

ASES World Renewable Energy Forum

The forum in Denver brought together a large cross section of renewable energy developers and advocates from around the globe. The featured speakers were highlighted by Bill Ritter, Director, Center for the New Energy Economy, Steven Chu, U.S. Secretary of Energy, and Dennis Dimick, Executive Environment Editor of National Geographic. Bill Ritter is travelling the country trying to convince politicians to leave the politics out of the path in order to attain a secure energy future. Many additional contacts made in Denver will help AREA with our ongoing efforts to move Arkansas forward. There are states trailing Arkansas in adopting RE, but most have left us behind.

2012 Riverfest

This year found the AREA booth due south of the Clinton Presidential Center in the new, fee free family area. Our favorite event, the dog jumping championships were also nearby. Along with a recently installed off-grid array at the new Heifer International festival field, this year our portable solar power pods were not only powering the AREA exhibit, but we also provided energy to the Yarnell's stage, Heifer International booth, and the Entergy exhibit, where Entergy was displaying efficient lighting options.

Joint Committee on Energy Meeting

The room was full, but not packed, for the meeting on June 14th. There are thirty-nine members on this joint committee and twelve were

present to hear from Bill Ball, who did a fabulous job on the hot seat. Bill provided a brief history of previous legislative efforts and outcomes, along with a factual presentation regarding the benefits of the proposed CLEAN Energy Act of 2013. You can view the most recent updated wording for the draft legislation [here](#).

Sierra Club CAG monthly meeting

Frank Kelly spoke to an enthusiastic group of concerned citizens regarding prudent strategies for lowering energy usage by focusing on how the sun's influence can negatively or positively impact operational expenses. Topics also included state of the art mini-split heat pumps, solar hot water systems, along with energy efficient building envelopes and window options. Our legislative efforts were also outlined

People's Clean Energy Town Hall meeting

Frank spoke briefly about the fact that the state energy plan should be for much longer than 3-5 years. The group was reminded that the fossil fuel technologies enjoy unheard of amounts of financial and environmental subsidies, and that we are being impacted by the law of unintended consequences from the current exploitation of our natural resources. In response to a question from Frank, one of the panelists mentioned that a renewable energy feed-in tariff would be an effective policy that would help to assure the most jobs, and the most amount of renewable energy be created within the state.

Citizens First Congress Convention

One hundred sixty-five delegates from fifty-five different organizations set a record in attendance this year at the CFC convention. AREA was able to place FIT policy on the long-term priority list in 2010 where it remains. Due to the large number of existing injustices being faced by the CFC family, the Environmental Caucus chose to place one resolution on the short-term priorities list, which was the implementation of best management practices (BMP) to be applied to fracking operations being conducted throughout the state. While there are only nine counties where drilling activity is most concentrated, the fact that toxic wastewater is now being trucked around for injection into natural underground wells means more of the state is actually at risk.

OMNI 350

A presentation titled “Distributed Generation” was made to the quarterly meeting of this north Arkansas environmental group. There were around twenty people in attendance and the message regarding the need to democratize our energy sources was well received by everyone in attendance. Many friends in the room made the connections even more relevant for all.

ASU Renewable Energy Conference

This third annual conference featured speakers from various energy efficiency and renewable energy development companies, manufactures, consumers, utilities, and advocates from around the region. The topics were varied and informational. I made the “DG” presentation to this group which numbered well over fifty people in

attendance from Arkansas and surrounding states. New contacts were made with potential strategic partners in our pursuit of promoting renewable energy installations in Arkansas.