

Georgia Commission on the Holocaust Donates Learning Trunk to Rome Middle School



Rome Middle School staff and students were surprised with a special gift from the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust.

Mike Weinroth, Exhibition and Speaker Coordinator for the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, and Georgia State Representative Katie Dempsey, presented Rome Middle School's eight grade Georgia Studies teacher, Amy Deese, with a trunk full of educational materials for the kids at RMS.

The Holocaust Learning Trunk Project is sponsored by the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Education and is supported by The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc. and the Georgia Foundation for Public Education. The contents of the trunk provide an interdisciplinary addition to the curriculum already in place at RMS, while also assisting educators in fulfilling the state's standards of excellence.

Some of the things students will have access to are books like "Anne Frank's Diary", lesson plans, DVDs and all kinds of educational materials to help the students at RMS to learn about the Holocaust.

"A few months ago, I was asked to bring a Holocaust survivor to an Exchange Club meeting here in Rome. While I was there, a gentleman approached me and asked if we would be interested in attending a Rotary Club meeting as well, and the trunks were brought up. I thought about the students at Rome Middle School and got a hold of Ms. Deese, and the rest was history," explained Weinroth.

Each trunk is special, as Weinroth said that the Commission has created around 150 trunks all housing different books and learning tools, so no one trunk is the exact same. They are each decorated by students in the metro-Atlanta area, "which allows students to express the lessons of the Holocaust through art. Each trunk has a story. No two trunk designs are alike," stated Weinroth.

"Our kids love learning about the Holocaust and are just fascinated by the stories of the survivors. My goal with this trunk is to encourage my student to become interested and make it relevant to their lives. I don't want it to be something they have to learn in history, I want it to mean something to them," smiled Deese. "Fate definitely smiled on us with Mr. Weinroth and we are just so thankful for this amazing gift."

Rome Middle School Principal Parke Wilkinson, was extremely excited to see the one of a kind trunk sitting in the media center surrounded by engaged students who were eager to answer any and all questions that Deese and Weinroth threw at them about the Holocaust. "I think it is awesome to have these kinds of resources available for our students. To have a teacher go out and get one of these treasures for our school and our students is phenomenal, and I am glad to have this kind of treasure for our kids for years to come," said Wilkinson.

Katie Dempsey, Georgia State Representative said, "It is a wonderful gift to the school and to the teachers and students who can avail themselves with this information. So much of the Holocaust goes unknown by a lot of people. It's not always taught or understood, so the trunk is just another way to explore this topic and embrace it."