The Clean Energy Jobs Act
by Gavin Taves, Illinois Environmental Council

The Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA) is the most comprehensive and progressive climate proposal in Illinois. CEJA is the next step toward electric sector decarbonization and stimulating the green economy. The Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition is hard at work to pass this bill in the November veto session.

The Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition (ICJC) is made up of hundreds of environmental groups, healthcare professionals, environmental justice champions, businesses, community leaders, consumer advocates, and faith-based organizations from across the state. The ICJC played a central role in the passage of the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) in 2016, which incentivizes $12 to $15 billion in private renewable energy investment in Illinois, while creating tens of thousands of new green economy jobs. FEJA also directs $750 million toward low-income programs like Illinois Solar for All, prioritizing new solar development and job training in economically disadvantaged communities.

After FEJA passed, the ICJC convened over 60 “Listen, Lead, Share” (LLS) events to elicit feedback from communities statewide. The LLS series allowed the coalition to gather valuable insight into local climate change policy priorities, which eventually led to the drafting of the CEJA (Senate Bill 2132 / House Bill 3624). Importantly, the LLS events amplified the voices of often unheard and disenfranchised BIPOC communities.

Four Pillars for Lasting Change
CEJA embodies four policy pillars that achieve aggressive climate change mitigation goals, while encouraging economic development through a just and equitable transition.

For Consumers: CEJA will help power more than 4 million homes with clean energy, while lowering electricity bills. This act directly contradicts the Trump administration’s dirty fossil fuel energy bailout (Minimum Offer Price Rule), which could raise the cost of electricity between $1 to $2.6 billion in the PRM interconnection (which includes Northern Illinois).

For the Economy: CEJA creates more than $30 billion in new private investments in Illinois (four times the amount that FEJA accomplished).

For Communities: CEJA expands access to clean energy careers, building community wealth, and ensuring new opportunities as we build a clean energy economy. CEJA improves air and water quality, leading to healthier communities.

For Transportation: CEJA reduces congestion and pollution from the transportation sector, now the largest source of carbon emissions.

The Details
CEJA promotes job and economic growth through a series of proposed actions: Clean Jobs Workforce Hubs will form a network of frontline organizations that provide direct and sustained renewable energy career development support for minority and disadvantaged communities; the act grants preferential treatment to companies that implement equitable (See CEJA p. 3)

Qualified Charitable Distribution
See information on page 11.
A great way to give to The Environmental Defenders!
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<tr>
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hiring practices; and CEJA creates a Contractor Incubator program that focuses on the development of underserved businesses in the clean energy sector.

CEJA also puts Illinois on a path to 100% renewable energy by 2050 and decarbonizes our electric sector by 2030. By incentivizing the development of 40 million solar panels and 2,500 wind turbines in-state, Illinois will leverage $30 billion in new renewable energy infrastructure that will lower the price of electricity (coal is expensive!). The act expands Solar for All and provides for a just transition framework that gives frontline communities the wraparound services they need to move away from the harmful fossil fuel economy. Clean Energy Empowerment Zones will support workers who are economically impacted by the decline of fossil-fuel generation. Further, without CEJA, the burgeoning FEJA solar economy is on the verge of collapse due to the “solar cliff”. Solar projects, especially those that are community scaled, will require a legislative fix to succeed.

The bill also empowers communities to develop Community Energy and Climate Plans that drive comprehensive local investments in energy, transportation, workforce, and environmental projects. Simultaneously, CEJA encourages electric vehicle adoption and infrastructure development through beneficial electrification initiatives, which aim to reduce the equivalent of 1 million gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles from Illinois roads.

The Politics and Path Forward
CEJA is widely supported on a bipartisan basis across Illinois. Recent polling reveals that 82% of Illinoisans support the CEJA, and there are 55 sponsors in the state House and 31 sponsors in the Senate. Illinois and its representatives understand the urgency of passing a climate change and energy bill in this moment. Our State has experienced major agricultural disasters, flooding, coastal erosion, heatwaves, and egregious environmental injustices perpetuated by burning fossil fuels. Action is needed now.

