



Librarian's Log by Arlisa Harris, Librarian Forrest City Public Library



When my driver's license expired recently, it was finally time to get the REAL ID license. I had put it off when the government extended the deadline several times due to the pandemic.

It was a no brainer for me to go ahead and get the REAL ID since my license was expiring. So, I equipped myself with extra documentation, especially in the proof of residency category. Good thing, since one of my utility bills did not meet muster and I'm glad I did because I didn't want to have to make a return trip.

As I spoke to the worker at the Revenue office, she mentioned that many Hughes residents come to Forrest City to obtain the REAL ID because the revenue office in their city does not furnish them. I pity the poor Hughes resident whose documentation is insufficient, and they have to make another trip!

When the REAL ID was first announced, the proof of legal name change was a headache for some who had issues with differences in what's on their birth certificate versus the legal name they have used. Several folks shared with me that they had to go to court and legally correct the spelling of their names due to various reasons. One example was a woman whose middle name was spelled differently on her identification versus her birth certificate and omitted completely on other official documents.

Another person shared that her birth certificate listed her father's surname, but her mother registered her under the mother's last name when she started school and that was the last name she used until she married.

AR Legal Aid helped the aforementioned persons with their name changes for a fee of \$300 plus dollars. Under certain financial guidelines, Legal Aid will provide this service free of

charge.

The new deadline is May 7, 2025, and you may say to yourself, why think about it now.

Well, let's say you have an emergency and need to fly close to the deadline; you don't have a passport, and you discover there are some discrepancies with your name on your documentation. Why wait until closer to the deadline and possibly have to scramble getting the necessary required documents or have to wait in a crowded revenue office with the rest of the procrastinators.

Scott Hardin, a spokesperson for the Department of Finance and Administration, says that Arkansas doesn't require a REAL ID and that a regular driver's license will still be valid. But if anyone wants to board a domestic flight or enter a federal building will either need a REAL ID driver's license (DL) or Identification Card (ID) or will need to provide a regular identification and additional accepted forms of identification.

A passport is an acceptable form of identification and may be used in lieu of a REAL ID Driver's License or ID to board domestic flights and visit federal facilities. But not everyone has a passport or wants to carry it around 24/7.

To obtain a REAL ID, one must present the following from each category except for proof of residency, which requires two documents. A full list of documents required can be found at <https://ar.gov/realid>. Some of the more interesting acceptable proofs of identity include a fishing license and a prison release document.

As a side note, while the approaching deadline of May 7, 2025, remains in place, TSA has proposed a plan that would delay full enforcement for another two years. Although this could mean travelers won't need a REAL ID until 2027, TSA also states that "travelers without a REAL ID compliant ID or

another form of acceptable ID after the May 7, 2025, deadline could face delays at airport security checkpoints." Air travel is hectic enough as it is so who wants that headache? I certainly don't.

LIBRARY BITS & BYTES

In my last column, I talked about the memorial tree that was dedicated to the veterans of World War I and that the library was selected as the site for St. Francis County. When I turned my column in to Tamara, she told me that there is also a veteran's memorial in Wheatley as well as the one at the Civic Center here in Forrest City.

I visited both of them that same day and they are both nice, although I must admit that I had no idea that there was one here in Forrest City. I have been to the Civic Center many times, and like most people, I use the side entrance, I never used the front entrance which is where the display is located.

The veteran's memorials in Palestine and Wheatley have bench seating and their designs better lend themselves to ceremonial events and programs for veterans and the rest of us.

The Forrest City veteran's memorial is a slab of granite engraved with the names of our honored veterans that currently sits on city property. The library is also a city property with sufficient space to better house the memorial for public viewing and programs like those in Palestine and Wheatley.

Therefore, I propose that that memorial, currently on display at the Civic Center, be moved to the library and become a part of a dedicated veteran's memorial space at the Forrest City Public Library and to be a centerpiece of that space, along with the WWI memorial tree dedicated to our fallen dead. Thoughts?

Until next time, signing off from your Forrest City Public Library. Where we bring the community together, one story at a time.