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Sullivan Library Becomes Third Largest In Scenic Library District

By James B. Bartle

As reported in the July 29, 2015, edition of the Sullivan Independent News, the Sullivan Library Board approved a merger in July that will make the library part of the Scenic Regional Library effective Oct. 1.

According to Mark Smith, Sullivan Library Director, this will be a positive move for the library.

"I think this is really a good thing for the library and the fact that we will see a new building in the next four to five years and expanded services is great for our patrons," said Smith in an interview last week.

In discussing the future construction of a new building, Smith stated that this does not mean that the library would move from downtown, as Scenic Regional Library, likes to be near Elementary Schools, but Scenic plans to spend $1 million in renovations, expansions and new

Continued on pg. 2A

facilities each year for the next 20 years.

With the merger, the Sullivan library Board will cease to exist. However, it does mean that four residents of Franklin County will be appointed to the Scenic Board and one resident from Crawford County, which could mean that Sullivan would have a true representative on the Scenic Board as the Sullivan City Limits is the only area in Crawford County that is not in the Ozark Regional Library District.

Also, with the merger, the library will now be open to residents from Stanton, Spring Bluff, Strain-Japan and other areas in the Scenic Regional Library Boundaries, as well as open to Ozark Regional members, due to a previous agreement between the two operations.

Scenic Regional Library is promising an expansion in services this fall with hours being extended on Saturday, increased usage of online programs through the Scenic Regional database and much more.

Smith stated to the Independent News, "I can tell you the Sullivan Library Board put a lot of research into this decision to merge with Scenic Regional Library and we've really outgrown our building in the 35 years we've been here. We were so thankful residents approved a tax levy increase in 2014 and that has helped our operations costs, but is still not enough to provide for an expansion of the structure so that it would be large enough to meet demands."

Thus an expansion of the library is believed to be set in the next four to five years, a location has yet to be determined but is believed to remain within walking distance of the Sullivan Elementary School.