The Paris Climate Talks Will Be a Historic Success. And a Historic Disaster.

The world is going to buy itself some time. But you still shouldn’t invest in beachfront real estate.

By Bill McKibben, Bestselling Author and Environmental Activist

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Here’s how to think about what happens in Paris over the course of the next two weeks: The conference isn’t the game — it’s the scoreboard.

Diplomats, heads of state, activists — they’ll all be descending on the French capital over the next few days (though in smaller numbers than expected before the horrific attacks in the city earlier this month). It will be a three-ring circus, overseen by 3,000 reporters — and the United Nations notified a thousand more last week that there was no more room. There will be congressional delegations, indigenous delegations, and delegations of peasant farmers. There will be oil lobbyists, coal lobbyists, and automobile lobbyists. There will be frantic negotiations that break down and restart and then break down again. And there will be some genuinely important decisions.

But for the most part the decisions have already been made. The action happened not in Paris, but in the streets and in engineering labs over the last half-decade and has changed the equation markedly since the failed talks at the Copenhagen climate conference in 2009. Those talks weren’t just a failure, they were a fiasco — the world’s leaders came together and then came apart, with bizarre and frantic improvised meetings that produced a one-page memorandum with no targets or timetables. No nothing, except a vague pledge to keep the planet’s warming below 2 degrees Celsius. It made Munich look like a diplomatic masterstroke.

Paris will go better. Not well enough to save the planet, but maybe just well enough to save our chances of saving the planet. Here’s why.

First, engineers have upped their game. It’s been remarkable to watch the sudden acceleration of renewable technology in the last five years. We aren’t talking technical breakthroughs — we’re talking quantum improvements in manufacturing and installation: Germany’s smart decision to lead the renewables revolution led to Chinese manufacturers learning how to make cheap panels, which in turn led to tomorrow’s hoped-for technology becoming today’s no-brainer. The price of a solar panel has dropped over 80 percent since 2008. That’s the key destabilizing economic fact of our moment.

And it means that much is possible we couldn’t have dreamed of just a few years ago. Developing countries are suddenly starting to leapfrog the fossil fuel age or at least demonstrate it can be done. Bangladesh — Henry Kissinger’s original “basket case” of a developing country — will be the planet’s first fully solarized nation by 2020 or so. Its well-developed micro-credit networks are now funding 60,000 or 70,000 rooftop solar arrays a month, spreading electricity to places where a hundred years of fossil fuel could never reach. In Rwanda, a single newly inaugurated solar farm...
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 envirodefmc@gmail.com.

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We have a new email address! envirodefmc@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE

Articles
Paris Climate Talks cover
By Bill McKibben, Author & Environmental Activist

News & Announcements
Citizens’ Climate Lobby McHenry County Chapter 4
Education & Advocacy update 5
Update on BYOBAG McHenry County 5
Upcoming events 6 & 7
Past events 8, 9
Recycling news 10
Calendar of Events & Activities Back page

Save the date - March 13, 2016 ~ Annual Meeting.
boosted Rwanda’s grid capacity by 6 percent — and it was
designed, built, and connected in a single year. In India, solar
power plants beat coal-fired stations for new contracts —
they’re cheaper, even if you don’t include all the externalized
costs of fossil fuel (which in, say, Delhi include irreversible
lung damage for half the city’s children).

The same arguments apply even in the rich world, where
companies like Apple and Google increasingly promise they’ll
power their server farms on 100 percent clean energy. The
energy forecasters annually underestimate — often by
ludicrous margins — how fast renewable energy will spread.
And in the process the overwhelming political power of the
fossil fuel industry is being slowly undercut by the rise of new
powers. Already there are more than twice as many solar
workers as coal miners in America; that is beginning to rewrite
the political narrative in the world’s biggest economy.

Adding to this momentum is the explosive growth of the
climate movement, the great emergent social force of the 21st
century. Before Copenhagen, there was nothing. I helped
organize a climate march in 2006 in Vermont — it drew just a
thousand people, including Bernie Sanders, in his pre-
presidential-candidate days. The press said it was likely the
largest climate march that had yet taken place in the United
States. But in the years since, 350.org, which I helped founded,
has organized 20,000 demonstrations in every country but
North Korea, and some of them have been huge. The 400,000
people who thronged the streets of Manhattan in September
2014 were part of the biggest demonstration about anything in
this country in many years.

