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Anonymous Donor Kicks Off Andalusia Farm Endowment Drive

MILLEDGEVILLE, Ga. -- An anonymous donor visited Flannery O'Connor's Andalusia Farm recently and pledged a \$30,000 gift to the Foundation that preserves the home where the author wrote most of the work that established her as one of the 20th Century's literary giants.

Ten percent of the donation will serve as the seed money for the new endowment fund being established for the Flannery O'Connor-Andalusia Foundation, a non-profit that operates the 544-acre former farm and homestead. The Foundation recently launched a fundraising appeal seeking donations with a dime on every dollar going to fund the endowment.

"We are so excited by this generous and unexpected gift," said Elizabeth Wylie, executive director of the Foundation. "The donor liked the idea that it would inspire others to step up at this critical juncture for this young organization. Andalusia Farm has been open to the public for 13 years. Our visitors come from all over the world and bring economic activity to Milledgeville. We hope our local audience as well as our broader fan base sees the importance of sustaining Andalusia so it is here for future generations."

The Foundation's goal is to raise at least \$100,000 by the end of its fiscal year (Sept. 30), with 90 percent to be used for annual operating expenses and 10 percent of the donations establishing the endowment. The Foundation's \$220,000 annual operating budget is largely supported by donations from individuals. This is supplemented by earned income (admission fees, gift shop sales, etc) and a pledge of \$60,000 from the author's literary estate.

Andalusia also received \$11,323 in capital funding this summer from the Milledgeville Chapter of the Watson-Brown Foundation Junior Board of Trustees for restoration of the equipment shed. The structure was already compromised but recently collapsed when a large tree limb fell on it.

Last year, the Hill House, where tenant farmers once lived, won the Georgia Trust's Preservation Award for Excellence in Restoration.

"The Hill House is now open to the public," Wylie said. "It's poised for programming to connect visitors with the mid-century farm life chronicled by Flannery in her writing. The Cow Barn has also been saved and is now open. The barn evokes the ill-fated tryst between Hulga and Manley Pointer in the short story 'Good Country People.'"

ANDALUSIA FARM

HOME OF
FLANNERY O'CONNOR

Wylie said the foundation wants to open up these spaces to engage visitors. Approximately 5,000 O'Connor fans visit Andalusia each year.

“By offering portals into preservation, conservation and cultural activities, we serve our core mission to care for Andalusia responsibly while encouraging readership and appreciation of Flannery O'Connor,” Wylie said. “By giving visitors a deeper experience, we hope to bring them back, again and again.”

The foundation recently updated its website to allow donors to contribute online more easily at www.andalusiafarm.org

Donors who give \$500 or more will have access to the Andalusia Supper Club, a pop-up farm-to-table private dining salon prepared by notable chefs, including Vivian Lee of Atlanta.

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