

OPINION

EDITORIAL: Taylor topped with 'green' awards

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“Green” — as in environmentally friendly — is the nation’s newest catchphrase. And the city of Taylor appears to be right in step, creating 30 new green programs, the most recent of which was the installation of a wind turbine at the Heritage Park Petting Farm. The turbine should cut the farm’s energy costs by 40 percent and serve as a teaching tool for visitors to the facility.

Taylor and Wyandotte have been at the forefront of environmentally friendly new programs. Both cities recently were honored by the Southern Wayne County Regional Chamber during its members’ recognition at the Downriver Italian American Hall in January. Taylor Mayor Cameron Priebe was honored individually for being a leading proponent of reducing his city’s energy consumption and carbon footprint.

The wind turbine was installed by Cresent Energy LLC of Wyandotte, owned by one of Downriver’s leading proponents of environmentally friendly devices, Robert Kulick. Other places in the area using such devices are the Southgate Golf Course, 3 Nick’s Tap Room (Southgate) and Wilson Middle School (Wyandotte). According to Kulick, the Southgate Veterans Memorial Library is seeking a grant for alternative energy.

The Petting Farm, at Pardee and North Line roads, marked the Downriver area’s first commercial wind turbine installation. The 45-foot wind turbine and previously installed solar photovoltaic panels will reduce the farm’s energy costs and will serve as an educational tool. The 4-kilowatt solar electricity utilizes 21 solar panels and was installed at the end of 2008, making Taylor a leading community wind energy and solar energy in an education setting.

Taylor’s Petting Farm is just the right spot for such educational tools to come together. It offers a year-round, hands-on experience for the young and young at heart in a unique park atmosphere.

The heated barn is filled with a variety of live animals. A welcome center is open year-round. Besides a barn full of live animals, the farm features a welcome center that serves as the activity room for birthday parties, field trips and other special events. Annually, the farm attracts about 22,000 visitors from southeastern Michigan.

What’s next? This spring, Taylor officials expect to supply biomass heating to the farm, so stay tuned, because it appears that “green” has just begun Downriver.