



## State's Largest Wind Projects Move Ahead

Wisconsin's two largest proposed wind generation projects advanced on decisions by the Public Service Commission (PSC), the Dodge County Board of Adjustment, and Milwaukee-based We Energies.

The PSC approved the certificate of public convenience and necessity in mid-July for the Forward Wind Center, a proposed 200 megawatt (MW) development straddling Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties.

Invenergy, a Chicago company, will build and operate the project. Power from the installation will be sold to Alliant Energy (50 MW), Madison Gas & Electric (40 MW), Wisconsin Public Power Inc. (40 MW), and Wisconsin Public Service (70 MW).

The day following the PSC decision, the Dodge County Board of Adjustment overturned conditional use permits approved by the Zoning Commission because they set restrictions that were contrary to state and federal law.

Just prior to the Forward Wind decisions, We Energies announced that the company would own, construct, and operate the two 80 MW wind farms proposed by Navitas Energy in Fond du Lac County.

### PSC Decision with Conditions

Clean energy groups applauded the agency's action on the Forward project.

RENEW Executive Director Michael Vickerman said the PSC action is "a powerful endorsement of wind energy for Wisconsin."

"This is a great step forward for clean energy and the environment," said Katie Nekola, energy program director at Clean Wisconsin and a member of RENEW's Board of Directors.

Echoing their sentiments, Forward Project Manager Mick Baird said, "This decision makes Wisconsin a national leader as a supporter of wind energy and renewable energy development. The PSC's decision supports Wisconsin and federal targets for renewable energy and will set an example for other states."

The ruling disappointed Horicon Marsh System Advocates, which intervened in the proceeding in opposition to the project.

In the order, the PSC imposed sev-

***RENEW views the Forward Wind project as a down payment toward complying with a 10% renewable portfolio standard by 2015.***

eral conditions likely to delay groundbreaking until next year.

The biggest one was prompted by the need to establish an appropriate setback distance from the Horicon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge.

The order states: "To minimize impacts on avian resources, Forward shall construct no turbines within two miles of the existing boundary of the Horicon Marsh. . . . Forward shall complete its 2005 Avian Studies. After doing so, Forward may petition the Commission to reopen the proceedings for a determination as to whether the likely avian impacts are sufficiently low to justify moving the setback line closer to the Marsh."

The PSC permit contains a grand total of 48 conditions, including:

- Post-construction monitoring of bird and bat interactions with the turbines;
- Buffer zones around private airports and villages;

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- Setbacks of 440 feet (1.1 times the height of the turbine) from property lines, roads and above ground utilities, 450 feet from residences of turbine hosts, and 1,000 feet from residences of those not hosting turbines;
- Mitigation of any interference to television, radio, Internet, or telecommunications reception;
- Local hiring of construction workers and local purchases of materials where practicable.

### Appeal Overturns Local Conditions

More good news followed the day

*Continued on page 2*

### New RENEW Members

RENEW welcomes the following new businesses and individuals who joined since the last newsletter:

- American Transmission Company
- Citizens Energy Cooperative
- Lakeshore Technical College • Rick Adamski • John Dunlop • Marvin Ecker • Tony Kerschbaum • Bill Kilgour
- David Knuti • Paul Kragh • Al Matano • Robert McClenachan • Don Pardonner • Kathy Powell
- William Reifenrath • Jeff Riggert • George Stone • Andrew Swanson

To join RENEW, complete and return the membership form on page 2.

### Largest wind projects

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after the PSC decision when the Dodge County Board of Adjustment (the equivalent of a zoning appeals board) overturned Zoning Commission restrictions that would have killed the entire project.

The Zoning Commission initially issued conditional use permits that required a three-mile setback from the Horicon Marsh and 9,000 feet from each of six private landing strips scattered in the area.

At a packed meeting of the Board in early June, RENEW's Ed Blume asked the Board to overturn these onerous conditions based on four considerations: PSC preemption of jurisdiction, statutory priority for renewable energy, economic and environmental considerations, and the wasted time and cost of an unsuccessful defense of the conditions.

"We at RENEW," Blume said, "enthusiastically support farmers and land owners in their desire to harness the wind that blows over their land to produce electricity, and we vigorously support a clean energy future, which the Forward Wind Center will bring to Wisconsin."

