



# MEDIA ADVISORY

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## National Great Rivers Museum Brings Masters of the Sky to Alton

**Alton, IL.** – The Meeting of the Rivers Foundation is scheduled to host “Masters of the Sky” raptor shows Feb. 19-21 at the National Great Rivers Museum. The organization will offer three live raptor shows every day. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will also offer free tours of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam and outdoor eagle watching opportunities.

Museum visitors must purchase tickets for the “Masters of the Sky” program, which will begin daily at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. Tickets are on sale now for \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.mtrf.org](http://www.mtrf.org), in person at the National Great Rivers Museum, or over the phone with a credit card by calling 618.462.6979.

Seating for the “Masters of the Sky” program is limited to 200 tickets per show. Shows will be conducted in an outside heated tent to accommodate a larger audience.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will offer additional activities at the museum, to include hands-on craft workshops, photos with “Eric the Eagle”, and a 14-minute film titled, “Where Eagles Soar.” Participants will also be able to use spotting scopes to locate eagles, get a bite to eat at the Eagle Café located at the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC), and take tours of NGRREC’s new facility.

Eagle watching is a winter tradition in the Riverbend. Bald eagles use the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary and Melvin Price Locks and Dam area as a migration thoroughfare this time of year. Eagles can often be seen perched in trees along the Mississippi River and standing on the ice, a lot of times with other migrating waterfowl. This event complements the winter migration by bringing live bald eagles, owls, falcons, vultures and hawks to the National Great Rivers Museum.

The rehabilitated birds serve as ambassadors for their species. Naturalists focus their presentations on teaching the importance of raptors in the food chain, challenges they face as they travel from their northern nesting grounds to find a food source along the Mississippi River, and interesting traits of the species. One highlight of the show is experiencing flyovers from specially trained birds that skim just above the audience.

Bird watchers should bring their binoculars and cameras, and dress for the winter weather – temperatures and wind chills are lower near the water. The key to successful eagle viewing is patience.

Additionally, guests are asked to respect private property and restricted areas. Eagle watching guides can be picked up at the National Great Rivers Museum.

This program is made possible by the Meeting of the Rivers Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the education and preservation of the rivers. The National Great Rivers Museum is located off River Heritage Parkway (IL Hwy 143) at #2 Lock & Dam Way, East Alton, IL 62024, adjacent to Melvin Price

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – RIVERS PROJECT OFFICE

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<http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Rivers>

Locks & Dam. It is open daily from 9:00 to 5:00, with no charge for admission or the locks and dam tours. For more information, or to purchase tickets to a Masters of the Sky show, call 618.462.6979 or toll free 877.462.6979.

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Editor's Note: There will be a media event on Friday, February 18 at 10:00 AM at the National Great Rivers Museum. This will take place during the "Masters of the Sky: School Days" field trip event. Media can expect to see students enjoying the raptor show, as well as go atop the Melvin Price Locks and Dam to view eagles. An optional trip to the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary to view additional eagles in their natural habitat will follow immediately.