

Village of Orion  
1202 4th Street  
P.O. Box 69  
Orion, IL 61273-0069

September 1, 2020  
Volume 22, Issue 4

# The Nosy Neighbor

## Christmas for Kids

The Orion Area Christmas for Kids Program is underway. It is available to any family in the Orion School District who is in need of help. All information is strictly confidential. Children ages birth to 18 years old are eligible.

Registration normally held in the lower level of village hall will be held elsewhere. Village hall access is restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Registration dates are October 6th and 20th. Watch for more information in the Orion School District newsletter. Questions prior to registration may be directed to Connie Kalman at 309-526-8918.

## Census in Full Swing

It was announced in early August that 2020 Census self-response and data collection will end one month early, on September 30, 2020.

There are over 5,000 enumerators in the field in Illinois. Enumerators are required to wear a face mask, use hand-sanitizer, and maintain a six foot distance between themselves and the respondent. Their hours of operation are from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Households are still encouraged to respond by phone at 844-330-2020.

As of August 1st Orion's self-response rate was 72.7%, compared to the state of Illinois's response rate of 67.8%.

A small group of those who have already responded will be re-interviewed to quality check the data.

**We miss our customers!**

**Due to COVID-19, village hall has been closed to the public since March 16th and will stay that way until further notice.**

**We have remained in the office throughout the pandemic and are ready to assist with your needs. We can be reached via phone or the email address listed below.**

**Take care, be safe, and we hope to see you soon.**

**Email**

**vclerk@orionil.org**

**Phone**

**309-526-8139**

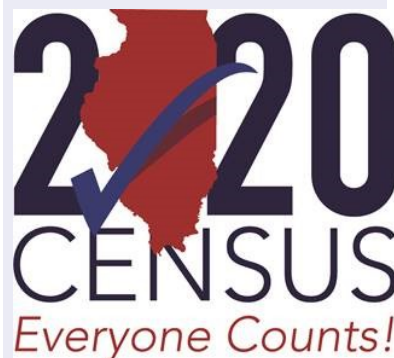
**Read more about  
A Great Hometown  
at  
[www.orionil.org](http://www.orionil.org)**

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## BOARD MULLS OPTIONS FOR STORM DAMAGE

### Open Dates:

#### Mondays

1-3 p.m.

09/21

10/05

10/19

11/02

11/16

#### Saturdays

8-10 a.m.

09/19

10/03

10/17

10/31

11/02

11/16

The landscape waste site was busy with a flood of storm debris the week of August 10th. The village did not provide pick-up service but allowed residents to bring landscape waste to the site. Employees were busy maintaining the site to keep it organized and debris burned down.

The village board mulled over the idea of having employees pick up storm debris in the future but expressed concern about potential injuries and time availability. Only three public works employees are responsible for the water, sewer, recreation, and street departments. When a major storm hits it can be difficult for the employees to keep up with their own workload plus pick up storm debris for 700 households. The village board will revisit this issue at its September 21st meeting.

The board approved the regular fall landscape waste site schedule, noted in the sidebar to this article. As usual, no grass or mulch allowed. Bagged debris must be emptied and bags removed from the site.

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*Only those who live within the village limits of Orion can utilize the landscape waste site.*

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## CONSOLIDATED ELECTION

**Municipal officials can have more impact on your day-to-day life than state or federal officials.**

**Local elected officials set policy and adopt regulations that affect the safety of the community, condition of the streets, quality of water, and recreation opportunities.**

**They also must decide how to satisfy state and federal mandates while maintaining quality of life for the community.**

While television airwaves have been filled with state and national political ads and conventions, the 2021 election process for your own hometown is gearing up. The first date for circulating petitions for the 2021 Consolidated Election was August 25th.

Four trustee positions along with the positions of village president and village clerk will be on the ballot in 2021. Those trustees whose terms are expiring are Mike Dunlap, Neal Nelson, Ryan Hancock, and Bob Mitton.

Anyone interested in becoming a candidate can pick up petition packets at village hall. However, village staff are not responsible for assisting candidates in the completion of their forms. A Candidate's Guide is available online at the Illinois State Board of Election website.

Candidacy papers must be filed between the dates of November 16-23, 2020. A primary, if needed, will be held February 23, 2021. The election date is April 6, 2021.

## 12TH AVENUE TO BE CLOSED FOR TRACK RUNS

After a lengthy discussion at the August 17th village board meeting, followed by a meeting between village trustee Steve Newman and Morgan Matson, Orion's track coach, Matson was allowed to use a portion of 12th Avenue for school track runs.

Twelfth Avenue will be closed from 5th to 7th Streets on the following dates:

Wednesday, Sept. 2nd from 3-3:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17th from 7-7:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 8th from 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 21st from 3-3:30 p.m.

Drivers should plan to take an alternate route through Orion during these times. Barricades will block vehicular access.



## LARKINS' TERM (cont'd from pg. 4)

Mel Drucker, chairman of the water committee, worried that the east well, the only source of the community's water for several months, could incur a problem before the west well was back in operating condition. Sandberg continued his quest to obtain two bacteria-free tests and finally, on November 1st an announcement was made that the west well was in compliance.

Once the west well was in service, the wooden ground storage tank was filled and leaked like a sieve. The wood had dried out over the months it sat empty. The problem solved itself once the wood absorbed water and swelled to a point where gaps between the boards closed.

A wooden ground storage tank at the east well was set to be demolished and replaced with a modern steel tank. The board was surprised by the rare success of being awarded a grant for the project. The Illinois First program provided the village \$250,000 to construct the tank.

Larkins' continued to push for a new TIF district, including an attempt to prepare for the extension of 12th Avenue, west of Rt. 150. The property involved in the extension was owned by H & H Properties. After an offer to purchase the property resulted in a counter-offer that was rejected, the village board voted to begin condemnation procedures. An extension of 12th Avenue was necessary to have access to property planned for development.

Looking ahead, Larkins' established a committee to plan events for the village's upcoming sesquicentennial in 2003.

Meanwhile, by November 2000 eighty-five percent of the Phase I sewer relief main had been installed.

-Lori Sampson

(Larkins term will continue in the Dec. issue of *The Nosy Neighbor*)



**A photo of the west water tower, ground storage tank, and pump house.**

**The water tower, a few years after its well acidization, would become listed on the National Register of Historic Places.**

## WATER/SEWER ISSUES CONSUME LARKINS' TERM

The March issue of this newsletter looked at the term of Bill Larkins as village president. This newsletter continues with his term and picks up in the year 2000.

The board, under Larkins' direction, pushed forward on Phase II design work for an upgrade to the sewer plant. Though unable to secure a grant, the board was awarded low interest loans by the Illinois EPA. The interest rate for Phase I was set at 2.535% . The Phase II interest rate would be set upon final approval of the project. Two sewer rate increases would become necessary to fund the project.

Laurie Ator, appointed by Larkins to fill a vacancy, began working with a vendor to purchase new playground equipment for Love Park. The cost was slightly less than \$10,000 and volunteers donated labor to construct the equipment.

In May, Arnie Sandberg was hired to replace retiring water/parks superintendent Ron Saunders. Sandberg would be put to the test within the first two months of his hiring, when the gallons per minute pumped from the west well dropped. A contractor was hired to acidize the well, which helped the GPM rate, but two consecutive water tests free of bacteria could not be obtained. After advice to correct the problem failed, the village hired a contractor from Missouri to perform a high velocity injection process, which would treat the well and force water from the bore hole. That water was thought to be the source of contamination. The work was done at a cost of nearly \$20,000. The process did not solve the problem.

(Larkins' Term cont'd pg. 3)

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