



Lessons Learned from The Union's Fall Home & Harvest Festival

If you missed last weekends Fall Home and Harvest festival you missed a great show. The demonstrations & workshops alone were worth the price of admission. Well, actually they were worth far more than the price of admission, given it was free! My favorites were the Care & Shelter of Backyard Poultry, Composting & Raised Bed Gardening, and Gold Panning. The others were really great too; these were just my personal favorites. If you're a fan of Going Green, you won't want to miss The Unions next Home & Garden show, cause' they just keep getting better and better. Besides, where else could you see such a wide range of products and services within walking distance of each other!

In addition to the demonstrations and workshops there was a fine assemblage of local purveyors of Green products and services. There must have been a dozen or more solar companies, many of which were from out of town. Not to bash the out-of-town companies but, hey, their prices are significantly higher than those from us local solar companies (according to the statistics from PG&E's web site of solar installations in Nevada County). Which makes me wonder, how could this happen? Your local solar companies offer (free!) site visits and bids! Plus, we don't have to travel as far to get to your home or business and, should something go wrong, who do you think will be there sooner to get you back online? So, if you're one of those people that thinks stuff is always cheaper "down the hill"; at least let us bid your installation so we can prove local is better. The money you save will be your own!

There was, of course, as expected, one company from out of town peddling the same stuff I've warned readers about in the past. In this case it was the "Power Saver" unit you plug into your home's electrical outlet that (they say) will save you up to 25% on your home power bill. And, like the last time they showed up at the Home & Garden show, I had to go by their booth and verbally accost them. Of course, as expected, they stood their ground, vehemently assuring me the overpriced capacitor-in-a-coffee can really does save power. They were so convincing they almost had ME convinced, so I had to leave before I started to scream....

There were a whole host of other new, local purveyors of Green. Fortunately for you, however, even if you missed the home show you can still check out their stuff since they're, well, local!

The Bamboo Home Store has the coolest stuff made from Bamboo. Hard to imagine that Bamboo could be softer and more durable than cotton, but it is. Based on experience (with my own wife) however, I recommend you guys accompany your wife to the store. That way you can't blame me when the credit card bill shows up in the mail. After all, this stuff's so cool she'll be replacing everything in the house with bamboo, so you'll want to keep a close eye on her!

Young's Carpet One was another local favorite. I remember when Randy Young first opened his store; I needed to advise homeowners about selecting a carpet and pad with low thermal resistance for the radiant heated floors I was designing. Yep, pretty esoteric stuff, and information like that was difficult

to impossible to find back then, but Randy dug deep and gave us just what we needed. Nowadays they carry a wide range of Green flooring materials of all sorts – it's recyclable, contains a minimum amount of recycled material and/or is made from a natural, sustainable, quickly renewable resource.

Unfortunately The Union doesn't give me enough space to adequately cover all the local companies providing green products and services so I'll just finish by rattling off the names of others I saw at the show – Abercrombie & Co., A to Z, Benham Plumbing, Green Building Systems, Hills Flat Lumber, PlanIt Solar, Sierra Solar Systems, Sierra Timberline, Sustainable Energy Group, Tekton Solar, Thermal Solutions and Wood Heat Stoves & Solar.

So remember, to Go Green you can visit these companies any day of the week, get competitive prices, excellent service, and all without having to drive down the hill!

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