storm of the season rolled through the area on Tuesday, Dec. 29, bringing near white out conditions and a long wait for anyone seeking to travel.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), an area of moderate to heavy snow moved northeastward across northern Illinois and far northwest Indiana from late afternoon into the evening of Dec. 29, with snowfall rates reported of 1- to 2-inches per hour.

By mid-evening, warming temperatures aloft resulted in the precipitation mixing with sleet and rain before changing over to all rain for much of the

SEE SNOW, PAGE 2



THE WAUPONSEE GLACIAL TRAIL lived up to its name after the first major snowstorm of the season came through the area last week. Hikers and snowmobiles took to the trail near Custer Park, Rivals Park, and through Wilmington.

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# January 1921, a roaring start to the new year



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko

Today we are looking at this month, 100 years ago. Politics was the number one concern. At that time, many Wilmingtonians were dissatisfied with the Wilmington City Council. One hundred voters of Wilmington signed a petition asking for a special election for the purpose of establishing the commission form of government. The petition was granted.

The date set for the special election was February 23. Normally, this question would appear in a general election, but none was scheduled, so a special election was called. The 1920 census report listed Wilmington with a population of 1,384.

Members of the Will County Farm Bureau met, naming G. W. Neese of Wilmington as the Treasurer, and Arthur States of Elwood as the Secretary. Their prime objective for the year was to

organize central farmer's markets, where local farmers could sell their own produce without "paying inordinate profits to speculators and middlemen."

The movie theater at the Opera House was doing great business. They showed all Paramount pictures, including Dorothy Gish in "Mary Ellen Comes To Town" and Margaret Clark in "Easy To Get." Included at each performance was the short film magazine called Paramount Magazine. Current Paramount film stars were featured, showing them at home and at play. The public ate it up.

The Wilmington Advocate on January 7, featured a horrific story, enough to scare their readers. The article claimed that at least three American marines, as well as scores of native girls and children, had been killed and eaten by cannibals in Haiti during the previous 14 months. The Americans were there a peace keepers.

Private Clarence E. Morris was completely devoured, Sergt. Lawrence Muth's body was terribly mutilated and Private Harry Lawrence was captured and no trace was ever found of him.

Back in the States the January 7 edition also told of a raid in Hurley, Wisconsin on the previous New Year's Eve,

where "dry agents" made 70 arrests. The paper states, "The raid followed a wild night at Hurley, during which liquor had been sold at bargain rates, ranging from 35 cents for moonshine whisky to 75 cents for well-known brands."

And for those who thought about making their own booze, an announcement was made that home brewers, if caught, would be fined no less than \$1,000 (about \$14,500 today).

Daring robberies had also become common. We read of one in Culver, Indiana. "The raid on the bank occurred shortly before noon. The bandits drove up in a black and yellow touring car. Two of them remained in the machine, the others entered the bank which was crowded with customers and employees."

"A business man occupying offices across from the bank, opened fire on the bandit car with a shotgun. The pistols of the holdup men spat fire in return. The business man was shot through the mouth and fell. Employees of the bank, hastily arming themselves, ran from the bank and commenced shooting at the bandits."

"Word that the bank had been held up spread rapidly through town. Men swarmed out, armed with rifles, shotguns and pistols. Before the

bandits could get their car under way they were being subjected to a storm of bullets and leaden slugs."

Of course, my question is, was everybody in that town carrying? It seems that all the bank employees had guns and weren't afraid to get into a fight. And the townspeople came running as well. Brave or stupid, not sure which.

Nearer to home, "For the third time within a year, robbers boarded the City of New Orleans as it pulled out of Chicago. They took possession of the rear Pullman sleeper car and robbed 25 passengers of \$500 and jewelry valued at \$1,600."

"The robbers, both mere boys, were captured shortly before midnight at the Aroma Park Station four miles east of Kankakee, by a posse organized by Tim Healy, special agent for the Illinois Central. One of the robbers was seriously injured in a duel fought with Agent O'Neil through the closed door of a washroom, where the youth had taken refuge. He died shortly afterward."

It seemed that 1921 was off to a roaring start. I hope that your New Year was a good one. Stay safe gentle readers. A better New Year to you all.



A CARTOON RUN in January 1921 in the Wilmington Advocate about the new \$1,000 fine for homemade booze.

## SIS students earn top trimester honors



5TH GRADE STUDENTS of the trimester for Stevens Intermediate include (above, kneeling, from left): Cole Boersma, Anthony Damian, Zander Van Duyne and Ryan Van Duyne. Back row: Sarai Duran, Katelynn Dedo and Amy Chiappetta. Not pictured: Madilyn Strong, Aubree Jandura and Ethan Howard.



