

Smithsonian Exhibition Celebrating Sports in American Communities Coming to Weatherford

09.02.2015

Baseball. Soccer. Hockey. Bowling. Kickball. Surfing. People around the country are drawn to compete in these sports and many others. Still more gather on the sidelines to cheer for their favorite athletes and teams. Nowhere do Americans more intimately connect to sports than in their hometowns.

The SWOSU Museum in Towne Centre of Weatherford, in conjunction with the Oklahoma Humanities Council, will celebrate this connection as it hosts “Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America,” a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street program. “Hometown Teams” will be on view September 14 through October 23.

“Hometown Teams” will capture the stories that unfold on the neighborhood fields and courts, and the underdog heroics, larger than life legends, fierce rivalries and gut wrenching defeats. For more than 100 years, sports have reflected the trials and triumphs of the American experience and helped shape the national character. Whether it is professional sports or those played on the collegiate or scholastic level, amateur sports or sports played by kids on the local playground, sports are everywhere in America.

“We are very pleased to be able to bring ‘Hometown Teams’ to western Oklahoma,” said Lynne Thurman, director of institutional initiatives at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford. “It allows us the opportunity to explore this fascinating aspect of our own region’s sports history and we hope that it will inspire many to become even more involved in the cultural life of our community.”

Area residents can view the free exhibit Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the SWOSU Museum, located at 210 W. Main Street.

Museum on Main Street invites the public to share their local sports stories through the “Stories from Main Street” website at www.storiesfrommainstreet.org or through the free mobile app available from the Mac App Store or the Google Play Store. Both platforms record and map the location reflected in the submission and will accept written and audio stories as well as videos and photos. Selected submitted stories to “Stories from Main Street” will be featured on the website and app. The archived stories will serve as a searchable record of the unique experiences of life in American small towns. Each story can be searched via location or by topic.