

Autumn 2008 Number 91

Our spring newsletter has become our fall newsletter, and we regret the delay. Our Executive Director Deb Bledsoe has been ill, diagnosed with cancer in January, and has been undergoing chemotherapy since then. She is responding well and her disease is regressing. We are in the process of hiring a new director and Deb will continue part-time with her watershed work. Our next newsletter will have details about our new director. Thank you for your patience.

- ASPI Board of Directors

Working Toward a Sustainable Future at ASPI

It's fall, autumn colors begin to show in our forests and we're munching on a variety of homegrown apples. Here's what's happening at ASPI with our efforts to protect Kentucky's waterways and watersheds, progress in educating about alternative energy and making it part of our lives, and sharing the insights of our recent student group visitors to ASPI.

Poetry Benefit for ASPI – A Thrilling Evening for All

“No Place Like Home: Spoken Word in the Bluegrass” is the name of a lively and laughter-filled evening of poetry reading held to benefit ASPI last December 21st, 2007, hosted by Jude McPherson of blacoetrypress.com at Lexington's Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning.

Performances were given by Marta Miranda, Eric Sutherland, Crystal McGee, Bianca Spriggs, Devine Carama, and others. ASPI provided very big cookies, coffee, and tea. The well-attended event was rocking with the passionately versified life experiences of the poets. Thanks to all, and let's do that again!

ASPI Publications

Our 2009 Simple Lifestyle Calendar - EARTH: Rock & Time - is available, and can be ordered by calling or writing our Mt. Vernon office, or online at www.a-spi.org. This beautiful calendar is packed with homely and wise advice for living more simply and is a good companion or gift.

Many ASPI books and publications are half-price! See page 7 for closeout bargains on ASPI books, or go to our website to order.

Energy News

Advanced Solar Photovoltaics Installation Training

October 13th to 17th, 2008 - Frankfort, Kentucky, 9am to 5pm. This workshop will involve students in the hands-on installation of a photovoltaic system. The PV system will be installed on an enclosed trailer that will be used as a mobile solar energy exhibit by the Kentucky Solar Partnership. The workshop will demonstrate code-approved techniques for installing a grid-intertied PV system with battery back-up. The workshop will include a mix of lecture and hands-on installation practice. For more information, call Andy McDonald at 888-576-6527 or visit www.kysolar.org.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Programs: Better Alternatives

In February, three Kentucky organizations offered a report to East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC) detailing how the cooperative could avoid building a costly new coal-fired power plant in Clark County. The Cumberland Chapter of the Sierra Club, Kentucky Environmental Foundation and Kentuckians for the Commonwealth released a report entitled [A Portfolio of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Options for East Kentucky Power Cooperative](#), stating that a combination of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs can meet the electricity demand that EKPC currently intends to fill with its proposed "Smith 1" power plant in Clark County. ASPI's Andy McDonald was a co-author on the report and contributed the section describing a solar water heating program. The full report can be found online at www.kftc.org or by calling the Kentucky Environmental Foundation at 859-986-0868.

ASPI Working to Improve Energy Policy in Kentucky

ASPI is working alongside other organizations to improve state energy policy by encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy use throughout the state. In a case before the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC), ASPI, the Cumberland Chapter of the Sierra Club, and the Appalachian Law Center argued that the PSC should place a higher priority on energy efficiency and renewable energy, and that environmental and public health costs of burning coal should be factored into the price of coal-generated electricity.

ASPI has also worked closely with Tom FitzGerald of the Kentucky Resources Council to develop state legislation providing support to energy efficiency, renewables, and green building. House Bill 2 is an omnibus energy bill with a wide range of important policies and incentives, including directives for state government to build energy efficient “green” buildings, and tax credits for renewable energy. Senate Bill 83 expanded the state's net metering law to include wind, hydro, biomass, and biogas facilities (in addition to solar PV) and increased the size of eligible systems from 15 to 30 kW. The bill included other provisions to make net metering more accessible to Kentuckians. Both bills were signed into law in April 2008.

The success of these efforts indicates that Kentucky's political climate may be shifting towards a greater appreciation of energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy. ASPI will keep working to encourage that shift. We are now looking towards 2009, with hopes to advance further legislation to support renewables and energy efficiency. For more information go to the Kentucky Solar Partnership web site at: www.kysolar.org.

