



Green Living Education Flourishes In Keys

In three years the Green Living and Energy Education (GLEE) organization has grown from a small grassroots effort into a well-organized non-profit organization. The group's achievements include hosting a top-notch energy expo in March 2005, creating the Green Thumb Certified Nursery program, holding Rain Barrel Workshops, becoming a non-profit organization and planning another expo.

The idea that sparked the conception of GLEE came from Key Largo resident Diane Marshall. After attending several countrywide sustainable living fairs and building her own "green" home with her husband

Look for more information about GLEE & the 2007 Expo in future issues of FKEC News

John Hammerstrom, Marshall understood the value in "green" education. She took her idea to hold an Expo to the Monroe County Extension service. Marshall also started contacting other environmentalist like FKEC's Environmental Affairs Manager Deb Shaw.

"You might say that I provided the spark or inspiration for the grassroots effort to bring the Keys community access to information about sustainable living." Said Marshall.

"From that point on, it was totally a group effort and could not have been done without the Extension, in particular Cristina Lindley; FKEC; FKAA; and South Florida Water Management District."

The initial goal of the group was to hold a sustainability fair to educate Monroe County's population on "green" living. Once that goal was achieved the group turned its efforts to evolving into a year-round ongoing venture for educating our community.

As part of the ongoing "green" education GLEE has numerous committees dedicated to the different areas of sustainable living.

GLEE Committees Promote:

Land Conservation
Conservation of natural habitats by using "Keys-Friendly" landscaping
Also, support of Green Thumb Certified Nurseries.

Alternative Energy
Promote solar & wind generated energy & educate residents on tax incentives.

Greening Your Home
Providing retrofit advice for existing homes & efficient designs for new houses. Also educate architects, inspectors, etc...

Water Conservation
Money savings & water use through efficient appliances, water audits, reusing rain-water & more.

Greening Financing
Info on tax incentives, rebates & programs that help finance, mortgage & appraise sustainability projects.

Alternative Fuels
Smart, clean & economically efficient use of BioDiesel, Ethanol, Fuel Cells & Hybrid Vehicles

Clean Boating
Eco-friendly projects & actions and support FDEP Clean Marinas.

Energy Conservation
Savings & pollution reduction through energy efficient appliances, energy audits, retrofits, & alternative energy.

Healthy Living
Buying organic foods, backyard gardening & community supported agriculture.

Reduce Reuse Recycle
Working to make it easier and less expensive for residents & businesses to reuse products, avoid disposables & recycle.