40th Anniversary ROOTS Week & ROOTS Reunion: Important Info

**Important Info**

(you might want to know what you’ve gotten yourself into…)

**ROOTS Week**: The Annual Meeting & Artists Retreat is a fun, challenging, and life-altering gathering for many people. Because this is an experiential event, it may be difficult to describe ROOTS Week to someone who has not attended before. However, we’ve provided answers to some of the questions you might have if this is your first ROOTS Week.

**Who attends ROOTS Week?**

Artists, cultural workers, educators, art supporters, and activists/organizers from throughout the South, other parts of the U.S., and even some international friends. Participants are people who want to meet and learn about the work of community-based artists making change happen. They are people who want to learn new methods of interacting with their communities, people who want to work towards the elimination of all forms of oppression, and protection of the natural world.

**Who will be performing and sharing art?**

Check out the Learning Exchange, Performance & Exhibition sections of your program book for a full line-up. In addition to a dynamic schedule, there are also informal opportunities for attendees to share art. Mini-performances are a regular feature of business meetings, and Late Night is open to anyone who has something to share. Spontaneous happenings are an integral part of a ROOTS gathering.

**Is there wireless access? How will I check my e-mail?!?!?**

Yes, there is limited, sometimes unreliable wireless access. The internet cafe is on the second level of Kohnjoy. You can also find internet at cafes off campus. However, we encourage you to be as low-tech as you can this week. It can be a lovely thing to step away from your computer for a while.

**Can I drink at ROOTS Week?**

Yes – if you’re over 21. We like to let loose around here. But, please keep in mind: not everyone drinks or feels comfortable around drinking. Please be discreet about your alcohol consumption and do not push it on others. Additionally, please do not serve alcohol to an underage participant.

**When’s the pool open?**

Weather permitting, the pool is open everyday from ​10 am-12 pm and 1-5 pm.

**If I’m NOT staying at Lutheridge, how do I get there? Where do I park?**

If you’re staying at the Clarion Inn, there will be regular and free shuttle service to Lutheridge. You can also park at our overflow lot – Lutheran Church of the Nativity; 2425 Hendersonville Road; Arden, NC 28704 – and catch a shuttle there. Shuttles will run regularly from 10 AM to 10 PM.

**What do I do in case of an emergency?**

If the incident is a real medical emergency please call 911.

Parkridge Hospital is the closest: 100 Hospital Dr, Hendersonville, NC 28792 / 828-684-8501.

Mission Hospital is also nearby: 509 Biltmore Ave, Asheville, NC 28801 / 828-213-1111.

Mission Pardee Health Campus (Urgent Care) is available for non-emergencies: 2695 Hendersonville Rd, Arden NC 28704 / 828-651-6300.

**How can I get in touch with Lutheridge and/or ROOTS Staff?**

Lutheridge Guest Services can be reached, day or night at: 828-606-5684.

ROOTS Staff can be reached by calling the office number, which will be re-routed to our various cell phones. To reach ROOTS Staff, call 404-577-1079 and dial the extension of the person you need to speak with:

Wendy Shenefelt, Programs Manager: x306

Paige Heurtin, Operations Manager: x305

Ashley Walden Davis, Programs Director: x304

Sarah Lamb, Registration Assistant: x308

**And a few more things...**

**Work Co-Ops: Everybody works at ROOTS Week!**

Whether you’re coming to ROOTS Week for the first time or are a founding member, there is a place for you to contribute your genius and energy in the work co-op. By working together, we can keep costs low, build community, and live out our values of sharing labor fairly. The vision is that everyone works one shift over the course of the week. Year after year, ROOTS members say that their experiences working together are some of the most important parts of ROOTS Week.

**Please be mindful of your personal fragrances**.

Some ROOTS Week attendees experience sensitivity to strong fragrances. We ask that you limit the use of strong perfume or cologne, fragrant laundry/body soaps and shampoos, or any other chemicals/fragrances, particularly when you will be engaging in our public spaces.

**Please be mindful of folks’ pronouns.**

You’ll have the opportunity to identify the pronouns you use on your nametag, and we encourage everyone sharing space with us this week to do so. Being intentional about identifying our pronouns, and attentive to using folks’ chosen pronouns is a way to make the space at ROOTS Week more affirming and welcoming to gender non-conforming, transgender, and genderqueer folks. If being mindful of pronouns is new to you, consider this week a wonderful opportunity for us as a community to support one another in putting this into practice.

**Please note our gender neutral restrooms.**

Alternate ROOTS welcomes gender diversity. All ROOTS Week participants are invited to use the restroom that best fits their identity. Multi-stall restrooms are located in the Faith Center, Dining Room, and Mission Halls. Single stall restrooms are located in Thornberg and Kohnjoy.

**And last but not least: please bring your wallets to evening events!**

Please support ROOTS and its mission by contributing to our 40 for 40 fundraising campaign! With 40 for 40 we’re raising $40,000 in 2016 to celebrate 40 years of arts, community, and activism. Your donation will support ROOTS programs and projects, more importantly, you will be part of a growing group of progressives committed to fortifying ROOTS’ next forty years!

