

Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Master Gardeners' Heritage Festival and Spring Plant Sale a Success

The NC Science Festival Event Educates UC About Natural Resources

April 25, 2016, Monroe, NC – The Union County Heritage Festival, held April 9 and 10 at the Union County Agricultural Center has been deemed a success by organizers and attendees. More than 2,000 visitors came out to partake in the festivities.

The Heritage Festival, hosted by the Union County Extension Master Gardeners, was held for the second year in conjunction with the Union County Farm Show and Festival hosted by the Union County Antique Tractor and Power Club. The event kicked off Saturday morning with the Wild Turkey 5K Trail Run and Walk, followed by a vendor fair with more than 60 garden, health, art, nature, community, and conservation themed exhibitors. There was also the Master Gardeners' Spring Plant Sale, food, bluegrass music, inflatables, and hands on science and craft activities for children. Local gardening experts and chefs presented free talks and cooking demonstrations. Confederate reenactors in period uniforms set up and manned an accurate depiction of a typical Civil War encampment.

“So much to see and do with both the Heritage Festival and the Farm Show and Festival; there was something for everyone,” said Deborah Dillion, Union County Extension Horticultural Agent.

On Saturday morning there was a ribbon cutting and Grand Opening of the Heritage Trail. Union County Extension Master Gardener Carol Larrimore coordinated the planning and building of the trail with the First Presbyterian Church of Monroe Boy Scout Troop #1 and their leader Mac McFarland. Eagle Scouts from the Monroe and Unionville troops developed and extended the trail, and built and donated benches to be used along the trail. The trail is an extension of the Master Gardeners' Teaching Gardens educating the public about native plants found in piedmont woodlands.

“We hope to eventually connect with the Carolina Thread Trail, said Larrimore.”

This year the Heritage Festival was an official event of the 2016 NC Science Festival presented by the Biogen Foundation. There were more 20 exhibitors offering information and activities

related to STEM, (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), including Atomz Lab, the Mecklenburg Audubon Society, the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Union County NC Beekeepers Association, the Union County Public Library, and Chris Hendrix of the Piedmont Archaeological Society.

The Union County Heritage Festival was free to the public and sponsored by generous donations from local businesses including the Union County Community Arts Council, Laxer Long & Savage, Union County Sheriff's Office, Brooks Sales, Inc., Stone Table, Face Art and More, Iron Horse Motorcycles, Beasley Media Group, PNC Bank, Monterrey Mexican Restaurant, Southern States Cooperative, Visions Landscape and Design, and the Town of Unionville, to name a few.

To help support Union County residents in need, attendees were encouraged to bring donations for Loaves and Fishes of Union County. More than 2,500 pounds of food and more than \$600 in cash donations were collected.

The Union County Antique Tractor & Power Club is open to those interested in collecting, restoring and the preservation of antique tractors, trucks, engines and farm equipment. For more information visit: www.unioncountytractorsnc.com.

The Union County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers' mission is to foster a partnership to create a sustainable community through education and implementation. They offer Successful Gardener classes to the public, maintain a website of useful gardening information, monitor a call system called the Growline at 704-283-3822 or ucmgwebsite@gmail.com and offer three sales events per year. For more information please visit: www.mastergardenersunioncountync.org .

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