



S.E.E.D. Meeting

GREEN ENERGY WEEK – Final Report

SUMMARY

We accomplished the goals; we held eight excellent events. In spite of mediocre participation, we had a good time and established an activity that can improve and grow in the future.

PERSONAL COMMENTS

Chairing this event at EUP was an awesome learning experience. I am encouraged that we were able to provide information to over 500 people at several high quality events. I am hopeful that we may have started something that will grow and expand in the future.

I am very grateful for the support, advice and encouragement I received from many fellow students, student organizations, staff of the Pogue Center and faculty members. The challenges and obstacles by some in the administration of EUP were discouraging.

My advice for the next chair of this event:

- Start sooner – *my ability to publicize the event and fix problems was hampered by the short lead-time*
- Include more people – *I relied on family and friends for support, fellow students would have been a better option.*
- Obtain explicit support from the administration (or quit) – *Enough said.*
- Recruit someone with media contacts (like Jeff Pinski) – *Press releases were sent; results were not evident. Inside contacts are the crucial to having the events appear in the media.*
- Change the date(s) – *I agree with the feedback from exhibitors, the Green Energy Fair might best be scheduled for October.*
- Be patient.

THIS REPORT

What follows are my opinions about the 2009 Green Energy Week. These comments are based on my knowledge of the planning behind each event and the problems I encountered. They are personal observations that should be used to help plan future events.

PARTICIPATION

Monday – Age of Stupid	26
Tuesday – Green Job Panel	44
Wednesday - Colin Beavan	141
Thursday Green Fair	152
Thursday Green Workshops	31
Friday Green Cars	15
FUEL - UPB Movie	80
Free Fuel Friday	25
TOTAL	514

**numbers are approximate*

I expected that providing a week of activities would *increase* participation. The variety and the number of activities would allow people to pick and choose the event or events that were of interest (and could fit their schedule) then skip the ones they didn't like.

Under normal circumstances (and much like the yearly EUP Green Week) having a week or a blitz of events draws more attention and focus on a particular subject. It concentrates the planning and volunteer time required to execute the events and it gives the news media more to write about.

It was suggested that we had too many events and that may have affected the attendance. This is sad because it means the number of people who would be interested in "green" type events is very small.

In total, we had about 5% participation of students & faculty.

In my experience, there are four factors to poor participation:

- 1) Promotion – people didn't know about it.
- 2) Content – what was being offered wasn't what people wanted.
- 3) Timing – bad time or day/conflicts with other activities.
- 4) Cost/value – negative affect generally due to overpricing.

Each of these factors should be reviewed during the post mortem discussion and again during the planning for the next event. This is a critical step in improving participation and value for any of these events.

Note about #4 cost/value. Generally people like things that are "free" – but this is usually associated with products. In the case of our Green Energy Week, it is possible the perceived value of the events was poor because we weren't charging.

PUBLICITY

Obviously this is an area that requires improvement. A couple of problems were encountered due to lack of time or slow responses. I received specific feedback on two press releases and one broadcast e-mail that more lead time was needed. One exhibitor (National Fuel) said that they could have included notices about the events in their billing and newsletter which could have significantly increased attendance by non-EUP guests.

However, we did much more than the average EUP event. Here is a partial listing of what was done for publicity:

- Events were listed on at least 14 community calendars and 8 websites.
- 18 Press Releases were sent to area newspapers
- Personal visits were made to 2 TV stations and 4 radio stations
- Hundreds of posters were hung all around Edinboro University as well as Erie, Edinboro and Meadville.
- Flyers were distributed through the Pogue Center, to the Boy Scout and Girl Scout leaders in the area.
- Invitations were sent to at least 23 different environmental organizations in the area
- Kathy Dahlkemper & John Evans were talked to personally and they pledged support to get the word out.
- Wind turbine display in the Pogue, solar panel in the library
- Mention on EUP Radio and TV was promised
- Broadcast e-mail to EUP students (late)
- Website <http://EdinboroGreenWeek.org>
- Listing on EUP website and calendar (late)
- Invitations sent to 8 area colleges and 3 high schools
- Listing on the Pogue Center lighted sign
- Table tents in the Pogue Center café
- PowerPoint promo and extra plugs at each of the events

Here are some of the things I wish we had done:

- Obtained support from EUP administration
- Utilized a PR person with media contacts (Jeff Pinski)
- Installed a banner across downtown (4-6 month lead-time)
- Small billboard on the way into Edinboro (\$)
- Interviews on radio & TV (both EUP and local media)
- Insert in the Edinboro News (\$)

MONEY

I was able to obtain over \$9,000 in sponsors and donations.

