



NATURE Matters

The quarterly newsletter of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It's not.

DR. SEUSS, FROM THE LORAX

January-March 2009, Volume 3, Issue 1

Climate Change: Here and Now

By Bill Donato

The environmental motto, "Think Globally, Act Locally," is also the focus of the Defenders work here in McHenry County. For example, it is our job to educate residents who think there is not much that can be done about global climate change. To the contrary, the effects of global climate change are already affecting Woodstock. This is a classic case of how local behaviors can affect the global health of our planet. It is the responsibility of all of us to contact our local politicians and demand that we start planning for global warming now and develop ways to reduce its effects.

In Woodstock, average temperatures have risen by 2.6 degrees Fahrenheit since 1980. Fifteen of the last twenty years have seen above-average annual temperatures. Without rapid action, the impact on Woodstock's climate could be dramatic. The town will experience more extreme heat, heavier and more damaging rainstorms, growing flood risks, and greater stress on public health, city infrastructure and city services. Disease vectors, such as the mosquito that carries the West Nile Virus and invasive species from milder climates, may increase. Woodstock's climate could resemble that of Baton Rouge,

Louisiana by the year 2050, with summer temperatures reaching 90-plus degrees on more than seventy days and 100-plus degrees on more than thirty days. In 1995, over 700 people died as a result of a heat wave where the temperature never dipped below 90 degrees Fahrenheit for five consecutive days.

Greenhouse gases are gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap the sun's energy and thereby heat the Earth's atmosphere. Greenhouse gases are part of a natural biogeochemical system that has been in balance for thousands of years. They have fluctuated in the past, but human activity has taken much of the greenhouse gases that were sequestered under the ground and released it into the air. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide (CO₂), a byproduct of burning fossil fuels, methane from agricultural sources, and nitrous oxide from industrial sources. In the last 50 years, levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere have risen 25 percent and levels of methane, an even more potent greenhouse gas, have more than doubled. Woodstock's greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings or the energy production needed to serve them. Another main source comes from transportation, specifically the burning of fossil fuels to operate cars, trucks, buses and trains. Most of the remaining greenhouse gas emissions come from farming, solid waste and industrial pollution.

Naturally occurring levels of greenhouse gases keep temperatures on earth stable; but the burning of fossil fuels,

Continued page 3



Mark the date!
Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, March 14, 2009

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
404 N. Green Street, McHenry, IL

Please see page 9 for details.

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About
NATURE Matters

Members of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County receive the newsletter as a membership benefit.

Basic memberships start at \$50. For information, questions, comments on membership or address changes, please contact our office at (815) 338-0393 or e-mail us at mcdef@owc.net.

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Environmental Defenders
of McHenry County
Mission Statement

The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County is a citizen organization dedicated to the preservation and improvement of the environment. We are committed to building sound ecological relationships between people and the natural world that supports all life.

To achieve the aim of environmental preservation and improvement, we provide the community with educational programs and volunteer action on pollution prevention, sustainable land use and energy and natural resource conservation.

We advocate policies which protect drinking water supplies and conserve land for open space and agriculture. We demonstrate waste reduction through recycling drives and reuse centers. We encourage natural resource protection through native landscaping and stream protection programs.

Letters to the Editor

Please address Letters to the Editor to:
ckanner@mcdefenders.net. Letters will be published based on space and Board review. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position and/or policy of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County. Letters can also be mailed to:
124 Cass Street, Suite 3, Woodstock, IL 60098

Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
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Rates:

Full Page	\$300
Half Page	175
Quarter Page	100
Eighth Page	75

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and increasing rates of deforestation and development, have produced growing amounts of CO₂, methane and other heat-trapping gases. Because of these increases in heat-trapping gases, average temperatures are projected to increase by 1 to 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit over the next few decades and to reach unacceptable levels in this century. In addition to this increase in temperature, certain areas will experience a decrease in temperature while areas above the Arctic Circle will receive a 10-12 degree temperature change. In Woodstock, the changing climate will be most apparent in the summer, when more frequent and intense heat waves will occur. Additional impacts of climate change will be increased storm intensity and droughts.

With ever greater determination, the world has responded to climate change. By the end of 2007, 177 countries and other government entities had ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and of these, 36 developed countries pledged to reduce their heat-trapping gas emissions to specified levels. A number of U.S. states, including Illinois, are supporting programs to cap greenhouse gas emissions. Companies have found ways to reduce their energy use, reuse industrial byproducts and switch to renewable energy sources, saving millions of dollars annually. Individuals everywhere are making climate-friendly choices, such as switching to energy saving light bulbs and opting for more fuel-efficient cars. Everyone has a role to play since everyone contributes to greenhouse gases through daily actions. These actions result in a “carbon footprint.” A carbon footprint can be calculated by auditing daily activities. There are many formulas to compute your carbon footprint and the following Web site does this easily: <http://www.earthday.net/ecofootprint>.