In response to an appeal filed by Invenergy, the Board of Adjustment threw out the restrictions on a 4-0 vote.

Linda Schraufnagel, chair of the Town of LeRoy where several turbines will be sited, hailed the decision. "The board made the correct decision and our Town Board wants to see this project

begin construction," she said.

### We Energies Takes Control

In announcing its purchase of the rights to build the former Navitas installations, We Energies becomes the first Wisconsin utility to commit shareholder dollars toward owning a major windpower project

As it stands now, the project will consist of two adjoining 80 MW wind farms in the towns of Marshfield and Calumet in northeast Fond du Lac County.

Though the two projects were permitted in 2004, We Energies may need PSC approval as well. A PSC permit would be necessary if the agency views the two wind farms as one project totalling 160 MW. The PSC has automatic jurisdiction over all generating projects over 100 MW.

"What better way for a utility to capture the multiple benefits of wind power," Vickerman said, "than to build and own the project itself."

Unlike We Energies' other generators, which are fueled by coal, natural gas, and uranium, these wind turbines "will produce clean power at a stable and predictable price over their entire operating life," added Vickerman in a statement released to the media.

"We Energies, being a local company and a stakeholder in Wisconsin's economic future, is likely to make a concerted effort to involve state-based businesses and manufacturers in the con-

struction and operation," Vickerman said.

### Legislature Up to Bat

RENEW views the Commission's action as a down payment towards adopting a higher renewable portfolio standards in the fall legislative session. As proposed by the state Task Force on Energy Efficiency and Renewables, the state's renewable energy standard on electric utilities would rise to 10% by 2015.

Taken together, the We Energies project and the Forward Wind Center would account for 20% of the new renewable energy needed to meet the proposed 2015 target.

In addition the task force recommended:

- Increasing state government's own use of renewable power to 20% by 2010;
- Expanding the role of the Public Service Commission in setting targets and funding for the state's Focus on Energy program;
- Improving the state's building codes on energy use;
- Encouraging the use of anaerobic digesters and wind turbines in rural Wisconsin.

With the session scheduled to begin on September 20, however, a legislative draft of the recommendations has not yet been circulated publicly.

"We are confident that these recent developments in wind power will spur the Legislature to act more expeditiously as the fall approaches," said Vickerman.✪

## Yes! I want to help RENEW promote the use of clean, renewable energy resources to diversify Wisconsin's energy resource mix.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

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## WISCONSIN RENEWABLE QUARTERLY

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RENEW Wisconsin is a nonprofit organization advocating the adoption of clean energy strategies to power Wisconsin businesses and households in an environmentally responsible manner. Through a combination of public policy and private sector initiatives, RENEW aims to increase the use of clean, self-renewing energy resources to generate electricity or displace fossil-generated electricity.

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## Lawmakers stiff coalition, cut energy funds

Groups from all points of the political spectrum waged a spirited defense but couldn't convince the Legislature to restore Governor Doyle's proposed cuts in funds for Focus on Energy (public benefits).

To add insult to injury lawmakers slipped another \$1.9 million out of the program and into another.

RENEW, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC), Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group, Citizens Utility Board, Wisconsin Paper Council, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin and others jointly ticked off the reasons for their opposition to the diversion of \$55 million in ratepayer dollars in a memo to the Joint Committee on Finance:

- This is nothing more than a *de facto* hidden tax increase on certain Wisconsin ratepayers.
- Customers pay these fees believing the dollars will be used to achieve energy

conservation and efficiency while increasing use of renewable energy. Diverting these dollars breaks faith the Wisconsin ratepayers.

- Diverting these dollars keeps electric rates artificially high in order to support general fund spending.
- Diverting customers' conservation dollars is counterproductive, and it undermines efforts to help reduce or delay the need for costly new plants and keep rates affordable.

The combined clout of the groups failed to overcome lobbying by Governor Doyle in support of the cuts and others' arguments to sunset public benefits.

Nearly 200 people at the MREA fair signed postcards to the governor asking him to use any unanticipated tax collections to restore as much of the funds as possible.

