

October 13, 2020

Library System Report

Cara Burton, Director

Director Update:

When COVID-19 cases were spiking on the Shore, ESPL closed our doors from March 19th to protect you and other library users, as well as our staff, from exposure to the coronavirus. Staff were available by phone and email and our e-resources were available to use. We never want to have to close our doors again, which is why we established procedures to protect you and our staff from getting COVID-19.

Staff attended training seminars and reviewed CDC guidelines as well as recommendations from professional library associations to develop a work plan for library service. We review these plans on a weekly basis and make changes that reflect local environmental conditions and our observations as to what is working and what is not.

One example of our response is new temporary student study enclosures at the Accomack library to meet the needs of students needing the Internet to complete their homework, while maximizing social distancing practices. When we are in our new library in Parksley, the temporary will

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Garden to Gro kits were given to students in the Northampton Parks and Recreation After School Program.

Partnerships Grow

In September, Youth Services worked with Kamesha Watson, Family Nutrition Program SNAP-Ed Program Assistant with Virginia Cooperative Extension, to obtain materials and supplies for a joint outreach endeavor funded by a Family Nutrition Program SNAP-Ed **Garden to Go** mini-grant. As a result, Eastern Shore Public Library was able to provide the materials for 40 Garden to Go kits as an outreach to the families in the area. Ms. Watson distributed kits to eleven families in Accomack County who requested them. The rest were distributed at the Northampton County Parks and Recreation Back to School Kids Program, where Janice Felker and Cara Burton set up outreach tables and gave out the kits as well as books and other

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Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

If you've been near the New Book section at Accomac recently, you may have noticed the new "Adult New Readers" collection. The books in this collection offer stigma-free reading to promote literacy and learning. The goal is to provide the newly literate, English language learners, or those working to build their reading skills the same types of materials offered to established readers, but at a lower lexile level.



PNC Bank sponsored the ANR Collection and display shelf.

A grant through the PNC Bank Foundation has allowed us to build a collection that includes fiction and nonfiction, graphic novels, Spanish language titles, and biographies. We have begun with 90 books and plan to purchase more physical books and a starter collection of Adult New Reader eBooks in October. The PNC grant also funded the purchase of a new, double-sided mobile display unit with

reconfigurable shelves and an angled back to allow for easier browsing.

As part of the grant requirements, we are beginning to publicize the collection with ES Literacy Council and ES Community College students, tutors, and instructors, and will also promote these new materials in the local media.

Northampton Free Library

Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager

As we continue to safely welcome our patrons back inside the building, our patron use has increased this month tremendously. There were 231 computer users, as well as 28 children's iPad users this month. The NFL meeting room was used 17 times this month by students. We've created a safe and quiet space for students to study and complete their schoolwork, and this also extends their time in the building.

Minimum building maintenance done this month, just a few bulbs replaced. Automatic doors were having issues with closing appropriately, and Clark & Son's are awaiting parts to replace the interior unit completely.

Public Services

Summer Dahlmanns, Circulation Manager

ESPL experienced an increase in library visitors, public computer, volunteer hours and Wi-Fi usage in September. Volunteers are still needed to assist with shelving books. Staff continues to clean books and surfaces to protect everyone five days a week. Circulation staff conduct a monthly meeting to discuss important issues, so that library services are provided effectively and efficiently.

See the table on page 8 for wifi usage.



The new Star Transit bus shelter, funded jointly with the Town of Nassawadox, has public wifi access.



Youth Services

Janice Felker, Youth Services Coordinator

Reading Grows Over the Summer



Distributing Garden to Go kits.



To promote and celebrate September as Library Card Sign-Up Month, Janice Felker, Barbii Rogers, and Charle Ricci worked together to refine and improve the system for providing eResource-only library cards to students in both counties. Felker communicated the improved option to school systems through emails to media specialists and other educators. In the month of September, over 120 students were able to get these new student library cards without leaving home.

In early September, Youth Services also wrapped up the virtual online summer reading challenges for *Imagine Your Story – Summer Reading 2020* including the distribution of final prizes and participation certificates (see outcome data below).



