



## Director's Report

**DATE:** October 19, 2020

### **Administrative**

We have dealt with a few staff members being out under quarantine. The Warren Branch Library was shut down for a week because of a positive COVID test. We continue to take one day at a time and address needs or issues as they arise. I seem to continuously be in zoom meetings and understand zoom fatigue is real. I met with Philip Shackelford, Library Director of the South Arkansas Library College in El Dorado this month regarding a possible partnership. SouthArk has applied for a grant through the Department of Education that will focused on enhanced delivery and service to online students, outreach to regional high schools and pathways for those students to complete college credit with them, particularly to rural students. They are wanting to provide access to college courses for rural students and need locations that would be able to assist students.

### **Technology**

We finally solved our server issues with TLC. It took some doing but I was able to convince TLC, our tech company and the people with Dell to work together and solve the issue. I believe there were some updates that needed implementing and just getting everyone to work together to fix the problem. We've had no more problem with it since the updates.

In July, we were notified that our digital platform Overdrive was waving the fee for their Sora app which is used by schools to access libraries' digital collections. This would allow students in our service area free access to digital material without a library card. This is wonderful news for our young patrons who cannot get a library card because mom or dad will not come to the library to sign them up. Sora will allow students to browse, search and borrow age-appropriate ebooks and audiobooks from their local public library. Sora also provides tools designed for students with reading disabilities, including a dyslexic font setting. I immediately completed the paper work required and sent a letter to all school districts in our service area. Many of the school have completed the necessary paperwork and now we are waiting on Overdrive to finalize the necessary steps.

### **Branch Updates**

Branches are continuing to serve the communities with curbside service and limited open hours. Make and take crafts bags seem to be very popular with patrons. We have not experienced any issues other than some slow WIFI service. Our five primary branches have reopened the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays each month. Because of COVID, we chose not to hold our semi-annual workshop. Instead, I registered all managers for the Association for Rural & Small Libraries virtual conference held the last week of September. There were 3 hours of sessions every day, so the managers could work their schedules around what sessions they wished to attend. The sessions were also recorded so they can still access them until December 31<sup>st</sup>. I

have also registered them for the Arkansas Library Association conference held in October. It is also being held virtual.

### **Community Engagement**

I started a weekly video series called “Wahoo Wednesdays” in August. We have covered a variety of subjects that have included: Meals in a Mug, Watercolor notecards, Traveler Databases, 2020 Census, StoryWalk and more. We seem to average around 200 viewers for each episode but hope that will pick up as more people share us. So if you see us on Facebook, please share with your friends. We have changed to a bi-weekly program because of the amount of time it involves. Headquarters staff member Jennifer Knight and I have become fairly good at producing and editing video, particularly Jennifer. We have purchase a stationary background and converted my meeting room into the video presentation room.

Our storywalk is still being enjoyed. We are exchanging a new book each month. It has been most enjoyable to watch from our office windows families reading together. We used wire yard stakes when we first started but learn they were not sturdy enough to withstand the weather. We ordered realtor stakes and they are much better. We present a new story every month.

### **Meetings & Workshops Attended**

- Arkansas State Library Board meeting – Zoom meeting
- Branch Manager Meeting – Zoom meeting
- Arkansas Digital Library Consortium – Zoom meeting
- Arkansas Library Association, Bylaws Committee – Zoom meetings
- Association for Rural & Small Libraries annual conference – via Zoom, September 28 – October 2, 2020.
- Arkansas Library Association Conference – October 14 – 16, 2020