

September 2010

## Upcoming Trainings :

IRENEW Renewable Energy Trainings:

October 9: PV 101 Basic Photovoltaics

October 21-22: SHW 301 Installation Lab at IRETC

November 10-12: PV 301 Installation and Lab at IRETC

December 3: PV 101 Basic Photovoltaics (tentative)

Register: [www.irenew.org](http://www.irenew.org)

## RENEW ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Date: **SEPTEMBER 12, 2010**

Time: **11 AM - 3 PM**

Place: **Kent Park Oxford, Iowa (Bluebird Shelter)**

### Meeting Agenda as follows:

1. New Spring Expo
2. Iowa Renewable Energy Training Center
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Directors
6. Membership Feedback
7. Guest Speaker (@ 1pm)



Guest Speaker Randall Swisher has been a Renewable Energy advocate since 1975. Swisher served as head of the American

Wind Energy Association from 1989 to 2009. Prior to that, he held energy policy positions at the American Public Power Association and the National Association of Counties. He also served on the staff of the House Interior Committee's Subcommittee on Water and Power. Swisher has taught energy policy at Georgetown University and the Georgetown University Law Center. Swisher has a Ph.D. in American civilization from George Washington University and a B.A. from the University of Iowa. Currently Swisher consults for AWEA and holds an Adjunct Professorship in the School of Engineering, at Catholic University.

## TOP TEN REASONS TO SUPPORT THE IOWA RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATION

- 1) No other local grass roots organizations are promotes Renewable Energy.
- 2) We are concerned about the Consumer and are Technology Neutral.
- 3) We provide accessible, spontaneous information in a user-friendly way.
- 4) We are the only step-by-step Iowa-centric resource to help consumers sift through conflicting Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency information.
- 5) We represent the citizens of Iowa and their interests-no one else.
- 6) Supporting I-Renew creates local jobs and educational programming and outreach.
- 7) Supporting I-Renew shows that you are a progressive business and/or group that cares about the local community.
- 8) Supporting I-Renew creates a cleaner, healthier more economical world for us all by making Renewable Energy a reality here at home.
- 9) Supporting I-Renew creates local energy independence by enabling Iowans to 'grow their own' power cheaply and locally.
- 10) Your support achieves reductions in im-

ported oil costs and utilities spending directly correlate with increases in consumer spending on other stuff: groceries, dining out, clothing, and discretionary spending.

*Support I-RENEW Today!*  
To learn more about how you can volunteer and or support I-RENEW please visit us at:  
[www.irenew.org](http://www.irenew.org) or [www.iowashares.org](http://www.iowashares.org)



September 2010

## **E**lectric Car Plant, Plus 300 Jobs, Coming to Webster City, IA

By JEFF ECKHOFF • jeckhoff@dmreg.com • *printed July 26, 2010*

Up to 2,500 electric cars a week could start rolling out of a new Webster City assembly plant under a deal slated to be announced today.

The new operation is expected to mean 300 or more jobs for Webster City, which is hurting from the closing of washer-dryer manufacturer Electrolux and the loss of its 850 jobs.

Envision Motor Co., an Ames firm formed to combine foreign-made car bodies with American-made electrical parts, is expected to announce a deal to assemble a line of three all-electric vehicles in 292,000 square feet of factory space now occupied by Eagle Manufacturing, an Electrolux subcontractor.

The vehicles - a pickup, a station wagon and a cargo van - are promised to get more than 200 miles on a single battery charge. They'll sell, possibly beginning late this fall, under an "Electric Motor Cars" logo for \$32,300 to \$37,300.

They'll join a soon-to-be crowded market that will include the Chevy Volt, a car expected in November, and the Nis-

san Leaf, a car due the following month. Many more car makers have electric vehicles in development - including Toyota, which earlier this month announced plans with California-based Tesla Motors for an electric version of the Rav4.

Shawn Carson, chief financial officer for Envision Motor Co., said the Webster City assembly plant will start with 25,000 square feet of space and expand as Electrolux work winds down.

Eagle, a manufacturing company that now performs a variety of contract duties for Electrolux, is scheduled to lose that work by the end of next year. Electrolux announced in December 2009 that it planned to move its production to Juarez, Mexico, and eliminate its Webster City manufacturing by the first quarter of 2011.

The new assembly plant is scheduled to produce 50 cars a week for the first three months, all of which will be sent to a still-building nationwide network of roughly 200 dealers.

