

TRIVILLAGE ENERGY COMMITTEE 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

The committee's mission is to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency, and explore other ways to reduce carbon emissions among the town's residents, businesses, and in municipal affairs.

Several screenings of short films were offered at the Walpole Town Library in February and March 2008 including the showing of The Story of Stuff and Bill McDounough's Cradle to Cradle Design. We also hosted The Story of Stuff for a Senior lunch which had approximately 45 people attending.

A large amount of our time and energy was dedicated to putting on the Energy Fair on May 3 at the town hall. It was an excellent turn out with over 500 attendees and a fabulous success! Despite the cold and wet weather and a last minute move indoors, the mood throughout the day was energetic and upbeat. Forty seven exhibitors and vendors crowded into both floors of the Town Hall to display wiser-energy products and services. Fourteen local farmers provided local products to shoppers. Speakers shared information on positive solutions to our challenging energy future. Demonstrations showed ways to increase local self reliance in food, fuel, and clothing. Everyone enjoyed toe tapping folk music, and kids of all ages made "art from trash" and solar hot dog cookers, and learned to plant seeds. The Boy Scouts and Blackwatch Farm kept everyone supplied with free grass fed, organic beef hot dogs. High school bands battled, and contra dancers swung their new friends. The Petroleum Free Parade, though dampened, was unhampered by the nasty weather and great fun for participants and observers alike. Nine homeowners opened their homes to our Home Energy Tour and explained such features as passive solar heat, photovoltaic and micro-hydro electricity generation, use of on site and natural materials, and radiant floor heat. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses, exhibitors, and vendors, almost everyone went home with free CFL light bulbs and many attendees went home with better-energy items won in the massive penny auction.

This summer was spent meeting with representatives from other energy committees from Alstead, Acworth, Marlow, and Post Oil Solutions out of Brattleboro, VT. Members from these groups joined forces to share resources of time and energy to work in the areas of home weatherization and public transportation. A "Weatherize Your Home" workshop was put on in August at the Town Hall and work continues to determine the best way to support existing public transportation in our region while investigating the feasibility of its expansion.

Our Local Food Subgroup's mission is to decrease the huge quantity of fossil fuels used in producing and transporting food by growing more ourselves. On December 20th, TriVillage Energy sponsored a Holiday Farmers Market in the Town Hall with over 25 local farms in our area. It was well received and we hope to do another one next year. The food group will be offering a community garden at the Hooper Institute this spring which will have plots for individual gardeners and a larger plot for volunteers to grow food for the food shelf. A series of monthly discussions on garden planning, seed sharing, canning, preserving, root cellars, and other topics will begin this spring and carry on through the fall.

TriVillage Energy hopes to increase the resilience of our community as we face an uncertain energy future. Abundance need not be based on diminishing fossil fuels, and the transition to clean, renewable energy offers the prospect of more jobs, cleaner and healthier air, water, and soil, and a stronger, more self-sufficient community.

For information about any of TriVillage Energy's activities or to volunteer to help, contact Jill Robinson at info@trivillageenergy.org, Fritze Till at 445-5385, or Tara Sad at 756-4861.

Respectfully submitted,

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