



SUSTAINABLE TALLAHASSEE: GREENING THE COMMUNITY

WHO WE ARE

Sustainable Tallahassee is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting environmental, economic, and social sustainability in our Tallahassee regional area through education and collaboration.

We are especially involved in the areas of Energy, Transportation, Water, Waste, and Local Food - for today and for future generations.



WHO WE ARE (CONT.)

- Established 2007, born out of the Knight Creative Community Initiative (KCCI)
 - Celebrated 10-years in 2017
- Composed of a wide range of committees
 - Community Carbon Fund
 - 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
 - Green Business
 - Renewable Energy
 - Sustainable Transportation
 - Community Garden Network
 - Community Area Sustainability Council
 - Water Resource Committee



RECOGNITION

- 2012 Rethink Energy Florida
Energy Innovators
- 2013 Big Bend Homeless Coalition
Champions of Hope
- 2015 Sustainable Florida
Best Practices for a Nonprofit
- 2016 Tallahassee Democrat
Nonprofit Organization of the Year
- 2016 ReThink Energy Florida
Energy Innovator (Rags2Bags)
- 2016 Sustainable Florida
Best Practices (Chain of Parks) -
Finalist
- 2017 B.L.A.S.T. (Big Bend/Leon County
Association for Science Teaching)
Service to Science Award
- 2017 Recycle Florida Today
Environmental Sustainability Award



INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Tallahassee (ST) takes the lead on implementing sustainable practices, or “greening,” the Tallahassee community through programs, events, and festivals. However, our efforts could not be actualized without the help of community partnerships including entities, such as Leon County and the City of Tallahassee; local organizations, like Green Party Events; and even passionate individuals, who volunteer their time to improve their community.

For this presentation we would like to focus on our greening efforts to reduce waste at large local festivals and events, including the LeMoyne Chain of Parks Art Festival (COPAF), which saw an estimated 35,000 attendees; the Tallahassee PrideFest: Pride in the Plaza event (5,000 attendees); Annual Tallahassee Turkey Trot (5,000-7,000 runners); and Southern Shakespeare Festival (10,000 attendees). We enjoy representing environmental awareness at these events because we are able to reach new audiences unaware of sustainable practices. Our goal is to increase sustainability on an individual and community level, but we can't accomplish this if we are only **“preaching to the choir”**: we need everyone on board.

RECYCLING: ADVOCACY

When we partner with organizations to “green” their festivals through different sustainability efforts, recycling advocacy is always at the core.



We depend on generous volunteers to patrol recycle bins at festivals like Chain of Parks, educating attendees on Leon County's recycling policies and resources.



RECYCLING: EDUCATION

To ensure that our 75 plus volunteers are well-versed in recycling, we partner with Leon County's Office of Sustainability to provide training sessions.

We also created a Recycle Guide that is posted throughout the grounds of the festivals and events we work at.

Through such efforts, 1380 pounds of cardboard were collected and recycled at Chain of Parks Art Festival.



RECYCLING: RECYCLED CONTENT AWARD - CHAIN OF PARKS

One of ST's recycling initiatives, unique to Chain of Parks Art Festival, was our sponsorship of the Recycled Content Award, given to an exhibiting artist for a singular piece of original work that was created using at least 75% post-consumer use/ recycled/reused materials. We wanted to jump start the conversation about reusing materials and bring an awareness to the reality of the amount of waste we send to the landfills every day.

REDUCTION OF PLASTIC WASTE: R2B COMMITTEE

Sustainable Tallahassee's Rags 2 Bags Committee crafted and donated 1,000 reusable bags at Chain of Parks Art Festival, and were used in place of plastic bags with every purchase at the festival's souvenir tent. These bags are made with donated sewing machines, fabric, space, and labor, and divert unwanted fabric from landfills. This committee's goal is to encourage people to refuse plastic bags, which can take up to 1,000 years to break down into toxic particles and kill an estimated 1 million birds, 100,000 turtles, and countless other sea animals each year.

REDUCTION OF PLASTIC WASTE: RAGS 2 BAGS COMMITTEE



these bags...

- are sewn using **donated** sewing machines, fabric, space, and labor.
 - require ~1 hr to make (valued at \$25/hr in labor)
 - divert unwanted fabric from the landfill
- So, for every 1,000 bags made, as was done for the Chain of Parks Art Festival 2017...
- 450 yards and 250 pounds of fabric was diverted
 - \$25,000 was donated in 1,000 hours of labor

why?

