

March 9, 2021

Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

Director Update:

What's New!: Shifting Gears to Plan ESPL's Future

The vision for a new regional library and Heritage Center has come to fruition. Eastern Shore residents are very excited to walk into our new library---the anticipation builds. Years went into planning this project, however, now we must shift gears. The Trustees and staff need to step back and look at our overall mission, vision, and goals to ask ourselves, "What next?"

Our strategic plan was not created with a pandemic in mind. It is essential that we work together to plan how we will be resilient and help our community heal and change with the changes we face.

We also need to communicate our "What's Next!" with our close partners: the Foundation, our Friends, and our affiliate libraries. This will help them plan their own agendas and better help them plan fundraising to support us. Our recent grant writing proposals

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Patron Registration Goes Online

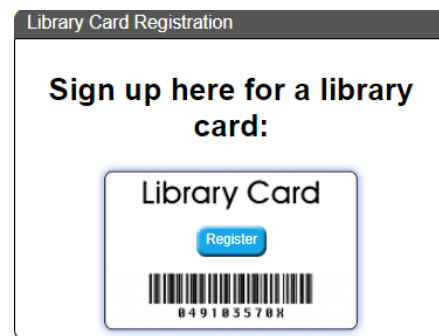
Northampton Free Library Staff Manage New Online Registrations

By Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager

While the inside of our libraries remain closed due to precautionary reasons related to the pandemic, we now have an online option for patrons to apply for a temporary library card!

The online registration form can be found by visiting www.espl.org and then clicking either "Apply for a library card" or the Shore Cat icon. Once the registration form is submitted, library staff will send the new patron a temporary card number via email.

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have demonstrated why we need a defined system plan. A plan helps us define how we will be accountable to our community and worthy of their support.

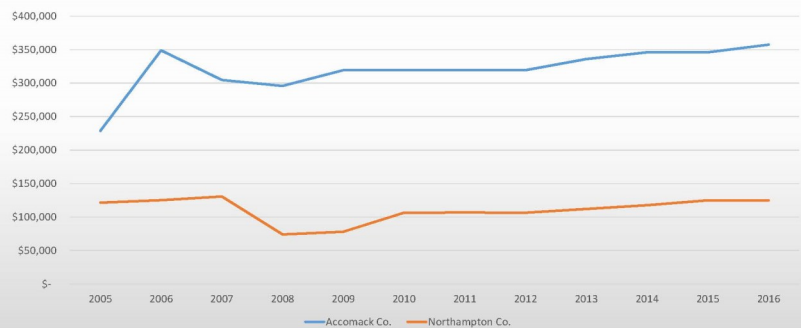
The current Accomack County budget plan has made it clear that our local government funding will not grow with our vision. This echoes my 2017 budget presentation of historically flat funding for our regional system. It is not expected that population growth on the Shore will increase significantly over the next few years and may actually drop, affecting local government income.

We do have some tools available to assist us in planning. Northampton County is in the process of developing their Comprehensive Plan for 2040. It covers many topics and “environmental scanning” information used in planning. Accomack County’s plan is from 2008 and has three amendments. Both Counties’ budget plans provide useful planning information in their introduction.

Our other tool in planning is our community. The ESPL Foundation has done a wonderful job of developing contact lists that can be used to obtain input from our supporters. ESPL staff have developed contact lists with our patron database and our e-newsletter contact list. We have also built many partnerships with other nonprofits and service providers.

The next step is for the Board to decide how and when it wants to proceed.

Historical County Income



The current funding model provides flat funding with little growth to meet the vision of the Board. (Source: Burton, 2017 Budget presentation)

Upcoming Virtual Programs:

Registrations & links at espl.org/about-us/news/events

- **What Makes You So Strong?**
Wednesday, March 17, 12:00/noon.
Reverend Doctor Paula Owens, author of Roots Matter: Healing History, Honoring Heritage, Renewing Hope.
- **Pick a Better Snack** Wednesdays,
March 3 to April 7, 4:00 pm
- **Resurrection Lilly Author**— National Library of Medicine Book Club, March 11, 3:00 pm.

- **What Every Retiree Should Know**
Friday, April 2, 12:00/noon. Social Security Public Affairs Specialist.

