

## SHARING SEED

Imagine moving into a new home, and a neighbor stops by with a grocery bag full of prairie seed.

Welcome to Alden Township in 1993. You've just met George Johnson!



George Johnson (center) at the 2024 Seed Sharing Day.



Members of the community gather for Seed Sharing Day.

One neighbor at a time, George built a tight-knit community of people who helped each other restore their properties. They shared seed from native plants, taught each other how to identify and remove non-native plants like buckthorn, and helped each other burn their land.

A 2006 *Chicago Wilderness* magazine article dubbed them "The Seed Sharers." The group was managing over 400 acres of natural land – all of it privately owned.

About that time, the Seed Sharers decided they wanted to spread the wealth, and offered to open their properties to others who needed seed for their own restorations.

George enlisted TLC to help. TLC invited members and other residents out to Alden Township for a one-day event called Seed Sharing Day.



Participants gather seed at an assigned site.

### Here's how it works:

- ▶ Participants gather at a central location (someone's home) where they drop off any seed they have to share and also food for the potluck lunch that happens when everyone returns from their seed hunt.
- ▶ Each attendee is assigned to a private property and is given directions to get there. Once at their site, a guide helps them identify the native plants whose seed they will collect for their own restoration project. Most people collect for an hour and a half or two hours. There are usually 3-5 collectors at each site.
- ▶ Folks are encouraged to return to the starting place to have lunch and browse the many bags of native seed that attendees have brought along with them to share. Guides are there to help with species selection to help make sure the plants chosen are right for their site.
- ▶ Once everyone returns, there is usually a short presentation on a topic of general interest, like: how to prepare your seed for sowing, best ways to prepare your site for the native seed, or information about new invasive plants to look out for.

Over the years, hundreds of people have collected seed in Alden Township that they used

to help restore their own properties. There are new people every year, and some folks who return year after year as their own restoration project expands.

Thirty-two years after George started sharing native seeds with his neighbors, Seed Sharing Day is an institution, held the third Saturday of October. (And George is still going strong at 100!)

There's still plenty of seed to share. Come see what it's all about!

### Seed collecting tips:

- ▶ Bring garden clippers and wear gloves.
- ▶ Bring sturdy paper bags for the seed. Birdseed bags work great too, and they don't tear. If you want to keep different species separate, paper lunch bags are useful.
- ▶ Proper etiquette is to take no more than about 1/3 of the seed from any species of plant. That helps ensure that there is still plenty of seed for wildlife and also for natural reseeding.
- ▶ Make sure to stop back at the gathering place when you are done collecting so you can browse the extensive amount of seed that other people brought to share from their own yards and that you can use in your own.

## Seed Sharing Day

Open to TLC members and their guests, Seed Sharing Day is an annual event organized by TLC and hosted by a number of landowners. This is an opportunity for people to collect and share native seed for their prairie, savannas and wet habitats. Beginners are encouraged to join landowners to collect native plant seed at an assigned site. An area of pre-collected, labeled seed will also be available with people there to help you choose the right species for your needs. If you have it, bring your own labeled seed to share. If not, that's ok too! Stay for the delicious potluck lunch and informal discussion about how to use your seed.

**Date/Time:** Saturday, Oct. 18, 9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Alden/Harvard Area. Registered participants will be emailed a location before the event.

**Fee:** Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org)



Bags of native seed are ready for sharing.



## News and Notes

from our Executive Director, *Lisa Haderlein*

Is it just me, or has summer flown by this year? I hope you enjoy these final weeks before the Autumnal Equinox on September 22.

I have some great news: **Mark your calendar for the grand opening open house at Thompson Road**

**Preserve on Saturday, October 11!** We've been talking about this for three years, and it is so exciting to be able to actually have a date on the calendar.

Trails will be open, we'll have a map, guided hikes, a viewing platform for bird watching, a gorgeous pollinator garden (thanks to the Bull Valley Garden Club), and lots of opportunities for you to become involved in taking care of the site in the years to come, because there is still a lot to do!