Regrettably, Governor Doyle did not use his line-item veto to change the Legislature's added cut or restore funds in any other way.✪

## We Energies Expands Menu of Renewable Options for Customers

We Energies filed with the Public Service Commission two experimental renewable tariffs that aim to encourage solar installations in its territory and commercial subscriptions to its Energy For Tomorrow program.

"This is absolutely great news for promoting solar installations," said Niels Wolter, RENEW board member and the manager of the solar program for Focus on Energy.

The Milwaukee utility asked the PSC for permission to:

- Create an experimental "solar buy-back rate" under which customers installing PV systems would receive 22.5 cents per kWh over a 10-year period. PV systems installed after 1998 and rated between 1.5 and 100 kW will qualify for the 10-year payments during a three-year enrollment period. Participation will be capped at 500 kW. Customers must be

enrolled as Energy For Tomorrow participants. The full output of systems under this experimental tariff will be used to provide solar PV energy to all customers enrolled in the Energy For Tomorrow program.

- A new offering under the Energy For Tomorrow is also being introduced for large business customers -- a "bulk purchase rate" whereby nonresidential customers in the Energy For Tomorrow program will pay 1.5 cents per kWh of renewable energy if they purchase more than 70,000 kWh per month (as opposed to the current rate of 2.04 cents/kWh). This premium should drop even further when the company's proposed base rates for 2006 take effect.

"These new tariffs are not trivial. They will definitely improve the economics of renewables in We Energies' territory," added Michael Vickerman.✪

**Renewables Producer Profile****Light Energy Systems: Focus Critical to Success**

**B**urke O'Neal and younger brother Mark founded Light Energy Systems in 2002. Though Burke grew up in Madison and graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering and a certificate in Environmental Studies from the University of Wisconsin, he left Madison for California where he went to work for a Light Energy Systems. When he returned to Madison, he worked out an arrangement to use the company's name and jointly purchase supplies to get volume discounts.

Two of his company's most notable solar electric installations sit atop the roof of the Williamson Street Coop grocery and Hypatia living coop just off of Gorham Street in the campus area. Light Energy Systems also installs solar water heating units and repairs existing steam and hot water systems.

Light Energy Systems can be reached at (608) 284-9495 in Madison or on the Web at [www.lightenergysystems.com](http://www.lightenergysystems.com).

**Q.** *Light Energy Systems was honored by being named the Focus on Energy's Renewable Market Provider of the Year at the Sustainable Living and Renewable Energy Fair of the Midwest Renewable Energy Association in Custer last June. What was that all about?*

We work closely with Focus on Energy. We were the first in the state to attend Focus training and sign up to be a market provider. Light Energy Systems creatively helps customers use every available program option offered by Focus on Energy. And we recently running a coop ad in *Madison Magazine*. A coop ad is a joint ad. This one promoted Focus on Energy, Light Energy Systems, and Kyocera solar manufacturers. We couldn't have afforded it without Focus.



**Burke O'Neal stands in front** of a 22kw solar electric system installed on the roof of the Williamson Street Cooperative grocery in Madison.

Actually, Light Energy Systems owes its very existence to Focus on Energy, but let me start at the beginning.

When I was a kid, I was fascinated with energy and how we use it. I remember then-President Carter's speeches about energy as he sat in front of the TV cameras in his sweaters. I went to the library and read about energy. Solar made the most sense, not coal and oil.

When I graduated from the UW-Madison, I wanted to get my hands on solar. I helped install a solar system at the Luthorian living coop on campus, and that pretty much tapped out the solar market at that time. By the way, that system still works.

I moved to California in 1997 and worked for Light Energy Systems

which largely repaired steam and hot water systems. We worked on a few solar heaters for pools. The solar PV market didn't exist.

Then I saw an ad in *Solar Today* magazine that said Wisconsin just adopted an incentive program (Focus on Energy) and the state was now an installer's paradise. I moved back and started Light Energy Systems.

**Q.** *How have the Focus on Energy incentives worked out? Do the incentives help Light Energy Systems?*

Focus absolutely helps. Site assessments sponsored by Focus led directly to two projects.