The plant is expected to begin making retail vehicles by the end of the year, Carson said. Ramped-up production eventually should reach 2,500 cars a week and require "300-plus" jobs in Webster City, he said.

Workers at the new assembly plant will receive fully built "gliders" - European-

made cars with seats and interior niceties, but no motors - and will add batteries and other electric equipment. Envision documents say two workers with a hydraulic lift and all the proper parts should be able to create a functioning car in less than six hours.

Joseph Fleming Jr., owner of Eagle Manufacturing, could not be reached for comment Friday.

Gene Gabus, a Des Moines car dealer who plans to sell the vehicles in Iowa and oversee distribution for 32 other states, has estimated that he can sell 50,000 a year, Carson said.

Joel Peterson, president of the business and industry committee of Webster City Area Development, the city's business-attraction entity, said the new jobs should cushion the blow in a community that expects to see at least 600 more pink slips by first part of next year.

"Any good news for Webster City is great news just because of the situation we're in," Peterson said. "That would be just welcome, great news."

Carson said the first 38 gliders should be in Webster City by the end of the week.

Chevy Volts are scheduled to be built in Detroit. The Nissan Leaf began production in Japan but will be made in Tennessee beginning in 2012.



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**P**OWERING UP SKILLS AND JOBS: Kirkwood partners with IRENEW building new energy technologies program

gram

Kirkwood Community College is partnering with I-RENEW to develop a two-year Associate of Applied Science degree in Energy Production and Distribution.

"Partnerships, such as the one we've established with I-RENEW is vital to the success of this new venture," said Jeff Mitchell, Kirkwood Dean of Industrial Technologies.

The new Kirkwood program will focus on wind power, photovoltaics, and to some degree conventional steam generation. "The reason steam is part of the curriculum is recognizing the reality of steam as an energy source for the near future," Mitchell observed. "Our goal is to promote and grow the renewables while providing instruction on the conventional sources in a form to maximize their efficiencies through the blending of fuels and

increased systems efficiencies as the renewables gains a larger footprint in our energy infrastructure." There will be many unique and innovative features of the new Kirkwood program:

- First year students will receive the same training as Industrial Maintenance Technicians in the areas of electricity, electronics, hydraulics, math, computers and OSHA compliance. At the end of their first year students are given the opportunity to choose between careers in maintenance or energy production and distribution.
- Non-credit coursework through continuing education programs will be accepted for credit electives through the implementation of Prior Learning Assessments (PLA's).
- Since low mathematical skills contribute heavily to student dropout rates in the technologies, a Math Assistance Lab is being provided daily to the students, free of charge.

- Students will obtain the National Career Readiness Certificate validating their "Reading for Information," "Applied Mathematics" and "Locating Information" skills in addition to their A.A.S. degree, making them more employable.

Students of this energy program will also have the added benefit of being exposed to cutting edge technology by utilizing I-RENEW's new training facility in Hiawatha. Students in other Kirkwood Industrial Technologies programs such as Plumbing, HVAC, Construction Management, Architecture and Carpentry have also been invited to use the new training site.

"Acciona, Clipper, Alliant Energy, CIPCO and I-RENEW, among others will be key players as we create affective and relevant course curricula for this program," Mitchell states. "We value these organizations' expertise and willingness to help Kirkwood make this a viable and sustainable program. We believe this will enhance job prospects and our regional economy for the foreseeable future."

**T**he University of Iowa Office of Sustainability welcomes educator and activist Bill McKibben on-Wednesday, October 13. Mr. McKibben's talk, "Creating a Sustainable World," will be free and open to the public at the Englert Theatre, at 7:00 PM.

Bill McKibben is an American environmentalist and writer who frequently writes about global warming and alternative energy and advocates for more localized economies. In 2010 the Boston Globe called him "probably the nation's leading environmentalist" and Time magazine described him as "the world's best green journalist." In 2009 he led the organization of 350.org, which coordinated what Foreign Policy magazine called "the largest ever global coordinated rally of any kind," with 5,200 simultane-

ous demonstrations in 181 countries. The magazine named him to its inaugural list of the 100 most important global thinkers, and MSN named him one of the dozen most influential men of 2009.

McKibben is a frequent contributor to various magazines including The New York Times, The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, Orion Magazine, Mother Jones, The New York Review of Books, Granta, Rolling Stone, and Outside. He is also a board member and contributor to Grist Magazine.