That movement has begun to claim real victories. It
convinced President Barack Obama to stop the Keystone
pipeline, which was the first time a world leader had rejected a
big project because of its effect on the climate. More
importantly, that effort spawned a thousand other fights, in
what one beleaguered fossil fuel industry lobbyist called the
“Keystone-ization” of every other project on the continent. In
Australia, activists have thrown a wrench into plans for one of
the world’s largest coal mines; in Germany they invaded
Europe’s biggest coal fields; in the Arctic they helped drive
first Shell and then Statoil away from the oil and gas fields.
Fracking has been banned in big U.S. states and major
countries. As of Paris, endowments and portfolios representing
at least $5 billion in assets have been divested from some or all
fossil fuels. (Most recently, it was the world’s largest insurance
company, Germany’s Allianz, pulling its capital out of coal.)

That surging political movement has changed the
conversation and made climate change a front-burner topic.
Obama and Hillary Clinton were able to come home failures
from Copenhagen and pay no price; that’s not true for Paris nor
for most other leaders. They need to show progress. And they
will. In fact, we already know how much. Since there’s not
going to be a real treaty (no one on earth thinks the U.S. Senate
would actually approve a binding document), the promises laid
out in advance by various nations already tell us what the
scoreboard will read come Dec. 11, though some details
remain to be hashed out. Instead of a world that will become 5
degrees warmer — our post-Copenhagen trajectory — we’ll
come out of Paris with promises from individual nations that,
when you add them up, would warm the planet 3.5 degrees if
they were kept.

That’s historic, that’s remarkable — and that’s also a
disaster. A world that warms 3.5 degrees would not be a world
with civilizations that resemble ours. In fact, even the longtime
negotiating goal of 2 degrees (the only thing that participants
in Copenhagen actually agreed on) is clearly too high. We’ve
heated the planet 1 degree so far since the industrial age began,
and the U.N. said in November that has produced a world
where 4.1 billion people have been affected by extreme
weather disasters over the last 20 years. So far this fall we’ve
seen the highest windspeeds and the lowest barometric
pressure ever recorded in a storm in the Western Hemisphere.
We’ve seen two rare cyclones plow into Yemen — and they
came a week apart, dropping the normal equivalent of 10 years
of rain in a few hours. We’ve seen — well, I could go on. The
point is, 1 degree has been enough to melt most of the summer
sea ice in the Arctic, fundamentally destabilize the Antarctic
icesheets, and make the oceans 30 percent more acidic. And
we’re hoping for 2 degrees? And aiming for 3.5?

Paris could still contribute to improving this picture on
the margins. There are two items on the docket still to be
decided.

The first is the amount of aid for poor countries trying to
become solar and wind-powered. It’s clearly both morally and
practically sound for rich countries to provide that aid:
Nothing would be more foolish than insisting Africa go
through the coal age. But of course the fossil fuel industry is
doing its best to block progress — in November the Senate
voted against even the exceedingly modest $500 million the
Obama administration proposed as our contribution. This
defines shortsightedness; it’s hard to imagine any diplomat
making a coherent argument for not helping out, especially
when we’ve contributed the plurality of the atmosphere’s
anthropogenic carbon dioxide. But apparently that’s politics
around 2015.

Second, there will be an effort to build in a “ratchet
mechanism” that automatically reviews the national pledges
and pushes them upward as the condition of the climate
worsens. This would make it easier to keep progress on track,
instead of the huge effort to build the diplomatic head of steam
necessary to get Paris off the ground.

After Copenhagen, the scoreboard read: Fossil Fuel
Industry, 50; Planet and Physics, 0. Call that halftime. After
Paris, the score will be more like 60-30. Reality is beginning
to catch up, but it’s not halftime anymore. We hope it’s the end
of the third quarter, but there’s reason to believe it’s actually
much later in the game. 2015 looks set to be the hottest year
ever recorded and October the hottest month we’ve ever
measured — indeed it smashed the old record by such large
margins that nervous climatologists called it “stunning,”
“shocking,” and potentially the start of a new, even more
dangerous, phase for the planet’s temperature.

So that’s Paris. We won’t win the climate fight; we won’t
even come close. But at least we’ll know the score — and
we’ll know how much we have to do in the next few crucial
years. 🌍
Join the McHenry County Chapter of the Citizens’ Climate Lobby

By Lois and Rick Johnson

As we start a new year, the outlook for large-scale climate action is promising. You can see the evidence here in McHenry County, in Washington, and around the world.

