Project Quercus: Saving McHenry County’s Remaining Oak Savannas and Woodlands

By Lisa Haderlein, The Land Conservancy

In 1837 when the Public Land Surveyors were marking off the townships and sections in McHenry County, they found that nearly a third of the county’s land area was wooded. 95% of the trees recorded in their survey notes were oaks. Since that time, nearly 90% of the oak woods has been lost, and if steps are not taken to care for the ones remaining, they could be largely extinct within 20 years – at least on private land. The vast majority of oaks remaining in the county are located on private land (83%). If oaks are going to continue as a significant part of the local landscape, preservation, restoration and replanting them on private property will be essential.

Old but not immortal.
I have four oaks in my yard, and each is well over 100 years old. Actually, a couple of them are probably over 200 years old. The house is 100 years old, so at least some of the trees were already big old oaks when the house was built.

Looking at these giant trees, it is hard to imagine them being vulnerable. Yet, just like senior citizens of our own species, they are more sensitive to environmental changes, more susceptible to infection, and more likely to suffer from age-related stresses.

The modern world includes a variety of challenges for these trees: air pollution, salt spray from roads, invasive species, lawn chemicals, mass grading of construction sites, impermeable...
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 that 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.

Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
Advertising Policy

The Defenders will accept advertisements in NATURE Matters if the product or services offered are consistent with the mission of The Defenders, as determined solely by our Board of Directors. Products or services advertised in NATURE Matters do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County. The Defenders is not responsible for the accuracy of the ads, or for the performance of the products or services advertised.

Rates:
Full Page $300
Half Page 175
Quarter Page 100
Eighth Page 75

Discounts for multiple advertisements may apply.
pavement, etc. Combine these stresses with an old tree, add gypsy moths and/or oak wilt to the mix, and these old trees are going to start dying – actually, they are dying.

**What can we do?**

This is the question that a group of biologists, ecologists, arborists and environmentalists asked at a meeting. The Land Conservancy of McHenry County held in 2006. Everyone in the room agreed that the remaining oak woods were in trouble, and without some intervention, most could be gone in 20 years.

The timeline is important. It takes an oak seedling at least 20 years to mature enough to produce acorns. And without acorns, there are no oaks.

The group sketched out a framework for Project Quercus – kind of a “no oak left behind” project that takes a comprehensive approach to restoring, regenerating, preserving and replanting our local oak woods and savannas. There are five main elements to Project Quercus:

1. **Regeneration:** raising and planting young oaks alongside aging oaks where there are few young trees growing, and also in places that once had oaks in order to re-establish the oak woods. To date, hundreds of trees have been planted, thousands of acorns have been gathered, and thousands of seedlings are being raised for future planting!

2. **Restoration:** many of the remaining oak woods are choked by invasive shrubs like buckthorn and honeysuckle, which prevent oak seedlings from growing. A brochure was developed with support from Davey Tree Expert Company and The Care of Trees and is being distributed to the owners of oak woods in the county.

3. **Regulation:** while some local communities have excellent ordinances to preserve their oaks and to require replanting of oaks, many communities have no regulations. Strong ordinances to prevent continued destruction of the remaining oak woods will be an important part of saving the oak woods.

4. **Resource Development:** for the project to succeed, we will need people, as well as sustained funding, to cover the hard costs of growing and planting seedlings, doing outreach, providing technical assistance, etc.

5. **Research:** in 2007, the McHenry County Conservation District released a study documenting the change in the coverage by oak woodlands in the county from the time of the public land surveys. The study also documented where the remaining oak woods of one acre or larger are found. An analysis of the location of the remaining woods found that the vast majority are on private land and we know virtually nothing about the privately owned woods!

**Research continues through citizen scientists**

In 2008, The Land Conservancy started a citizen monitoring program called Oak Keepers to gain an understanding of the condition of these privately owned woods. Ultimately, the information will help provide technical assistance to landowners, so they can keep their woods healthy.

Twenty-five Oak Keepers were trained in 2008, and throughout the summer and fall, they completed monitoring for 34 properties ranging in size from 5-80 acres. A total of 72 sample points were surveyed, with the volunteers collecting information on tree species, age diversity, presence of invasive species like garlic mustard and buckthorn, and the overall health of the trees observed. There have been some exciting surprises along the way.