Bill has been awarded Guggenheim and Lyndhurst Fellowships, and won the Lannan Prize for nonfiction writing in 2000. He has honorary degrees from Green Mountain College, Unity College, Lebanon Valley College and Sterling College. He is a scholar in residence at Middlebury College.



**September 2010**

**INVITATION TO ATTEND:**

Iowa Solar and Small Wind Installers Summit,  
Sept., 24th, 2010

Iowa's first Solar and Small Wind Installers Summit will be held in Grinnell Iowa on Sept. 24th. This event will be held to bring together people currently in the business of installing small renewable energy systems as well as electrical and mechanical contractors interested in entering the market, tech instructors and trainees, utility personnel, inspectors and regulators. We will discuss issues of professional certification, safety and consumer protection as well as laying the groundwork of adoption of a state RE installers code of ethics.

Iowa is in the process of moving toward a new energy paradigm that includes distributed generation of small, independently owned renewable energy systems. We all understand that these systems provide new economic opportunities and environmental benefits to our state, but it is critical that we implement this new technology in a way that is safe and efficient, utilizing quality equipment, sold and serviced by responsible and ethical businesspeople and installed by qualified technicians.

The old saying goes..."A satisfied customer tells 3 friends, an angry customer tells 3000." Any renewable energy installer or contractor knows that's true, and a few unscrupulous players can do a lot of damage the fledgling solar and small wind businesses in Iowa. We need to grow this industry together, with quality products and workmanship.

**You can register online at:**

<http://www.ceee.uni.edu/Home/Programs/Energy/Energy/SolarTraining.aspx> or **contact:**

**Jeff Beneke, Center for Energy & Environmental Education**

**319-273-3850**



**Agenda:**

**9:00 AM:** Introductions

**9:30 AM:** Panel of state agencies - How state government is supporting RE development.

**10:45:** Break

**11:00:** Small wind turbine certification.

**Noon:** Lunch/panel on utility incentives

**1:00 PM:** Professional certification, licensing and training opportunities.

**3:00 PM:** Break

**3:15 PM:** Break-out working groups- topics include: state policy, consumer protection, grants and incentives, zoning and interconnection, code of ethics, etc.

**4:15 PM:** Open discussion/ breakout reports, discuss code of ethics

**5:15 PM:** Next steps, Final remarks

**6:00 PM:** Optional mixer, dinner at local restaurant

**Speakers:**

State Agencies - **Greg Watkins**, Iowa Utilities Board, **Todd McGee**, Iowa Workforce Development, **Jeff Geerts**, Iowa Office of Economic Development, **Steve Switzer**, Iowa Attorney General's Office, **Scott Bents**, Office of Energy Independence Small Wind Certification- **Heather Rhoads-Weaver**, Small Wind Certification Council Utility Incentives- **Regi Goodale**, Iowa Association of RECs, **Eileen Parker**, Alliant Energy, **Warren McKenna**, Farmer's Electric Coop, Kalona Training- **Nick Hylla**, North American Board of Certified Energy Professionals (NABCEP), **Jeff Beneke**, Center for Energy and Environmental Education ("Train the Trainer" program), **Steve Fugate**, Iowa Renewable Energy Association.

*This event is sponsored by The National Center for Appropriate Technology, Alliant Energy, The Iowa Energy Center, UNI Center for Energy and Environmental Education and The Iowa Renewable Energy Association*

Photos from the PFI Field Day at Yoderville Biodiesel Collective:

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On Saturday, August 28th staff and members of IRENEW joined Practical Farmers of Iowa Members and enthusiasts at the Yoderville Biodiesel Collective in Kalona, Iowa for a tour of the facility that allows Yoderville Biodiesel Collective members to produce more biodiesel quicker, cheaper, and of higher quality than before. Participants watched biodiesel manufacturing equipment in action, and visited with collective members about production, economics, politics, and the prospects for biodiesel from waste oil and from oilseeds. Participants brought their own sample of oil or

grease to titrate for biodiesel potential. Free samples were also distributed. This workshop was for both biodiesel beginners and those with advanced questions. The event was sponsored by Yoderville Biodiesel Collective and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), and Center for Energy and Environmental Education. (Photos from the event are above). **The Collective: The Yoderville Biodiesel Collective is a group effort to share information and resources and to capture economies of scale in the production of biodiesel. The YBDC's next scheduled workshop is September 11, 2010. For more information see page 5 of this newsletter of contact: Steve Fugate, 319/331-4831, steve@yfdc.org**