A little more than a year ago, the Education Committee of Environmental Defenders of McHenry County encouraged formation of a McHenry County chapter of the international organization, Citizens’ Climate Lobby (CCL). The Defenders now partners with McHenry County CCL, providing support through publicity, newspaper contacts, and joint tabling events.

McHenry County CCL has taken many local actions toward a healthy climate in recent months. They have provided media packets to the Northwest Herald, written letters to the editor, made calls and sent letters to our Congressmen. CCL has hosted a half-dozen outreach events and co-sponsored the Merchants of Doubt documentary with The Defenders.

The Defenders became the first local signer for CCL’s “Endorsers Project” in August 2015. The project invites community leaders and organizations to sign a letter of support that urges members of Congress to take action on climate change and lets legislators know that their constituents support action. Since then, the Illinois League of Women Voters, two local faith leaders, and six small business owners have signed endorsements through McHenry County CCL.

At the time of this writing, the 2015 Paris Climate Conference is underway, pulling together representatives from nearly 200 countries to address the effects of climate change. Six years ago the conference in Copenhagen yielded no agreements or timetables to reduce emissions, but there’s cause for optimism this time and here’s why:

• The cost of a solar panel has dropped 75%.
• China has started to change its energy system with cap-and-trade.
• Six major U.S. banks are calling for action to address climate change.
• Every 10 days for the past five years one U.S. coal plant has been retired or announced its plan to close.
• In the last five years 46 gigawatts of clean wind, solar, and geothermal power have been added to our energy markets.
• Legislators on both sides of the aisle are increasingly interested in solutions.

The most cost-effective way to implement a global response to climate change is with carbon fee and dividend. That approach may become part of the package of actions to come out of Paris. The goal of a newly-launched Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition of U.N. agencies, 12 national governments, and 60 businesses is to add carbon pricing to all national strategies by 2020. Another carbon pricing effort includes that of the World Economic Forum, with CEOs from 78 companies asking for effective climate policies that include carbon prices. A growing group of organizations sent a letter to the delegates asking that the final agreement contain clear principles to guide nations toward effective, efficient, and equitable carbon pricing policies. The discussion is clearly moving beyond whether carbon should be priced to how it should be priced.

We invite you to join the McHenry County Citizens’ Climate Lobby chapter. It meets monthly to connect with other chapters and to take actions that will influence elected leaders in Washington. The winter 2016 meetings are scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on the following dates: January 12, February 16, and March 15 at Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church, 8505 Church Street, Ridgefield (Crystal Lake). For more information, visit citizensclimatelobby.org or contact Rick Johnson at lois-rick@comcast.net or by calling 815-728-7002.

Defenders’ Office
Open on Fridays

For some years now, The Environmental Defenders have had office hours from Monday-Thursday. Since the end of July, the office has been open on Fridays as well. Members and others are welcome to come by and peruse our library, chat about the environment, and, of course, shop at The Defenders’ Green Spot store across the hall. Cynthia Kanner, Defenders’ member of 15 years, editor of EarthConnect, and Founder & Chair of The Defenders’ BYOBag committee, now works at the office every Friday as office assistant. She looks forward to seeing you!!
As BYOBag McHenry County enters its third year, I’m happy to report that the energy continues to move forward. Since the last update, the towns of Spring Grove, Cary and Huntley have proclaimed their own BYOBag months. At the end of the year, a BYOBag Powerpoint presentation was given before two commissions of the City of Woodstock: the Environmental Commission and the Cultural & Social Awareness Commission. Together, those commissions plan to recommend that the City of Woodstock proclaim 2016 as BYOBag YEAR in that historic town. In addition, the two commissions have started working on language for a plastic bag reduction plan for future consideration by the city. Way to go Woodstock!

In the southeast corner of our county, a busy shopping area that includes the towns of Algonquin, Huntley, LITH and Crystal Lake, BYOBag will be most effective when those towns work together to reduce plastic bag use. A ban on plastic bags and charge for paper, or something along the Aldi model with a charge for both plastic and paper, are a couple of options that have both helped tremendously in reducing the amount of single-use plastic bags used around the country.

