

December 8, 2020

# Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

## Director Update:

ESPL has experienced many changes during the pandemic, but the most unexpected has been the impact on the Accomac facility. The building's age and weaknesses have been highlighted with pandemic changes to activity.

Shortly after the libraries closed to visitors, staff noticed mice. Lots of mice! In fact, on one day, the Library Director caught seven mice. Apparently, because the public was not coming into the building and only a skeleton crew of staff were on hand, the mice thought they had the run of the office. This highlights the cracks and holes in the facility due to ill-fitting doors and wall cracks. If mice are getting in, then heat is getting out in the winter and cool air in the summer, resulting in higher energy costs. Mice also damage archival materials and carry disease.

After some months, the Accomac library also experienced failed water safety tests. The library has well water. After numerous tests and meeting with the Virginia Department of Health staff for an assessment, it was determined that the low usage of water was likely the cause. Rather than regular high flows of water through pipes, water was more stagnant and

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## Youth Services Librarian Retires

2020 has been a year of few celebrations, but we have one to announce. Janice Felker, our beloved Youth Services Librarian, is retiring December 31. While we are sad she is leaving our employment, we are very happy she was able to dedicate four years to ESPL. She packed a lot of effort and accomplishments into those years, too!

Janice created a system-wide Youth Services program, bringing professionalism and a love of youth literacy to the position. She coordinated many programs enjoyed by hundreds of children. She nurtured re-

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# Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

## Final phases of Shelving and Collection Layout Planning

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, library staff met with Paula Altman of MELOS, Inc. and library director Burton to review and finalize the shelving layout plan for the new library in Parkside. Through a careful inventory of existing shelving and a detailed analysis of space needs for each sub-collection of library materials, staff determined which shelving could be reused in the new facility and where each unit will be placed.

Once the shelving layout was finalized, Ricci, Felker, and Childers were then able to examine current sub-collection sizes and conduct an analysis to determine how to best locate each portion of the materials collection. Decisions were based not only on shelf space needed per collection, but also on logical placement for wayfinding, and for patron convenience and a positive browsing experience. For example, the

large print books will be located just around the corner from the circulation desk to allow for increased ease of access for our large print readers.

In the children's and adult collection areas, shelving units were aligned in such a way to optimize line-of-sight visibility for both staff and patrons throughout the areas whenever possible.

Additionally, as shelving units were placed, staff

utilized as many low-height units as possible to retain an open feel and unobstructed views. By balancing aesthetics with the need to make the best use of the available space and shelving for the collections, Felker, Ricci, and Childers

chipped away at the layout until it was complete.

Ricci is now determining which sub-collections will need additional weeding to fit comfortably onto their new shelves. Over the last several years, all portions of the materials collection have been examined and items that are out of date, irrelevant, or in poor condition have been withdrawn and, in some cases, updated or replaced. This final phase of weeding will be a fine-tuning with an eye to detailed shelf space calculations. It is a very exciting time indeed as we draw close to the actual move date.



# Youth Services

Janice Felker, Youth Services Coordinator

In November, the Youth Services Librarian, Janice Felker continued to provide *Take Away* kits for families to pick up at the Accomac and Nassawadox libraries, including a kit featuring the *How to Make a Mermaid* book and one featuring the book *Finding Dory* along with a read-along CD. Felker also continued the collaboration with the Eastern Shore Land Trust to provide their printed activity sheets to young patrons for fun at-home learning about nature on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Also in November, Felker registered the library to participate in the American Society of Civil Engineers Dream, Build, Create program which offered patrons

Eastern Shore Public Library Youth Services  
Published by Janice Felker · 1d ·

Yay! We have more Take Away kits available at the libraries in Accomac and Nassawadox. Each includes a "Finding Dory" paperback book with a read-along CD, as well as some fun coloring pages and crayons.



