

History comes to life at Oklahoma Heritage summer camps

BY CARRIE COPPERNOLL  0

Published: May 26, 2010

Gini Moore Campbell wants her students to learn while they're at her summer camps.

But spending a week with the Oklahoma Heritage Association is about more than facts and dates.

"More than anything," she said, "it's them walking away (saying,) 'How cool that I'm an Oklahoman.'"

Campbell, director of publications and education for the Oklahoma Heritage Association, has two camps this summer for children age 5 to 12. The morning session will be about arts and science and will be from 8 a.m. to noon. The afternoon session will be about agriculture and will last from 1 to 5 p.m.

The sessions will be June 21-25 at Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum, 1400 Classen Drive. Sign up ends June 4.

Each session is \$75 for museum members and \$100 for nonmembers. Campers who go to both sessions get a 10 percent discount and free lunch. Tuition assistance is available. This summer will be the third that Kari Watkins' sends her kids to the Heritage Association camp. The museum and the staff provide a great place for her children to learn about the Oklahoma story, Watkins said. And she would know. She's the executive director of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum.

"It's not all about artifacts," she said. "... They're bringing the rich history of the state to life."

Last year, Watkins' kids were part of a living wax museum of Oklahoma heroes. Her son Ford, 8, was Wiley Post. Daughter Caroline, 6, was Miss America Jane Jayroe.

When Jayroe heard about the project, she invited Caroline over to see the crown and try it on. Caroline was excited, to say the least, her mom said.

Experts, heroes and notables from all walks of life visit students at the camp, and that brings Oklahoma history to life, Watkins said.

"My kids know more about Oklahoma history than most adults," she said. "They know all about it from the people who made it happen."