

Green Notes: Weekly tips for reducing your carbon footprint from First United Methodist's Green Team

Sharing our stories of success: Volunteering for Climate Smart Missoula and the River City Roots Fest!

Let's hear a big GREEN shout-out for our own Laxmi VonHoffman and Carole Addis for their great volunteer work on the Green Team at this year's River City Roots Fest!

Their time and effort helped divert 65 percent of the disposables from this year's music festival away from Missoula's landfill and into recycling and compost bins. In all, 6,500 pounds of material went to local compost and recycling companies for reuse.

Laxmi and Carole answered Climate Smart Missoula's call to First UMC for volunteers and reported for duty on opening day. They were soon equipped with plastic gloves and long-handled, clawed trash pickers.

For hours, they worked together, hunting through garbage bins and retrieving the discarded recyclables and compostables. "It got to be a game," said Carole. "We had a great time, especially when we tried to get French fries out of the bins. We really got to laughing and carrying on."

Climate Smart worked with food vendors at this year's festival to ensure that only compostable cups, containers and flatware were used, so the opportunity for composting was significant – if folks knew what to put in which bin.

That's where the efforts of Laxmi and Carole really paid off: As festival-goers watched them pick discards out of the trash and deposit them in the recycling and composting containers, they

realized the error of their ways. “Ohhhh, so that can be composted!”

“Pretty much everything in the bins was compost,” Laxmi said. “Usually, we would only take trash to the landfill. But this year, after we sorted through the bins, there was just a little bit of trash – and the recycling and compost containers were filled.”

Climate Smart contracted with Missoula Compost Collective, an industrial composter that can handle cups and clamshell-type food containers, to provide the composting bins. “Composting would reduce the amount of trash in our landfill by a longshot,” Laxmi said. (As much as 20 percent of the waste taken to U.S. landfills is food.)

Thank you, Carole and Laxmi, for being such inspirations!

Call or email Sherry Devlin at 546-1016 or sherrydevlin@gmail.com to share stories of what you’re doing – or what a friend or neighbor is doing – to help stop global warming. We’ll share your success story in an upcoming edition of Green Notes.

Looking for a “green” gig? Climate Smart Missoula needs volunteers for its Climate and Clean Energy Expo on Sept. 25. Sign up at this link:

<https://www.missoulaclimate.org/volunteer-opportunities.html> .