STEVENS INTERMEDIATE 3RD grade students of the trimester include (kneeling, from left): William Panepinto, Luke Medlin and Gage Sorensen. Back row: Madison Rivera, Tessa Biskupski, Skylar Boersma, Hannah Stiehler and Raelynn Grygiel. Not pictured: Jayce Strong, Henry Lewis, Brynne Ryder and Alayna Vollman.



STEVENS INTERMEDIATE 2ND grade students of the trimester include (left, front, from left): Grace Keane and Maeve Bryant. Back row: Ryder Meskill, Cruz Islas and Nolan Van Duyne. Not pictured: Brianna Musick, Emma Workman and Keely Henke.



SIS ANNOUNCES 4TH grade high honor roll (from left): Taylor Tenn and Phoenix Uthe. Not pictured: Peyton Adams, Chesnee Geiss, Jordan Rader, Eli Van Duyne, Weston Lancaster, Adelle Freeman, Tyler Hammett, Nadine Liguind, Kiley Nichols and Kelsie Roeder.



STEVENS INTERMEDIATE 4TH grade students of the trimester (kneeling, from left): Cainen Machalek, Eli Spicer and Eli Strohmeyer. Back row: Payton Govero, Roslyn Wengelewski, Lillian Govero and Taylor Tenn. Not pictured: Nick Pridemore, Josh Meyer, Chesnee Geiss and Kelsie Roeder.



STEVENS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL announces 5th grade high honor roll (sitting, from left): Jadyn Sorensen, Kelly Tatera, Dominic Grassity, Cruz Hincherrick, Layla Reno and Reagan Mossell. Second row: Zander Van Duyne, Colin Strong, Cameron Corlett, Chase Rabideau, McKenna Vantilburg and Holly Eighner. Third row: Cole Boersma, Trey Weitendorf, Caroline Smith, Katelynn Dedo, Haylee Fritz and Amy Chiappetta. Not pictured: Hank and Nolan Lindsey, Sophia Albright, Ethan Howard, Aubree Jandura and Annabelle Lawson.

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# Sip on a stinger, a 20th century cocktail

"It's a Stinger. It removes the sting."  
- Bing Crosby to Grace Kelly in High Society, 1956

Ah, the Stinger. The curiously strong minty delight that exudes style and sophistication. Recipes for the Stinger began to appear in recipe books published on both sides of the Atlantic around the turn of the 20th century, but the drink began its rise as a status symbol during prohibition.

Wait a minute, the drink became more popular during prohibition? How is that possible?

It was possible to keep your home bar stocked quite well during prohibition if you had the money to do so, which the millionaires of the early 1920s were able to do. One such millionaire was Reginald "Reggie" Vanderbilt, heir to a large railroad fortune. Also, insert pop culture side note here, you may have heard of Reggie's daughter: fashion designer Gloria Vanderbilt.

Reggie Vanderbilt had a mansion on 5th Avenue, and would invite guests to his "Martini lunches" where he

would entertain his guests by making drinks behind his lavish bar. A local paper ran a gossip column in 1923 crediting Reggie with the recent invention of the Stinger, but this is simply not true as the recipe appears in several publications prior to prohibition.

Vanderbilt may not have invented it, but it was a favorite drink of his and he kept the drink alive among Manhattan's elite during prohibition. Reggie did not live to see the end of prohibition, he died of liver failure in 1925 at the age of 44.

Once prohibition ended the Stinger began to appear in movies and novels, and was a bit of an accessory to the upper class when dining or socializing. The drink is a great fit either as an aperitif or digestif, fitting for either side of a large meal.

I lean more toward digestif as the drink is spirit forward (strong) and has a certain dessert quality to it thanks to the mint. The original version of the drink was heavy on the mint, approximately 2 parts brandy to 1 part mint. In recent years the mint has been dialed

back to 1/2 oz. to 3/4 oz. for a 2 oz. pour of brandy.

Where exactly does the "mint" come from? The mint flavor in the Stinger and other minty cocktails comes courtesy of crème de menthe, a mint liqueur. Crème de menthe is a strong, sweet mint. Think spearmint flavor with a more pronounced menthol. The crème de menthe settles into the drink nicely thanks to the bold, full-bodied flavor of brandy. There is a lot going on in this drink flavor wise making this perhaps the most complex two-ingredient cocktail in the book.

Crème de menthe is available in either green or white varieties, the only difference in the two is the color. For the Stinger, reach for the clear or "white" crème de menthe. You will find crème de menthe in the liqueur aisle of your local spirits retailer, look for brand names Drillaud, Jacquin's, and DeKuyper.



THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL

Brian Rung

Once you have your crème de menthe in hand, you will need to choose a brandy. Cognac is also a good fit, as it is technically a brandy. Choose wisely! At 2 oz. of brandy per drink, you are going to taste the brandy. Conventional wisdom usually says "don't use the good stuff in mixed drinks", but this is a situation where you will want to use the good stuff. If you have a VSOP brandy or cognac, use it in the Stinger. A VSOP brandy will have some age to it, at least 4 years. A mid-range brandy may be used, but you will not be getting the most out of this drink.