Above is the inside of a brochure, produced with funds from The McHenry County Community Foundation, which was sent to all mayors and presidents of McHenry County towns earlier this month requesting action be taken while encouraging all towns to declare a BYOBag month to kick things off. In March, BYOBag will present at the McHenry County Council of Governments meeting to be held in Algonquin with the hopes that through this group, leaders will discuss how to work together for lasting change. In the meantime, our BYOBag signs and bag racks that have been given to stores throughout the county, as shown above, continue to remind shoppers to bring their own bags when shopping.

Fall Education and Advocacy Efforts

By Nancy Schietzelt

Many thanks to all The Defenders’ volunteers who helped make the projects listed below possible. During Fall 2015, in addition to other activities that are covered in this issue, The Defenders were able to complete the following educational and advocacy efforts:

• Provided global climate change information at the Artful Living program on fracking at the Raue Center.
• Collaborated with McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program to conduct the Styrofoam Challenge in seven schools in the county.
• Continued to facilitate monthly Green Drinks events.
• Presented a program about Defenders’ activities at Grace Lutheran Church in Woodstock.
• Continued collaboration with CMAP in the development of a watershed plan for Boone and Dutch Creeks.
• Presented a program about recycling for the FFA Chapter at Faith Lutheran High School.
• Continued our participation with the McHenry County Solid Waste Task Force.
• Met with Woodstock Morning Rotary about improving recycling in downtown Woodstock.
• Hosted a Crystal Lake Talks Trash event with downtown businesses to increase recycling.
• Activated our members to contact legislators to maintain strong rules governing power plants in the state.
• Collaborated with Silver and Sleepy Hollow Creek Watershed Coalition and Crystal Lake Park District to hold a restoration workday at Wingate Prairie.
• Began collaboration with McHenry County Farm Bureau to help protect and promote pollinators in the county.
• Provided educational information about the environment at the MCC Green Living Expo where we also advocated for the mission of our BYOBag Committee.
• Continued to provide the Northwest Herald with an Environmental Tip for weekly publication.
• Helped with the Fall Youth Groundwater Festival organized by the McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program.

New Defenders’ Transportation Committee

At the suggestion of a Defenders’ member for the organization to have a committee dedicated to transportation issues, The Environmental Defenders would like to start a Transportation Committee and invites you to become involved to help this possible new committee get off the ground successfully. The committee needs a chairperson or two co-chairs. If you’re interested in making a difference by joining, and possibly helping to lead this committee, please contact The Defenders at our new email address: envirodefmc@gmail.com. Subject: Transportation Committee. Thank you!!
**Welcome New Members!**

Ders Anderson, Bull Valley  
Jeff Aufmann, Cary  
Jennifer & Michael Balian, Algonquin  
Rick & Beverly Blankenbaker, Harvard  
Robert Brasile, Woodstock  
Berne Clary, McHenry  
Jose & Selena Cruz, Woodstock  
Lisa Davidson, Crystal Lake  
Debbie Dechant, Woodstock  
Tom Flynn, Woodstock  
Dorothy Frantz, Chicago  
Melissa & Zach Grycan, Woodstock  
John Hebert, Woodstock  
Dorothy Hughes, McHenry  
Matthew Jamnik, Crystal Lake  
Ray Lucich, Woodstock  
Mark & Sherri Manninen, Union  
Rob Mutert, Woodstock  
Kestas & Rita Palulonis, Crystal Lake  
JoAnne & Carl Papp, Crystal Lake  
Susan Parker, Crystal Lake  
Kay Preschlock, Crystal Lake  
Jaclyn & Nick Radeni, Crystal Lake  
Jon & Ina Roquet, Spring Grove  
Don & Tracie Rose, Crystal Lake  
Roger & Darlene Schlies, McHenry  
Ann Viger, Crystal Lake  
Rick Walters, Cary  
Laurie & Jay Wilde, McHenry  
Nola Willis, Cary  
Christine & Dana Woodall, Woodstock

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**From the Prairie to the Tundra**

Program by Neill Sachs  
Sunday, February 21, 2016

Join fellow Defenders’ members for a road trip from Illinois to the Tundra! Defenders’ member, Neill Sachs, will be taking you vicariously on a journey that he and his wife, Margaret, took from Illinois to Alaska. Along the way they passed through several ecological zones—from prairies to mountains and boreal forests to tundra. Through this photo journey, Neill will guide us along while discussing highlights of environmental issues in each region.

The Membership Committee will be hosting this free event at the Soil and Water Conservation District Building on the corner of Dean St. and Hwy. 14 from 2:00–3:30 p.m. on February 21st. Cookies and warm drinks will be provided. RSVPs to envirodefmc@gmail.com are not required, but would be helpful for planning. Hope you can “come along!”

