

ELK GARDEN - "I'm so happy that everyone came to Elk Garden,

September 18, 2018 | Mineral Daily News-Tribune (WV) Author: Ronda Wertman Tribune Correspondent | Section: WV News | 668 Words Page: A2 OpenURL Link

ELK GARDEN – "I'm so happy that everyone came to Elk Garden," said Mayor Marian Droppleman as visitors battled the rain and fog to attend the first Energy Expo.

She recalled how Elk Garden had many coal mines and almost became the county seat. There were gas lights, a board walk for a sidewalk and railroads.

Elk Garden was also the site of the Davis Coal and Coke Company No. 20 mine where most of the men in town worked, and over 20 miners were killed in 1911. A monument to the miners stands at the town hall and was the setting for a memorial service Saturday.

"We need to remember those who have brought coal mining and energy where it is today," said Droppleman.

"We are very proud of this day," she added as visitors sat down for a miner's meal of beans and ham, buttered potatoes, stewed tomatoes, pork and sauerkraut, corn bread and rolls.

She said a favorite meal of her grandfather's was "coffee soakies," but she knew they couldn't serve that to guests at the expo.

"West Virginia is blessed that we are an energy rich state," said Sen. Randy Smith, a veteran miner and chairman of the Energy Committee from the 14th District.

"As a state and a country we have to diversify our energy," he said, noting the growth of wind power in the last five years as evidenced by looking at Corridor H.

Hydropower is another up and coming venture with talk of a plant at Jennings Randolph Lake Dam.

He said from Preston County to the west gas is booming and there are talks of a wood pellet plant in Keyser.

"The energy sector is what has brought West Virginia out of the gloom and doom. We should be a lot richer state than we are," he added, noting that much of West Virginia's coal and timber are being taken out of state.

"Elk Garden has a rich history with coal and timber," Smith said, noting that as technology improves you have to adapt.

He noted that the technology in the mines is a lot different than what you see on TV. "The technology in the mines is unbelievable. We have better internet underground than most of West Virginia."

"I started in 1979, it's unbelievable how much it has changed since then," said Smith who also brought along some items to be included in Elk Garden's Miner's Museum.

In the old days a canary in a cage was used to determine if a mine was safe for miners, while new technology monitors methane, oxygen and carbon monoxide.

John Lecky of the Mineral County Chamber of Commerce, reaffirmed West Virginia's role as an energy producer noting that the state is second in the nation in coal, first in mine safety and fourth in all energy production.

He is hoping to give local students a closer look at the energy producers with tours of mines, Dominion Power and the Green Mountain Wind Farm all in the discussion phase.

As part of the expo, students at Elk Garden School were asked to create an art project based on the energy that they see.

"I was really excited to see the thought that went into the kids art work," said Karen Lasure, an energy development specialist with the Office of Energy. "Kindergarten they get it."

Among the items Lasure had on display were a variety of kits for the classroom stressing energy efficiency and conservation.

"This is near and dear to my heart," she said. "My goal is to raise a crop of little engineers for the future."

In addition to education, she also works on benchmarking state owned building showing how the building is doing compared to other buildings in energy consumption.

One of the newest forms of energy being tapped locally is wind.

Jacob Trevillian of the Green Mountain Wind Farm spoke of their 23 turbines.

"There's a huge wind resource in this area," he said noting that is also "huge potential for growth."

"Our industry is really unique. We try to leave as small of footprint as possible," he added.

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ELK GARDEN - Rain or shine, the Elk Garden Energy Expo is a

September 14, 2018 | Mineral Daily News-Tribune (WV) Author: For the News Tribune | Section: WV News | 918 Words Page: A2 OpenURL Link

ELK GARDEN - Rain or shine, the Elk Garden Energy Expo is a go for Saturday, Sept. 15, from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

An "All Energy" focus is the theme of the expo examining the major sources of energy generation that combine to make West Virginia No. 4 in the nation for energy contribution to the Unites States. Number 1 in bituminous coal; No. 2 in all coal only after Wyoming; and ahead of all other states in mining safety measures.

Energy is a strength of West Virginia for which we can be proud, and Elk Garden a center of energy sourcing for Mineral County for generations.

The new Elk Garden Miners' Museum will be open to view at the Town Hall, where Mineral County coal history is being showcased.

The most recent contributions of a miner's hardhat with the carbide lamp attached and a miner's first aid cabinet were donated this week by Paul and Mary (Paugh) Green, some of which was used in the Masteller Mine. Mary's father Robert Paugh lost his life in the mine when a cable broke and hit him when she was 3 years old. And John is the great-grandson of the doctor for whom Green Mountain is named, Dr. John Green. Stories such as theirs abound and are being recorded with the contributions so these memories live on.

The memorial of others who lost their lives in the Number 20 mine sits just outside the Town Hall, and at 2 p.m. Councilwoman Jean Braithwaite will lead a memorial service there. Flowers will be placed in their honor.

Also outside of Town Hall there will be a wind energy display brought to us by the team of operators of the Green Mountain Wind Farm on the ridge above Elk Garden. Their model, parts of turbines that kids can touch and handle, and educational packets will combine with first-person career experience of those who work in wind energy nearby. A tour of the wind farm will be offered to students of the Elk Garden Primary School for a date to be set in the fall.

Another fall tour is being prepared for the school students by Tim and Troy Schwinabart, of D and L Mining, in the open mine just to the south of the town on Route 42. And conversations are underway for another tour of Dominion's Mount Storm Power Plant that can be seen by many Highland families. These are planned so kids can see up close the excellence of the work that sends power from West Virginia, and learn more about careers in energy that can keep kids working in Mineral County with good jobs.

At the Elk Garden Fire Hall, Karen Lasure from the West Virginia Energy Office in Charleston will focus on new avenues for energy conservation. She is making a presentation in the primary school today, and serving as a judge for an art contest in the school. Students were asked to depict what they see of energy everyday in their community, from the turbines, to the mines, to the power plant, and the timber industry.

Prizes will be rewarded to winners of the contest for each grade, K-4, and for an all-school winner. All students participating are being rewarded with ice cream, a favorite positive reinforcement according to principal Mike Saturday.

Also today, a First Energy Miners' Meal has been added at 6 p.m. to offer a welcome reception and occasion to hear more from folks traveling in for the event. Karen will lead the conversation with more stories from the energy careers welcome during the evening.

Mayor Marian Droppleman and her crew are preparing foods that were customary for miners to take into the mines or enjoy after a hard day of labor. First Energy has donated resources to help with the meal and has provided materials that will be handed out this evening that introduce career opportunities with the company.

Councilman Jody Paugh will help attendees understand the timber element of energy generation by describing the usefulness of outdoor wood furnaces, with one provided by Boggs Supply from Keyser. Pellets will be available to see and even order in town that day.

Weather permitting, a skidder from a timber project will be there for kids to become more familiar with. And the working Leon's Lumber Mill just a quarter- mile on down Paughtown Road will be open to view.