Eastern Shore Public Library Youth Services  
Published by Janice Felker · November 9 at 2:16 PM ·

Take Away Bags! We have a new Take Away bag available to grab at the public library in Accomac or Nassawadox. It includes a pencil for drawing and a free copy of "How to Draw a Mermaid and other Cute Creatures" by Lulu Mayo. Supplies are limited!



a free film screening of the award-winning documentary *Dream Big: Engineering Our World* on November 10, 14, 17, and 24. In addition to the film, ASCE organized several virtual panels in November where patrons could join live conversations with their Dream Teams of young, diverse engineers. Dream Teams included Cities of the Future, Women in Engineering, Black Engineers, and even a Spanish-language Dream Team. The program was promoted on social media.

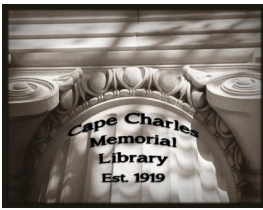
Throughout the month, the Youth Services Facebook page was used to promote Family Literacy Month, Children's Book Week, and the annual Children's and Teen Choice Book Awards. Youth Services also helped the staff decorate the library Christmas tree on display in Onancock by creating ornaments that spelled out "read" in various languages and some that pictured well-known children's Christmas books.

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lationships with families, schools, and other nonprofits. Her input in the design of the future Children's and Young Adult areas in the new regional library have been valuable as well as her creation of the Youth Garden at the Northampton Free Library. While she was with us a short time, her work with us will have lasting impact for years.

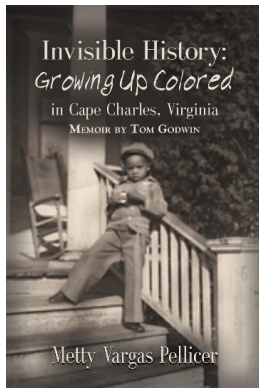
The staff and board congratulate Janice on her retirement. We wish Janice the best!





# Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager



For the past two years, interested readers have participated in a Town-Wide Read sponsored by the Cape Charles Memorial Library during the months of January and February. Readers up and down the Shore were invited to submit the names of books that they feel would be suitable for a read in January 2021. A vote was taken and there was a tie, so two books were chosen: *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, and *Invisible History: Growing up Colored in Cape Charles* by Tom Godwin as told to Metty Vargas Pellicer.

This past month the Friends of the Library offered a Zoom program entitled *Be Safe This Fall! Balance and Yoga*. This was the second in their Zoom and Learn series.

One of our favorite programs the Library presents is Storytime. As we have been unable to present our regular weekly Storytime due to Covid-19, Ann was thrilled to be invited by Cape Charles Christian School to do a special outdoor program. Although the wind was fierce we had a good time!



## Northampton Free Library

Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager



During the month of November, NFL had some building maintenance done and a few projects started. Clark & Sons fixed the automatic doors this month, by replacing the interior unit.

Herbert Senns will remove the cone-shaped hanging lights in the public computer area, as well as the electrical outlet located behind the building. We are in the process of adding an outdoor flood light near the bus shelter.

Currently we are working on a landscaping project, which includes weeding, dead Azaleas removal, sidewalk edging, rock bed treatment, and tree trimming. We are also looking to replace the dead Azaleas next year during the spring.

Also, we have a tree that hangs over our neighbor's home that we are in the process of removing. The tree was scheduled to be removed this week, but it has been a delay and should be removed no later than next week.



# Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager



CIL is doing well, all things considered! Our Patron count for each day continues to be steady with an average of 25. Some days see more than 30 Patrons. Computer Usage/Copy/FAX has slowed a bit, however, is steady as the Winter/Holiday season is getting under way.

Since CIL has opened on Saturdays 10AM to 2PM, beginning November 21<sup>st</sup>, we have experienced a great response from our community! Although it has been only 2 Saturdays, CIL had a Patron count of 21 with 15 in the first 2 hours open! The 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday was a total of 20.

