

Time Travelers

Students experience 18th century life at Colonial Camp



Fourth graders from Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts will travel back in time to experience life in 18th century America as part of a hands-on field trip program being presented May 5 at the Arts Center.

The Colonial Camp will tie into the students' social studies curriculum, offering real-life lessons on everything from the dress and domestic duties to the industries and artistry of the period.

"It will give the kids a better picture of what life was like back then," said fourth-grade teacher Linley Frieden. "These kinds of hands-on experiences are what they remember most."

As the 135 students arrive at the Arts Center, they will be treated to fife and drum music performed by authentically garbed "colonists." Following a short introduction on Colonial history, the students will begin rotating through tents set up on the grounds of the Arts Center, each featuring a different activity or lesson.

At the "Quill and Ink" station, children will use a feather quill and ink well to copy a section of an 18th century penmanship exercise similar to one George Washington worked on when he was in grade school in Fredericksburg, Va.

They'll learn the basics of fabric-making by weaving strips of yarn on a loom. At another station, they'll make their own rag dolls out of cloth and yarn.

Two of the lessons will focus on Indian customs and culture. During the Indian Games session, the fourth graders will play American Indian games, such as Pa-tol, Follow My Leader, Corncob Darts and Hoop & Javelin. They'll also learn how to apply war paint to their faces and listen to the stories of colonists captured by Indians.

Throughout the day, students will have the opportunity to shop at the Grey Burrow Trading Post, where they can purchase a wide range of merchandise, including bamboo flutes, powder horns, buffalo tooth necklac-

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es, dry ink powder and raccoon hats.

“You can talk about Colonial America, but it’s an abstraction until you experience it first-hand,” said Colonial Camp founder Graydon Stephenson. “Our goal is to get kids excited about history so they’ll return to the classroom eager to learn more.”

A touring company based in North Carolina, The Colonial Camp presents about 150 field trips a year, serving more than 15,000

students. This is one of the special programs and classes the Arts Center will provide to the School for the Creative Arts in 2008-09 through its Adopt-a-School program.

“We’re really looking forward to it,” said Frieden, who has been teaching at Hilton Head Elementary School the last 15 years. “It’s a wonderful way to reinforce what the children have been learning in their social studies classes.”