- The U.S. uses ~100 billion plastic bags (from 12 million barrels of oil) per year, with the average adult using ~350-500.
- Plastic bags take ~15-1,000 years to break down into toxic particles.
- An estimated 1 million birds, 100,000 turtles, and countless other sea animals die each year from ingesting plastic.

Metrics from <https://www.reusethisbag.com/25-reasons-to-go-reusable.php>



REDUCTION OF PLASTIC WASTE: KICK THE WATER BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

One of our committees focuses on the “Kick the Water Bottle Campaign,” which urges people to not use plastic water bottles by educating them on the harm wasted plastic does to animals and our natural resources.

Right: Our resident Water Bottle Monster, providing a dramatic example of the pollution from single-use plastic water bottles in our oceans.



REDUCTION OF PLASTIC WASTE: KICK THE WATER BOTTLE CAMPAIGN



Pledge to Kick Bottled Water

Take the pledge to choose tap over bottled water.
Make every drink count toward protecting the environment – and saving you money!

- Bottled water is not safer than tap water.
In fact, the federal government requires rigorous and frequent safety testing and monitoring of municipal drinking water – but not for commercially bottled water.
- Our municipal water tastes great.
Most commercial water is bottled from municipal water systems elsewhere. Why drink it when City of Tallahassee water has been awarded as the best tasting in Florida?
- Bottled water is thousands of times more expensive than tap water.
Compare \$0.002 per gallon for most tap water to a range of \$0.89 to \$8.26 per gallon for bottled waters.
- Bottled water hurts the environment.
After millions of barrels of oil are used to produce and ship plastic water bottles, 75% end up in the garbage or our waterways instead of the recycle bin.

www.SustainableTallahassee.org

YOUR INFORMATION *(please print)* * Required fields

*First Name: _____

*Last Name: _____

*Your Email: _____

*Zip Code: _____

Phone #: _____

Yes, keep me updated by email from Sustainable Tallahassee.

I pledge to:

- ✓ Choose tap water over bottled water whenever possible;
- ✓ Fill a reusable bottle with tap water;
- ✓ Support initiatives that promote clean, affordable tap water for all.

Signed: _____

To remind them of their commitment to avoid single-use plastic water bottles, people can choose to sign a pledge to kick bottled water and choose tap.

REDUCTION OF PLASTIC WASTE: CITY OF TALLAHASSEE WATER WAGON

Sustainable Tallahassee approached the City of Tallahassee Utilities about providing a refillable water station at events like Chains of Parks Art Festival, with the idea that people can fill their reusable water bottles and avoid single-use water bottles. The result was the City building a portable water filling station or wagon.



FOOD VENDORS: FOOD RECOVERY

Environmental issues are often very intersectional, concerning a wide variety of issues and groups of people. The processes by which we get food from an industrial farm to our table are often riddled with pollution: fossil fuel emissions based on food miles, eutrophication from fertilizer run-off, the thousands of gallons of water involved in producing a pound of meat. Therefore, while we encourage individuals to shop locally and we should also make sure that our food, once made, is not going to waste, especially when so many individuals right here in Tallahassee are going hungry.

This is why we partner with Florida State University's Food Recovery Network, and strive to recover food that would have otherwise been thrown away and donate it to a food shelter. We are proud to say that we recovered 322 pounds of food at Chain of Parks Art Festival.

FOOD VENDORS: FOOD RECOVERY



Left: two members of Sustainable Tallahassee collecting leftover food from Chain of Parks

Right: tins of collected food from Chain of Parks ready to be taken to a food shelter



FOOD VENDORS: OIL, STYROFOAM, & PLASTIC BAG POLICY

At Chain of Parks Art Festival, food vendors were both encouraged to deposit their used cooking oil into the prescribed oil containers (which the City of Tallahassee uses for fuel) and agreed by contract from using any styrofoam or plastic bags. A total of 55 gallons of oil were collected and turned into biodiesel. While these accomplishments stand as laudable goals that we hope to incorporate at all festivals and events that we green, we always at least encourage food vendors to not bring styrofoam or plastic bags by explaining the problems these materials pose to the environment.



COMPOSTING

At events such as the 2017 Trash Dash 5k and Tallahassee Turkey Trot composting bins were available for participants to discard waste that is able to break down organically.

When providing a composting bin it is essential to monitor the space carefully for any possible contamination. It can be tricky because people are often quick to discard waste, however, composting is very manageable in a contained environment. Extra caution and information should be displayed clearly at larger events.



SOCIAL MEDIA EVENT PROMOTION

Below are just some examples of our efforts to engage and inform the public of our organization's events through posts on multiple social networking sites.