Maybe you want to adopt the pollinator garden and weed it a couple of times a year? How about monitoring the bluebird trail to see who is using the houses and how many baby bluebirds hatch each year? Or helping to restore the 35 acre oak woods? You could even sponsor one of the prairies, a specific trail, or— if the price is right—name the preserve!

**I hope to see you there: 9707 Thompson Road, Bull Valley, 1-4:00 p.m.**

Thank you for making this project possible, I am so excited to share it with you next month!



Thompson Road Preserve

## Welcome New Members!

Jon Alspach | Woodstock  
 Sara Archacki | Spring Grove  
 Judith Beville | Crystal Lake  
 Mary Bishop | Woodstock  
 Gina Brankey | Geneva  
 Cecilia Browne | Woodstock  
 Amanda Cavazos | Marengo  
 Donna Ceisel | Crystal Lake  
 Aura Cimo | Richmond  
 Leo Daviero | Woodstock  
 Brian Donahue | McHenry  
 Sue Draffkorn | Wonder Lake  
 Rita Duffy | Woodstock  
 Linda Ecklund | Wonder Lake  
 Patricia Eriksen | Woodstock  
 Jane Falk | Woodstock  
 Deb Figura | Spring Grove  
 Edith Finsaadal | Woodstock  
 Miriam Fisher | Trout Valley  
 Anthony Friend | Algonquin  
 Brian Gates | McCullom Lake  
 Jim Haba | Marengo  
 Stephen Henning | Spring Grove  
 Melissa Killam | Crystal Lake  
 Sharon Kovar | Crystal Lake  
 David Lai | Algonquin  
 Eric Lanzl | Woodstock

Becky Long | Crystal Lake  
 Dan Mackaben | Crystal Lake  
 Cheri Magrini | Woodstock  
 Lauri Maguire | Crystal Lake  
 Lisa Maier | Marengo  
 Ana Maldonado-Tate | McHenry  
 Cathy McCauley | Lake Zurich  
 Margaret Miller | Lake in the Hills  
 Douglas Moore | Cary  
 Kandis Nissen | Spring Grove  
 Adrian Owen | Crystal Lake  
 Nancy Paczynski | Village of Lakewood  
 Tasha Marie Pinkley | Crystal Lake  
 Ruth Raubertas | Woodstock  
 Danielle Regan | Cary  
 Richard Rill | Crystal Lake  
 Emily Santos | Crystal Lake  
 Eva Saucedo | Algonquin  
 Eileen & Michael Scherer | Wonder Lake  
 Linda Siebrandt | McHenry  
 Erich Stefan | Crystal Lake  
 Carrie Turner | Cary  
 Mary Warskow | Fox River Grove  
 Katherine Weston | Algonquin  
 Aidan Woltman | Richmond

## 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!



## Learning Circle for Women Farmers and Farmland Owners

Learning Circles are events created for women farmers and farmland owners to join other women to share ideas, stories and expertise on how to manage the land you love. This Learning Circle will focus on topics such as: conservation easements, foraging, value-added products and more!

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, Sept. 16, 9:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** The Blue Farm, 9513 Reese Rd., Harvard, IL 60033

**Fee:** \$5/person. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org) or email Claire Hodge at [chodge@conservemc.org](mailto:chodge@conservemc.org) by Sept. 12.



## The Land Conservancy of McHenry County

P.O. Box 352, Woodstock, IL 60098  
815-337-9502

[ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org)

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## Conservation@Home Spotlight: Lisa Maier

# Small but Mighty in Marengo

### Backyard Habitat Supports Endangered Bee

In the movement to support our native pollinators and birds, will a ¼-acre yard really make a difference? Lisa Maier's yard in Marengo is confirming that yes, it absolutely will!

Growing up in Chicago, Lisa's connection to the natural world started years ago when caring for a sick family member. They spent a lot of time watching birds at a nearby bird feeder, and Lisa was hooked. Binoculars, field guides, and attending seminars sent her headfirst into the "bird world."

