

February 9, 2021

# Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

## Director Update:

### Long Term Fallout of Pandemic: Libraries Can Help Heal

We can't wait for this coronavirus pandemic to be behind us! We know there will be after-effects for years to come. The economic fallout is obvious. The long-term health effects are unknown. Children are growing up not seeing faces and having inconsistent classroom experiences. As in past crises, public libraries are in a unique position to help the community recover from this disaster.

Post-pandemic Health: We are already hearing that COVID-19 survivors are having long-term health issues such as loss of taste, tiredness, and "foggy" thinking. What about the children, our most vulnerable population? "In 2009, Finch and Crimmins published a study examining epidemiological data on individuals born in 1919, who were newborns or second- or third- trimester fetuses during the height of the pandemic. The data revealed that these individuals had approximately 25% more heart disease after age 60, as well as increased

*Continued on page 7*

## "Colored Voters" Register:

### A Valuable Resource Worth Saving

The Eastern Shore of Virginia regional public library and Heritage Center is now under construction in Parksley, to be completed this spring. The state-of-the-art Heritage Center aims to bring Eastern Shore stories to light through its extensive reading room collections, microfilm and especially valuable primary source documents in the archives. This is the story of one item in the collections, a voting register.

After a year of debate, Virginia



*Continued on page 6*

# Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

## Book Donations Update

While the bulk of the materials added to each of the four Shore libraries are purchased using the monies allocated from the operating budgets, there is a valuable supplement to these materials that comes from the wider Shore community: Donations! These particular donations are not monetary in nature, but are instead physical items: books, sound recordings and video recordings.

Donations are dropped off at the library by a variety of individuals, some are frequent library customers and some have never used the library before, but all are interested in giving the items they longer want or need another chance to be enjoyed. In some cases, the materials are in such poor condition that our only choice is to recycle them, but oftentimes, they are excellent candidates for adding to our collections.

At Accomac, we rely on the ESPL Friends group to process the donations. After a preliminary review, during which the Technical Services Manager, trained in Collection Development, selects items to be added to the collection, the Friends then sort the remaining donations into groups to either be offered for sale at their ongoing or annual book sales, or to be sent to Better World Books to be sold at a commission.

The items that are selected for the library also make their way through a sorting process. For newly released titles with a waiting list, the donated copy will be added

quickly to help shorten the wait times for patrons on hold for that title. For significant or popular titles that of which Accomac already owns a copy, staff will catalog the donated copy and share it with another ESPL location. In cases where enough copies of the title are already held in the ESPL system, Friends volunteers will be asked to compare the donated copy to the shelf copy. In many cases, the donated copy is in better condition than its match on the shelf, and the cataloged copy will be upgraded.

Donated items are just one way that the Shore community supports the ESPL system through generous giving. The value of these donated additions to our library collections is significant, and allows the book budget to go farther.

COVID-19 has prevented the libraries from accepting donations



for almost a full year. When we can once again safely receive donations, library staff, Friends, and volunteers will happily resume the sorting and cataloging processes to incorporate these valuable items into the library collections and get them into the hands of Shore readers.

***In the meantime, please keep your book donations at home for now!***

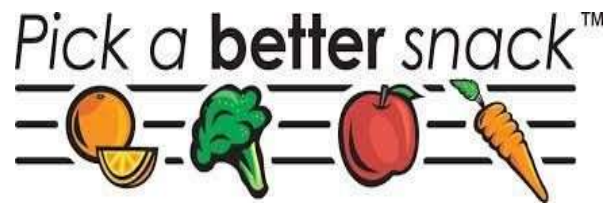
**57%** of ESPL collections are stored at the regional library headquarters!

# Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian

At the End of January, Tiffany Flores and Cara Burton hosted Eastern Shore Public Library’s first- ever Meet and Greet Webinar. The event was held during lunch on Friday, January 29th, and proved to be a success. Through this event, Tiffany Flores was able to answer various questions from Eastern Shore Library community members and discuss what her plans are for the next few months, especially about the Summer Reading Program.

