



Minnesota Renewable Energy Society

connecting minnesotans with renewable energy resources

News for Immediate Release

EVENT DATE: Saturday, May 17, 2008
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Event Location: Beach at Phalen Park
St. Paul, Minnesota

Contact: Doug Shoemaker
(612) 965-3371

(952) 431-2653

www.MNRenewables.org

MINNESOTA RENEWABLE ENERGY SOCIETY HOSTS THE 16TH ANNUAL SOLAR BOAT REGATTA

Lake Phalen, MN – On Saturday, May 17th, teams of solar-powered boats will compete in an annual race designed to educate middle school and high school students about solar and engineering. According to the event organizer, Doug Shoemaker of Minnesota Renewable Energy Society (MRES), “we expect more than ten teams will be participating in the event representing Minneapolis and other cities in Minnesota, including Apple Valley, Long Lake, Mahtomedi, Mora, Royalton, West St. Paul, and White Bear Lake. The competition will feature a variety of race categories including speed, slalom, and endurance and will be a great event for the whole family,” Shoemaker said. The event features live music from the Nick Hass trio and refreshments (available to participants) from Izzy’s Ice Cream.

The Mahtomedi team hopes to debut a hydro-foil boat at the competition this year and will be looking for their fifth trophy in the event. Technology Education teacher, Mark LeFeber, has been working with students after school, designing and building two boats for the upcoming competition. LeFeber, a self-described “tree hugger,” says the Regatta really helps to raise awareness about renewable energy and natural resources. “We need to think differently,” he says, “participating in this competition really helps my students slow down and think differently about the way we use energy.”

What is the Solar Boat Regatta?

The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society’s (MRES) Solar Boat Regatta provides an opportunity for middle and high school students (as well as individual boat builders) to build a boat that runs on solar power. They compete in a number of races, culminating with a one hour endurance race. This event has given hundreds of junior and senior high school students valuable and unique experience with solar electricity, wiring, motors, fluid dynamics, boat design, construction, and teamwork. By racing the solar powered boat that they have put together, students experience the thrill of competition and the pride of accomplishment that comes with creating something useful and fun.

MRES partners with teachers and teacher organizations to enhance the competitive nature of the event, expanding the number of schools participating, and extending solar education throughout the school year.

About the Boats and Competition

A solar boat makes use of the sun's radiation. The solar energy must be received exclusively by on-board transducers (photovoltaic cells). On-board storage and conversion into intermediate forms of energy (electric energy storage in batteries) are permitted. The boats must not be designed to use forms of energy other than solar—no wind, no human power, no gas engine power, no additional batteries, and no additional PV cells.

In 2008 there will be three classes:

- Student Class: Grades 7–12
- Adult Class: Individuals or groups not associated with a school
- Experimental/Exhibition Class: Boats that exceed the criteria listed in the Rules.

Each Class competition includes Slalom, Speed, Endurance, and weather permitting, Solar Only races. Trophies will be awarded by class.

About Minnesota Renewable Energy Society

The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society (MRES) is a volunteer member-run, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in Minneapolis in 1978 to promote the use of and advocacy for renewable energies in Minnesota through education and demonstration of practical applications. MRES is involved with education, awareness, and advocacy efforts for all forms of renewable energy technologies, with an emphasis on solar energy technologies.

For more information and photos go to: www.mnrenewables.org

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