Internal energy will be provided by Mineral County's Farmers Market vendors outside across from the school in the Town Park with fruits and vegetables of the harvest. If it rains, the Farmers Market will be placed inside the fire hall.

Other internal energy will be found at the Elk Garden Methodist Church with music during the afternoon, and through foods they are preparing. Also at the Firehall there will be sweets and treats to power up attendees even if it rains.

State Senator Randy Smith, chairman of the WV Senate Energy, Industry, and Mining Committee, and Mineral County Senator, will be in attendance Saturday, describing the importance of energy to West Virginia, telling of his 40 years working in the mines, and listening to constituents' thoughts. Senator Smith has been quite helpful in preparations for the Energy Expo, and has introduced planners and the Town of Elk Garden to numerous leaders in WV energy, and opportunities going forward.

Last-minute questions can be directed to John Lecky, of the Mineral County Chamber of Commerce, at 304-790-0947.

Everyone is encouraged to make the trip to Elk Garden on Saturday, and a warm welcome is promised - whatever the weather - along with more understanding of the energy that makes our state stand out in the nation.

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Battery system replacing some Somerset County windmills

November 17, 2016 | Tribune-Democrat, The (Johnstown, PA) Author: Randy Griffith | Section: News | 321 Words OpenURL Link

GARRETT – When Green Mountain Wind Farm opened in 2000 in Somerset County, it represented the latest in wind energy technology.

Sixteen years later, it has been replaced with the latest in battery technology.

The wind farm near Garrett was decommissioned in December because its technology was not as efficient as newer turbines.

In fact, since Green Mountain Energy Storage System went online on the same property in June, it was able to deliver the same 10 megawatts of power as the eight turbines did before, a company spokesman said.

"We built on the site of the wind farm a new battery storage electricity facility," said Bryan Garner of project owner NextEra Energy Resources. "The facility stores electricity and sends it to the power grid when it is needed.

"This is new technology that has come on in the last few years."

Workers have begun dismantling the wind turbines at Green Mountain, and the farmland should be restored to its original appearance in a few weeks, Garner said.

In the past, wind turbines sent electricity directly into the power grid when the wind was blowing. If the energy was not needed at that time, it would not be purchased.

With the energy storage technology, that electricity is stored for times when demand is higher, Garner explained.

NextEra bought the Garrett wind farm in 2003. It also owns wind turbines in the Meyersdale and Somerset areas as part of its network of 110 wind farms in the United States and Canada.

Rural Electric Cooperative of Somerset was under contract to purchase the electricity until 2012, when the agreement expired.

Battery storage systems help stabilize the contribution by renewable sources such as wind and solar energy to the power grid, Garner said.

"This is exciting technology that is changing the way power is delivered to customers," he said.

"Wind energy continues to be a valuable resource in Pennsylvania, and the storage technology complements it well."

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The winds of change

September 16, 2012 | Times Leader, The (Wilkes-Barre, PA) Author: MATT HUGHES mhughes@timesleader.com | Section: A | 978 Words Page: 3A OpenURL Link

PHILADELPHIA - The Mehoopany Wind Farm under construction in Wyoming County will be the largest in Pennsylvania upon its completion, producing 144 megawatts of electricity.

That's a significant charge, enough to power 44,000 homes, but it's a drop in a rainstorm compared to wind energy projects in development around the world, experts said Friday at a clean energy conference in Philadelphia.

By the end of 2012, Pennsylvania will surpass 1,000 megawatts in emissions-free wind production capacity, according to Katie Bellazza, marketing manager for Pittsburgh-based wind farm developer EverPower Wind Holdings. While that's a significant horizon for the state, but wind projects planned in Europe and Asia will soon eclipse that 1,000 megawatt mark with a single wind farm.

"There are some 1,000-plus megawatt projects that will begin production in the next year or two," said Tim Daniels of Deepwater Wind, a company planning a 200-megawatt offshore wind farm between Long Island, N.Y. and Martha's Vineyard, Mass. "When we look at our projects, some of the larger projects won't be coming online until 2016 to 2018, so we're hoping that by the time we go into construction we'll be able to see what happened with some of those projects that will by then have been operating for several years."

Strategies to encourage development of the Mid-Atlantic's wind market was one of the topics taken up at environmental advocacy group PennFuture's 2012 Clean Energy Conference, a gathering of renewable energy executives and experts aiming to create a regional energy hub of clean energy manufacturers, installers and policy makers in Pennsylvania and neighboring states.

While they expressed confidence that renewable energy development will continue, industry experts at the conference said numerous obstacles hamper growth of the wind farm industry in Pennsylvania and surrounding states; obstacles that prevent the region following in Europe's footsteps.

Some of those challenges lie in the expiration of government incentive programs helping to fund the enormous construction costs. Lee Davis, northeast regional president of independent energy producer NRG Energy, said his company had been developing a wind farm project off the Delmarva Peninsula since late 2008. It hoped to fund construction of the project through a loan from the U.S. Department of Energy that was made available as part of the 2009 federal economic stimulus, but lost its loan guarantee when the department was unable to finish its review of the project by the program's expiration in Sept. of 2011. Further attempts to fund the project privately failed.

Part of what's holding the wind industry back could stem in part from Pennsylvania's current natural gas boom, Davis also said.

Spurred by a glut in supply from domestic shale formations like the Marcellus Shale that underlies much of Pennsylvania, natural gas prices dropped dramatically in 2012. That has not only been bad for the bottom lines of gas production companies, but also for renewable energy sectors, because the price of energy in the Northeast is tied to the price of natural gas, Davis said.

"Its economic challenges, not the EPA or any state agency's regulations (that are holding the wind industry back)," Davis said. "With the price of gas being so low, driving the power down as low as it is, you're not even seeing prices that allow gas (power plants) to get built," added Mike Speerschneider of EverPower Wind Holdings.

Eric Thumma, director of policy and regulatory affairs for wind generation and renewable energy company Iberdola Renewables and former energy director for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, said the state could do more to help the wind industry prosper in Pennsylvania by adjusting its renewable portfolio standard rules for utility companies.

Legislation signed by former Gov. Ed Rendell in 2004 required that a percentage of the power utilities supply come from alternative energy sources including wind, biomass and hydroelectric, escalating by percentage annually until reaching a mandatory minimum of 8 percent in 2020. But Pennsylvania is also an energy choice state, meaning energy customers can choose where the energy they buy comes from. That combination can prevent renewable producers from gaining the long-term capital commitments they need to build new infrastructure like wind farms, Thumma said.

"You don't know how much renewable energy you will need in the next year (to meet the renewable portfolio standard) because you don't know how many customers you're going to have," Thumma said. Updating the portfolio program to tie the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates by utilities, which help renewable energy companies fund new power plant construction, to the distribution, rather than generation budget of the utility could help stabilize electricity prices by encouraging utilities to sign multi-year contracts with renewable suppliers, giving them the stability and commitment they need to grow, Thramm said.

