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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW ON ENERGY



The World of Energy has added a new exhibit called Global Balance to offer kids a global perspective on energy-related issues. Below right, communication specialist Andrew Beckner demonstrates one of the exhibit's touchscreen monitors.

PHOTOS BY REX BROWN | THE JOURNAL

New 3-D exhibit gives global picture

BY STEPHANIE JADRNICEK
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — A giant globe greets visitors as they walk into the World of Energy. And just around the corner, workers are installing an updated renewable energy exhibit equipped with a wind turbine and solar panel.

World of Energy communication specialist Andrew Beckner said

Duke Energy is constantly investing in renewable energy, and the new Global Balance exhibit gives kids — and adults — more of a global perspective.

With a diameter of five feet, the interactive three-dimensional globe has two touchscreen monitors that provide videos and information about energy-related issues from an international viewpoint.

“This exhibit is about

how the things we do affect not just our local community but our global ecosystem as well,” Beckner said. “Duke’s big on energy efficiency and being responsible global citizens. This demonstrates that we’re just a small part of what’s going on in the world with energy efficiency and sustainability.”

By simply touching the

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'one-of-a-kind display piece'

screen, the user accesses information about everything from urban farming in Milwaukee to the recent tsunami in Japan.

Kids can learn about the effects of climate change in the Andes, where a tribe in Bolivia faces extinction because its water supply has dried up, and how China's rapid economic growth and rising energy demand may affect the environmental fate of the planet.

They also read about how Portland, Ore., has transformed from a dying inner city to a model of progressive transportation and sustainable living. And how Ohio has become a hub for research on carbon dioxide emission reduction.

Jay Sitton, project manager for Art Guild Inc., oversaw the design and construction of both exhibits. He said the World of Energy wanted to incorporate 3-D objects into the

displays to create a more engaging experience.

"But you can't just go anywhere and get a five-foot diameter acrylic globe with brackets," Sitton said. "That's a one-of-a-kind display piece. We used a specialty fabricator to build it and integrated it with all the custom metal work. We also did the woodwork in house."

Duke's World of Energy has been around for more than 40 years, predating

the construction of the Oconee Nuclear Station. Beckner said the education center is a line of communication between the company and local residents.

"These exhibits are a part of our ongoing commitment to continue to evolve and change our exhibits to meet the informational needs of our community," Beckner said.

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