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**CONTACT:** Erin Page, APR  
Director of Communications & Marketing  
Oklahoma Heritage Association  
Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum  
405.523.3208  
[ep@oklahomaheritage.com](mailto:ep@oklahomaheritage.com)

**Oklahoma Heritage Association & Gaylord-Pickens Museum  
kick off first membership campaign**

OKLAHOMA CITY. – For the first time in its 82-year history, the Oklahoma Heritage Association launched a membership campaign to purposefully spread its mission and gain support across the state. A reception was held Feb. 4 at the Gaylord-Pickens Museum to kick off the campaign.

“We have tremendous support for our mission of preserving Oklahoma history and promoting pride in our state in the Oklahoma City metro, so this was a natural first stop for us on our statewide campaign to increase membership,” said Shannon L. Rich, president of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and Gaylord-Pickens Museum. “Because the organization is funded through private donations, our memberships are extremely important to our success.”

Since its humble beginning in 1927, when the Association was founded by Anna B. Korn to create the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, the organization has grown to include educational programs, a scholarship competition for high school students, annual awards to recognize those who preserve state history and a publishing arm that is the leader in publishing Oklahoma history. In May 2007, the Association opened the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Like the Association, the Museum strives to tell Oklahoma’s story through its people. Its high-tech, interactive exhibits give visitors a unique look into the lives of notable Oklahomans like Wiley Post, Shannon Miller and Reba McEntire.

“The addition of meaningful programs over the years has also meant that we have to continually seek support from individuals and businesses across the state,” said Rich.

The membership campaign will travel across the state over the next four months, with stops planned in Tulsa, Ponca City, Norman and Lawton. Lawton native Bill Burgess, the Choctaw Nation and an anonymous donor have each made substantial contributions to commence the 2010 campaign.

“The generous gifts we received certainly started us off on the right foot, and we are very grateful to have strong supporters who are passionate about our mission,” said Chairman Tom J. McDaniel. “Our goal is to recruit 1,300 new members and increase our base of financial support through this campaign, and we know these contributions are going to serve as encouragement to get other Oklahoma businesses and individuals involved.”

The campaign will focus on sharing the Association and Museum programming opportunities with community members, businesses and educational institutions, providing information on both how they can benefit from membership and what their membership contributions would support.

“Every dollar and every member makes a difference,” said McDaniel. “It’s important to remember that more than three-quarters of our annual supporters give to us at the \$100 level or below, so it is the everyday families, couples and individuals who help keep our mission flourishing.”

Hosts for the Oklahoma City kick-off event were: Tom J. McDaniel, Glen D. Johnson, Meg Salyer, Clayton I. Bennett, Bond Payne, Polly Nichols, Andy Coats, Christy Everest, Jane Jayroe Gamble, Robert E. Hayes, Jr., Duke R. Ligon, Dave Lopez, David Rainbolt, William F. Shdeed, Lee Allan Smith, Ty Tyler, J. Blake Wade and Hardy Watkins.

For more information about becoming a member of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and Gaylord-Pickens Museum, visit [www.oklahomaheritage.com](http://www.oklahomaheritage.com) or call 405.235.4458.