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**Student Creates New Signs for the Green Spot**

Local high school student, Natalie Hume, created new standing and window signs for The Defenders’ Green Spot store. Natalie did this as a project for her Woodstock High School Graphic Occupations Class. Thank you, Natalie. Great work!

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**Environmental Defenders’ Board Member receives “Teacher of the Month” Award**

“Congratulations to Mrs. Sue Jensen, Art Teacher at South Elementary School in Crystal Lake & our NOVEMBER “Teacher of the Month” WINNER from Home State Bank on Star 105.5! At right is South Elementary School’s principal, Rachel Alt.”

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**“Su”n is the kind of art teacher that changes the way kids look at the world. As an art teacher and member of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County she is always providing opportunities for the kiddos to get involved with creative, environmental activities: from teaching her students about the importance of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, through up-cycling art crafts, to inviting the students to take part in summer parades dressed in tutu’s made of recycled items! Some of the upcycling projects have included recreating Van Gogh’s Starry Night with bottle caps and making reusable bags out of old t-shirts. She even helped some of her students create a video on the importance of waste reduction for their science class! There are many great teachers in McHenry County and Sue Jensen shines bright with them!” Teagen Andrews
You’re invited to join your fellow Defenders’ members for an early Sunday night supper and program for our **2016 Annual Meeting** on March 13, 2016, celebrating our 46th year as an organization. This year we’ll be meeting at Park Place at 406 W. Woodstock Street in Crystal Lake. The event will run from 4–7PM with supper, awards ceremony, and program rounding out the evening. And, there will be an opportunity to obtain some wonderful items from our raffle and silent auction. Tickets for the event are $22 for members and $50 for non-members, which includes the price of a one-year membership. All of those joining us for supper will receive a special Defenders’ mug, thanks to an anonymous donor! Guests may attend just the program portion of the event for free, but RSVPs are requested.

Our program will be about the endangered and threatened species that call the Chicagoland region “home.” As you may know, our area of Illinois boasts more endangered and threatened species of plants and animals than any other part of Illinois. And inherent in our mission is our commitment to “build sound ecological relationships between people and the natural world that supports all life.” So, this will give us a great opportunity to get updated about the status of some of these species that we are working to help protect. The program will be presented by Kristopher Lah, with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Like last year, we also plan to put together themed gift baskets filled with items donated by multiple members. So we will welcome donations of smaller items for that purpose. We also ask that those making a donation to the auction and raffles consider donating services and/or consumables (i.e. rototilling of garden, washing windows, cleaning gutters, one hour outside labor, canoe use, kayak tour, etc.) This will help to reduce the amount of “stuff” as an alternative.

Tickets for the event may be purchased through our website at www.mcdef.org, through the eNews, or by mailing a check to the office at 110 S. Johnson St., Suite 106, Woodstock, IL, 60098. You’re always welcome to stop by the office as well. Last day to purchase tickets is March 4th. We hope you can come celebrate with us!

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**Annual Award Nominations Needed!**

**Theta Award** – given to an organization or individual who demonstrates a commitment to the environment through programs and actions that result in conservation, protection, and preservation of natural resources.

**Government/Organization Award** – for the McHenry County governmental group or organization that has made a significant contribution to environmental protection in the County during the past year.

**Volunteer Award** – for the Defenders’ member who has contributed the most to the good of the organization through his/her volunteer efforts during the past year.

**Young Environmental Defender of the Year Award** – for a Defenders’ member under 20 who has contributed most to environmental protection in the County in the past year.

Please email nominations to: envirodefmc@gmail.com by February 1st.

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**2016 Great Lakes Bioneers McHenry County Speaker Series**

The speaker series is free and open to the public. No registration required. All sessions are at 7 p.m. in the McHenry County College Luecht Conference Center in Building B located on Main Campus in Crystal Lake.

**February 9, 2016**

**Water Tension in the Great Lakes Region and What It Means to McHenry County**

Peter Annin is a veteran conflict and environmental journalist. He authored the definitive work on the Great Lakes water diversion controversy, titled “The Great Lakes Water Wars.” Mr. Annin will speak to the diversion of water from the Great Lakes and why it is not a valid alternative to groundwater in McHenry County.