(See CEJA p. 5)
Special 50th Anniversary Look-Back & Annual Events Announcements

Members’ Bike Ride
Glacial Park to Richmond
Saturday, August 29
by Gary Kanner

Join Defenders’ Transportation Action Team on August 29 at 11AM as we return after three years to a picturesque, easy, 4.5-mile bike ride from Glacial Park to Richmond with a stop at Main Street Coffee Company before the turn-around. Meet at the parking lot closest to the Prairie Trail at 11AM. This section of the trail is not paved. For those who want to take a longer route at a faster pace on paved roads, other options are available; one will be chosen and led by Transportation Team Chair, Gary Kanner. Questions and for sign-up, please contact Gary at kanner-gary@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATES – 2020 Bike to Work Week will be September 21–27, with Bike to Work Day on Tuesday, September 22.

13th Annual It’s Our River Day Hitting the Road!

We are taking “It’s Our River Day” on the road! On Saturday, September 19, we will be cleaning the branch of Boone Creek, that runs through the City of McHenry. We are collaborating with the McHenry County Conservation District and The Sierra Club. Wear work clothes, gloves, and boots and park in the employee lot behind the Jewel at 4222 W Elm Street. Questions? Please call 815-338-0393 or check our eNews for the latest details. 9AM to NOON. With guest speaker from MCCD.
(CEJA from p. 3)

While a plurality of Illinois residents support passing CEJA today, the Covid-19 pandemic has postponed the legislative process for many bills. However, the ICJC is confident that, with the support of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County and its members, we can pass the CEJA this fall.

To help, please follow the attached link to reach out to your representatives today. Every email, call, text, and letter to our representatives makes a difference. We can only pass CEJA with the help of the community.

Link to support the Clean Energy Jobs Act: https://ilcleanjobs.org/clean-energy-jobs-act/

EnviroZOOM and Forget-Me-Not Fridays
by Cynthia Kanner

Throughout the stay-at-home order issued by our State due to the COVID-19 virus, the Environmental Defenders has adapted, like so many other organizations and businesses, and gone online and curbside. Our educational component has really stepped up, as we’ve been offering two weekly programs, via Zoom, on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Our Wednesday programs, which have varied in timing, have covered issues like electric vehicles in Illinois, a recycling update (yes, caps stay on milk jugs!), composting, environmental education in the county, and environmental legislation at the state level.

Our Friday noon programs featured a different Environmental Defenders’ Business Member each week, so that we can support these wonderful local businesses through a difficult time. We’ve brought places like Conscious Cup, Terra Vitae Farms, Habitat for Humanity Restore, Organic Rootz and Marvin’s Toy Store into everyone’s home.

While our office has been closed, this has been a new discovery of ways to reach out to our members and the general public. It’s very likely that we’ll continue to organize Zoom events on occasion, so keep your eyes open for upcoming virtual events, like July 22 on diversity in conservation and the environment. Hope to see you soon on Zoom!

Environmental Ambassador Program
by Cynthia Kanner

The Environmental Ambassador Program of The Environmental Defenders is ramping up its efforts and we need you, your family, friends or colleagues to help us grow this important grassroots outreach. The program’s purpose is to connect our residents to those making decisions in our communities that affect environmental health, whether negatively or for the better, and to keep our office apprised of developments around the county so that we don’t miss a beat – whether it’s to thank a town for working hard to help our environment or to voice concern for decisions being debated that could impact our environment in a negative way. We need to stay informed ourselves as leaders in our county navigate decisions, and to do this we need regular and consistent volunteers to review meeting agendas, keep apprised of issues concerning the environment, and attend meetings in their towns or more broadly. This program takes us back to how and why The Defenders was founded in 1970. It connects our residents of the county with the important decisions that affect the world around us and activates our community members to make a difference.

Please contact Cynthia if you can take some time to volunteer or just want to find out more information – cwkannerenvirodefmc@gmail.com, or call 815-338-0393. During this time at home and with social distancing, council meetings are largely if not entirely taking place on-line. So, all you need to do is check the meeting agendas in your town and hop on a Zoom call, for example. Take notes and keep in touch. If you’re interested, and I hope you will be, please reach out!

