



Farmland Forever Gauger Family Preserves Their Farm in Richmond

Gary and Ginger Gauger on the porch of the house they grew up in.

Siblings Ginger and Gary Gauger grew up on the farm first purchased by their grandparents, Henry and Mabel Gauger in 1923. "Grandpa was a dairy farmer. He retired around 1960," recalls their grandson Gary. "My grandparents never used chemicals on their land."

Today, Gary continues farming the land that's been in the family for more than 100 years. Located along Highway 173 east of the village of Richmond, Gary continues working the land, producing healthy, nutrient-rich, chemical-free vegetables for the community. Gary and sister Ginger each inherited the farm and own side-by-side parcels. Gary grows on both farms and sells produce from a roadside stand. "We used to do a

McHenry County folks might remember Ginger Blossom, a store that specialized in imported goods. The business is now closed, but Ginger continues to live in the house where she grew up, along with her pack of Belgian Shepherds. It was Ginger's idea to look into preserving the farm. Both she and Gary attended The Land



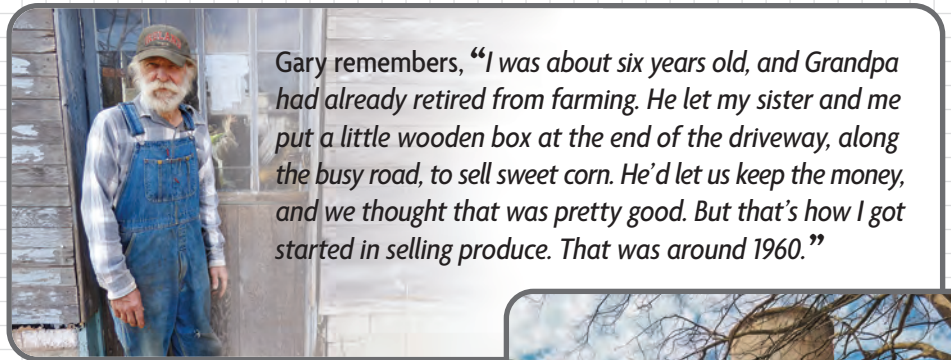
A photo of Ginger Gauger's farmland.



The Gaugers' father and grandfather threshing oats at the farm, circa 1960.

conservation easement prevents the land from being developed, and it runs with the title. One hundred years from now, the land may no longer be owned by a Gauger, but it will be farmland forever.

Gary and Sue's Natural Farm Stand is located at 3206 Illinois Highway 173, Richmond, IL.



Gary remembers, "I was about six years old, and Grandpa had already retired from farming. He let my sister and me put a little wooden box at the end of the driveway, along the busy road, to sell sweet corn. He'd let us keep the money, and we thought that was pretty good. But that's how I got started in selling produce. That was around 1960."

Conservancy of McHenry County's (TLC's) Preserving the Family Farm seminar in 2023 to learn how conservation easements work. They had been talking about preserving their farmland for a long time, and got the process started with TLC.

Ginger and Gary decided to place a conservation easement on each of their inherited pieces of the farm. "It's our legacy," as Ginger tells it. Their love for the land and family runs deep. The conservation



Gary Gauger at his farmstand.

lot more", relates Gary's wife, Sue. "I was in charge of the farmers markets, but it got to be too much. Now we sell from right here on the farm. We have a U-Pick too and it's been doing really well!"



TLC Hosts Native Plant Sale in Woodstock

Shop for native plants, trees, shrubs, TLC gear, and locally grown vegetables and herbs! Current TLC members receive a 10% discount. Knowledgeable staff will be on hand to answer your plant questions.

Date/Time: Friday and Saturday, May 16-17, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Location: McHenry County Fairgrounds, 1900 Country Club Rd, Woodstock, IL.



News and Notes

from our Executive Director, *Lisa Haderlein*

How are you doing? I hope you have been getting outside in this nice weather, finding time to enjoy some beautiful spring days!

There are lots of things that happen every day that we have no control over, which is why I love the rhythm of nature through the seasons in the Midwest. Spring follows Winter. Summer follows Spring. Bloodroot and Prairie Smoke bloom in April, Wild Geranium in May.

The predictability is comforting for me.

That's one of the things I like about the work TLC does - it helps ensure that even as the years pass, technology advances, and fashions change, some really good things will continue forever. The Gauger Farms will continue to be available for growing healthy, whole, natural produce for local residents because Gary and Ginger decided that is what they want for the land that they inherited, and TLC was here to help them make that vision a reality. The Wolf Oak Woods Preserve will provide habitat for redheaded woodpeckers, and Boloria Meadows Nature Preserve will be a haven for many types of butterflies for generations to come because the local community - members like you - helped TLC preserve and restore these areas.

Thank you for working with TLC to make sure our community will always include farms for growing food, natural areas to provide habitat for many species, and undeveloped lands where people can find comfort and joy during all seasons of the year.

I hope to see you at one (or more) of the upcoming TLC events!

The Land Conservancy of McHenry County

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ConserveMC.org

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Summer Native Tree & Shrub Sale

Order your native trees and shrubs for pickup in Spring Grove, IL. Bring beauty and function to your yard while also supporting local wildlife and TLC! Current members receive a 10% discount.