**February 16, 2016**

**The Recipe for a Better Food System**

Danielle Nierenberg is president of Food Tank, an organization focused on building a global community for safe, healthy, nourished eaters. Ms. Nierenberg will speak about the recipe for a better food system including preventing food loss and waste, building soil, empowering women, and cultivating the next generation of agricultural leaders.

**February 23, 2016**

**Beyond Milkweed: Pollinators, Pollution and Purpose**

Robert Michael Pyle is the author of 17 books, including Wintergreen, which won the John Burroughs Medal. A Yale-trained ecologist and a Guggenheim fellow, Dr. Pyle will take us beyond planting milkweed and bring his unique level of expertise and offer practical solutions to the most critical ecological issue of our time.

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**April 23—Earth Day**

Save the date!

**Earth Day Celebration!!**

When: Saturday, April 23 • 11 AM–4 PM
Where: Prairieview Education Center
2112 Behan Road, Crystal Lake IL

Hosted by McHenry County Conservation District and The Environmental Defenders. The event is held both indoors and out and will go on rain or shine! Recycling drive and special booths representing conservation organizations will be there. Take a walk in the prairie and hear good music, too!
Make a Difference Day

This red oak (the 2nd largest in the county) already looks happier with the buckthorn and honeysuckle removed from around it. About a dozen Defenders’ members cleared invasive species from our property as well as from the McHenry/Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District’s property on October 24th as part of the national Make a Difference Day event.

Merchants of Doubt
Review by Cynthia Kanner

*Merchants of Doubt* is a documentary film by Robert Kenner that was shown at McHenry County College last fall. From time to time, we’re able to invite our members and guests to contemplate and discuss pressing environmental issues through the media of film. This particular film is timely to say the least, and clearly, if not painfully, demonstrates the reality of the politicization of one of the most, if not the most, pressing environmental issues of our day. It compares the current situation of climate deniers with that of the historic tobacco debates. From exposing Think Tanks for their role in steering public debate on behalf of industry, to reminding viewers what the deniers are really after—a political debate about the role of government, the film introduces speakers from all walks, including climate scientists, special interest groups, and politicians who have reversed their views in favor of scientific results. It demonstrates how seemingly simple it is to manipulate public opinion. *Merchants of Doubt* is frustrating and thought-provoking. And, you can see the film if you missed it by checking it out from The Defenders’ library any time! The following films are also available at our library:

- Dirty Business
- Who Killed the Electric Car?
- Queen of the Sun
- The 11th Hour
- An Inconvenient Truth
- The True Cost of Food
- Everything's Cool
- The Rotten Truth
- Dirt
- The Unforseen
- Moral Ground -- A Discussion of Global Environmental Ethics
- The Nature of McHenry County
- ...and more.

A big thanks to all those volunteers who made the Fall Book sale and Woodstock Mall Hallway book sale such a success!

*Gifting the World with eco sustainable products produced in a Fair Trade environment.*

"On the Square" in Woodstock, IL
100 Cass St. ~ 815.669.6003.
www.greenboxboutique.com
The Green Living Expo

This year, the Green Living Expo, an annual event at McHenry County College where The Defenders always has a booth, had about 900 very engaged and interested visitors!! And, some really great connections were made. For example, some of the students that brought their solar cars ended up spending time in MCC’s garage with automotive department students after the expo where they exchanged ideas and had a good time. In fact, this year’s Green Living Expo resulted in more community connections than ever before. Some examples of the effect on the community are:

- A tiny house is scheduled to be built in McHenry County next spring
- Eight (possibly ten) contracts for solar installations
- Seven new Food Shed members
- Connections with MCC automotive department and visiting schools – Department Chair Albamonte took the visiting students for a tour of MCC space and facilitated a discussion with MCC students and student exhibitors on space, resources and creative solutions.
- One of the Tesla owners from the Expo has been invited to visit with Woodstock North High School students
- McHenry County Conservation Foundation is working on a partnership with Nicor
- Additional Styrofoam recycling drop off locations were identified and will be implemented after the new year.

Christmas Tree Sales

Thank you to all of our volunteers who baked for and helped at Christmas tree sales at The Howenstine’s Pioneer Tree Farm from Thanksgiving til Christmas. Thank you to Bill and Alice and all the Howenstines for this magical annual event and Defenders’ fundraiser.
A Call to Action:
Electronic Recycling Needed

Due to the unprecedented volume of electronics recently received at the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County’s monthly drives, it is necessary to suspend the January 2016 McHenry and February 2016 Woodstock recycling drives. In the last two months of 2015, the amount of electronic waste received was triple the monthly average due to the size and quantity of televisions and monitors dropped off. As a not-for-profit, volunteer organization, The Defenders cannot continue to sustain the cost and transport of recycling electronics in these quantities. The Defenders has provided additional recycling services to McHenry County communities for over 45 years. The organization has adapted to many changes to continue accomplishing its environmental goals in the area of recycling and waste reduction.