## Grassroots Energy Efficiency Movement Puts Twist on Traditional Smoothie

A **smoothie** is a machine blended, chilled, sometimes sweetened beverage made from fresh fruit or vegetables. Many smoothies include crushed ice, frozen fruit, and yogurt. Traditionally they have had a milk-shake like consistency which is thicker than a slushy. Smoothies are often marketed to health-conscious people, and some restaurants offer add-ins such as soy milk, whey and protein powder, and nutritional supplement mixes. Smoothies became widely available in the United States in the late 1960s when health food stores began selling them. By the 1990s and 2000s, smoothies became available at mainstream cafés and coffee shops, and in pre-bottled versions at supermarkets all over the world.

One local energy efficiency enthusiast aims to take the traditional smoothie to new heights in popular acclaim with the introduction of the 'Chunky.' With all the health benefits and options of the traditional smoothie, the 'Chunky' places emphasis on locally grown in-season organic ingredients and it pulls the plug-so to speak-on the energy required to blend, grind, crush, grate, liquefy, stir, puree, chop, whip and mix ingredients. Although energy modeling comparisons between building a standard smoothie versus a sustainable "Chunky" are still being calculated, blindfold taste and texture tests results are proving the Chunky to be the next wave in the local food movement; one of which even Bill McKibben could approve.

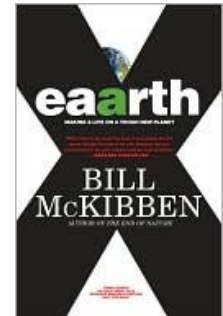


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## **S**tatewide September Events, Trainings and Opportunities

- Anatomy of Iowa Floods: Preparing for the Future** The University of Iowa Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research has added four community flood seminar dates across Iowa in response to requests from more Iowa communities to help people better understand the 2008 Iowa floods and how Iowa residents, local, regional and state leaders and land-owners can better plan and prepare for future flooding. The seminars will take place in four communities beginning Sept. 7 and ending Sept. 30. The presentations will be followed by a question and answer session. For more information, see <http://www.cgrer.uiowa.edu/calendar/2010/08/08162010.htm>. The upcoming seminars follow five community seminars held in June and July in Burlington, Cedar Rapids, Waverly, Mason City and Ames.
- September 2, Air Quality Rule Meeting, Public Welcome Des Moines** The next PM2.5 (fine particle pollution) Implementation Workgroup Meeting will be held Sept. 2 at 9 AM in the DNR Air Quality Bureau conference room at 7900 Hickman Road Ste 1, Windsor Heights. Go to [http://www.iowadnr.gov/air/prof/meet\\_wg/pm25/index.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/air/prof/meet_wg/pm25/index.html) for additional information.
- September 11: Yoderville Biodiesel Collective Hands-on Workshop** sponsored by IRENEW, NCAT and ATTRA. Topics Include Oil Collection; Titration; Processing; Washing & Drying; Simple Biodiesel Quality Tests; Waste Stream Management; Cold Weather Issues; Safety, Permitting and Tax Issues. Cost: \$80/ person, \$60/IREnew members, \$40/ Students. Limited class size. Pre-registration Required.! Contact: Steve Fugate, Phone: 319-331-4831, E-mail: [steve@ydbc.org](mailto:steve@ydbc.org).
- September 13: Public Hearing on Iowa Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule, Des Moines** A public hearing for the Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule will be held Sept. 13 at 1 pm in the DNR Air Quality Bureau conference room at 7900 Hickman Road Ste 1, Windsor Heights. To learn more about the Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule, go to <http://www.iowadnr.gov/air/prof/ghg/ghg.html>. Contact Marnie Stein at [marnie.stein@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:marnie.stein@dnr.iowa.gov) or 515-281-8468 if you have questions.
- Sept. 24 : Iowa Solar and Small Wind Installers Summit** see p.4 of this publication or visit: <http://www.ceee.uni.edu/>

## **R**eaders Corner A Review of 'Eaarth-Making a Life on a Tough New Planet' By Bill McKibben



I've decided not to purchase books in hardcopy anymore as a commitment to saving our planet's resources. In so doing, however, I have not written off reading books; instead I have decided to purchase books in downloadable and audio forms which facilitates sharing (not that you can't hand-off a book to an enthusiastic reader-pal but I know I am less likely to do so as I covet the books I have read and enjoy looking at my library of books as much as I have enjoyed the read. However, you can't dog-ear a WAV, AIFF or PCM file). My new commitment, albeit small, is one of many ways I attempt to act small and yet stay smart.

