

Solar power industry offered chance to shine

By John Stephens
Sentinel-Voice

For years Rose McKinney-James has championed the practicality of using solar power.

Thanks to a little legislative help, she and other solar power aficionados now can better compete with Nevada's other energy providers.

Gov. Bob Miller signed into law AB366 which deregulates electric utilities such as Nevada Power and eases the way for other companies with solar power applications to set up shop.

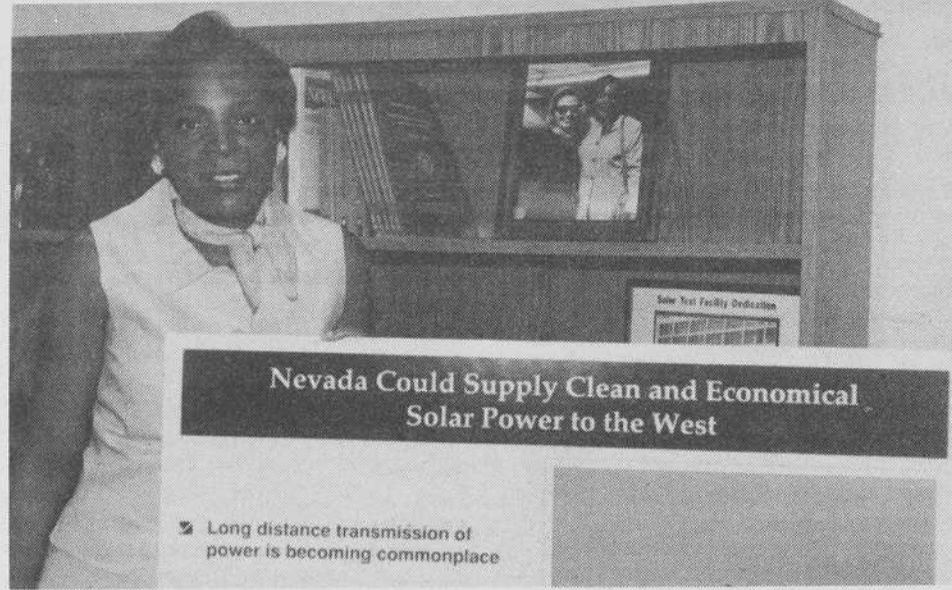
Given the area's climate, McKinney-James said, the law is practical.

"Southern Nevada has an abundance of sun, and we need to capture it and turn it into an economic resource," she said.

In mid-1995, she started the Corporation for Solar Technology and Renewable Resource (CSTRR) with a \$3 million U.S. Department of Energy grant.

As the company's president and CEO, she aims to promote the use of solar energy. She urged other companies to pursue solar-related activities.

Only a handful of states have laws governing renewable energy.



Rose McKinney-James has long been a proponent of the use of solar power as a resource.

"Assembly Bill 366 ensures that solar energy and the technology are mainstreamed into the energy market place," she said.

McKinney-James left her native Detroit in 1981 and headed for Las Vegas.

She and husband Frederick have two sons, Eric, 7, and Avery, 16 months. She earned a juris doctrine from Antioch School of Law in

Washington D.C., and a bachelor's degree in

liberal arts from Olivet College in Olivet, Mich.

"Rose was an excellent advocate for solar power and renewable energy in general," Sen. Dina Titus said. "She was extremely knowledgeable on the subject and knew both the players and the process from her days with the Public Service Commission and the state division of Business and Industry."

"Developing solar power is not only good for Nevada's economy, but it also helps to save the planet," Titus said. Titus said some are interested in contracting to build a solar power plant at the Nevada Test Site.

"The power companies that exist today have very little money, if any, invested in the research and development of cheaper electrical resources," Sen. Joe Neal said.

"AB366 is part of an electrical restructuring which treats energy as a commodity rather than a contributing service to the community," he said. "The bill was a good bill."

Parent calls for school's closure

By Damon Hodge
Sentinel-Voice

A parent who championed West Las Vegas' first middle school called Tuesday for its temporary closure until construction can be completed and the necessary equipment and supplies delivered.

Marzette Lewis, a parent of two West Middle schoolers, said the school lacks myriad items including public address and intercom systems, orchestra and band instruments, computers, technology modules, phones, desks, televisions, VCRs, library books and textbooks. She said the school should be closed until construction can be completed and the supplies come in. "It's a slap in the face to the kids (that the school isn't

finished)," she said.

Principal Lois Venger on Wednesday rebuffed Lewis' request to close the school. "It's against the best interest of the children," she said. Venger said closing the school would unnecessarily burden the children by putting them on double sessions with other schools.

She acknowledged that the school lacks some basic equipment but said that should not overshadow what's going on there. "We have youngsters that are glad to be here. They love their teachers. The faculty is excited." There's teaching and learning going on here," she said.

She attributed some of the problems to order mix-ups, price hikes and shipping delays

and said the school has many of the items Lewis claims it doesn't.

"We have 70 percent of the band instruments, the PA system is being installed, there are phones in every office, we have VCRs, the students and teachers have desks and we have textbooks." She said the library books and technology modules should be here next week, wiring is being finished on the intercom system, and the TV's and computers are on their way.



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice by Bob Herd

SISTERSPEAK

Bobby Troutman (right), host of KCEP-FM 88.1's weekly talk show *For Women Only* spoke recently with Norma Harris-Hagan, author of "Meandering Through the Soul of A Mother Daughter," during a program called "The Progress of Women of Color." The program is part of the free monthly lecture series *Humanities and Language Through The Black Experience*.

CORRECTION

Last week's story about Committed 100 Men's banquet incorrectly titled Mike Waller. Waller is chairman of the board for Committed 100 Men.

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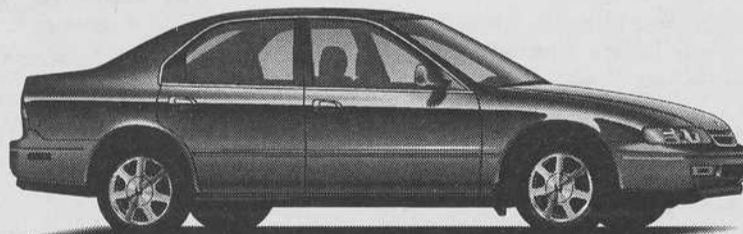


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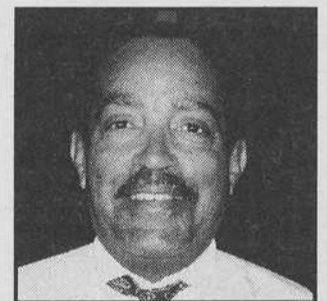
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