



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

Solar home

The home shown here is just one of the solar homes that comprise Firewood Farms, a solar community located in the Back Mountain area.

Firewood Farms

Local solar community leads the way

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Correspondent

Firewood Farms located near the top of Bunker Hill, Trucksville, is more than the name indicates. It is not a farm, but a 260-acre development of solar homes.

Firewood Farm, purchased by Mr. and Mrs. John Hibbard (John and Betsy) in 1970, was a part of their thinking toward the future and their retirement. It is a fast-developing solar community, the result of an article read by Betsy when she was only 16 years of age. It was an article written by a geologist predicting that the world would reach its peak in oil consumption by 1975 and in 30 years from that time (2005), there would no longer be any oil available to burn for energy.

This started Betsy Hibbard thinking toward the future and the need for energy and water. As a result, the idea for a solar community was born. Since water was also a major concern, each home is built on a five-acre minimum of land and the individual homeowner will be able to cut enough firewood to burn if desired.

There are presently six homes completed in the all-solar community designed by the Hibbards with a seventh, a huge house sitting on the top of the large development, nearly completed.

The first six months were designed by Betsy, but the owner of the one now under construction designed his. All seven homes are of contemporary design.

Although all of the homes are solar heated, each has a degree of back-up heat. The Hibbards, in addition to using solar heat, burned two and one half cords of wood last year and the cost of electricity for their all-electric 1530 square feet

home was only \$450 for the 12 month year.

Betsy Hibbard explained the solar homes can be any style as long as they have southern exposure and a storage arrangement. The contemporary style has been predominant looking toward the future so solar cells could be used to generate electricity.

As far as the Hibbards know, the Firewood Farm community is the only one restricted to passive solar collector homes. The homeowner saves 40 to 50 percent energy by the passive solar system. The nearest development with any type of solar heat known to the Hibbards is Davis, California. Eventually, they believe there will be central systems generating solar power, and shortly, someone will learn how to generate power by burning hydrogen.

"This will probably be within a 30 to 50 year period," said Betsy Hibbard.

The Hibbards have no moral objection to people using oil or gas, their only fear that these forms of energy will be exhausted in the future.

The Hibbards do their own contracting and, included in their covenants with buyers, is a requirement explicitly stating the amount of insulation that must be in the walls and roofs of the solar homes as compared to the minimum normally used. Owners may have any style home desired as long as the insulation requirements are met.

The first solar home built in the Firewood Farm community was five years ago. In the past three years, six more have been constructed. The Hibbards' own home was the fourth one completed. To date, no one in the community has a lawn mower. The grand cover is the native low bush blueberries and

every home is surrounded by the natural beauty of the 260-acres of land.

There are ponds (man-made) in various locations on the property, built as a form of flood control and each home has water supplied by wells. The principle is if the wells are kept filled there will never be a shortage of water, Betsy explained. She said there are many wells, natural wells, on the top of the mountain.

When the community is complete, there will be 30 homes in all. The Hibbards are already planning for the eighth home which Betsy plans to be one of Colonial design.

Although there are no other such solar communities anywhere in this country that the Hibbards are aware of, many other developers have shown great interest in the Firewood Farm project.

A teaching professor of engineering from a German University came to discuss the project with John and Betsy Hibbard. A man from Atlanta, Ga., who is building individual solar homes, came to look into the Hibbard's program and contractors from the Poconos have shown increasing interest.

Around town

ONCE IN A WHILE, our country celebrates a truly great holiday. This week, when our beautiful Statue of Liberty celebrates its 100th birthday, everyone will be watching their televisions to get a glimpse of our newly restored statue.

Not only does the Statue of Liberty stand for freedom, but now it also represents the efforts of thousands of children, men and women who raised and donated funds for its restoration.

Personally, it has always been one of my favorite spots in new York. It reminds me of the courage and strength of my grandparents, who arrived on these shores like thousands of other immigrants seeking a better way of life. Happy Birthday, Lovely Lady Liberty!



JOAN KINGSBURY

CONGRATULATIONS TO Lorraine and Calvin Symons on the birth of their daughter, Cara. Although I haven't had the chance to meet the lovely little miss yet, I hear that she is a beauty.

Lorraine is director of Girl Scout Neighborhood 24, Shavertown. It seems the adult leaders in the neighborhood got their wish since we were all hoping for a little Girl Scout.

TARA LYNNE STRAUSSER, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Strauser, Dallas, and Theodore Leonard Radzinski, Jr. son of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Radzinski were married Saturday in Church of Christ United, Kingston.

