

PRESS RELEASE

Local Contact: Martha Gruning, Museum Board President,
President@TrailheadMuseum.org

State Council Contact: Brian Boyles, La. Endowment for the Humanities, boyles@leh.org

Smithsonian Contact: Jennifer Schommer (202) 633-3121; schommerj@si.edu

Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Celebrating Sports in American Communities Coming to Abita Springs

November 13, 2016

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 Abita Springs Trailhead Museum, in cooperation with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH), 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 November 19 through January 1, 2017.

The Trailhead Museum and the surrounding community have been expressly chosen by the LEH to host “Hometown Teams” as part of the Museum on Main Street program—a national/state/local partnership to bring exhibitions and programs to rural cultural organizations. The exhibition has toured five communities in Louisiana. A short video about the exhibition can be viewed at <http://s.si.edu/1bSRDZd>.

“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 our area,” said Martha Gruning, Trailhead Museum Board President. “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.”

“Allowing all of our state’s residents to have access to the cultural resources of our nation’s premiere museum is a priority of the LEH,” said Brian Boyles, LEH Vice-President. “With this special tour, we are pleased to be working with the Trailhead Museum to help develop local exhibitions and public programs to compliment the

Smithsonian exhibition.” Such free events include a panel discussion with area coaches called “In the Press Box with Sports Legends” and “School Spirit Day” with crafts, music, and performances for kids throughout the day and a bike ride on the Tammany Trace benefitting the Miracle League.

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.

“Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America” is part of Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils across the nation, and local host institutions. To learn more about Hometown Teams and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org.

Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress.

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 60 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science, and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. For exhibition description and tour schedules, visit www.sites.si.edu.

###

Abita Springs Trailhead Museum
Box 461, 22044 Main Street
Abita Springs LA 70420
(985) 871-5327