I really like the Focus on Energy program because the residential site assess

*Continued from page 4*

ments do so much more than just assess the viability of a renewable energy installation. For instance, if I get a call from someone wanting an estimate on an installation, I do the estimate and that's it. If I do a site assessment for Focus, I look at the energy efficiency, as well as the possibility of an installation.

On a recent assessment, for example, the homeowner had two big old freezers in the basement. He didn't think they were drawing much electricity, so I convinced him to go to the library and check out a voltage usage meter to measure their power use. They were pulling the equivalent of 600 watts of PV. In other words, if we'd left those old freezers sucking up electricity, we would have had to install 600 more watts of PV than he really needed.

This also illustrates the real tragedy of the governor and legislature cutting funding for Focus on Energy. We're building generation plants while enormous energy efficiency opportunities could offset the plants.

The efficiency of generation plants needs to be examined too. If we're burning dirty coal, we need to get everything possible out of it. We need co-generation, gasification, and waste heat recovery to name a few efficiencies.

**Q.** *How's the market for solar PV installations?*

A few months ago, I would have said it was so-so, but in the last month it's taken off.

People are beginning to realize that our energy future isn't secure. A renewable energy installation gives them better reliability, and they're believing that renewables are what the county should do. Owning their own system gives them control of their energy too.

People get a strong sense of satisfaction out of owning a system. A few years down the road, they forget the cost of the system. They're glad they did it. They have a sense of pride.

People seem to be making very sophisticated comments about energy.

**Q.** *Light Energy Systems usually has a booth at the MREA Fair. Is that really worth your while?*

It's worth while to be seen, to make contacts with people at the fair. We also participate in the Tour of Solar Homes too.

People take a long time to decide on an installation. Think about it; you have to make the decision, arrange financing, and get everything lined up.

I saw one person at the fair last year, and I saw him again this year. Now we're doing an installation.

**Q.** *In your mind, what system or systems make the most sense for residential customers?*

I really like to see new construction incorporate solar thermal into radiant heat. That's ideal. Bob Ramlow popularized the idea. Maybe he even invented it.

In a new building, we can dig out the basement an extra two feet. We run radiant tubing through a big sand bed in those extra two feet under the basement floor. We can even begin to pre-heat the sand bed in August though it won't begin radiating until October. A well-insulated two story home can use the radiant heat and a small energy efficient wood stove. It takes a fairly large area for solar collectors, but it works well.

**Q.** *Light Energy Systems has made it to the three-year mark, about the time a lot of small businesses have already gone belly up. Are you going to make it?*

Full funding for Focus on Energy and a strong renewable energy standard would help a lot.

This year was better than last. We can expect 10% to 15% growth per year if the carpet isn't pulled out from underneath us.

We're also seeing an increase in op-

erating efficiency as the industry grows. We're seeing improved products, specialized tools, better expansion tanks. We might be able to continue to increase growth without even adding staff.

Light Energy Systems also continues to do enough hydroponics (steam and hot water systems) to stay up to date on the technology and techniques in case the renewables collapse. You see apartment buildings in Madison, for instance, where landlords are paying enormous amounts of money on wasted energy. They simply need individual controls on each apartment, so the people on the top floor aren't opening their windows to escape from the heat while the people on the ground floor keep turning up the thermostat.

Owning my own business is great. I get a lot of satisfaction in the quality we deliver. We have great customers. But I worry about the uncertainties in the risk factors that could dramatically change the market. The industry needs sustained support in tax incentives and Focus on Energy.✧

## Renewables and Efficiency Help Hypatia Cut Energy Use

Burke O'Neal lives what he preaches when he goes home after a day running Light Energy System, the company owned by Burke and his brother Mark.

Residents of Hypatia living cooperative near the UW-Madison campus, the two brothers installed PV and solar water heating systems on the roof. At the low-tech end of the energy-saving spectrum, they wrapped insulating tape around every exposed pipe of hot water heating system, installed temperature-regulation valves on several radiators, blew 50 bales of cellulose fiber between the joists under the attic floor, replaced standard exit lighting with LED signs, and switched from incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescents.