From just the first year of monitoring, Oak Keeper volunteers are responsible for identifying the first pre-settlement record of swamp white oaks in the county, and also for documenting an ancient grove of red and white oak giants (estimated to be more than 300 years old). A second round of training was held in May 2009 for an additional 16 Oak Keepers. Who knows what surprises are waiting for the Oak Keepers to find this year!

**Project Quercus is the whole community**

The Oak Keepers program is a good example of how Project Quercus is a partnership. The program was started with funding support from the McHenry County Community Foundation and Chicago Wilderness. Generous in-kind, technical assistance has also been provided by Davey Tree Expert Service, The Care of Trees, McHenry County Conservation District, Glacier Oaks Nursery, and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission to help us design the Oak Keeper curriculum and provide a three-part training program for the volunteers. And, of course, the time and dedication of the Oak Keepers, themselves, make the program a resounding success!

**The third generation is ours to nurture**

When the early European settlers first moved here, the oaks they found could be considered the first generation of post-settlement oaks. The oaks that grew up since those days would then be the second generation. If we do not act now, there may not be a third generation.

It is in this context that Project Quercus was born, and it is in that spirit that Project Quercus will continue working to engage the entire McHenry County community to ensure oaks are an important part of the local landscape for many generations to come.

*If you have oaks and would like information about how to care for your trees, or if you live in an area with oaks and would like to arrange a presentation for your neighborhood on oaks, please contact The Land Conservancy at 815-337-9502.*
Defenders’ Stormwater Rangers Team Formed to Stop Pollution at Construction Sites

By Cindy Skrukrud

In March Defenders’ Water Resources Protection Committee hosted a workshop that trained citizens on how to spot and resolve soil erosion problems at construction sites. The outcome of the workshop was the formation of two new Stormwater Ranger teams, one for McHenry County and one in Lake County.

Soil runoff is one of the leading causes of problems in Illinois streams and lakes. Citizens can help monitor construction sites to prevent this major pollution problem. Because developments often involve major earth-moving, the potential for erosion and sediment wash-off from a construction site is the greatest of any land use activity. The need for proper erosion prevention and sediment capture techniques at construction sites is critical. Unfortunately, not all construction sites put the proper controls in place. So, the diligent patrol by Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), municipal, county and Illinois EPA (IEPA) staff, as well as by citizens, is needed to stop problem sites from polluting our waters.

Since 2003, all construction activities on sites one acre or greater in size must be covered by a Clean Water Act permit issued by the IEPA, which requires proper soil stabilization and soil capture measures designed to prevent soil runoff. In addition, under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit (which covers most towns in McHenry and Lake counties), towns must also have a municipal program in place that controls stormwater runoff from construction sites. Municipal programs should include an ordinance that requires construction sites to implement proper soil erosion and sediment control measures, called Best Management Practices (BMPs); inspection and enforcement procedures; as well as “procedures to receive and consider information submitted by the public.” The MS4 permit also requires towns to design new development to promote infiltration, reuse and evapotranspiration of stormwater in order to reduce stormwater pollution from finished developments. These relatively new permit programs are the result of Congress’s 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act, which recognized the need to reduce damage to our nation’s waters from polluted stormwater runoff.

At the March training session, participants learned about the problems caused by sediment runoff into lakes and streams. They learned how to recognize good and bad soil erosion and sediment control practices at construction sites; the requirements of IEPA permits, which cover construction sites; how to find information on construction sites in our counties; and how to report problem sites. In addition, the group visited a nearby construction site to practice what they had learned and how to use a sediment stick, a simple tool used to measure the amount of sediment in water. Prairie Rivers Network’s Stacy James, Tom Mattingly from McHenry County SWCD and Cindy Skrukrud, Sierra Club were the session’s trainers.