Wind Farms in Pa. Armenia Mountain, Bradford County/Tioga County, 67 turbines, 100.5 MW, online since 2009

Allegheny Ridge, Blair County/Cambria County, 40 turbines, 80 MW, online since 2007

Bear Creek, Luzerne County, 12 turbines, 24 MW, online since 2006

Casselman, Somerset County, 23 turbines, 34.5 MW, online since 2007

Chestnut Flats, Blair County, 18 turbines, 38 MW, online since 2012

Forward, Somerset County, 14 turbines, 29.4 MW, online since 2008

Green Mountain Wind Farm, Somerset County, 8 turbines, 10.4 MW, online since 2000

Highland Wind Project, Cambria County, 25 turbines, 62.5 MW, online since 2009

Locust Ridge, Schuylkill County, 13 turbines 26.0 MW, online since 2007

Locust Ridge II, Columbia County/Schuylkill County, 51 turbines, 102.0 MW, online since 2009

Lookout, Somerset County, 18 turbines, 37.8 MW, online since 2008

Meyersdale, Somerset County, 20 turbines, 30 MW, online since 2003

Mill Run, Fayette County, 10 turbines, 15.0 MW, online since 2001

North Allegheny, Blair County/Cambria County, 35 turbines, 70 MW, online since 2009

Somerset, Somerset County, 6 turbines, 9.0 MW, online since 2001

Stoney Creek, Somerset County, 35 turbines, 52.5 MW, online since 2009

Waymart, Wayne County, 43 turbines, 64.5 MW, online since 2003

Totals: 420 turbines, 748.1 MW, enough for about 218,416 homes

Source: PennFuture

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MATT HUGHES mhughes@timesleader.com, 'The winds of change', *Times Leader, The* (online), 16 Sep 2012 3A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1415C475F38F62F8



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Green Mountain Wind Farm, Somerset County, 8 turbines, 10.4 MW, online since 2000

Highland Wind Project, Cambria County, 25 turbines, 62.5 MW, online since 2009

Locust Ridge, Schuylkill County, 13 turbines 26.0 MW, online since 2007

Locust Ridge II, Columbia County/Schuylkill County, 51 turbines, 102.0 MW, online since 2009

Lookout, Somerset County, 18 turbines, 37.8 MW, online since 2008

Meyersdale, Somerset County, 20 turbines, 30 MW, online since 2003

Mill Run, Fayette County, 10 turbines, 15.0 MW, online since 2001

North Allegheny, Blair County/Cambria County, 35 turbines, 70 MW, online since 2009

Somerset, Somerset County, 6 turbines, 9.0 MW, online since 2001

Stoney Creek, Somerset County, 35 turbines, 52.5 MW, online since 2009

Waymart, Wayne County, 43 turbines, 64.5 MW, online since 2003

Totals: 420 turbines, 748.1 MW, enough for about 218,416 homes

Source: PennFuture

To see additional photos, visit www.times

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• Citation (aglc Style)

MATT HUGHES mhughes@timesleader.com, 'The winds of change', *Times Leader, The* (online), 16 Sep 2012 3A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/14156F5979AACD58



Alternative School staff and faculty tour Wind Farm

June 15, 2012 | Mineral Daily News-Tribune (WV)

Section: News | 18 Words

Page: 6 OpenURL Link

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'Alternative School staff and faculty tour Wind Farm', *Mineral Daily News-Tribune* (online), 15 Jun 2012 6 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/13FCE2F6046415A0



PSC staff recommends investigation of wind farm noise - complaint

April 3, 2012 | Charleston Gazette (WV) Author: Rick Steelhammer Staff writer | Section: News | 716 Words Page: P5A OpenURL Link

The state Public Service Commission staff has recommended rejecting a request by the operators of a Mineral County wind farm to dismiss a homeowner's complaint about excessive wind turbine noise.

Instead, the PSC should continue looking into noise and other issues involving Pinnacle Wind's 23-turbine Green Mountain operation near Keyser, according to a joint staff memo filed last week.

Richard Braithwaite, whose home lies about a half-mile from the nearest Pinnacle Wind turbine, said in a complaint filed in February that he has recorded readings as high as 83.4 decibels outside his home, and indoor readings as high as 63.6 decibels, since the turbines began operating in November.

While there are no federal noise regulations regarding wind farms, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends outdoor noise levels of no more than 55 decibels to protect public health and safety in residential areas, farms and other places where people spend time outdoors.

Several states with wind power projects have established their own wind turbine noise limits - Oregon's indoor limit is 36 decibels - but West Virginia is not among them.

"Three mornings ago, it got up to 87 decibels outside," Braithwaite said in a telephone interview on Monday. "When the wind's coming in from the west, it sounds like a train rumbling in the distance. When it comes in from the east - that's when the back of the windmill is pointed at me - it sounds like an airplane circling."

Braithwaite said his home's east-facing picture window now frames four turbines from Pinnacle Wind LLC's Green Mountain wind farm.

"I used to love seeing the sun coming up," he said, "but now, with all those wind turbine blades rotating, it's like a strobe light going off inside my house, even when the curtain's there. When the sun's coming through the blades, I get these crazy migraines."

A response to Braithwaite's complaint by Pinnacle Wind LLC contained no technical information regarding turbine sound levels and failed to address any of Braithwaite's concerns, according to an engineering memo prepared by PSC technical analyst Donald E. Walker.

Instead, the company asked the PSC to drop Braithwaite's complaint on grounds that no direct term or condition contained in the text of the PSC's order allowing the project to move forward had been violated.

"It is ludicrous to argue that because the Commission possibly had incorrect information before it when it made its decision, it cannot now review that decision," wrote PSC Staff Attorney John Auville. "Therefore, Staff believes Pinnacle's argument that this issue is beyond Commission review should be rejected."

If noise levels prove to be as high as Braithwaite alleges, Pinnacle would be "exceeding the noise levels inside a person's home that the U.S. EPA believes is safe outside a person's home," Auville wrote. "Had the Commission had this information before it when deciding whether to issue this certificate or not, the Commission very well may have placed further conditions on this certificate to avoid exceeding the EPA's noise guidelines for residential areas."

Walker wrote that he contacted Pinnacle officials in late March about issues raised in Braithwaite's complaint and

was told that "the offensive noise emanating from the machinery is caused by a cooling system that is an integral part of the wind turbines. The company has taken preliminary sound level measurements, and recognizes that there is an issue which is being addressed with the manufacturer, Mitsubishi, which is located in Japan."

Mitsubishi has designed a muffling system for the turbines "which will hopefully mitigate the sound problem," Walker continued. "The company has installed the prototype on one of the turbines which is currently being tested. The pending results will determine the next step in resolving the noise-related issue of this complaint."

In his complaint, Braithwaite asks the PSC to order Pinnacle to shut down operation of the wind turbines from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., until the issue is addressed.

