



## APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT November 2025

### Administration

- 2026 Open Enrollment for the State Health Plan is complete. The State Health Plan changed employee rates to be salary-based premiums. The employer rate is being increased from \$674.62 to \$742.04 per person per month. A \$67.42 per person per month increase. The plan included a \$50 per person increase so we will potentially need to adjust some of the budgets for the shortfall.
- 2026 Dental insurance is going to increase to \$46.08 from \$45.50 per month per person. The budget will fully accommodate the increase.
- There was legislation passed in August and not distributed until Sept. 26th that would have increased our Retirement contribution by 2.4% to cover additional shortfall by the State Health Plan but that legislation was reversed for the FY 2025-2026 due to the huge outcry of the Local Governmental agencies effected. This change would have cost ARL over \$40K. We may face this surcharge fee in 2026-2027 or see about getting out of the State Health Plan.

### Policy

The circulation staff of the three libraries worked hard on the revisions to the circulation policy for the regional library. I will present the revised policy to the Governance Committee of the Board at the November meeting for their review. Approval will occur at the January meeting.

The next policy that will be revised will be the Collection Development Policy.

### Technology Updates

- We completed the upgrade of our servers and disaster recovery system. The process went well and there was minimal disruption for staff. We should be in good shape for another 5 years with the new equipment.
- Our newest Evergreen ILS upgrade took place on Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup> after hours. There was no disruption for patrons or staff.
- Our E-Rate Form 470 was filed in early October. We've received a handful of bids for broadband and WAN service and expect more in the coming weeks.

### Strategic Planning

Four companies/individuals who specialize in strategic planning for libraries have been invited to submit proposals to ARL for development of the new 2027-2032 strategic plan. All proposals are due by November 15<sup>th</sup> and will be reviewed by the Director, Finance/HR Officer, and County Librarians. The final company/individual chosen will then be asked to submit a detailed proposal, including all budget requirements for use in preparing the LSTA proposal that is due on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.