

LOCAL

Archaeology After School program helps children appreciate their heritage and history

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The Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) is hosting Archaeology After School: All You Need is Love: (Artifact) Dating in Archaeology program this month to help children appreciate the uniqueness of archaeology and the beauty of history.

FPAN Music Manager Mike Thomin wants the program to be fun and engaging while children and parents learn all about the field of archaeology, which is the study of people and the things they leave behind.

“What we hope to do with this program is not necessarily to turn kids into archaeologists, but just to get them to understand what archaeology is, and then have an appreciation for all heritage from all different communities,” Thomin said.

The program is similar to their Archaeology Storytime, which educates children about archaeology by introducing them to different aspects of the field.

Students in third through sixth grade will be able to learn about the science of archaeological dating and discover how archaeologists are able to come up with dates and ages for the sites and artifacts they explore.

The day will start off with a short presentation introducing them to what archaeology is, then there will be a hands-on activity, and at the end will finish off with a craft they can take home to remember their time at the event.

It is not just a program to drop off your child and leave, but a time when parents and caretakers can also participate. Parents who have participated in past projects say they have

enjoyed their time taking part in activities such as throwing spears or building pots and helping to leave memories with their children together.

When people care about the sites in their communities they want to protect, which could be Indigenous mound sites or historic cemeteries, that is where local communities have the most effective protections and preservation. Thomin hopes the earlier they can get people engaged in archaeology and in their local history, the better the chance they will have of making people a lifetime steward of these resources.

“It's all of our heritage, like all these things that happened in the past, and the areas where we live, really belong to us all,” Thomin said. “And it's a story that connects everybody. And so when we talk about preserving sites, or teaching people about these places, it's really making sure that these things and these stories remain part of the community and it's something that they can all be proud of.”

Archaeology After School

When: Feb 22, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Where: FPAN Coordinating Center 207 E Main St.

To register go to Eventbrite or visit their Facebook at Florida Public Archaeology Network - Northwest Region.