"When they started putting these turbines in, I never went to any of the meetings they had about them,"
Braithwaite said. "I thought since it was their land, they could do anything they wanted to on it. But I never thought they'd be making the turbines so close and so loud."

Auville wrote that Pinnacle should file the results of noise studies it has made at Green Mountain with the PSC, along with any plans to resolve noise complaints.

Reach Rick Steelhammer at rsteelhammer@wvgazette.com or 304-348-5169.

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Rick Steelhammer Staff writer, 'PSC staff recommends investigation of wind farm noise complaint', *Charleston Gazette* (online), 3 Apr 2012 P5A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/13DED72440C9C070



Mineral County approves Green Mountain wind farm agreement

January 26, 2011 | Cumberland Times-News, The (MD) Section: Local News| 42 Words OpenURL Link

KEYSER, W.Va — The Mineral County commissioners voted unanimously to approve both the Pinnacle Wind Farm decommissioning escrow agreement and decommissioning study for the proposed 23-turbine wind farm on Green Mountain.

See our e-Edition for the rest of this story.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

'Mineral County approves Green Mountain wind farm agreement', *Cumberland Times-News, The* (online), 26 Jan 2011 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1350696F49448B18



Wind farm project main topic at Mineral commission meeting - Residents raise questions about study report

January 11, 2011 | Cumberland Times-News, The (MD) Section: Local News| 72 Words OpenURL Link

— KEYSER, W.Va. — At yesterday's Mineral County Commission meeting, the topic of the proposed Green Mountain wind farm dominated the majority of the discussion. As part of the agenda, five letters to the commission were read concerning the wind farm and after the regular agenda was discussed, nine five-minute appointments were given to discuss the the decommissioning agreement and study.

See our e-Edition for the rest of this story.

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'Wind farm project main topic at Mineral commission meeting - Residents raise questions about study report', *Cumberland Times-News, The* (online), 11 Jan 2011 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/134B7264EC1297CO>



Mineral commission says public will see agreement - County attorneys will see escrow terms before signed

December 30, 2010 | Cumberland Times-News, The (MD)

Section: Local News | 96 Words

OpenURL Link

— KEYSER, W.Va. — For Mineral County Commission president Wayne Spiggle's last meeting, the overriding theme continued to involve the escrow contract surrounding the decommissioning of the proposed Green Mountain wind farm

Kolin Jan, a Mineral County resident, wanted to know if and when the community is going to get the chance to evaluate the agreement.

"The public should see the document before it's signed," said Jan at Tuesday afternoon's meeting, asking why the commissioners are signing up taxpayers for a "disasterous system down the road."

See our e-Edition for the rest of this story

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'Mineral commission says public will see agreement - County attorneys will see escrow terms before signed', *Cumberland Times-News, The* (online), 30 Dec 2010 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/13472A3E2AA9E000>



Cries & Whispers too interesting to ignore

October 18, 2009 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: STAFF; READERS; STAFF| Section: News | 1128 Words Page: A02 OpenURL Link

COLUMN: CRIES & WHISPERS

Using Teddy's cane

The operation isn't scheduled yet, but U.S. Sen. John F. Kerry is girding for replacement surgery for his left hip.

Kerry already had his right hip replaced during surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston in August. Now, he is going to need his left hip replaced too, according to spokeswoman Brigid O'Rourke.

Kerry may have pedaled in too many bike rides or done too much wind surfing.

Fortunately for Kerry, Victoria Reggie Kennedy, the widow of U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, has agreed to allow Kerry to use her late husband's cane.

The Associated Press reports the cane belonged to Kennedy's father, Joseph Kennedy. The senator used it after his back was injured in a plane crash in Southampton in 1964 and before he died in August of brain cancer.

With Kennedy gone, Kerry is now "The Big Kahuna" for Massachusetts in Washington.

Not so Craz-E about burger

FOX News anchor Shepard Smith is no fan of the Craz-E Burger, the gooey, gloppy bacon cheeseburger on a doughnut bun that made its debut at the most recent Big E.

As far as Smith is concerned, it's not a crazy burger, it's just plain insane.

On a recent telecast, Smith could barely contain his indignation as he went off about the 1,500-calorie bacon cheeseburger on a glazed doughnut bun. Or is it a glazed doughnut with a bacon cheeseburger filling?

"It seems like it is the stupidest thing. Good god!" he exclaimed.

"There are a lot of ways to end it all. You could take a bottle of pills . . . Or you could just eat one of these," he said.

Considering Smith said the Craz-E Burger could be a sign the apocalypse is near, its a pretty good bet the FOX host will not be trying one any time soon. The clip is available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch? v=SjaNYbPEydw&feature=player em bedded#

Power to the people

Holyoke native Mitchell Epstein is making more than a statement with his book, "American Power," which is due out this month from Steidl.

Epstein's work, filled with photographs he took criss-crossing the nation to show how energy is used to support the American way of life, was profiled in the Arts section of the New York Times on Oct. 10. Six years in the making, the photographs were taken in 25 states, from the Hoover Dam and Yucca Mountain in Nevada to the Green Mountain

Wind Farm in Texas and the Amos Coal Power Plant in West Virginia.

Mitch is the son of Ruth Epstein, who recently moved from Holyoke to Martha's Vineyard, and the late William Epstein. He's received many awards for his photography and has works on display at the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art. Three years ago, he published a book, "Family Business," documenting his family's history in Holyoke.

You be the judge

Usually, it takes an accused serial killer, a trigger-happy gang member or a mob hitman to get seven court officers assigned to a hearing in Springfield District Court. Last week, it took Celeste Benoit, 62-year-old retired teacher from Longmeadow, best known for her public brawl with Agawam Mayor R. Susan Dawson.

Benoit, the ex-wife of Dawson's boyfriend, stands trial in December for allegedly punching and kicking the mayor in an April ambush outside the women's room at Max's Tavern. After a peaceful summer, the pair crossed paths last week at Pazzo Ristorante when Dawson threw a drink in Benoit's face after allegedly being taunted about her primary election defeat.

Given that the defendant was to have no contact with Dawson before the trial, the Hampden district attorney's office wanted her bail revoked. Judge Robert Gordon disagreed, but scolded the impeccably dressed defendant and warned her to stay 100 yards away from the mayor until the trial.

Benoit, who looked faint at one point during the hearing, seemed revived by the ruling. But as the judge left the courtroom, she nearly crumpled again as all seven guards bellowed "all rise" - a command that rang like a thunder clap.

"You scared me," she said, sitting down in the front row to get her breath back.

What's your Poison?

Bret Michaels wowed his fans at the Big E on Oct. 3, and they didn't let a little thing like rain bother them. Many held umbrellas and others wore rain gear as they listened to Michaels perform hits like "Unskinny Bop."

While security had been holding fans back, Michaels encouraged them to move forward, and they rushed the stage, becoming an arm-waving mass for "Something to Believe In," which Michaels sang in tribute to the armed forces. "West Springfield, you give me something to believe in!" he yelled.