Order Dates: Place your order at ConserveMC.org from May 16–June 23

Order Pickup: Pick up your order on June 27 from 10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m. (*The nursery cannot accommodate pickup outside of these hours*) at Majestic Oaks Nursery in Spring Grove. The address will be provided upon order confirmation.



A quick, easy tip to make your home more Earth friendly

Karen Lavin, TLC Board Member—lawdog57@hotmail.com

I'm going to talk about 'reuse' today, and I'd like to thank Donna V. for sending me ideas for reducing the use of plastic. Instead of using a new sandwich bag each time, she reuses empty bread bags. She also reuses the wax bags from cereal boxes or cracker boxes instead of new plastic. She can make one roll of plastic wrap last months with these simple tips.

I came across some imaginative ideas for reusing items in the April 2025 issue of Real Simple magazine. Some of their ideas include using:

- Tension rods to keep baking sheet cabinets organized
- A fitted twin sheet for a picnic tablecloth
- A toothpick to tuck under the end of a roll of tape so you can dispense it easily
- An old pillowcase for dusting fan blades
- An empty tissue box to hold plastic bags
- A coffee filter to clean glass
- A wine bottle filled with water and placed upside down in plant pots for watering when you are going out of town.

Before you throw something away that will end up in a landfill, look around and use your imagination. You may very well find a way to reuse the item!

Welcome New Members!

Judith Baker | Cary
Michael Bazan | St. Charles
Marin DeNicolo Hann | Bull Valley
Dana Garretson | Crystal Lake
Lake County Forest Preserves | Libertyville
Barbara Lewandowski | McHenry
Jill Luesing | Woodstock
Robert Lukes | Woodstock
Dave McCarter | Marengo
Sharon McLoughlin | Capron
Patrick and Peg O'Brien | Bull Valley
William Pankey | Port Barrington
Lindsey Petitt | Huntley
Stacy Pratt | Crystal Lake
Samantha Provenzano | Woodstock
Kati Rowe | Woodstock
Allison Wolcott | Crystal Lake

Are You a Member?

Scan this QR code with your phone to become a member of TLC or renew your membership today. Thank you for preserving land for life in McHenry County!



Preserving Oaks for Life

Trees are working for us every day, cleaning pollution out of the air, providing shade on a hot day, and reducing local flooding by slowing rainfall. Trees absorb carbon dioxide (CO2) and release oxygen (O), which we need to live. They store the carbon (C) in their trunks, branches, and roots, where it is held for the life of the trees.

As we grapple with the effects of a changing climate, trees are one of the best allies humans have to slow the buildup of CO2 in the atmosphere, and all we have to do is allow them to live out their natural lives.

In McHenry County, the dominant trees historically were oaks, which can live for hundreds of years, storing tons of carbon during their lifetimes. But, sadly, McHenry County loses more oaks to neglect, development and clearing for agriculture than we preserve each year.

What if there were a way to reverse this trend, and start to save more oak woodlands than we lose?

In 2022, the Land Conservancy of McHenry County partnered with City Forest Credits (CFC), a nonprofit carbon registry, to develop carbon credits tied to the preservation of 80 acres of oak woodlands in McHenry County. CFC's program targets preservation of forests in urban areas where the forests are most at risk of being cut down.

Each carbon credit is equal to one metric ton of carbon being stored in a forest over a 40-year timeframe. The credits are held in an online registry, and made available for sale through various carbon markets. These credits are available for purchase by businesses and individuals who want to offset their carbon emissions and support a local land trust preserving local forests.

TLC recently completed two sales: to an individual and to Chicago Events Management (CEM operates the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, the Bank of America Chicago 13.1, and the Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle).

Carbon credits can help preserve oak woodlands in McHenry County.



CEM was attracted to TLC credits as a way to help offset the carbon emissions of athletes participating in their events and invest those dollars for the benefit of local residents.

These sales will result in more than \$200,000 that TLC will invest directly in maintenance of local forests, improving access to the properties for recreation, and making sure we are able to manage these woodlands forever. The carbon credit sale agreement requires TLC to take care of those oak woods for 40 years keeping the trees healthy, providing habitat for birds and mammals, cleaning pollutants from the air, and storing carbon.

City Forest Credits is the national standard for greenhouse gas emission reduction and removal for tree projects in urban areas. Developed by leading scientists, industry, and urban forest professionals, the Standard and Protocols define the set of rules and requirements that tree planting or preservation projects must follow in order to earn third-party verified carbon credits.

Do you have at least 15 acres of oaks, and would you like to explore whether carbon credits are a good fit for your property? Are you a local business or individual interested in supporting local land conservation and offsetting your carbon footprint? Then give Lisa a call at 815-337-9502 x103.

"A Shared Plate" Garden Planting

Help plant the first gardens in the new raised beds at TLC's Community Food Forest! This year we will be highlighting culinary plants from different cultures and will hear about the significance of those plants. After we finish planting, stay for light refreshments and fellowship.

Date/Time: Wednesday, May 21, 5:30–7:00 p.m.
Rain date May 28.

