



DATE: April 18, 2022

Administrative

In February, Arkansas State Librarian, Jennifer Chilcoat, notified public libraries concerning another potential source of funds that would allow for construction and renovation of community buildings. The construction project would ensure that the participating libraries have a minimum of two separate spaces that will allow private and secure virtual meetings for activities like mental health counseling, job interviews, tutoring, telehealth visits, training, and others. The Arkansas State Library worked with their partners at the UAMS Institute for Digital Health and Innovation (IDHI) to select ten libraries from the 23 that applied. Factors influencing their selection included, but were not limited to, geographical dispersal, libraries' hours of operation, existing telehealth-capable facilities in the area, population served, feasibility of adding or equipping rooms, statewide rankings in statistics categories collected by the Arkansas Department of Health, and even congressional districts. Both the Star City and Warren Branch applied for the selection. The committee selected the Warren Branch to be a part of the project. This is not a guarantee the project will be funded. I submitted our budget for the project on April 11. The Arkansas State Library will apply for the funds by May 1.

We received our first Freedom of Information request in February. The information requested was available after confirming Arkansas residency with the help of Attorney, Cliff Gibson. The same individual made a second request in March. I provided the information requested.

We are still waiting for information concerning the second round of ARPA funds that we applied for in March. I have included the application and budget information in the board packet. If funded, the grant will replace HVAC systems, install touchless toilets, hand dryers, automatic doors, and a permanent StoryWalk.

Administrative duties this quarter have included completing the annual Library Survey required by the Arkansas State Library to qualify for State Aid, filing the IRS 990 e postcard on behalf of the six Friends of the Library groups and working with Regional Cataloger, Madison Hough, with her Practicum for a Master of Library Science degree. Madison's practicum goals included revising our procedure manual and weeding branch collections.

In February, the Central Kansas Library System contacted me concerning conducting a two-day workshop for new library directors in the state of Kansas. Of course, I said yes, it is such an honor.

I filed our 3rd quarter progress report for our ARPA funds. Once our mobile Employment and Career training course is held in May, this grant will be complete.

Technology & Branch Updates

I am excited to report on the Branch renovation projects that have begun. Dermott and Dumas both have received new roofs. A grant from the Bob White Foundation funded the cost of the Dermott Branch roof. The contractor will be returning to Dermott to remove two large windows replace them with a solid wall. The ceiling in the Dumas Branch is next on the list for repair. The Lake Village Library also received a Bob White grant for renovation projects. The work included, replacing the columns on the front of the library, outside lighting repaired, and the outside metal lettering received a facelift. Lake Village, McGehee, Dumas, Eudora Branch

Libraries received new outside book returns purchased through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) grant. A new thru-the-wall book return will be installed at the Dermott Library during the wall construction.

Summer Reading is just around the corner and we are busy working on material for the booklets. Star City Branch has received a mini grant from Simmons Bank to help with their Summer Reading Program.

Branch Manager, Sandy Doss, recently shared information about the \$3000 National Grant for Small and Rural Libraries the library received in partnership with the Bradley County Ministerial Alliance. The grant allows the library to better serve the needs of the homeless groups, get to know their residents better, and help them to continue building a happier and healthier community for families. The Warren Branch has two Elibraries (Community Resource Centers) in Bradley County. One at a laundry mat and one at the Warren Library. These Elibraries provide information such as Drug Rehabilitation, Housing, Food Distribution, Clothing Distribution, Daycare, Churches, GED Classes, etc. Funding for the Elibraries was made possible by a grant from the American Library Association (ALA) through a special initiative (Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries) aimed to help small and rural libraries address issues of concern in our communities.

Clearwater Paper donated \$250 to the Dumas, McGehee and Monticello Branch Libraries to expand their current collection of materials written by and/or about African Americans and their history. The new materials will feature African Americans in STEAM fields and history (non-fiction) as well as works written by or featuring an African American protagonist (fiction).

Community Engagement & Outreach

We have installed our new Free Little Libraries purchased with CARES funding. We replaced the libraries at the Rye and Gould locations and are waiting for approval to established a new Free Library location at Rohwer as part of the Delta Heritage River Trail. This gives us a total of five Free Little Libraries located in remote communities. Five branch libraries received little house book returns in their children section. These are for children to return books they read while they are inside the library for staff to reshelve. We have restarted our Nursing Home and Assisted Living large print rotation schedule. It has been more than two years since we have rotated material to these facilities because of Covid.



Our Employment and Career Training course will be held in May. We have advertised in local papers and with a Facebook Ad. The course will include career assessment, application procedures, resume building, and the interview process. Instructors Cathy Edmonds and Newlyn Birch will conduct a one-day workshop at our six primary branch libraries. This event is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Arkansas State Library.

Meetings & Workshops Attended

- Central Kansas Library System – Zoom meeting
- Association for Rural & Small Libraries Membership Committee – Zoom meeting
- Arkansas State Library –ARPA Round 2 – Zoom meeting
- Arkansas State Library – Center for the Book – Zoom meeting
- Kanopy Town Hall Meeting – Zoom meeting
- Applied Public Library Education (APPLE) Retreat, Rock Springs, KS – April 12 -13