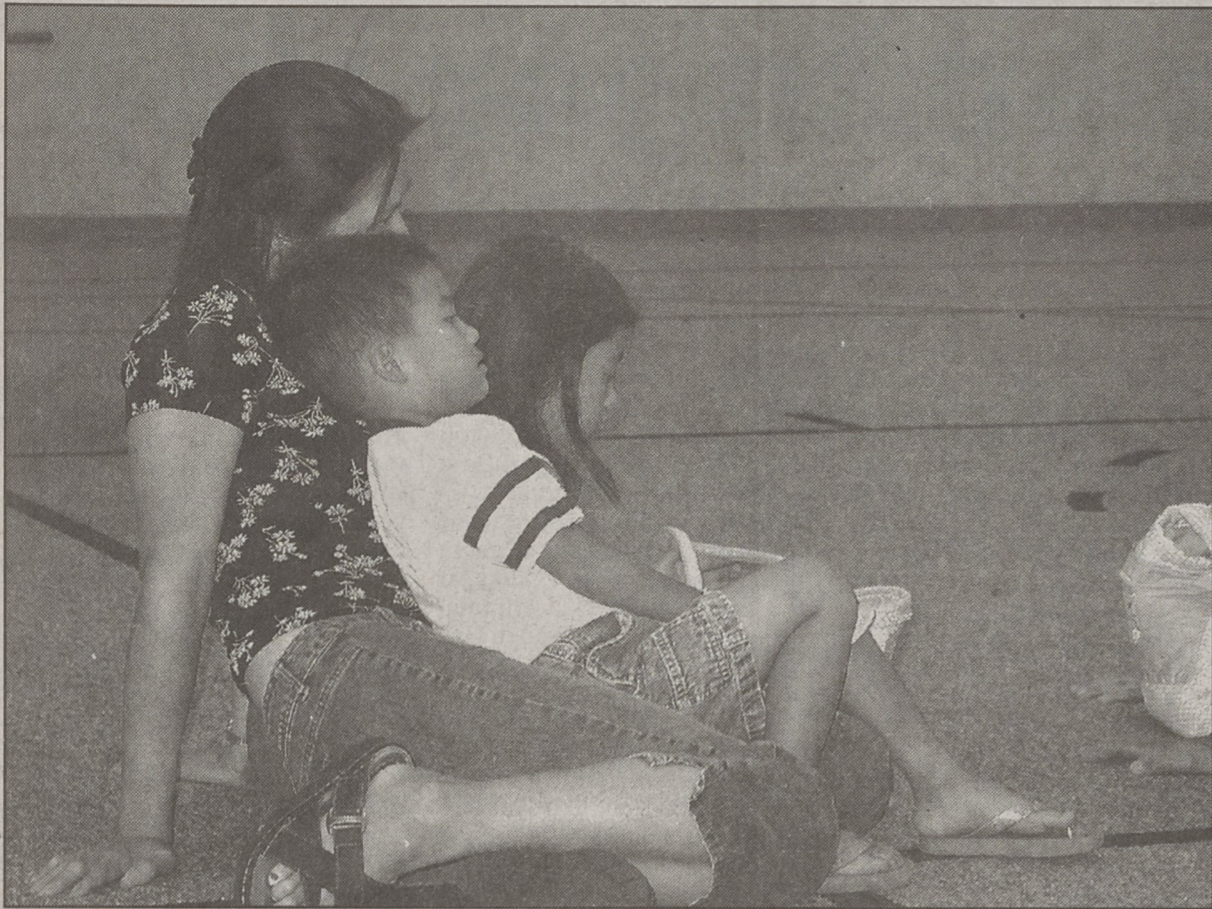


LIFESTYLES



Brittany Venevongsoth sits with her little ones in her lap, Rexen and Kaitlin, as they watch a presentation on Native American life given by the Schiele Museum at the Summer Reading program.



Laura Dameron from the Schiele Museum instructs Trevor Capotosta how to "hunt rabbits" with a dart inside a blowgun made of river cane, like the Native Americans used.