But YOU want to know about the book. I'll start with the title. Why the double 'a' you ask? According to McKibben, earth, the planet we purport to live on...exists no longer. Bringing the reader too close for any comfort level with climate change, Mr. McKibben introduces planet AA, Eaarth. A place where Earthlings live in an environment well past the safe threshold 350 ppm (parts per million) of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>...an environment with inhabitants on a life-saving mission to reinvent existence at an impending 650 ppm.

What will Eaarth be like as it segues from 350ppm to 650 ppm? Well...be reminded...you are living on it! I won't regurgitate McKibben's tale of the daunting path of our environmental reality. I'll just hit the low-lights: Australia and the American Southwest have been experiencing permanent drought due to drastic changes in rainfall patterns. These increase the intensity and frequency of cyclones, hurricanes, and wildfires. Erratic weather patterns affect food system stability for all, especially those living or whose livelihood depends on the land. Arctic ice-melt, expansion of the tropics, 33m acres of forest wasted due to population explosion of the Rocky Mountain Pine Beetle, are all due to increasing atmospheric temperatures.



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Plastic residues in our oceans have created rampant acidity which threatens aquatic plant and animal species with extinction let alone survival. The only natural occurrence from all of this is a series of feedback mechanisms which accelerate the warming of our planet. If you need more convincing, take inventory of what is going on. That's what environmentalists and climatologists have been doing for decades, only to be drowned out by nay-say-ers.

I had a phone meeting with colleagues a few weeks ago and learned that another colleague at Iowa State University couldn't join the call-in meeting because she was sandbagging her office building in an effort to slow flood waters. Even land-locked Iowa is not alone as it enters a major hydrological cycle. Nay-say-ers will tell you "we aren't experiencing more flooding or hurricanes, the media is just reporting it more than they used to." To which I offer, there just aren't that many news outlets and it doesn't take a climatologist to figure out that they are reporting on the same climate-related change events, which are in fact occurring more frequently and with more severity.

So who invited this guy to the cocktail party? Sad but true, most don't want to hear, much less read, page after page of the sullen and pessimistic. McKibben is an excellent writer and knows how and where to balance humor, albeit dark, with our 'backed into a corner' reality. This book is a wake-up call if you needed one; a biblical page turner of environmental proportions if you are religiously committed to adapting to our new planet Eearth. Darwin's theory 'Survival of the Fit' comes to mind; those who adapt will be fit enough to survive and tell about this *terra incognita*.

Bill McKibben, in "Eearth, Making a Life on a Tough New Planet" encourages the reader to abandon big and go small. Even if we built two million wind turbines, "Four times as many as we built in 2007, every year for the next 40 (years)" we'd only offset one ninth of carbon output to make the planet vaguely resemble the one into which baby boomers were born.

Instead, going small allows us to direct focus on community in order to meet top-line needs: food, energy and, strangely enough, the internet. McKibben directs: "Small, smart, labor-intensive, natural systems are undoubtedly the way to go." Related, food and energy need to go small because our current industrialized-agricultural food and energy systems (which are based on futures markets) are vulnerable to peak oil. Peak Oil, a concept we've known about since the 70's, is a clear threat to food security home and abroad from every angle (check that country of origin label on your pepper); and the marriage between our current food supply and energy are responsible for a significant portion of global greenhouse gases. Smaller more diversified agriculture lends stability to our compromised food supply. "Growth" as an economic concept is about to flat-line and needs to be replaced with 'maintain' and 'downsize.' These, applied, will cause an 'uptick' in sharing, community organizing, and spreading 'how-to-ism.' Enter....the internet. Shifting our lives in light of these new realities will spark a "quieter movement for what might be called functional independence." These will be the new global game-changers of ours and our grandchildren's generations.

My copy of Eearth in audio format, is currently on loan. Email me [Kimberly.dickey@gmail.com](mailto:Kimberly.dickey@gmail.com) and I'll happily share the knowledge.

**S**ave the date: **October 15th, 2010**  
Bill McKibben will give the Keynote address at the Iowa Environmental Council Annual Meeting. For more information visit : [www.iaenvironment.org](http://www.iaenvironment.org)

