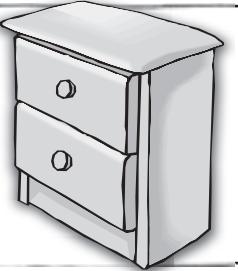


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The wind farm in Lempster.

Photo: Donna Baker-Hartwell

Four from East Andover Visit Lempster Wind Farm

Surprised not to hear a lot of noise

Caroline Ratzki

My husband and I and two friends from East Andover recently went to visit the wind farm in Lempster. Sincere thanks to the director, Ed Cherian, who gave up his Saturday afternoon to show us around and answer our questions.

It was my first visit to a wind farm, and I did not know what to expect. Over the years, I'd heard wildly differing reports of what it felt like to be close to a wind turbine, and it was time to find out for myself.

That Saturday in May was bright and windy as we drove through scenic Lempster and up a steep road. Ed met

was very windy, and the turbines were definitely working. I remember marveling that we could stand beside a large turbine yet carry on a conversation among the five of us without ever having to raise our voices.

Yes, there was a whooshing sound, like a big bird flying by very close. Not terribly loud, and not unpleasant.

We met Kevin Onnella and his wife, who live right in the middle of the wind farm. The Onnelas invited us over to their house, which sits on the ridge with an extraordinary view. There are several turbines close by.

I asked Kevin if the noise bothers him, and he said not at all. If he noticed it, he said, it reminded him of the ocean.

Unless we consciously stopped to think about the sound, it just blended into the background to the point where we didn't notice it, and that's when we were outside. In Kevin's house, there was no noise, and absolutely none of the vibrations that some people have attributed to being close to turbines.

There are many other aspects to wind farms which I did not look into that day. Some people find them unsightly. Personally, I think they're beautiful: an elegant testament to human ingenuity and our need for an alternative to fossil fuels.

I've heard that Lempster gets significant revenue from the farm, and it would be interesting to learn more about how the people in Lempster feel regarding the wind farm.

On this first visit, I wanted to find out, "Are the turbines noisy?" Surprisingly, they are not.



Caroline Ratzki, Donna Baker-Hartwell, Mario Ratzki, and director of the wind farm Ed Cherian pose at the foot of one of the 256-foot-tall towers. Photo: Brad Hartwell

us at the gates, and we followed him as the dirt road climbed ever higher, and then suddenly, there they were: a row of wind turbines, their blades turning in rhythmic cadence.

Over the course of the afternoon, we stopped at the foot of several turbines. It

the Andover Lions Club in the morning on the Fourth and will be on the Village Green with campaign materials from the various candidates. I am always available at 735-5440 or at MarioRatzki@gmail.com.

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will be quiet in Concord while negotiations on the budget are going on.

I wish everyone a happy Fourth of July. I will be flipping pancakes with