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The North Carolina Arboretum Celebrates Take a Child Outside Week

ASHEVILLE, NC – The North Carolina Arboretum is participating in a growing nationwide effort geared toward getting young people off the couch, unplugged from technology, and enjoying the outdoors in their local community. Taking place September 24 through 30, Take a Child Outside week is a program that urges all citizens to participate in outdoor activities. The event is designed to help break down obstacles that keep children from discovering the natural world, and to provide parents, teachers and other caregivers with resources and recreational activities for exploring local habitats.

The Arboretum provides a perfect location for families in the community to connect with nature during the week, or any other time of year. Stunning color in 65 acres of cultivated gardens, as well as 10 miles of hiking and biking trails offer children and families a place to embrace and explore their world. To enhance the experience, Discovery Packs are available to check out from the Visitor Information Desks at the Baker Exhibit Center and the Education Center. Each pack includes a notebook, binoculars, insect net, magnifying jar, seasonal activity and kid's guide to discovering the Arboretum. Packs are free to borrow, but an Arboretum membership card or driver license must be retained while the pack is on loan. Packs must be returned by 4:45 p.m.

Also taking place on Saturday, September 24 is Heritage Crafts Day at The North Carolina Arboretum. Held from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., the event features artists and crafters whose work reflects the heritage of Western North Carolina. In addition to the fine crafts featured, there will be children's activities from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m.

Started in 2007 as an initiative of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Take a Child Outside week is held in cooperation with partner organizations across the United States and Canada. The goal of the movement is to help children across the country develop a better understanding and appreciation of the environment in which they live, and a burgeoning enthusiasm for its exploration. More information can be found online at www.takeachildoutside.org.

The North Carolina Arboretum believes children want to embrace and explore their world. This exploration shapes their lifelong relationship with their parents and the environment. Stress reduction, greater physical health, a deeper sense of spirit, more creativity, a sense of play, even a safer life, are the benefits for a family when it invites nature into their lives.

Heritage Crafts Day and general admission to the Arboretum is free for Arboretum Society members or with the standard parking fee (\$8 per personal vehicle). For information, call (828) 665-2492 or visit www.ncarboretum.org. The central mission of The North Carolina Arboretum, an affiliate institution of the 17-campus University of North Carolina system, is to cultivate connections between people and plants.

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The NC Arboretum is located next to the Blue Ridge Parkway entrance at Milepost 393. From I-26, take Exit 33 and follow Blue Ridge Parkway signs for two miles to the entrance ramp. Visit www.ncarboretum.org plan-a-visit for parking fees, property hours and building hours. For general information call (828) 665-2492 or visit www.ncarboretum.org.