



Volume 1, Issue 2

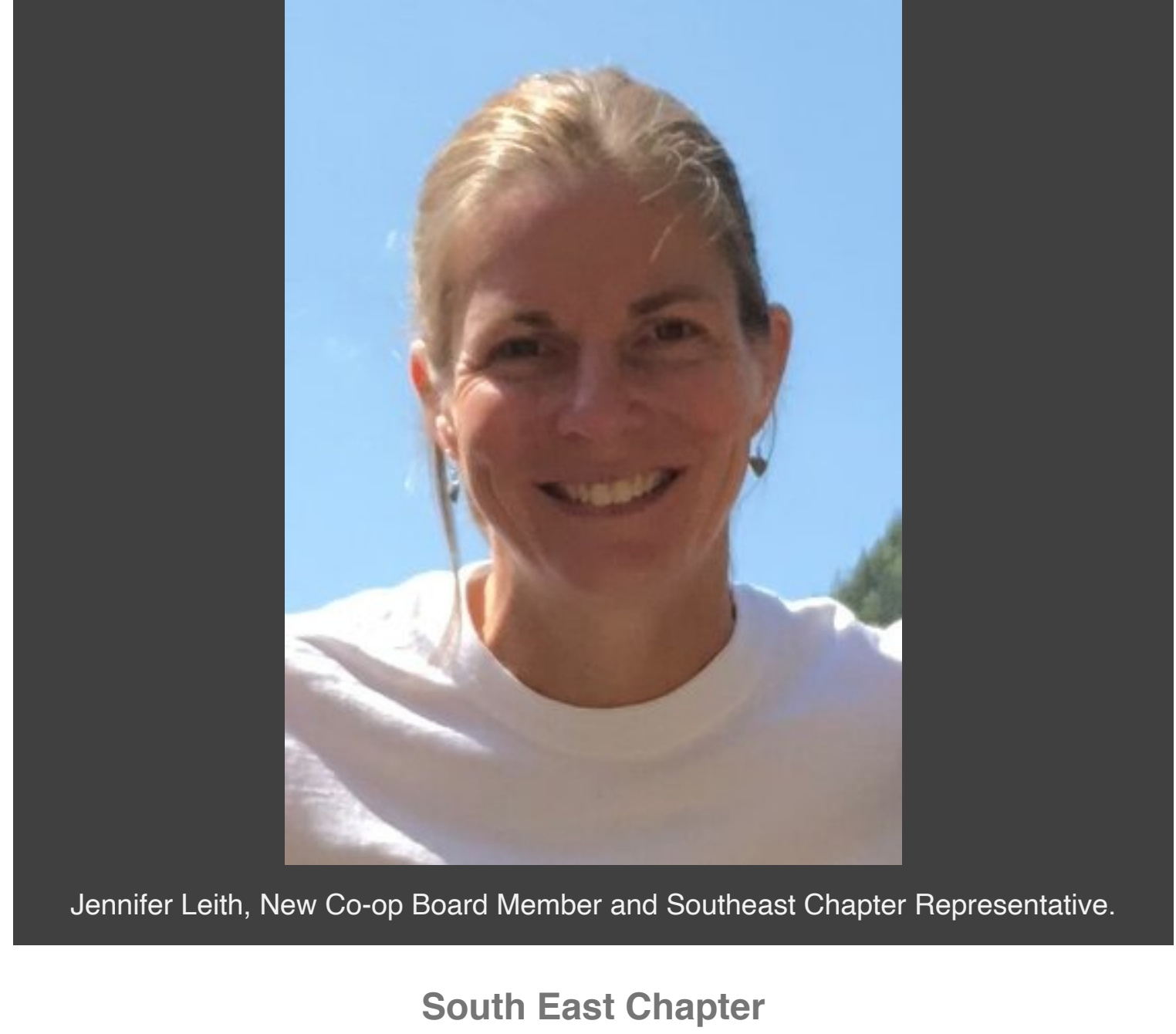
June, 2021

We're Expanding!

