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### **Minnesota Renewable Energy Society to Host the 18th Annual Solar Boat Regatta**

Lake Phalen, Saint Paul, MN - For the 18th year in a row, teams from various schools and organizations across Minnesota will compete in a solar-powered boat race on May 22, 2010. Designed to educate students about solar power and engineering, teams will include middle school, high school, college students and independent teams. The event begins at 10:00 AM and goes to 4:00 PM, and includes slalom, speed, endurance and solar-only races and includes three classes: student, adult and experimental. Also returning this year is live music from the Nick Hass trio.

According to Doug Shoemaker at the Minnesota Renewal Energy Society (MRES) there is more interest than ever in the Regatta. Race participation has grown by over 25% this year. Doug said, "I am very excited to have 20 teams participating in the event, coming from across the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota. We have both new and returning teams including a new team from Austin, Minnesota and several area charter schools. Some of last year's teams are even coming back with multiple boats, including newly built boats."

Orono Schools' Technology Education Instructor Brad Jans has three solar boat teams racing this year, after narrowing two of the teams down from 20 applicants. Jans began by mentoring an 8<sup>th</sup> grade team that started in the Student Class and has progressed to the Experimental Class, racing for the third year in a row. Jans stated, "The teams have brought to life my philosophy of hands-on minds-on learning. Together, we reflected on our successes and challenges of the last two years and how to improve the solar efficiency and boat performance." Jans also said he is very proud of the students. "They have shown awesome sportsmanship by supporting and helping the other teams at race time, while maintaining their high-spirited and competitive enthusiasm for the Regatta."

Over the years, hundreds of students have participated, gaining valuable and unique experience with solar electricity, wiring, motors, fluid dynamics, boat design and modification, construction, and teamwork. The boats will make use of the sun's radiation, generating electricity that is either stored in a battery or used directly to run the boat's motor. No other power source is allowed.

The public is welcomed and encouraged to come to the Regatta which offers a chance to show support for solar power and the students' interest in renewable energy in action. The Solar Boat Regatta has been organized to coincide with WaterFest 2010 at the Lake Phalen Park Pavilion. [www.rwmwd.org](http://www.rwmwd.org)

The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society (MRES) is a member-run, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in Minneapolis in 1978 to promote the use of and to engage in advocacy for renewable energies in Minnesota through education and through the demonstration of practical applications. MRES is involved in education, awareness, and advocacy efforts for all forms of renewable energy, with a particular emphasis on solar technologies. MRES is celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year through a series of events and activities.