

CCCRA
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Hayesville students experience Cherokee culture at Cherokee Homestead Exhibit

By Sandy Nicolette

The fog lifted to reveal a bright, warm day at the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit for 112 Hayesville Elementary School fourth graders. They came to learn about the Cherokee who lived in the area for thousands of years. Presenters from Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (CCCRA) and the community provided opportunities for students to learn about the Cherokee culture in a variety of fun, interactive ways.

After instruction from Danny Keith, students had the opportunity to throw a rivercane spear at a chunky stone and then discovered stickball requires a lot of skill. Students learned about the seven clans, testing their knowledge by playing a fun matching game. Jacqueline Blackburn taught the students about Cherokee artifacts and symbols depicted on the retention wall at the exhibit while participating in another fun activity.

Jim Glock taught them that the Cherokee made their homes out of rivercane and locust poles, which were covered with mud for insulation. The students then tried out their weaving skills on platforms Glock had made. Sally Jordan taught the “three sisters” method of farming by having them act out the roles played by corn, beans and squash in the mound gardens.

A visit to the museum enabled students to identify locations in Clay County that retained their Cherokee names. In addition, they viewed artifacts discovered in Clay County. Getting to see the life-size basket weaver enhanced this experience. Molly Seaver invited the students to come back with their parents so they could explore the remaining rooms at the museum.

Fourth grade teacher Keisha McClure commented, “We enjoy coming to the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit each year. The students benefit from learning about the Cherokee through the various activities you provide for them. Thank you from all of us.”

Educational programs at the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit are made possible by donations from CCCRA members and the community. Since 2009, 11,660 students have participated in learning activities provided by CCCRA at the Exhibit. Should you like to see these programs continue to be offered to students, you may make a donation to the Cherokee fund by mailing a check to CCCRA, PO Box 1533, Hayesville, NC 28904 or visit our website www.cccra-nc.org and donate through PayPal. Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (CCCRA) is qualified as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to CCCRA are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law

