



Winter 2008 Newsletter

Solar is Great in '08!



January 1st has finally come. Have you made a commitment to a more sustainable way of living? Are you ready to lower your carbon footprint? Or do you want to lower your electric bills? The tax credit is now making it possible for you to achieve your goals and dreams by cutting cutting the price in half.

LSES Members featured in SOLAR TODAY

By Sandy and Denice Petit (as seen in [SOLAR TODAY](#))

It has been nearly 30 years since we began a life with solar energy. At a time when photovoltaic cells had yet to be developed into the relatively affordable, user-friendly technology that it is today, we decided to go solar. We recall an incident from the days when we were first married.

Back in those days we owned an electronic repair store and made service calls throughout Louisiana's St. Charles Parish, where we still live. One afternoon Sandy visited an elderly man's home to repair his television. The old man had little of anything. While Sandy was working on the television, the electricity went out. At first, Sandy thought the man had not paid his electric bill. In reality, the parish was upgrading to central sewage and required all residents to pay a \$400 tie-in fee. The old man had not complied for whatever reason, and his service was terminated. The thought of a government that can freely impose such consequences struck Sandy as harsh. It was from that moment that Sandy vowed never again to grant anyone such control over his life.



Sandy Petit has been upgrading his photovoltaic array since installing it in 1984. The system includes four 120-watt cells and has been supplemented with a 400-watt wind turbine. *Photo by Cecil Sumners*

During the years that followed, we did whatever we could to live independently. We installed a photovoltaic system and, a few years later, a wind generator to power our home, a deep water well, a wood-burning stove, a Bosch AquaStar on-demand propane water-heating system, and a high-efficiency DC-voltage Sun Frost refrigerator and DC lighting throughout the house. Although our 900-square-foot home is connected to the electricity grid, we need no grid electricity or very little most of the year. As a semiretired couple, we enjoy the low, fixed electricity costs of renewable energy. Best of all, we love telling others about how fun and easy it is to generate our own electricity.

About the authors: Sandy Petit is an electronics technician who holds a NICET III and numerous other electronic licenses and who works for the St. Charles Parish School. Innovating is his passion; independence is his way of life. His wife, Denice, is a uniquely creative free spirit with a zeal for life that shines throughout their yard and home. Contact them at spetit3@stcharles.k12.la.us or dpetit21@bellsouth.net.

Louisiana Solar Tour 2007 – Coming October 6

The National Solar Tour this year will be held on Saturday October 6, 2007, and the LSES will be hosting the Louisiana tour again. LSES has hosted this exciting event since 2000. The tour is tentatively scheduled for 11 – 2pm on October 6, 2007. Times may vary among tour sites, so please check the website for the latest updates.



The National Tour of Solar Homes is held every October throughout the United States. In over 100 communities in 42 states, solar homeowners open their doors to visitors to demonstrate the renewable energy and conservation features of their homes. The tour highlights solar energy technologies that are working right now, in real places for real people.

WE WANT YOU! – We are finalizing the tour list. If you would like your solar home to be part of the National Solar Tour, please contact us right away! Drop us an email if you would like to be a part of this exciting event: info@lses.org

IS YOUR HOME READY FOR SOLAR?

LSES is hosting an educational workshop on September 29, 2007 at the Bluebonnet Swamp from 1- 5pm. This free workshop is open to the public and will cover information on PV modules and technology, solar monitoring, and system options and applications. Information such as site analysis, system sizing, and



[Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center](#)
10503 North Oak Hills Parkway
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
(225) 757-8905

financial incentives can help determine if solar is right for you. There will be hands - on opportunities and plenty of time for Q & A, so bring your questions!

The workshop is limited to 40 participants; however, LSES members are given the opportunity to register first! Go to www.lses.org to register for this exciting and informative event.

Directions: Take Bluebonnet Road Exit off Interstate 10 (between Seigen and Essen). Travel south approximately 2.5 miles. Oak Hills Parkway is on your right.

Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement & Development Grand Opening

Photo Credit: RenewableEnergyAccess.com



By: Elizabeth Galante of [Global Green](http://GlobalGreen.org)

The grand opening of the Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement & Development was held on April 2 at 10:30 am. The center will serve the local community by educating residents on how to use green technologies and materials and by acting as a clearing house for information on city-wide and local community recovery planning. The center will also foster civic engagement by hosting community meetings, and involving youth in grass roots activities.

Residents will also be able to learn about natural systems in the lower ninth and how to develop community gardens and parks. The long term goals of the center are to serve as a cornerstone in building a strong community mindful of its history, resources and vulnerabilities. Through it, the Lower 9th Ward will be resilient, prosperous, and energy independent. The center is located at 5130 Chartres St. at Lizardi Street, New Orleans, LA, in the back of Greater Little Zion Baptist Church.

Global Green was there at the opening, with a donation of bulbs from Bulbme, an Arizona based compact fluorescent light bulb company. Please visit their website at www.bulbme.com. The bulbs are the first part of an energy efficiency kit Global Green will be distributing to residents of the Holy Cross neighborhood.

Google's Solar Panel Project

In the last 24 hours, Google has produced 5,946 kilowatt-hours of electricity from the sun.

In October 2006, Google announced a commitment to solar energy production and launched the largest solar panel installation to date on a corporate campus in the United States. Google has installed over 90% of the 9,212 solar panels that comprise the 1,600 kilowatt project. Panels cover the rooftops of eight buildings and two newly constructed solar carports at the Googleplex.

This installation is projected to produce enough electricity for approximately 1,000 California homes or 30% of Google's peak electricity demand in the solar powered buildings at the Mountain View, CA headquarters.



Google built a [webpage](http://www.google.com/corporate/solarpanels/home) to monitor and share the day to day production of clean, renewable energy from their rooftops.

You can check on the progress of this solar project at <http://www.google.com/corporate/solarpanels/home>

JOIN LSES

WWW.LSES.ORG

FOR ONLY \$15 A YEAR YOU CAN BE A PART OF THE EVER GROWING LOUISIANA SOLAR ENERGY SOCIETY. YOU WILL RECEIVE NEWSLETTERS AND INSIDE INFORMATION ON SOLAR ACTIVITIES IN OUR STATE. DUES ARE EASIER TO PAY NOW THROUGH PAYPAL.

JOIN ASES

WWW.ASES.ORG

ASES HAS INSTITUTED DUAL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP TRACKS KEEPING IN TACT THE CORE MEMBERSHIP GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS, SCIENTISTS AND ACADEMICS (PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP, \$89), AND ADDING A LEVEL SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR THE END USER AND ADVOCATE (BASIC MEMBERSHIP, \$39).

JOIN ASE

WWW.ASE.ORG

IT'S FREE! AND YOU WILL RECEIVE PERIODIC UPDATES FROM THE ALLIANCE TO SAVE ENERGY.

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