In January, Youth Services Librarian Flores continued working with Virginia Cooperative Extension in order to plan and prepare for Pick a Better Snack Virtual storytimes. The program is set to launch on March 3rd and aims to provide children between the ages of 5-7 with an evening storytime session. Each session will educate participants on a new fruit or vegetable, teach food safety, and demonstrate an exercise that kids will be able to participate in.



Flores also helped Library Director Cara Burton with ESPL’s Bookmark Contest by assisting with the selection process and working on the final steps of the contest such as creating certificates, collecting and organizing prizes, and contacting participants with contest updates. In total there were 81 total participants and 10 winners selected from those participants. At this time winners have been announced on Facebook. Some of the winners are pictured below.



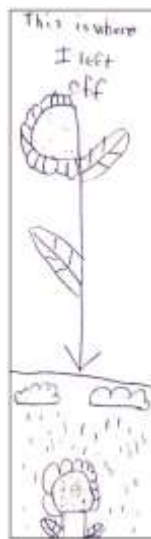
Cameron Ashbridge  
Weymouth Elementary School



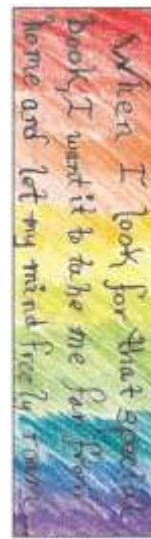
Jada Gray  
Cape Charles Christian School



Brooke Johnson  
Cape Charles Christian School



Alana Hill  
Shore Christian Academy



James Appling  
Northampton High School



Kari Liu  
Henric, Virginia



Nakya Beach  
Northampton High School



# Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager

One of the special services we offer families is pulling a collection of books on a particular subject or a particular reading level. Families can also call the library and ask us to pull some books suitable for their children's age group. Another service we are providing for the community are our "Grab and Go" bags. The theme of the month was Owls; each bag included games, learning activities, color sheet, and a craft to make.

This month we were able to get our front door converted to an ADA approved door, allowing patrons to push a button to automatically open the door. Although our Computer Lab is closed to the public at this time we opened it on January 21 to allow people without computer access to view the Town Council Meeting.

The Town of Cape Charles received a Litter Prevention and Recycling Grant from DEQ, and staff has been working on gathering ideas and networking with other organizations.



Listen in to Coffee with Kelley on Shore Daily News—WESR on Tuesday, February 23, at 9:30 am for the

***Book of Love Challenge.***

**ShoreDailyNews.com**

Serving the Shore Since 1958

Director Cara Burton will be Kelley's guest as we talk calls for songs that mention books! Fun trivia and talk about upcoming library events, too!



# Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager

CIL is bobbing along with the waves; steadily increasing in inquiries, both support and tech support for our current patrons, as well as adding new patrons. CIL is seeing an increase in ShoreCat usage and the Holds amount by courier is growing. It is very encouraging to have past patrons returning and renewing their expired cards! Circulation and our patron counts have picked up since the Holidays have sailed away.

The CIL Board will be meeting on February 12th and on their agenda

some items to be addressed are:

\*Discussion of Programs, Events and Activities in 2021

\*"Virtual Story Program"



The "Virtual Story Program", originally scheduled for January 12th, has experienced a delay in the recording of the stories as the increase in rising COVID cases made this timeline untenable. The Board hopes to start recording sometime in February. As reported last month, the plan to "air" these readings on YouTube on Thursdays at 10AM. Please stay tuned for further information.

The CIL Board decided to undertake the project of "Takeaway Activity Bags", with the assistance of volunteers. There are bags for 3-year-olds and bags for the 4 to 8-year-olds. We have placed pictures and information on how these Takeaway Bags may be picked up, free, on the CIL webpage. We have had a great response to this!

# Heritage Hub

*Continued from page 1*

passed a new state constitution that went into effect July 1, 1902. Its effect on the electorate as a whole was disastrous, but for African-Americans it was particularly devastating.

