

News Release

Contact: Kathy Ziprik
828-890-8065
kathy_ziprik@simonton.com

\$2.50 a Day Heats 4,000 Square Foot Solar Home

PARKERSBURG, W. VA. – Who cares if it’s 14 degrees outside with nine inches of snow piled up? Not John Kosmer. No matter what the temperature or the weather, it costs Kosmer just \$2.50 a day to heat the 4,000 square feet in his upstate New York solar home. That’s less than \$1,000 a year in energy costs at a time when fuel oil prices are steadily rising.

“Heating costs for this home are so low because the sun is responsible for the lion’s share of the heat,” says Kosmer. “Our passive solar house was constructed so that it retains heat and moves it through the home in a ducted air heat transfer system.”

Kosmer, builder John Carrigan with Building With Integrity, and Bruce Brownell of Adirondack Alternative Energy, all worked together to carefully select the products used to construct the three-story home. As the solar engineer on the project, Brownell specified four-inch thick rigid polyurethane on the exterior walls, under the roof and beneath the one-foot concrete slab. A state-of-the-art boiler was added to include supplemental heat during the coldest weather. And, pre-finished concrete siding with a 50-year warranty covers the home’s exterior.

“One of our most important decisions was which windows to install,” says Kosmer. “I specified ENERGY STAR® compliant windows from Simonton Windows® with a very sensible glass package that includes Argon gas filling, double glazing and Low E soft coat. This glass package helps us retain the sun’s energy. Choosing vinyl windows with an upgraded glass package is one of the best investments any homeowner can make to save on energy bills.

“For our house, we’ve found the vinyl frames offer superior energy efficiency capabilities. Their longer life cycle (when compared to wood or aluminum frames) makes these Simonton windows one of the most cost effective and sustainable choices I made when constructing this home.”

There are 53 Simonton windows in the Kosmer Solar Home (the majority of them being casements), pouring sunlight into the white interior and on the natural blonde bamboo floors throughout the house. A woodstove with a red enamel stovepipe rises several stories in the atrium of the house. The atrium acts like a huge duct, carrying heated air up into grilles in the attic ductwork. From there, it's then redistributed throughout the home to keep temperatures at a comfortable 68 degrees.

“When you consider that this passive solar home costs about the same as a comparable traditionally constructed house, you can understand how this home makes traditional new home construction obsolete,” says John Carrigan, builder of the home. “Following the current green trend in America, public awareness of passive solar homes has begun to create the kind of demand that can re-invigorate the home building industry in the near future.

“Because this home uses more natural light than most houses, the Kosmers will spend less on electricity. Even the ENERGY STAR compliant appliances, light bulbs and boiler help save on energy costs. Passive solar homes are definitely going to rise quickly in popularity throughout the United States in the near future.”

Simonton Windows produces ENERGY STAR qualified replacement and new construction windows and doors, including a line of impact-resistant products. The company was ranked #1 in quality in the 2007 Brand Use Study sponsored by *Builder* magazine and has won two consecutive Best In Class Awards for being ranked “Overall Top Rated Vinyl Window Brand” in unaided industry studies.

Founded in 1946, Simonton's hallmark has been to deliver its made-to-order products in seven days or less. Part of consumer products company Fortune Brands, Inc. (NYSE: FO), Simonton has manufacturing facilities in Pennsboro, Harrisville and Ellenboro, W.Va.; Paris, Ill.; McAlester, Okla.; and Vacaville, Calif. Simonton is a founding sponsor of The Weather Museum and a corporate partner of Homes for Our Troops. For information, call (800) SIMONTON or visit www.simonton.com.

###

Additional Story Resources:

- www.Building-With-Integrity.com
- www.aepassivesolar.com
- www.simonton.com