The Sierra Club’s Woods & Wetlands Group in Lake County now has an active Stormwater Ranger Team as a result of the training session. Defenders Stormwater Ranger Team has six trained members and is open to new members. The Sierra Club’s Water Sentinels program has created a Stormwater Rangers training video and manual that provides the basic information, which team members need to learn. If you are interested in joining the Defenders’ Stormwater Ranger Team and would like a copy of the training materials, contact Cindy Skrukrud at cindy.skrukrud@sierraclub.org. Together we can protect the streams, lakes and wetlands of McHenry County from improperly maintained construction sites!
Life Without the Defenders

By Bill Donato, President

I was watching the history channel the other night and came across an interesting show. It was called Life After People. It showed day by day what would happen if people were suddenly removed from our planet. Life immediately would change. This made me think about the Defenders and our role in the county. We are working hard to raise funds to hire an executive director and every meeting seems to focus on this. We even held an executive director fund campaign. Still, we are short of funds. It is easy to get discouraged, but after watching this show and speaking with long time active members of the Defenders, such as Ed Ellinghausen, Dwight Dalton, and Alice and Bill Howenstine, it is remarkable just what an impact the Defenders has had and continues to have on the county.

But what if the Defenders ceased to exist? What would it be like? The documentary shows what happens after one day, one month, one year, one hundred years, and so on. Even after one day of the Defenders ceasing to exist, people in the county would not have a voice for their environmental concerns. A month later, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and CFL bulbs would be thrown in the trash, adding to the risk of mercury contamination groundwater. Parker Fen would become contaminated because the Defenders would not be there to advise the McHenry County Board how to protect Class III groundwater. Several species would leave the area. Subdivisions would be built without safeguards and restrictions suggested by the Defenders. After only a year or two silt would run off from these subdivisions and add to the turbidity of the Kishwaukee River, forcing many animals to leave the county. Ammonia levels rise because the Defenders are not there to advise city planners of septic requirements and to increase waste water treatment. A superhighway is placed through the county again without the safeguards that Defenders’ members advise developers to follow.

It’s hard to really know the effects of the loss, since so much of what we do is behind the scenes. When Nancy Schietzelt and Kim Willis of the Water Resource Protection Committee attend a meeting and make suggestions to the planners, no one really knows about it. Changes are made because of their work and appearance. The Defenders are like the Lorax. They speak for the trees and the environment that is easily forgotten. Planners and county boards often do not always agree with what is suggested, but the defenders are there to remind them that they can’t ignore the environment. In short, the Defenders educates young and old about best management practices and provides opportunities for its members and citizens to work for a better environment.

I realize I only postulate on what may happen if the Defenders ceased to exist and there are, of course, other excellent organizations in McHenry County, such as the Land Conservancy, the Conservation District, the Lou Marchi Total Recycling Institute, and the McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program (McSEEP), all of which make a tremendous difference in the county. We do not work alone. Still, what if the Defenders, with all the breadth and depth of issues that we cover, never existed? Like James Stewart in It’s a Wonderful Life…what if the Defenders never existed in McHenry County? The outcome might be easier to predict. Millions of tons of recyclables would be added to our trash because the Defenders would not have been there to start the state’s first curbside recycling program. A superhighway, known as the Fox Valley Freeway, would be moving through what is now Glacial Park. The Defenders were instrumental in stopping this development. The Conservation District would not have over 22,000 acres of land protected due to the Defenders spearheading the creation of the District. The Land Foundation of McHenry County, now called the Land Conservancy, protects over another 1,400 acres. This was founded by the active work of a Defender committee and its first board was appointed by the Defenders. The Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee might not exist since it was started by the Defenders. There would never have been the Lou Marchi Total Recycling Institute since it was started by a former Defenders’ Member, Lou Marchi. The program’s current director, Pat Dieckoff, is an active Defenders’ member. The Green Guide would not exist, which would cause citizens to dispose of many products that could have been recycled, reused or disposed of properly. Several species of butterflies and birds would have been killed, due to the overuse of pesticides to control gypsy moths. The Defenders were instrumental in getting the county to use a biological control method that was the first in the country. Sound gravel mining practices would not exist if it were not for the watchful eyes of the Defenders. The Woodstock Farmers’ Market might not exist, because it was a Defenders’ member who funded it and continues to be active in maintaining it. Environmental education programs would most likely not exist because it was the Defenders that distributed environmental education grants to schools and distributed literature concerning environmental programs in schools. Full Moon Theater programs, like special showings of An Inconvenient Truth and The 11th Hour might never have occurred, so fewer people would be aware of global climate change and practices that can help reduce their carbon footprint.