Local Actions

Two quick actions on a national and state level are to join Greenpeace’s Project Hot Seat, which is attempting to persuade Congress to reduce greenhouse emissions by 80% by 2050, and to write our local representatives like Mike Tryon and Pam Altoff to vote for the bill Jack Franks co-sponsored, House Bill 3424: The Clean Cars Bill.

The Defenders has recommended to the Woodstock’s Environmental Commission the following actions, which will aid in the reduction of greenhouse gases: natural landscaping, best management practices, greenways, rain gardens, water conservation, solid waste reduction, and energy efficiency. More specific recommendations made to the Commission include:

A. Reduce carbon emissions by 30% by 2020, 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 to match the International Panel on Climate Control’s recommendation. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

1. Conduct a detailed energy audit for all municipal buildings to identify areas to reduce greenhouse gases. Defenders members should sign up to get an energy audit by calling the Defenders’ office. Audits will start in January for a \$50.00 donation. Look for the Education Committee’s presentation of “Kilowatt Ours” at MCC the second or third week of January for complete details.

2. Conduct education sessions with citizens on ways to reduce their carbon foot.
3. Increase mass transit options in Woodstock. This will reduce the need to drive, which represents the majority of greenhouse gases in the area.
4. Develop a safe and efficient bicycle pathway that connects green spaces within the city and major businesses, so that employees can safely ride to and from work.
5. Investigate the use of wind and solar power for residents and municipal buildings.
6. Develop an ordinance that new buildings must be LEED certified.
7. Investigate grants to fund the creation of green roofs on municipal buildings, businesses and homes.
8. Purchase hybrid vehicles when new purchases come up for municipal vehicles.
9. Plant native vegetation in city parks and retention areas to reduce mowing.
10. Develop a tree ordinance to protect native trees, such as oaks and hickories, which help sequester carbon from development. Require the planting and maintenance of native trees.
11. Provide an easy way for individuals and businesses to purchase carbon offsets and purchase green energy. The funds would go into energy reducing projects for the city.
12. Include business recycling through a contract with Waste Management or other waste haulers. This will reduce our solid waste, which adds to the creation of methane gas (methane absorbs heat 20-30 times more than carbon dioxide).

To help with these actions, local nonprofit organizations can be contracted by the city to educate, conduct surveys and work toward reducing each citizen’s carbon footprint. To help fund some of the projects, the city can use some of the energy savings from the reduction of energy and maintenance. A small surcharge could be applied to citizens’ energy and water bills.

B. To prepare for climate change, the city should establish cooling stations during the summer and warming centers for residents susceptible to changes in temperature. The city should establish contingency plans for heat waves, floods, massive snowfall and extreme wind chills. An environmental alternative for salt should be purchased by the city to protect our groundwater and surface water as well as increase the safety on our roads. An investment in mass transportation would also decrease traffic and ensure the safety of our residents who would normally drive during poor conditions.

As always, the Defenders needs its members to work on committees to accomplish our goal of reducing the effects of global climate change, among other pressing environmental issues. Please see page 10 for committee information and help advocate for a cleaner and healthier planet! ♻️

New Combatant Against Global Warming: The Insurance Industry

By Barb Day

According to a recent article from the *Christian Science Monitor* by Ron Scherer, the world's second-largest industry, worried about losses related to climate change, offers incentives to go "green." Scherer states that insurance companies are becoming leading business protagonists in the assault on global warming. Some examples include:

- Travelers Insurance. They offer owners of hybrid cars a 10 percent discount in 42 states and have cornered a large share of the market.
- Fireman's Fund. They have cut premiums for "green" buildings that save energy and emit fewer greenhouse gases. When it pays off claims, it directs customers to environmentally friendly products to replace roofs, windows, and water heaters.
- Marsh. They offer a program with Yale University to teach corporate board members about their fiduciary responsibility to manage exposure to climate change.

Mr. Scherer said the insurance industry's clout is sizable. It's the second-largest industry in the world in terms of assets and has a direct link to most homeowners and businesses. It insures coal-fired power plants as well as wind farms, so it can influence the power industry's cost structure. With its financial muscle, the industry could help advance the use of new financial instruments designed to allow companies to trade greenhouse gas emissions in the same way that commodities are bought and sold.

"The insurance industry has the ability to change behavior, policies and communicate with clients," says Nancy Skinner, U.S. director of the Climate Group, which lobbies for business and government action to address global warming.

