

# Farmers, small businesses have eco-friendly options

## St. Paris area graduate setting up renewable projects locally

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A small business or farmer interested in being more eco-friendly can get up to 75 percent of a renewable energy project funded by the government.

The projects, ranging from solar panel installation to biomass systems, can be paid off within an estimated four years because of the tax credits and grants available, Solar Power & Light Project Development Director Brett Henderson said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) is offering a 25 percent grant for the installation of a renewable energy system. Another 50 percent is paid back by the Federal Investment Tax Credit, which is good through the end of 2016, Hen-

derson said. Businesses and farmers can claim depreciation on the system, warrantied to last 25 years, but expected to last between 30 and 40 years.

The additional financial incentives make renewable energy projects more economical for small businesses and farmers, who could see the projects pay for themselves within four years. Without the credits and grants, it could take an estimated 11 years for the projects to pay off, he said.

"When a customer is looking at an 11-year payback, especially for a business, that's a long time," Henderson said. "With a four-year payback, farmers can see it as a long-term investment. For the right small business that plans on being around, it is a great investment and a great hedge against rising energy costs, which I think we are all pretty

aware are coming."

Henderson, a Graham High School graduate who grew up in St. Paris, hopes to help area small business owners and farmers with their own eco-conscious projects.

Henderson said the USDA grant is aimed at smaller businesses and farm projects, not massive ones for large cities or corporations. The grant application gives points for small businesses, those owned or co-owned by minorities or women, for example.

Solar Power & Light has completed projects for St. Paris village, the city of Xenia, the city of Cincinnati, Antioch College and a variety of other businesses and organizations nationwide, Henderson said. The business also designs "solar signs," another way for a company to use the sun to power operations.

Henderson and Solar Power & Light are working on a project for Henderson Land Investment Company on Scioto

Street and East Lawn Avenue in Urbana. The business, owned by Henderson's parents, also has a location in St. Paris. The Urbana location was remodeled within the past few years, and it was the light shining in the south-facing windows that sparked the idea for a solar project.

E. Lee Henderson, Brett's mother, said they thought having an awning, that could serve as both a power generator and shade creator, would be a great way to accomplish the solar project.

"As far as we know, no one has done a solar awning," she said. "My son and his company are designing and building it. This will make some shade, but also create electricity. We're trying to be environmentally conscious."

E. Lee Henderson added she wanted to have a positive impact on the community, and she believed demonstrating conservation was a good way to do so.

"I believe that all conscious businesses and their owners must hold the intention of having a positive impact on their community in every possible way. I believe that choosing to use and conserve clean energy is a way of contributing to the common good. We drive hybrid vehicles and we recycle 90-plus percent of what we use as responsible stewards of our community and the earth," she said. "The financial benefits are secondary in my mind."

The Henderson Land project is in the permitting stage; Henderson said he expects installation will occur by mid-August. The company's other location in St. Paris is not in a good location for a solar project, E. Lee Henderson said.

Projects may take a couple months, depending on how long it takes to hear back on the grant application and get the materials ordered, he said. Henderson said an example of the cost

can range from \$21,000 for the Henderson Land Company project to \$500,000, depending on the size of the system. Those costs are the total cost before grants and tax credits are received, he said.

Solar Power & Light staff do all the work, from discussing with the owner electricity needs to designing and installing the renewable energy system, Henderson said. Staff will fill out and submit the grant application and assist with any other issues that crop up during the project.

Henderson added the USDA grant deadline is twice a year, in April and November. It can take 30 days after the grant deadline to find out if a project has been approved for a grant, he said.

For more information, call Henderson at 937-259-1316 or email him at bhenderson@splsolar.com.

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## OHIO NEWS BRIEFS

### Woman accused of pocketing money from fund for boy killed

SPRINGFIELD (AP) — An Ohio woman has been charged with pocketing money from an online fund she set up to help the family of a teenager fatally struck by a truck in his yard.

The Clark County sheriff's office says 24-year-old Tina Harper of Springfield was arrested Thursday on a telecommunications fraud charge.

A sheriff's office report says Harper set up an online fundraising page to support the family of 13-year-old Tyree King, who was struck and killed by a truck last month. The report says about \$2,800 had been donated on the website, but Harper gave the boy's family only about \$1,600.

Harper is in the Clark County Jail. It's unclear if she has an attorney.

### Police: Searchers recover body of missing swimmer in river

MIAMITOWN (AP) — Authorities say they've recovered the body of a man who went missing while swimming in a river in southwest Ohio.

Police say they found the body of 21-year-old Adam Young in the Great Miami River in Miamitown on Thursday. Young disappeared while swimming with friends under a bridge in the river on Monday.

He was reported missing Tuesday.

Police say they're not suspecting foul play, but investigators are trying to find out why there was a lapse in reporting Young missing.

Search and rescue teams scoured the area Tuesday and Wednesday, but couldn't locate him. Bad weather prevented searchers from going up in a helicopter until Thursday, when they spotted the body.

### Train hits semitrailer, pushes it half-mile on Ohio tracks

SANDUSKY (AP) — Police say a semitrailer was struck by a train and pushed about a half-mile down the tracks in northern Ohio after getting stuck at a rail crossing.

The Sandusky Register reports the crash occurred around 1 p.m. Thursday. Police say the semitrailer driver was backing over the railroad tracks in Sandusky and onto an access road when the vehicle's back tires got stuck in the mud and gravel. The driver tried to move the semitrailer off the tracks, but got out as he saw an approaching train.

