

Cultivating Community Environment in Mt. Airy

A very exciting thing is happening in Mt. Airy! The energy and perspective of three young men, Tim Richards, Josh Schaefer and Andy York, has helped birth a sustainability initiative. The group calls itself *Citizens for a Green Mt. Airy* <http://www.greenmountairy.org/history.html>. They describe their history and philosophy, saying that

“Green is not about a certain political agenda or ideology. It's about a way of being in the world so as to be harmonious with nature and to promote health of human and all other forms of life. It's about realizing our symbiotic relationship between ourselves as human beings, between humans and other animals, and humans and the natural world - living with a full knowledge that harming the other harms oneself. It's about revering our factual interconnectivity: spanning gaps, hurdling barriers, collaborating for a better life on Earth, now and in the future. It's about recognizing long term consequences and acting with these in mind by shifting towards the sustainable - economically, politically, and socially as well as environmentally.”

“We focus not on political agenda but rather practical action that will make our lives and the well-being of our community better now and sustain it for future generations to come. Sustainable social practices and relationships are just as important as ecological ones - we don't think community should just be a bunch of individuals who happen to live in the same area, but rather an engaged body that is a living whole, thriving to the extent that its individual parts are active and interactive. To this end, we host a variety of events and activities that not only relate to green and sustainability issues, but also to cultivating community, as in our slogan 'Cultivating Community Environment.' Event types include [community education](#) (workshops, film showings), [community dialogue](#) (forums, farmer's market table), [community action](#) (cleanups, tree plantings, community energy project), and [bulk purchasing collectives](#) (rain barrels, dual-flush toilets, compact fluorescent light bulbs, renewable energy certificates.”

Tim emphasizes that the group is basically something to be replicated all over the world, as such groups have a vital place in society – Citizens for a Green Mt. Airy is sort of a misnomer, he suggests. Instead the group should be called "Citizens for a Green/Sustainable (can't have one without the other) Society - Mt. Airy Chapter."

Check out their several initiatives. See whether you might want to join or participate in one of their bulk purchasing collectives, tree planting volunteer events, films or forums. Notice that they still have some rain barrels available at modest prices available through Mt. Airy Town Hall, 301.829.1424 and dual flush toilets that save 2/3 of normal water use. Or perhaps your community might want to take their success as inspiration and begin to plan and launch whatever sustainability initiatives make sense in your community.

For further information, contact Tim Richards at tim@greenmountairy.org .