Ultimately, we are striving for at least two Environmental Ambassadors in each town in the county and some folks to cover other meetings, such as board meetings of the McHenry County Conservation District. If you missed one of our four Environmental Ambassador workshops in the past, we will offer an additional opportunity for those who want to be involved and are happy to meet with you on Zoom or in person with social distancing.
Introducing our Summer Interns!

Thanks to you, our members, and your contribution to our 50th Anniversary Dinner meeting, we are able to have four paid interns working on our many projects. Please meet…

Martin Hurst is working on our Styrofoam Collection Program with our Recycling Action Team and plastic reduction with our Waste Reduction Action Team. Martin, a senior at Northern Illinois University majoring in Environmental Science with a minor in Economics, is on track to graduate this fall and would like to find a job within the EPA, either in or with an NGO. He hopes this internship will help him gain a better understanding of how environmental change happens at the local level and get a sense of what kind of work he may be doing in the future.

Katie Evans is our first intern to work on communications, especially social media. She lives in Algonquin and graduated from Jacobs High School in 2016. Katie graduated from Augustana College in May of this year with a Bachelors in Environmental Studies and Geography and a minor in Public Health. She is pursuing a career in community engagement and outreach. While at Augustana, she participated in the Garden Club, Geography Club, and helped run new-student orientation. Katie had various internships that helped her discover her interest in environmental outreach and education. These included working with OKE Charity while on study abroad in New Zealand, working with the Upper Mississippi Center and the Quad City Botanical Center, and spending a summer interning at The Forest Preserve District of Kane County. Katie is excited for the opportunity to learn more about social media marketing and hopes to increase engagement on the Environmental Defenders’ Instagram page, as well as reach younger audiences. In her free time, she likes to do yoga, read, and go for walks or hikes.

Jacob Karkowski was one of our interns last summer, and we are thrilled to welcome him back to the Water & Natural Resources Protection Action Team. Jacob is a Forestry: Ecosystem Restoration and Management Major at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP). At UWSP Jacob is President of both the UWSP Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration and the UWSP Land Conservation Society. He is excited to be joining The Defenders for his second consecutive internship, as he continues to aid in the restoration and management of natural areas throughout the county and learn techniques and strategies that he will take with him as he continues his college education.

Isabel Bernardi is working with our Water & Natural Resources Protection Action Team. Isabel, a Junior at Iowa State University, is majoring in Civil Engineering with a minor in Sustainability. She hopes to design and be a part of the construction of green buildings and is eager to receive LEED certification. She has been a member of The Defenders for several years, and always finds it enjoyable to volunteer and work with each and every member, whether it be outdoor restoration work, recycling drives, or educational activities. From the Defenders, she hopes to increase her knowledge of environmental issues, educate others, especially the younger generations about the environment, and expand her network. This is her first internship ever, and she is glad and excited it is with The Environmental Defenders.
Honored to be Recognized at 50
by Cynthia Kanner and Nancy Schietzelt

The Environmental Defenders has received proclamations from The State of Illinois, the City of Woodstock and The McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) in honor of our 50th Anniversary. We thank all who have recognized our volunteer efforts to preserve, protect and educate the citizens of McHenry County on the importance of nurturing the soil and protecting the water and air that is McHenry County. Engaging young people, the future leaders of this county, is central to our mission going forward. We look forward to continuing our special anniversary year and our mission in the future as best we can, given the current circumstances, and to collaborating with others. We are grateful to be part of a caring and environmentally conscious county.

A group of members visited with Senator Wilcox and a couple of our representatives during our CEJA lobbying trip on March 4th. While we were talking with Senator Wilcox, he congratulated the Environmental Defenders on our 50 years of protecting the environment in McHenry County and made Nancy promise to present the certificate to the group at our Annual Meeting on his behalf! She did that!
THANK YOU!
Grand Victoria Foundation and
Aptargroup Charitable Foundation
by Cynthia Kanner

As current grantees of the Grand Victoria Foundation, we are so grateful to have been invited to submit a COVID-Relief Grant Application to the Foundation in May. The grant of $10,000 was subsequently awarded to The Environmental Defenders at a time when our book stores were closed and very few new memberships rolled in. In addition, as of February 1, we started paying rent for The McHenry County Schools Environmental Program (MCSEEP) in preparation for their move to our building on the Woodstock Square as we slowly become the new home for this very important in-school environmental education program. With an office, two book stores, and MCSEEP, the grant is directed toward helping pay our monthly rent on all these spaces, while the Small Business Administration-Payroll Protection Program Loan we received helps to pay other operating expenses.

