



**DATE:** July 18, 2022

## **Administrative**

Most of you are aware, I have been in and out of the office this quarter with my husband, Jay, who was recently diagnosed with serious health issues. Thank you for your prayers, calls and texts.

The Region was a victim of check fraud this quarter. Four payment checks never made it to their destinations. Four bogus checks were written on our commercial account for over \$20,000. We were notified by Capitol One after they cashed one of the bogus checks. Of course, the bank has reimbursed our funds. We have started paying more bills online to cut down on the number of mailed checks.

We finished using all our ARPA funds and I have filed the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report. Once I file the final reports, this grant will be finished. Our Employment and Career Training courses did not have the attendance we were expecting, in fact we had to cancel 3 of the classes. With leftover ARPA funds from the Employment classes we were able to purchase the CoLibri book covering machine from Italy. It is the fastest and most innovative book covering system in the world. CoLibri allows us protect paperbacks, publications, and hardcovers of any size very fast with no glue, tape, or scissors required.

I have been working the Arkansas State Library in preparation of a statewide virtual union catalog, and resource sharing platform that would allow libraries throughout the state to share their catalogs with other libraries and with library users. This is something that has been in the works for a very long time. I believe it went live June 22 with a soft launch. Our catalog is not part of the platform yet but should be very soon.

## **Technology & Branch Updates**

At the end of 2020 South Arkansas Community College in El Dorado applied for a grant through the Department of Education that focused on enhanced delivery and service to online students. They were wanting to provide access to college courses for rural students and needed locations that would be able to assist students. We agreed to partner with SouthArk on this endeavor and they were awarded the grant. The grant enabled SouthArk to provide Wi-Fi access points for all nine Branch Locations allowing for better Wi-Fi coverage. We should have those access points installed very soon.

Summer Reading is in full swing and enrollment is up! Branches are reporting good attendance and lots of fun. We are very fortunate to have great community support for our summer reading programs. The decorations in all the branches have been amazing this year. Our Summer Reading Program booklets have once again been a big hit this summer. We have received so many positive responses to them and they have been shared across the country. Printing costs for the 800 booklets was covered by Union, Commerical and Citizen banks.

There are lots of other programs going on in the branches, from zumba kids, diabetes classes, lego groups, crafts, and so much more.

We are still waiting for our contractor to begin work on the repairs at Dermott and Dumas. I am happy to report that work has begun in Dumas, so hopefully Dermott will not be

far behind. Eudora has new rock for the side parking lot. In May, we had the Monticello/Headquarters building and sidewalks professionally cleaned by South Ark Soft Wash. They did a fantastic job.

We are losing our McGehee Branch Manager, Tori Clark. She has taken a job at Cornerstone School where her children will be attending. Our new McGehee manager, Alyssa Hayes, is training this month. She is originally from Monticello, but lives in McGehee. I believe Alyssa will be a great addition to the team.

We are preparing for a staff workshop in August.

### **Community Engagement & Outreach**

We have installed our last Free Little Library at the store in the Rohwer community. Madison Hough, Regional cataloger, has expanded her role to Outreach Coordinator. She will be running the Express Route and will also be in charge of our outreach programs that include Nursing Home rotation, Storywalk and the Little Free Libraries.