

# THE SANCTUARY AT SHEPARDFIELDS

May 2010  
Annual Appeal Letter

Dear Friend,

**Do you believe we can achieve a deeper harmony with the world and with ourselves?**

We believe such a harmony is within our collective reach. The task is grand but the path is clear. We must learn to understand and value more deeply our interconnections with each other and with our environment. This requires the cultivation of fully conscious living - understanding the impact of our behavior on the world around us - learning to trust our heart and to take seriously our longings for a better world - learning to open up to the deep calm and silent wisdom of nature - and rediscovering what children experience naturally: the simple joys and wonder of being alive.

*This project is our project and we want you to be our partner.*

## **The Sanctuary's mission**

The Sanctuary is an interfaith spiritual life center and environmental education 501(c)(3) which offers sacred beautiful space and educational and community resources for personal transformation, the evolution of community and the restoration of the environment.

*Our mission is to live in harmony with the environment, to share a spiritual practice open and affirming of all and energized by the process of an evolving global consciousness, and to promote sustainable and non-violent ways of living which value and protect our community's health, wealth and happiness.*

Located on a 40 acre land preserve in East Haddam, the Sanctuary features a yurt, drumming circle, labyrinth, community garden, apiary, composting eco-temple, and walking trails past quiet brooks, beaver ponds and forests. The Sanctuary staff and extended community of artists, spiritual teachers and holistic health practitioners offer regular classes and workshops and host special events promoting mindful living and sustainability.

## **Where we are now**

Founded in 1995, the Sanctuary is fast becoming a unique resource in the lower valley of the Connecticut River for the innovative educational experiences, community building skills and green technologies needed to bring about a more sustainable society and a more evolved consciousness. These are some of our current activities:

*Regular classes in meditation and yoga*

Learning to be present and calm in our minds and bodies is key to healing and to cultivating the energy and vision needed to transform ourselves and our communities into healthier, more prosperous places to live. The Sanctuary offers various regular meditation services and yoga, and hosts holistic practitioners who offer workshops fostering the integration of body, mind and spirit.

### *Holistic educational programming for children*

In partnership with Om-FLY, the Sanctuary hosts an innovative environmental education and circus arts summer program for kids ages 7-17. This unique program offers a nurturing experience integrating holistic health, place-based and hands-on learning, the cultivation of creativity, self-control, mindfulness and compassionate interaction as a group.

### *Sustainable living demonstration projects*

The Sanctuary is engaged in various projects which showcase and educate the public about techniques for living sustainably in the world. Three current projects include a community composting toilet demonstration project illustrating sustainable wastewater treatment techniques; an organic community garden illustrating permaculture techniques for sustainable horticulture; and an apiary illustrating organic bee keeping techniques.

### *Innovative educational experiences for adults*

The Sanctuary hosts special seminars and events offering participants unique opportunities to integrate normally disconnected aspects of their lives and to cultivate the energy of mindful awareness of self and environment. Recent and upcoming programs include *Nine Questions About Love* (a discussion seminar), *Awakening the Dreamer* (a symposium by the Pachamama Alliance cosponsored by the Earth Charter Community of the Lower Valley), *Kirtan with Dave Russell* (sacred music and chanting - June 11<sup>th</sup>) and the *Tao of Voice* (a holistic singing and speaking workshop by Valerie Walsh - July 11<sup>th</sup>).

### *Community Partnerships*

The Sanctuary offers a place dedicated to the hope for a truly diverse community of communities which is safe for individuals of all religions, classes, sexual orientations, races, ethnicities, etc. The Sanctuary nurtures community development by hosting meetings and community-based events for various local networks where people can come to hone spiritual skills through participation in dialogue, meditative practice, creative exploration and interaction. Some current partners of the Sanctuary include: Earth Charter Community of the Lower Valley, East Haddam Green Committee, Active Contemplatives of the Sanctuary (supporting the local LGBT community), Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, Connecticut Experiential Learning Center, Three Rivers Community College and more.

## **The Story continues**

Our story is an exciting one but we need you to help us develop the plot! Our regular and special programming makes up only about half of our operating budget (a total of approximately \$12,000 annually.) The remainder of our operating expenses (mostly electricity, insurance, fuel and materials for maintenance of the Sanctuary grounds) is met with donations. Like many other organizations, Sanctuary revenues have seen a sharp decline in recent years and current operations are running on a deficit. Continued operations will require donations from people like you.

Looking forward, we envision an exciting expansion of the services currently offered. We see the Sanctuary becoming a completely self-sufficient living laboratory for sustainable education and a full service spiritual life center offering affordable retreat opportunities right here in the lower river valley. Components of this dream include: use of renewable energies (photo voltaics, etc.) for Sanctuary power supplies, a year-round community greenhouse garden, and greater environmental - educational resources for supporting the local school systems and home schooling communities.

This is a big dream but highly viable and urgently necessary for building a sustainable society here in Connecticut. Your partnership with us will be decisive in making this dream a reality, and it may be your own personal opportunity to serve the greater harmony you are dreaming about for yourself.

*Will you help us continue the story?*

Sincerely Yours,

The Sanctuary at Shepardfields Board of Directors

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## Donation form

Please support the Sanctuary 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with your tax-deductible donation (EIN #: 06-1416588).

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I wish to help the Sanctuary with a donation. My commitment is a:

<i>Planter \$5-25</i>	_____
<i>Cultivator \$30-50</i>	_____
<i>Harvester \$75-100</i>	_____
<i>Bounty Share \$150-500</i>	_____
<i>Farmer \$ 500-1000</i>	_____
<i>Force of Nature \$ 1000+</i>	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ Sorry, I can't help but keep me informed about Sanctuary events. (Note: Financial support is not necessary to participate in Sanctuary programs or to be a member of our community.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Please take me off your mailing list.

Make your donation via credit card online at [www.oursanctuary.org](http://www.oursanctuary.org) or send checks payable to: The Sanctuary at Shepardfields. Checks can be mailed to the Sanctuary at Shepardfields, 59 Bogel Road, East Haddam, CT 06423. Contact us at [info@oursanctuary.org](mailto:info@oursanctuary.org) or (860) 319-1134 if you'd like to set up a pledge schedule for your donation. Namaste!

Trust your heart.