

REDI News in 2007

In January, the board members met and updated our Strategic Plan. We have been following our planned priorities all year. These are some of the highlights:

Home Energy Link Program – We reported 12 months of HELP to City of Willits. The city council renewed our grant funding, which will continue the program part way into 2008. We have a five-year plan to weatherize all income-eligible households in the city limits, and still are seeking full funding for this effort and to spread out beyond city limits.

Small Business Energy Alliance – We entered into an agreement to provide energy efficiency services to small businesses countywide. So far we have signed up most of the Willits companies.

Flex Your Power – This educational program reaches out to rural areas to teach people how to conserve energy. We will complete this work by the holidays. Our mid-year evaluation revealed that our grant sponsors consider REDI the model Flex program statewide!

Staff Team – These core programs have allowed us to develop a committed team of employees. Sara O'Brien is Program Manager, and Sue Coop and Terri Wilcox are Program Representatives. Kerry Scarberry, Program Rep and Administrative Assistant, is leaving us to move back east, so we are seeking the right person to join our team.

Small Business Development Centers – REDI has formed an alliance with West Company, who was awarded a contract to run SBDC on the North Coast. We have been grant writing and plan to work on ways REDI can offer technical assistance and other services for economic development.

Willits Economic Localization – WELL grew up and moved out of the REDI Haus! Our friends at WELL have established their own office across town. We're pleased to see them grow and succeed.

REDI Haus – We upgraded the two solar photovoltaic systems on the house. New inverters were installed. The grid-tied system was re-sited to a sunnier location on the "carriage house" roof. The off-grid battery-backed UniSolar thin-film system was tuned up. Thanks to Ralph Pisciotta (again!) for taking this on as a volunteer and completing the work.

Solectria EV – The vintage electric vehicle donated to us in 1999 has been out of service for some time, needing replacement of an expensive charge controller. Ralph managed to get the EV running again by charging the batteries individually—with PV energy, of course! Our plan is to fully restore this custom car, to demonstrate solar-powered transportation.

Haus Maintenance – It turns out our property in downtown Willits has been a great investment, tripling in value over the seven years we have owned it. However, maintenance has been deferred for several years for lack of sufficient funding. This year we have enough to put a new roof on the third of three buildings (the other two have new metal roofing). Also the exteriors need paint, which will likely be done in 2008. Energy efficient windows are needed, as well as more insulation. According to our demonstration concept, all improvements are environmentally sound.

Web Site – We have engaged a real webmaster, who is working with us on a major update. Stay tuned for new info at www.redinet.org, as we will be making better use of this communication tool.

Goals for 2008 – These include continuation and expansion of our core programs, building our staff team and board, renovating the Haus and renewing the sustainable landscape. Join us!

“REDI links people and places to renewable energy.”