We spent nearly all of it with an expected surplus of approximately \$200

See final report on fund raising for details of the income. See separate spreadsheet for details on the expenses.

FOOD

No one was able to predict the number of participants so I used my best guess. We had fewer people than expected so there was too much food. Luckily, I planned for simple and inexpensive food at each event and much of the food was donated.

Fortunately NONE of the food was wasted! All of the excess food was returned with the exception of the extra cupcakes and apple cider which were "reused" by being given away.

It was suggested there was too much “plastic” being used. Since all of that was donated to us by Chartwell’s we didn’t have much control over it. If SEED wants to eliminate these items in the future they should expect to pay more and/or volunteer to do dishes.

VOLUNTEERS

The key volunteers came from SEED members. SEED president Jeff Sines and advisor Dr. Eisenhart were at every event lending a helping hand. THANK YOU!

In addition to SEED, I was able to recruit volunteers from four different student clubs – Alpha Phi Omega, Lambda Chi Alpha, Circle K and the Engineering and Physics Club. In addition to SEED, only two of the clubs had members that showed – Circle K and LCA.

It was a pleasant surprise and relief to have the Pogue Center staff set-up and tear down everything. This made the job quite easy and the no show volunteers weren’t missed. The only time we could have used more people was during the set-up and tear down by the exhibitors at the Fair. A volunteer photographer would have given us more pictures too!

FOLLOW-UP

Everyone who helped with the events was thanked personally and thanked via e-mail. Some were thanked via card. In the interest of saving paper and postage, not everyone was sent a card.

DOCUMENTATION

I have over 1,800 e-mails and 2 GB of files from the Green Energy Week.

EVENT COMMENTS & OBSERVATIONS

A great deal of thought went into determining the primary audience for each event. My personal preference was to have all the events geared toward students, but that seemed selfish and self-serving. Ultimately I made sure each event was relevant to students, professors and the general public and only limited the green car test drives to students only.

I decided the primary focus for the movie(s), job panel and cars would be the students. For the Fair it was the general public (homeowners) and for Colin Beavan it was both. Considering the majority (2/3rds) of fair participants were from the general public this was a good decision.

Monday – The Age of Stupid

We were up against two events that were scheduled after we planned and rented the movie. A comedy show and a recently added holiday tree lighting (with bagpipes and brownies).

Also, unlike the movie “No Impact Man” which was packed with extra credit students, we had virtually no extra credit students attend.

The movie was very timely considering the Copenhagen meetings this week. It was also worth watching for anyone interested in climate change.

The popcorn, candy and punch were a nice treat.

Next year: consider a green movie festival with a different movie each day of the week.

Tuesday – Green Job Panel

This was probably the least exciting of the weeks’ event, but potentially the most useful. Recruiting panel members was more challenging than I expected. Two panel members cancel out the week before and one member cancelled two weeks before.

The program was at times boring and at times very interesting. Some panel members were great while others were dull. It depends on your perspective and what you are looking for. There was a wide range of panel members since “green jobs” fall into a wide range of categories.

Cookies and cider worked out well. Cookies were reused and completely gone after the fair, cider was donated.

Next year: consider a green job fair. It would be more relevant and more useful.

Wednesday – No Impact Man: An evening with Colin Beavan

After being turned down by three people to be a guest lecturer (two alumni and one wind industry giant), I was inspired to see if Colin Beavan was available as a tie in with the planned movie showing. When Tamarah Black agreed to fund him everything was set.

The potluck dinner put on by SEED members was awesome.
The room looked full, but it would have been nice to have more.
The talk by Colin Beavan was awesome.

EUP President Brown would have benefitted from meeting and talking with Mr. Beavan.

