

Living Energy Farm September-October Newsletter



Framing the first wall of the greenhouse.

Construction Continues!

Two new outbuildings are coming along at Living Energy Farm this fall. In anticipation of next year's growing season, the construction of our first greenhouse is nearing completion. The greenhouse is being built almost entirely from reclaimed materials, including most of the lumber and cinderblock, and all of the windows and insulation.

Season extension- the practice of giving your crops a layer of protection, such as a greenhouse or row cover, in order to extend the growing season- is an important part of food self-sufficiency, especially when living without a freezer or conventional refrigeration. In central Virginia, seeds for a spring garden can be started indoors as early as January, so it's never too early to think about next season!

Another outbuilding we are working on is a storage shed near the house site. This shed is being built in the "pole barn" style of our first barn, meaning we are using round, unmilled posts harvested straight from the land as the major structural element. The shed will be used to store the tools and materials we will be using to build our first residence in the coming months.

Fall Events

Fall is the time for festivals and gatherings in Virginia, and Living Energy Farm made its debut at several this year. On September 17th, we participated as vendors at the Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello, where we educated hundreds of folks about living fossil fuel free. To demonstrate the utility of combining old and new technologies, we set up a piston pump that could be powered by either a exercise bike or a solar panel and DC motor. The kids had fun seeing how high they could shoot water by cycling as fast as possible. The record was about 30 feet.



Alexis shows how to power a piston pump at HHF.

On September 14th, we held a coming out party at Random Row book store and

community center in Charlottesville. About 50 people came by to share a community dinner and watch a slideshow on Living Energy Farm. Many folks left excited and inspired by Alexis's talk, which explained why and how we are building Living Energy Farm, what we have accomplished so far, and what we have planned for the future. Many were also impressed by a very large and amazingly sweet Amish Moon and Stars watermelon that we grew at LEF.



Jon leads a tour on Land Day.

Last but not least was October 8th, our first annual Land Day! This month marks the one year anniversary of the purchase of our land, and we celebrated the occasion by inviting everyone to come out, tour the land, eat, drink and party. Highlights included a bonfire, an tie dying workshop by Keenan, and the ceremonial planting of Rosa's placenta tree (a Rosseyanka persimmon, of course!). We were pleased to see some new faces along with our old friends and regular volunteers.

We've come a long way in a year. We planted and harvested a garden, established orchards and outbuildings. We built our first barn and irrigated our fields without the use of any fossil fuels. We held workshops, parties and events to spread the word and educate folks about living without fossil fuels. We still have a long way to go and need your support! Come out for a Saturday work day or consider donating tools, building materials, or funds. All donations are tax-deductible. For more information see our website www.livingenergyfarm.org, or contact us at livingenergyfarm@gmail.com or 434 409 6006.