

## TRAVELING TRUNKS

The RESA 2 Teaching American History (TAH) Project participants created four traveling trunks last year to provide a loanable, mobile resource for teachers. Each trunk contains information and material representing a specific time period in our country's past to help engage students.

Within each trunk are "Reading Strategies and Writing Strategies for Social Studies" that ensure teacher appropriate lessons.

1. ***Children and The Civil War*** contains books written by and for elementary age children, readers' theater plays, and appropriate costumes for the period. In addition, there are lesson plans to augment the books as well as standalone lesson plans. The trunk contains artifacts such as Confederate money and belt buckles. Finally, there are "hands-on" materials such as the American Girl, "Addy" and her books, a Harriet Tubman doll with various Underground Railroad activities, and even a Civil War soldier set.
2. ***The Founding Four: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin*** trunk includes many types of books on these four figures of American history for students with a variety of reading levels. Included are sets of primary source readers with lesson plans, readers' theater plays with costumes and wigs, and Benjamin Franklin's glasses. While attending a mini-institute with Dr. Dennis Denenburgh – author of *50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet* – participants were encouraged to use dolls in teaching; therefore, dolls of the four men (and Martha Washington) were included. In addition, there are many reproduction artifacts such as a drum and fife, Revolutionary War soldiers, compasses and spy materials that Washington might have used, and a reproduction of Mt. Vernon. Also, included are CDs with period music, several DVDs, and an animated DVD on Ben Franklin and his discovery of electricity.
3. ***The Ohio River: Its Place in American History*** trunk can be used by both history and science teachers. There are several books dealing specifically with the Ohio River and others on rivers in general. Some of the books have been written by local authors who signed and donated them to the trunk. Other books were obtained from the River Museum in Pt. Pleasant. There is a readers' theater play complete with costumes, a binder of lesson plans and games, and suggested websites where a teachers may go to get information or enjoy animated videos. Students will get a feel for life on the Ohio River by studying artifacts like a brass bell, a complete

model of a tugboat and even rope so students can try tying knots!

4. ***The Coal Industry: Its Past, Present, and Future*** trunk was created by teachers who combed their communities and found amazing artifacts such as: an antique phone actually used in a mine; a miner's hat; and scrip issued by coal companies as pay to employees. In addition, several coal companies donated materials including pictures, DVDs, and brochures on the process of producing coal. Individual coal miners donated various items of safety equipment. Each artifact includes a tag that explains its use. There are many books for both the teacher and students.

For example, a kindergarten student wrote a book, called *Popeye Says*, in which she tells the story of her



grandfather and his work in the mine. The book was published and a signed copy is included. There are several DVDs and music CDs. The contents are almost outshone by the trunk itself. It was designed and carved by a local artist and is shaped like the interior of a coal mine. On each side is a hand-painted scene with coal mines of the past, present, and future. This trunk should not be missed and can be used by history, science, and math teachers of any grade level.

These trunks will be available for loan to teachers across the state of West Virginia as well as the nation. This grant is funded through the US Department of Education.

## THE PATHWAY PROJECT

***The Pathway Project*** is a RESA 2 Alternative Certification Plan statewide initiative English 5-Adult and Physics 9-Adult levels.

RESA 2 developed this project as an alternative route to an on-line certification directive in two of West Virginia's most challenged fields – English and Physics. Many teachers in both subject areas across West Virginia are reaching retirement age, and the state's demographics are changing. This means the education needs of our state are changing, and the change is prompting the education community to adapt to face this new challenge.

The Pathway Project offers a statewide opportunity for an additional certification in English 5-Adult or Physics 9-Adult. The endorsements are designed to assist West Virginia certified teachers in adding commendations to their certificates in teaching shortage areas via an exclusively on-line opportunity. Marshall University agreed serve as a partner for the English cohort members and Fairmont State University has agreed to serve as the physics cohort partner. Both schools have made strong commitments to teacher quality in building curricula for these educators.

The need for an alternative route to teacher certification has become evident following a joint review of data and the partnering universities believe this program addresses needs for several reasons:

- The program explicitly addresses teachers from diverse settings
- Cohort participants form relationships that will persist after completion of the program
- Research suggests that a strong mentoring component, such as the one this program will provide, is an important factor in helping individuals to persist in the endorsement path.

Trudy Parker, an educator from the eastern panhandle area of the state, said The Pathway Project has been a boon to her career.

“The Pathways cohort organized by RESA 2 has provided me with the opportunity to make my dream a reality,” she said. “I was afforded the opportunity to teach several different subject matters as a special education teacher. From that experience, I found my love for English/Language Arts.”

“The Pathway Project is giving me the opportunity to extend my certification to teach Middle School and High School, which has always been a goal of mine,” Tammy Smith, a cohort member from Mingo County, said.

The marketplace for teacher training in shortage areas has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. Endorsements via alternative-certification programs have proliferated, according to the National Center for Alternative Certification. The Pathway Project courses and programs are a solution to hectic educators’ schedules. RESA 2 is proud of these programs, and hopes to develop new pathways in the future to address the ever-changing challenges of teacher certification.

## **THE CIVIL WAR TRAIL**

RESA 2’s Teaching American History cohort recently spent time visiting one of America’s most hallowed battlegrounds: the Civil War trail that leads to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where the Union finally turned back the Army of Northern Virginia in July 1863.

Twenty-one teachers participated in this trip, which provided hands-on learning on just how this battle affected the course of American history. The tour began in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where the group viewed artifacts of the Civil War and then toured the National War Civil War Museum. Later that day, the group toured the home of John Harris and Simon Cameron, prominent Pennsylvanians, and learned how these men affected American history. The second day a local historian, Jim Schmick, joined us and gave the group background information on Gettysburg that many history works do not cover. Participants received a signed copy of his book, and he accompanied the cohort on a bus tour of the Harrisburg and Mechanicsburg area, where skirmishes and battles took place before Gettysburg. This included the actions of Confederate General Albert Jenkins, a Cabell County native who commanded a cavalry unit during the Gettysburg campaign.

Day three was spent at Gettysburg taking tours of the battlefield and cemetery led by a licensed guide. The group also toured notable historical landmarks: the Schriver House, David Wills House, and the Jenny Wade House. The group learned not only about the battle, but also about the people of Gettysburg and what happened to them before and after the battle.

The next day was spent in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where cohort participants toured the Amish area with a Mennonite guide, further exploring the concept of the separation of church and state and how the Amish and Mennonite communities played a role in American history.

A play conducted by a local AME church showed how slaves were taught to act free once they acquired freedom through the Underground Railroad. It was an interactive play and the audience played the part of recently free slaves. Each person left that day with a new respect for those who gained their freedom through the Underground Railroad.

Finally, the group spent two days in Philadelphia where members toured Christ Church and burial grounds and then worked with National Park Ranger Jeffery Collins in an all-day professional development session. The teachers returned home with a deeper understanding of the content around the Civil War and the beginning of U.S. government as well as many new ideas and resources for their classrooms.

This grant is funded through the US Department of Education.

For additional information on the Traveling Trunks please contact Brenda Stevenson at 304.529.6205 ext. 33 or [bstevens@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:bstevens@access.k12.wv.us). For information regarding the Pathway Project please contact Karen Davies at 304.529.6205 ext. 24 or [kdavies@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:kdavies@access.k12.wv.us).