

WILKES \* ASHE \* WATAUGA

## APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

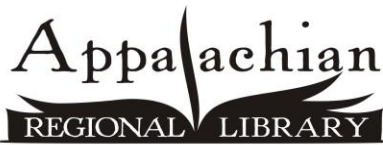
May 2025

### Administration & Personnel

- Ashe: Adult Services Manager begins work May 16
- Watauga: Hiring a Youth Services Manager (FT), temporary Youth Services Assistant (PT)
- Wilkes: All positions are filled.
- Evaluations (2024) and WDPs (FY 2025-26) are due June 30.
- Unemployment claim – claim was dropped before the hearing date.
- Director of Libraries search update: We have had 18 applicants, 10 interviews to date. One candidate withdrew prior to the second scheduled interview and one withdrew prior to the first scheduled interview. The position has been posted and reposted on state, regional, and national job boards, as appropriate. The posting was also on ALA for one month. The search committee met May 6 to discuss second-round, in-person interviews. Five invitations have been sent, two have currently been confirmed.

### Grant Updates

- NCDIT Digital Champion Grant – The full Grant amount of \$402,656 has been received. \$357K of those funds have been spent, and financial reports have been filed. First quarter progress report has been submitted. Dates are being set for laptop distribution to those affected by Hurricane Helene.
- NC Dept. of Commerce Downtown Development Fund Grant: Watauga County has been awarded \$125,000, plus a 5% match by the County for the Watauga County Public Library renovation. This Grant must be spent by February 2028.
- LSTA 2025-26 Grants submitted for each library; award notifications should be received on June 5.
- 2025-26 IMLS Funding, State Aid, and NC Cardinal
  - Cost of NC Cardinal for FY 2024-25: \$1,829,956 (Resource Sharing Cost: \$1,089,190)
  - Revenue for FY 2024-25: LSTA: \$1,345,869 / Member Contributions: \$468,486
  - ARL Usage of Resource Sharing in FY 2023-24: 3,641 unique users borrowed 32,465 items; this is the fifth highest usage in NC Cardinal out of 53 systems
  - Options presented by NC Cardinal and SLNC



WILKES \* ASHE \* WATAUGA

## APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 2025

### Policy

- Meeting Room revision – on the agenda for approval at the Regional Board meeting on May 15.
- Personnel Policy revision – on the agenda for approval at the Regional Board meeting on May 15.
- Circulation Policy revision – on the agenda for approval at the Regional Board meeting on May 15.

### Technology Updates

- New public labs, OPACs, and outreach laptops have been rolled out over the last 2 months. Issues related to Windows 11 and Deep Freeze have been resolved. Once the renovation at Wilkes County is complete, there will be more new PCs and laptops rolled out there.
- We will roll out a new managed wireless system for all buildings in the next few months. We saved money on the analytics component with the new system.
- Our E-Rate application for funding year 2025-2026 has been approved. This means that 90% of our network and broadband costs (roughly \$40,000) will be covered via reimbursement. The preliminary consensus is that the Supreme Court will not overturn the E-Rate funding mechanism.
- Looking ahead, we will replace our server and disaster recovery infrastructure after we complete the wireless system project.