



Times-News

Local ECO Energy Expo Energizes Henderson County

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Saturday, April 26, dawned bright and sunny, a perfect fit for a day-long series of events on energy conservation and alternative energy sources held at Blue Ridge Community College. The event was presented by ECO, the Environmental and Conservation Organization of Hendersonville.

Approximately 150 participants gathered in the Patton building to hear speakers such as Ned Doyle, who has been active in sustainable energy and environmental issues for over 30 years; Brian Winslet, who shared insights into alternative energy research; and John Sticpewich, who spoke on energy resources and nuclear power generation. The keynote speaker of the day was Jeff Barrie, who presented his revised version of the documentary Kilowatt Ours: A Plan to Re-Energize America.

Workshops also occurred throughout the day on topics such as making your home more energy efficient, green building, applying solar energy to water heating systems and making an older home a greener home. Participants gained valuable information on how they can apply current energy technology to their homes to increase energy efficiency and decrease energy usage and costs.

Concurrent with the workshops was also a series of films on a variety of topics relating to energy. Numerous participants attended a viewing of *Who Killed the Electric Car?* which documented the rise and demise of the electric-run automobile and why this quiet, fuel-efficient, environmentally-friendly vehicle no longer graces our roadways. *The Story of Stuff*, although shorter, packed a provocative punch as it pointed fingers at our consumer-driven culture and how our stuff is created, purchased and then trashed, usually within six months of purchase.

Exhibits by local green builders and organizations promoting energy conservation were staffed and available for viewing and discussion. A table full of children's activities, including solar cars, a windmill demonstration and a kilowatt meter was enjoyed by those of the younger generation (and their parents!). The outdoor exhibit, although slightly affected by the afternoon deluge, drew attendees interested in alternative fuel vehicles powered by gas/electric, vegetable oil, electricity, E85 and compressed natural gas.

If you missed this event, there's no need to feel left out. ECO is initiating Project Green Light, a community effort which includes churches and local community organizations in a festive, friendly competition, enabling the community as a whole to share in the fruits of a lower energy lifestyle. For more information, call 692-0385 or visit www.eco-wnc.org.