By an overwhelming majority, the Members of the Co-op voted in a special election, held in April, to change the Co-op bylaws to include formation of chapters. The new wording in the bylaws now states:

Chapters. A chapter of the Cooperative may be formed, operate and be dissolved, according to such rules as established by the Board. Chapters shall comply with all the Cooperative's Bylaws herein and all Administrative Policies, Regulations, Rules and Procedures established by the Board.

This change in the bylaws reflects an opportunity presented by a group of people from southeast Pennsylvania to join the Co-op, both as individuals and as a distinct chapter. New Board Member Jen Leith represents the Southeast Chapter and explains here it's history and rationale.



Jennifer Leith, New Co-op Board Member and Southeast Chapter Representative.

South East Chapter

By Jennifer Leith

Albert Einstein stated "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." It was when navigating the difficulty and challenges of financing a local solar project that we learned about the Clean Energy Cooperative. In the summer of 2020, a small but mighty group of solar advocates in Southeastern PA, Victor Donnay, Joy Baxter, and myself, along with a student duo from Bryn Mawr College and Haverford College, were pressing our local Board of Commissioners to take action on their 2018 'Ready for 100' pledge which committed the municipality to 100% renewable energy by 2035.

As we researched the 'business case' for a pilot solar roof installation on a Township building, it became clear that taking on a crowd-source funding campaign or establishing a loan fund from the community to build the solar project would be mired in challenges like SEC rules and the like.

Through Sharon Pillar, of the PA Solar Center, we learned about the Clean Energy Cooperative and reached out to then Board Chair, Jack Barnett. Jack's enthusiasm and graciousness in sharing his time, insights and impressive spreadsheets with us, ignited our enthusiasm to join the Co-op and to amplify the mission of developing community through clean energy in PA.

Our local Board of Commissioners - after a persuasive presentation by Victor, Joy and students in September 2020 - voted unanimously to not only move forward on a pilot project for a solar rooftop array on a Township building, they opted to pay for it themselves and float a municipal bond to do so.

The success (and swiftness) of this advocacy lead us to approach the Board of the Clean Energy Co-op with an idea to create a chapter in Southeastern PA: to broaden the reach of the cooperative by creating a localized cluster of solar enthusiasts to make renewable, clean energy happen in our corner of the state.

Through various stages of governance and membership approval, the Southeastern PA Chapter of the Clean Energy Cooperative was born --- officially approved on April 20, 2021 -- with 13 inaugural members.

We are actively working on our outreach plans, project development inquiries and overall functions as a new (and pioneering) membership group.

We are extremely appreciative to all of the Cooperative members for their leadership, guidance and warm embrace of our Chapter concept. We look forward to working together to build our local and regional communities and economies through people-powered solar projects.

Onward together!



Stourbridge Project solar system.

