

Ashe picks Texas librarian to head county's library

BY JESSE CAMPBELL

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A Texas librarian who has family ties in northwest North Carolina has been selected as the newest librarian for the Ashe County Public Library.

Appalachian Regional Library Director Molly Westmoreland told the *Ashe Mountain Times* Wednesday that Suzanne Moore will begin her new role as county librarian on July 16.

Moore is currently serving as the librarian for the Mineola (Texas) Memorial Library, but

has family connections in neighboring Alleghany County.

Westmoreland served as Ashe County Librarian previously before being named interim director for the Appalachian Regional Library System on Dec. 16. She became permanent in the position of regional director on March 15.

Moore holds a master's in library and information sciences from the University of North Texas. She also recently acquired her North Carolina Library certification.

The ARLS board approved

Moore's selection. She was one of four candidates interviewed by a selection committee, which was assembled by Ashe County Library Board Chairman Robert Ferree. The committee included Ashe County Library Board members and Friends of the Library, along with Westmoreland.

Moore's experience made her resume stand out above all others.

"She has three years experience as a library director," said Westmoreland. "We were certainly glad to see that. She also has experience in managing a

library budget, as well as experience in providing programs that are tailored to her community ... she is very responsive to community needs."

After ascending to her new role as regional director, Westmoreland said she has also taken on the responsibilities of maintaining the Ashe County Public Library as well.

"I made sure the work was being done and we were moving forward," said Westmoreland. "But there is a difference between keeping things going and implementing new initiatives."

As regional director, Westmoreland also assists with duties at other facilities in the Appalachian Regional Library system, which includes libraries in Ashe, Watauga, and Wilkes counties.

Ashe County currently serves as headquarters for the regional system.

"Historically, it is always where the director lives," said Westmoreland. "Typically, I will spend three days in Ashe and the other two in Watauga and Wilkes."

Moore was unavailable for comment as of presstime.

CAMP

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In the 1960s, when Taylor began his career in special education, one in 2,000 children was diagnosed with autism, and in March of this year, the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced that 1 in 88 children are being diagnosed with autism. With these numbers, the Taylors said it is important for others to become more aware of and accepting of children with autism.

The summer camp will be located in Deep Gap, and Taylor expects the camp will open in July 2013.

Taylor said they have three main goals for the program: to offer nature-related and outside activities for children with autism and their families; to offer a training opportunity for college students; and to be a model for others to replicate.

Activities will be based in nature as outdoor activities and will be supplemented with music, art and language.

"You can see such a difference in children with autism when they experience nature," Taylor said. "Just give them freedom and shadow them and it's amazing."

KAMPN's LIFE (Life In Family Experience) will allow participating college students to "live-in" with the families.

Taylor said the living units are designed to enable students to

Donation boxes were made by shop classes at Ashe County High School and will be used by KAMPN at locations around town to collection donations for the development of the camp.

HEATHER CANTER/AMT PHOTO



experience and better understand the challenges and rewards of the daily activities of the family.

"I believe the concept is one which has real potential to become a valuable resource in the field of autism, but perhaps more importantly, a living, learning environment for the family unit with autistic children," said Charles Duke, dean of Reich College of Education at Appalachian State University, in a letter of support to KAMPN. "I know that such a resource does not currently exist in this region and

also know firsthand the lack of resources for families with children with special needs.

"KAMPN would seem to offer many opportunities for our students to gain valuable insights and experiences with autistic children. The uniqueness of the program, its focus on the family unit, not just the individual child, is one which we would like to see replicated many times over," Duke said.

The group is seeking donations to help operate the camp. They want to keep the costs down as

low as possible to make it easier for other groups to replicate and offer the idea in other areas throughout the country.

All documents and materials that would help in establishing a program like KAMPN will be distributed.

Taylor said the plan is to have four units available to serve four families per week for the month of July.

Several universities will be assisting with the program, including East Carolina University, Appalachian State University, West

KAMPN Benefit Concert

6 p.m., Saturday, July 14 at Faith Fellowship in Ashe County featuring Wayne and Gina Stewart. Donations will be accepted for KAMPN.

DONATIONS

Tax-deductible donations can be mailed to 1255 Wildcat Ridge, Deep Gap, NC 28618, or call (828) 264-0054. For more information: call (828) 264-0054, visit www.kampn4autism.appstate.edu or email kampn4autism@yahoo.com.

Virginia University, University of St. Francis and Ball State University. Taylor said they may involve other universities as well.

Board members for KAMPN are Taylor, president; Len Hagaman, vice president, and Watauga County Sheriff; Mary Sheryl Horne, secretary, of Appalachian State University; Harold Griffin, treasurer, of East Carolina University; and Kimberly Floyd of West Virginia University. A group of parent advisors are also working with KAMPN.

The first fundraiser for the camp is coming up in July. At 6 p.m., Saturday, July 14, Faith Fellowship in West Jefferson will host a Christian concert by Wayne and Gina Stewart.

Taylor said the Stewarts have a child with autism. Donations will be accepted at the concert and will go to help with the development of KAMPN.

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