

INDIAN CREEK NEWSLETTER

August 2019

On the web at <http://www.indiancreeksubdivision.org>

Contact us by email at indiancreeknews@hotmail.com

Ecology Action Center Selected as Grassroots Educator for Illinois Solar for All

The Ecology Action Center (EAC) is excited to announce it is one of ten non-profit organizations across the state selected to serve as grassroots educators for the first round of Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA).

ILSFA is part of Illinois' larger Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) that took effect June 1, 2017. The FEJA legislation was designed to strengthen the Illinois economy and bolster the state's clean energy future through investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy. The ILSFA portion of the legislation is aimed at providing greater access to the clean energy economy for low-income and environmental justice communities.

A key provision in the program is grassroots education. Local community organizations understand the needs, motivations, and challenges of their communities and can more easily meet people where they are. The EAC wants to build on the success of its solar and energy efficiency initiatives to educate the community about solar basics and the benefits available through the ILSFA program.

The EAC is working with Habitat for Humanity, Western Avenue Community Center, Mid-Central Community Action, West Bloomington Revitalization Project, and the Normal Township to help reach and engage the households, non-profits, and public facilities in the McLean County area that are eligible for and can benefit from the ILSFA program. The EAC will launch its outreach campaign in August and will host presentations and open houses to ensure everyone that wants to participate in the ILSFA program has that opportunity.

The ILSFA program is designed to reduce barriers to participation in solar energy projects for low-income and environmental justice communities. Assistant Director Larissa Armstrong spoke optimistically about the impact of this program, "the Ecology Action Center is hopeful that McLean County can serve as a leader and an example of success for ILSFA program implementation. We are excited to continue to educate our local community on ways to reduce energy use, incorporate renewables where possible, and improve individual and community health in the process."



The Ecology Action Center is a not-for-profit environmental agency with a mission to inspire and assist local residents in creating, strengthening and preserving a healthy environment. The EAC acts as a central resource for environmental education, information, outreach, and technical assistance in McLean County.



Grow Solar Bloomington–Normal Reaches First Benchmark

McLean County, IL - The Grow Solar Bloomington-Normal group buy program is gaining momentum as it surpasses its first goal of 50 kilowatts (kW) with six properties going solar and more to come. This is the third bulk solar group-purchasing program, offered by the Ecology Action Center (EAC) and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA). The program provides McLean County property owners access to solar education, and StraightUp Solar (SUS), the vetted competitively selected local installer, offers solar at reduced prices through the duration of the program.

Prices decrease for all program participants when the program collectively reaches benchmarks of 50 kW and 150 kW, with a final reduction at 250 kW. Thanks to Casey Radliff and other Grow Solar Bloomington-Normal participants, the program reached its first benchmark of 50kW, lowering the cost even more.

One of the first Grow Solar BN participants to have their solar system installed, Ms. Chris Kaufman, said she went solar with this program because, "The values of the company [StraightUp Solar] are values that we really like and everybody who has been associated with the program clearly lives those values. We're very impressed."

During the program's Solar Power Hour presentations, EAC staff gives a brief explanation of the program, discusses the projected costs of installing solar and highlights the benefits of going solar, and a SUS representative provides a case study. Power Hours are held at the Children's Discovery Museum, Green Top Grocery, Bloomington Public Library, and the YWCA--participants may sign up for program pricing through the end of September. A complete schedule of the Solar Power Hours is listed at SolarBloomingtonNormal.com.

The discounts available through the Grow Solar Bloomington-Normal program, combined with the current federal and state incentives, make this year the ideal time to go solar.

The Ecology Action Center is a not-for-profit environmental agency with a mission to inspire and assist residents of McLean County in creating, strengthening and preserving a healthy environment. The EAC acts as a central resource for environmental education, information, outreach, and technical assistance in McLean County.



The MREA was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit shortly after the first Energy Fair in 1990. MREA's mission is to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living through education and demonstration. To learn more, call 715-592-6595 or visit www.midwestrenew.org.

Towanda Busy Bees 4H

The Towanda 4-H members will be showing their projects at the McLean County Fair Aug. 1-5th, 2019. A meeting will be later in the month to work on their year-in records. For more information, contact Scott Clement 309-275-5910 or Jeanie Wager 309-728-2852.



Towanda Fire News for August



It's August and that means it is school season! It is an important time to make sure your child is up to date on all of their immunizations. It is also good practice to go over what to do at school if there is ever an emergency, being prepared before drills are run will help ease the anxiety when they actually occur. Weather wise, don't let the month fool you, it is still very hot and humid out. Make sure you stay hydrated and if you are working outside to stay in the shade and to take breaks so you do not over exert yourself. Some warning signs of heat exhaustion are excessive sweating, nausea, fainting, and muscle cramping. If you are feeling these effects get out of the heat and hydrate. If they get worse, call 911 for it may turn into a heat stroke. As always stay safe while outdoors! The department ran 8 medical and 5 fire calls in the month of June.

