



## Selma solar building boasts kitchen

By Stacy Nadelman of the Daily Courier

SELMA—The heat is on in the Illinois Valley. Thanks to the new Solar Demonstration Pole Building and a commercial kitchen, people in the Rogue Valley will be able to concoct their tasty cuisine while helping the environment.

The facilities will be unveiled Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Selma Community and Education Center, 18255 Redwood Highway, where the Selma Farmers Market is held. County Commissioner Jim Raffenburg will conduct a ribbon cutting ceremony to kick off the special event.

Tours will be offered throughout the day and the event will last as long as people are still showing up. There will be live music and refreshments.

"It's been a real community effort—many volunteer hours have gone into this project and we're very proud of it," said Linda Meier, board member of the community center.

Meier is also the chairwoman of the Farmers Market committee.

"We feel very fortunate and very appreciative to all the people who donated to the success of the Selma Community Center and the pole building," said Meier.

Over the last two years, volunteers have put in thousands of hours to help build the pole building.

The pole building project was completed and the solar array was installed earlier this month with the help of community donations totaling \$7,395, as well as grants from the Energy Trust of Oregon (\$35,000), Josephine County commissioners (\$10,000), Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (\$700), and the Meyer Memorial Trust (\$8,212).

Pamela Tenny, owner of Cascade Home Inspections and chairwoman of the food processing kitchen, says the new building will produce electricity to reduce costs at the community center, while also helping to educate people about solar energy. "We have a fully functioning solar energy site," said Tenny. "We're trying to encourage local entrepreneurs to get started."

Thanks to the Ashland Food Cooperative, which provided a \$1,000 grant to the center, the kitchen will be available for a \$10 an hour rental fee to those who wish to produce food items such as jams, jellies, pestos and organic products to sell at the Farmers Market or at other retail stores.

Information about Oregon Department of Agriculture regulations for food processing and labeling will be available to those who rent the kitchen.

The Selma Community Center has about 120 members and as of July 1, it is offering membership at \$5 a year or by giving 10 volunteer hours.

For more information about the grand opening and the center's events and opportunities contact Director Marcy Sowa at 415-1000 between 1 and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Anyone interested on vendor information for the Farmer's Market can contact Linda Meier at 597-2522.

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Reach reporter Stacy Nadelman at 503-474-3721 or [snadelman@thedailycourier.com](mailto:snadelman@thedailycourier.com)