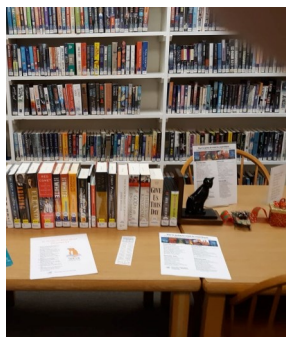


CIL will be decorating the library for the Christmas season outside, as well as our window displays on Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Some of the inside is already done along with books/materials displays. See below for pictures.

The CIL has added new Tote Bags to our Gift Shop. They are available for \$20.00 each and come with Red or Blue trim and handles on a muslin material. They have a nice picture of CIL on the front. CIL also has Embroidered Christmas Ornaments for sale for \$5.00 each. A local artist and former Patron, Sandy Tabor, has handmade these ornaments and has donated them to the CIL. Sandy also sends us handmade embroidered bookmarks during the year. CIL is very thankful for her and her generosity! Please see pictures below.



The CIL Board meeting will be on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. One of the items to be discussed will be the new yearly Budget. Also, after the first of the new year, they will be finalizing their plans to record the Virtual Volunteer Reading Programs for Pre-Schoolers.



From the staff, volunteers, and the Board of Chincoteague Island Library: We would like to wish each of you a safe and joyful Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year!

# Heritage Hub

## Local History Services

Stacia Childers, LH Specialist

This year marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's suffrage and I was pleased to find a rare item in our archival collections to highlight this milestone on social media. Facebook provides a great platform to tell brief stories that entertain and inform, and let the public know of the valuable holdings in our archives. (If you're on Facebook, please "like" the Eastern Shore Room at Eastern Shore Public Library page and share our posts!)

The story and photo below were posted on election day.

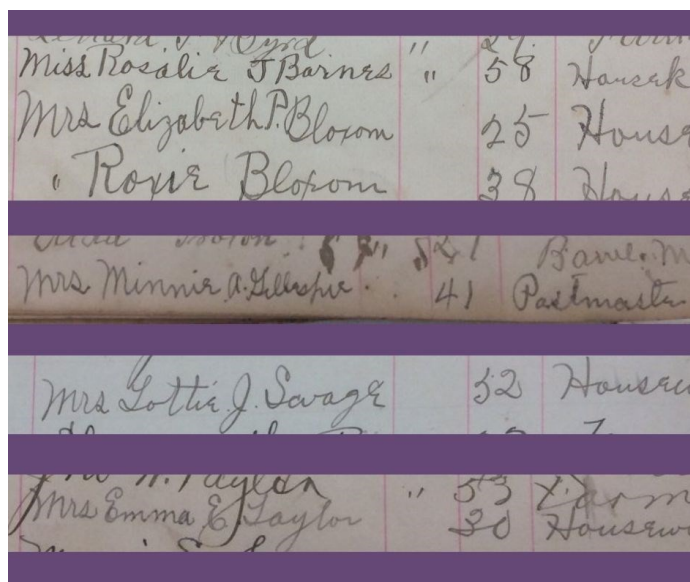
In September 1920, with the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment earlier in the year, a notice was placed in the Peninsula Enterprise newspaper that any woman who so desired – and who could pay the \$1.50 poll tax – could register to vote. In Mappsville Precinct of Accomack County, six women answered the call.

Mrs. Minnie Gillespie was the postmaster at Mappsville and the only woman with a profession other than "housewife" or "housekeeper" listed in the register.

Lottie J. Savage was born in New York of English parents. Given that background it is perhaps not surprising that the mother of five would appear in the register.

Just a few houses away from Lottie lived Roxie Bloxom, wife of Brantley and first cousin to Minnie Gillespie.

Elizabeth P. Bloxom also lived in town, as the wife of John M. Bloxom who owned a store there for many years.





