



Watch for EarthScope on Your Television

By Naomi Lubick, Science Interchange Reporter

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Nobu was asking me to hold up a piece of white paper, just so, to reflect the sun away from Anno's face. We'd just spent the afternoon poking around a Mill Valley house built with straw-bale architecture, an eco-friendly building technique. We'd interviewed the architect and owner about their partnership in building this beautiful open home, with light streaming in through the windows high above and warm cement beneath our stockinged feet. My arms were tired from holding the paper just so as Anno spoke her lines that would introduce the finished short video that we were producing, but I was thrilled.

The pilot for our cable television production of EarthScope was also my first foray into television producing. Nobu Sakamoto is our videographer. He had experience in the world of green building, so he had arranged this first "roll-in" production, or pre-produced video segment, on straw-bale architecture that we would include in our pilot show of EarthScope.

The program is a half-hour environmental show that airs on AT&T Cable Channel 26 in Marin. Our mission for EarthScope is to bring environmental news and information to our audience in a form that they can use, much like this column you are reading of the same name. Tom Hinman of the Marin Conservation League and Sandy Wallenstein of the Environmental Education Council of Marin have been essential to EarthScope's production, and they function as sources for ideas and contacts in the community. We want to examine issues that are important to the local inhabitants of Marin, giving them access to experts and online resources that can take them further into a topic.

Part of that access is conversations with people who know what they are talking about. The first EarthScope show focused on issues of sustainability. We spoke with Sim van der Ryn of van der Ryn Architects, an ecologically minded design firm; Jim Goodwin, president of Green Generation Products; and Alex Hinds, the director of the Marin County Community Development Agency. The video piece produced by Nobu and our teen reporter Anno Davis focused on the straw-bale home built by David Arkin, an architect who has worked with van der Ryn. Another of our excellent teen reporters, Katy Tang, appeared on television for the first time to present the website resources that we had found on green and sustainable building.

We've had the good luck to get Jan Yanehiro as our host. She is an experienced broadcaster, with many years hosting "Evening Magazine" at KPIX TV and several Emmy awards under her belt. I am amazed at how easy she makes the interviewing process look.

It's not easy to do, as our teen reporters Davis and Tang might tell you. These two young women have shown real courage and spark in getting in front of the camera to conduct interviews for the two programs that we have made so far. When we are in the studio, we film the show as if it were live, with no chances to edit or retake any piece of it. Our studio crew is composed entirely of

volunteers, who have been trained by AT&T's staff to do camera and soundwork and other key jobs for live production. Katy has been on the spot twice now in the studio and has done an excellent job, as did Anno in her on-the-scene interview for the straw-bale house segment.

For me, the process of putting together the show is somewhat like regular reporting. I've done background research and sought out interesting people who are experts in their fields, and somehow I've persuaded them that they want to come talk to us in the studio! It's been quite exciting to meet these folks, and I'm looking forward to putting together future shows.

The next one in the works is on women environmental activists, in honor of women's history month and Earth Day. You will see some of my reporting on the topic in our next EarthScope column, but think about tuning in to our program to see who Jan and our teen reporters get to interview in the studio.

RESOURCES

We just finished production for the second EarthScope program, focusing on wetlands acquisition and restoration in the northern San Francisco Bay. To find out when it will be aired, call Shelley Saylor at AT&T Broadband Community Cable (415-459-5333 ext.1268) or visit: <http://communityprogramming.marin.org/schedule.html>