



October 2021 Newsletter

Empowering Sustainable Communities

Local News

Interested in Solar Energy? SEEDS Can Help.



SEEDS offers a variety of supports for growing renewable energy sources, especially solar energy. As interest in renewable energy grows, people may not know where to begin or how to move from interested to actionable. SEEDS works with individuals, businesses and communities to bring education, connect people with resources, and celebrate the progress towards a sustainable future together.

Check out this [list of local contractors](#) as a starting point for your solar project. Additionally, SEEDS Food Circle

Leader and Solar Advocate Jack Barnett authors an ongoing blog, "[Solar Buyers Beware!](#)" offering information, advice and tips for your solar installations. Check out [Part 2](#), featuring advice on choosing the right contractor for your project so you can avoid scams and over-priced PV installations.

We love getting updates from our members on their solar installation projects, like this one from Ed Zygumt of Perennial Acres in Susquehanna County:

"Our 10 new shiny 405 watt solar panels went online today and are already tapping the clean energy from the sun. Added to our original panels installed in 2018, we now have a 7.5kw system. This will supply a large percentage of our electrical needs. Many thanks to Gordon for his expertise in helping me to acquire the solar components. And of course, to all the great folks at SEEDS who helped guide and encourage me along the way. I couldn't have done it without you. Here's a photo of our solar array. The new panels are the ones on the bottom row."



Contact SEEDS today for more information on how we can help you bring the power of the sun to your property at info@seedsgroup.net. SEEDS members receive a free energy assessment, find out more [here](#).

Back to School

An Evergreen Elementary Graduate Remembers her School

by Elizabeth Wasylyk

As a young student, among some of the first to attend Evergreen Elementary in Hamlin, PA, I remember always being in awe of the building. The school was created



from recycled materials, with low-flow plumbing, windows for plenty of natural light, and a geothermal system, tapping the heat of the earth for heating and cooling.

When I attended the school, all of the windows amazed me. Staring out the window was one of my favorite past times when I was bored. I loved the greenhouse, too. One of my fondest

memories were of planting marigolds in the greenhouse for our mothers for Mother's Day. There were always a variety of plants and the concept of the greenhouse just fascinated me- no other kids my age had a greenhouse at their school. I loved running around the big hallways, jumping around on the big multicolored dots on the floor. Everything was so open and bright. I used to get frustrated when washing my hands with the low-flow sinks. I could never get all the soap off my hands and they were left sticky. I never wanted to use more water than I had to. I now realize the low-flow sinks, although still frustrating, are a great way to conserve water and help the younger kids avoid leaving the water running all the time. Looking back on it now, I understand why there were so many windows and so much open space. It was perfect for natural lighting during the day. The use of the geothermal heating pump was very advanced for the time and it really worked great to provide a heating and cooling system for the building. I never felt too hot or too cold in any of the rooms in the school. I feel honored to have been part of something so new and advanced in our area as a young student, and that I had the chance to learn at such a beautiful school.

There are three ways we use Geothermal energy:

- One taps deep into reservoirs of hot water or steam that leak from fissures found in volcanic areas or where tectonic plates meet, using that hot water or steam to run turbines that will generate electricity. We do not have these reservoirs here in the east.
- Another way directly uses steam or hot water to heat buildings.
- The third way is the kind used in my school. It uses the constant 50 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit temperature of the earth by drilling wells or digging deep trenches and inserting a closed loop coil of piping that runs through a heat pump system.



Elizabeth Wasylyk is a Junior at Western Wayne High School, where she is a staff writer for the school's literary magazine and a National Honor Society member. Recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution Award, Elizabeth is currently enrolled in an Associate's Degree program in Business Studies at Lackawanna College and she also participates in the University of Success program through the University of Scranton. Elizabeth placed at last year's Envirothon.

Legislation Update

100% Renewable Energy Bill Introduced in Harrisburg

On Tuesday, September 21, 2001, [PennEnvironment](#) was joined by Rep. Rabb, Sen. Cappelletti and Sen. Muth at a press conference introducing the 100% Renewable Energy bill in Harrisburg. The #Go100PA initiative aims for 100% renewable energy for Pennsylvania by the year 2050. The [#Go100PA](#) website contains lots of information, including the details of the bill, projections of what this ambitious goal can do for Pennsylvania, and more about how you can get involved to support and promote it.



You can watch their [September 21st press conference](#) to hear about how we can come together to tackle the climate crisis. [Learn more](#) about how Pennsylvania can join 9 other states that have already passed similar policies. Follow the progress of Senate Bill 872 and House Bill 100 [here](#).