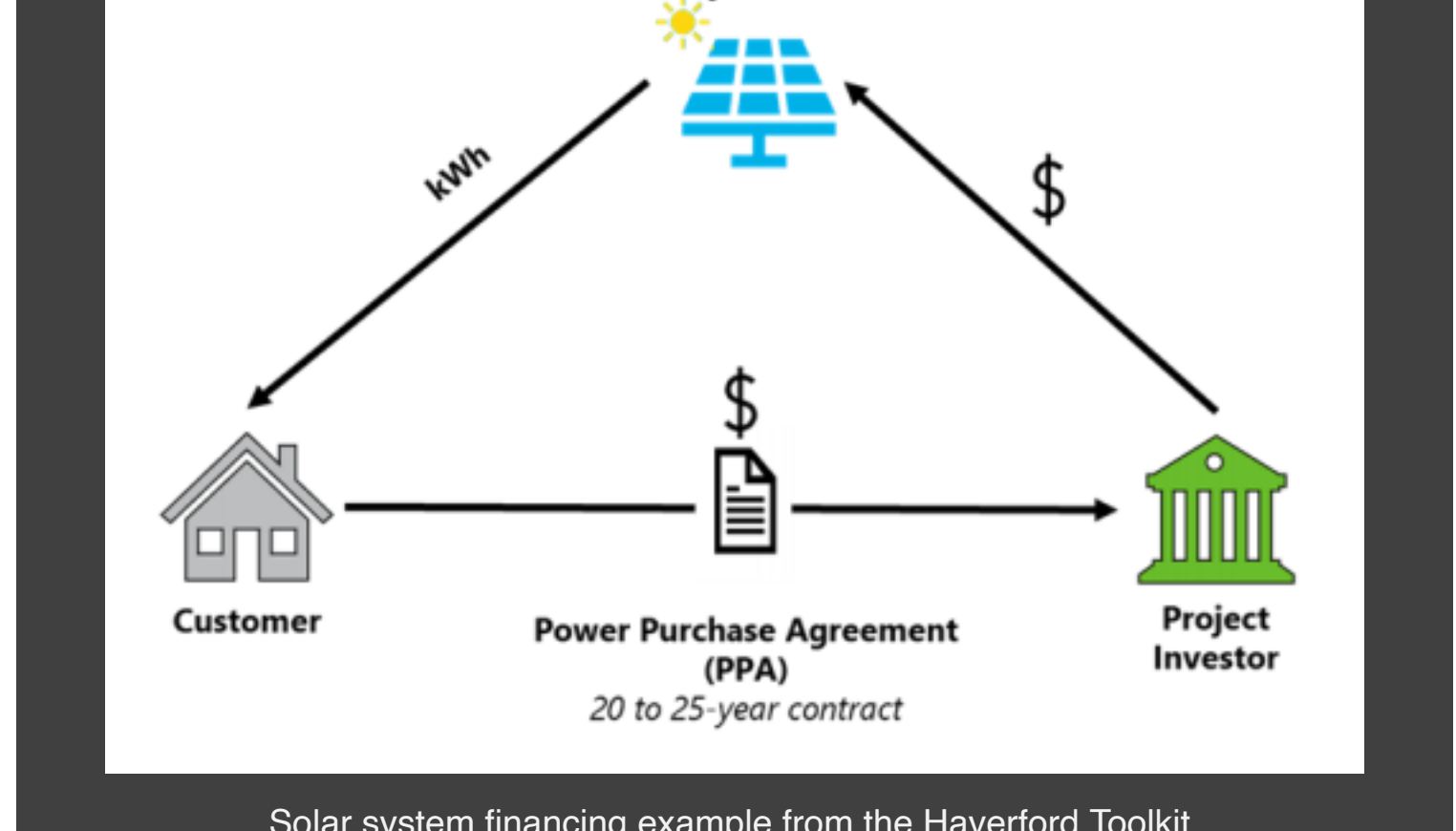
A New Solar Toolkit!

In partnership with the Co-op, a group of Haverford College seniors have created an inventive and informative solar toolkit. It is designed to provide individuals, businesses and nonprofits an in-depth but accessible background in all things solar.

Among the sections are:

- Benefits of solar power
- How does solar electricity work?
- Purchasing your solar system
- Is my home/business suitable for rooftop solar?
- Solar financing options
- Important resources and contacts for installing solar

The entire 24-page toolkit, in pdf format, can be found on the FAQs page of our website: cleanenergy.coop/faqs



Solar system financing example from the Haverford Toolkit.

Membership Report

With the addition of the South East Chapter's 15 members, the total membership in the Co-op now stands at 130, up from 86 this time last year.

The optimistic goal for this year is to reach 200 members, which would more than double the membership in a single year.

The Outreach Committee is considering having the Co-op join regional organizations such as WEDCO and Pocono Mountains Visitor Bureau to expand the audience and membership prospects for the Co-op.

Please urge friends and family members to learn more about the Co-op by going to www.cleanenergy.coop, read about its goals and projects, and then join us. We now accept online membership orders. Membership dues remain at \$100 for a lifetime membership.

There have been several other inquiries like the Philadelphia group's and the Board is looking to see if this is a feasible way for the Co-op to expand across the state of Pennsylvania in the future. Stay tuned for more information in the weeks and months ahead.

