

USA Michigan

Ben Brown

EarthApprentice, Solar Cooking in Michigan.

Ben Brown, of Earth Apprentice, Solar Cooking in Michigan, continues to raise awareness of solar cooking potential in the north country by speaking on and demonstrating solar cooker technology. This year's presentation focused on the Jim LaJoie's All Season Solar Cooker. SCM encourages donations to SCI. The Willard G. Pierce and Jessie M. Pierce Foundation, the charitable arm of PCCEI, graciously responded to SCM's program by providing a grant to SCI. SCM also sent a Villager Sun Oven to Haiti in conjunction with a Kiwanis Aid Program and First Congregational Church of Charlotte, Michigan.

Solar cooking in Michigan has been a very enlightening experience. Beyond the cultural self challenges of not wanting to be or feel significantly different lies a very different paradigm that makes sense. There is a wide degree of possibilities solar cooking from the equivalent of a stick built campfire with simple solar cookers, having to take multiple steps before cooking can begin; to easier models of simply opening up the door to put food in a stationary and waiting solar oven.

For a month this Spring (traditional 'April showers' time) all household meals were made in our homebuilt 60/30 oven. It was great. Morning meals of my oatmeal and other leftovers were reheated in our microwave or on the induction hob, but the initial cooking was done in the solar oven. **On occasion we even used our huge pot sized Thermos cooker made by the Thermos Corporation, but as Summer came I later discovered I could actually cook dinner after work including pies browned to perfection.**

Cooking on our front drive, many passersby would stop to ask me about the oven and enjoy the aromas coming out. The last week of cooking in the community before relocating, I celebrated the donor of cardboard I used for building the oven and cookers by doing hot dogs and baked beans using smaller solar cookers across from my donors storefront. Solar cooking just makes sense.