The train struck the semitrailer and dislodged its engine, then continued pushing it down the tracks until both came to a halt and the train derailed.

Police say no one was injured in the crash.

### Judge: Girl charged in baby's death not competent for trial

PAINESVILLE (AP) — An Ohio juvenile court judge has ruled that an 11-year-old girl charged with fatally beating an infant in February is not competent to stand trial.

Lake County Juvenile Court Judge Karen Lawson made the determination Thursday. She says the girl has significant mental health issues that make her incapable of understanding court proceedings.

The girl will be held at a juvenile detention center for 90 days after which the murder charge will be dismissed.

Lake County Prosecutor Charles Coulson says he's disappointed in the decision.

The girl has been held in a juvenile detention center since Feb. 6, the day 2-month-old Zuri Whitehead died in surgery. Police say the baby was severely beaten while staying at a Wickliffe home with the girl and her mother.

### Leader of central Ohio drug ring sentenced to 25 years

COLUMBUS (AP) — A man who prosecutors say was the leader of a central Ohio drug ring has been slapped with a 25-year prison sentence.

The Columbus Dispatch reports that 44-year-old James DeJarnette was sentenced Thursday after pleading guilty to 15 counts including engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, and trafficking in heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine.

DeJarnette was indicted last year based on search warrants and wiretaps conducted through a joint investigation by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

The plea agreement allows him to apply for judicial release after serving nearly half of the prison sentence.

His brother, 43-year-old Joseph DeJarnette, and 10 other defendants previously pleaded guilty in the case. Joseph DeJarnette was sentenced in March to nine years in prison.

### Ohio Lottery records record sales in last fiscal year

CLEVELAND (AP) — The open-

ing of two new racinos with slots-like video lottery terminals helped the Ohio Lottery to record sales in the last fiscal year.

Traditional lottery sales combined with the video lottery terminals generated \$3.6 billion in sales in the 12 months that ended June 30. That's up \$483 million from the previous fiscal year.

The lottery says profits generated a record \$990 million for the state education fund in last fiscal year. That was up \$85.7 million from the previous 12 months.

The figures are preliminary. Audited figures are expected to be released in October.

Ohio Lottery profits support public school operations.

### Guardsman convicted of abusing daughters files appeal

MARYSVILLE (AP) — An Ohio National Guardsman convicted of sexually abusing three adopted daughters has filed a notice of appeal.

The guardsman was sentenced last month to life without parole following his conviction on 15 counts including rape and sexual battery. He was accused of abusing girls who were younger than 13.

The 42-year-old Marysville man testified in his own defense. His wife testified she never saw signs of such abuse. She has pleaded guilty to charges of intimidation and obstructing justice.

The guardsman appealed his conviction late last month in Union County Court. A message was left with his attorney seeking comment on the appeal. The Guard says it's severing its connection with the guardsman.

The Associated Press isn't naming the couple to protect the children's identities.

## FBI: Church gunman shouldn't have been able to get gun

WASHINGTON (AP) — The gunman charged in the Charleston, South Carolina, church massacre should not have been allowed to purchase the weapon used in the attack, FBI Director James Comey said Friday as he outlined a series of missed opportunities and incomplete paperwork that allowed the transaction to take place.

The problem stemmed from an arrest of Dylann Roof in South Carolina weeks before the shooting in which police say he admitted to possessing illegal drugs.

Under federal rules,

that admission alone should have been enough to disqualify him from an April gun purchase. But, Comey said, the FBI background check examiner who evaluated Roof's request to buy a gun never saw the arrest report because the wrong arresting agency was listed on the list rap sheet that she reviewed.

The transaction went through after three days because the examiner didn't have enough information to authorize or deny it.

"If she had seen that police report," Comey said, "that purchase

would have been denied."

Comey said he learned about the problem on Thursday night and that FBI officials planned to meet Friday with relatives of the nine victims of last month's church shooting in Charleston. He said he had also directed an internal 30-day review into how the FBI uses criminal background checks in gun transactions.

His announcement came within hours of the Confederate flag's removal from the South Carolina Statehouse. Families of the victims attended the ceremony.

## Confederate flag taken down in South Carolina after 54 years

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — For the first time since the civil rights movement, the Confederate flag was removed entirely from the South Carolina Statehouse, in a swift ceremony Friday before thousands of people who cheered as the Civil War-era banner was lowered from a 30-foot flagpole.

Many people believed the flag would fly indefinitely in this state, which was the first to leave Union, but the killing of nine black church members during a Bible study in Charleston last month changed that sentiment and reignited calls to

bring down Confederate flags and symbols across the nation.

Dylann Roof, a white man who was photographed with the Confederate flag, is charged in the shooting deaths, and authorities have called the killings a hate crime.

The crowd, estimated at up to 10,000 people, chanted "USA, USA" and "hey, hey, hey, goodbye" as an honor guard of South Carolina troopers lowered the flag during a 6-minute ceremony. Gov. Nikki Haley stood on the Statehouse steps along with family members of the victims and other dignitaries. While she

didn't speak, she nodded and smiled in the direction of the crowd after someone shouted: "Thank you governor."

Haley supported the flag before the shooting, but the Republican had a change of heart in the days after the killings and led the push to get legislators to pass a bill before the end of the summer. She signed the legislation Thursday.

As she looked on, two white troopers rolled up the flag neatly and tied it with a white ribbon. They handed it to a black trooper who brought it to the Statehouse steps.