Miss Rosalie J. Barnes	"	58	House
Mrs Elizabeth P. Bloxom	"	25	House
Roxie Bloxom	"	38	House
Mrs Minnie A. Gillespie	"	41	Postmaster
Mrs Lottie J. Savage	"	52	House
Mrs Emma E. Taylor	"	30	House

Miss Rosalie J. Barnes never married and likely lived in the house left to her by her father John P. Barnes who had just passed away two years earlier.

Emma E. Taylor, 30 years old, was not yet a mother. Her husband Virgil was a farmer. She also lived just outside of town on the Seaside Road, and judging by their proximity on the 1920 U.S. Census, may have been close neighbors.

In that election, Accomack County went overwhelmingly for the Democratic ticket of Cox/Roosevelt with 2,026 votes. Harding/

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Our New Mailing Address:  
**Eastern Shore Public Library**  
**PO Box 25**  
**Parksley, VA 23421**

## Staff Changes:

**Jessica Van Dessel** has resigned, after 15 years of service to ESPL, to focus on the Van Dessel farming business. Jessica most recently has been our courier and a public service information specialist. We will miss Jessica at work, but are happy her family farm is thriving.

### **Welcome aboard!**

**Tiffany Flores** will be our new Youth Services Librarian, effective December 14, 2020. She will be responsible for youth services at the Accomac and Nassawadox locations.

**Jessica Guzman** recently joined us as a library page. She assists staff with shelving, pulling holds, and with sanitizing during the pandemic.

*Suffrage, continued from page 6*

Coolidge got just 409. But even Eugene Debs earned 1 vote.

In the 1920 U. S. Census, 18,479 people over the age of 21 resided in Accomack County. All of them, according to the Constitution, able to cast a ballot in that election. But only 13% of them had their votes counted that year.

In Mappsville Precinct, at least 6 of them were women.

**Information obtained from: “*List of White Voters, Registered at Mappsville Precinct in Metompkin Magisterial District, Accomac County Virginia.*” Original held at Eastern Shore Public Library.**

For more information on Virginia women in the 1920 election: <https://uncommonwealth.virginiamemory.com/blog/2020/11/02/a-day-of-triumph-and-dignity-virginia-women-vote-in-1920/>

Vote by county here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1920\\_United\\_States\\_presidential\\_election\\_in\\_Virginia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1920_United_States_presidential_election_in_Virginia)



growing bacteria. In the new regional library in Parksley, the water source will be treated water from the town's supply. ESPL will not have the cost of testing water regularly and will not have to buy bottled water for drinking.



Black silt was in the bathroom water due to lack of use and old pipes.

After Thanksgiving holiday, staff returned to work to find black water in the public bathrooms... though, oddly, not in the staff bathroom. The

plumber was fairly confident it is due to the old pipes and the low water flow with lack of use. During the pandemic, visitors are not in the library long enough to need to use the bathrooms. After multiple flushes, the water cleared. Now a new morning routine for staff is to repeatedly flush the toilets. This tedious task will be eliminated with all the new pipes in the new library.

We thank the community for understanding the challenges of working in an old building during the pandemic. Our procedures and responses would have been different in the new regional library! Hopefully, by the time we move into the new building in Parksley, this pandemic will be behind us and we can open with normal hours and services.



## Public Services

Summer Dahlmanns, Circulation Manager

One of the ongoing projects this month was updating the computer inventory at the Eastern Shore Public Library and Northampton Free Library. This task is important so that outdated unsupported technology can be replaced when the budget allows. Many of the computers at the Northampton Free Library contain the Windows 7 operating system, which is no longer supported with Microsoft updates. ESPL is currently seeking funding to replace these outdated computers.

K-12 students are utilizing the public Wi-Fi to attend school virtually a couple days a week. This technology makes it possible for students to attend school virtually who do not have access to Internet services at home. These students are able to bring their laptop and sit within the designated cubicles at the Eastern Shore Public Library in Accomac for an extended time period when the library is open. Staff continues to ask students and patrons to wear a mask while visiting the library.



***Happy Holidays!***

*From the Staff of the Eastern Shore Public Library*

*Thank you, Volunteers!*