



Spring 2007 Newsletter

*Working together for our environment*

**LOUISIANA STRONG**



## Earth Day 2007 in Baton Rouge

The Red Stick turns GREEN this Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> for the 18th annual Baton Rouge Earth Day celebration. It will be held in Downtown Baton Rouge along North Boulevard from noon until 8:30pm. This will mark the 7<sup>th</sup> year of exhibition for LSES.

You will find LSES at this year's Earth Day celebration in our usual (and favorite) location in front of the Entergy building on North Boulevard. We will have exhibits to educate attendees about a variety of solar topics such as PV, solar thermal, solar water pumping, solar siting, and other topics. Be sure not to miss the annual All Species Parade featuring children and adults dressed as native Louisiana plants and animals with Mayor Kip Holden in the lead. There will be much to enjoy for all ages including the Artists Market, live music, food & drink, and of course the LSES table.

Check out the official website at [www.earthdaybr.org](http://www.earthdaybr.org) for the complete schedule of events for the celebration. See you there!

## A Word from the LSES Director...

### What is limiting solar growth in Louisiana?

By Jeff Shaw

I have been scratching my head on the issue many years now. At first I thought the lack of education on the part of the citizens was limiting the growth of solar so I founded the Louisiana Solar Energy Society. Through the LSES I have spent 7 years doing everything possible to promote solar in Louisiana and educate the citizens.

Then in 2001 I wrote an article titled "Problems in Louisiana" where I blamed the **lack of net metering** and **incentives** for the limited growth of solar in our state. (If you Google "Problems in Louisiana" you will find my article at the top of the search engine list with over 2.6 million other hits) To address this problem I introduced **Net Metering** legislation for our state in 2003 that was signed into law which now fixed that problem. By 2005 **President Bush** signed into law a 30% tax credit for the purchase of solar power systems which partially fixed the other problem.

### So now what else could it be?

I think I have figured it out. **The leaders are not leading so the followers are not following.** What I am saying is that now is the time for the leaders in the Louisiana environmental community to "**Lead by Example**" when it comes to solar. The citizens of Louisiana are not fools. They have heard environmental groups telling them to do one thing and witnessing them do another. The very people **promoting alternative**

**energy** are not **using alternative energy**. It's like having your "green" neighbor tell you about the evils of the chemical industry and having their lawn chemically treated (yes this actually happened to me). I would not ask anyone to do what I would not do myself. In 1999, prior to founding the LSES I installed a solar power system for myself which runs my home office.

**When the citizens see the leaders take the first step then they will follow.**

I am proposing for all organizations in Louisiana that are environmentally or energy related to make plans to install alternative energy at their office now. In addition, these systems should be educationally accessible via lobby monitors for increased visibility. Furthermore, I propose that the employees and activists that work for the organizations include solar power where they live.

In order to facilitate this, my company Gulf South Solar will provide these systems at cost plus 10% to all Louisiana environmental or energy related companies and their employees during 2007. Just mention that you want to "**Lead by Example**" and I will get you going with solar.

I am and always have been committed to the growth of alternative energy for our state and I hope you will join with me in this bold step. No more excuses folks. Email [info@gulfsouthsolar.com](mailto:info@gulfsouthsolar.com) for more information.

## **LSU Students "Rethink" Their Earth Day**

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LSES participates in second annual Earth Day celebration at LSU held on Friday, April 13 and hosted by LSU's Environmental Conservation Organization. There was great weather for this year's celebration which was held on the parade grounds. Titled "rethink," the festival urged students to reexamine their ideas of the world around them.



## **KEEP YOUR COOL!**

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Earlier this year, LSES participated in *Keep Your Cool*. Not an anger management seminar, this series of workshops were presented by Operation Comeback of the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRC) and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to make sure property owners are well-informed about how to cut energy costs using new products and technologies available for rehabbing historic homes (or building new ones).

The *Keep Your Cool! Solar Panels* seminar was the fifth in a five part series of energy efficiency workshops. The January 24<sup>th</sup> session held at the PRC headquarters in New Orleans outlined the availability and compatibility of photovoltaic, or solar, energy when renovating local homes, including as a source for generating heat, light and reserve power in case of power outages.

### ABOUT OPERATION COMEBACK

The PRC established the Operation Comeback program in 1988 in order to spur the revitalization of the Lower Garden District by returning vacant historic buildings to occupancy. It has since expanded its efforts to additional neighborhoods and its services to include education for renovators and purchasers. Currently, the Holy Cross neighborhood in the Lower Ninth Ward is Operation Comeback's target area and their plans include partnering to outfit ten houses with solar power.

## **Summer Internship Available**

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LSES is in need of an intern for the summer to assist in some of the organization activities. Help is needed with correspondence, website updates, Solar Tour information, and other fun things. This paid position is best suited for someone located in Baton Rouge. If you would like to help (or know someone that could) please email ASAP.

## **USDA Renewal Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant & Loan Program**

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USDA Rural Development is inviting grant and guaranteed loan applications for *Section 9006: Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Grant and Loan Program*. This program provides grant and guaranteed loan assistance to rural small businesses and agricultural producers in constructing renewable energy systems (including systems that generate energy from solar sources) or making energy efficiency improvements to their existing business or farm.

The grant program can fund up to 25 percent of eligible costs, maximum of \$500,000 for a renewable energy system or \$250,000 for an energy efficiency improvement. Maximum guaranteed loan: \$10,000,000, not to exceed 50 percent of project costs. Grant applications must be submitted to their office no later than May 18, 2007. Applications for guaranteed loans as well as combination grant and guaranteed loans must be submitted no later than July 2, 2007.

Please see following website for more details <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farbill/index.html> or contact Kevin W. Boone, Renewable Energy Coordinator for USDA Rural Development: (337) 262-6601 ext. 133, or by email :[kevin.boone@la.usda.gov](mailto:kevin.boone@la.usda.gov).

## **Louisiana Solar Tour 2007 – Coming October 6**

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The National Solar Tour this year will be held on Saturday October 6, 2007, and the LSES will be hosting the Louisiana tour again. 2007 will be our 7<sup>th</sup> year to host this exciting event!

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.



If you want to be a part of this exciting event, there are many ways to participate. You can participate as a visitor or as a host in your own solar home. You can also participate as an organizer helping to develop and publicize multi-home tours, or as a sponsor supporting the tours financially either on a local or national level in exchange for public recognition and visibility.

Drop us an email if you would like to be a part of this exciting event: [jeff@lSES.org](mailto:jeff@lSES.org)

## **Clean Energy Homes Tour -- New Orleans**

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Celebrate Earth Day 2007 at the Clean Energy Homes Tour in the Holy Cross Neighborhood featuring solar electric systems and energy efficiency technologies. Learn first hand from experts how to lower energy bills and fight global warming by reducing energy waste. Two homes will be showcased.

- When: Sunday, April 22nd, 1:30-4:30pm
- Where: Meet at the Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development
- 5130 Chartres St. (at Lizardi)
- Sponsored by: Alliance for Affordable Energy, Sierra Club, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association
- For more information, please contact: Alliance for Affordable Energy, 504-208-9761

## **Director Presents at New Orleans Home and Garden Show**

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Jeff Shaw, LSES Director, presented a solar workshop on March 29 at the New Orleans Home and Garden Show held at the Superdome. His presentation addressed topics such as technology options, cost effectiveness, energy independence, and solar for emergency/power for outages for the homeowners of New Orleans.

## JOIN LSES

[WWW.LSES.ORG](http://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](http://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](http://WWW.ASE.ORG)

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

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