



Union County Public Information Office

500 N. Main St., Room 921 • Monroe, NC 28112 • Phone (704)283-3546 • Fax (704)282-0121

Down to Earth Day Set for April 5

March 6, 2014, Monroe, NC – The Union County Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Association is hosting the Union County Down to Earth Day festival on Saturday, April 5, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Union County Agricultural Center and grounds.

Down to Earth Day is a free, county-wide, family-friendly celebration of Earth Day. The theme "Healthy People/Healthy Community/Healthy Planet" will be reflected throughout the event. There will be educational and fun activities for the entire family.

This is the 6th year of the Union County Down to Earth Day festival, but the first year the event will be held at the Union County Agricultural Center in Monroe, and the first year hosted entirely by the Union County Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Association. The Master Gardeners are excited by the opportunity to share with the public their teaching gardens and greenhouse. At the event, the Master Gardeners will be available to answer gardening questions and talk about and conduct informal tours of the gardens.

The day will begin at 8 a.m. with the 5th annual 5K Trail Run starting at the back of the Ag Center grounds and circling the Jesse Helms Park complex. Runners, joggers and walkers are welcome. There will be a Kid's Fun Run at 9:15 a.m. and awards presented at 9:30 a.m. T-shirts will be available to the first 100 runners. Register on-line: www.sportoften.com.

Staff of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Services will be on hand to share their expertise, including local foods, backyard chickens, cooking and preserving the harvest, urban trees, and the 4-H will offer an educational program for kids called "There's No New Water".

Several non-profit groups will have booths at the festival, including three that will collect donations for their charities. The Fabulous McGrady and Friends Foundation supports rural animal shelters and will collect pet food and supplies. Plant a Row for the Hungry will collect non-perishable food items, and Operation Reach Out will collect paper products, household cleaning supplies and personal care items for the needy in Union County. The public is invited to bring donations the day of the event. Those who bring a donation will receive a free raffle ticket. For a complete list of needed items, visit the website: www.mastergardenersunioncountync.org.

Several Union County municipalities will be represented, some will have exhibit booths and others have donated "Town Baskets" with items and gift certificates from local businesses for the raffle.

There will be lots of fun and educational activities for kids. The Union County Community Arts Council is sponsoring the Scrap Exchange out of Durham who will bring a truckload of creative



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recycling fun. Discovery Place will present "You Are What You Eat", and the Union County Early College Environmental Club will provide face painting and organize some fun Earth Day activities.

The Wingate Volunteer Fire Department will bring its Fire Engine and explain its many features and the Union County Fire Safety House which provides a hands-on real life fire safety situation for children to learn from. Word is the NC Forest Service will ask Smoky the Bear or Woodsy Owl to make an appearance.

For adults there will be vendors and exhibitors, presentations and demonstrations, and a number of wonderful donated items available for the price of a \$1 raffle ticket. Hendrick Chevrolet Cadillac will bring a few environmentally friendly cars for display.

Food will be offered by the KO Food Truck and Sticks and Cones. Last, but not least, entertainment will be provided by DJ Jimmy Huntley, the Dorian Fiddles of the Union County Youth Symphony, singer Pamela Whitted, and two dance groups, Cielito Lindo (Beautiful Skies), and the Sassy Steppers.

All proceeds from the day benefit the Union County Extension Master Gardeners and help support their various community programs. Want to become a Master Gardener? Visit the website, or "Ask a Master Gardener" at Down to Earth Day!

For more information visit: www.mastergardenersunioncountync.org

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