

Green and solar tour great success

BY TOM CARSTENS

Applegate Valley's first solar home tour in 22 years was, by all accounts, a great success. The sold-out tour took place on a rainy Saturday, October 4. Two buses transported more than 100 participants to three solar homes and two businesses in the valley. The homes included the 12 year-old Everson off-grid earth berm home, the Adams' brand new grid-tied Energy Star solar home with a ton of energy-saving features, and the Carstens' two year-old award-winning EarthAdvantage home. The businesses included the Conner Vinery, which powers a portion of its pumps and equipment from solar energy, and the Wooldridge Creek Winery, which makes excellent use of passive solar construction to keep power bills low.

An organized tour at each site was conducted by each of the homeowners and the contractors who helped them put in their systems. Banking, design, real estate, and tax experts also were on hand to help out. Tour patrons, most of whom were from the Applegate Valley, said they really appreciated the opportunity to learn about the variety of systems, green measures, and tax breaks that are becoming increasingly available to the

average homeowner now. All participants received a complimentary tote bag filled with a variety of literature to take with them to augment what they learned on the tour. Everyone said that they felt they received excellent value for their ten-dollar ticket.

It wasn't all work. Delicious box lunches were provided by Eve's Cafe. At the end of the tour, the sun came out and everyone enjoyed relaxing and talking at the winery. Wine was provided by Wooldridge and broker Yolanda Haynes contributed delicious food prepared by Jacksonville Inn. The tour could not have taken place without the active participation by GACDC volunteers and a host of others who helped usher patrons and keep things on track for this action-packed event.

Tour organizers already are planning another great tour for the Applegate Valley and possibly the Williams Valley for next year. These tours are in conjunction with the state and national tours that all happen at the same time. If you have a green and solar home that you'd like to show next fall, please give me a call. When we get the word out, people see that going green and solar makes great sense.

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Above—Eric Hansen from Electron Connection explains solar installation at the Adams home. Photo: Tom Carstens

Below—Cecile Everson explains details about the construction of her interesting home on Sterling Creek. Photo: Linda Pinkham



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