

WILKES ** ASHE ** WATAUGA

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT September 2025

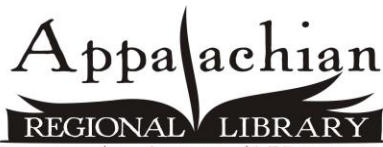
Administration & Personnel

- Ashe
 - Open Positions – Part-time Youth Services Specialist and Full-time Assistant Circulation Manager.
 - Vickie Milam retired September 4th and Jim Guenther filled her position.
 - Mallory Cline was hired as the Temporary Part Time Outreach Assistant.
- Watauga
 - Open Position – Part-time Circulation assistant.
 - Angela Constantino retired September 5th and Jenny Brunner filled her position.
- Wilkes
 - Taylor Hazan was hired as the new Adult Services Manager.
 - Deb Beckel has decided to go part time as the Traphill Branch manager. This leaves an open position as a Part time Librarian in Adult Services.

Grant Updates

- NCDIT Digital Champion Grant
 - The full Grant amount of \$402,656 has been received. \$380.5K of those funds have been spent and financial reports have been filed.
 - 2nd Quarter progress report was submitted.
 - 134 laptops have been distributed throughout the region. We are currently working with local partners to identify additional recipients.
- LSTA 2025-26 Grants
 - Ashe received a LSTA grant for \$37,500 with a required match of \$12,500 for a new outreach vehicle and outreach supplies. The vehicle was purchased in July. Request for LSTA reimbursement has been submitted.
 - Watauga received a LSTA grant for \$44,492 with a required match of \$4,944 for 3 mini conference room pods. Currently reviewing vendor options before making the pod purchase.
- NC Commerce Grant
 - A representative from the NC Department of Commerce, Lisa Rueh, did a site inspection on August 4, 2025.
- 2025-26 IMLS Funding, State Aid, and NC Cardinal
 - The 2025-2026 State Budget is still pending approval.

Policy



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- We will be reviewing the Collection Development and Patron Code of Conduct policies over the next couple of months.

Technology Updates

- We shifted some staff members to different Microsoft 365 plans due to the discontinuation of formerly free tiers.
- Our wireless network changes are now in place to mitigate the issues we recently experienced with torrent activity.
- We have begun filing for E-Rate reimbursements for funding year 2025-2026.
- Our next large-scale circulation system upgrade will take place in November.
- We plan to replace and upgrade our servers and disaster recovery system during the week of September 15th. If all goes well, there will be no noticeable downtime.

Other Updates

- Scheduled to attend the new Director's orientation at the State Library on September 30th and October 1.
- Regional Director, All County Librarians and a number of staff members are scheduled to attend NCLA in Winston-Salem in October.
- 1/2 Day Staff training days have been scheduled at Ashe (October 10th and Watauga on December 18th). We are in the early stages of planning the spring staff training. Additional information will be forthcoming