The Kentucky Green Energy Roadshow a Big Success!

On March 29 the Kentucky Green Energy Roadshow made its first stop at the London Community Center. Over 40 people turned out for a day of workshops on topics such as green building construction standards, solar photovoltaics, solar water heating, wind, hydro, and biomass resources.

The Roadshow stopped in Owensboro on April 5, where 63 people gathered at the Maple Mount Conference and Retreat Center, and went on to Northern Kentucky University on April 12, and Morehead on April 26 with similar successes at each location. It is obvious that interest in energy and sustainability is high among the general public.

We want to express our appreciation to all Roadshow sponsors, exhibitors, and speakers. All Roadshow speakers are donating their time, and we are very grateful for that. A big Thank You to the Presenting Sponsors, Major Sponsors, Local Sponsors, Exhibitors and Partners, and the Speakers! Each name is individually listed in our “Thanks” on page 6.

Thank you to the Blue Grass Community Foundation

ASPI has received a grant from the Blue Grass Community Foundation to support the final development of our Solar Trailer, a mobile renewable energy exhibit which will be debuting at the BlueGrass GreenExpo. Many thanks to them for their generous support.

Service Learning: Volunteer News

ASPI provided Service Learning experiences in 2007 to 5 groups of students, from University of Notre Dame, Loyola University Chicago, Eckerd College of Tampa FL, and the University of Dayton's ETHOS Club. This year we we hosted Notre Dame and Loyola, as well as students from two new schools, DePaul University College of Law and John Carroll University, which took part in expanded programming for the Service Learning Project to include mountaintop removal field trips, climate change education, and civic infrastructure curriculum materials.

We are developing (and we welcome!) new community partners including host families for students wishing to return individually for in-depth service opportunities.

Student groups helped with an illegal dump cleanup on Price Branch, tributary of Skeggs Creek and the Rockcastle River. They took a mountaintop removal "ecodisaster tour" in Perry County, and helped with trail building and maintenance at ASPI on River. Law students from DePaul University College spent a day at the Capitol in Frankfort, seeing politics in action during deliberations by the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on a bill that created watershed advisory committees to work on watershed improvements/protection. Students also toured the sewer treatment plant in Livingston, enjoyed an evening of bluegrass music, and endured lots of rain and cold! For some groups, a nice day or two was added to the mix.

Student participants sometimes question the value of the work they do here, but it has been pointed out that we completed the cleanup of an illegal dump on Hammond's Fork last year which ASPI's student volunteers worked on spring and fall for three years, and the community had been working on for two years before that. A local official estimates it would have cost the county over \$200,000 to have a contractor do that work, and that's a substantial amount of avoided cost in a county this size.

Here are the specifics of recent student contributions to local environmental improvements: Working on Price Branch, Crooked Creek, and the Dry Fork of Skegg's Creek, the grand total for the 4 spring college groups combined was 385.5 hours; 671 bags of trash, and 43 tires.

Comments from Student Participants

“The projects that you work on open your eyes to the problems that our country faces that you do not hear on CNN.”

“I am truly inspired to be more conscious of my energy consumption decisions, especially now that I’ve seen the social and environmental costs of being wasteful. The time here was certainly well spent.”

“A week at ASPI is a great way to become aware of the environmental issue facing Appalachia first hand. You learn about and observe waste treatment, mountaintop removal mining, and the effects of illegal dumping. You also get a taste of the warmth of local culture.”

“**Amazing - Service/Learning experience - Preparing you to be a positive advocate for needed change - In the environment, in our communities, and in our world!**”

Watersheds and Forestry

ASPI continued participation in Lake Linville Sourcewater Protection Working Group and made community presentations on water quality, as well as continuing work in our pollinator and wild bird garden in Mt Vernon and citizen water monitoring in the Upper Cumberland basin.

Board President Terrie Curd attended an Americorps VISTA Site Supervisor Training in Charleston, WV in preparation for ASPI's seeking VISTA volunteers to do watershed work. To follow up and deepen ASPI's commitment to this great program, Director Deb Bledsoe attended OSM/VISTA'S Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team's spring training at Breaks Interstate Park, and we are in the process of preparing an application for a fulltime VISTAvolunteer.