Mr. Scherer went on to say some consumers are already noticing a negative effect of this shift. In the past year, some 600,000 homeowners have seen their policies canceled or not renewed because they live in a zone that an insurer considers a high storm risk in this era of climate change. This includes coastal areas stretching from Texas to New York. Currently, coastal properties are valued at \$7.2 trillion.

One reason for this massive change in coverage is an ongoing shift in the way insurance companies view risk. Insurers are starting to change their risk-assessment models to reflect future climate-change scenarios instead of past weather patterns.

"Climate change represents an ever-increasing risk, a risk far too great to ignore," says Clement Booth, a member of the Board of Management at Allianz AG, one of the world's largest insurance firms. Allianz, in cooperation with the World Wildlife

Fund, issued a report on steps the insurance industry could take to reduce the physical impact of global warming or to help society adapt. "The industry is in a unique position to incentivize," says Miranda Anderson, an author of the report and a vice president at David Gardiner & Associates. "This is the very beginning of thinking through this issue."

In fact, the industry is not driven just by an attempt to help the environment: it also wants to make money. In Travelers' case, the impetus to give a policy discount on hybrid cars came when Greg Toczydlowski, a senior vice president of product management, who was gassing up his wife's Ford Excursion: "A hybrid zipped in and out while I was still pumping, and it occurred to me it takes so little gasoline and runs so much longer on a tank," says Mr. Toczydlowski. "I came back and did research on how many hybrids are out there and what's the profile of the customer. We discovered it was a preferred customer – middle-aged, very responsible, and stable financially." Now hybrid owners, besides saving on their fuel bills, can save money on their auto insurance – about \$100 a year, according to Travelers.

Mr. Scherer said the attention on climate change is likely to receive a boost from state insurance regulators, who had planned to discuss its risks in September 2005 in New Orleans at their annual meeting. Hurricane Katrina intervened, however, and the meeting was moved to Chicago. "As a result, regulators spent an enormous amount of time on climate change and what changes to promulgate to make sure the companies are financially sound," says Mindy Lubber, president of Ceres, a coalition of investors, environmental groups, and public-interest organizations in North America.

Ceres has made two reports on what the insurance industry can do to profitably manage climate change. In a report Ceres detailed some steps currently under way, such as Swiss Re's investment in new solar technology, Munich Re's insurance renewable energy projects, and Lloyds of London's insurance on predicted energy savings.

In the U.S., one of the more unique and potentially far-reaching efforts was presented by Fireman's Fund. After a building is damaged, Fireman's will specify that it must be repaired with "greener" materials, including consumer electronics that must have Energy Star ratings from the Environmental Protection Agency. If a building is a total loss, it will be rebuilt as a "green" building. The insurer also plans to pay for an engineer to make sure ventilation systems and boilers are installed properly, which could also save energy. "All the evidence suggests [that] if you decrease energy usage in a building, the owner's net operating income increases and you will improve the asset value," says Steven Bushnell, product director of Fireman's, owned by Allianz.

Insurance companies, adept at managing risk, are also trying to educate their customers. Marsh and Yale will train 200 board directors to understand risks of climate change. Again, part of the motivation is money: Insurance companies provide liability insurance for board members.

Bottled Water: A Health and Environmental Concern

By Dwight Dalton



Since the days of Andrew managing our recycling center, the Defenders has been concerned with the glut of plastic water bottles. We have suggested alternatives to using them in this newsletter (see July-September 2008, Volume 2, Issue 3). And, studies continue to indicate that plastic water bottles are a litter problem, a trash item and a recycling concern.

Now, maybe we will all have the health scared out of us and reduce the frequency with which we resort to buying water in bottles.

A new set of tests on various brands of bottled water has revealed that they contain an array of contaminants, such as bacteria, fertilizer, industrial chemicals, drugs and even radioactive elements. None of the levels found were in amounts that exceeded federal health regulations; however, the study did find that bottled water is often less pure than the stuff you get from the tap.

If you aren't getting a cleaner, better product, why continue to pay 1,500 times more for bottled water than for tap? Environmental Working Group found 38 different contaminants in bottled water, with an average of eight different types per brand. Basically, there are less regulations on commercial water retailers than public water utilities, which are required to do testing and filtering.

Our health is an obvious concern. Environmental health is a concern, too. In addition to the bottles ending up as litter, the environmental impact of the production of water bottles is enormous in terms of the energy that goes into producing the bottles as well as the energy used to ship them all over the country. So why drink bottled water at all? ♻️

For the purpose of this article, I contacted several insurance companies and inquired about their efforts to "go green." Sandy Colee of State Farm Insurance replied, "State Farm takes our environmental responsibility seriously. We have one of the nation's largest eco-friendly fleets, our Energy Star rating for our largest buildings is 82 (meaning our buildings are more energy efficient than 82 percent of comparable buildings), our company recycling program is more than 25 years old, and many of our agents are engaged in environmental initiatives in their offices and communities. State Farm offers a lower rate to cars that are driven fewer miles. We also provide grants to schools and communities for projects that engage young people in "green" service learning projects."