Pennsylvania has a long road ahead to achieve fully renewable energy sources. According to [this infographic](#) produced by the [U.S. Energy Information Association](#), as of 2020 our energy is primarily sourced from natural gas, which supplies 52% of the Commonwealth's energy consumption. This is followed by nuclear energy at 33%, coal at 9%, bio-mass and miscellaneous sources at 6%, wind at 1.7%, hydro sources at 1.5% and solar energy at just 0.1%.

Reach out to your State Representatives and Senators to let them know that:

- The Go100 PA initiative is important to you;
- You believe that 100% renewable energy by 2050 is both a necessary and doable goal;
- and you support the Legislation sponsored by Rep. Rabb, Sen. Cappelletti and Sen. Muth--Senate Bill 872 and House Bill 100.

Local News

A Plastic-Free Halloween

In August 2021, North Branch Friends hosted a webinar entitled, "Plastics, The Environment and Us," as part of their Quakers for Peace and Justice Series. Led by Danica Buchanan-Wollaston, founding member of [Pittsburghers Against Single Use Plastics](#) (PASUP), the two hour webinar presented a plethora of information about plastics, their abundance and dangers to our environment. You can watch the full presentation [here](#).

In light of this informationally robust, albeit frightening educational experience, we at SEEDS have been looking for actionable steps community members can take to reduce plastic use in our community. This October, we invite you to consider some plastic-free alternatives in celebrating Halloween.

This [blogpost from Treehugger.com](#) offers great ideas for plastic-free decorating, including scarecrows, mason jar lights and adding to ambiance with music. [This article](#) has more decoration ideas using upcycled materials.

Try different themes for your decorating to help get the environmentally-friendly creative juices flowing. A cemetery theme can use painted pieces of scrap wood, and those can be saved for future years. No wood? Try empty cereal boxes. A spider theme can frighten using common craft supplies; check out this [Instructable](#) for how to make a yarn spiderweb, or [this one for an indoor version](#). Use old jars and fill up with water and "specimens" from around the house to create a Mad Scientist Laboratory for another direction entirely, [this blog](#) has some pictures and ideas for that. And don't forget fall themes for environmentally friendly decorations, including bales of hay, corn stalks, gourdes or pumpkins from all available from local farm sources.



An internet search of "Plastic Free Halloween" or "Environmentally Friendly Halloween" will yield lots more results, or start your creative wheels turning. Send us

pictures at info@seedsgroup.net or tag SEEDS on Facebook or Instagram @SEEDSofNEPA and we will share your great, plastic free Halloween ideas!

Our Today's Main Ingredient podcast, which launched on the SEEDS website in mid-May, airs weekly on Sunday mornings on two Honesdale-based radio stations: WDNH (95.3 FM) at 7:05 a.m. and WYCY (105.3 FM) at 7:20 a.m, or you can also listen to the episodes straight from our website!

Visit <https://seedsgroup.net/blog/todaysmainingredient/> to listen, and while you're there be sure to get the recipes from each episode!

Our September episodes featured:



Sweet Corn - Our host [Mikki Uzupes](#) talks yummy sweet corn with [Matt Shaffer](#), owner/operator of [Matt's Farm Market](#) just off Rt590 east of Hamlin PA, and chef [Ben Cooper](#) from [Here & Now Brewing Company](#) on Main Street in Honesdale. Nutritionist [Carol Kneier](#) shares some of the health benefits of fresh sweet corn. As a whole grain, fresh corn is great to include in a balanced diet.



Herbs - [Gudrun Feigl](#), owner/operator of [Mount Pleasant Herbarry](#) in Maude Alley, on Main Street in Honesdale PA, and chef [Marcia Dunsmore](#) from the [Myrtle Avenue Bakeshop](#) in Hawley. Nutritionist [Carol Kneier](#) discusses the benefits of using culinary herbs to add flavors without the salt and sodium, plus some of the medicinal properties.



Cabbage - Organic farmer [Greg Swartz](#) of [Willow Wisp Organic Farm](#) in Damascus PA, and foodie [Lori Fogg](#) who writes the Pennsylvania-based food blog [A Coal Cracker in the Kitchen](#). Nutritionist [Carol Kneier](#) shares the surprising health benefits of eating cabbage (hint: really low calories).



Beets - Farmer [Liz Krug](#) of [Fuller's Overlook Farm](#) in Waverly PA, and chef [Joe Infante](#) from [Tick Tocks on Terrace](#) in Honesdale PA. Nutritionist [Carol Kneier](#) adds some of the nutritional benefits of eating vibrant and colorful beets, both greens and root.

Is your mouth watering for all those locally, sustainably grown ingredients? The Cooperaage Project provides this thorough [map of local farms and farmers' markets](#) to augment your summer food shopping.