From first experiencing her original house finch "spark bird" at that backyard birdfeeder, she now has 722 bird species on her life list from around the world. For someone who is truly passionate about birds, an obvious next step is to start learning about the habitat that supports them. Cue the native plants and insects!

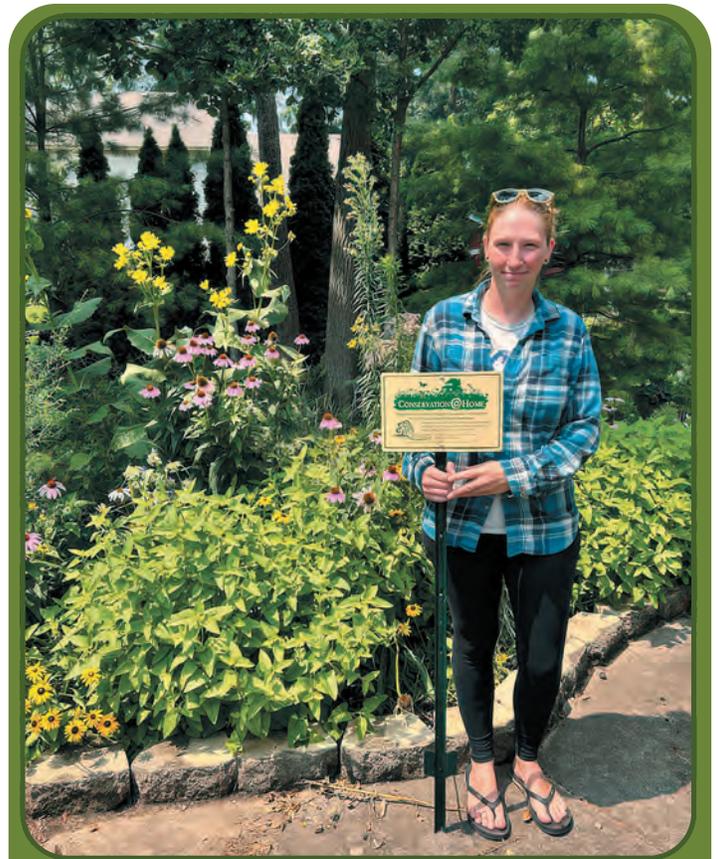
Through Doug Tallamy's writings and her involvement in various birding groups, Lisa became a backyard native plant enthusiast to provide everything a bird needs, from insects and seeds to shelter and water. Also an avid photographer, Lisa takes pictures every day in her ¼-acre yard in Marengo where she has lived for two years. Imagine her surprise at the end of July when she photographed a federally endangered rusty-patched bumblebee on two native

wildflowers in her yard, Culver's Root and Sweet Joe-Pye Weed. If you plant it, they will come!

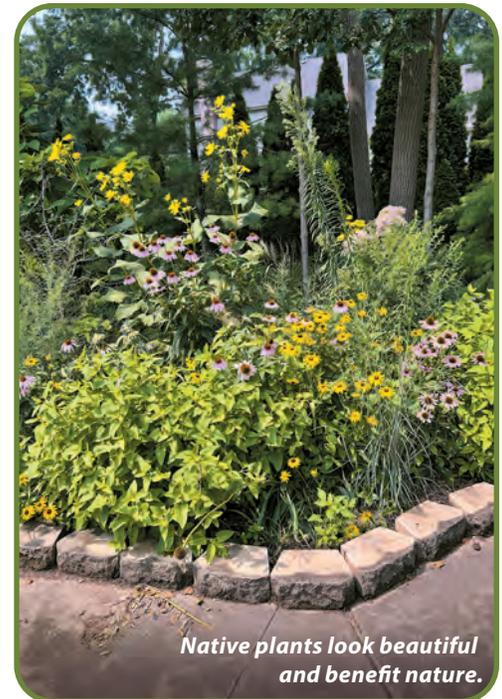
Lisa has surrounded her home with 70-plus species of native plants, trees and shrubs, so it's no surprise that she's supporting such rare insects as a federally endangered bumblebee. Not only are these plants benefitting the insects and 84 species of birds she's documented in her yard, but they also act as a sponge to absorb stormwater before moving into a nearby drainage easement.

