



The Power to Make a Difference  
Newsletter  
Third Quarter  
September 2014



### Greetings!

Thank you for continuing to follow RREAL's work. As always, we are grateful for your interest and support. Enjoy this issue of the newsletter, share it with your friends and colleagues, and let us know what you think!

### On the Road With Solar Assistance Projects

RREAL has been busy with Solar Assistance installations this season. Thanks to funding from the Otto Bremer Foundation, our crew was able to travel to Wisconsin to do installations for the Bad River Nation, as well as North Dakota to install at several locations for the Red River Valley Community Action. The Blandin Foundation also funded a grant which made possible several installations for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Housing Authority and KOOTASCA Community Action Council.



### REAL Solar Busy With Installations



REAL Solar has completed a wide variety of solar installations this summer, both residential and commercial. Many of the systems are

### Gearing Up For Give to the Max Day



Give to the Max Day is coming soon! Watch for details on our Facebook page, and follow us on Twitter to keep informed about this huge giving event.

Of course, you can make a donation at any time! Visit our [GiveMN page!](#)

### Solstis SPF Patent

**8,757,143**

RREAL is proud to announce we've officially received the patent on our Solstis™ Solar Powered Furnace! Credit goes to our original team of inventors: Sarah Hayden, Graham Wright, BJ Allen, and Jason Edens.

### Outreach Opportunities



Have you seen the solar systems at RREAL's new building? Would you like to know more about them?

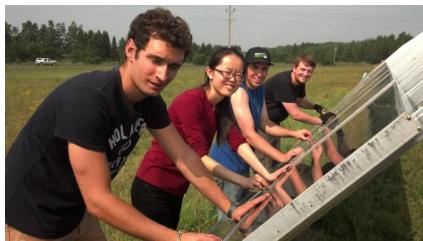
If you are part of a class, group, or organization and are interested in learning more about solar energy, we invite



of technologies. Perhaps our most notable system is the solar awning installed at the Harmony Food Co-Op in Bemidji, MN. RREAL Solar also sub-contracted with one of our dealers to complete an installation on a greenhouse with a combination of solar air heat and solar water heat technologies. We also completed several installations that qualified for the Made in Minnesota rebate program, which still has funding available.

## RREAL Provides Training Installations

RREAL has provided two training installations this summer. In June, we partnered with Community Action of Minneapolis and a local contractor to do an installation at the New Hope Ministries in south Minneapolis. Thanks to Community Action of Minneapolis for funding this project!



RREAL Solar installed a PV system at its new facility to generate clean energy for its use on site. The whole RREAL crew including our summer interns participated, and the installation was a blast for all. Thanks to Alex, Qicong, Guy, Ryan, Roger, Adam, Steve and Jason. Also, thanks to Keith Dahl who conducted an applied hands-on training in layout, and special thanks to Jon Kramer and Sundial who donated the 104 modules for the installation. The modules are re-purposed from an older installation and demonstrate the durability of the technology.

## REAL Solar Settles Into New Home

After a lot of hard work, REAL Solar finally has its new home. Volunteers and staff have spent many hours cleaning, painting, landscaping and installing solar panels to get the building ready for occupancy. This new location will house

RREAL Solar Design Build. The property features a large 4.3kW solar photovoltaic array, as well as nine of RREAL's Solstis™ Solar Powered Furnaces.



## Conservation Corps Corner



photovoltaic (PV) systems, but a few projects included a unique combination

you to schedule a tour with RREAL's Solar Heat Outreach Specialists, Ryan and Adam. They'd be happy to speak with your group about our mission, the different types of solar technologies and their applications, and show you the recently installed solar air heating and photovoltaic systems.

To schedule your group tour, contact us at 218-587-4753 or by email at [adamm@rreal.org](mailto:adamm@rreal.org).

We look forward to seeing you!!

## Made in MN Rebates

Funds are still available for the Made in Minnesota Solar Thermal Rebate program. To date, RREAL Solar has been able to secure rebates for several solar thermal clients. Solar thermal is an effective and appropriate choice in so many applications. Don't let these funds go unused! Find out more about the MiM Rebate Program [here](#). Call us to help develop your Made in Minnesota project!

## Summer Interns Sunset

As fall creeps in, RREAL says farewell to its summer interns.

We'd like to thank Trevor Pierce, Guy Dibble, Alex Combe, and Qicong Wang for their many, many hours of work with RREAL.