None of the improvements change the appearance of the 1853 Italianate villa, but the residents have seen their energy bills shrink significantly and the electric meter run backwards.✧

# Byron Wind Turbine Site Owner's Perspective

*The Fond du Lac Reporter recently published the following letter from Doug and Cindy Decker.*

**W**e own the land that We Energies leases for its two wind turbines, which are located in the Town of Byron, Fond du Lac County. We invite all to attend the two public wind turbine tours that We Energies is hosting this year. The tours will be held on May 21 and September 24 (both dates are Saturdays), from 9:30 a.m. until noon. Come out and see (and hear) these two turbines up close and learn more about this type of clean, renewable energy.

This June the turbines will have been generating renewable electricity for six years. So far they have generated over 17 million kilowatt hours—the energy equivalent of 12 train carloads of coal—without producing any carbon dioxide or smog-forming emissions. To put this production in perspective, the average home served by We Energies consumes 9,000 kilowatt hours per year.

Each year, we witness flocks of birds migrating. Our wind turbines have proven to be no threat to bird or bat populations. In almost six years of operation, we have found only two dead birds. Cars, trucks, as well as the average cat, kill many more birds in one week than a wind farm does in a year.

Improper grounding and poor wiring cause stray voltage, not the wind turbines themselves. There is ample evidence that wildlife is constant around our wind turbines by their tracks. If stray voltage was present, animals would avoid the area.

Wind turbines do not fling ice; they shed ice. This happens because turbines are designed to shut down as soon as ice forms on the blades, disturbing the air foil. As the temperature warms up, the ice will fall off the lowest blade. Only when all the ice has slid off the blades can production resume.

Conditions have to be right for shadow flicker to occur. The sun has to be in the proper position in the sky and

shining, and the turbine blades have to be turning. Due to the changing orbital path around the sun, these conditions occur twice a year, and last only a few days. It takes only 10 to 15 minutes for the flicker to pass across our house.

We live about 1,300 feet east from the turbines and can hear them occasionally. However, every day we hear nearby Highway 41 and the Byron train, which is almost two miles away.

Our neighbors and many other people have told us how much they enjoy watching the graceful sweep of the blades. They say that they now always know which way the wind is blowing. Some use this knowledge for

hunting game on our farm. A neighboring farmer told us that he looks to see which way the wind is blowing before he takes his tractor out to spread manure.

We feel fortunate to be a part of something sustainable that produces energy yet reduces pollution. We support domestic renewable energy sources.

We would like to close with a quote from Michael Vickerman, RENEW Executive Director: “Keep in mind that all sources of electricity - coal, natural gas, wind turbines, hydro, solar and nuclear - have measurable environmental consequences. Placed in that context, wind is a clear environmental winner.”✧



*Cody Jacobson gives his sign of approval during We Energies' Byron turbine open house on Doug and Cindy Decker's property last May.*

## Three New Members Join RENEW Board of Directors

RENEW members elected John Bahr, Mark Daugherty, and Rebecca Grossberg to the organization's Board of Directors in voting during the first two weeks of July. Current RENEW secretary of the board Dennis Briley won re-election as well.

Bahr and Briley lead RENEW's Wind Power Community Education Program, which has made nearly 50 presentations on wind energy in the last year in southeastern Wisconsin. With a Ph.D. in engineering, Bahr spent many years in advanced system design with GE Medical.

Daugherty's background includes stints as CEO of Virent Energy Systems, Chief Scientist of Enable Fuel Cell Corp., Principal Investigator at Los Alamos National Laboratory, and R&D Manager at Superconductivity, Inc. He currently works on renewable energy business development at MSB Energy Associates in Middleton.

Grossberg works for the Madison Environmental Group, an innovative consulting firm specializing in green development, transportation demand management, and action-oriented community outreach.

Briley, Bahr, and Grossberg will serve for three years, while Daugherty's seat will expire in 2007.

The board also appointed Bill Aeschbacher and Chuck Alsberg, former board members, to one year terms.

Current board members Larry Krom, Rich Hasselman, Shelly Laffin, Mary Myers, Katie Nekola, Mick Sagrillo, Michael Vickerman, and Niels Wolter were not up for election.✧

## Board Meetings Open to RENEW Members

Members are always welcome at meetings of RENEW's Board of Directors.