Just as James Stewart runs through a town he doesn’t recognize, we might have had a similar experience if the Defenders didn’t exist. Uncontrolled growth, polluted surface and groundwater, and an uneducated populace would be the norm. Instead, the county boasts a remarkable number of high quality areas and is the place where I chose to raise my family and hope others make the same commitment. This work can only continue if you get involved through committee work, donating much needed funds, and giving your time to special projects. In addition, we need help attracting the next generation of Defenders to build a stronger membership base to take us into the decades to come.

The Defenders continue to act as The Lorax, sometime ridiculed by the environmentally uninformed, but always there to remind us what we have to lose. ☀️
Scholarship Recipient Announced

Each year, the Defenders selects one high school senior who they feel can become the spark to show others that they, too, can make a difference in their community. This year that student is from Woodstock High School. The $500 scholarship has been awarded to Brian Clow.

Brian is a senior at Woodstock High School and will be pursuing an environmental studies degree at Middlebury College in Vermont. Brian has been on the high honor roll for his entire high school career and has successfully completed six advanced placement college courses. Once Brian completes his education, he would like to tackle the mounting environmental policy issues we face by “leading the tide of environmental change into the next generation.”

Brian is the son of Lenore and Bill Clow of Woodstock, Illinois.

Grant Received from McHenry County Community Foundation

In May, the Environmental Defenders were awarded a grant of $2,000 from the McHenry County Community Foundation. We thank the Foundation for this grant and appreciate their support of our organization.

This money will be utilized to fund three activities in our Outreach Program. Dollars will be provided for “green gatherings” in several areas of the county to be organized by the Membership Committee, as mentioned in the last newsletter. Also, construction of a display board for a traveling library exhibit on water resources in McHenry County, that is being created by the Water Resources Protection Committee, will be financed. And lastly, the Board will utilize some of the money to host two meetings of the McHenry County Environmental Alliance, a consortium of all organizations in McHenry County that are involved with the environment. They are slated for this Fall and next Spring. Watch future newsletters and the eNews for further information about these activities.

Restoration Work Crews

The Environmental Defenders have begun organizing work crews for restoration work on our members’ properties. Our goal is to provide the muscles needed to do the work that our members would like to carry out on their properties, but do not have the time or ability to accomplish on their own. In turn, contributions made for this service will provide additional funding for the Defenders. We plan to utilize interested volunteers from our organization as well as students taking part in MCC’s Promise Program beginning this Fall.

Our first work session took place in early June and involved nine volunteers pulling garlic mustard for two hours. Eighteen hours of labor were provided for members John and Timmie Clementsen, who in return gave a contribution to the Defenders. Other types of restoration work that we can provide include the following:

- invasive brush cutting such as buckthorn, bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, etc.
- invasive vine control such as oriental bittersweet and wild grapes
- invasive weed control such as garlic mustard, reed canary grass, and Phragmites
- opening up oak woodlands for oak regeneration
- trash removal and general clean-up of property
- seeding and planting

If you have need of any of these services or if you would like to be part of the work crew, please call the Defenders office at 815-338-0393 or email us at mcdef@owc.net.
The Defenders

NEEDS YOU

at the County Fair!

August 5-9

For the past two years, Defenders members have worked as ticket takers at the McHenry County Fair, which is a very successful fundraising endeavor for us. We are once again asking members to come out and help. The Fair (www.mchenrycountyfair.com) is being held from August 5-9. Help from our members is vital to making this another successful fundraiser. Please e-mail our office at mcdef@owc.net or call us at 815-338-0393 to sign up. Please be sure to leave contact information, such as address, home phone, cell phone and e-mail address. Thank you!

Defenders Annual Corn Roast

Sunday, August 16

Location: Bill and Alice Howenstine’s Pioneer Tree Farm, 4614 Pioneer Road (Located 1/2 mile off Route 31, three miles north of McHenry.) All welcome at 4:00 p.m. Food will be ready at approximately 5:30 p.m.

What to bring: Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share and enjoy a day of fun for the whole family and your fellow Defenders members! Bring serving utensils and your own non-disposable plates, cups and utensils. Please label your wares so that you can be sure to get them back at the end of the day. Roasted corn, lemonade, iced tea and hot coffee will be provided. If you want something else to drink, bring it along. Picnic tables are available, but you might want your own blanket or chairs as well.

