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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Re: 2024 Texoma Earth Day Festival

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual Texoma Earth Day Festival will be April 20, 2024, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The festival is a fun, family-oriented event with a broad range of things attendees can participate in and enjoy. The event is at the Sherman Municipal Ballroom, Lucy Kidd-Key Park, and surrounding streets. The event offers children's activities, educational workshops, vendors, music, demonstrations, displays and recycling. Registration for Vendors and sponsors will close on April 10, 2024.

Children's activities are in the Municipal Ballroom. The Welcoming Team from Red River Unitarian Universalist Church will host the third annual free clothing swap on the Municipal Ballroom stage. It is not necessary to bring clothes to swap, but please make sure anything brought to the swap is clean and free of stains and holes. The Texoma Quilters Guild will provide a sewing project using upcycled materials. The Boys & Girls Club of Sherman will provide a flower planting activity. Bluestem Master Naturalists will offer several activities, including fossil digging, identifying pelts and skulls, and information about birds found in our area. Recycled sculptures from Perrin and Fred Douglass Early Childhood Centers will be on display during the festival.

Five workshops will be held in the kitchen of the Municipal Ballroom. Byron Compton of STG Farms will offer a workshop on Bee Keeping, including how they live, how they make honey, and their importance to our food chain. There will be products and a live hive on display during the workshop. Paul Kuhar of Champion Waste & Recycling will present a workshop on composting. Champion is a commercial composting company based in Pottsboro. Members of the Bluestem Master Naturalists will present three workshops, All About Fossils, Identifying Types of Butterflies and Native and Endemic Plants. Matt DeLozier will talk about fossils, including defining what fossils are, how they are formed, and how to find them. He will also talk about the types of fossils found in Grayson County. Sue Abernathy will conduct the butterfly workshop. She will help the attendees understand the life cycle of a butterfly, the functions of their body parts, how they spend their day. Attendees will learn simple ways to attract butterflies to their yards. Mavis Sauer will speak about native and endemic plants. Attendees will learn how beautiful native plants can be while also offering a local food pantry for wildlife. She will focus on local favorites, give tips for use in your landscape, and identify local sources for native plants.

Vendors on the lawn (Lucy Kidd-Key Park) will sell their wares, give information about services they provide or their nonprofit organizations. Two Austin College environmental

groups, Austin College Climate Summit and Austin College Thinking Green, will help bring awareness to the work they do and current environmental issues. In addition, three vendors will accept recyclables at their booths. The Sherman Noon Lions Club will accept donations of eyeglasses, sunglasses and reading glasses. Function 4 will collect used printer ink cartridges so they can be refilled or recycled. Holmes Family Rustic Kitchen will accept donation of canning jars. The jars must be clean and dry. Anyone who wants to recycle these items will need to bring them onto the grounds while visiting the vendors. New to our vendor area are booths for young entrepreneurs, sponsored by SCRAP Sherman Creative Reuse. Any young entrepreneurs who want to sell their goods should contact SCRAP Sherman Creative Reuse to learn how to participate. Attendees will be able to shop for original art, jewelry, handmade soaps, canned goods, upcycled craft items, Tupperware food storage and more. Food vendors are on Rusk Street adjacent to Lucy Kidd-Key Park. They include Tacos Hondumex, Lemonade Depot, Sugar & Spice State Fair Donuts & Dipping Dots, Rollin' Woodfire Pizza and Old Man Kettle Corn.

While visiting the vendors make sure to visit our photo props and displays. New this year are a series of displays about the benefits of trees to our environment, physical health, and mental health. You will also be entertained by demonstrations from Legend Martial Arts, Little Goddess Trybe, The CAMP Military School of Boxing, and Sapphire Lotus Belly Dance. Musical entertainment includes Children's Chorus of Greater North Texas, Neon Toboggans, Band on Grand, Sherman High School Jazzcats Band, Keepers of the Sound and Canyon Creek Players.

Recycling continues to be a major attraction at the Texoma Earth Day Festival. All recycling will be on Elm Street between Mulberry and Elm Streets. Anyone with recycling must enter the south end of the street from Pecan Street. We request everyone study our website for detailed instructions, lists of materials accepted, and the rules. No trailers will be allowed to enter the recycling area. We are accepting electronic waste (no tube style televisions or monitors), latex paint, plastics 1,2, and 5, plastic bags, bubble wrap and shrink film, paper, flattened cardboard, Styrofoam and bagged Styrofoam peanuts, and textiles. A shred truck sponsored by First United Bank will be in the recycling area from 9:00 am to noon for shredding of sensitive documents. Patrons are limited to 10 boxes of paper. Cardboard boxes will be flattened and added to the cardboard recycling bin.

The Texoma Earth Day Festival is an official outreach project of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church. For more information, please study our website <https://www.earthdaytexoma.org>.