Detectives explore Native Americans at library Summer Reading Program

EMILY WEAVER

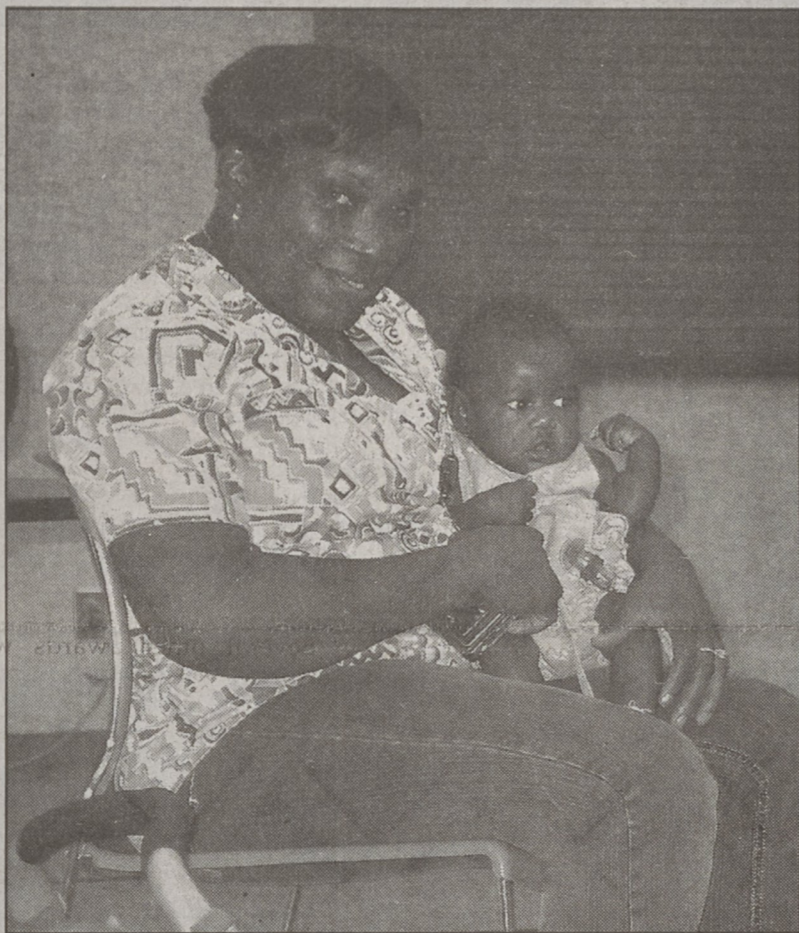
eweaver@kingsmountainherald.com

Little detectives in Mauney Memorial Library's Summer Reading Program solved the mystery of Native American life Wednesday morning at Central United Methodist Church.

Laura Dameron from the Schiele Museum in Gastonia helped them investigate the history of Native Americans through a traveling program called "The Catawba Village." From the back of the museum van, she pulled out history of ancient people stuffed in boxes and crates.

Inside, a crowd of over 100 spectators waited to learn about the splendors she carried with her. The antlers of a deer, its fur and skin were laid upon the table, along with other instruments the Indians carved from their environments. It was all about survival. Mother earth was their provider.

The essentials of life (water, shelter, food and clothing) were all harvested from the Native American's land, which at one point in time was very close to home today. Even from a white-tailed deer, the scavengers drew their strength. In all prudence and respect for the animal which gave its life for their survival, little was wasted. Its fur brought them warm coverings. Its skin was shaved and steamed to make rawhide. Its brains were boiled to make a liquid that would tan the hide into a softer, more wearable buckhide.



Photos by Emily Weaver
Carolyn Neely and baby Trinity Lamb enjoyed a Summer Reading program about Native American history at Central UMC with Neely's day-care students.

The sinews of its muscles were stripped and chewed to string the bows for their arrows and strings for sewing. The hooves were boiled to make glue and sometimes used as beads or to make rattles. The scapula, or shoulder blade, of the deer was often tied to a stick and used as a

garden hoe.