Leah Knapp, from Progressive Insurance provided the following information regarding "going green" and stated they are committed to minimizing the effect operations have on the environment. Knapp stated that they work closely with builders on new construction and renovations to ensure the use of eco-friendly processes, like metal recycling and sourcing locally to lower fuel costs. They reuse building materials and products and reuse, repair and rebuild furniture and furnishings. They use energy-efficient computers and other machines to help manage business and also offer customers paperless options. They work to conserve the natural setting of campuses in Cleveland, Austin, Tampa, Sacramento, Colorado Springs, and Tempe by working with builders to save old growth trees and protect wetlands.

The company also has a number of initiatives, such as usage-based insurance, which is an innovative way to price car insurance that lets drivers get a customized rate based on how they actually drive. For example, the company's MyRate program gives drivers a financial incentive to drive less and safer. Depending on the state, drivers can get up to a 40 or 60 percent discount based on their driving habits, and new customers can get an immediate 10 percent discount just for signing up. Independent research shows that aggressive driving can burn an extra 125 gallons of gas per year and lower gas mileage by 33 percent on the highway and 5 percent in town. During the pilot phase, they tracked more than 200 million miles driven and learned that drivers participating in the pilot program are less likely to be involved in car crashes.

From the Environmental Defense Fund's newsletter, Solutions, September 2008 issue, I found out Progressive and GMAC are courting environmentally conscious consumers who tend to get behind the wheel less than other policyholders. Their mileage-based car insurance premiums go up or down depending on actual miles driven. This gives drivers a reason to reduce trips, thereby cutting pollution, fuel use and traffic congestion.

No other companies responded to my request for information and I am not endorsing any companies mentioned herein. Because we are seekers of a greener lifestyle, I thought you, our readers, might be encouraged and interested that some businesses seem to be paying a little more attention to this issue than we know has been paid to it in the past. ♻️

Welcome New Members!

Heather Brown, Woodstock

Paul Rausch, Woodstock

JoAnn Wedin, Wonder Lake

Scott & Larry at Country Donuts, Crystal Lake

Thank you for your support.

It's Our River Day Celebration a Success!

By Cynthia W. Kanner

On Saturday, September 20, over 100 folks from Woodstock to Hoffman Estates, including nearly 40 young people, gathered at the Fox River as part of the state-wide "It's Our River Day" celebration. With rain falling heavily the weekend before, several celebrations around the state were canceled, unfortunately. In Algonquin, however, the day was a great success, thanks to the support of numerous people and organizations. The location of Cornish Park at the confluence of the Fox River and Crystal Creek was the perfect place to celebrate.

The purpose of "It's Our River Day," started several years ago by Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, is to honor and preserve the rivers of Illinois. Here in Algonquin, the Defenders' Water Resources Protection Committee and the Village of Algonquin came together to co-sponsor a celebration of the Fox. The day's events included talks by several speakers, including Congressman Don Manzullo, Olivia Dorothy from the Lt. Governor's office, Brian Dianis, Village of Algonquin Trustee, Katie Parkhurst with the Village of Algonquin, Cindy Skrukurd of the Sierra Club and The Defenders, and Gary Swick with Friends of the Fox River Monitoring Network. Following the brief talks, which focused on keeping the Fox River clean and conservation, attendees suited up with gloves and bags provided by the Sierra Club and hit the dirt, scouring for trash and recyclables. What they found amounted to approximately 1,000 lbs. of trash and 15 bags of recyclables. These numbers would have been much higher if not for the stewardship of those responsible for keeping Cornish Park, and thereby the river, clean on a regular basis.

Many individuals and families came out to clean up, as did organized groups, including AT&T Pioneers and two Algonquin Cub Scout Troops – Pack 151 from Eastview Elementary School



Brian Dianis, Village of Algonquin Trustee, addresses the crowd at "It's Our River Day."

and Pack 155 from Algonquin Lakes Elementary School. Volunteers walked along the shoreline, crossed the bridge to clean up the east side of the river, and walked west along Crystal Creek toward Towne Park. Some of the more unusual items picked

up included a sprinkler and an auto four cylinder engine block. Volunteers even had the opportunity to learn about water quality monitoring



Kayaker, Don Leigh, of the Prairie Coast Paddlers and surfer, Kristian Gustavson, from Below the Surface, show their moves on the Fox River.