Mr. Beavan did a book signing after the talk and continued to chat with students and guest. Four books were sold while others brought their own. Colin also signed some of our posters.

Colin was genuinely pleased with the turnout and the audience participation.

All the comments from participants were favorable to excellent. Several people commented that they thought the talk was considerably better and more valuable than watching the movie.

We were fortunate to have drinks and other things left over from a previous event donated by Chartwell's. Our use of these items instead of throwing them away matched our goals of "reusing". "Reducing" took a hit - cupcakes we ordered expecting 300 people was a little too much! But these were also reused at the Fair leaving only 2 trays out of 5 1/2 to give away.

Next year: continue the guest speaker. Consider an interesting (free) speaker on a timely subject or maybe another "green" celebrity.

Thursday – Green Energy Fair (see comments from exhibitors also)

Regardless of the number of students or general public, the event was worthwhile if only for the networking the exhibitors were able to do with each other.

There were a few small glitches, but overall it went well. The room set-up worked out great. The PowerPoint was appreciated by the sponsors. The program booklet was professional looking. The addition of the energy tips book saved us a lot of money in printing costs.

We could have done without the t-shirts. They were cheap and not very well received by the students.

Eco-Elvis was cancelled due to cost. I also had some feedback from business owners in downtown Edinboro that they thought he wouldn't do much to draw more participants.

Food was simple, fun and inexpensive. We were originally going to have donated pizza for everyone, but the logistics for that was too much. I decided to just get pizza for the exhibitors (and should have ordered 2 or 3 more).

Door prizes were a big hit. We should have given prizes to more people rather than a lot of prizes to one person each half hour. A suggestion was made to have power strips as door prizes. We had no money in the budget for door prizes nor did we control and only minimal input on the prizes vendors made available.

There was some negative feedback on the narrow 6' tables. Unfortunately that is all we have at the Pogue Center – and we only realized this the Sunday before the Fair. The "news" was communicated to everyone in advance so they could plan and prepare. The small tables were only used for exhibitors who were free. We had to use 6' tables or we would not have been able to fit everyone. Next year we can try to find wider tables elsewhere on campus, rent them or consider using the McComb gym and all 8' tables.

I thought the wide variety of exhibitors might have lacked focus, but some of the feedback has suggested people liked the variety.

Next year: bigger room, more exhibitors, more time to plan. I think the event needs a “hook” in order to get media attention (which was the original intent of Eco-Elvis).

Decide on the primary audience for the event and gear the exhibitor invitations accordingly.

Thursday – Green Energy Workshops

I wasn't able to attend the 2:00-4:00 workshop/public meeting on biomass, but I understand there were 20-25 people there. This was a last minute addition that was requested from the guys who run Fuel for Schools and Beyond.

The other workshops were held after the Fair at a time when the general public was more available to attend (after work, school & dinner). Each had only a handful of participants attend. This is unfortunate because the workshop leaders were excellent.

Next year: consider repeating the workshops.

Friday – Green Car/Hybrid Test Drives

Only about 15 people took advantage of this opportunity. I don't know this was due to timing, the weather or lack of interest.

I originally had a couple of Segways scheduled but cancelled them due to the cold weather.

Aside from the sales talk, it was very interesting to learn about the cars.

Next year: consider having hydrogen fuel vehicles and try to get a Chevrolet Volt.

Friday – Free Fuel Friday

This event for professors was a last minute addition. I needed to schedule a showing of the movie FUEL and include a Q&A session with Hero/BX – and I needed to make sure there were a decent number of people.

We had 25 or 26 people participate. The Q&A wasn't the greatest – but having the movie, lunch and Q&A made us look good with our biggest sponsor.

Tuesday to Friday – FUEL the Movie

Having this movie playing all week was a huge bonus. It wasn't in the original plan or budget so we were lucky when the UPB agreed to fund it.

Showing the movie scored some major points with Tamarah Black and was a key factor in her decision to give us \$5,000!

I don't know how many people watched the movie during the week. I enjoyed it. Although the movie has been out for a while, the information is timely and relevant.

Next year: consider a green movie festival with a different movie each day of the week.