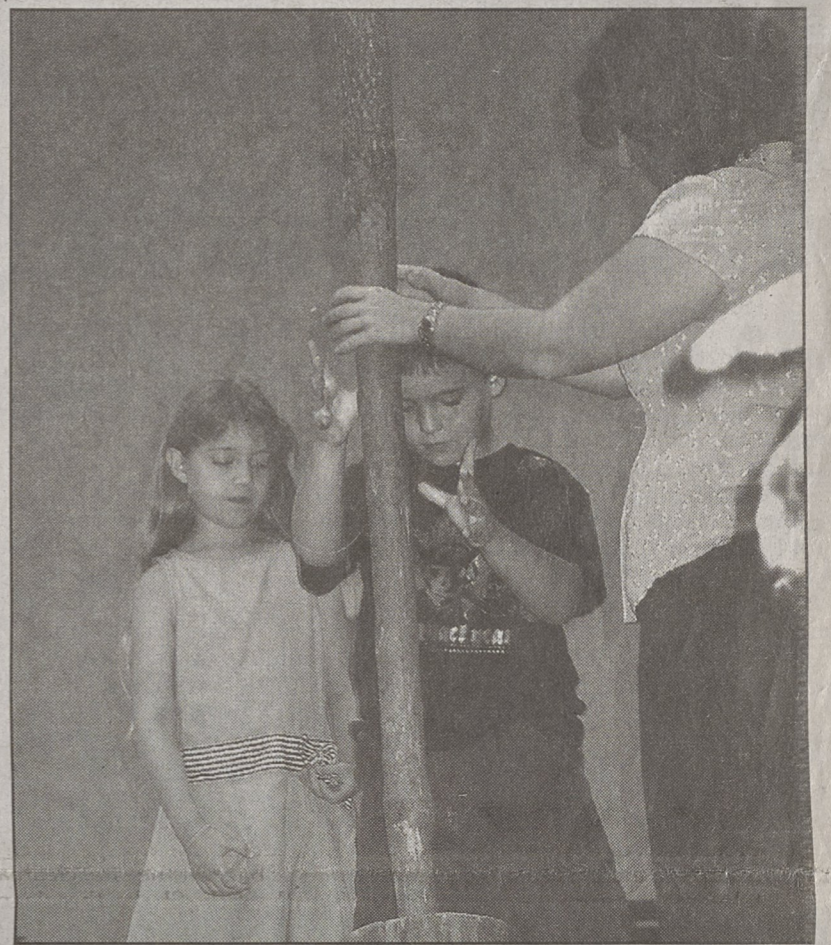
After the boys in the audience had correctly shouted that the

men did most of the hunting and the group had confirmed that the women did most of the sewing, Dameron asked who would use the hoe for gardening. "The women," blurted Trevor Capotosta.

"Are you trying to make more work for the women?" Dameron quipped.

She was full of investigative information that she shared with the little spectators. She let Capotosta and Abby Pennington try out their shot at "hunting rabbits" (picture of a rabbit taped to the lid of a box) with a blowgun made from river cane. A few other audience members were called up to try their hand at grinding corn. But corn ("maize") was not the only crop the Indians utilized. She held up a gourd (shaped like an oversized pear) and asked the children what it was. "A pear!" one yelled.

She said that the gourd was not eaten because it would make people sick, but was often dried and used for other purposes. The crowd seemed to love the lesson and as the investigation into Native American history wound down some of the children grew excited with what they had discovered. Case closed - little detectives in the "Get a Clue" Summer Reading Program loved learning about their ancient neighbors.



Hunter Sizemore helps grind corn into meal, with Schiele Museum's Laura Dameron, just like the Native Americans used to do. Left, Taylor waits her turn.

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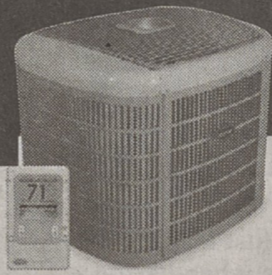
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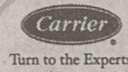
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