**Collective Accessibility**

Alternate ROOTS aims to provide inclusive community building by making our organization and its events accessible across a full spectrum of abilities. We are sensitive to, and attempt to accommodate, mobility differences, communication differences, sensory differences, chemical injury/sensitivities, and environmental illnesses. In so doing, we commit to our practice of “All of us, or none.” This practice of collective accessibility includes, but is not limited to:

* Selecting a conference site that is as fully accessible as possible to participants with mobility challenges
* Providing an American Sign Language interpreter for participants that are deaf or hard of hearing
* Avoiding the use of strong fragrances that irritate participants’ chemical sensitivities
* Sharing the importance of mindful language, particularly related to a wide range of disabilities and differences

It is our desire that ROOTS Week attendees integrate inclusive language that does not

privilege and normalize non-disabled ways of thinking, communicating, feeling, and moving through the world (e.g. “moving through the world” rather than “walking through the world,” “coming forward for membership” rather than “stepping up for membership.”)

**Alternate ROOTS**

**Meeting Processes & Roles**

This is an evolving snapshot of ROOTS’ practices for convening meetings. It is by no means a mandate for every meeting, nor is it ever complete. Please feel free to add in new language or revise items as you see fit to better serve the unique needs of your group/community.

**Meeting Agreements**

At the beginning of each meeting/retreat, we create a meeting contract. This agreement includes everything from emotional needs to physical requests in order to keep us together and moving as a cohesive, productive group. It can include things like:

* Use "I" statements (speak from your own experience and feelings)
* Take care of yourself and your own needs
* Avoid alphabet soup/coded language (if there are newcomers in the room, do not assume that everyone knows what our acronyms or buzzwords mean)
* Seek first to understand; assume good intent
* Leave the space in better shape than we found it
* Move forward, move back (if you're talking a lot, make room for others to have a turn; by the same token, if you're not participating very much, challenge yourself to join the conversation)
* Let's have stretch breaks and creatively use our bodies whenever possible!

**Assigned Roles**

Also, at the beginning of a meeting, we assign roles. Some of these roles fall naturally to someone who already has a position the function is tied to it (e.g. our elected officer, the Secretary, will likely want to be the notetaker). Roles are:

* Facilitator: knows the goals for the discussion and keeps everyone on point toward that end
* Co-Facilitator: joins in when the facilitator needs help, often will also keep "the stack" or "queue" (the list of people who are waiting to participate in the conversation)
* Time Keeper: is aware of how much time has been allotted for a discussion item and gives verbal or visual cues for when time is counting down or over
* Public Scribe: takes notes up on the butcher paper/chalkboard/etc.
* Note Taker: takes notes for archive purposes on a computer
* Emotions Monitor: keeps a temperature reading on the room; if things get heated, suggests a breathing exercise, bio-break, etc; if the group moves through a hard piece successfully, suggests a celebratory moment
* Door Keeper: greets late comers or those who have had to leave and come back; catches them up on what the group has been discussing so that conversation does not have to stop with each new entry

**Check-ins/Check-outs**

Generally, as time and agenda allow, meetings begin with a check-in and end with a check-out. Individuals are invited to say what’s going on in their neck of the woods, or in what physical, spiritual, or emotional state they’re entering or leaving the meeting space. This process can be shortened creatively by asking participants to use one word, a song title, or some other abbreviating/creative concept to capture an energetic reading.

**An Alternate ROOTS Glossary of Terms**

ROOTS has a 40-year history of creating and defining language. Here are a few terms you might hear over the course of this week:

**Business Meetings:** All meeting attendees, no matter how new they are to the organization, are encouraged to participate in ROOTS’ business meetings which include, but are not limited to, program updates and evaluations, planning the future and clarifying our vision, and voting in new members.

**ExComm:** ROOTS’ Executive Committee is frequently referred to as the “ExComm.” The ExComm is comprised of elected representatives, a slate of officers and the staff.

**Late Night:** Based on an open mic or cabaret format, Late Night is an opportunity for you to get up and show some of your stuff. Totally casual and off-the-cuff, Late Night is a place where our night owls come together to share poetry, dance, music, monologues, blog entries – whatever you want to show. Each evening has a host or hosts and that’s who you would speak to about getting on the list.

**Learning Exchange:** A Learning Exchange looks different wherever and whenever it happens. It is an opportunity for a community to come together around an agreed upon topic. Inspired by the principles of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal, ROOTS has adopted the term "learning exchange" to show that all the knowledge that is needed to solve any given problem is already in the room.

**Region:** ROOTS has a 14-state service area, plus the District of Columbia. Our service region is the geographic area of the United States often referred to as "The South": Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

**Rhizome:** Taken from a horticultural term that relates to plants that grow through their root structure, rhizomes are small groupings of ROOTS members and friends who convene and participate in ROOTS-related activities across the region.

**Self-Organized Space:**  A meeting technique that acknowledges your power to set your own agenda. Come prepared to share with one another. Studios, workshops, discussion sessions and performances can all happen during time set aside for Self-Organized Space.

**Spontaneous performance/happenings/combustion:** Also known as “Gettin’ ROOT-y.” We occasionally burst out into song during the middle of a meal, create an impromptu performance on the way to the pool, or make a sculpture of tin cans. You don’t need permission to join this sort of thing – you just have to give yourself permission.

**Strategic Plan(ning):** This is the process of setting priorities and new directions for an organization. These priorities will serve as a roadmap for future programmatic decisions. Every 3-5 years ROOTS evaluates and sets new directions. All meeting attendees, no matter how new they are to the organization, are encouraged to participate.

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