New voter qualifications such as payment of land taxes, a literacy test and a \$1.50 poll tax caused the numbers of all voters in Accomack County – White and Black – to drop significantly from what they had been just after the Civil War. African Americans living in Accomack County, for instance, saw their share of the electorate drop precipitously, from 40% before 1902 to only 12% after the new constitution was adopted.

Among that 12% was fifty-year-old oysterman and father Parker Handy, born in 1852. And the Rev. G.H.T. Byrd, who in 1902 was a deacon at Jerusalem Baptist Church but who later broke off from that congregation to help found and become Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Temperanceville. Another was Alfred Justice, a 60-year-old laborer born in 1845 and a Civil War veteran who had served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, Company A, United States Colored Troops. Younger men born after the war also registered to vote in 1902 like farmer George D. Justice, age 29, born in 1875.

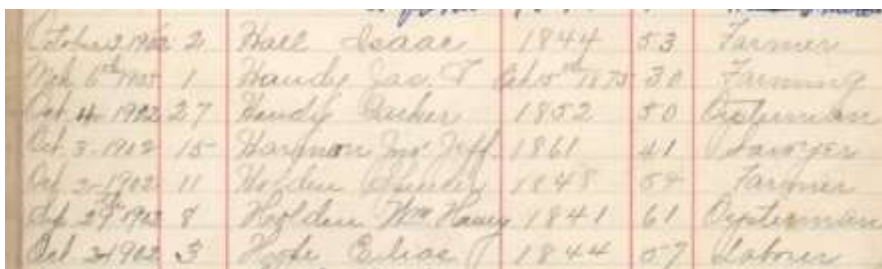
Their names were recorded at that historic moment in the “*List of Colored Voters Registered at Temperanceville Precinct in Atlantic Magisterial District.*” The actual register is held in Eastern Shore Public Library’s archives, but a complete digital

## Local History Services

Stacia Childers, LH Specialist

image is now available to view on our website at <https://espl.org/genealogy/digital-history/>

The book also reveals those few Black women in northern Accomack County who registered in 1920 when passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment legalized women’s suffrage. Women like Mary F. Brown, 44, a housewife and mother who lived with her family in Withams. And 30-year-old Estella Tull, also of Withams, who was listed as a housewife



when she registered to vote October 2, 1920, but who later became a schoolteacher.

Not only is the register a monument to local historical events, it is a monument to family. Everyday people – a laborer, a farmer, a mother – left their mark on history and are a part of the story of a place and its people. For their descendants, many of whom still live on the Shore today, individual lines in a register reveal an important piece of their family story. A seemingly distant and abstract historical fact – Virginia adopted a new state constitution in 1902 – can become very personal.

ESPL invites you to learn more about your own family’s story with its genealogical and local history resources by visiting the GENEALOGY tab at [espl.org](https://espl.org).

diabetes risk, compared to a similar cohort of individuals not born in 1919, including those who were older infants during the pandemic.” (Beth Newcomb, Dec. 2020, <https://gero.usc.edu/2020/12/08/century-covid-pandemic-risk/>).

Public libraries have many medical resources available to educate families about self-care and preventive medicine in both print and electronic formats. Libraries also have cookbooks that are important for people with diabetes and heart conditions to learn how to adjust to new diets. Libraries have programs that include health providers as well as healthy-living educators. Our Youth Services Librarian, Tiffany Flores, is working on such a program now with Pick a Better Snack.

Public libraries also help with mental health. During our capital campaign, we have highlighted that libraries act as a “third place” beyond home and work. Volunteers enjoy their service at libraries as they meet new people and productively contribute to their community. Library programs offer opportunities to mingle with others in a safe, diverse, and drug-free environment. Even sitting and reading in a library helps combat loneliness.

Additionally, we are expecting the trauma of the pandemic to exacerbate ACEs, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and PTSD, post-traumatic stress syndrome. ESPL already partners with Healthy Communities and Community Partners of the Eastern Shore to provide programming and education about these illnesses. The upcoming “What Makes You So Strong?” virtual program is an example. Public libraries are an outlet for health organizations to distribute their educational literature. The welcoming nature of public libraries lends to providing individuals a non-threatening respite

away from stressful domestic and workplace situations.