Hosted by ASPI in partnership with Eastern Kentucky University's Environmental Research Institute, VISTA Summer Associate Thor Bahrman, III spent the summer testing many of the smallest streams in the Upper Cumberland River Basin for a number of water quality parameters to assess impacts from pre-1977 mining. When all results are in, a map will be prepared highlighting the sites which need a further look, and the results will be incorporated into a multi-year framework database for future use.

News from the River

River Day

River Day 2008 was a laid-back event with superb weather for a potluck, tours, and discussions around the bonfire. Guests from around the state attended

and a good time was had by all.

News and Notes from Around ASPI

Condolences are offered to Fr. Jack Kieffer on the passing of his mother, Leona Drennen, on May 31, 2008. Mrs. Drennen was a long-time supporter of ASPI and will be greatly missed by family and friends alike.

Nature Center Coordinator Nancy Seaberg tabled at the Berea Rain Barrel Event on April 26th. Sustainable Berea sponsored this great event to educate folks about watershed protection through art, food, music and public auction of beautifully decorated rain barrels.

Energy Outreach Coordinator Jessa Turner has been spending her free time developing ecological design projects for her business, HomeGrown HideAways. This summer, she and her partners conducted several code-approved natural building projects including a strawbale and cob art studio, a cob pottery studio, and an earthbag dome house. They are also in the process of developing workshops for fall to convert a diesel vehicle to run on vegetable oil, biodiesel processing, and building a small-scale wind turbine. To sign up for the mailing list, visit www.HomeGrownHideAways.org.

Board President Terrie Curd and her husband Philip report that Sunbelievable Services in Berea completed the installation of a 14-panel grid intertied photovoltaic system on the roof of an implement shed at their home in Sand Gap, KY, and they began generating electricity on Dec 20th. They have the capacity to produce a maximum of 2600 watts. They decided against having battery storage at this time because of the environmental impact of their production and disposal. The PV system supplements the grid-supplied electricity for their house and the implement shed and they have a net-metering arrangement with their electric co-op so that when the system generates more electricity than their usage, the excess goes into the grid - essentially running the meter backwards and giving them credit at the same rate they pay the electric company for power they use. After five months of operation, the system has generated 1200 kilowatt hours of electricity. The first three weeks of May they averaged 9.5 kWh per day. A total of 400 kWh has been returned to the grid. Sunbelievable Services has estimated that this level of power generation is equal to 4000 lbs of coal. Every kWh that Terrie and Philip's system generates reduces their co-op's need to depend on coal generated electricity.

Friends of ASPI

Available in October: Bluegrass Green Living & Energy Directory 2008-09

ASPI past executive director Ben Perry's new business, Bluegrass Greenworks, is readying a new edition of the Bluegrass Green Living & Energy

Directory for distribution within about a 40 mile radius of Lexington, KY, via partnering businesses.

The Directory contains information to help with a wide variety of projects, from making your home more energy efficient, to purchasing healthier products for your home and family, to making food choices that benefit your body, the environment and your community. You will find resources for greener cars, travel, investments, health care, art, recreation, gardening, renewable energy, and about any other need you may have. The civic-minded will find a wealth of information and resources for improving the health, sustainability and prosperity of their communities.

The Directory is an outgrowth of the BlueGrass GreenExpo, to be held October 25-26 at the Lexington Convention Center, with information online at www.bluegrassenergyexpo.org. The Directory is the product of a partnership between Bluegrass Greenworks and ACE Weekly. For more information, contact Ben Perry, Editor at benperry@a-spi.org, (859) 523-4773 office, 327-0924 cell; online at www.bluegrassgreendirectory.org.

