

Energy classroom arrives in a trailer

By Deb Moldaschel
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Sleepy Eye students had the opportunity to learn from a traveling energy classroom when a trailer full of educational kits and demonstrations was at St. Mary's and Public School recently. The energy trailer was scheduled as a YES! Team sponsored event for Earth Week.

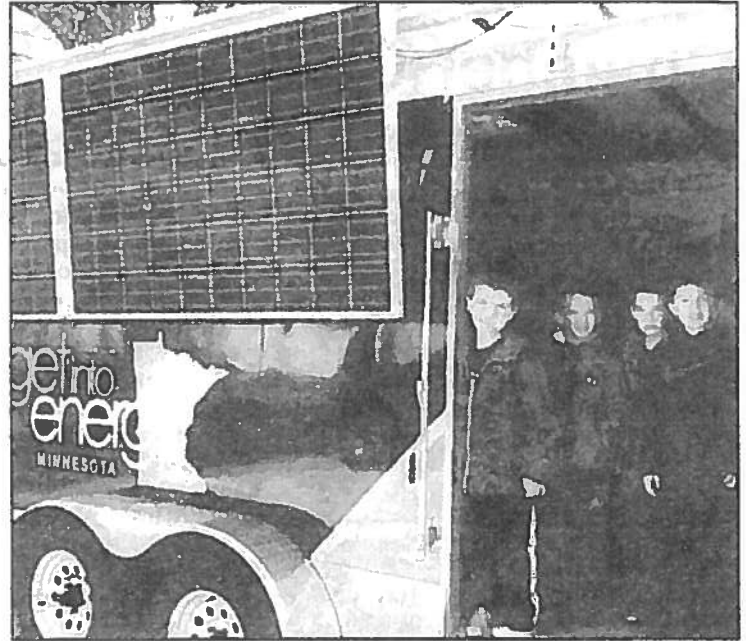
Last June, St. Mary's science

teacher and YES! Team advisor, Mary Beth Botz, attended a two-day workshop, Energy Education for Educators (E3), sponsored by the Minnesota Energy Center out of St. Cloud. She said the workshop consisted of energy-themed classroom presentations and curriculum, hands-on demonstrations and lab kits, plus energy industry tours. "In conjunction with the E3 workshops, the Minnesota Energy Center put together some of those kits and demonstrations in a trailer,



Submitted photo/Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch

After learning how solar collectors can produce electricity, students received a bag of popcorn popped in a solar-powered popcorn popper.



Submitted photo/Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch

Teachers brought kits from the trailer to classrooms for their students to explore 'hands-on' lessons for renewable energy.

which became a traveling energy classroom," said Botz, "and we were able to bring it to Sleepy Eye."

The energy trailer was at St. Mary's on April 10, 11 and 12; and at Public School after Easter break, April 18 to 20. Teachers were able to take kits from the trailer to their classrooms, for students to explore hands-on lessons for both traditional and renewable energy sources.

According to the Minnesota Energy Center the trailer is powered by a complete solar PV system. Kits in the trailer include solar, wind and hydro power trainers, and solar pathfinders which allow for site assessment of solar applications. A bonus feature is a popcorn popper so students can pop "solar" popcorn.