Local News

SEEDS Annual Meeting Held Via Zoom September 29

SEEDS held its Annual Meeting via Zoom the evening of Wednesday, September 29. SEEDS Chair Kathy Dodge hosted the meeting, which featured election of board members and officers, reports including Treasurer, Executive Director and Circle reports, and presentations by the teams of participants in the Earth to Sky program.

After a vote to approve the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes, Chair Kathy Dodge thanked outgoing Treasurer Allaina Propst, now a Board Member-at-large, and welcomed Nancy DeYoung, who was appointed as new SEEDS Treasurer last month and was and has now been elected to a full term; Nancy works at the Chamber of the Northern Poconos and is a former SEEDS board member. Kayleigh Cornell, Sixth grade science teacher and former AmeriCorps volunteer with SEEDS, became the new Secretary, replacing Jane Bollinger, who Kathy noted has done a wonderful job of Secretary and to whom she expressed great thanks. Also elected Wednesday evening was Board Member At Large Jocelyn Cramer, who has also been involved with SEEDS for many years including serving as our first Executive Director and who also currently serves as a Wayne County Commissioner.

The Treasury Report noted that the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted fundraising activities, such as the End of Year Campaign which raised \$15,000, down slightly from previous year; Swapalooza canceled, which typically raises \$4,000. 'Raise the Rent' on-line auction raised 3 months rent, and despite the challenges, SEEDS continues to grow, with \$3,542.00 SBA Paycheck Protection Program Round 2; \$2,500 PPL sustaining

grant; and \$2,000 Honesdale National Bank Foundation grant. The Investment Circle was established with a \$10,000 donation to maintain scholarship in memory of Michael (Jake) Burkhardt. The budget report for 2021 was \$43,314, and the Treasurer Reported explained that expenses are primarily payroll and rent, and this year included providing maternity leave with partial payment to Executive Director as well as hiring a part-time hourly Outreach Assistant. The bank balance as of September 3, 2021 was \$55,660.

The Governance Circle, which includes Jack Barnett, Kathy Dodge, Sue Currier, and led by David Ford, reported making significant progress this year, strengthening the governance framework for the organization, hiring a new staff member, and addressing strategic plan items.

The Food Circle, which includes Jane Bollinger, Jenna Mauder, Kim Emmet and led by Jack Barnett, reported 27 episodes of the podcast "Today's Main Ingredient," which launched in 2021. Each 15 minute episode features a locally grown produce and air weekly on two Honesdale radio stations, in addition to being available on the SEEDS website, as well as through the podcast service Podbean.

The Outreach Circle, which includes Erin SanClementi, Shannon Cilento, Sue Currier and is led by Chuck SanClementi, reported progress on a digital presence spearheaded by Executive Director Olga Trushina that includes Newsletter updates as well as a polished social media presence largely authored by new Outreach Assistant Shannon Cilento.

The Energy Circle, which includes Pete Snyder, Jim Sanders, Larry Reeger, Jack Barnett, Jamie Stunkard, David Falvo, Daniel Berg, Chuck Heyn, Jocelyn Cramer, Olga Trushina and is led by Kathy Dodge, reported, presenting an Energy 101 program to residents of Hemlock Farms, training five new assessment team members and giving two home and one non-profit Efficiency Assessment (using covid restrictions), as well as giving 11 solar assessments to homes and non-profits & updated two past assessments with new financial information. Additionally, they provided expertise and SEEDS volunteers to help install a total of 346 solar panels for two arrays for the Highlights Foundation, for a total of 138.26 kW!

The Education Circle, formally led by Jenna Mauder and currently led by Jamie Reeger, who was ratified as Circle Leader this September, also includes Sandy Long and Jocelyn Cramer. They reported overseeing NEPA Recycles, an [online resource for identifying recycling opportunities in our region](#); a new SEEDS Reads video posted in August on YouTube channel; two new Little Free Libraries in Honesdale; and the success of this year's Free Book Swap which was held September 18 and 19, after a one year hiatus due to covid, at the Wayne County Fairgrounds and featured over 30,000 books,

17,000 of which found new home, all thanks to the 50 volunteers who made it possible.

The Finance Circle, which includes Nancy DeYoung, Allaina Propst and Olga Trushina, and is led by Sue Currier, reported working to grow and maintain the financial well-being of SEEDS, meeting together monthly, in addition to weekly meetings with staff by Sue Currier in order to discuss fundraising work. The Treasurer's Report was also authored by the Finance Circle.