11-16-07 to 3-15-08 UK Cooperative Extension, Blue Grass Community Foundation, Aur Beck, Bob Fairchild, David Brown-Kinloch, Elizabeth Crowe, Gary Watrous, Geoff Greenfield, Jason Streit, John Robbins, Mark Isaacs, Matt Fiscus, Matt Partymiller, Michael Campbell, Perry Leitner, Robert Fehr, Rodney Wright, Scott Maas, Steve Melink, Talina Mathews, Toby Wilcher, Wallace McMullen, Jessa Turner, Mark Spencer, Tony Moreno, Werner Jud, James and David Budniakiewicz, Duke Energy, USDA Rural Development, Apricus, Atmos Energy, ECOS – Environmentally Concerned Organization of Students at NKU, Environmental Education Center at Morehead State University, Eon-U.S., Fischer SIPS, Kentucky Governor's Office of Energy Policy, Kentucky Homebuilders Association, Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, Morehead State Public Radio, WEKU – FM, Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, Southwest Ohio Chapter of Association of Energy Engineers, Advanced Energy, Cumberland Chapter of the Sierra Club, East Kentucky Power Cooperative, Epiphany Foam, Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, Kentucky Environmental Foundation, Robert Bagley, Sol Dillingham, Carolyn and Eugene Brandenburg, James Renner, Ray Graves, Sr. Barbara Walsh, SUSC, Sharon Fradenburgh, Rosemary Thielke, William & Barbara Boeck, Robert & Mary Kelly, Charles & Rachelle Hollander, Bill & Helen Naumann, Philip & Terrie Curd, Sr. Ellen O'Bryan, Richard & Martha Lammers, Paul & Ann Rapien, Mariana D'Amico, Frank & Carol Schmidt, Christopher & Della Oberst, Donna Ford, Claire Nader, James Hall, Garland Hurt, Peter Hrabak, Barry Horowitz, Winnie Hepler, Wendell & Tanya Berry, Ilse Ackerman, Ronald & Mary Beth Lusby, Arnold & Kathleen Simonse, Alice Howell, Eric Matchette, Robert & Virginia Johnson, Claire Carpenter, Carole Pierce, Mary M. Morgan, Robert & Roberta Guthrie, Ralph Nader, Sr. Leanne Herda, Tim Hensley & Jane Post, Fr. Albert Fritsch, SJ, Reid Paxton, Ed & Tricia Cortas, Mary Goodwyn, Benita Considine, Nancy Osborne, Jim Fournier & Karen Zeleznak, Russ Tucker, Jonathan Kern, Tammy Clemons & Timmie Reedy, Michael & Mary Ann Lambert, Phyllis

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ECO-CHURCH An Action Manual

Albert Fritsch, S.J., with Angela Iadavaia-Cox, Resource Publications, Inc. Your church can become more sensitive to the needs of the Earth. Eco-Church shows you how! 1992, paperback, 126 pp., AB2 Was \$14.95 NOW \$7.45

Renew The Face of the Earth

Al Fritsch, Loyola University Press. Explores the basic theological foundations for Earth renewing actions. Directed to a variety of environmental concerns and pursuits. References. 1987, 307 pp., AB3 Was \$4.00 NOW \$2.00

APPALACHIA: A Meditation

Loyola University Press. Reflections by Al Fritsch with biblical quotations, punctuated with the penetrating photographs of Warren Brunner. 1986, 159 pp., AB4 WAS \$7.95 NOW \$4.45

EarthHealing: A Resurrection Centered Approach

Bob Sears and Al Fritsch discuss environmental problems from two converging Judeo-Christian approaches. 1994, 152pp., AB6 WAS \$16.00 NOW \$8.00

Through the Seasons: A Celebration of Creation

Gene Wilhelm, Oikos Publications. Month-by-month descriptions of

Pennsylvanian naturescapes, with color photographs. 1990, 74 pp., AB8 ~~WAS \$9.00~~ NOW \$4.45

The Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings

By Alex Wilson, Jennifer Thourne, & John Morrill; American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, 2003 (216 pg). This book is a must for homeowners! Well organized and easy to read, each chapter has a list of recommendations summarizing how to save energy in one area of your home. Helps identify your major energy uses, investment paybacks, and resultant reductions in pollutants. It's full of helpful charts, graphs, diagrams and contact information. ~~WAS \$10.00~~ NOW \$5.00

The End of Fossil Energy

by John Howe, McIntire Publishing, 2004 (99 pg). A quick read for those wanting to learn about the post-fossil fuel world we are heading toward with reckless abandon. Howe argues that remaining fossil fuel reserves should be used strategically to build the infrastructure for a renewable energy economy that will allow us an acceptable quality of life in the future. Howe offers a detailed plan to help take us there. ~~WAS \$5.00~~ NOW \$2.50