

2026 Exchange Place Fall Folk Arts Festival

Exchange Place (EP) Living History Farm (4812 Orebank Road in Kingsport) invites you to attend our **54th annual Fall Folk Arts Festival** on **Saturday, September 26, from 10am-5pm, and Sunday, September 27, from 12-5pm**. Admission is **\$5 for adults and free for children under 12**. In celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States, Exchange Place is taking this Festival to a new level with one of the largest-ever slates of heritage crafts-makers, live demonstrations of farmstead activities, and loads of traditional folk-art, seasonal crafts and autumn plants for sale. As always, there will be delicious food, music from local performers, and plenty of hands-on activities for youth. Come to Exchange Place and experience why people say the farmstead, proudly listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is such a special place.

A Day in the Life: Demonstrations

Throughout the Festival, artists will share their talents with live demonstrations of skills associated with 19th century crafts, music, animal husbandry, and life on a farm.

On the Farmstead side of EP, *Rick Stewart* and his son/apprentice, *Brendon*, will demonstrate the heritage craft of “coopering,” or making churns, buckets, barrels, and tubs from wood staves held together only by wooden hoops. Representing the fifth generation of Stewarts to master this skill, Rick has forged a reputation as a master craftsman with demonstrations across the United States, including the Festival of American Folklife in Washington, DC, and in Japan in the 1980s. Rick now shares his knowledge with others as an instructor at the John C. Campbell Folk School.

Nearby, *Dennis Farris*, a master banjo maker, will serenade guests with old-time tunes on his 1890 Minstrel banjo. During breaks, he’ll describe how to make banjos from scratch and accept orders for custom instruments. If you have a simple repair or need the strings changed on your own banjo, bring it along and chat with Dennis!

In the open area of the Farmstead, *Jack and Jamie Harvey* of Sadie’s Soap will show attendees how to make lye soap over a fire. Next, walk to the front porch of the Preston House where returning artist *Dorothy McMillan* will craft dolls and flowers from corn husks, then sell her finished products. Also on the front porch, *Camille Daffon* will be weaving seats for EP chairs from flat reed. She invites attendees to bring their chairs to weave along with her. On the Preston House back porch, *Randy Rauch* will demonstrate powder horn engraving.

Close by *Steve Gilly and Rod Mullins*, who co-host the popular Stories of Appalachia podcast, will share captivating folklore from our east Tennessee region.

In EP’s log kitchen, the *Eden’s Ridge Hearth Cookery Society* and *EP Junior Apprentices (JAs)* will prepare foods that the Preston Family would have eaten in the 1850s. JAs will also carve gourds near the Cook’s Cabin and demonstrate their iron-shaping skills at the blacksmith forge. Visitors can support the JA program by purchasing their handmade bark baskets and vases, gourd-based crafts, and freshly picked cut-flower arrangements at the Cook’s Cabin.

On Saturday only, Maggie T. Mule will work the cane mill to extract sorghum cane juice that will be cooked into sorghum syrup. On Sunday, Maggie will retire from being a working mule; please come celebrate her years of service on either Saturday or Sunday – and, while supplies last, purchase a pint of pure sorghum syrup from the Guenther family of Muddy Pond, Tennessee.

Talon Ridge Raptor Institute (TRRI) aims to develop our area's first raptor rehabilitation facility. Come learn about their organization and meet their raptor ambassador, a Eurasian Eagle-Owl.

Across the road, *T.J. DeWitt* will shear EP's five Cotswold sheep outside the Quilt Barn. Next door on the Roseland porch, *Kathy Martin* will demonstrate paper-making with pulp from iris, okra, and yucca stalks on Saturday and offer a hands-on papermaking experience for children. The *Overmountain Weavers Guild* will demonstrate spinning and weaving techniques in several locations around the farmstead. On Sunday Guild member Emory LaPrade will be processing flax to spin into linen.

The Embroiderers' Guild of America (EGA) will offer two opportunities to celebrate our heritage of needle art. A collection of 250th anniversary American patriotic pieces created by members of the local EGA chapter will be on exhibit in the Burow Museum. In the EGA tent, in addition to a display of completed needlework, the Guild will host a community stitching project; everyone is encouraged to add a bit of color to a gigantic embroidery pumpkin. Children of all ages are also invited to create an embroidered sassafras leaf (a symbol of EP) to take home.

Arts, Crafts, and Plants for Sale

More than 50 local artists and vendors will fill the Farm with their handicrafts, including baskets, pottery, wooden planters and cutting boards, cornhusk dolls, woven, knitted, crocheted and needle-felted crafts, assemblage art, handmade paper and soap, and handcrafted jewelry. Chrysanthemums, succulents, and perennial plants will also be available for purchase.

Be sure to visit the **Museum Gift Shop** to check-out unique-to-Exchange Place additions: boutique scarves, angel ornaments, crochet baby blankets, handmade slab pottery, sheep magnets, pearl necklaces and earrings, fancy knitted caps for children, vintage toys and EP-themed jigsaw puzzles.

Children's Activities

Across the Farmstead, child can play games from the 1850s and try harvest-season chores and old-time crafts. The Tri-State Basket Guild will teach children to weave a basket in the Schoolhouse; the \$5 fee for this project will purchase feed for Exchange Place's animals.

Food

As always, come hungry and snack on lots of tasty treats as you tour the exhibits, demonstrations, and vendors. From baked goods, nuts, and raw honey to hot sauces, goat milk cheeses, lemonade, and ice cream, there is something for every taste. Remember to buy an extra bag of kettle corn to take home!

Tunes of the Time

The Kingsport Community Band opens the Festival at 10am on Saturday. The Renaissance Strings, EP's JA Band, and other local musicians will play 19th-century instruments like dulcimers, mandolins, and pennywhistles throughout the weekend.

To complete your visit, please say hello to EP's beloved animal residents: Jenny, our friendly donkey, Bliss, our American Milking Devon cow, Lily, EP's American Guinea Hog piglet, four egg-laying Dominique chickens, and five Cotswold sheep, including Dandelion, who was born in spring 2025.

Paulette Bruggeman, a member of the Overmountain Weavers Guild, will lead a rug-hooking workshop on Saturday, September 26, from 1pm-4pm in Roseland. Participants will choose one of two designs (pumpkin or bird) for their very own mini-mug rug. The cost is \$40 and includes all supplies - the

wool strips, hook, and backing. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. To register, please email epfestivals.gf@gmail.com.

Witches Wynd Tickets

Tickets to one of EP's most popular events - **Witches Wynd** - can be purchased for \$10 on the porch of the Museum Gift Shop. This annual storytelling adventure is scheduled for 8pm on **Friday, October 16** and **Saturday, October 17**. Admission is limited to those age seven and older. Tickets are limited and often sold out before the end of the Fall Festival (not sold online); please come early to get yours!

Thanks to Hamlett-Dobson Funeral Homes for help in sponsoring our heritage artists. For more information, visit <https://www.exchangeplacetn.org>, call 423-288-6071, or email epfestivals.gf@gmail.com

Exchange Place is a living history farm whose mission is to preserve and interpret the heritage of mid-nineteenth century farm life in Northeast Tennessee. Exchange Place is a non-profit organization maintained and operated entirely by volunteers and is supported by donations, fundraisers, memberships and grants.

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