

**Letter from the Executive Director:
Jason Edens**

Seven years ago, when RREAL first began, I wrote a couple of newsletters. I don't know how I wrote more than one because we hadn't done anything yet, and we didn't know much of anything either. Although writing a newsletter back then was premature, it is now long overdue. Having grown from a garage band non-profit with lofty ideals to a solid organization with a clear mission and important programs, RREAL is founded on the powerful mission of making solar power accessible to people of all income levels.

RREAL is proud to be delivering solar heating to low-income families on public heating assistance. Although heating assistance is a much needed service, it is not currently offering a lasting solution. Our Solar Assistance program can! Solar power is an appropriate technology that can address both the social justice issues of fuel poverty and the environmental issues of greenhouse gas emissions.

We have exciting news to report. We've recently been awarded a substantial research contract to demonstrate the capacity of newly developed solar air heating panel. Designed specifically to be applicable for small residential Solar Assistance installation as well as large commercial arrays, our solar collector will be in production with 2 months! Following the deployment of 67 our collector prototypes, we'll submit our collector design to the Solar Rating Certification Commission for their stamp of approval. RREAL will be manufacturing high quality, efficient and durable solar collectors!



RREAL News: An Update from the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance

Making Solar Power accessible to People of all Income Levels

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2007

We Moved: Our Spacious New Home

In the past, we have called crowded offices, basements and garages "home." While we are a small non profit, we have experienced a great amount of organizational growth over the last year and have

moved into the Greenhouse Building on the Hunt Utilities Group Campus, located just outside of Pine River, MN.

The significant increase in space gives us the opportunity to work with manu-

facturing tools and increase employee teams. Now we are better able to serve and function as a professional and growing

organization.

HUG's mission is to explore and develop sustainable building techniques and systems. RREAL both supports and practices this mission ourselves— what a great fit! The campus is full of innovative and sustainable projects like different wind turbines, straw bale buildings, a green roof, permaculture, low energy and water use buildings and environmentally friendly art. Continued on Page 2. See Move.



Our big new office!

The Benefit Was a Smashing Success!

On May 26th, RREAL invited the public to a open house and benefit to celebrate our new space at the HUG campus and to celebrate the success and support that allowed us to be here. The day was tremendous with live music, a garage sale and silent auction. Items included boats, a snowmobile, and beautiful furniture. Everything sold at the benefit was donated by supportive community members. The

festivities continued on into the evening with chocolate tasting and book reading of From the Table with author Gary Holthaus. Delicious

chocolate and good conversation was plentiful! The event's success could



Community Members looking at items in the garage sale. This is the greenhouse space in our new building.

not have happened with out all of our (Continued on Page 2. See Benefit)

RREAL
Rural Renewable Energy Alliance

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Making Solar Power Accessible to People of All Income Levels

What is New With RREAL?

New RREAL Staff

RREAL continues to stay busy with projects and installations. To make the work load a little easier, two interns, Eric and Danielle, are working with us for the summer to help with new projects. Graham, our volunteer from the Americorps/VISTA program is helping us with our solar air heat research and development projects. A second Vista volunteer will be joining us in August.. Thanks for joining the team!

RREAL is seeking volunteers

RREAL is currently seeking several volunteers to help us tackle our very ambitious summer goals. We need volunteers on installation sites, in the shop, around the office, and writing grants. We appreciate any amount of time you can give. Of course financial donations are always greatly appreciated as we are a privately funded organization. If you are interested in volunteering or donating please email info@rreal.org. Donations are tax deductible.

Solar Profile: Syvantis Technologies

Last September RREAL installed photovoltaic panels at the Fairview Office Park in Brainerd for Syvantis Technologies. This 2.2 kilowatt system provides approximately one quarter of the electricity needs for the 13,000 square feet building. The panels are highly visible off of Highway 210 in Baxter. This location is ideal providing RREAL another opportunity to show what a strong and viable alternative solar power is to traditional energy sources.



The photovoltaic panels at the Syvantis site.

RREAL contracts photovoltaic installations with businesses and individuals as another way to support our Solar Assistance program and provide Renewable Energy options in North Central Minnesota. If you are interested in more information about our contracting service, please call or email us.

Move Continued:

Another great thing about being on the HUG campus is that the other tenants- Happy Dancing Turtle, Moon Bay Designs, Round Belly Clothing and HUG diversify the knowledge and expertise on campus. The talents of all of HUG's tenants help make it interesting and lively. Together we create a space where our combined areas of knowledge allow us to assist and promote people's efforts to be more sustainable.

So stop on by our new office and say hello, we would love to see you!

Volunteer Profile

RREAL would like to recognize Courtney Butcher who spent many hours planning our recent Open House and Benefit event. We could not have done it without her hard work, talents and generous nature. She did an excellent job planning the entire day and the event unfolded beautifully.



Benefit Continued:



Informational displays in our office telling people what RREAL does.

volunteers, thank you so much to all those that helped. The event's success could not have happened with out all of our volunteers, thank you so much to all those that helped. Over the course of the day, there was between five and six hundred people out at the HUG campus. People came with questions and interest in what RREAL does. We were simply blown away by the community outpouring. We are so grateful and happy to see so much interest in our organization. Thank you to all who donated to these events. Combined the garage sale and silent auction raised over \$4000, which will help RREAL continue to grow as an organization.

A Big Thanks to You from Us!!

Thank you so much to the following people who have helped us recently:

BJ Allen, Steve-o Benson, Barbara Butcher, Ben Butcher, Danny Butcher, Chocolate Ox, Crow Wing Food Co-op, Ed Fasula, Paul and Lynn Hunt, Gary Holthaus, Grieds's Jewelry, Charles Krysel, Kendall Candles, Lorna Koestner, Lakes Latte, Joel Lindstrom, Bob McLean, Roundbelly Clothing, Stone Women Herbals, Sibley Station, Sunshine Gardens, the Thomas family, Windrose Farm, Worldknit.com, Graham Wright.

BIG thanks to:

Hunt Utilities Group

Happy Dancing Turtle

The Initiative Foundation

RREAL is a small organization with a big mission, so there is always so much to do. That is why our volunteers are so important to us. You are of crucial to the success of RREAL. We really appreciate all the time, talent and energy you bring to our organization.