Speaking of getting the absolute most out of this drink, the cigar community loves this drink for cigar pairing. Something to think about if Santa brought some new sticks

for your humidor. There is no "official" preparation for the Stinger. The early Stingers were shaken, the contemporary versions are almost always stirred. If you find that the 3/4 oz. crème de menthe is too minty, dial it back to 1/2 oz.

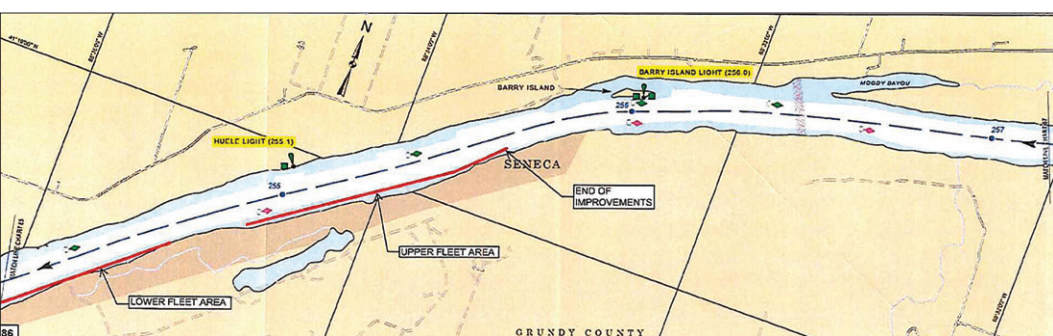
By the way, Gloria Vanderbilt passed away in 2019 at the age of 95, but her jeans remain in production. For those too young to remember: She was one of the most recognizable women in America in the late 1970s, appearing in her own commercials for a fashion line that brought in over \$200 million in 1980 alone.

I'll drink to that. The Stinger may be served in either a chilled rocks glass or a cocktail (Martini) glass. If you are going to serve over ice, the rocks glass is best while the cocktail glass lends a nice presentation to the drink if serving neat.

The Stinger is built in a mixing glass and served in a chilled rocks glass.



Combine in mixing glass: 2 oz. brandy (or cognac) 3/4 oz. crème de menthe Stir with ice Strain into ice-filled rocks glass Garnish with mint sprig Until next week, enjoy responsibly.



A 1.6-MILE BARGE terminal located in the Illinois River just east of Seneca has become the subject of a lawsuit that has been filed in Grundy County. The map shows the proposed area (red line) on the south river bank just downstream of Barry Island.

## Couple seeks to stop barge terminal on Illinois River

STAFF REPORT

A Grundy County couple seeking to stop the construction of a barge terminal along 1.6 miles of the Illinois River have filed suit against the developer, state of Illinois and the Department of Natural Resources, among others.

Richard and Gloria Sims, reside on Old Stage Road west of Morris. Their property located on the north bank of the Illinois River approximately 6 miles west of the city limits.

In November, Illinois & Michigan Oil, LLC. [IMOL] was granted an IDNR permit to construct a barge fleeting facility including mooring pins, and a 600-foot sheet pile dock wall and to perform dredging along the south bank of the river, across from the Sims' property.

Stating their, "quality of life, their quiet enjoyment of their residence and supporting premises and their property values will all suffer substantial adverse effects if the project is built," the couple filed suit in Grundy Circuit Court on Dec. 30 naming the IDNR, its director Colleen Callahan, the state of Illinois, Gov. JB Pritzker, and IMOL as plaintiffs.

The Sims are asking for administrative review to vacate the IDNR permit allowing Joliet-based IMOL to occupy 21 acres of the river to construct and operate a barge fleeting facility.

According to the suit, IMOL filed an application in March 2020 to construct a facility capable of holding 106 barges, with what the defendants state could be, "filled to capacity with potentially hazardous and toxic materials."

The Sims, per the suit, have raised procedural objections to the permit evaluation process pointing to a denial of a public hearing, a failure to obtain signed statements from property owners along the river and the failure to obtain governor's signature on the permit.

The suit claims the project could, "adversely impact the public's access to use and enjoyment of the river."

The project, per its application, would include the installation of 20 concrete filled steel mooring pins at 400 foot intervals along an estimated 1.6 miles of the river with a 600 foot long, 45 foot wide dock.

Additionally, IMOL's application sought permission to dredge 10 feet along the length of the project.

In the suit, the Sims raise concerns about the materials to be contained within the barges, cleanup plans should the barges become unmoored, potential adverse affects on the river and its adjacent land, and their own enjoyment of the river.

