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For Immediate Release

BABYLON HOMES FEATURED on NATIONAL SOLAR TOUR

Three solar-powered homes and one municipal facility in the Town of Babylon will be open to the public for free visits on Saturday, October 3rd from 10 AM to 4 PM as part of the National Solar Tour & Green Buildings Open House on Long Island. Tour visitors can learn about solar and other forms of clean energy directly from the people in their community, watch electric meters run backwards, and see the actual savings on utility bills.

These open houses are part of an island-wide tour of about 90 sites that use solar energy or other green building features. The National Solar Tour is organized on Long Island by the non-profit Renewable Energy Long Island (RELI) and by the American Solar Energy Society at the national level. Last year's tour attracted 140,000 visitors nationwide and has been billed as the largest public renewable energy education event in the world.

One home available to tour, the Heyman residence in Babylon, features a 10 kW solar electric system which has drastically reduced the owners' electric bill. Another location is the Lopes residence in West Babylon which also did energy efficiency upgrades. The third home on the Tour within the Town of Babylon is located in Oak Beach.

"I had the panels installed because I wanted to protect the environment. I'm very happy with my system because of the savings in my electric bill", said Red Heyman. "In 2003, my electric bill was \$1409. In 2004, it was \$1561. 2005 was \$1862. Then I installed the solar panels in 2006 and the annual bill went down to \$550, and the panels were only installed in July! In 2007, it cost me \$32. In 2008, my total cost was \$14.00. I did alright!"

"I installed the panels last August and was very happy with the installer" said Jim Lopes. "I also had an energy audit of my house to find problem areas and I made some improvements myself to reduce energy consumption."

LIPA currently offers substantial, upfront cash rebates (up to \$35,000) for the installation of solar electric systems. Combined with increased federal income tax credits and state tax credits, these incentives can reduce the cost by 2/3.

"The Solar Tour is really the best way to see first-hand what solar is all about and to talk directly to the owners to find out whether solar energy will work for you", said Gordian Raacke, Executive Director of Renewable Energy Long Island (RELI).

"The tour provides a unique opportunity to learn about the benefits of going solar," said LIPA President and CEO Kevin S. Law. "LIPA's nationally-recognized *Solar Pioneer and Entrepreneur Program* continues to help our customers reduce energy consumption and lower electric bills, diversify Long Island's energy portfolio, strengthen the local economy, and to transform the solar photovoltaic marketplace to help reduce our dependency on costly fossil fuels."

Visitors are encouraged to first visit one of the central tour hubs where they can pick up materials and participate in educational activities. The Senior Center at Tanner Park is the central hub location for Babylon and features a solar electric system, van transportation to nearby sites, efficiency and solar seminars at 11:30 AM, 1:30 PM and 3:30 PM. There will also be a cocktail party celebration at the Beach Hut at the end of the day.

The self-guided tour is free of charge but visitors will need to obtain a free Visitors Pass from RELI. Every visitor will receive a free copy of the Long Island GreenGuide, a 64-page publication with handy information and a green business directory. The Visitors Pass and more information on the tour and clean energy technologies & incentives are available at RenewableEnergyLongIsland.org or by calling (631) 329-8888.

PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:

Heyman residence in Babylon: <http://lishines.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1158973949.JPG>

Lopes residence in Babylon: <http://lishines.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1222196129.jpg>

To arrange pre-tour interviews and for location information, call the RELI Media Line at 516-313-6611.