

EARTH DAY: It's a Newenhouse, and it's Earth-friendly

Tim Damos, News Republic | Posted: Thursday, April 14, 2011 3:30 am

In 2012, Sonya Newenhouse will begin selling a house that is so well insulated it can be heated by the equivalent of two hair dryers.

"There are two little eco-heaters that are radiant wall units," said Newenhouse, founder and president of the Madison Environmental Group. "No furnace is needed."

Newenhouse, an innovator in the field of sustainable living, will be the featured speaker at Sauk County Earth Day 2011, running from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday at the University of Wisconsin-Baraboo/Sauk County.

The event is open to the public.

The NewenHouse will range in size from 600 square feet and one bedroom to 1,000 square feet, three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

"I always describe it as a house of the future," Newenhouse said.

Aside from describing her prototype for the NewenHouse, which is now being built in Viroqua, she will discuss other suggestions for living sustainably.

Newenhouse also is president of Community Car LLC, a member-based car-sharing organization that provides fuel-efficient cars by the hour for Madison-area residents who occasionally need a car.

She writes a blog for Natural Home & Garden magazine about building the NewenHouse kit home.

Judy Spring, a member of the group Sustain Sauk County and a Sauk County Earth Day planner, said she hopes the presentation by Newenhouse "gives us a chance to discuss how we might apply some of her innovations locally."

This year's event also will feature a workshop about geocaching, an activity that involves using global positioning system units.

"Geocaching is like a treasure hunt and is a great way to get to know new places," Spring said.

More than 50 area non-profits and entrepreneurs concerned with environmental protection will have displays at Sunday's event. The Sauk County Art Association also will host the third annual ENCORE!! Art competition.

Earth Day is sponsored by a collection of area agencies, non-profits and businesses.

Send email to tdamos@capitalnewspapers.com.