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts “VMFA On The Road” Artmobile

- Nassawadox – April 7 & 8
- Onancock – April 9 & 10

Go to espl.org/about-us/news/events
to register an appointment.

Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

Changes in Use During Pandemic Highlight Need for Regional Services

Analyzing patron requests for library materials reveals a pattern of library use on a Shore-wide scale: over 50% of the 2,349 patron requests over the past year required the transfer of the requested items from one ESPL library location to another. The strength of our regional system is evident as our shared resources allow each of the four libraries to better meet the needs and interests of Shore readers than it would be possible to do alone.

Patron requests are one way that the library keeps a finger on the pulse of the community's interests. By knowing which titles our customers are interested in, book orders can be customized and prioritized based on our cataloging queues. This gets in-demand items into the hands of our readers as quickly as possible.

Patron requests arrive through multiple sources: on good old-fashioned paper request cards, by email, through the request form on the library's website, and through the library catalog, ShoreCat.

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted the normal operations of the library and the daily routines of library patrons. However, some things haven't changed: people are still reading, and

Top ten requests from ESPL Patrons (as of 3/1/2021):

1. Four Winds by Kristen Hannah
2. Dark Sky by C.J. Box
3. Gambling Man by David Baldacci
4. Win by Harlan Coben
5. Golden Girl by Elin Hilderbrand
6. Eternal by Lisa Scottoline
7. Hour of the Witch by Christ Bohjalian
8. Survivors by Jane Harper
9. The Affair by Danielle Steel
10. Daylight by David Baldacci

people are still requesting the items they are interested in reading.

In the past 12 months, 2,349 items were requested from the collections of the four ESPL libraries. Books were the most requested material format, with 2,086 requests for the printed word. 193 video recordings were requested. With commute times for many people dropping significantly because of working remotely, sound recordings were requested just 67 times.

Of the 2,349 requests, over 1,600 were entered directly into the ShoreCat catalog by library patrons themselves. Library staff entered the remainder on behalf of library users, but the rate at which patrons are searching the catalog and submitting their own requests speaks to **ShoreCat's ease of use** and the digital skills of library patrons.

68% of requests are now directly placed online by patrons via ShoreCat.

Heritage Hub

Local History Services

Stacia Childers, LH Specialist

What does Tom Clancy's famous novel *The Hunt For Red October* have to do with the Eastern Shore of Virginia? Even if one might remember that there is in fact a passing mention of the Shore in its pages, it is highly unlikely that one could pinpoint the page of the 1984 edition that a character speaks about hunting geese on the ESVA.

But Kirk Mariner could.

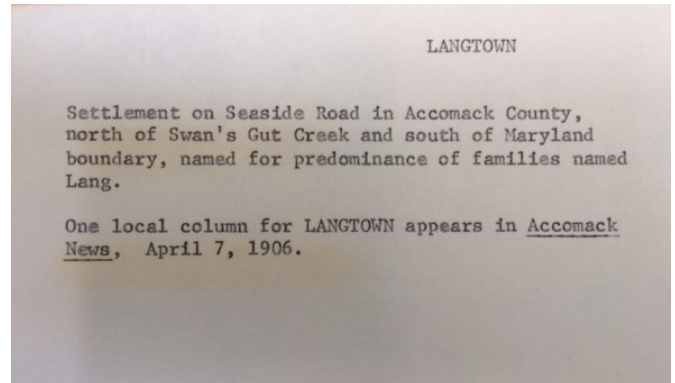
Not from memory, perhaps, but with a quick consultation of his personal card catalog he would have known that it was on page 118. Part of the Kirk Mariner collection bequeathed to Eastern Shore Public Library, that card catalog serves as the inventory to his personal library of over 2,000 books, journals, and in some cases, files. The cards also collect newspaper clippings and bits of other information that he thought might be useful in his writing and research.

Where was Langtown and where might one find information on it? Seaside Road in Accomack County north of Swan's Gut Creek, and check the Accomack News, April 7, 1906 edition for a local column.

Who was Alfred Jairus Nottingham? An Eastern Shore AME preacher born in Eastville, August 18, 1868.