Project Development Report

Though there is currently not a Co-op Project offering investment opportunities for qualified members, there are several in the investigation stage, including a farm, a regional arts facility and a new school building project in our new chapter region. Stay tuned as these projects evolve.

And more importantly, Co-op Members have been the BEST source for new project development.

What we look for in a project:

- You are non-profit, or community-oriented (e.g. farm, medical, theater, church, educational, or supporting low or moderate income families, etc.)
- You own a local building with significant annual energy usage (if you rent, then we'd need the landlord to be as involved and committed too.)
- You have an unshaded, and flat or mostly south-facing roof where a solar system could be mounted.
- You are committed to our sustainable-oriented communities for the long-term, as well as to energy savings and conservation.

The benefits to our project hosts:

- No cash up-front; instead the solar project will be paid for over 15 to 25 years.
- All (or most) of the building's electricity load will be produced on site from clean and sustainable solar panels, resulting in reduced emissions and pollution.
- More stable electric bills, projected out for two decades or more, reducing the impacts of future utility price increases and frequent rate changes.
- Money circulates more within our local communities.

Stay Active - Stay Tuned

Our elected representatives in Harrisburg have many sustainable energy-related bills under consideration, and some are at various stages of becoming law. Jack Barnett, our past president and legislative monitor, lists two top initiatives that we all should encourage Harrisburg to move forward on.

Increase and Extend the AEPS

The PA Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (AEPS) was passed in 2004, and been successfuly reached (Yea!); but are now flat-lined as of June 1st 2021. Future prices due to no further Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) will be much lower, reduced to no further increase in demand.

HB1080 (Sponsors: Quinn-R and Herrin-D) / **SB501** (Sponsors: Laughlin-R and Haywood-D) increases the solar requirement to reach 5.5% by 2026, with overall renewables to 18%.

HB1394 (Sponsor: Rep Quinn-R) very recently filed, increases the AEPS solar requirement to 2.5% by 2030 and all renewables to 15%.

SB300 (Sponsor: Santarseiro-D) increases the APES solar requirement to 10% by 2030 and overall renewables to 30%; in line with the "Finding PA's Solar Future" project.

Community Solar

SB472 (Sponsors: Scavello-R and Haywood-D). This bill requires utilities to support a new class of "community solar" facilities up to 5MWs that sell the generated electricity to subscribers within the utility's service area, with the kWh credits (subscriber's share of the array's production) appearing on the utility's monthly bill for each subscriber. This allows renters or anyone with a poor roof to get solar electricity from the "shared solar array." Financial incentives are included for the solar facility to provide grid-services to the utility.

HB1555 (Sponsor: Kauer-R and many bipartisan co-sponsors) Less financial incentives, but otherwise mostly the same language as SB472.

SEEDS has advocated for community solar legislation in PA since 2014. The Clean Energy Co-op was founded to bring those benefits to our local communities, even without this much needed legislation. PA needs to join the 20 other states (AZ joined last month) and enable these local shared solar projects!

More to come on Policy in Harrisburg in future newsletters.



The Co-op's Cooperage solar project (bottom left) and two independently developed solar roofs in Honesdale. How may other downtown rooftops could host solar?

Co-op Production Updates

Our four completed projects continue to produce clean, renewable energy for our region. Here is a current estimate of total energy produced to date by each project:

Project	Since	Energy Produced
Cooperage:	Dec 2015	164,046 kWh
Anthill Farm:	Oct 2017	158,755 kWh
Willow Wisp:	Oct 2018	161,599 kWh
Stourbridge:	Dec 2020	19,130 kWh

The just-over 500,000 kWh produced by projects of the Clean Energy Co-op is equivalent to avoiding burning over 60 TONS of coal!

Feel free to forward this along to anyone you think might be interested in the Co-op. For any comments or questions, email us at info@cleanenergy.coop. Thanks for reading!

Our Mission:

"To sustainably develop renewable energy resources for a healthy and just energy future for our communities, using local investment and providing positive returns to our members."

[Find Out More](#)