During the clean up, a local band – The Mack Hotterson Band, featuring musicians Alan Parquette, Eliot Levy and Randy Siewert – performed everything from Van Morrison to Nirvana.

During the last part of the event there were exciting canoe and kayak demonstrations given by the St. Charles Canoe Club and The Prairie Coast Paddlers. Taking advantage of the calmness of Crystal Creek just before it meets the Fox, the two groups demonstrated paddling techniques and water safety, and drew cheers from the crowd with an Eskimo roll or two. Out on the swiftly moving Fox River, the kayakers played in the rapids and demonstrated a rope rescue. With summer-like conditions that day, a surfer from Below the Surface also took to the Fox for some fun on the "waves."

With speakers, clean-up, music, and paddling demonstrations, the three-hour event was constructive as well as festive. The Defenders send a very warm thanks to all of those involved, especially the Village of Algonquin for their co-sponsorship. Everyone present did his or her part to clean up the Fox River, while learning how much fun rivers can be and how vital clean rivers are to our communities. ♻️



Volunteers line the shores of the Fox River.
Photos: Cynthia W. Kanner

Fun on the Fox

By Dwight Dalton

On September 28th, the Environmental Defenders sponsored a canoe trip on the Fox River. As the organizer, I arrived at Buffalo Park in Algonquin, our “put-in” place, a bit early and waited for the other kayakers to arrive. I sat in my car with the window open and watched confused warblers flitting around in the trees. All of a sudden, two speed demons – yellow rumped warblers in fall coloration – flew into my open window and smashed into the inside of the passenger door. The rescue effort was easy. A bird in the car is worth two in the bush. I walked around the car, opened the door and one of them flew out as I released it from my hand. I placed the second, more stunned fellow in the grass and hoped it, too, would recover.

The Fox River from Algonquin to the tollway was a surprisingly scenic trip. Along the way we spotted numerous belted king fishers, along with egrets, blue heron, cormorants, turkey vultures, house wrens, cedar waxwings, and other common birds, such as mallards, gulls and Canada geese. There were many stretches with no homes and in some places the wide lazy river required some paddling. Avis Fisher, one of the kayakers, commented that if you didn’t know better you’d think you were in Wisconsin and not in this urban area near Dundee. One dam in Carpentersville required an easy portage. It took the five kayakers about three leisurely hours for this trip. We had lunch at the Carpentersville portage and talked to several people who were fishing. I wouldn’t eat fish out of the river necessarily, but it sure is a lot cleaner than it was back in 1970. That was the year the Defenders’ roots began when the Defenders of the Fox and a recycling committee joined forces. ♻️



Fellow paddlers from L to R: Dan Wilson, Avis Fisher, Roy Jenkins and Dwight Dalton. Photo: Susan Jenkins

“Make a Difference Day” Makes a Big Difference on Defenders’ Land

By Nancy Schietzelt



Volunteers at “Make a Difference Day.” Photo: Tom Mattingly from the Soil and Water Conservation District

On a crisp Saturday morning in late October, over 30 volunteers gathered to “make a difference” at the headwaters of the Kishwaukee River. This property, on Dean Street near the intersection with Highway 14 in Woodstock, is owned by the Defenders and is the future site of our new home. Armed with bow saws, loppers, and garbage bags, the group cut out invasive species that were encroaching into the prairie and made piles of the branches for wildlife. They also tore out an old wire fence and collected many bags of trash that had blown into the area. With so many willing workers, brush was also cut and piled and trash was collected on the adjoining property of the Soil and Water Conservation District.

These habitat improvements were brought about by Defenders members as well as students from Prairie Ridge, Cary-Grove, Crystal Lake South, and Woodstock High Schools. A big thanks goes out to all of these hard working volunteers! Also, thanks to the Soil and Water Conservation District for providing parking, use of their building, and most importantly, pizzas for all to enjoy at the end of the work day! Everyone’s hard work truly did make a positive difference for wildlife and water quality at this beautiful site. ♻️

IRA Charitable Rollover

If you are 70 1/2 years of age or older and must remove funds from your IRA annually, please consider The IRA Charitable Rollover tax incentive and make a contribution to the Defenders. The Rollover allows individuals to donate from their IRAs and Roth IRAs to public charities without having to count the distributions as taxable income. This opportunity is available through 2009. Please consult our Web site, www.mcdef.org, for more information. Thank you!