Trevor and Guy served as interns through Mesabi Range Community & Technical College. Trevor worked with our installation crew, and Guy assisted with manufacturing. Alex is finishing up his internship through Arts et Metiers Paris Tech, and Qicong is volunteering after attending the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Alex and Qicong have been working on



River. From making pizza box solar ovens and playing a photon ball toss game to comparing light bulbs and analyzing solar resource potential, Adam and Ryan helped to connect kids with clean and renewable energy. Their outreach travels also took them to northwest Minnesota where they led activities at the White Earth Math & Science Academy and at a Project Get Outdoors event in Crookston, MN.

Meanwhile in Iowa, Jackie Boat continues to teach energy conservation classes, and is hoping to reach out to local schools with presentations and SPF system tours. HACAP is considering solar installations at

3 homes in rural counties, which would be funded by HACAP's Rural Rehab Fund.

## MN Legislative Energy Commission Visits RREAL



With the loss of nearly 40% of the State's supply of propane due to the reversal of the Cochin pipeline, the MN Legislative Energy Commission is investigating the feasibility of converting propane gas users to natural gas or other alternative sources of energy, like solar heat.

In late July, members of the Energy Commission visited three of RREAL's Solar Powered Furnace installation sites

where the solar heating systems were offsetting propane. The last stop was a tour of the RREAL headquarters and one of the largest solar heating installations in the state, after which there was a lengthy discussion about how Minnesota can backfill the loss of propane supply with solar heat rather than a rail play or more natural gas. After the tour and a question and answer period, the Commission held its regular meeting on campus.

Thanks to the MN Legislative Energy Commission for its interest in the value of solar thermal and RREAL's efforts.

## Featured Dealer



We are very proud to feature Craig Taylor of Taylor Made Homes in this issue of our newsletter. Craig came to the dealer program in the spring of

several research and development projects.

Interns are vital to RREAL's work, each lending individual skills and gaining meaningful experience.

## Fundraising Event Coming Soon

Plans are underway for a fundraising event to benefit RREAL to be held in the metro area. It won't just be about fundraising for RREAL...it will be about BEER, food and fun! Watch our Facebook Page, and follow us on Twitter for details as they become available.

## Staff News

Congratulations to our Program Manager, Shannon Wheeler, and husband Gabe on the birth of their daughter, Ruby!

Also, we'd like to welcome Guy Dibble as our new Manufacturing Assistant. Guy is no stranger, as he has just finished a summer internship with RREAL.

## Quick Links

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## Hero Search



2013 as a well-respected builder of high-end custom homes in the Lakes Area of Minnesota. He attended RREAL's annual dealer training, which included a classroom session as well as a hands-on installation of a 3-collector Solar Air Heat system on a Habitat for Humanity home as a Solar Assistance project.

Donate items to RREAL through Hero Search [HERE!](#)

Just last week Taylor Made Homes submitted two applications to the Minnesota Department of Commerce for the Made in Minnesota rebate program, both of which were approved. Craig is now preparing to install a 7-collector array on the Pine River Township building in Pine River MN and another 4-collector system at the Backus Municipal Airport in Backus MN. Both agencies are in Made in Minnesota utility regions and both use propane. Both Made in Minnesota recipients will save thousands on propane season after propane season for decades

Through hard work and dedication, Craig is now a solar expert, able to utilize his knowledge of renewables and incentives to furnish the Lakes Area in Minnesota with effective, affordable Solar Energy. Way to go, Craig!

## RREAL To Begin Series of PV Projects for Environmental Learning Centers

RREAL has committed to installing nearly 40 kW of PV at six area residential environmental learning centers, including Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Deep Portage Learning Center, Audubon Center of the Northwoods, Long Lake Conservation Center, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center and Laurentian Environmental Learning Center. The project will provide solar curriculum for tens of thousands of learners of all ages. RREAL is both thrilled and honored to be the solar contractor for this project.

## PV for Phebe: Fundraising Continues



The best way we can serve the people of Bong county and Liberia as they grapple with the frightening ebola epidemic is to continue to develop the PV for Phebe project, so that as soon as the epidemic is behind Liberia, we can get some boots on the ground prepping for the installation at Phebe hospital. The need for reliable power is all the more evident.



For a phenomenal story about how the women of Liberia brought an end to a ten year civil war, watch [this video](#). Learn a bit of the backstory, and see why our project there is so important.

Learn more about the hospital and this project and how you can donate on their [Facebook page](#).

## Help RREAL Help Others!

RREAL is grateful for the support of a variety of organizations and funders who have helped make this year's Solar Assistance and Outreach programs successful. We need your continued support to help our organization bring Solar Assistance to low-income communities not only here in the Midwest, but across the nation. Not only do we need your continued support, we need the support of your friends and fellow citizens. Tell someone about RREAL's innovative and transformative efforts to address poverty with solar energy. Help us help others!

**Sunny regards from all of us at RREAL!**

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