A Solar Community in Alabama

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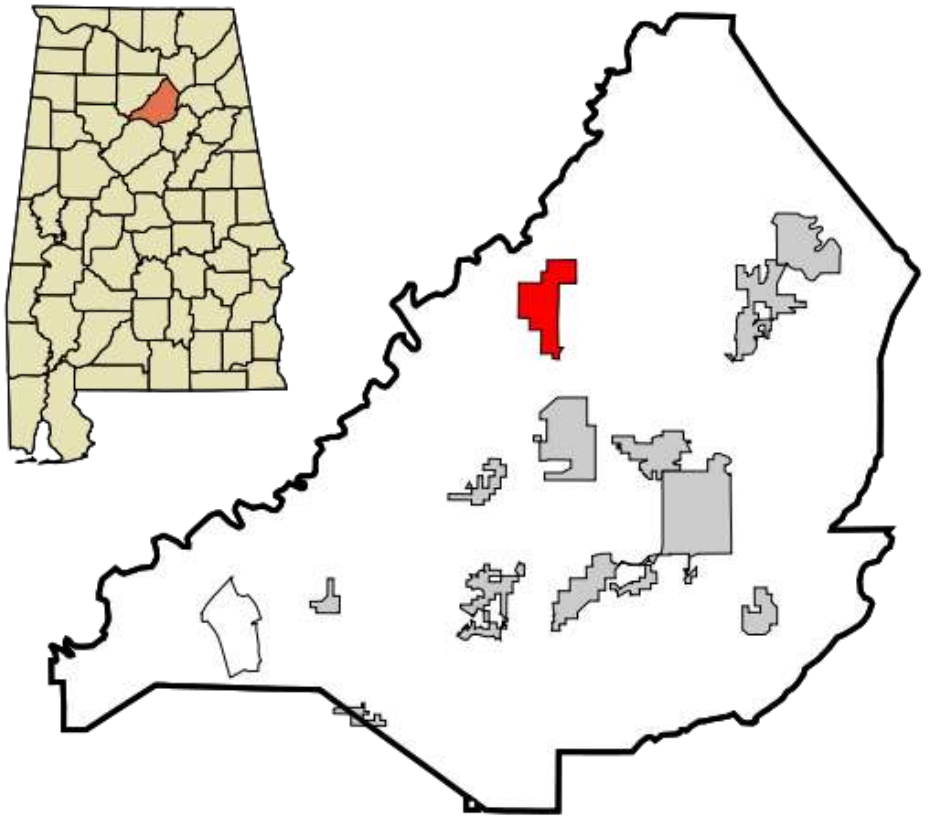
Blountsville, AL: Population 1684
“The Covered Bridge Capital of Alabama”



Stephen Guesman’s Coverted Yurt

Darryl Bergquist’s Clerestory House

Alden Brindle’s Straw Bale House

Off the Grid: Stephen Guesman's Coverted Yurt

Solar Hot Water Heater on Roof
Passive Solar Heating

Solar Panels on Ground

Yurt Features

- Passive Solar Heating
- Solar hot water heater on roof
- Solar array on lawn
- Solar oven

- No AC
- Electric refrigerator – “Beyond Energy Star ratings”
- No phantom energy drain

Bergquist Clerestory House

Cupola for Ventilation

LCD Lighting

Solar Oven

Clerestory House Features

- Passive solar heat, lighting
- Natural ventilation
  - Cupula above windows
  - Two screened porches for cross ventilation
- Solar panels, water heater

- On the grid
  - 10 kwh 2008; 300 kwh 2009

Brindle Straw Bale House

Brindle House Interior

Straw Bale Walls

Custom Built Basement Refrigerator

Solar Panels on Lawn

Brindle House Cat

Brindle House Chicken

Brindle House Features

- Straw bale insulation
- Solar panels on ground
- Custom built refrigerator in basement/root cellar
- Propane water heater backup

Three Houses: Three Paths to the Same Goal

- Building for passive solar heating
  - Glazing on south side
  - Deep overhangs above windows
  - Deciduous trees, vines
- Ventilation
- Energy efficiency
  - Refrigerators = energy hogs
- Lifestyle changes
  - Off-grid motivates conservation