

# Worried about the winds of change

People with varied interests and concerns learned about the pros and cons of the renewable energy source.

By AMY CAVALIER

Messenger Post Staff

PENFIELD — Some towns embrace the idea of energy generated by wind turbines. Others, like Naples and South Bristol, have banned the technology.

About 30 people interested in hearing more about wind energy attended a talk sponsored by the Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists at the First Baptist Church in Penfield on Monday night. The discussion was "Wind Energy: The Environmental Benefits and Hazards."

Troy Nesbitt and Don Traver live near the shores of Lake Ontario — in Hamlin and Webster, respectively. They've never met, but they already have something in common: They're hoping to have a say in the development of wind turbines in their towns.

In Hamlin, Nesbitt said, several landowners have been approached by wind development companies and some have signed lease agreements. Nesbitt and a group of about 25 residents have begun meeting to have a say in the process.

"We want people to become educated because it'll affect the town for a very long time to come," he said. "The proposed area is close to the

lake and a lot of Canadian geese stop and land on the farms in the area."

Speakers Bruce and Mary Ann Cady, members of the Rochester Birding Association, presented some facts about wind turbines — pro and con — and they tried to pin down information on bird and bat deaths as a result of windmills.

Wind energy does not contribute to global warming, air pollution or acid rain, Bruce Cady said. It can also provide income to landowners, particularly farmers, and can reduce local government costs, possibly resulting in a tax decrease.

However, in addition to being a threat to birds, Bruce Cady said, wind turbines can create low-frequency noise and vibration, as well as ice throw, which is when ice buildup flies off the blades of a wind turbine.

The group discussed the need for better data on bird and bat deaths as a result of wind turbines.

According to the National Wind Coordinating Committee Fact Sheet from November 2004, one turbine kills an average of 4.3 birds and 46.3 bats each year. A study of seven turbines in New York from 2001-2002 by Curry and Kerlinger showed just four bird deaths.

Before wind tower permits are issued, Bruce Cady said, more information needs to be known about bird migration corridors and stop-over sites. He said there needs to be multi-season, multi-year studies done on bird behavior and how it relates to turbines.

## Electricity generated in New York in 2005

**Nuclear:** 28.9 percent  
**Coal:** 15 percent  
**Oil:** 15.7 percent  
**Gas:** 22.6 percent  
**Hydro:** 15.7 percent  
**Other, including solar and wind:** 2.1 percent  
*Source: The Nuclear Energy Institute*

Mark Denecke, an outreach contractor with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and a planner with the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, discussed the process by which wind turbines are approved and how citizens can get involved.

Locations with high ground, closer to populated areas and transmission lines are ideal for generating wind energy, he said. Signs that it might be coming to your area include meteorological towers, which are used to test the potential for wind power, commercial companies seeking landowner agreements and applications to the New York State Independent System Operator to get onto the energy grid and applications to town boards, planning boards or zoning boards.

Denecke said wind power should be addressed in towns' comprehensive plans and zoning codes. He said some towns have used moratoriums to freeze development of wind turbines, but that should not be used as

## In the wind: Other regional proposals

### Messenger Post

Below are wind farm projects that are under development in the region:

- Ecogen LLC, a company based in West Seneca, has been given the go-ahead by the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency to build 53 turbines in the town of Prattsburgh, Steuben County — provided it get a number of approvals from the state Department of Environmental Conservation and other agencies. The company is still seeking those approvals.

- Windfarm Prattsburgh, a partnership of UPC Wind Partners LLC and Global Winds Harvest Inc., is a proposal to build up to 50 turbines, also in the town of Prattsburgh.

The Steuben County Industrial Development Agency is handling the environmental review of the project. It is not clear whether the Ecogen and the Windfarm Prattsburgh projects can both be built, given the competition for turbine sites.

- UPC Wind Management LLC plans two projects in the town of Cohocton, Steuben County: It recently submitted revised plans to the town of Cohocton Planning Board for a 36-turbine farm on Pine Hill and Lent Hill, about 2.3 miles southwest of the village of Naples. The original plan called for 41 turbines.

The second project is a 16-turbine wind farm on Dutch Hill, near Dutch Hill Road and Atlanta Back Road.

a tool to prevent them. Instead, he said, towns should be studying the issue and formulating policy during that time.

Other towns, such as Malone, Naples and South Bristol, have gone so far as to ban wind power, but, Denecke said, that has yet to be tested in court. It may be enough to discourage wind energy developers from coming into the towns, though, he said.

Neither Nesbitt nor Traver is opposed to wind power, they say. But they just want it done right. Both say they hope it's not too late to get their

concerns addressed.

"It's a freight train rolling," Bruce Cady said of the renewable energy source and increased pressure from developers of wind farms.

Traver agreed. "I'm absolutely in favor of wind power," he said, "but turbines have to be sited with thought."

Visit [www.powernaturally.org](http://www.powernaturally.org) for information on renewable energy, including a wind energy tool kit. Amy Cavalier can be reached at (585) 381-3300, Ext. 456, or at [acavalier@mpnewspapers.com](mailto:acavalier@mpnewspapers.com).

## Deaths

**Death notices are a free service provided by the Daily Messenger. Paid obituaries supplied by funeral homes/families of the deceased appear on page 4B.**

**HALL**, Ralph E. Jr., 82, formerly of Clifton Springs, died Saturday (Jan. 20) at the DeMay Living Center in Newark. Friends may call 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, at the Patrick Funeral Home, 26 W. Main St., Clifton

Springs, where services will follow at 2 p.m. Burial in Riverview Cemetery.

**JAENECKE**, Timothy M., 44, of Farmington, died Monday (Jan. 22) at his home. Friends may call 6-9 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, at the Lucey-Van-Voorhis Funeral Home, 301 W. Main St., Victor. A service will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 25, at the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 58 N. Main St.,

Canandaigua.

**LEWIS**, Joshua, 17, of Shortsville, died Sunday (Jan. 21). Arrangements are incomplete and being handled by Halsted-Patrick Funeral Home, Manchester.

**SHEETS**, Charles R., 73, of Clifton Springs, died Friday (Jan. 19) at his home. Services and interment will be private. Arrangements by the Halsted-Patrick Funeral Home, Manchester.

## Police Beat

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#### Arrests

- John Lekich, 16, of 113 Adelaide Drive, Canandaigua, was charged with possession of marijuana Jan. 17. Deputies said he was a passenger in a car stopped on Chapin Street and was found in

possession of a pipe containing marijuana residue.

- Deputies charged Jessica A. Ellis, 26, of 3910 County Road 46, Hopewell, with two counts of second-degree harassment Jan. 18 at Thompson Hospital. She is accused of kicking one nurse and threatening another. Deputies said she was jailed in lieu of bail.

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