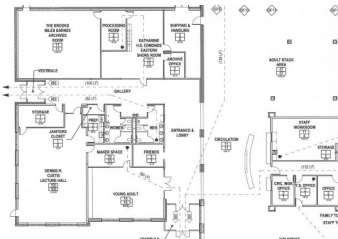
Plastic sheeting helps social distance at children's iPad stations.



Partnership, from Page 1.

information from both the library and the Northampton County Extension Agency. Representatives from the 2020 Census were also there to help families learn more about the census. The participating families were very appreciative.

System Capacity



ESPL Continues to See Additional Funding

ESPL continues to seek additional funding to equip the library with resources for planned initiatives and for the unplanned expenses due to the pandemic. Most grants have limited parameters as to how and when the funds can be expended, which is often the deciding factor on the grant project.

FEMA – Burton has had two recent phone meetings with the assigned FEMA representative. The ESPL request for reimbursement for emergency expenses related to COVID-19 is on track. It is estimated around \$5,300 will be approved. This will reimburse the library supply budgets, mainly for PPE, cleaners, and cleaning. Funds are sought for the Accomac, Chincoteague and Nassawadox locations.

IMLS CARES – The Institute of Museum and Library Services is distributing its CARES funding in two ways: to state libraries for distribution and as direct grants. ESPL applied for a \$200,000 grant to support an outreach librarian, student intern, and equipment, but was not awarded the grant. IMLS received 1,701 applications requesting \$409,251,399 and was able to award **68** projects totaling **\$13,800,000**. Please see the [IMLS news release](#) announcing the funded projects.

ESPL was, however, awarded a \$50,623 IMLS CARES grant from the Library of Virginia. The funds will be spent on an RFID inventory management system which will allow for self-checkout of materials. This will assist with social-distancing and reducing contact surfaces to clean in the future Parksley location. The project will be implemented in phases, with the first phase being tagging books with the Eastern Shore Room Collection as a priority.

Burton has also asked Accomack and Northampton Counties for CARES funds.

USDA Rural Development – Burton has begun the application process that would pay for 55% of the security system at Parksley.

NEH PAG – If time allows, Burton plans to re-apply for consulting support for the archives that will assist with the integration and move of collections.



Census & youth services outreach in Northampton.



Burton escorted Census Bureau staff to Tangier to install portable wifi device.

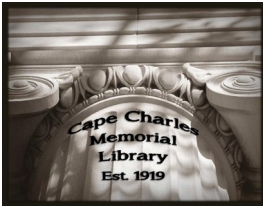


Outdoor wifi in the parking lots.



Testing signal range of portable wifi device outside Exmore.

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Cape Charles Memorial Library

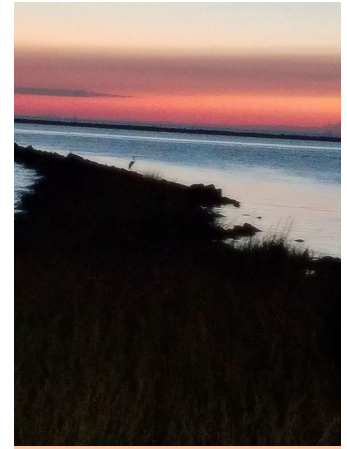
Ann Rutledge Library Manager

The CCML remained closed this month but we will reopen in October. Curbside service continues and our circulation has increased.

This month we collaborated with Kiptopeke State Park to present a Full Moon Hike on Cape Charles Beach. Participants met at the LOVE sign at 7:00 and Ranger Stan lead the group, using social distancing of course! Next month we will be offering two more outdoor programs with Ranger Stan.

The Friends of the Library will be offering three Zoom and Learn programs this Fall and the first one will be on October 10 at 12:00 noon and will be presented by Julie Warmer, an RN from Riverside Shore Hospital.

On September 25, National Comic Book Day, we handed out give away bags for kids with free comic books and other goodies.



A perfect night for a Full Moon Hike at Kiptopeke



Congresswoman Elaine Luria toured the Parksley Construction site on September 3 to see how the National Endowment for the Humanities' Challenge Grant funded project is going. This provided a chance for Ricci and Felker to tour the site for the first time to help in planning shelving layout.



System Capacity, continued from page 5

Virginia Humanities – Two Letters of Intent have been submitted to VH. One is for the whole ESVA Museum Network to secure a consultant to begin planning for the US250, which the NEH is recognizing with a “More Perfect Union” initiative. The second is for a planning grant for a website for the Heritage Center.