The next board meeting will be at 10 a.m. on October 18 at Milwaukee's Urban Ecology Center, 1500 E. Park Place. Visit the Center's Web site for a map: <http://www.urbanecologycenter.org>.✧



*Michael Vickerman dips his hands into the composted solids from the new anaerobic digester at the Five Star Dairy near Elk Mound. Microgy, Inc., the developer and owner of the digester in the background, will sell the power to Dairyland Power Cooperative, owner of the generating equipment. The installation is expected to generate 775 kilowatts of clean baseload energy, capable of powering 600 homes throughout Dairyland's four-state service area. The dairy is owned by Lee Jensen and his wife Jean Amundson, in partnership with his cousin Jim Jensen.*

## Wind Group Honors Mick Sagrillo

Long-time RENEW board member Mick Sagrillo received the first ever Small Wind Advocacy Award from Wind Powering America at the Windpower 2005 conference in Denver in May.

"Mick Sagrillo has influenced the knowledge of small wind and renewables around the world," said Trudy Forsyth, senior project leader for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), the administrative agency for the Wind Powering American program.

"No one deserves this more than Mick," added Michael Vickerman.

Sagrillo has over 20 years experience with wind technology and is the owner of Sagrillo Power and Light, a consulting firm specializing in small wind turbine technology and educational workshops. He has been involved in over 700 projects and authored many of the most influential articles published on small-scale wind technology.

In addition, he is a founding member of the Midwest Renewable Energy Association and has served as president of the board since 1991. He is also the wind energy specialist for Focus on Energy. He began his career by forming Lake Michigan Wind and Sun, which he sold in 1997.

"Focus on Energy is proud to have a some of the top renewable energy experts in the country, and Mick Sagrillo is a shining example," said Don Wichert, program director for Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program.

"His enthusiasm for renewable energy has resulted in a number of programs in Wisconsin that are helping to keep our air and water clean for future generations."

The Wind Powering America program promotes wind energy as a new source of income for American farmers, Native Americans, and other rural landowners.✧

# Renewable and Energy Efficiency Events

Sept. 12-14 2005	<b>Renewable Energy from Organics Recycling</b> , Madison, WI. BioCycle's comprehensive three-day conference will bring the facts needed, latest systems and technologies . . . to get projects up and running successfully. Meet the project managers, farmers, investors, business developers, expert consultants who are actively building an industry. Participants will establish their roles in this vital growing segment of biomass utilization. More information at <a href="http://www.focusonenergy.com/data/common/calendarfiles/Conference%20Brochure.pdf">http://www.focusonenergy.com/data/common/calendarfiles/Conference%20Brochure.pdf</a> .
Sept. 24 2005	<b>Byron Turbine Tour</b> , Byron WI. We Energies offers tours of its two wind turbines in Fond du Lac County. The first tour begins at 9:30 a.m. and the last tour begins at 12:30 p.m. No reservations necessary for small groups but large groups of 5 or more should make reservations. Call 414.221.4264 to make a reservation. More information at <a href="http://www.we-energies.com/educators/fieldtrips/gentour_info.htm">http://www.we-energies.com/educators/fieldtrips/gentour_info.htm</a> .
Oct. 19-21 2005	<b>Renewable Energy: A Look into the Future</b> , Elkhart Lake, WI. A statewide conference addressing solar, wind, biomass, biodiesel, carbon sequestration, biogas, geothermal, ethanol, hydrogen fuel cells, and more. Sponsored by Glacierland Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. More information at <a href="http://www.glacierlandrccd.org">www.glacierlandrccd.org</a> .
Sept. 30 - Oct. 1, 2005	<b>Tour of Solar Buildings</b> , all across Wisconsin. Free tours to the general public of businesses on the 30th and homes on the 1st. More than 100 sites are open throughout Wisconsin during these two days. Guided tours by bus will be available in Madison, Milwaukee, Northern Wisconsin, Central Wisconsin, and Green Bay (small fee for bus tours). More information at <a href="http://www.the-mrea.org">www.the-mrea.org</a> .
June 23-25, 2006	<b>Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Fair</b> , Custer, WI. The world's oldest and largest fair of its kind. Sponosred by the Midwest Renewable Energy Association. More information at <a href="http://www.the-mrea.org">www.the-mrea.org</a> .

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