We are very excited that the Aptargroup Charitable Foundation has awarded us a $4,000-grant to continue running our Styrofoam Collection Program for another year. During the Stay-At-Home order from the state, due to the COVID-19 virus, a lot of you held onto your Styrofoam and waited patiently for us to re-open our sites. We opened back up on June 15 thanks to many volunteers who prepare the bags of Styrofoam for those who, in turn, pick them up for recycling. Last year this collection program saved 34,000 pounds of Styrofoam from going to landfills. We thank our volunteers who are able to return to this project, and to the many new volunteers who responded to our shout-out for help. Without them we could not save this forever-plastic from the land and water. Thank you!

Sorry, not this year!
by Alice, Bill and Chuck Howenstine

Due to the corona virus pandemic, the Defenders’ Annual Corn Roast at Pioneer Tree Farm, usually held in mid-August, is being postponed until further notice. We’ll keep you posted! Stay well and in good spirits!

Through a collaborative effort Conversacion de Conservacion, The Environmental Defenders, The Land Conservancy, The McHenry County Conservation District, Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge, and Hispanic Connections Woodstock are pleased to bring conservation outings and a special ZOOM panel to our Latino community in McHenry County. A national effort since 2014, the purpose of Latino Conservation Week is to “Harness Latino Passion for the Outdoors;” “Emphasize the Latino Role in Conservation;” and “Improve the Lives of this Generation and the Next.” As part of this special week there will be several simultaneous events around McHenry County from which to choose. Each organization will hold an outdoor educational outing in a conservation area that they manage/restore/own. Due to COVID-19, there will be limits on how many people can participate at some events. Please see our Facebook page and website for all the details! The Environmental Defenders will hold its event on its property in Woodstock, at 2222 S. Dean Street on Sunday, July 19, 2:00 to 4:00 PM. At the Defenders’ property we’ll follow the trails to explore the area and even venture into MCCD’s Kishwaukee Headwaters site. We’ll be looking for birds that visit the site in the Summer and prairie flowers blooming in July. How this site came to be preserved through a rather amazing coalition will also be explained as well as future plans for the site. Please bring binoculars if you have them and wear long pants and closed-toe shoes. Sign up by emailing envirodefmc@gmail.com.
Environmental Defenders’ 2020 Scholarship Winners!
by Cynthia Kanner

The Environmental Defenders’ Education Action Team is pleased to announce our three awardees this year! They are: Tyler Butler, Woodstock High School, Haley Wegener, Prairie Ridge High School and Jasmine Villavicencio, Woodstock High School.

Tyler will attend Drake University with a double major in Environmental Sustainability and Resilience/Management and possibly minor in Zoo and Conservation Science. He was active in his high school’s Green Club and Blue Planet Club and was fortunate his school offered an Environmental Science class. Haley is planning to pursue an education that will lead to becoming an environmental lawyer one day. She will begin her studies at Iowa State University and plans to major in political science with a secondary major in environmental science. Haley excelled in her high school’s AP Environmental Science Class. Jasmine will be studying environmental science at the University of Tampa. Like her fellow scholarship awardees, she took an environmental science class in high school. She is passionate about travel and wildlife conservation and is the first recipient of The Environmental Defenders’ Latino Environmental Scholarship. Jasmine’s award was made possible through the grant received from the Gerry & Bill Cowlin Foundation. The grant will also be used, in part, to help fund The Environmental Defenders’ general Latino Outreach Program of which the scholarship is a part.

At left, Jasmine Villavicencio and opposite page, Tyler Butler and Haley Wegener.

Each scholarship winner this year was awarded $1,000. We congratulate these young people who plan to go on in their college and adult careers with the goal of helping preserve and protect our environment. Way to go!