Summer Lawn Watering

Please follow our recommended procedure for lawn watering based on your street address watering on odd/even days. Please also limit watering to 3-4 hours at a time. It is very important we do not overtax our water system during the summer months.

Operetta Performer from Indian Creek

Indian Creek's own John Hermann is performing in the Prairie Fire Theatre Operetta - H.M.S. Pinafore. on Aug. 1,2,3,4 at Community Players. This operetta is a romantic comedy performed in English.





Garden Tips

by Helen Leake

It is time to raise the mower blade to 3 - 3 1/2 inches. By leaving the grass blades longer, they will shade the soil more and help prevent the weed seeds from reaching the soil and germinate. Shading the soil will also help keep the roots cooler so the blades of grass won't go dormant from the summer heat so soon. Deep watering and not as often will encourage deeper roots and more drought resistant grass.

Harvest your vegetables regularly to encourage continuous production. Pick the cucumbers and zucchini when it is about 6-7 inches long for better flavor. Also, you will not have an overabundance of them.

Deadhead annuals and the repeat blooming perennials regularly so they will continue to bloom.

Top the water in your water garden if the level drops because of evaporation. Fertilize the trees and shrubs before July 15 for the last time so the new growth can harden off before winter. Often after you fertilize them, they will send up new growth.

Blossom end rot on tomatoes and peppers is usually caused by uneven watering. Placing mulch around the plant can help prevent it.

Give your sedum and mums their last clipping to shape them for fall now.

We have been talking a lot about the bees, butterflies, and birds being good pollinators, but we don't think about the special pollinator the bat. Bats are active during the evening and at night, so we don't think about them. As they draw nectar from a plant, they also pick up pollen and move it to another plant. Bats might not be your favorite, but they do a lot for us and our environment, we should do what we can to help them.

There are some false ideas out there about them. Actually, bats do not suck your blood out. They are not trying to get into your hair. They are flying low so they can get that insect before it bites you. In fact, each one can eat 600 insects in an hour. Rather than fear them, we should protect the bats and their habitat. They also do not attack humans. Less than 1/2 percent of the bats carry rabies, less than some animals.

Bats spend their evening flying around eating insects and pollinating flowers and fruit plants. Bananas and mangoes are 2 of the more than 300 species of fruit around the world that depend on the bats for pollination. The bats use trees for part of their life cycle, such as roosting, raising young or feeding. They prefer forests that are less dense and are home to a variety of native plants and insect species. Their favorite tree is the shagbark hickory for its daylight habitat.

You could put up bat houses for these incredible, necessary mammals.

The hot weather that we were having was just as hard on our containers of plants as it was on us. You might need to water daily and fertilize weekly. You can use the liquid fertilizer at 1/4 strength and fertilize while the soil is damp.

If you have some flowers that you want to dry, now is a good time to start. Leave a long stem when you cut them. Tie the stems together and hang them upside down in an airy location to dry. Do the same with the herbs.

There is a plea out that we need to plant more trees. We have lost millions of trees in the last few years to hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods. Also, cutting coffee trees so they can farm the land. Years ago the Dutch Elm disease killed a lot of trees and just recently the Emerald Ash borer killed millions of nice trees.

Trees do much more for us than provide shade and beauty. An acre of trees can absorb 6 tons of carbon dioxide and produce 4 tons of oxygen a year. That is why it is relaxing taking a walk thru the trees. It can reduce stress hormones, lower blood pressure and boost the immune system.

Trees can cut your heating costs 20-50 percent and cooling cost 30 percent by blocking the wind and providing shade. That also saves energy and reduces power plant emissions and cuts your fuel bill. Trees cool the air by casting shade and releasing water vapor. On a hot summer day, a willow tree can lose up to 5,000 gallons of water through its leaves.

Trees not only help humans, but they also provide food and shelter for birds and wildlife. Their roots help prevent erosion and they help filter the water.

Remember, every time that you plant trees, or shrub, you are helping the environment.

Fall Towanda Area Garage Sales

Towanda Area Garage Sales ~ Thursday-Saturday, **September 5-7. Friday, August 30 is the due date** for sale information to be held at the days/times of your choice. a) Sale location, b) Contact information (phone & email), c) Days and times of your sale (not necessary to have your sale each day), d) List of items (include as much as you like, in priority order, and depending on space available, items will be listed on the flyer and by category in the Pantagraph), and e) \$7 fee (for Pantagraph, ad flyers), checks payable to Gail Ann Briggs. Please, email sale information to rgbriggs@frontiernet.net (preferred) or Mail to Gail Ann Briggs, 112 Hunt St, Towanda, IL 61776. Email or call (728-2187) with questions. You'll get a response by email when I have your information. Anyone with items they particularly want to sell may want to take out an individual ad as well.

