



NCTIMES.COM

This newspaper uses recycled paper.

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

NEWS FROM OCEANSIDE, VISTA, CARLSBAD, CAMP PENDLETON, ENCINITAS, SOLANA BEACH, DEL MAR AND ALL NORTH COUNTY



Show of force

Another show of power at Boston catapults the Rays to within one win of the World Series.

Sports, Page C-1

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008

Vol. 124, No. 289

AN EDITION OF THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES

50 CENTS PLUS TAX

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008 • (LCVO)

NORTH COUNTY TIMES **D**

ENERGIZED ABOUT THE FUTURE

International conference in San Diego focuses on the potential of solar power

BRADLEY J. FIKES
STAFF WRITER

Solar power is entering the mainstream for the nation's and world's energy resources, say speakers and exhibitors at the Solar Power International conference in San Diego, which opened Tuesday.

This year's conference is three times the size of last year's, and organizers ran out of room for all who wanted to exhibit, said Julia Hamm, conference chairwoman. Hamm and other speakers spoke optimistically about the solar industry's growth potential, from large-scale deployment by utilities to individual projects for homeowners and apartments.

Even the ongoing economic crisis has its sunny side for solar, said Rhone Resch, president of the Solar Energy Industries Association. A critical solar investment tax credit was extended for eight years as part of the \$700 billion bailout package approved a few weeks ago, Resch said. That extension provides stability for solar energy companies as they grow, he said.



Rhone Resch

"In the next eight years, solar energy is going to create 440,000 new jobs throughout the United States," Resch said. "We're going to have \$325 billion of economic investment in the solar industry, and we're going to install 28 gigawatts of new solar, enough to power 7 million homes throughout the United States."

A new administration next year, no matter which presidential candidate wins, will be interested in expanding solar energy installations, Resch said.

In a panel discussion after the opening session, Bill Williams, a management analyst with the city of Encinitas, described how the city piggybacked a solar panel installation at its Civic Center complex with an already-needed ren-



► FUTURE

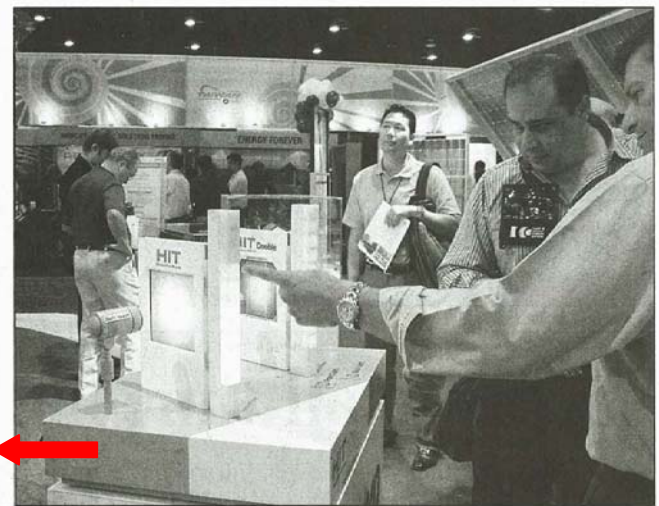
Continued from D-1

ovation of the facility. A sagging roof was refurbished and outfitted with solar panels. The project will save an estimated \$4.3 million in lower electric bills over 25 years, Williams said.

Getting the city to commit to the project was helped by Encinitans' commitment to the environment, Williams said, and also by rapidly escalating utility bills at City Hall.

On the exhibition floor, companies such as Sanyo Energy USA Corp. displayed their solar energy systems. Sanyo showcased its photovoltaic panels, which convert sunlight into electricity. Sanyo's systems are installed at Stone Brewing Co. in Escondido, and in the parking lot of Sanyo North America Corp.'s San Diego office. The panels not only make electricity, but double as shade for the cars.

El Cajon-based Borrego Solar exhibited its range of solar electric systems, which are used by businesses and individual homeowners, said Caleb Saunders, a Borrego So-



BRADLEY J. FIKES / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Attendees at the Solar Power International conference in San Diego look at photovoltaic products by Sanyo Electronics.

lar energy consultant. "We've done schools, businesses, governments, so we cater to essentially all solar customers," Saunders said.

He described the conference as "a phenomenal networking opportunity. It's the event to be at this year."

The conference is co-sponsored by San Diego Gas & Electric Co., whose chief exec-

utive, Debra Reed, addressed the conference. Reed asked conference attendees to help utilities make solar power more cost-effective.

The utility is already pushing ahead with projects, such as solar energy installations at large businesses, which increase SDG&E's peak power capacity, and with even larger-scale projects in the desert.