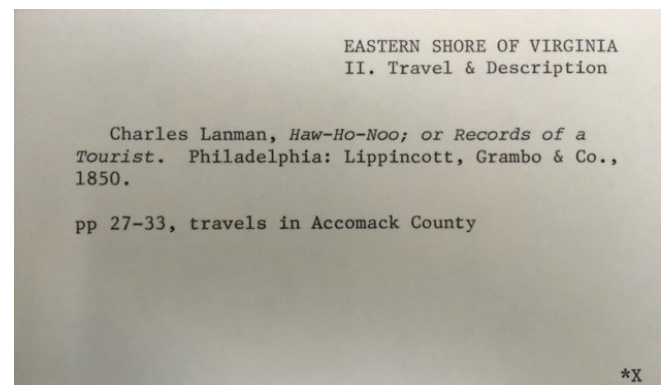
Where might one find a mid-nineteenth century travelogue of the ESVA? Try Charles Lanman's *Haw-Ho-Noo*, located under "Lanman" in Mariner's files.

The catalog is the product of its creator, and so not without bias. To Mariner, a Methodist minister born in northern Accomack County, the



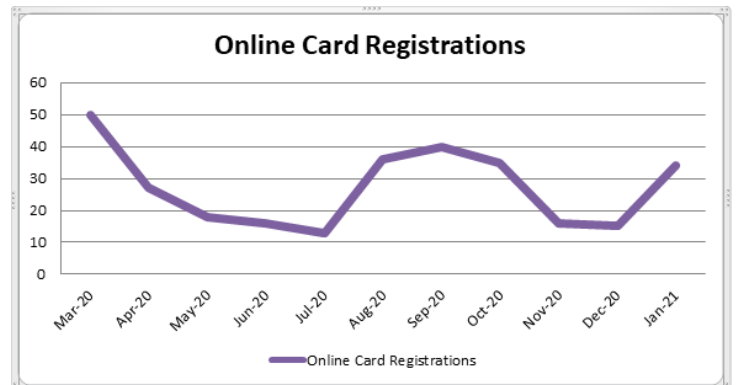
Methodism and New Church (& vicinity) sections are particularly voluminous, with the New Church area broken into decades and Methodism taking up almost one whole drawer.

As staff is working through the collection, integrating volumes into the Eastern Shore Room's existing reading room collection, the catalog has been invaluable in explaining a book's seemingly mysterious presence on his shelves. Knowing that there must be a connection to the Eastern Shore or it wouldn't have been included, but the connection not always being



With a temporary card, patrons will be able to do the following:

- Log in to their library account
- Place hold requests and submit material suggestions through our online catalog.
- Check out a limited amount of library materials
- Have access to all of our e-resources including:
 - ⇒ E-Books & Audiobooks
 - ⇒ Research Resources
 - ⇒ Educational Resources and more!!!



Once our library doors open under safer conditions, patrons may visit the circulation desk to verify their address and contact information. This will upgrade their account to a full-use card with complete access to our library collections.

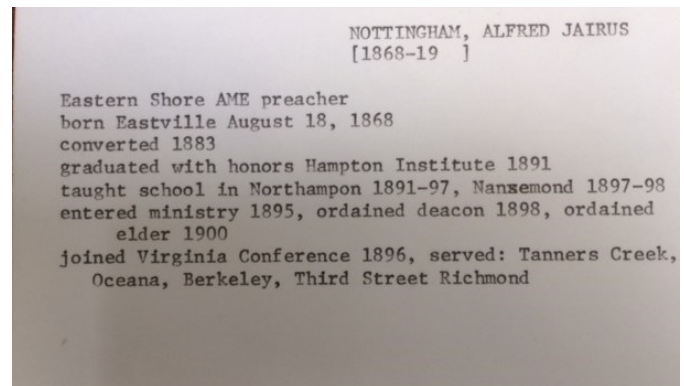
There has been an increase in the number of requests for new library cards over the past few months. The online registration option in ShoreCat has helped the library get more cards to more people than we could have done otherwise.

Mariner, continued from page 4

immediately obvious (see Tom Clancy above) a quick check of the card catalog reveals the answer.

Unfortunately no key was left to Mariner's notations, but staff has mostly cracked the code. An "X" means the volume is in the collection. The absence of an "X" means it is held in another repository, sometimes named. An "X" with an asterisk means the text is in the files, not on the shelves. Books and articles are listed by author and often cross referenced by subject heading and newspaper clippings are classified by subject, location or personal name depending on the point of interest

The wealth of information contained in Kirk Mariner's card catalog extends far beyond serving as an index to his personal collection – a gift in itself. It serves as an index to the entire Eastern Shore.