The Executive Director's report included adorable pictures of Ludmila Trushina, the newest addition to the Trushin family who joined them in August this year. Chair Kathy Dodge welcomed Mila, while noting Olga Trushina, our third executive director of SEEDS, currently on maternity leave, has demonstrated great talent in directing the day-to-day operations of SEEDS, as well as creating an online presence including videos that have greatly enhanced our educational efforts during the time of Covid. Kathy also welcomed Shannon Cilento, new Outreach Assistant, who has greatly helped SEEDS carry on in Olga's absence, and will help free Olga to pursue more grant funding and other objectives when she returns. Joining SEEDS in June of this year, Shannon works full time as the Resources and Land Use Specialist at the Upper Delaware Council in Narrowsburg, NY and has undergraduate degrees in Anthropology and International Studies with a minor in Museum Studies, Art History concentration, and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation Planning from Cornell University.

The final portion of the annual meeting was devoted to the Earth to Sky Program, which was explained by Mary Anne Carletta as a collaboration among NASA, the National Park Service & the Forest Service to educate, nurture & sustain regional groups of climate change educators. The Upper Delaware River Watershed - Earth to Sky group asked influential people from four Upper Delaware counties to form county teams and created nine webinar series on areas of particular concern for our region: how to communicate about climate; aquatic & forest ecosystems; agriculture; and public health and climate justice. County teams created plans for their particular communities.

Team Sullivan County's Project, "The Wonder of Place," was presented by Carol Roig, Sullivan County Office of Sustainable Energy, and team members included Heather Brown, Shannon Cilento, Peggy Gans, Suzanne Morris, Sean Welsh, and Carol Roig. Their project focuses on the creation of a booklet, web content, and experiential learning events in the landscape for residents in the UDRW, both new and longstanding, and visitors of all ages. As of this presentation the team has: developed a concept and preliminary outline of the booklet – approximately 12 pages; identified a graphic designer; developed a funding request and applied for support from the OSI through their Land and Climate Catalyst grant program, under the auspices of the

Upper Delaware Council. Their team's goal is for "people to understand and value the fact that they live in an ecological system that supports an incredible abundance of life –including our own and folks downstream. We are all part of that system, and the diversity of life in that system is awe-inspiring and essential to our own ability to thrive."

Team Pike County's Project was presented by Kelly Stagen of the Pike County Conservation District, and features "a small, multigenerational team with big ideas." Their project aims to use social media platforms to communicate their message and teach residents how easy it is to switch their energy suppliers from fossil fuels. Among their media projects is a web series for YouTube featuring young children teaching their parents about making this switch.

Team Wayne County's Project, "Cabinet of Climate Change Curiosities," was presented by Elaine Matthews, and team members included Tannis Kowalchuk, Jenna Mauder, Kathy Dodge, Bonnie McGuire, and Stephen Moulton. Drawing on the historical "cabinets of curiosity," early proto-galleries or museums dating as far back as medieval Europe, Wayne County's cabinets will be a multi-media climate-education project, aimed at a wide and diverse audience, and specifically designed so it can evolve, grow, be upgraded, adapted to different situations and focus on timely topics. They will consist of a physical, mobile cabinet, performances such as songs and scenes, presentations with materials on science of climate live, online and onsite, as well as interactive immersive experiences such as backyard fishing game, testimonials, or Q&A cards. This multi-media project combines the physical, the experiential and the digital, and features a coordinated series of materials that are adaptable for a wide range of audiences, like newspaper articles and columns, websites and blogs radio interviews, schools, performances, and other public events. Team Wayne County believes that the mysteries, curiosities, and mitigation of climate change can be communicated in an educational and playful manner.

Thanks to our 2021 SEEDS sponsors: Dirlam Brothers Lumber; Citizens Savings Bank; Matt Meagher; Nature's Grace Health Foods & Deli; Roche Supply; East Shore Lodging; Wayne Pike Farm Bureau; Platform Industries; Happy Tattoo; Quality Printing; Scarfalloto's Towne House; Wayne Conservation District.

We Need Your Feedback

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, SEEDS opted to hold our annual meeting virtually for the second year. SEEDS members needed to RSVP online in order to receive a link to the Zoom meeting.

How easy was it for you to join this year's Annual Meeting?

[Very easy, I registered and joined without issue.](#)

[I joined but it was a more difficult process than I would have liked.](#)

[It was difficult and I gave up or was not able to join.](#)

[I did not know I had to register.](#)

[I was not interested in a virtual meeting.](#)

Please send more specific feedback to us at info@seedsgroup.net.

If you are not a member of SEEDS, please consider [joining us](#) today!

You can use this link to share our membership page with others:

<https://seedsgroup.net/become-a-member/>

You will continue to receive our newsletters, invitations to our educational forums and other events. Members are eligible for free solar evaluations, have voting rights at our annual meeting, and help shape our programs and initiatives. For more information visit our website at www.seedsgroup.net.

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Visit us at SEEDSgroup.net

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