Towanda HCE

Towanda HCE would like to thank you for coming to the 2019 July 3rd Spaghetti Supper. The rain deluge for 45 minutes at the beginning of the supper prevented a few people from coming but we served around 200 people. We had some great deserts made by our HCE members and the Towanda 4-H Club parents, leaders and 4-Hers were wonderful in working at the supper.

We look forward to our 102nd year of HCE when we meet next on Monday, September 9th, 7:00 p.m. The program will be "A Matter of Balance and our Fact Find will be the "Study of Kenya Africa. For questions about Towanda HCE, contact Cindy Kelley, 309-824-4797. Come check us out for great life-long learning on interesting and important topics.

Library Announcements

Library Announcements and Program Updates for August:

Summer is winding down and we are getting ready to go back to school. Where did the summer go? Several of you have stopped in to see the new improvements. Our new shelving is here and we have more on the way. As you can see, we are excited to spread out. We will be painting, constructing new furniture, and shifting books around the library to utilize our new space. Our goal is to make the library as inclusive, inviting, comfortable, educational, informational, and cutting edge as possible.

Please contact the library or email me directly; director@towandalibrary.org if there is a particular book, movie, music cd, or audio book that you would like us to acquire. In between projects we are hoping to plan a few special events. We will keep you posted through the Indian Creek Newsletter, our website, and Facebook page. We will be launching a new website in 2019. While we anticipate it to be visually pleasing, it will also be highly functional and much more user friendly for our patrons. We will hold programs to navigate the new site once it goes live. We will offer programs in 2019 that will explore our new digital services and offerings.

Knitters and Crochet Group: We are happy to welcome Knitters and Crochet group every Tuesday afternoon. Come join us!

Towanda Reads Book Discussion Group: We are reading "Educated" by Tara Westover. Copies are available at the library. All are welcome to join us to discuss this title at 5pm on Tuesday August 13th. For more information about this month's title: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvYg_gp0JPc

Looking Ahead:

Pre-School Story Time: Story Time with Miss Holly will return Wednesday September 4th at 10:30

Read to Dogs: Read to Dogs will return Tuesday September 17th at 5:30. The fall program dates are September 7th, 24th, October 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and November 5th, 12th, 19th. Please call the library to schedule your child's 15 minute "Reading Reservation" 309-728-2176.

Pet Patrol

Reminder to clean up after your pet whether you walk it in one of the common areas, along the trail, or along the road. Many people take family walks as the days grow longer and children can pick up the *strangest* things. Also, the main common area is used to play soccer, baseball, frisbee throwing, etc. A clean place to play is beneficial to all! Thank you!

Community

Unit 5

Friday August 16 - 1st day of student attendance – full day

Wednesday, August 28 – 1-hr Late Start

Please provide information about your organization: contact name, phone number, email address, usual meeting day, time and location and any other pertinent description of your organization to: clerk@villageof towanda.org so the village website <https://www.villageoftowanda.org/organizations/> can be updated. Thank you for your help!!

Classified

Businesses:

**John Hermann**

Financial Professional Associate
Greater Illinois Financial Group

Prudential Advisors

1907 Jumer Drive, Suite D, Bloomington, IL 61704
Tel 309 808-5212 Fax 309 808-5230 Cell 309 287-5972
john.hermann@prudential.com

Pampered Chef features cooking shows, catalog parties, freezer meal workshops, bridal showers & fundraisers!

Contact your local Indian Creek consultant for these events.

Annette Hancock

7 Bent Tree Lane

Call Home - 728-2990

Text or call- 242-1802

Email - oldcars@frontiernet.net

Website - www.pamperedchef.com/pws/annettehancock

Pinterest - www.pinterest.com/ahancock0935



For Hire:

Need someone to take care of your pet while you are away, call Bailee Harmon at (309) 530-5360. I have experience with animals at the Humane Society and have been petting sitting for two years. References provided upon request.

Brenna Schwamberger is available for babysitting. She will be a sophomore next year at NCHS and has completed her Red Cross Babysitting class. You can contact her at 728-2857 (h) or (309) 824-1410 (c).

Are you looking for someone to take care of your pets or children? Do you need someone to do housework or cleaning so weekends can be spent relaxing? Call me, Aubrey Thomas, and I will help you out. I will be a freshman at NCHS in the fall. I love animals of all kinds. I have completed the Safe Sitter course and will make sure I watch your children carefully. Mother makes sure I get plenty of opportunities to practice my cleaning skills. I can be reached at 309-728-2246 (home) or (309) 532-7466. Reasonable rates.