



OIRM was chosen by the Smithsonian Institution as one of only six small museums in the United States to present their "FOOD" exhibit via their Museum on Main Street program. We are calling our exhibit "A Taste of Community" and will showcase business owners and patrons from across the state in an interactive exhibit from January 2024 - July 2025. OIRM's exhibit will be the very first of these exhibits in America!

We have reached out to scores of local businesses and individuals asking for stories, pictures, and artifacts to bring this exhibit to life. It truly is a community exhibit and we are grateful for everyone's assistance.



Homeschool Classes



Our homeschool classes, which are open for students from kindergarten - 12th grade, have focused on Decades of Progress. We began with the 1820s when Batesville was incorporated and have discussed each decade's newest technology, science, history culture, and art.

The majority of each class contains a hands-on experiment or exercise where we build small electromagnetic engines, for instance, or experience escapades such as the Olyphant Train Robbery. With the help of volunteers and staff, Cathy Shonk has been able to reach out to between 20 and 35 homeschoolers every monthly session.

Homesteading Classes

To draw attention to our upcoming "A Taste of Community" exhibit, Laura and Cathy have brought together a series of homesteading classes, including canning, dehydrating, fermenting, et cetera.



While the classes were not well attended, the material was well planned and executed. Beginning in November, the classes segued into Down Home Southern Cookin' meetings. This organization creates and shares family favorites every month with a theme for each meeting. The "A Taste of Community" exhibit will also focus on a specific food "community", such as Native American foods, Hispanic foods, picnic foods, et cetera. Because the two ideas were closely linked, we have joined forces to create a scrumptious monthly taste sensation!

Day Camp



This year's Day Camp theme was Homesteading. We pulled together half a dozen volunteers to teach our students how to sew, work with wood, cook, start a fire with a battery (who knew?), and so much more.

We rounded out the week with an in-depth look at democracy since we were hosting the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street "Voices and Votes" exhibit. Students walked through the exhibit on a guided tour, played a series of interactive games, and answered thought-provoking questions, such as "Should you be able to vote if you are 16?" and "Does my vote really count?" The students were engaged in every aspect of the presentation.



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Happy 25th Anniversary, OIRM!

September 14 heralded in a very special date in our history: our 25th anniversary. We celebrated in grand style with great food, fantastic entertainment, and special memories with our favorite patrons. It was wonderful sharing the evening sharing memories with friends!



With the help of the Lambda Iota Chapter of Kappa Sigma at Lyon College, the setup of the Smithsonian Institution’s Museum on Main Street “Voices and Votes” exhibit went up in record time. We hosted our Day Camp around the exhibit, and called in several classes of students on their first week back to school to see the exhibit in the short six weeks we were able to present it.

International Geocache Day

August 19 was OIRM’s first foray into International Geocache Day. We invited a spectacular speaker who regaled us with tales on creating and placing clever geocaches out in the open where nobody notices them. We had several geocachers from out of state and throughout Arkansas.



School Tours

The school tours we have hosted this year have been memorable. Along with Voices and Votes, Alan Bufford connected with a West Elementary teacher to host a museum tour focusing on the International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) orphanage, which was located on or adjacent to West Elementary.



Cathy Shonk connected with the Presbyterian Day School for their three and four-year-olds to visit the museum to play games and hear stories. Cathy returned the favor later in the year by visiting the pre-school for more stories and games.

School tours will resume in January when the “A Taste of Community” exhibit opens.





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And now, a word from our sponsors...

OIRM has been blessed with several sponsorships, gifts, and grants this past few months and we would like to recognize those individuals.

- The estate of Dr. George Lankford gifted OIRM with enough funding to break ground on our outside learning garden. We have a contractor who is ready to begin creating a beautiful space for adults and children to engage in nature and learn important skills.
- The Chamber of Commerce's Batesville Advertising and Promotion Commission granted OIRM funds to host a Quilting and Coffee event to bring more overnight tourists to our area.
- Cathy applied for a grant to attend the Small Museum Association in February and was accepted. SMA will provide a stipend, which will cover the hotel stay and most of the travel expenses.
- Grants for repairing our north- and west-facing windows, the "A Taste of Community" exhibit, and our eclipse event have been submitted.

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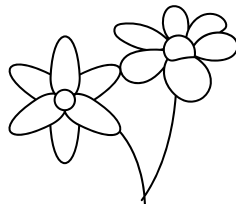
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you!*