Green Share Day

A Success

By Joe Starzynski

The Fundraising Committee extends its sincere thanks to all those who participated in Green Share Day. Our goal, for this first-time event, was to make the day a profitable one for the Defenders. With the help of our members and friends, the generosity of our local merchants, and the four businesses who sponsored the marketing of Green Share Day, we were successful. Purchases exceeding \$3,000 were recorded by local merchants! Those merchants were more than happy to share 5% of their sales for Green Share Day and some were able to donate a higher percentage. In these economic times, sales were not as brisk as hoped, but there remained a positive feeling and the knowledge that we do have supporters that are willing to make an effort to help the Defenders' cause. Some merchants suggested that we repeat Green Share Day in 2009, possibly as soon as spring. We hope to extend the list of participating merchants to those based in Algonquin and Lake in the Hills.

The Fundraising Committee would like feedback from our membership regarding Green Share Day. If you could not participate and shop on November 15th, please tell us why. Are there retailers you would like to see on the list? Who are they? When and how often do you think Green Share Day should occur? Please send comments to: mcdef@owc.net with the subject title: Green Share Day.

One thing the Fundraising Committee feels strongly about is supporting businesses that support us. Please review the list of merchants who participated in Green Share Day and show your appreciation by continuing to be their customers throughout the year. Please let them know why you support them. Thank you! ♻️

A special thanks goes to the following businesses for sponsoring our ad in the *Northwest Herald*:

Behr Metal Recycling, Woodstock
(815-206-5511)

Computer Recycling Center, Crystal Lake
(815-455-6200)

Falcon Green Resources, Woodstock
(815-334-8689)

T & C Metal Co., Crystal Lake
(815-459-4445)

Thank you to all those merchants who participated!

Woodstock Retailers

- Apple Creek Flowers
815-338-2255
- Chardonnay Bay Wine & Gifts
815-206-5454
- Cobblestone on the Square
815-337-1750
- Courthouse Grill
815-337-1600
- DeWane Studio
815-338-1880
- Fox Frame Shop
815-338-5867
- Jenapea's Soups & Sandwiches
815-206-JPEA
- Katherine's Bead Boutique
815-337-7540
- Knuth's School & Office Outfitters
815-338-3535
- La Petite Creperie & Bistro
815-337-0765
- Lloyd's Paint & Paper
815-338-1180
- Lorraine's Memories Scrapbooking
815-308-5881
- Mardi Gras Sandwich Shoppe
815-334-0335
- Napoli Pizza
815-338-2430
- O'Leary's Pub
815-337-5744
- Outdoor Recreation Bikes,
Camping, Clothing
815-338-6088
- Paper & Plume
815-338-6422
- Pirro's Restaurant & Banquet
Facility
815-337-9100
- Read Between the Lynes Bookstore
815-206-5967
- Seasons by Peg
815-206-3666
- Studio 10 Salon & Color Spa
815-338-7830
- Tarts & Truffles
815-338-8278
- The Thoughtfulness Shop
815-338-5651
- Woodstock Music and Arts Center
815-337-9634

Crystal Lake Retailers

- Clix Photographs and
Savables
815-455-1092
- Conscious Cup Coffee
Roasters
815-356-0115
- Country Donuts
815-455-2028
- Dalzell & Co. Jewelry
815-455-3600
- Duke's Alehouse
815-356-9980
- Giftology, Inc.
815-477-1007
- J. Scott Menswear
815-459-8883
- Le Petit Marche
815-477-3296
- Player's Bench Music Store
815-459-8614
- Slim's Barber Shop
815-444-9190
- The Fabric Shop
815-459-2084
- Wheelwerks Custom Bikes &
Fitting
815-444-6897
- Wickham Interiors
815-455-6202

McHenry Retailers

- Cartridge World
815-385-7465
- Impressions Salon & Spa
815-385-8373
- Mary's Flowers
815-759-0075

Cary Retailers

- Periwinkle Florals
847-516-9888

Beginning Bioneers Symposium: Raising Your Environmental EQ

By Caron Wenzel, Bioneers Steering Committee member

A group known as the Environmental Alliance (Green Business Referral Exchange, Lou Marchi Total Recycle Institute, and the McHenry County Environmental Alliance, of which the Defenders is a member), presented a "Beginning Bioneers" Symposium on Saturday, November 8, 2008 at McHenry County College.



Bioneers attendee, Julie Jackson, poses with the Greenpeace polar bear.

Beginning Bioneers featured sessions from the October 2008 national Bioneers conference.

Presentations by regional environmental businesses and organizations, including the Defenders' Bill Donato, focused on energy savings and green building, recovering water, and sustainable agriculture. The Defenders participated by introducing themselves in the beginning session with other local environmental non-profits. This was an incredible event opportunity for adults to gather information and tools for these uncertain times. Access to ideas, community networking, green products and services were featured.

