

How can the WPCC library serve you?

By NANCY WATTS
For The News Herald

Nestled on the top floor of the E. W. and Mary Adair Phifer Learning Resources Center at Western Piedmont Community College sits a focal for learning. The community college's library serves both the 2,781 currently enrolled college students — a 21percent increase over last year — as well as residents of western North Carolina.

How can WPCC's Library serve both the student body as well as the community?

Dean of Learning Resources Mr. Winston Lear said, "The two libraries compliment each other. We use materials that are more technical in nature, toward academics. Collections are available for residents, too. I want them to know that they can use the community college library as well.

"We have added services for the local community."

The collection contains more than 36,000 books. It also has some 418 current periodical subscriptions, something for everyone, that can be read in the library's lounge area. Twelve daily and national newspapers can be accessed by the public, as well as 2,500 videotapes.

The online computers are for students' academic research and reference use. There is no charge for students to use NC LIVE and OmniFilesearch database, which provide full-text format. These resources are available to currently enrolled on-campus and distance learning students, Lear said.

The library possesses the tools for learning, but it is the staff that makes the tools work.

"I am most proud of the staff itself," Lear said. "We have three professional librarians and two support technicians who are very knowledgeable and service oriented."

"Most of our collections are

strong and we have emerging technologies like our on-line data base catalog."

Another point of pride for Lear is having the Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. Library as part of the college's learning resources.

Sen. Sam, who prided himself on being a country lawyer, was perhaps best noted for being the chairman of the Watergate Committee. The Ervin Library and Museum is a replica of his home library. The room was built to the exact specifications and all furnishings, books and other items were moved and placed exactly as they were in his home.

The Library contains all of his books, professional and family memorabilia. A picture of his beloved wife, Miss Margaret, sits on his desk. A gavel given to him by the Eastern Band of the Cherokees, as well as numerous political cartoons and other items collected by Ervin over the years, are on display.

The Library provides a wide range of reference material to scholars and students, relating to constitutional issues. Senator Sam, who lived from 1896 to 1985, was considered to be an expert on constitutional law. The room construct in the college's library looks like it did when Senator Sam wrote his books, *Preserving the Constitution* and *The Whole Truth: The Watergate Conspiracy*.

Another gift would come when, upon the death of his son, Judge Sam Ervin III, "His wife gave over 1,200 volumes of (Senator Sam's) law books to the library. We now have about 7,000 reference works," Lear said.

The reference works cannot be removed from the library, but may be photocopied.

"Some don't realize how extensive the college is in the arts and literature areas," Lear said. "(And) for people interest-

ed in legal type questions, we have probably one of the best legal libraries in the western part of the state."

Library hours are 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday and 7:30am -5:00pm. Friday.

Lear said he likes to know ahead of time to schedule group tours. Individuals can be assisted anytime by one of the library's helpful staff to use the on-line catalogue to locate items. Also, helpful brochures tell how to use the catalogue. I asked what a person should do if they want to support the college library in some way.

"They should call the service librarian who would consider if it would be beneficial," Lear said. "Donations dealing with the history of the college, or memorials or archival material would be most welcome."

Lear said he hopes to increase the collection of books to 40,000 by 2004, not only to serve the needs of the college students, but the residents of the area as well.