Michaels may have gained fame with Poison, but he has reinvented himself as a reality television star, with three seasons on "Rock of Love," about his quest to find true love. Big John, another star of the show and Michaels' bodyguard, videotaped the crowd.

David J. Zurlino, of West Springfield, said he was enjoying the music with Colleen A. Murray, also of West Springfield. "We can't wipe the smile off our faces . . . We are old and we do like the old '80s and early '90s music," Zurlino, 43, said.

Contestant falls short

Kate Crowley wanted to be a millionaire, but the 30-year-old Florence resident and Mount Holyoke College student will have to be content for now with being a "thousand-aire."

Crowley appeared on an episode of the syndicated game show "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," which was broadcast on abc40 on Oct. 15, and won \$5,000.

Crowley went into the show with modest aspirations for what to do with the money if she won the big prize. She was

going to pay off her tuition and send her husband to college, and she was going to take her family on a trip and get a new washer and dryer.

For those who have never seen it, the show has contestants trying to win \$1 million by answering correctly 15 multiple choice questions. Get one wrong and the game is over.

Crowley made it up three rungs of the millionaire ladder, but got tripped up on the \$12,500 question, a multiple choice question about which of four musical instruments can be played "pizzicato." She, upon advice of her lifeline, quessed the clarinet when the right answer was the violin. Pizzicato is Italian for "to pluck the strings."

Don't miss The Republican tomorrow for Cries & Whispers on recogniton for Tess M. Pelissier by the Monson School Committee, a court reporter retires after 31 years in the courtroom, a family affair for the Palmer School Committee, and other items too interesting to ignore. Reach us at cries@repub.com

(COLOR PHOTOS 1) John F. Kerry

(PHOTO 2) Craz-E Burger

(PHOTO 3) Celeste Benoit

(PHOTO 4) Kate Crowley, of the Florence section of Northamtpon, sits opposite host Meredith Viera on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire."

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• Citation (aglc Style)

STAFF; READERS, STAFF, 'Cries & Whispers too interesting to ignore', *Sunday Republican* (online), 18 Oct 2009 A02 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/12B786F94DBBA000



Mystery trip

June 17, 2003 | Daily American, The (Somerset, PA) Section: home_and_family | 341 Words OpenURL Link

The Green Mountain Wind Farm near Garrett was the destination for the annual summer mystery trip held by the Hillcrest Grange members on June 11.

Doyle and Donna Paul, both members of the Hillcrest Grange for more than 40 years, planned and coordinated the event.

Harold E. Nicholson, who serves as a tour guide for Green Mountain Energy, welcomed the group, gave them a history of the wind mill farm and opened a gate so the group could get to the base of one of the wind mills that towers over the skyline of Summit Township.

The Garrett area wind turbines, which are among the tallest and most technologically advanced in the world, were built in Germany. Before arriving in the U.S., they were loaded onto a giant freighter that traveled for 18 days across the Atlantic Ocean before docking in Philadelphia. Once in port, approximately 1,300 tons of turbine parts, motors and blades were loaded onto over 25 semi trucks.

Eight wind turbines are spinning in a field that used to be a coal stripping operation. Each year that wind farm generates enough energy to power approximately 2,500 homes.

Kathy Blough, master, and David R. Hay, lecturer, welcomed the group to their mystery trip and announced upcoming events of the organization. Hillcrest's June 25 meeting is the organization's annual summer picnic, starting at 7 p.m. at the new residence of Jon, Kathy, Jenny and Katie Marteney near Berlin. While the Marteney family will provide grilled hamburgers, Grangers are asked to bring along covered dishes, a beverage and their own table service for a special evening of fellowship and fun.

Swimming facilities are available.

Hillcrest's July 9 meeting, "Put a Smile on Your Face" will also include honoring of 50 and 25-year members.

The Pomona Grange picnic and car rally will be held at the picnic pavilion of Jean Shaffer along Mud Pike Road in Brothersvalley Township Sunday.

The picnic gets underway at 1 p.m. Grangers should bring covered dish specialties, a drink and place settings. A road rally will start at 2 p.m. under the direction of David, Kathy, Amanda and Amber Blough.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

'Mystery trip', *Daily American, The* (online), 17 Jun 2003 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/13BD3ADDE643A398>



COMPANY AIRS WIND FARM PLANS FOR MOUNTAIN PASS

October 2, 2002 | Times Union, The (Albany, NY) Author: BOB GARDINIER Staff writer | Section: CAPITAL REGION | 455 Words Page: F4 OpenURL Link

A Massachusetts company has proposed using a pass on Berlin Mountain for a wind farm consisting of 180-foot-tall windmills that produce electricity.

Nicholas Hiza, one of the members of the board of Fristefanick Corporation of Williamstown, made a presentation at the end of the last Town Board meeting on his company's proposal to build seven towers with huge propeller-looking blades that turn in the wind.

Fristefanick, an entrepreneurial think tank connected with the University of Massachusetts, is currently researching the feasibility of developing the wind-powered electricity generation facility on a ridge of Berlin Mountain on land in Massachusetts held by Williams College.

Though plans are sketchy at this point, Hiza said the site would supply power to Williamstown Township in Berkshire County, Mass. However, the windmills would be visible on the New York state side of the pass.

Local officials said it is too early to gauge opposition.

``It was just a few weeks ago and I haven't heard that anyone has problems with it at this point, anyway," said Town Councilman Donald Yerton.

Officials said the proposed location for the Berlin Mountain Wind Power Project is off Lucy Street near the Berlin Pass and is near the Taconic Crest Trail, which roughly follows the boundary between the two states. Hiza's company has been looking at wind farm possibilities and doing wind studies along the Taconic Crest, Hiza said.

Wind power has been catching on locally and around the state recently.

Two months ago, the Federal Building on Henry Street in Binghamton became the first federal facility in the country powered 100 percent by wind energy. The federal building's wind energy comes from giant fan blades on the Fenner wind farm in Madison County, east of Syracuse. There are about 20 windmills, each 200 feet tall, and the fans each cover an area the size of a football field.

But a month earlier, a battle surfaced in Cherry Valley, a community near Route 20 about 50 miles west of Albany, over a company's plan to erect up to 43, 1.5-megawatt wind turbines to generate electricity on two ridges in the scenic and historic Otsego County town.

Preliminary sketches given to town officials showed turbine towers surpassing 200 feet tall with three blades measuring more than 100 feet each. The 64.5-megawatt project would cost an estimated \$50 million.

Opponents of the project have surfaced and plan to fight it. Some don't want the modern structures marring the viewshed of the town, which was the site of the 1778 Cherry Valley Massacre, one of the Revolutionary War's bloodiest and most notorious events.

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Wind power for Erie County

June 16, 2002 | Erie Times-News (PA) Section: Letters | 214 Words Page: 2 OpenURL Link

An alternative source of power is wind. Harnessing the wind is a cheap way to generate electricity, except for the initial cost of installation. Power generated in this way reduces greenhouse gases and has no significant impact on the environment.