Member Field Trip
Aldo Leopold Shack and the Leopold Center
by Nancy Schietzelt

At our annual meeting in March, it was very timely for us to learn more about Rachel Carson, who wrote Silent Spring in 1962, the book that challenged the use of pesticides and called for a change in the way humankind viewed the natural world. In a similar way, visiting the shack where Aldo Leopold wrote his famous A Sand County Almanac, will give us the opportunity to become more familiar with the man who gave us the “land ethic,” which calls for a caring relationship between people and the earth. Aldo Leopold was a conservationist, forester, philosopher, educator, writer, and outdoor enthusiast who helped lead the way for people who love and want to protect our natural world to join organizations such as the Environmental Defenders.

As part of our celebration of our 50th Anniversary, Defenders’ members are invited to tour Aldo Leopold’s shack and the Leopold Center located in Wisconsin’s sand county region near Baraboo, Wisconsin. Nancy and Randy Schietzelt, who are shown sitting in front of the Leopold shack several years ago, will lead a caravan to the sites for a guided tour on September 5, 2020. The tour will accommodate 20 people with each paying a $10 fee. Please watch for more details in the eNews as we get closer to the tour date. If you would like to learn more about Leopold and the Leopold Center, go to https://www.aldoleopold.org/about/aldo-leopold/. And if you haven’t already read A Sand County Almanac, you’re encouraged to do so. You’ll love it!
Dwight Dalton Retires from Defenders’ Board of Directors

(© Curmudgeon)

by Barb Day

In the early years of his membership in the organization, Pat Dieckhoff remembers Dwight taking charge of recycling at the Crystal Lake Metro station. He bagged newspapers that Northwestern Railroad conductors would leave in a shed nearby, and then took them to Precision Twist to be used as packaging to protect Precision’s products when mailed.

During his time on the Board of Directors (26 years), Dwight led the way on several issues facing the organization. These included siting and monitoring gravel pits, preventing landfills on permeable soils, stopping power plants from being built on agricultural lands, and fighting an oil pipeline that was to run underground through a lot of the county. He held a meeting with the county, waste haulers and Defenders’ members to consider an alternate way to process solid waste that was taking place in Morris, Illinois.

He worked to get the Woodstock Recycling Center up and running. When the opportunity to purchase the Dean Street property came along, he walked the land with Dave Brandt, District Conservationist, to establish the wetland setback. He negotiated the purchase of the property with the McHenry County Conservation District, the Soil and Water Conservation District and the City of Woodstock. He led the New Home Committee, formed after the purchase, for a proposed building on the property. Dwight also represented The Defenders for many years as the group’s representative to Earth Share Illinois. He was Board President from 1995 to 2006. He will continue volunteering at recycling drives and helping to run our Styrofoam Collection Program. Glad to see you are staying with us, Dwight. Thanks for all you have done!

Rick with Chicago Logistic Service, Dwight, Alice Howestone, Bill Kreznor, and Gary Johnson at the annual Earth Day recycling drive.

RECYCLING EVENTS

McHenry County Dept of Health
Environmental Defenders
9AM – NOON ~ SATURDAYS

July 25-Harvard
Milky Way Park, 300 Lawrence Rd

August 29-Woodstock
County Administration building, 667 Ware Road

September 19-Huntley
Grafton Township, 10109 Vine St

October 3-MCC
8900 US Highway 14, Crystal Lake

WWW.MCDH.INFO ~ 815-334-4585

ACCEPTED
Electronic Devices that can be recycled at these Drop-Off Sites: • Televisions & Computer Monitors (Fees Apply) • Computers & Small Scale Servers • Printers, FAX Machines and Scanners • DVD Players, DVD Recorders and VCR’s • Video Game Consoles • Digital Converter Boxes, Cable and Satellite Receivers • Electronic Keyboards, Electronic Mice and Portable Digital Music Players—Limit of 7 electronic devices per visit. Batteries collected at August and October drives. Document shredding available at all drives. Environmental Defenders will collect: • Fluorescent tubes and bulbs • Textiles and clothing • Clean Styrofoam

Recycling drives are hosted by McHenry County Department of Health www.mcdh.info
EARTHCONNECT SUMMER 2020

OUR ACTION TEAMS
Come Join Us!