ALA Census Equity Grant – The two portable wifi devices are in service: one on Tangier and one for outreach events. Opportunities are sought to use the portable device at Census outreach events. The device was tested at an outdoor funeral and it proved to carry the signal which would allow for Zoom viewing of the service from the car, which can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

PLA/Microsoft Internet Capacity Grant – The outdoor wifi grant is implemented with equipment installed and operational at Accomac and Nassawadox libraries.

NEH Grant's Recommendations Improve Access

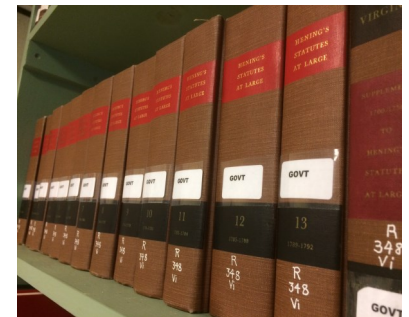
For years our collection has been arranged by Dewey Decimal system, which can be difficult to navigate for those new to our resources. The size of our collection can also be overwhelming to new researchers. Without staff assistance, sometimes extensive catalog searches are required to locate materials. Browsing is time-consuming and can be very frustrating.

In her final 2019 report for the **National Endowment for the Humanities' Preservation Assessment Grant** (PAG) grant, Lyrasis consultant Leigh Grinsted recommended that the items that are most often used and most valuable to researchers be reorganized by subject. Not only could they be easily browsed, but also quickly located by patrons and staff alike. I have been tackling this project while working from home in recent months, and all of the appropriate materials have been categorized by shelf location (Census, Vital, Probate, etc.) in our new online catalog, ShoreCat.

This became particularly useful and timely during the recent pandemic.

After being unable to offer in-person research opportunities to patrons for the first several months of the pandemic, the Eastern Shore Room opened for advance appointments in September. However, because the room does not allow for proper social distancing, staff is still not onsite to offer assistance. The items have not yet been physically rearranged as we are moving soon, and it was more practical to assign the designation in the catalog and with a spine label now, and then arrange appropriately in the new space.

Since staff will not be onsite to assist, when patrons make appointments I do a reference interview about their research goals for the visit so that I can prepare them to make good use of their time in the room. Our first patron was specifically trying to identify the English origins of an early settler to the area, and wanted to consult various resources dealing with immigration and records from the 1600's. By having the new shelf locations already in ShoreCat, I was able to quickly pull a report based on the "Immigration and Early Colonial Records" shelf designation, export it to a .pdf, and email it to the patron the night before. He could check that list for the sources he wanted to consult and then easily locate them during his visit.



Browsing Now Easier in the Eastern Shore Room.



Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager

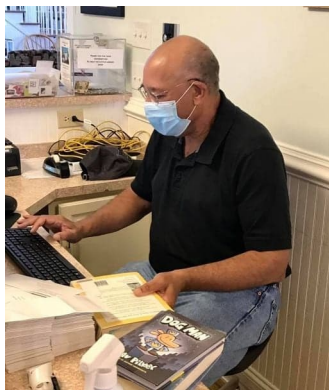
Circulation, patron counts, copy/FAX services and computer usage continue to be steady here at CIL! Also, we are experiencing patrons who are returning to update and/or renew their cards. They are expressing the need to reconnect to the library resources and are very thankful we are open. CIL is providing patrons with much needed information on all the ways to make use of our library.

During the month of September, which was National Library Card Sign-Up Month, we had a total of 20 new patrons added!

Requests for materials by patrons continues to be steady, as well as the use of the ShoreCat Card Catalog.

CIL continues to have an extended visitor season, as the fall weather is cooperating. Many are “repeat” visitors!

CIL welcomed Paul Miller to the CIL Board. Paul is a great asset to the library, both as a volunteer and Board member. The picture below is of Paul hard at work.



