



Solar Washington Newsletter

SPRING 2008

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Silicon Energy Line In Test

The long-awaited Silicon Energy solar module production line is complete and in pre-production test.

According to Director of Operations Gary Shaver, the line will be used to produce a rugged, fully state of the art polycrystalline solar module-mount combination designed for ease of handling and integration with building structures. Basic raw materials include Washington silicon. Pilot production will begin in the next few weeks, and modules will become available to installers "late in '08". Shaver promised that additional details of the new modules will be announced in time for the June issue of *Solar Washington Newsletter*.

Solar PV Training Classes

A short-term 5-hour Solar Photovoltaic Designer Certificate course is being offered on a series of five week-end sessions by Shoreline Community College this summer, from July 11 through August 9. The summer session was added following a spring session because of the "overwhelming" interest in the subject. Taught by faculty member and Solar Washington Board member Mike Nelson, the course will train students to specify and/or install solar panel systems for residences and buildings, and prepare for certification through the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCAP).

For information: Shoreline CC, Tel. 206-546-5876.

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A Solar City!



Seattle has been selected as a Solar America City and will join 11 other U.S. cities to share in up to 2.4 million dollars to advance solar energy, according to a March 28 announcement by Energy Secretary Samuel W. Bodman.

The cities were chosen for their commitment to overcoming barriers and support for additional infrastructure for solar energy technologies, as part of the President's Solar America Initiative (SAI). The Department of Energy will also provide expert assistance in urban planning and developing favorable zoning regulations, building codes and financing plans.

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels announced that the city will match the grant with \$200,000 in local funds to promote the development of a sustainable solar energy infrastructure. Among the area agencies taking part will be NW SEED (Sustainable Energy for Economic Development), directed by Solar Washington board member Leslie Moynihan.

Legislature Adjourns, Energy Bills Passed

The State Legislature adjourned its frenetic 60-day session March 16 after passing three bills related to renewable energy. Of 50 bills concerning broad energy and emissions-related issues introduced and re-introduced from the 2007 session, eight were passed. As of late March, five have been signed by the Governor.

Stand-out among the energy bills passed in the two-years of the 60th Legislature was the omnibus energy House Bill 1303, passed in 2007, providing for and funding diesel emissions reduction, air pollution control at ports and energy freedom and alternative fuels. Key measure signed by the Governor in 2008 was the Climate Action and Green Jobs Bill, HB 2815. Notable among the bills failing this year was HB 1032, establishing a sustainable energy trust. After passing the House, the bill died in Senate Rules Committee. The bill must be introduced anew in the next Legislature.

Events in the Near Future

April 15, 2008. Washington State Technology Summit. Host: Washington State Technology. Registration.: \$220. Meydenbauer Center, 11100 NE 6th St., Bellevue, WA. Information: www.watechcenter.org.

April 16 – 18, 2008. 3rd Annual Northwest Solar Expo 2008. Sponsor: Oregon Solar Energy Industry Association. Oregon Convention Center, Portland, OR. Free public workshops April 18 and 19. Information: www.nwsolarexpo.com

May 3 – 8, 2008. Solar 2008. Sponsor: American Solar Energy Society (ASES, Parent organization of Solar Washington). Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, CA 92108. Info: www.solar2008.org

May 4, 2008. 10 AM – 3 PM. West Seattle Sustainable Fair 2008. Sponsor: Sustainable West Seattle. Alaska Junction, California Ave. SW & SW Alaska St. Brian Allen, Secretary, 206-973-7374. Information: www.sustainablewestseattle.org.

May 21, 2008. Solar Seminar. Solar Power: Projects and Permitting. Sponsor: The Seminar Group. Content: Legal. Red Lion Inn, 1415 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101. Information: www.theseminargroup.net/

We're Solar Washington

Solar Washington is a chapter of the American Solar Energy Society. We're a private, not-for-profit association for people and organizations interested in solar power, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

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Next meeting: Please watch our website for the next meeting. We hope to see you then.

Solar PV Production Growth "Phenomenal"

Worldwide 2007 production of photovoltaic materials, including both polysilicon and the newer thin film types, increased by about 50 percent over 2006 and has maintained an average 48 percent increase each year since 2002, according to preliminary data cited by GreenforGood earlier this year.

Even though less efficient, thin film technology is expected to capture 20 percent of the market by 2010 because of the variety of flexible products into which the film can be formed.

The growth of the PV industry in China is astonishing. With 400 individual companies involved, China's share of the world market has leaped from about one percent in 2003 to more than 18 percent today. However, Germany still leads the world in the actual installation of PV systems. In 2006, Germany became the first country to install more than one gigawatt of PV systems in a single year, aided by a tariff of 49 cents per kilowatt-hour paid by the utilities.

In the United States, PV system installations increased by about 30 percent in 2006, driven largely by California and New Jersey with their strong state government programs and generous incentives. States adopting RPS standards and the tax credit of \$2000 under the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 contributed to a huge increase in the number of PV installations in 2007.

Installation of PV systems in Washington is expected to soar as modules made in Washington by Silicon Energy become available late this year, qualifying homeowners for a credit of as much as 54 cents per kilowatt-hr. of power produced, with an annual cap of \$2000. Reference: www.greenforgood.com/info

President's Column

Solar Washington President Pam Burton presents her final column with this Newsletter, alerting the membership to upcoming events, new business members, federal legislative alerts, the annual solar home tour and *Careers in Renewable Energy: Get a Green Energy Job*. The full column appears on the Solar Washington website at www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0803/Prez.pdf.

