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Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991,
is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Open year-round on weekends – noon to 4pm Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm Sundays.
Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, hours expand to include weekdays from
10am to 4pm. The Center is also open other times, including holidays, by appointment.

MISSION: to provide a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong
learning for all ages by connecting science, history and the arts.

WHERE SCIENCE HISTORY AND ART CONNECT

To: Raven Hill friends
From: Cheri
Date: October 7, 2023
Re: Celebrating solar!

Thanks to the Charlevoix County Community Foundation and Great Lakes Energy People Fund grant awards, both the **Solar SMART** Exhibit and the **Solar SMART Outreach** Program deliver facts and practical ideas about solar energy. The multi-pronged project includes informational kiosks and real-world uses of solar energy. **Solar SMART** meets the Center's mission of providing hands-on and lifelong learning for everyone. It increases outdoor learning opportunities at Raven Hill and "on the road." It challenges minds, expands thinking and links ideas for visitors to the Center and people taking part in the outreach program. The long-term benefits of quality education and clean energy are goals worth striving for, goals that can benefit the local community and the world at large. **Solar SMART** encourages Raven Hill visitors to learn about solar energy usage and better understand how to incorporate it into their daily lives. The new exhibit stands ready to ignite a visitor's imagination and vision of a solar powered world.



The three main **Solar SMART** informational sections include directional and slope kiosks, as well as a timeline of solar usage and what homeowners need to have to "Go Solar" themselves.



The directional kiosk compares solar efficiency with north, south, east, and west facing panels.

Raven Hill encourages informal learning opportunities. **Solar SMART** provides information about and enjoyment of solar energy. We invite visitors to step into a small corner of Raven Hill's world that is "off the grid," not connected to any electrical systems, but that is in harmony with our earth and gives guests new insights into solar energy. This permanent exhibit consists of several parts: a kiosk with solar panels in all four cardinal directions for comparison; a second kiosk that has three solar panels positioned with various slopes to show the best angle position; several informational panels with background as to how solar panels work, as well as the historical and practical uses of solar energy; lighting and phone chargers for visitor usage; and new solar security lighting for all the Center's buildings. There is also a traveling version of **Solar SMART** that can be loaned to schools or libraries.



Slope kiosk displays 0-, 45- and 90-degree slopes and meters allow visitors to see the difference.



*Portable solar panels and power bank are available for loan and will allow school students and others a chance to explore direction and slope effects on solar efficiency for themselves. Call Cheri at 231.675.6025 to reserve the traveling **Solar SMART** exhibit for your classroom or library.*



At the Energy House, panels explain the effects on solar energy output with straight sun, cloudy skies, and darkness. A small phone charging station encourages visitors to sit and enjoy the view as they re-charge their cell phones.

Solar SMART enhances and expands the Center’s existing Energy House. With winter approaching, the short days and early darkness can be a perfect time for visitors to enjoy solar events there. Raven Hill invites individuals, families, and small groups to learn about solar energy, while enjoying food, music, and the ambiance of solar lighting at the Energy House. If interested, call Cheri at 231.536.3369 to make reservations and set a date convenient to you.



*Using the existing solar panels at the Energy House, evening visitors can fix food and listen to music, in addition to enjoying the new **Solar SMART** lighting— all compliments of our funders and the sun!*

Again, our deepest appreciation goes out to the Charlevoix County Community Foundation and Great Lakes Energy People Fund for their support. The **Solar SMART** exhibit will “debut” October 14, 2023. This is also the date of the Annular (Partial) Solar Eclipse and the last **FREE Second Saturday** event for 2023. The eclipse starts a little before noon, so the Center will open early at 11am and remain open until 4pm.

Note: Eclipse viewing requires **special eclipse glasses**. Eye damage can occur if you wear regular sunglasses to look at an eclipse. The Center will have eclipse glasses for sale at \$2 each.

Please join us for these exciting solar celebrations. *Cheri*

P.S. Just a reminder that starting Monday, October 9th, Raven Hill will begin fall/winter hours. The Center will be open from noon to 4pm on Saturdays, 2pm to 4pm on Sundays and other times, including holidays, by appointment. To make reservations for a family or group visit, email cheri@miravenhill.org or call 231.536.3369.