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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2009

Ecoman and the Skeptic sound off



Last week, I met two of the most charming fellows. They went by Ecoman and the Skeptic, but in actuality they were Philadelphia University professors Rob Fleming and Chris Pastore.

Rob, who is Ecoman, is director of the university's sustainable design program. He's big into the philosophy of green.

Chris, the Skeptic, is head of the architectural engineering program. He's big into the science of green. If there's no data to back it up, there's no green.

Together, they host a weekly online radio show about environmental matters that's informative, fast-paced and fun.

Last week, I was the guest, there to talk about toilet paper and facial tissues and other similar products. You can buy ones made of recycled paper, or you can buy ones made of trees. Big difference.

They were nice to me. Even Chris. (I was scared of the Skeptic!) So I suppose I might be considered biased. But here goes anyway. I was so impressed with how well they had prepared for the hour-long show. In a room off a student lounge with a few microphones and a bunch of laptops, they start off with 15 minutes of news, all delivered with an easy banter. Then it's time for the guest. They grilled me not just about TP, but about all manner of things I had written about recently, from better-burning wood to green burials. I tried not to sound like a chipmunk -- or an idiot -- and I think it went okay. Either way, it was fun.

At the end, Rob and Chris square off on a weekly true-or-false Green Wash quiz about eco events, hosted by Prof. Rob Frye, who usually tries to trip them up. Last week, they needed to know whether Republicans were supporting climate change legislation and what the big data point was that Bill McKibben is so hot on. Skeptic is winning so far, but Ecoman shows promise.

This week's show, live at 11 a.m. tomorrow, will feature actor and environmentalist Ed Begley Jr., star of *Living With Ed* and author of *Ed Begley, Jr.'s Guide to Sustainable Living, Learning to Conserve Resources and Manage an Eco-Conscious Life*. The "duelling duo," as Rob and Chris are sometimes referred to, will delve into practical tips for living green -- while still getting along with your spouse. Begley's probably a real live wire. In his first book, *Living Like Ed*, his wife got to chime in with segments they dubbed "Rachelle's Turn," which were often hilarious. She'd stumble over the solar oven and freak out trying to switch the battery system over to the grid. So what Ecoman and the Skeptic want to know is: Will Ed and his wife Rachelle be able to strike a balance between doing good and living well? What are the three steps to energy independence?

You can get more info -- and tune in to boot -- at <http://www.philau.edu/ecomanandtheskeptic/>

Better yet, if you're listening and you have questions, call in during the broadcast at 1-888-346-9141.

Posted by Sandy Bauers @ 4:49 PM Permalink | Post a comment

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ABOUT SANDY BAUERS



Sandy Bauers is the environment reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer, where she has worked for more than 20 years as a reporter and editor. She lives in northern Chester County with her husband, two cats, a large vegetable garden and a flock of pet chickens.

GreenSpace - her column about how to reduce your carbon footprint in everyday life - appears every other Monday in Health & Science.

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- "The Christmas Song," Nat King Cole
- "White Christmas," Bing Crosby
- "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year," Andy Williams
- "Blue Christmas," Elvis Presley
- "Do They Know It's Christmas," Band Aid

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