Location: Apple Creek Food Forest,
3210 Dean Street, Woodstock

Fee: Free, please register by May 19 at ConserveMC.org



Tree and Shrub Identification Walk

Learn how to identify common native trees and shrubs common to our area. The class will be outside, so dress for the weather. Registration is required.

Date/Time: Friday, June 6, 10–11:30 a.m.

Location: Ryders Woods, 750 Kimball Avenue,
Woodstock

Fee: \$10/person, please register by June 3 at
ConserveMC.org



Join the Homegrown National Park Movement

Want to become a biodiversity hero? Learn how planting natives and removing invasive species can make you a part of the Homegrown National Park movement. Come learn about this nationwide call-to-action with a short film, "What's the Rush?" by renowned conservationist Doug Tallamy, followed by a presentation and Q & A with local pollinator experts from the Boone-Dutch Creeks Watershed Alliance.

A number of area libraries are showing the film during **Pollinator Week, June 16-22**. All week long there are also outdoor events and celebrations where you can learn more about our native landscape and how it supports pollinators that are in peril and need your help. **Scan the QR code to see the list of Pollinator Week events!**



Boloria Meadows Nature Walk

Join us for a family-friendly butterfly and pollinator walk at the beautiful Boloria Meadows Nature Preserve in Bull Valley. The preserve contains nearly 60 acres of high-quality restored wetlands, prairies, and oak woodlands. With over 150 species of wildflowers, Boloria is a haven for over 30 species of native butterflies as well as many species of bees and other pollinators. One unusual butterfly species that should be abundant in June is the Baltimore Checkerspot that uses the Turtlehead flower as its host plant. The walk will cover roughly one mile of gently rolling terrain.

Date/Time: Saturday, June 21, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

Location: Street parking at 7219 Millburne Court, Bull Valley

Fee: Free, please register by June 20 by Noon at ConserveMC.org



Howl at the Wolf Oak: Summer Solstice Edition!

S'mores around a bonfire, food, a guided evening hike, and family nature activities! Come spend an evening enjoying the company of a 300-plus year-old oak tree and learn more about the history of this interesting site that has been preserved for life by TLC. It's a great way to meet like-minded nature folks in the county!

Date/Time: Friday, June 20, 6–8:00 p.m.

Location: Wolf Oak Woods, 8930 IL-120, Woodstock

Fee: Free, please register at ConserveMC.org



Women's Learning Circle

Women farmers and farmland owners are invited to join other women to share ideas, stories, and expertise on how to manage the land you love. This Learning Circle will focus on cut flower production, native flower and shrub integration, high tunnels and more!

Date/Time: Tuesday, June 17, 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Location: Teshuva Fields Flower Farm, 624 Leonard Ave., Crystal Lake

Fee: \$5/person, please register at ConserveMC.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Event dates and times are subject to change. If you are new to TLC workdays or it's been a while, please be sure to fill out a volunteer form online at www.conservemc.org/volunteer before you attend so you can receive updates or cancellations.

May 3: Irish Oaks Nature Preserve restoration workday. 19019 Lincoln Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 5: Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday. 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 7: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 9: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 14: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 16–17: *TLC's Native Plant Sale and Plant Pickup* McHenry County Fairgrounds, 1900 Country Club Rd, Woodstock. 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

May 19: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. and 1:00–3:00 p.m.

May 19: Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday. 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 21: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 21: *"A Shared Plate" Garden Planting* Apple Creek Food Forest, 3210 Dean St. Woodstock. Free, register at ConserveMC.org 5:30-7:00 p.m.

May 28: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

May 28: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 1:00–3:00 p.m.

May 30: *Pollinator Garden Planting at Thompson Road Preserve*, 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. and 1:00–3:00 p.m.

May 31: *Pollinator Garden Planting at Thompson Road Preserve*, 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. and 1:00–3:00 p.m.

June 2: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 1:00–3:00 p.m.

June 2: Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday. 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 4: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 6: *Tree and Shrub Identification* Ryders Woods, 750 Kimball Ave. Woodstock. \$10/person, please register at ConserveMC.org 10:00–11:30 a.m.

June 6: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 7: Irish Oaks Nature Preserve restoration workday. 19019 Lincoln Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 10: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 1:00–3:00 p.m.

June 11: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 17: *Learning Circle for Women Farmland Owners* 624 Leonard Ave., Crystal Lake. \$5/person, please register at ConserveMC.org 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

June 18: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 20: *Howl at the Wolf Oak: Summer Solstice Edition!* Wolf Oak Woods, 8930 IL-120, Woodstock. Free, please register at ConserveMC.org 6:00–8:00 p.m.

June 21: *Boloria Meadows Nature Walk* 7219 Millburne Ct. Bull Valley. Free, please register at ConserveMC.org 10:00–11:30 a.m.

June 23: Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday. 9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 25: Crowley Oaks restoration workday. 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard. 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 27: Apple Creek Food Forest workday. 3210 Dean St., Woodstock. 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

June 27: *Summer Native Tree and Shrub Pickup* Majestic Oaks Nursery in Spring Grove, 10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.

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The Land Conservancy of McHenry County

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