Activities: There will be lots of fun activities, including informal nature walks, volleyball, horseshoes, frisbee, tetherball, feeding chickens, just sitting around talking, and a hayride!

Help needed: Anyone willing to help roast corn and those willing to help set up and/or take down, please call Bill or Alice at 815-385-8512, or just pitch in when you get there. Questions? Call the Defenders office at 815-338-0393 or call Alice and Bill.

Schedule of Events

Speakers: 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

River Clean-up: 1:45 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Bags & gloves compliments of The Sierra Club

Kayak demonstrations: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Prairie Coast Paddlers

Live music by
The Mack Hotterson Band

The Defenders
and
The Village of Algonquin
invite you to celebrate the Fox River at

“It’s Our River Day”

Saturday, September 19, 2009
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Cornish Park, Algonquin, IL
(At Route 62 and Harrison Street below the dam.)

Come celebrate the beautiful Fox River and help keep her clean! Learn about the river and conservation, pick up trash & recyclables, enjoy live music and learn about safe fun on the river through kayak/canoe demonstrations. Event is free and open to the public.
A Home with a View

On an unseasonably cool June Saturday, several Defenders’ Patron members, shown below, were welcomed by the Defenders’ Board to the Dean Street property to enjoy a glass of wine and view the future site (at left) of the Defenders’ green home. Thank you to those who were able to visit with us and take in the beauty of this very special land!

Member Spotlight

Larry Lane of Crystal Lake joined the Defenders in March of 1971. At the time, Larry was teaching environmental science in Crystal Lake. Larry had his students doing a variety of studies on the lake and even taught them how to use the laboratory at the Water Treatment plant to determine coloriform levels on the lake. Brian Koukol, a dentist in town, heard about Larry’s efforts and convinced him to join this new organization, The Defenders. Larry remembers working to try to get people with an environmental “bent” elected to public offices. He became a trustee of the Crystal Lake Park Board and served there for six terms. Larry is an avid camper and kayaker.

Welcome New Members!

Bazil Brainard, Woodstock
Gayle Cranston, Roseville CA
Adam Diamond of McHenry
Charlie & Ellen Hanson, Crystal Lake
Michael Mangold, Crystal Lake
Bo & Gini McConnell, Harvard
Lori McConville, Crystal Lake
Jared Messinbrink
Art & Dolores Oakley, McHenry
Wayne Pearson, Woodstock
Stacey Prerost, Woodstock
Mckayla Prerost, Woodstock
Leticia Romero, Cary
Timothy Seitz, Palatine

Thank you for your support.

Turtle Creek Trip in Photos

Fourteen kayakers and canoeists took to this lovely Wisconsin waterway on a perfect paddling day on Saturday, May 23. Here they are and a look at the scenery along the way. Please check our back-page calendar for future trips!
Defenders Heed Obama’s Call for Day of Service

By Cindy Skrukrud

Thirteen hardy souls braved the frigid weather on January 17 to participate in the nationwide Day of Service preceding Inauguration Day. President-Elect Obama called on the nation to launch an ongoing commitment of service to our communities in conjunction with his inauguration and the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The people of the nation responded with over 13,000 events held throughout the country from January 17-19. Here in Illinois, it was a tough call to hold an outdoors event, but Defenders and Sierra Club (the event’s co-sponsor) members responded. Jim Wigman, site steward of Wingate Prairie Nature Preserve in Crystal Lake, and Steve Byers of the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission revved up their chainsaws while the rest of the crew kept busy (and warm!) hauling brush. Invasive honeysuckle and buckthorn were removed from under the oaks that border Wingate Prairie in Crystal Lake Park District’s Veteran Acres Park.

The Defenders will continue to post our service events at the USAService.org Web site as a way to engage non-members in our commitment to protecting the natural resources of our McHenry County community. Check out the website for other ways you can help out.

Earth Day 2009

By Rick Johnson

The McHenry County Conservation District and the Defenders once again co-sponsored Earth Day on Saturday afternoon, April 18. The event, which was attended by over 350 people, was held at the Conservation District’s Prairieview Education Center in Crystal Lake. This year’s Earth Day theme was a Greener U. Deb Chapman, Education Services Manager for the Conservation District said, “We had fun with the Greener U theme this year, offering mini-seminars on sustainable living practices, a resources library, and even ProfessorOops and his ecology lessons in the lecture hall.”