Bioneers is an organization that stands for "biological pioneers," an award-winning national group of people, who, for almost 20 years, has become a major forum enabling solutions to problems by looking to nature for answers. Their mission is to facilitate discussions from sustainability, community, to cultures and for future generations, while preserving biodiversity and the natural world. To see what they are about go to: www.bioneers.org.



Exhibitor, Dirk Dypold of Advanced Geothermal Plumbing & Heating LLC, talks about his geothermal products. In the background are the global warming signs from the Greenpeace exhibitor table.

Planning for next year's Bioneers conference has already begun with a tentative mid-November date. The feedback the Beginning Bioneers Steering Committee received was very positive and various participants said that they would like to "grow" this local group of the national conference. Stay tuned for future updates on this exciting group! 🌱

Upcoming EVENTS

2nd Annual Environmental Film Festival



Sunday, February 8, 2009

1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Stage Left (next to the Woodstock Opera House on the Square)
Woodstock, IL

At the Environmental Film Festival, feature length and short films on a variety of environmental topics will be shown. Watch for details in the Northwest Herald and The Defenders E-News announcements. Fair Trade coffee will be available for purchase.

The Film Festival is sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee of the Congregational Unitarian Church in Woodstock



Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, March 14, 2009

5:30 p.m. ~ Arrival

6:00 p.m. ~ Pot Luck Dinner

6:45 p.m. ~ President's Remarks

8:00 p.m. Awards

Beverages will be provided
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
404 N. Green Street, McHenry, IL
Please bring your own placesettings!



The Defenders annual meeting is a great way to make and renew friendships with fellow Defenders members over some great homemade food and conversation. Above, members enjoy last year's dinner. We hope to see you there this year!

This is a members only event.

Earth Day 2009

"Greener-U"

Saturday, April 18, 2009

Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake

Enjoy an afternoon of environmental booths, speakers and entertainment.

Co-sponsored by the Defenders and MCCC

Detailed information coming in the Spring edition of NATURE Matters!



Help the Defenders Fulfill its Mission: Join a Committee

The Defenders' work in our community depends on volunteers. There are many issues that need our attention and we need you to help fulfill our mission of protecting and preserving the environment by joining one of our committees. Below is a list of committees that focus on particular issues. Please contact the office at 815-338-0393 for more information and to sign up for one that interests you. Please join in the effort to keep McHenry County a healthy place in which to live.

- Water Resources Protection Committee**
-groundwater, wetland, river issues
- Land Use Planning Committee**
-planning, zoning, transportation issues
- Natural Resources Preservation Committee**
-greenways, open space, native planting
- Waste Reduction Committee**
-recycling, waste reduction issues

Update from the Education Committee

The Defenders' Education Committee has a couple of Full Moon Theatre ideas in the planning stages and will communicate dates through future newsletters and through E-News. The Committee is also working on a showing of "Kilowatt Ours" along with other environmental documentaries in the winter and spring. In addition, the Committee is hard at work with the Conservation District planning the details for April Earth Day events.

A Home of Our Own

Last winter, the Defenders' New Home Committee was given the task of making a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding the direction the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County should take to finally have our new home. Discussion focused on two choices: building a new green building on our property or remodeling an existing building somewhere else. Pros and cons of both choices were debated for several months and in April, 2008, the committee made its recommendation – to build a green building on our property on Dean Street in Woodstock. This building could serve as a demonstration to those who would like to incorporate green specifications in their own remodeling/building projects and the property itself would allow for more educational possibilities.

A capital campaign committee is in the process of forming at this time. This committee along with the New Home Committee will work closely as we move forward toward our goal of a home of our own.

Disposal of Old Medications

The Waste Reduction Committee would like to pass on information regarding two locations where one can take old pills and medications to be disposed of properly. As you all know, the old instructions were to flush them down the toilet. However, it has been found that, over the years, this practice has been contaminating ground and river waters.

We challenge you to expand your environmental practices by taking your old pills and medications to:

Johnsburg Police Department. Monday through Friday. This is a small police department and they suggest you call first, 815-385-6024. The department is located at 3611 Chapel Hill Road.

Fox River Grove Police Department. Open 24 hours daily. The phone number is 847-639-2411, but it is not necessary to call first. The FRG department is located at 305 Illinois Street.

If anyone is aware of other locations that currently offer the same service, please let us know.

Defenders' Recycling Drives

What: We collect fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs), and household batteries for recycling. The suggested donation for this service is .50 cents per pound of household batteries and .50 cents each for fluorescents. Packing peanuts and re-useable bubble wrap may be dropped off for no charge.

When: Second Saturday of every Month.