Last summer I visited the Green Mountain Wind Farm near Garrett in Somerset County. The farm is a tourist attraction. The sight of these sleek towers with their blades silently spinning is quite a sight to behold. They have eight towers in place and operating. Each tubular tower is 200 feet high, has three blades 95 feet in length and is situated on less than a one-quarter acre of land.

These towers can generate enough electricity to power 2,500 homes year-round. The technology involved is improving every year, and they expect wind towers will generate even more electricity with new scientific discoveries.

Windmills for Erie County could do several things. They could be another tourist attraction. They could provide us with cleaner electric generation. Finally, they could create more jobs. It is an idea to think about. We need to find new ways to do things that protect our environment, while giving us a reliable source of energy using the inexhaustible supply of a natural element — wind.

Joy Greco

Erie County Council

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• Citation (aglc Style)

'Wind power for Erie County', *Erie Times-News* (online), 16 Jun 2002 2 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0F42FDFA11CC8762>



An energy windfall ** Some say wind farms could give power industry the jolt it needs.

June 9, 2002 | Morning Call, The (Allentown, PA)

Author: Christian Berg Of The Morning Call | Section: BUSINESS | 1969 Words

Page: D1 OpenURL Link

It's hard for motorists to miss the six windmills towering over the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Exit 10 in Somerset County.

Rising 100 meters above a hilltop just south of the highway, the sleek white blades churn in stark, high-tech contrast to the cornfields and cow pastures below.

But the windmills, which can produce up to 9 megawatts of electricity when conditions are right, are more than just roadside curiosities. They represent a fast-growing source of environmentally friendly energy in Pennsylvania.

Four wind farms producing more than 34 megawatts of electricity have been built since state lawmakers opened the state's utility industry to competition in 1996. That's enough electricity to power more than 10,000 average homes.

Four more large-scale wind farm projects are now under development, with an expected generation capacity of almost 150 megawatts. If built, the new wind farms could produce enough electricity to serve another 45,000 homes.

Pennsylvania's wind industry is not driven by perfect wind conditions. In fact, the number of Pennsylvania sites windy enough to support large-scale wind farm development ranks just 22nd among U.S. states, according to the American Wind Energy Association.

North Dakota ranks first with a total wind energy potential of 138,400 megawatts. That's more than 27 times Pennsylvania's 5,120-megawatt potential.

Despite that, Pennsylvania had 34 megawatts of installed wind generation, while North Dakota has installed just 1.3 megawatts.

Experts say wind farms are being built here because deregulation unleashed enough consumer demand to make them economically viable.

"Everything is kind of pulled by the consumer," said Brent Beerley, director of business development for Community Energy of Delaware County. The company markets wind power to consumers throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

"There are another 10 to 20 wind farms that could be developed in the next few years if we can prove the demand is out there."

Pennsylvania's utility deregulation program has been criticized for failing to produce the kind of fierce retail price competition that public officials promised. But regulators are quick to hold up the thriving wind power industry as an example of its success.

"We're building these tremendous [wind farm] facilities, and it's only because people have the choice," said Glen Thomas, chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. "When the demand is there, the market responds."

Prior to deregulation, Pennsylvania consumers had no influence over how their electricity was produced. Each

region was served by an incumbent electric utility that generated power and delivered it to all customers within their service territory.

Virtually all of that electricity was produced in large power plants that use nuclear reactors or fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas.

Today, Pennsylvania ranks first in the nation with almost 120,000 customers meeting at least a portion of their electricity needs from renewable generation sources such as wind, solar, hydroelectric and landfill gas.

"This is what we intended," Thomas said. "Given the choice, people are choosing the environment."

Although the raw numbers are encouraging, that means only about 2.4 percent of Pennsylvania's 5 million total electric customers are using renewable energy.

And while wind power is the world's fastest-growing source of electricity, it comprises less than 1 percent of total U.S. power generation.

The U.S. wind industry set a record in 2001 by installing almost 1,700 megawatts of new generation capacity, according to the wind energy association. The association estimates there will be 100,000 megawatts of wind power installed by 2020, accounting for about 6 percent of the nation's total energy needs.

"Even though we've been growing very quickly, wind power is still a very small portion of U.S. electricity," said Christine Real de Azua, spokeswoman for the wind energy association.

In Pennsylvania, government regulators, wind energy developers and environmental advocates believe deregulation creates an opportunity for wind power to grow more quickly.

One environmental group, Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, has started a campaign to have 10 percent of the state's total electricity needs met by wind power by 2010.

The organization, more commonly known as PennFuture, estimates that between 2,000 and 2,500 megawatts of installed wind generation will be needed to reach the 10 percent mark -- about 14 times what's currently under development.

"It's an aggressive goal, but it certainly can be done," said John Hanger, PennFuture's president and chief executive officer. "If we achieve that, it would be a win-win for the economy and the environment."

Development of 5,000 megawatts of wind power in Pennsylvania would create 3,750 short-term construction jobs and 2,250 permanent operation and maintenance jobs, according to the wind energy association. The group also estimates that the projects would generate \$13 million in annual lease payments to landowners where the windmills are located and \$35 million in annual tax revenue.

From an environmental standpoint, the association said developing 5,000 megawatts of wind power would reduce Pennsylvania's annual power plant emissions by 14.8 million tons of carbon dioxide, 38,000 tons of nitrogen oxide and 125,000 tons of sulphur dioxide.

To help make its 10 percent goal a reality, PennFuture has joined the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition. The coalition of government agencies, energy companies and community organizations has set up a Web site (www.cleanyourair.org) designed to educate consumers about the benefits of renewable energy and encourage them to buy it.

Renewable energy costs an average of 20 percent more than the basic electric rate charged by local utilities. One of the biggest reasons for the price difference is that the turbines powered by windmills are not as efficient as those used in traditional power plants.

However, wind turbine technology is improving rapidly. The cost of wind power has dropped from between 17 and 23 cents per kilowatt hour in the late 1970s to between 4 and 6 cents per kilowatt hour today.

Another reason for the price difference between wind power and traditional electricity is government tax credits and fuel subsidies.

Wind farms receive a federal tax credit of 1.7 cents per kilowatt hour, but fossil fuel plants receive tax credits and fuel subsidies worth about 2.5 cents a kilowatt hour, said Dale Osborn, president of Distributed Generation Systems of Evergreen, Colo.

Osborn, whose company is developing Keystone Wind Power, a proposed 30-megawatt wind farm in Somerset County, said wind power could be cheaper than traditional power if all subsidies were eliminated.

Although consumers have to pay more for clean power, Hanger said the expense is an investment in Pennsylvania's future.

"Consumers now have the power in their hands," said Hanger, a former PUC commissioner. "If they make choices for clean energy, they're making Pennsylvania better."

According to the coalition Web site, renewable energy helps reduce pollution that is linked to environmental and health problems such as global warming, acid rain, asthma and birth defects.