At her **Conservation@Home** site consultation, she received instructions on how to remove a section of lawn to convert it to a partially sunny savanna from seed. She likes the personalized information she received at her consultation, and is hopeful to use the yard sign to encourage others to plant natives.

When asked what she would recommend to those just getting started in their native plant journey, she suggests starting simple and planting a native tree or shrub: "They provide so many benefits such as being the host plants for most moths and butterflies, add structure in the landscape, provide food, shelter and nesting habitat for birds and other animals, provide shade and wind protection, add winter interest ... the list goes on!"



*Lisa Maier stands with the Conservation@Home sign she hopes to use to encourage her neighbors to plant native plants.*



*Native plants look beautiful and benefit nature.*



*A rusty-patched bumblebee is drawn to the Culver's Root in Lisa's yard.*

## Feeling inspired by Lisa's story?

Visit [ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org) to learn more about ways in which TLC's **Conservation@Home** program can support you in your native plant journey. To learn more about birds and bees, you can read two of Lisa's favorites: *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America*, by David Allen Sibley and *Bees*, by Heather Holm.

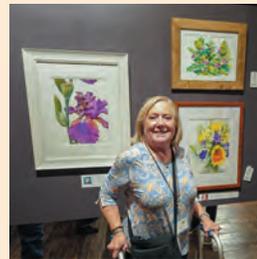
You can also order native plants, trees and shrubs at TLC's fall sale! In-person shopping is available September 12-13 in Woodstock, IL. TLC members receive a 10 percent discount, so become a member today if you're not already!



Experience exceptional artwork, beautiful photography, unique artisan items, friendship, fun and more, all in support of land preservation in McHenry County! Art of the Land is TLC's biggest event of the year, and all proceeds support land preservation in McHenry County.

**Get ready for:**

- ◆ Art and youth art that reflects the beauty of our local landscape
- ◆ Unique artisan items for purchase
- ◆ Nature photography and People's Choice photo contest voting
- ◆ Poetry on the spot by the Atrocious Poets
- ◆ Live music, appetizers included, cash bar
- ◆ And more! We look forward to seeing you there!



**Tickets are on sale now!**

\$15/person in advance, \$20/person at the door.  
Use the QR code to purchase tickets or go to [www.ArtoftheLand.org](http://www.ArtoftheLand.org)



**Date/Time:** Friday, Oct. 24 and Saturday, Oct. 25, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

**Location:** The Starline Factory, 306 W. Front St. Harvard, IL 60033



**Become a Sponsor!**

Your business can show your support for art and nature in McHenry County - become a sponsor today! Sponsorships range from \$250-1500. Visit [Artoftheland.org/#aotlsponsor](http://Artoftheland.org/#aotlsponsor) or contact Glenda at [gmaki@conserveinc.org](mailto:gmaki@conserveinc.org) for more information.

All proceeds from *Art of the Land* benefit land preservation in McHenry County.

**Thank You to our current sponsors!**



# SPECIAL EVENTS

## Fall Warblers Bird Walk at Crowley Oaks

Spotting fall warblers can be difficult, but with a little help, you can spot and identify even the most confusing of fall warblers. Join us at Crowley Oaks Woods in Harvard on a guided hike focused on this amazingly diverse group of birds as they migrate south to their wintering grounds.

**Date/Time:** Sunday, Sept. 7, 7–8:30 a.m.

**Location:** Crowley Oaks Woods,  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard, IL.

**Fee:** Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org)



## Help TLC Collect Native Seed for Restoration Three Dates • Three Locations • Sign up for one or all three!

**Registration Procedure:** [www.conserveMC.org](http://www.conserveMC.org)

Help TLC collect native seed to help restoration efforts for our 1,000 acres of natural areas across McHenry County! No experience necessary; we will help you learn the different seeds we want to collect. Bring gloves and water to drink (and paper bags & hand snips if you have them!). We recommend wearing closed-toe shoes with socks. Three organized events in Sept/Oct are planned (weather permitting); reach out to Daniel Pohl at [dpohl@conservemc.org](mailto:dpohl@conservemc.org) with any questions.