EDUCATION – Second Monday, 5:30 PM at McHenry County College Cafeteria
Contact – Dave Roggenbuck (dave.roggenbuck@gmail.com) or Kim Compton (caldwellk@gmail.com)

FUNDRAISING – Fourth Monday, 5:30 PM, Environmental Defenders office
Contact – Anne Basten (envirodefmc@gmail.com)

MEMBERSHIP – Fourth Wednesday, 5:30 PM at The Green Read, 61 N. Williams St., Crystal Lake, Contact: Zak Klehr (klehrz14@gmail.com)

TRANSPORTATION – First Monday, 7:00 PM The Green Read, 61 N. Williams St., Crystal Lake
Contact: - Gary Kanner (kannergary@gmail.com)

RECYCLING – Contact Barb Day (barbjday1934@gmail.com)

WASTE REDUCTION – Second Wednesday, 7:00 PM, Crystal Lake Brewing, Crystal Lake
Contact: Cecilia Carman (ddcarman@hotmail.com) or Michelle Muryn (mlmuryn@sbcglobal.net)

WATER & NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION – Third Thursday, 7:00 PM Environmental Defenders Office. Contact Cindy Skrukrud (cskrukrud@gmail.com)

THE GREEN READ welcomes you…
https://thegreenreadbookst.wixsite.com/home

Come visit us at The Green Read – The Environmental Defenders’ gently used book store in Crystal Lake. 61 N. Williams Street. Books of all kinds, puzzles, Defenders’ Ts and sustainable gifts in a great location and cozy setting. Like us on Facebook!

MONDAYS-SATURDAYS – 10AM TO 5PM

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!
Kyle and Jessica Mino, Woodstock
Brad Zerman, Chicago
Mary Sherman, Crystal Lake
Connie Fischer, Woodstock
Suzanne Kushner, Algonquin
Patti Prochaska, McHenry
Kelly Boho, Woodstock
Jean Graf-Teterycz, Woodstock
Jeffrey and Jessica Miller, Crystal Lake
Lloyd Everard, Crystal Lake
Danny Giffin, Crystal Lake
Joshua Kraus, Chicago
Janet Sahm, North Barrington
Thank you!

Styrofoam Collection Sites
WE ARE OPEN!!!!!
Village of Algonquin
110 Meyer Drive
Algonquin Public Works ~ Open 24-7

Algonquin Township Road District
3702 US HWY 14
Open 7 AM to 3 PM ~ Mon. - Fri.

City of Woodstock
Public Works
326 Washington Street ~ 7:30 AM to 3 PM

Qualified Charitable Distribution
When you reach age 70 ½, you may take a distribution from your IRA account and choose to donate your distribution, or a portion of it, directly to a charitable organization like the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, and avoid paying taxes on the funds donated. You can request that your distribution be made directly to Environmental Defenders, 110 S. Johnson Street, Suite 106, Woodstock, IL 60098. Be certain to request your gift be identified with your name and address and your intention to use it as a 2020 IRA QCD.

One of the easiest ways to donate to The Environmental Defenders is by contributing to EarthShare in your workplace charity campaign. Talk with your employer or contact us at 815-338-0393.
JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!
please circle level:

Supporting ($250)  Patron ($100)  Family/Basic ($50)
Young Professional ($30)  Student ($15)  Senior ($30)

Name ____________________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________________
City, State & Zip ___________________________________________________________________
E-mail __________________________________ Phone _________________________________
Total contribution: $__________________________

Please mail to Environmental Defenders of McHenry County 110 S. Johnson Street, Suite 106, Woodstock, IL 60098.
Checks payable to EDMC. If COVID-19 has impacted your ability to renew or join, please write us - envirotefmc@gmail.com.

MAKE IT A GIFT for $25*
*If this is a gift, please complete the above for recipient and print your name & email address here:

Name ____________________________________________________________
Email ____________________________________________________________________

Please visit Hyperstitch at https://tinyurl.com/givedefenders for Defenders' shirts, bags, caps, face masks and more.
WEAR YOUR SUPPORT!