Burton is relinquishing her duties in order to devote more time to her business and personal life. The several years of vision and leadership that she has provided will be sorely missed.

Board Sets Mission, Goals and Action Plan

The Solar Washington Board of Directors has recently re-defined the SW mission:

- To promote solar and renewable energy through education.
- To participate in energy policy-making processes.
- To serve as an administrative and information resource for its sub-chapters and members,
- To support solar and other renewable energy demonstration projects.

The goal of the SW Board is to use the strength and interests of its all-volunteer members to maintain an active, organized and productive team.

Action plan for 2008 is to develop and maintain membership via our website and newsletter, survey our members' interests, coordinate the annual ASES Tour of Solar Homes, participate in local and regional events that align with our mission, and something new – to develop quarterly "webinars" on topics relevant to our local chapters and members.

The Solar Washington Board is excited and eager to put these plans into action, but SW member volunteers are also greatly needed. Please contact us if you would like to get involved. Go Solar!

Solar Washington's president writes her final column alerting the membership to upcoming events, new members, legislative alerts, and *Careers in Renewable Energy: Get a Green Energy Job*

Our president's column by Pamela Burton

Solar Washington Needs You, New Solar Business Members, Annual ASES Conference and Solar Tour



Annual ASES Conference

The ASES conference is taking place early this year on May 3 thru 8 in San Diego, CA. It is the premier technical conference for solar energy and energy efficiency professionals in the U.S. Speakers including Van Jones, a leading force behind the Green Cities Initiative and the Green Jobs Act, Edward Mazria, founder of Architecture 2030, Jigar Shah from Sun Edison and DOE's alternative vehicle program and Randy Udall, Dir. of Community Office for Resource Efficiency. Solar WA will be meeting with dozens of members of other state chapters for an all day caucus meeting. This is our annual opportunity to get together and share ideas about how to grow our chapters.

NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

Eric Thomas and Tricia DiBernardo are owners of Solar Epiphany. I meet Eric when he visited my home for the 2005 Solar WA tour with his young daughter, Nina Rose, in his arms. He told me that he was hoping to pursue a career change from the transportation field into the renewable energy field, with the goal of doing meaningful, fulfilling work. He attended Solar Energy International's Advanced PV Design and Installation program, worked with Chris Herman of Winter Sun Design and Puget Sound Solar, learning how to do sight evaluations, array sizing and shading studies using 3-D modeling for array placement and shading analysis.

He and his partner, Tricia DiBernardo, founded Solar Epiphany first and foremost out of their unrelenting desires for independence and sustainable, responsible employment. "We have had our "solar epiphany". We understand the value of clean, free energy and the potential impact on the world that harnessing this energy will have. We believe that a complete exodus from dirty to renewable energy is possible in this lifetime and we plan to facilitate it".

EARTHDAY AND BEYOND - SOLAR WASHINGTON IS THERE

With 300 exhibits and 150 visionary authors, leaders and educator the Green Festival is happening April 12 and 13 and Solar Washington will have a booth. Pick up a copy of the program at your local library or on the web at greenfestivals.org. We need your help staffing the booth at the festival and there will be a number of other events this spring where Solar WA's presence is being

requested. Please give Fred Mitchell 206-632-2140 a call if you can fill a 3 hour slot at the Green Festival other events happening on the weekends. Check out the website for listings.

FEDERAL TAX CREDITS

Federal incentives for solar, wind, geothermal, and other sustainable technologies are set to expire this December. That means these sustainable energy sectors, some of the most promising and strategically important industries in America, are at risk of losing Federal support - unless we act now. Renewables and energy efficiency are key components in powering green-collar jobs, promoting energy independence, and tackling climate change. At a time when fossil fuel costs continue to rise, the costs for renewable energy continue to fall. But legislation to extend these sustainable energy tax incentives (H.R. 5351) is currently stalled in the Senate and time is running out. The best way to break this stalemate is for grassroots supporters of renewables to stand together and take action. Contact your Senators; submit a brief letter to the editor of your local newspaper, one key point to highlight: failure to promptly extend renewable energy tax incentives puts 116,000 solar & wind industry jobs and \$19 billion in energy investment at risk. (ASES)

ANNUAL ASES SOLAR TOUR

Coming this fall, the annual solar tour will happen Saturday October 4. Please let me know if you have a home or business that features solar energy systems and/or green design that you would like to share with others. If you are an architect, builder or installer and have a project that you would like to have on the tour please talk with your client and let us know. We will post on the Solar Washington website the welcome letter that explains how the tour work and two forms that you will need to submit.

HOME SCHOOLERS

I had the opportunity to take a group of home schoolers on a tour of my home this winter. The children are studying solutions to global climate change so they quickly understood when I explained the basics of having a tight house so that the heat that is produced within or from our large south facing windows will stay in. They had lots of questions about the solar water heater and loved my electric car. The electric meter going backwards did not have the impact on them that it did their parents. I hear from college students everyday, looking for careers in the renewable industry. I am inspired by their interest and enthusiasm.

GREEN-COLLAR JOBS

A new book, *Careers in Renewable Energy: Get a Green Energy Job* by Gregory McNamee has just been published by PixyJack Press in Colorado. McNamee has evaluated the numerous, new career opportunities that are available in the renewable energy field for adults changing careers, high school, college, and post graduate students. "By evaluating them and writing this guide to the best of them, I hope to contribute to positive action that will lead us into a more environmentally responsible, sustainable way of living in the world."