

## Director's Report



**DATE:** October 16, 2023

### **Administrative**

On July 29, U.S. District Judge Timothy L. Brooks issued a preliminary injunction against enforcement of two provisions of Arkansas Act 372 of 2023. As a result of the decision, enforcement of Section 1 (5-27-212. Furnishing a harmful item to a minor) and Section 5 (13-2-106. Establishment of guidelines for selection, relocation, and retention of materials.) of the Act was put on hold pending the outcome of a lawsuit challenging their constitutionality. This means we will make no changes to our current challenged material policy until this case is decided.

Much of this quarter has been devoted to research for two new policies which will be introduced to the board. When a small organization handles its own HR situations, there is always room for improvement with policies and procedures.

We welcomed two new staff members to the Region in this quarter. First, Kristen Finch, was hired as the new Collection Developer/Cataloger at the Regional Headquarters. Ms. Finch, comes to us from Mississippi, where she has worked in both public and academic libraries. Luckily for us, she moved to Monticello to be close to family and we had a position. We also have a new Library Assistant in Dumas. Ms. Yvonne Berry has joined that Branch after retiring from the Department of Human Services.

### **Technology & Branch Updates**

We are starting to upgrade computers in some of the branches. Most of our branches have public computers that are at least 10 years old. We are looking at funding from different sources to help with the cost. We have 6 computers ready for installation in Dumas and Hermitage. We have installed security cameras at the Warren Branch and which have helped discourage vandalism. We are still waiting on some work to begin in Eudora with handicapped parking.

We received 19,200 eclipse glasses from the Arkansas State Library for the two upcoming Solar events. The first is a partial solar eclipse on October 14 and the second is a full solar eclipse on April 8, 2024. Half of the glasses have been distributed to the branch libraries and the second half will go next year sometime in March.

We've had a couple of issues with our new Colibri Book Covering machine that we purchased. The customer service department with this company has been excellent. We've had two video calls with them so they could see how we were handling the machine and what material we were using. They decided to send us a branch new machine and new supplies.

### **Community Engagement & Outreach**

The Monticello Branch hosted the Arkansas Center for the Book event *If All of Arkansas Read the Same Book* author event. The 2023 selection was the "Beasts of Prey" series by Arkansas writer, Ayana Gray. *If All of Arkansas Read the Same Book* is an annual, statewide reading program designed to encourage the enjoyment of reading and promote book discussion in libraries of all types across Arkansas. We were disappointed that we did not have the attendance we were expecting but what was lacked in numbers was made up by the enthusiasm of the author and attendees. Special thanks to the Monticello and Headquarters staff who assisted with the decorations.

I have been running the Little Free Library route and discovered we will need to replace one of the little libraries that was made by the Gravette school. I do not think it can be repair enough to keep moisture and insects away from the material. We will also be moving the little

library at Rye to a different location because of lack of use. No location has been selected as of this time.

I was contacted by the Arkansas Library Association president, Carol Coffey, and ask to take over the position of Awards Chair for the upcoming conference in Hot Springs. I will be emceeding the Awards ceremony as well as presenting a presentation. We have 3 managers and 1 assistant that will be attending the Arkansas Library Association Conference October 13 – 15.

### **Meetings & Workshops Attended**

Arkansas Center for the Book Author Event – Monticello, AR, August 5

Drew County Quorum Court – Monticello, AR , Sept. 11

Association for Rural & Small Libraries Conference – Wichita, Ks Sept 20 - 23

Arkansas Library Association Conference Committee Meetings, bi-monthly

Arkansas Library Association Conference – Hot Springs, AR, Oct. 13 - 15