



## PUBLIC INFORMATION

ITEM NO. 3.

**DATE OF MEETING:** February 21, 2011

**REQUESTED BY:** Mike Taylor, Library Director

**SHORT TITLE:** Pender County Public Library to Host the Smithsonian Institution's "Journey Stories" Traveling Exhibit this Summer

**BACKGROUND:** The county library applied to the NC Humanities Council to be one of the six sites in the state to host the Smithsonian's *Journey Stories* exhibit. The council is working with the Smithsonian to coordinate the NC tour. Not only was the application approved, but Pender County was selected to be the inaugural site in the nine month tour of NC. The exhibit will be installed in the meeting room of the library in Burgaw from June 23 to August 4 complemented by special programs and local exhibits.

Journey stories – tales of how we and our ancestors came to America – are a central element of our personal heritage. From Native Americans to new American citizens and regardless of our ethnic or racial background, everyone has a story to tell. *Journey Stories* will examine the intersection between modes of travel and Americans' desire to feel free to move. The story is diverse and focused on immigration, migration, innovation, and freedom. It is accounts of immigrants coming in search of promise in a new country; stories of individuals and families relocating in search of fortune, their own homestead, or employment; the harrowing journeys of Africans and Native Americans forced to move; and, of course, fun and frolic on the open road.

The Pender County Historical Society and the Burgaw Depot Historic Preservation Foundation were partners in the application. The Friends of the Pender County Library in Burgaw are major backers of the library's efforts. The partners are contributing a mix of volunteers, funding, local exhibits and sponsoring complementary activities in association with the six week exhibit. Local exhibits about immigration to this place now called Pender County will also be designed and installed in the library and partnering location.

Collaborating organizations, like the Penderlea Homestead Museum, will also be identified and promoted. One of the highlights will be the production of a play in the historic Burgaw Depot of Pender journey stories being written by county native playwright. Williams is a Tony Award nominated author and a member of the NC Literary Hall of Fame. We are honored by Mr. William's generous gift to the people of Pender County.