Additional issues raised involve a 100-year permitted velocity of the river current, lack of flood plain zoning and approved permit from the Seneca Port District which has jurisdiction over the project location, among others.

The Sims are asking the court to vacate the IDNR permit, prohibit IDNR from issuing any permit for the project and IMOL from moving forward with construction, and award costs of the suit and attorney fees.

The couple is being represented by Maurides Law of Chicago and the Morris firm of Hynds, Yohnka, Bzdill & McInerney.

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# Biden's plans for a greener climate

Dear EarthTalk: What will President-elect Joe Biden's top environmental priorities be once he assumes office-and who is he tapping to head up key environmental positions in his administration?  
J. Woodbine, Saddlebrook, NJ



The world collectively faces the threat of climate change driven by human-made pollutants and environmental degradation. President-elect Joe Biden has made it clear that he intends to work to address and mitigate the climate crisis as the U.S. president.

The President-elect has set a goal to reach net-zero emissions within the U.S. by 2050, promises to rejoin the Paris Climate Accord immediately upon entering office, and aims to create 10 million new jobs within the clean energy economy.

The Biden Plan outlines his strategy to address climate

change while securing environmental justice and equitable economic opportunity. One thing that the Biden Plan prioritizes and engrains into every aspect of its proposal is the importance of creating jobs and workers' unions throughout the transition to a more sustainable economy.

The Biden Plan will cost around \$2 trillion. This covers investments in infrastructure, an American-based energy efficient automobile industry, increased public transportation options, a sustainable power sector, weatherized

buildings and housing, scientific innovations, climate-smart agriculture and conservation, and efforts to promote environmental justice.

Despite his lack of clarity on whether or not he supports the Green New Deal (GND), Biden has worked together with several key players such as Bernie Sanders and the youth-driven Sunrise Movement to develop his own climate plan.

After these collaborations, the main differences that still stand between the GND and the Biden Plan are how much would be spent (\$2 trillion in the GND versus \$2 trillion in the Biden Plan), their goals for carbon neutrality (GND aims for carbon neutrality in 10 years, while the Biden Plan aims for 2050), and their outlook on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) to extract oil and gas.

In addition to his climate plan, Biden's cabinet will also

play a large role in pushing through his environmental agenda. Deb Haaland, Biden's pick to run the Interior Department, would be the first Native American to hold a cabinet secretary position.

Biden also nominated Michael Regan as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator and Brenda Mallory as Chair of the Council of Environmental Quality. They would be the first Black man and woman to hold these positions. Some of Biden's Obama-era nominees include former EPA head Gina McCarthy as national climate adviser, John Kerry as the international presidential envoy on climate change, and Tom Vilsack as agriculture secretary.

Overall, there has never been a cabinet with so much focus on climate. One of the biggest ways we can help as individuals is to urge our Senators to confirm Biden's cabinet choices.



IF HE CAN deliver on his climate and environment promises, Joe Biden could go down as the greenest U.S. president in history.3

How much of Biden's climate and environmental hopes and dreams come true depends on many factors, but one thing that's for certain, he will likely go down in history as one of the greenest presidents

ever. EarthTalk® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://lemagazine.com>. Send questions to: [question@earth-talk.org](mailto:question@earth-talk.org)

## The Forest Preserve schedules 2021 'Eagle Watch'

The Forest Preserve District of Will County will celebrate the beauty and bounty of bald eagles during its 2021 "Eagle Watch" program set for Saturday, Jan. 9, at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon.

The free, all-ages event will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Four Rivers is located in McKinley Woods at 25055 W. Walnut Lane, off of Blackberry Lane south of Bridge Street.

Bald eagles are spotted regularly at Four Rivers because of its location near where the Des Plaines, DuPage and Kankakee Rivers meet to form the Illinois River. So, odds are you might see

some of these regal raptors flying about on a cold January weekend.

Four small guided hikes will be offered at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. Register for one the hikes by Jan. 8 on the Event Calendar at <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/> >ReconnectWithNature.org. Or take an independent hike after asking a naturalist where the eagles like to perch along the river.

No indoor activities will be offered this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and masks are required for outdoor program participants, except for those younger than 2 years old and those with

a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing one, per state guidelines.

Will County is one of 27 Illinois counties where bald eagles have been spotted in recent years as their numbers increase in the wild. In addition to McKinley Woods, eagles have been spotted in the north at Isle a la Cache in Romeoville, Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve in Plainfield and Whalon Lake in Naperville and out east at Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve in Crete Township and Monee Reservoir in Monee Township.



Courtesy photo by Paul Dacko

THE FOREST PRESERVE District of Will County's 2021 "Eagle Watch" is set for Jan. 9 at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon. No indoor activities are planned due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, but visitors can register for small guided hikes in advance, or take independent hikes through McKinley Woods preserve.

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