And let’s not forget the children. Storytimes, Summer Reading Programs, and other youth activities will be critically important in helping to get children’s education back on track. Public libraries, unfettered by state education requirements, will continue to be a fun learning place for children. No Kid Hungry free meal programs will continue to help children stay healthy and ready to learn. With reading, children will continue to escape the challenges of day-to-day drama, will learn to envision bright futures, and will develop curiosity.

Post-pandemic Economy: Public libraries historically have been a go-to place for individuals to find resources that help develop job skills and search for jobs. Library programs and reading materials educate job-seekers to better prepare them for the workplace and for applying for jobs. Public computers and Internet provide the equipment for online job applications. Virtual job interviews will be possible in our new regional library with its private meeting rooms as they are now at Northampton Free Library.

In the new economy that is developing post-pandemic, employers have realized that telecommuting is a viable option to retain skilled workers. Public libraries provide physical resources to facilitate that including copiers, printers, scanning devices, public WiFi, and notary services. Our new regional library will have sound equipment for recording podcasts, radio ads, and promotional videos.

Investing in our public libraries is more important now than ever. As we celebrate exiting the pandemic, let’s continue to build support for public libraries as part of our healing process.

# Public Services

Summer Dahlmanns, Circulation Manager

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Dahlmanns attended the American Library Association (ALA) Virtual MidWinter Conference from January 22-26, 2021. There were many different sessions to attend at the conference. In “Rising to the 2020 Challenge,” the benefits of attending virtual meetings was discussed. Libraries have a decrease in mileage expenses and travel time. Staff became more efficient when they did not have to spend time traveling to meetings. Another library expanded mail services to send books to patrons who were unable to pick them up. Two-thirds of the employees at the San Francisco Public Library were reassigned to providing disaster assistance to the community in 2020. The Nashville Public Library (NPL) provided curbside services and expanded the electronic resource collection. Kent at NPL stated that “employers need to know their staff’s capabilities, trust them, recruit within the organization and that communication is important between everyone.”

Another session at the conference discussed **digital equity** and the role that libraries play in providing mobile hotspots to students at home. Cindy, a Professor in Practice, spoke about students at home who were unable to attend school, because they did not have internet access. She spoke about adults who were unable to apply for jobs, because they did not have internet access. She reviewed the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program that was passed in December 2020 by the Federal government to assist the community in applying for subsidized funding to be able to purchase internet access at home.



*Eastern Shore Public Library  
Will be closed on Monday, February 15th in honor of  
President's Day*



# Northampton Free Library

Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager



## What is Urban Fiction?

Urban Fiction, also known as street fiction, has become popular amongst a diverse group of readers. Urban fiction focuses on the underside of city living, and is basically a narrative of explicit and descriptive details. It's a popular and growing genre with many book titles available to readers, whether the choice is an e-book, audiobook, or a traditional page turner!!



Urban fiction shines a light on the harsh realities of life in the city, including rough topics like drugs, gangs, poverty, and violence.

Most writers focus on realistic stories with realistic

characters who overcome adversity, betrayal, and surviving the street life. The authors commit to writing books that readers can relate to.

Urban Fiction is needed in our Public Libraries, because we have readers who are interested in things that remind them of their own lives and can relate to such topics.

“Hip hop music is about storytelling, street lit is

just an extension of those stories. Readers, young and old, can identify with situations in the books they're reading because it either reflects their real life experiences or it sheds light on observed experiences that they now can more fully understand,” Dr. Vanessa Irvin Morris

Currently we have approximately 100 urban fiction titles in our library system, which are found in the fiction and mass market paperback collections. Also, you

Just type “Urban Fiction” in the ShoreCat search field to find it!

will find urban fiction in our teen collection, where you will read about diverse characters that are growing up in adult situations, and making tough decisions.

Due to the increase in interest in Urban Fiction, with the help of Tech Services we were able to order and add to the system's collection. We are currently working together to continue to add different genres to our library collection to meet the needs of all readers!!