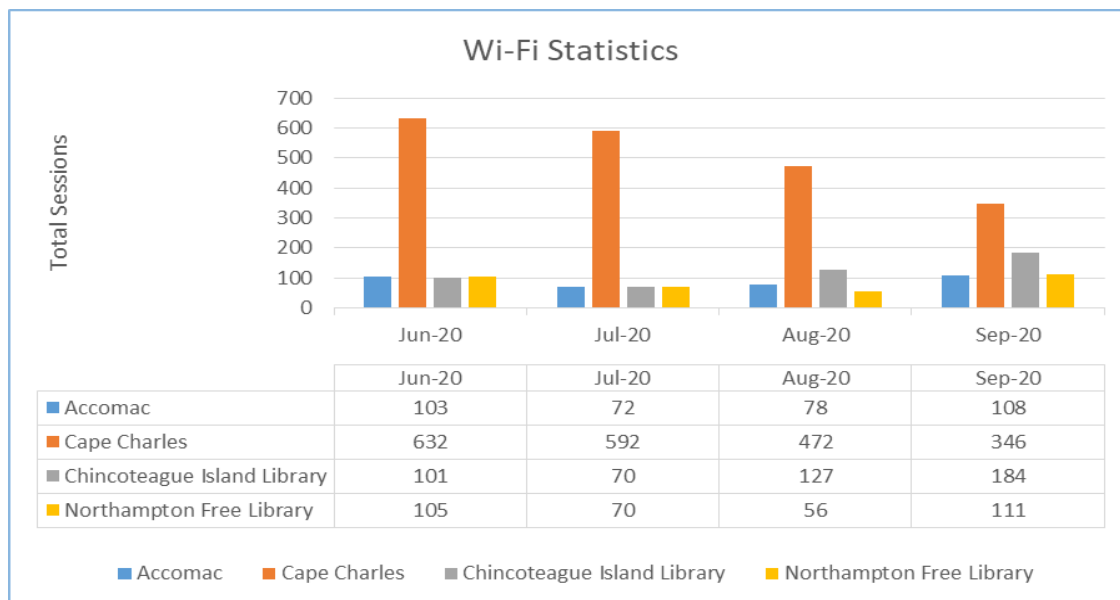
**New CIL Board member
Paul Miller.**

One of the owners of Pico Taqueria, Kate Moot, contacted CIL’s Board President, Linda Ryan, with the great news that they have chosen to donate the proceeds of this weekend’s receipts to CIL! This will take place starting October 9th. They will be open for business until their inventory is gone, which is usually around noon this Sunday, October 11th. They choose an organization to donate to each year at the end of the season. CIL is so thankful to Pico Taqueria!

The Board formed a committee that has created a Homework Club which is for students in Grades 3-5. The intent is to offer a structured setting and volunteers who will be available to assist with assignments. There will be 2 sessions per week and each session will have two groups. Students will be accompanied by a parent or an adult over the age of 18. Please see the brochure below for more specific information.

The CIL Board has been busy with preparing for our annual fundraising drive. Donations are beginning to arrive. A special thanks goes out to Iuliia Nahirna for helping with the set up and design of our newsletter. A huge thank you to all our board members and volunteers who helped to label, stamp and mail over 3,000 newsletters.





The table above illustrates the public Wi-Fi statistics for the last four months. *Table by Summer Dahlmanns*

Director's Update, continued from page 1



Make-shift Student Study Cubicles made from shower curtain liners.

become permanent, as that facility will have several enclosed study rooms.

I am very proud of you, our valued patrons, and my staff in the hard work you have all devoted to helping us maintain our COVID-19 safety plan. I know it is not easy. It is frustrating. We are all tired of this pandemic. I am, however, confident that our procedures are working.

To date, none of my staff have been ill. If any of my staff do become ill with COVID-19, I will have to close the library while their co-workers quarantine. To avoid this, we ask that

you continue to wear your mask covering your nose and mouth when you visit and that you limit your time in the library. We ask for your understanding when we cannot come to the computer and help you. We want you to know that we care about your health as well, and this is why staff spend an hour each morning cleaning all surfaces and continue to clean throughout each day.

Thank you for your patience and understanding with our staff and these procedures. I ask for your continued support and diligence.

I hope this finds you and your family well. As COVID-19 continues to play a large part in our everyday lives, I know we are all looking forward to better, more normal times.

Sincerely,

Cara Burton, Library System Director

This was distributed to all ESPL patrons using the email on their library account on October 7, 2020. If you did not receive it, I ask that you inform staff so that they can update your account to ensure you receive important patron messages.