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Local News

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## Westside launches solar panel project

Westside Secondary School students have an opportunity this year to learn about alternative energy sources in a hands-on experiment, with the help of Reduce The Juice (RTJ), a local youth-led energy conservation team.

Dave Knight, a technology teacher and Mike Pinkney, a geography teacher, are incorporating in their lesson plans a study about solar panels and alternative energy.

"The project includes two solar panels," said Mr. Knight. "One panel will remain stationary and one panel will be mounted on a device that will allow the panel to track the sun."

The first part of the project is for the students in Mr. Knight's class to design and build the apparatus the one panel will sit on to track the sun.

"The experiment this year includes installing

the panels and then gathering the data collected," Mr. Knight said.

The two teachers think it's a great way to use one experiment for two different classes and Mr. Pinkney

says geography and environmental studies like solar energy go hand in hand.

"The project, when it's up and running, has learning potential in many classes. It's a hands-on and worthwhile experiment." Mr. Pinkney said.

Reduce The Juice, a grassroots, youth-led organization, has been working with the local high schools on various projects.

In Shelburne, in its first year, launched a greenpower project, overseeing the installation of a 1 kilowatt wind turbine and 500-watt solar panel that was connected to the grid and is delivering power to the school.

At Orangeville District Secondary School last year, with students' help, a renewable energy trailer was built and Reduce The Juice is using it to demonstrate all the components needed for a home, to generate alternative energy.

RTJ also provided a solar panel for a go-kart the students built and raced.

"We looked for projects unique for each school," Randy Dryburgh, RTJ spokesperson said. "We've been very pleased with the response from the schools and for the enthusiasm shown."

Reduce the Juice's Shelburne project was sponsored by the Ministry of the Environment, Hydro- One, Eco Action, and the TD Bank friends of the environment fund. In Orangeville, half of the funding was provided by Orangeville Hydro, the conservation bureau, Ecoaction and Westside Secondary School.

"We've received funding from many generous partners who see the value in teaching these types of lessons," Mr. Dryburgh said.