Included in the Earth Day activities were 23 exhibitors on sustainable practices, entertainment by Off Square Music, kids’ activities and puppet shows, and a recycling drop-off, which collected electronics such as televisions and computers, fluorescent light bulbs, and all types of batteries for recycling.

Schools honored by McHenry Schools Environmental Education Program were Chesak Elementary, North Elementary, Woodstock High School, Dean Street Elementary, Harrison, Prairie Hill, Heinemann Middle School, St. Mary’s Catholic School, and Valley View Elementary.

State Senator Pam Althoff praised the work of the Defenders and the Conservation District in offering environmental awareness information to the citizens of McHenry County through the Earth Day programs. Bill Donato, president of the Defenders remarked, “This year’s event provided many practices that citizens could take back to their own homes and reduce their carbon footprint.”

Everyone who completed an Earth Day Survey received a free CFL bulb donated by Commonwealth Edison.

Fox River Clean-up in Fox River Grove

On a windy day in May, nineteen people scoured Picnic Grove Park and Lions Park in Fox River Grove collecting the garbage, not only along the river bank but throughout both parks, to prevent it from ending up in the river. A total of 100 pounds of trash and 50 pounds of recyclables was collected. This year’s most unusual object found could not rival the safe that was recovered from the river last year in McHenry. It was only an aquarium stand!

Several Defenders members took part in the clean-up along with Robert Nunamaker, Village President of Fox River Grove, and his wife Mary Lou. We were also very fortunate to have twelve students from three schools, Learning House and Cary-Grove and Prairie Ridge High Schools, out there helping out as well. The event was co-sponsored by the Sierra Club, who provided reusable bags and gloves. Thank you to everyone who took part in this effort!
30-Minute Conservation Challenge
This Summer

The Defenders’ Membership Committee would like to invite all of our members to participate in our 30-Minute Conservation Challenge this summer. Simply donate at least 30 minutes to conservation between now and the end of August. Clean a park, introduce someone to your favorite natural area or . . . your choice! Send us a paragraph and/or a picture about your experience and we’ll share your ideas and actions to help inspire others in a future edition of NATURE Matters and on our Web site (you can be named or anonymous.) All who participate will be eligible for a drawing of environment-related prizes in September. Visit www.mcdef.org, call 815-338-0393, or e-mail mcdef@owc.net for details.

“350” Bike Rally
October 24, 2009

According to NASA’s James Hansen and a team of scientists, the maximum number of carbon parts per million (ppm) in the atmosphere should be 350. Since we are beyond 385 ppm right now, there is work to be done. The world’s leaders will meet in Copenhagen this December to craft a new global treaty on cutting carbon emissions, so people all over the world – from Antarctica to Zimbabwe – are showing their support for “350” through a global movement.

In our area, cyclists of all ages are needed to take to the trails and roads of McHenry County to bring attention to the number “350.” That’s the number of miles we hope to pedal, cumulatively, in McHenry County. Cyclists will select a segment from a road and/or trail map of the county that shapes that important number “350.” For the smallest carbon footprint, the portion selected should be close to home and suit the ages and abilities of the riders.

The Education Committee of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County and other interested groups are sponsoring the event. Visit www.mcdef.org to find out more or sign up to pedal your part. See www.350.org to learn more about what others are doing around the world.

Recycling Drives

What:
Collection of fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs, 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. We will also be conducting a buy-back program for aluminum cans and other non-ferrous metals and will be accepting styrofoam pellets and bubble wrap. Come in and help keep these items out of the landfill.

When:
Second Saturday of every Month.

Where:
Woodstock: The Woodstock collection takes place on the second Saturday of each EVEN numbered month and is 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.

SHOP & SHARE IDENTIFICATION SLIP

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GROUP: Environmental Defenders of McHenry County

SIGNATURE

PLEASE SIGN THIS SLIP AND TURN IT IN TO YOUR CHECKER WHEN YOU SHOP. PARTICIPANTS CAN MAKE PURCHASES AT ANY JEWEL-OsCO ON THE DATE ABOVE. IDENTIFICATION SLIPS ARE NOT TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN FRONT OF ANY JEWEL-OsCO.