**Fee:** Free for all three dates. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](http://ConserveMC.org) (Or just show up if it's not raining.)

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, Sept. 17, 4–6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Boloria Meadows, 7219 Millburne Ct.,  
Bull Valley, IL.

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, Sept. 30, 1–3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Yonder Prairie, 1143 S Rose Farm Rd,  
Woodstock, IL.

**Date/Time:** Thursday, Oct. 9, 4–6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Wolf Oak Woods, 9100 IL-120,  
Bull Valley, IL.



## TLC's Fall Native Plant, Tree and Shrub Sale — Woodstock —

Fall is a great time to plant, with cooler temperatures and increased rainfall, which helps with care. The Native Plant Sale is a major fundraiser for TLC. You can help our local environment while also helping TLC.

**Date/Time:** Friday, Sept. 12 and Saturday, Sept. 13, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

**Shop & Order Pickup:** McHenry County Fairgrounds, 11900 Country Club Rd, Woodstock, IL

Thank You to  
our sponsors!



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## Autumn Equinox Forest Walk — with Cathy McCauley —

Join certified forest bathing guide Cathy McCauley for a sensory walk in celebration of the Autumnal Equinox. Through a series of gentle invitations, you'll be encouraged to slow down, engage your senses, and connect with the natural world as you explore the woods and the pond's edge. This relaxed walk unfolds at a slow, meditative pace, covering less than a mile. The walk will conclude with a small forest celebration featuring tea brewed from native plants harvested from a local garden.

**Date/Time:** Sunday, Sept. 21, 9–11:00 a.m.

**Location:** Hennen Conservation Area, 4622 Dean St., Woodstock, IL.

**Fee:** \$30 per person (max 15 people), please register through Cathy's website, Birdsong Nature Co. Visit [www.birdsongnatureco.com/events](http://www.birdsongnatureco.com/events) and select the event "Autumn Equinox", or email [cloudmccauley@gmail.com](mailto:cloudmccauley@gmail.com)

A portion of the proceeds from this walk will be donated to TLC.

## Battle Against Buckthorn and Its Buddies

Want some practical tips on how to rid your property of invasive tree species such as buckthorn and garlic mustard? Join Sarah Michehl, Community Ecologist with The Land Conservancy, to learn how to control these species. Native tree and shrub replacement recommendations will be covered, too!

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, Oct. 14, 6–7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Woodstock Public Library, 414 W Judd St, Woodstock, IL.

**Fee:** Free. Please register at [woodstockpubliclibrary.org](http://woodstockpubliclibrary.org) or call 815-338-0542.



## Beginner's Chainsaw Training

Want to learn how to chainsaw, but don't know how to get started? Join The Land Conservancy's Ecologist, Daniel Pohl, to learn the basics in a hands-on way.

Participants will be introduced to protective equipment, basic chainsaw maintenance, and the development of technique to safely fell a tree and cut it up. Participants are welcome to bring their own protective equipment such as leather gloves, safety glasses, earplugs and chaps, but we will have some for people to use during the class as well. This class is tailored to beginners who have never used a chainsaw. Please bring lunch and water.



**Date/Time:** Saturday, Sept. 27, 9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Hennen Conservation Area, 4622 Dean St, Woodstock, IL.

**Fee:** \$35 (TLC members); \$50 (non-TLC members). Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org)

## Fall Migrant Bird Walk at Hennen Conservation Area

Migrating birds are making their way south to their wintering grounds, but there are still plenty to be found! Learn to spot migrating birds such as raptors, warblers, sparrows, flycatcher, finches and more!

**Date/Time:** Sunday, Oct. 5, 7:30–9:00 a.m.

**Location:** Hennen Conservation Area, 4622 Dean St, Woodstock

**Fee:** Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.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](https://www.conservemc.org/volunteer) before you attend so you can receive updates or cancellations.