"Every family that switches to wind power prevents an amount of pollution equal to not driving their car 20,000 miles a year," Hanger said.

Wind farm developers say growing consumer demand for clean electricity is the key to their success. That's because it costs about \$1 million per megawatt to develop wind power, and it's impossible to get the money needed for a project unless the electricity is sold in advance.

"Your real acid test before you do a project is your cash flow," said Bob Markee, marketing director for Energy Unlimited. "You're not going to get the money unless you have a power purchase agreement."

Energy Unlimited, of West Conshohocken, owns a 200,000-kilowatt wind farm at the Humboldt Industrial Park in Hazleton. Markee said the company is involved with proposals for larger facilities elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

Finding an advance buyer for a wind farm's power output is necessary, Markee said, because it lets creditors know that you will have enough money to make debt payments.

But without consumer demand for clean energy, utility companies and energy marketing firms would be reluctant to sign contracts to buy electricity they might not be able to sell.

So ultimately, the pace of new wind farm construction will be determined by consumer appetite for wind power.

Consumer demand for clean energy is what led Green Mountain Energy to support development of the state's first utility-scale wind farm in Garrett and Summit townships, Somerset County.

The 10.4-megawatt Green Mountain Wind Farm opened in May 2000. It is the only wind farmed owned by Green Mountain Energy, which markets environmentally friendly power to customers in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas, California and Oregon.

"For all the ups and downs the Pennsylvania [deregulation] program has had, the one enduring success has been the green power market," said John Holtz, Green Mountain's vice president for public affairs. Consumer demand also prompted Exelon Power Team to sign 20-year power purchase agreements for two wind farms that began operating last October in Somerset County -- the 9-megawatt Somerset Wind Power farm in Somerset Township and the 15-megawatt Mill Run Wind Power farm in Mill Run.

Exelon Power Team, the wholesale marketing division of Exelon Corp., has also signed a 20-year agreement to purchase the output from the Waymart Wind Farm, a 60-megawatt Wayne County facility that is expected to open in mid-2003.

Completion of the Waymart site would make Exelon the largest wind power wholesaler east of the Mississippi River.

"Wind is something that's very beneficial, not only because it's clean, but because people in this part of Pennsylvania have shown there is a great demand for the product," Exelon spokesman Ben Armstrong said.

All of the wind power Exelon buys is sold to Community Energy, which markets it to residential and business customers.

"The more customers we find, the more wind power Exelon helps us build," said Beerley, the Community Energy official.

The University of Pennsylvania became Community Energy's largest customer in October, when the university announced the nation's largest retail wind power purchase.

UPenn will buy as much as 20 million kilowatt hours of wind power from Community Energy over the next three years -- enough to meet about 5 percent of the university's total electric needs.

"From an environmental standpoint, it's just flat-out the right choice," said Mike Coleman, UPenn's director of central services. "It was where we had to be."

Coleman said the wind power will cost several hundred thousand dollars more than electricity produced by traditional methods. But Coleman said the university will more than offset that with an institutional energy use reduction program that has lowered total electricity consumption.

"From an environmental standpoint, it had two effects," Coleman said. "It reduced the amount of energy consumed, and it increased the amount of wind power being produced."

So far, Beerley said most of Community Energy's customers are large corporate and institutional users, who have purchased about 90 percent of the available wind energy.

For example, one of the state's largest corporate users of wind power is Giant Eagle, a Pittsburgh-based supermarket chain that gets 3 percent of its electricity from wind. And state government meets 1 percent of its energy needs from wind.

Community Energy has also set up a Web site (www.newwindenergy.com) to market wind power to residential users. It sells wind power in 100 kilowatt-hour blocks, and Beerley said the average household uses about 600 kilowatt hours of electricity a month.

"For an extra \$2.50 a month, they can claim they are 16 percent wind power, and they can go all the way up to 100 percent," Beerley said. "It's our goal to make it mainstream."

WANTING WIND?

Two energy marketing companies -- Community Energy and Green Mountain Energy -- offer wind power to Pennsylvania consumers. To learn more, visit their Web sites.

Community Energy: www.newwindenergy.com

Green Mountain Energy: www.greenmountain.com

The Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition has also created a Web site to educate consumers about the benefits of wind power and other forms of renewable energy. The Web site provides links to help consumers find sources of clean power in their area.

Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition: www.cleanyourair.org

Source: Morning Call research

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Blade runners; Power Switch

April 23, 2002 | Hamilton Spectator, The (Ontario, Canada) Author: Joan Walters; The Hamilton Spectator | Section: News | 1468 Words Page: A06 OpenURL Link

Energy: The answer for some is blowing in the wind; The move to privatize energy

The giant towers loom abruptly into view at a curve on a secondary highway, causing out-of-town traffic crossing this sparsely populated mountain valley to stop and gape.

Perched on a ridge near Pennsylvania's highest point, the sculpted blades of eight surrealistic windmills turn in hypnotizing circles on pylons thrust 20 storeys high.

This is Green Mountain Wind Farm, the first of half a dozen projects created in the far reaches of this coal-mining region after the state opened electricity markets to competition.

Wind power, once a struggling renewable energy dream, has become a reality since the late 1990s as Americans have gradually been allowed to choose who generates their electricity.

About 2.5 per cent of Pennsylvanians, or 120,000 consumers, now select green power -- much of it wind-driven -- as a conscious environmental action to help displace polluting fossil fuels.

The Ontario government hopes this will be its future too, after the province opens its own market on May 1.

Wind power is expanding globally by 40 per cent a year because of its simple technology and environmental appeal.

Electricity produced on this reclaimed mountaintop, a former strip mine, follows the ancient principle of wind generation. Rotating blades turn a shaft which spins to create power.

But these steel towers, bolted onto 10-metre-deep concrete bases, bear no resemblance to the squat, folksy windmills used since the seventh century to pump water and power mills.

Here, an electricity-generating turbine the size of a mini-bus sits atop each tower, powered by three 30-metre blades resembling propellers.

Each blade weighs five tons.

It's logical to expect the thwuck-thwuck sound familiar from propeller engine startups at an airfield.

There is in fact only a faint swooshing as the blades cut the air.

Faced into the northwest winds that race across the Allegheny Mountains, these soaring structures are often viewed as modern art.

"People think they're beautiful," says Harold Nicholson, a wind farm guide who's lived all his life just over the hill from the 15-hectare site.

"I gave 31 organized tours last year and every time I'm here, cars drive up to see them closer."

Yet, this is functional art. The two-year-old \$10-million commercial project sends enough electricity into the state's power grid to light 13,000 100-watt bulbs. That's 25 million kilowatt hours, enough to power 2,500 homes for a year.

Green Mountain's 10.4-megawatt total electricity output is a bare fraction of the 23,000 megawatts now flowing from wind in Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Britain, India and elsewhere.

But total wind power in Pennsylvania, including Green Mountain's, has risen from zero to 150 megawatts in the last two years, a feat the state says is exclusively due to open markets.