Because electronics recycling regulations are in flux and profits have been reduced, most recyclers have completely stopped taking televisions and many have simply shut their doors. The Defenders cannot handle this increased amount of e-waste recycling and is urging local governments to provide a solution to meet the needs of their citizens. In November, The Defenders hand-delivered proposals to 17 municipalities and 17 townships in McHenry County detailing how to establish an electronic recycling drop-off site. This would provide residents a convenient, local place to responsibly dispose of all electronics. Municipalities or townships have numerous options for setting up collections, with costs possibly as low as $1 per household per month.

This effort needs your support! Contact your local representative (village, city or township) and ask that person to support the Proposal for Electronics Recycling. Municipal representative–http://bit.ly/City/Village contact or Township representative–http://bit.ly/TownshipContact. For electronic recycling, please visit the Green Guide at mchenry.edu/Recycling/greenguide.pdf. For television or computer monitor recycling please contact Chicago Logistic Service (CLS) at (847) 429-1926. Thank you for your support and for advocating for electronics recycling in your area.

HELP!
WE ARE SUSPENDING RECYCLING DRIVES UNTIL MARCH

The Environmental Defenders, a non-profit, volunteer organization is overwhelmed due to the recent influx of electronics drop-offs

Support recycling efforts by contacting your local government and ask them about the solution

Or for more information contact us at: 815-338-0393

Thank You
Barb Day, Chairperson, Waste Reduction Committee

I wish to thank all of our volunteers who participated in our non-recycling drive, Saturday, January 9, 2016 and all of you, our members, who, to date, have helped us get the word out about our need to find a better way to get electronics, particularly TVs and monitors, recycled. The picture appearing next to this article was my worst fear of what might have happened and, thankfully, didn’t. Please contact your representative and make it clear you support finding the best way to get no-longer-wanted electronics collected appropriately. Like so many other things in our State, legislation requiring manufacturers to help defray the cost of processing these materials is delayed. In the meantime finding them along the roadways in McHenry County is not what anyone wants to see. Let’s all keep up the good work!
**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.

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**Membership Form**

*Membership makes a great gift!!*

**Levels of Membership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Basic</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Professional</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime Membership</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other amount</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total contribution:** $____

**Form Information**

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**

110 S. Johnson Street, Suite 106
Woodstock, IL 60098 OR

Join on-line at [www.medef.org](http://www.medef.org)

Questions? Call 815-338-0393

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**The Green Spot**

*Gently Used Books & Video Store/Fighters*

**Hours**

Tues - Fri: 11 AM to 4 PM
Saturday: 11 AM to 3 PM

110 S. Johnson Street
Woodstock Square Mall, Woodstock

*Credit cards accepted.*
### FEBRUARY

- **Wednesday, February 3**
- **Sunday, February 21**
- **Tuesdays, Feb. 9, 16, & 23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Green Wednesdays” Talk &amp; Reception</td>
<td>Duke’s Alehouse &amp; Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From IL to Alaska — Photo journey and talk by Neill Sachs.</td>
<td>See page 6 for details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioneers Speakers McHenry County Speaker Series</td>
<td>FREE, 7 PM at MCC. See page 7 for details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MARCH

- **Wednesday, March 2**
- **Sunday, March 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Green Wednesdays” Talk &amp; Reception</td>
<td>Duke’s Alehouse &amp; Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defenders’ Annual Membership meeting — 4PM. Park Place, Crystal Lake.</td>
<td>See page 7 for details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APRIL

- **Wednesday, April 6**
- **Saturday, April 23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Green Wednesdays” Talk &amp; Reception</td>
<td>Duke’s Alehouse &amp; Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Day at Prairieview Education Center — See page 7 for details.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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“One environment. One simple way to care for it.” It’s your world. Consider letting EarthShare help you take care of it. One contribution supports all the causes they represent, or you can give specifically to The Environmental Defenders.

Does your employer offer EarthShare? Call The Defenders at 815-338-0393 for information.