Where: Woodstock: The Woodstock collection takes place on the second Saturday of each EVEN numbered month, and will be held in front of the Farm Bureau, 1102 McConnell Road in Woodstock, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

McHenry: The McHenry collection takes place on the second Saturday of ODD numbered months at the Metra Station Parking lot, 4005 Main Street in McHenry, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The McHenry collection will also pay for aluminum, brass and copper.

Treading Lightly



Creative Gift Wrap

By Meg Murray-Bradshaw

With our biggest gift giving time of year behind us, I'd like to focus on gift wrap in 2009. There is perhaps more room for creative gift presentation at other times of year, when the colors and themes may vary.

The main environmental issue is that wrapping paper often isn't accepted for curbside recycling because so much of it includes foil. Few people have the patience to unwrap or watch others unwrap without tearing the paper, so as to reuse it. So gift-giving frequently becomes a time of great waste.

Never fear. There are creative, earth-friendly ways of presenting a gift other than wrapping it in newspaper comics.

For starters, consider saving your 2008 calendars. A gorgeous calendar page, say of kittens or a big dew-touched flower, can make for a gorgeous piece of wrapping paper on the right size box.

Gift bags are increasingly easy to find in all sizes, and as long as you use a tie-on tag or a card tucked in the bag (instead of sticking a tag on the bag with adhesive), bags are readily reusable. Some stores even sell fabric gift bags, which may be longer-lasting as well as more versatile for reuse by your recipient.

Your wrapping could be part of the gift. By presenting it in a basket or hat box, you give your recipient an opportunity to create, for instance, a table centerpiece, magazine rack or storage for sewing supplies. You might then wrap your basket in a scarf, tied at the top of the basket handle with a big ribbon.

Instead of stuffing your container with tissue paper, perhaps you can cover your gift with some related soft item. You might snuggle tableware among cloth napkins. Or bury a new pair of shoes among bunches of socks. Or wrap baby shower gifts in a receiving blanket.

Some gifts may be fun to present without hiding what they are. For the young adult's first apartment, give a bunch of kitchen utensils arranged in a decanter or sifter like flowers in a vase. Give a woman a basket full of bath and body pampering products, which are often in pretty packaging already, perhaps arranged among the folds of a fluffy towel. A gag gift for a retiree might include a metal pale full of sand, a toy shovel, suntan lotion and sunglasses.

Ribbons and bows can certainly be saved and reused. But perhaps you would enjoy using some different embellishments. Tie a scarf, a tie or shoelaces around your box as you would ribbon. Top a gift with a lollipop, a tree ornament, or a lapel pin.

Want more ideas? Check out the Defenders' Web site. Have ideas to share? E-mail Christy Matsuoka at cmatsuoka@mcdefenders.net for a chance to get your gift-wrapping tip on the Defenders Web site. ♻️

Membership Form

Levels of Membership

- Supporting – \$250.....
- Patron – \$100.....
- Organization – \$50.....
- Family/Basic – \$50.....
- Senior – \$25.....
- Student/Other – \$10.....

Subtotal: \$ _____

Additional donation: \$ _____

Total contribution: \$ _____

Name #1 _____

Name #2 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Township _____

E-mail #1 _____

E-mail #2 _____

Phone _____

Year moved to McHenry County: _____

Number of individuals residing in household: _____

My check is enclosed.

Please return completed form to:
 Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
 124 Cass Street, Suite 3
 Woodstock, IL 60098 OR
 Join on-line at www.mcdef.org
 Questions? Call 815-338-0393

Code: *nwsltrwntr09*

Give a Gift Membership for Any Occasion!

Give GREEN! Please consider giving a membership in the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County to family and friends. Memberships make a great gift for birthdays or anniversaries or for any occasion! Simply divide the basic membership fee (\$50) in half, include the recipient's name and address, mail it to us and your gift will be on its way. If you have any questions, please call us at 815-338-0393. Thank you!

Photo of the Quarter



Wind farms in Paw Paw and north of LaSalle-Peru, IL. Photo: Barb Day

Please send your photos of the environment to:
ckanner@mcddefenders.net.



124 Cass Street, Suite 3
Woodstock, IL 60098
www.mcdef.org

Calendar of EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 8 **2nd Annual Environmental Film Festival,**
1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Stage Left, Woodstock.
See page 9 for details.

MARCH

Saturday, March 14 **Defenders Annual Membership Dinner,**
5:30 p.m., Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church.
See page 9 for details.

APRIL

Saturday, April 18 **Earth Day 2009, "Greener-U,"**
Noon-4:00 p.m., Prairieview Education Center.
See page 9 for details.

Please visit our Web site periodically for announcements of other timely events and watch for invitations through the Defenders E-News!



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