Canadian wind projects -- largely in Alberta -- fill less than one-tenth of 1 per cent of total electricity demand. They do not even register on the world stage. Ontario has only demonstration projects now.

It expects more. Ontario, like Pennsylvania, relies on nuclear and coal-fired generating stations but wants to explore wind and other alternatives.

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) put a wind tower at the Pickering nuclear power plant in August, saying the unit's 1.8-megawatt output will form part of the company's green offering in the new market. OPG is also in a joint venture for a 10-megawatt wind farm to be developed on Lake Huron.

In Hamilton, local conservation officials are exploring land in Flamborough for a 30-metre windmill.

"It's just a dot on the horizon right now," says Hamilton Conservation Authority's Tony Horvat. "But if we go ahead, it could act as a pilot and a bit of a role model for others."

Guelph businessman Glen Estill, vice-president of the Canadian Wind Energy Association, preaches the benefits of turbines for Ontario. The group wants to see 10,000 megawatts of wind power in Canada by 2010.

Estill estimates coal generation in Ontario could be halved if the province had the 8,000 wind turbines Germany does. But there is a long road before that kind of saturation can occur.

The wind farm at Garrett, a project of Green Mountain Power of Vermont and National Wind Power of the U.K., is one of only dozens up and running across the United States. Nationwide, Americans still get less than 1 per cent of energy from wind.

States like Pennsylvania, however, claim that letting consumers choose their power generator automatically supports alternative green power.

"Deregulation brought this all to pass," says Nicholson, a former general manager of the Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, the local utility that transfers the Green Mountain wind farm's power onto the state grid.

"There is obviously more to come."

Green power companies are now combing the region with hand-held anemometers, or installing the wind-measuring instruments on ridge tops, to find new sites.

"Large institutions are particularly interested in buying green power," says Sam Enfield, head of Atlantic Renewable Energy Corp. which has two wind farms in these mountains south of Pittsburgh. "Universities, retail chains, there's a lot of potential there because these organizations want to show their communities they're sensitive. Wind power is finding a market."

Six of Atlantic's turbines are perched across the county, above a heavily populated valley traversed by the trafficclogged Pennsylvania Turnpike. Drivers on that toll road regularly slow down to gawk at the elegant structures. High public awareness of wind power -- boosted by the powerful visual attraction of the farms -- encourages environmentalists.

About 60 per cent of Pennsylvania power is generated by coal. Ontario uses coal for 25 per cent.

"But if 100 per cent of consumers were buying from alternative energy companies, all the coal plants would close," says John Hanger, a former utilities executive who founded a public interest group called Penn Future.

The green energy sector says switching to wind or other non polluting sources would prevent the release of millions of tons of carbon dioxide, a byproduct of coal-burning generators.

"Realistically, the trick is getting as many customers as possible to make this choice. Our goal is to have 10 per cent of customers buying alternative energy by 2010," Hanger says.

The 2 to 3 per cent who buy green energy now pay slightly more -- a penny or so per kilowatt hour -- than Pennsylvania's average retail rate of 7 to 8 cents a kilowatt hour. That remains a deterrent to consumers and the Ontario price differential is higher still.

Two recent notices from Ontario wind demonstration projects showed prices of 11.8 to 14.89 cents a kilowatt hour, plus transmission and other costs. The Ontario Energy Board estimates the average annual retail price will be 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour after May 1.

And for wind projects everywhere, there is still the problem of reliability.

If the wind stops or is too strong, there is no power. But it takes wind of only 10 kilometres an hour to start the blades turning and storm-force winds of 90 kilometres to shut them down.

That leaves a lot of room for full-tilt power generation in between.

You can contact Joan Walters at jwalters@hamiltonspectator.com or at 905-526-3302.

Technicians are measuring wind speeds and climbing hills as they explore sites for a nine-storey windmill to generate green power.

The Hamilton Conservation Authority, like dozens of groups across the province, is assembling data that will help decide whether a wind-powered generating tower makes sense.

"We're just in the preliminary stage but one or two locations seem to have promise," says senior engineer Tony Horvat. "It would be one tower, about 30 metres high, not a whole wind farm."

Ontario consumers will soon be able to buy electrical power from wind, solar, biomass and other alternative energy -- the result of the opening of the provincial market to competition.

The Ontario Clean Air Alliance, an umbrella group for environmental action, says displacing dirty coal plants with green power would dramatically cut pollution and protect health.

"We've been in the business of good natural resources management for many years," says Horvat. "Wind projects seem to be a wise outgrowth."

The project, with an estimated cost of \$1 million, would be built on conservation land and could generate a small amount of power into the Ontario grid.

The authority has so far looked at two or three sites in Flamborough.

Environmentalists hope numerous projects will be started, boosting wind power capacity provincewide.

The authority plans a one-year assessment, including liaison with area residents and wind exposure studies.

"It has to be exactly the right site."

Horvat says a wind turbine could be a model for others in the area to look at their own involvement in wind power.

"There may be similar locations in the city or land the school board owns, or a private individual," he says.

"Anything we can do to reduce the reliance on coal-fired plants is certainly a smart thing to try."

More information about alternative Ontario energy choices is available at www.electricitychoices.org.

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SOME FACTS ABOUT GREEN MOUNTAIN

October 14, 2001 | Akron Beacon Journal (OH) Author: BOB DOWNING| Section: BUSINESS | 109 Words Page: B1 OpenURL Link

Place: Green Mountain Wind Farm

Location: Outside Garrett, Pa., 15 miles south of Somerset. The site was chosen over 400 others in Pennsylvania.

Size: Each of the eight tubular steel towers is 200 feet tall and 14 feet in diameter. The fiberglass-composite blades are 95 feet long, the length of a jet plane wing. Each tower is topped by a nacelle, a small trailerlike structure filled with equipment. Each tower weighs about 170 tons.

Operation: The blades spin at the rate of 12.7 or 19 revolutions per minute, depending on wind speed. It is a highly automated, computer-run system.

Cost: In excess of \$10 million.

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IF YOU'RE GOING TO GREEN MOUNTAIN

October 14, 2001 | Akron Beacon Journal (OH) Author: BOB DOWNING| Section: BUSINESS | 146 Words Page: B3 OpenURL Link

The Green Mountain Wind Farm near Garrett, Pa., has attracted more than 70,000 visitors since it opened 17 months ago.

There is a public viewing area with interpretive signs near the towering windmills.

Tours also can be arranged in advance for organized groups, families and individuals.

To get there from the Akron area, travel east on Interstate 76 and then on the Ohio and Pennsylvania turnpikes. Get off the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Exit 10 (Somerset).

Take U.S. 219 south to Garrett. Take state Route 653 through Garrett and turn south on Church and then Berlin streets. Turn left on Schrock Road and look for signs.

It is a three-hour, 15-minute drive from Akron.

For additional information, call 1-800-286-5856 or check out http://www.greenmountain.com on the Web.

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