**Sept. 3:** Crowley Oaks restoration workday.  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 6:** Irish Oaks Nature Preserve Restoration Workday,  
19019 Lincoln Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 7:** *Fall Warblers Bird Walk*  
Crowley Oaks Woods, 18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org)  
7:00–8:30 a.m.

**Sept. 12 & 13:** *Fall Native Plant Sale in Woodstock*  
McHenry County Fairgrounds, 1900 Country Club Rd.  
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

**Sept. 15:** Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday.  
9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 16:** *Learning Circle for Women Farmland Owners*  
The Blue Farm, 9513 Reese Rd., Harvard.  
\$5/person, please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org)  
9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

**Sept. 16:** Apple Creek Food Forest workday,  
3210 Dean St., Woodstock.  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 17:** Crowley Oaks restoration workday.  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 17:** *Help TLC Collect Native Seed for Restoration!*  
Boloria Meadows, 7219 Millburne Ct., Bull Valley, IL,  
4:00–6:00 p.m.

**Sept. 21:** *Autumn Equinox Forest Walk with Cathy McCauley*  
Hennen Conservation Area, 4622 Dean St., Woodstock.  
\$30/person, register at [www.birdsongnatureco.com/events](https://www.birdsongnatureco.com/events)  
9:00–11:00 a.m.

**Sept. 25:** Apple Creek Food Forest workday,  
3210 Dean St., Woodstock.  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Sept. 27:** *Beginner's Chainsaw Training*  
4622 Dean St., Woodstock.  
\$35 TLC member, \$50 nonmember  
Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org).  
9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

**Sept. 30:** *Help TLC Collect Native Seed for Restoration!*  
Yonder Prairie, 1143 S. Rose Farm Rd., Woodstock.  
1:00–3:00 p.m.

**Oct. 1:** Crowley Oaks restoration workday.  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 4:** Irish Oaks Nature Preserve Restoration Workday,  
19019 Lincoln Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 5:** *Fall Migrant Bird Walk*  
Hennen Conservation Area, 4622 Dean St., Woodstock.  
Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org).  
7:30–9:00 a.m.

**Oct. 6:** Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday.  
9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

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

**Oct. 9:** *Help TLC Collect Native Seed for Restoration!*  
Wolf Oak Woods, 9100 IL 120, Bull Valley.  
4:00–6:00 p.m.

**Oct. 11:** Boloria Meadows Nature Preserve Restoration  
Workday, 7219 Millburne Ct., Bull Valley.  
10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

**Oct. 11:** *Thompson Road Preserve Grand Opening*  
Open House – 9707 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley.  
1:00–4:00 p.m.

**Oct. 14:** *Battle Against Buckthorn and Its Buddies*  
Woodstock Public Library, 414 Judd St., Woodstock.  
Free. Please register at [Woodstockpubliclibrary.org](https://www.woodstockpubliclibrary.org)  
6:00–7:30 p.m.

**Oct. 15:** Crowley Oaks restoration workday.  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 16:** Apple Creek Food Forest workday,  
3210 Dean St., Woodstock.  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 18:** *Seed Sharing Day*  
Open to TLC Members, Alden-Harvard area.  
Free. Please register at [ConserveMC.org](https://www.conservemc.org)  
9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

**Oct. 20:** Thompson Road Preserve restoration workday.  
9505 Thompson Rd., Bull Valley.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 23:** Apple Creek Food Forest workday,  
3210 Dean St., Woodstock.  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 24 & 25:** *Art of the Land at The Starline Factory*  
300 W. Front St., Harvard, IL.  
\$15/person in advance, \$20/person at the door.  
6:30–9:00 p.m.

**Oct. 29:** Crowley Oaks restoration workday.  
18725 Crowley Rd., Harvard.  
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Oct. 30:** Apple Creek Food Forest workday,  
3210 Dean St., Woodstock.  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

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The Land Conservancy of McHenry County

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