Rev. H. James Shillabeer and Father Jon Bendik performed the double ring ceremony.

Mrs. Radzinski is a graduate of Dallas High School and the Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education. She is employed at the Drexel Early Childhood Center in a Graduate Assistantship.

Mr. Radzinski is a graduate of Dallas High School and the Pennsylvania State University with an Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is employed as a designer for the Philadelphia Electric Company.

Following a wedding trip to Bermuda, the Radzinskis will reside in Collegeville, PA.

CONGRATULATIONS TO Becky Gingo who received her Silver Award at ceremonies held at Camp Louise Girl Scout Camp near

Berwick. The Silver Award is received only after extensive service projects, and I know that Becky worked very hard. The daughter of Shirley and Gene Gingo, Becky will be a freshman at Dallas Junior High School in September.

I HAVE JUST RETURNED after a weekend at Camp Louise. Our Cadette Scout Troop attended Anything Goes, a special weekend for Cadette and Senior Scouts. The girls could choose their activities. Paddle, Pole and Roll instructions on canoeing, and Swimming Skills, were chosen by our girls.

Also offered was a talk on careers by Helen Stager from Penn State Campus in Lehman. This career information was presented in a most interesting and informative manner and proved to be very noteworthy.

MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH J. KLEBACK were recently united in marriage in St. John the Baptist Church, Pittston. Msgr. Joseph J. Super performed the double ring ceremony.

Mrs. Kleback is the former Daria Barbacci, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Basil Barbacci of Dallas. A graduate of Bishop O'Reilly High School, she is employed by Sharper

Image Hair Salon, Wilkes-Barre. Mr. Kleback is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kleback, Exeter. A graduate of Wyoming Area High School, he is employed as a graphic artist by Atlantic Financial Federal, Edwardsville.

Following a wedding trip to Hawaii, the Klebacks are residing in Plains.

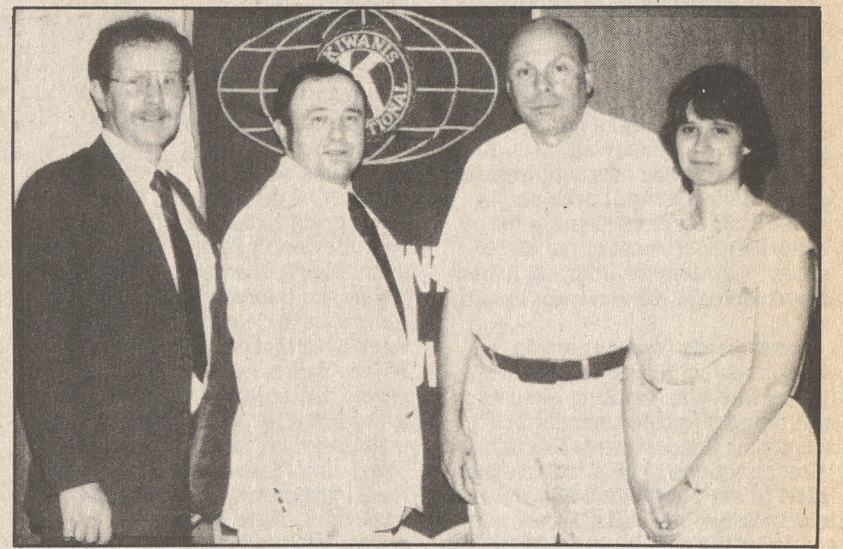
MR. AND MRS. LAWRENCE CARR were recently married in St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church, Edwardsville. Very Rev. John Kuchta performed the double ring ceremony.

Mrs. Carr is the former Linda Lamoreaux, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Lamoreaux. A graduate of Wyoming Valley West High School, she is employed at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital.

Mr. Carr, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Carr, Dallas is a graduate of West Side Vocational-Technical School. He is employed by Carter Footwear, Wilkes-Barre.

Following a wedding trip to Canada, Niagara Falls and Atlantic City, the Carrs are residing in Larksville.

(Joan Kingsbury, a Back Mountain resident, is a columnist for The Dallas Post. Her column appears weekly.)



Lt. Governor visits

Lt. Governor Elect Joseph Gorman made his official visit to the Back Mountain Kiwanis Club at a recent breakfast meeting at the Irem Temple Country Club, Dallas. Shown here are, from left, Joseph Gorman; Ted Waterowski, Lt. Governor; Stuart Oakley, President; and Charlene Santarelli, Lt. Governor, Div. 15, Circle K.

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