Please clip for shopping at Jewel-Osco from August 17-19. Thank you!
Treading Lightly: Food Prep, Service & Storage
By Meg Murray-Bradshaw

How did we ever manage in the days before plastic food storage containers, zip-lock baggies and plastic wrap? What did we do with leftovers and how did we store our produce in the fridge?

We think all this plastic makes our lives easier, but the way we use it in the kitchen often creates new work for ourselves. We store produce in plastic bags from the grocery store, transfer it to bowls for meal preparation, transfer it again to cookware, transfer it again to serving dishes, and transfer the leftovers into plastic food storage containers, zip-lock baggies and dinnerware covered in plastic wrap. Our food storage containers are not microwave safe, so we transfer the leftovers again before heating them up at the next meal. What a hassle, what a lot of dishes to wash, and what a lot of wasted petroleum resources in the form of throw-away plastic!

We used to cook, serve and store food in glass and ceramic dishes with lids. Do you still? If not, there are new opportunities to do so.

Some Pyrex glass pieces come with matching lids. For example, Pyrex offers a 10-piece set, consisting of two casserole dishes and three bowls of various sizes, each with a matching plastic lid. Also available are loaf pans and other glass cookware with lids. You can buy direct from www.Pyrexware.com, and buy from a variety of stores in person or online.

Even better are the choices from Corningware. Choose from glass and chip-resistant ceramic stoneware, all made to handle oven, microwave, refrigerator and freezer. Corning offers a new “SimplyLite” collection of glass cookware that is half the weight of traditional ceramic bakeware. The collections include dishes, matching glass or ceramic lids, and plastic lids for stacking in the fridge or freezer. These are available direct from www.Corningware.com and from other stores.

Another source is the delightful Vermont Country Store, available to shop by catalogue or online at www.VermontCountryStore.com. There you can find glass cookware with glass lids, and floral pattern porcelain bowls with lids that are safe for the microwave and dishwasher. You will also find whimsical, dishwasher safe containers for your produce: “Made in the likeness of the items you store in them, these fun, brightly colored vegetable keepers make veggies easy to find in the fridge, while keeping them fresh and fragrant a whole lot longer. Besides, they reduce the need for plastic baggies – the scourge of roadsides and landfill sites everywhere.” The collection includes Lemon and Lime Savers; Red and Yellow Onion Savers; Tomato Savers and Garlic Savers.

To recap, glass dishes with lids are resistant to heat, cold, stains and odors; they are dishwasher safe; they are stackable. They allow you fewer dishes to wash, and less wasted plastic. Bonus: you can see what leftovers are inside at a glance. What’s not to love?

Give a Gift Membership

As a member, you can help the Defenders most at this time by giving a 1/2 price gift membership to someone you know – a neighbor, friend or colleague. Easy to do. Send $25 to the office with the name and address of the recipient. (You can even use the form below). He or she will receive a packet of membership information plus a note mentioning who the gift is from. In order for us to continue upholding the environmental integrity in McHenry County, we need members. Our strength is in numbers. Thank you! The Membership Committee

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: nwsltrsummer09
## Calendar of EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### JULY
**Saturday, July 11**
**Kishwaukee River kayak/canoe trip.** 9:00 a.m. Contact Neill Sachs for and to sign up. 815-675-2594.

### AUGUST
**August 5-9**
**McHenry County Fair Defenders’ Fundraiser.** See page 7 for details

**Sunday, August 16**
**Annual Corn Roast.** See page 7 for details.

### SEPTEMBER
**Sunday, September 13**
**Fox River kayak/canoe trip.** 9:00 a.m. Contact Cindy Skrukrud for details and to sign up. 815-675-2594.

**Saturday, September 19**
**It’s Our River Day.** 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Cornish Park in Algonquin. Clean-up, speakers, kayak demos and music. See page 7 for details.

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**Mark your calendars for these future events!**

**Beginning September 2** - “Green Wednesdays” at Dukes Alehouse, Crystal Lake.
5 to 7 p.m. Sponsored by the McHenry County Green Drinks Committee.
Preset drink menu includes fun, food & friends. Come talk about “greening” the future with others. Must be 21 to purchase alcohol. Go to: WWW.GREENDRINKS.ORG for more information.

**October 24** - “350” Bike Rally
**October 24** - “Make A Difference Day” at Kishwaukee Headwaters

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

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