

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Sept. 21, 2016 Edition)

Boxerwood Festival Celebrates Home

Lexington, VA – September 21, 2016. In the spirit of community homecomings, Boxerwood will be hosting its annual Fall Family Festival on Saturday, Sept. 24 (raindate Sept. 25). A Rockbridge tradition, the festival commences at 1 p.m. on the grounds of the Nature Center, just outside Lexington, and ends at 5 p.m. Admission is \$5 per carload with proceeds benefitting Boxerwood’s award-winning nature programs.

“Celebrating Home” is this year’s theme. “Over the years, we’ve noticed more and more people strolling the grounds or bringing their children to play,” notes Boxerwood educator and festival organizer Hannah West, “and we love that! We decided to put on our own Homecoming—a time for all of us who love Boxerwood to get together and have fun.” Per tradition, festival attenders will have an opportunity to participate in apple pressing – and enjoy their fresh cider with crispy doughnuts. “There would probably be a revolt if we didn’t have cider and doughnuts for sale,” said West, noting additional home-baked treats for purchase are being donated by the Lexington Moms’ Club.

Like any homecoming, this year's Fall Family Festival offers attendees a bounty of activities. In addition to spending time with one another in the natural world, there will be opportunities to weave honeysuckle head-wreaths, roll a strike at pumpkin bowling, and meander through the woods on a clue-based treasure hunt. Organizers are also planning some surprise opportunities for visitors to go back in time to see what Boxerwood looked like in its first years. "And speaking of homes," said West, "folks can also stop by our bird station to create something for our feathered friends too. At Boxerwood, celebrating home means remembering we're all in this together. Taking care of all our community members is what we do."

Highlight of Boxerwood's Homecoming will be the celebration of local culture, community, and place with help from Halestone Dance Studio, now in its 39th year. As part of festival activities, Halestone's young dancers will offer four different performances each in a unique Boxerwood outdoor space. "Youngest children will have a chance to dance their hearts out at the PlayTrail," noted Boxerwood educator Jess Sullivan who is also on the board of the newly re-organized non-profit. Young cloggers, meanwhile, will take to the Boxerwood stage to highlight Appalachian culture. Halestone will also offer a modern dance piece entitled "On Holy Ground." Teens in the Halestone Company —themselves once children attending Boxerwood nature programs-- will contribute another site-based dance as part of festivities.

Halestone is not the only community group collaborating with Boxerwood for the homecoming. This year's Fall Family Festival is sponsored by Kendal of Lexington, in support of Boxerwood and its earth-friendly mission. "We really appreciate this event underwriting from our neighbor," said Ms. Levy Schroeder, Boxerwood's new executive director. "A homecoming wouldn't be a homecoming without people of all ages coming together. The Kendal/Boxerwood partnership brings everything full circle. We are grateful to be a welcoming and restorative place for community celebration." To lend a volunteer hand at the festival, contact Hannah West at hannah@boxerwood.org; For more information, visit the Boxerwood website at www.boxerwood.org or call 463-2697. Boxerwood Nature Center is located at 963 Ross Road, Lexington. Raindate is Sept. 25 in the afternoon.

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