PHYSICAL MEDIA EVENT PROMOTION

We also promoted our participation in festivals and events through newspaper, continuing our efforts to reach those who might not be aware of sustainable practices. This article is part of a regular column called “Greening our Community” in our local newspaper, The Tallahassee Democrat. It is written by rotating members of the Capital Area Sustainability Council, a forum of local sustainability-focused organizations assembled by Sustainable Tallaha

Greening Our Community – With Two Green Festivals!

April 6th, 2017 | by Sustainable Tallahassee | 0 Comments

<http://blogs.tallahassee.com/community/2017/04/06/greening-our-community-with-two-green-festivals/>

EXHIBIT TABLE

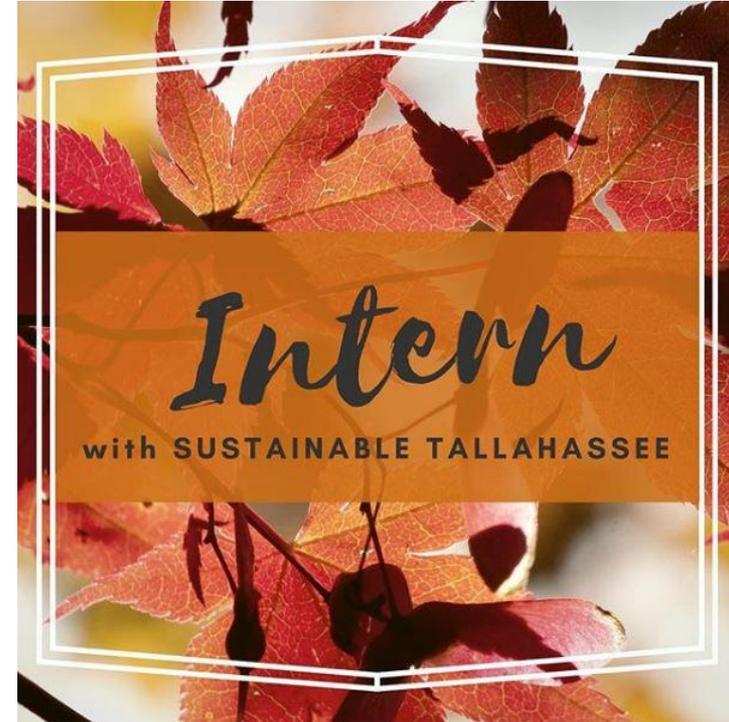
Sustainable Tallahassee is always happy to host one of our exhibit tables at various events. Tabling is where we are able to meet community members one-on-one and talk about their personal sustainability goals, suggest how they can work on behalf of our community, and share what we work on throughout the year to encourage environmental sustainability.



INTERNS: FRESH THOUGHT IN OUR COMMUNITY

Sustainable Tallahassee usually brings on a pair of interns every semester to bring in new ideas and help future leaders gain experience - ST tries to scope every interns personal interest into their position

Recently our interns assisted in organizing the greening of our annual Trash Dash 5k as well as the 2017 Tallahassee Turkey Trot. Recyclables and compostable food stations were set up and monitored.



PARTNERS



green party
e v e n t s
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RESULTS

At Sustainable Tallahassee we feel that our festival efforts are being noticed by our community and its residents. One of the most significant results has been to clear up the confusion as to what can be recycled at our local facility, Marpan. It has been great to hear from attendees at the festivals say that their spouse or child has encouraged recycling in their household, but the attendee now feels more comfortable about becoming engaged in their recycling at their household or business.

RESULTS

We firmly feel that to be successful, households or businesses need a “Recycling Champion” and we hope we have encouraged some to take this step. We expect to assist at more events and become participant in keeping items from the landfill.

The ultimate goal of Sustainable Tallahassee would be to educate so “Greening” becomes internalized within our community and it becomes second nature - when an event is going to be held people first ask, “How can we make this happen with the least amount of impact.”

RECOGNITION

From Laura Johnson, Executive Director of the Southern Shakespeare Company

I just wanted to give a shout out to you both and ALL of the Sustainable Tallahassee folks that joined our Festival this year on site.

You and all of your volunteers were utterly delightful, engaging, and full of GREAT information. I LOVED all of the photos!!!

Thank you for being such fabulous partners. I hope we can continue to grow this partnership into something even bigger and better next year!!!!

Thank you again, Jim and Brenda.

All my best,

Laura



WHAT'S TO COME IN 2018

- Refine action at current festivals
- Educate Gulf Winds Track Club Race Directors for future race greening
- Complete “How to Green” manual
- Grow number of festivals and events in our community

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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