Virginia Humanities Grant Awarded

ESPL has been awarded a \$5,000 rolling planning grant from Virginia Humanities. The grant will hire a consultant to design an RFP for a new website for the ESVA Heritage Center and a consultant to assist the ESVA Museum Network in planning for the US250. Details for follow!

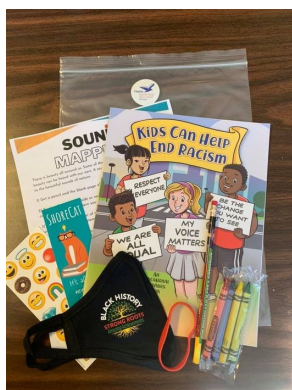
Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian

During February, Youth Services Librarian Tiffany Flores and Chincoteague Island Library's Karen Sharp joined a class of Chincoteague Elementary School 3rd graders virtually. During this meeting, Tiffany was able to teach the third graders how to sign up for library cards, reserve books, and explore the catalog virtually. From there Karen Sharp continued the lesson by teaching the students how curbside pickup works and promoted Chincoteague Island Library's programs. The day ended with the understanding that 24 kids now knew how to use our services virtually and there were now 7 new cardholders due to the event.



Flores teaches Chincoteague 3rd graders about library cards.



Throughout February, Youth Services continued to offer Activity bags at both Accomac and Northampton Library locations. This month's bag featured an activity booklet, an activity sheet from VES Land Trust, and various other goodies. Additionally, a select number of bags featured a Black History Month themed facemask which was a huge hit among the community. Within two days of posting the kits on Facebook, all face mask kits were gone while kits without the mask made it through the month. Overall, 47 February bags were made and 41 were distributed.



Curbside service has been popular and keep staff busy pulling requests!





Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager



Chincoteague Island Library has been very busy as we have increased patron usage of ShoreCat, the placing of holds, patrons renewing expired library cards, and adding new patrons. Help with inquiries such as support, information about library services, general information such as local history and tech support are given.

CIL has a new addition! We have been in need for a place to bring our paperback collection together. So more growing room for our Fiction section could be achieved, we adapted an armoire to create a “little library” for our paperbacks. An added bonus: more storage underneath!

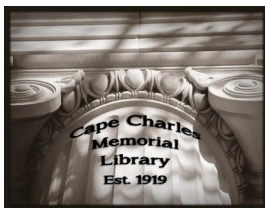
The CIL Board will be meeting March 12th. Linda Ryan, our Board President, has shared what they have been up to:



It has been a busy month. Many of our volunteers have now gotten both of their COVID vaccinations.

- CIL’s Takeaway Activity Bags have been a big hit! As a result, we have begun offering them to 3-year-olds as well as to 4 to 8-year-olds. To date, we have distributed over 30 bags.
- Thanks to Karen for passing along the information from Chincoteague Island Elementary School teacher, Mr. Drew. He reached out to our library and wanted CIL to share with his 3rd grade students on how to get a library card, how to check out books/ materials, to learn about other library services and what the term “curb-side” means. Karen and I reached out to ESPL Youth Services Director, Tiffany Flores. Tiffany and she were able to set up a Zoom classroom to help the students and Mr. Drew. Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager of Northampton Free Library, reported that 11 students had applied for a library card by that
- afternoon!
- The CIL Board has finished recording our Virtual Tales 4 Tots Storytime. Our technician, Doug Mills, is editing the recordings. There are 6 episodes which will be shown weekly when Doug is finished. Stay tuned!
- The Board has contacted Glen Ferry of Affordable Business Machines to get an estimate on a new all-in-one printer which will be net-





Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager



The CCML Friends of the Library presented a Spring into Health, Zoom and Learn program, entitled Medication Management on Saturday, February 14 at 12 noon. Six people attended this program. The Friends also provided funds for the purchase of additional foot stools and side tables for the library. The stools offer steady footing for older patrons and the side tables paired with a chair provide a place for laptop users and are easily moved. Although we are still not open to the public, we continue to improve our facility to make it more user friendly.

This month staff has had the opportunity take some time to attend several online programs. Staff attended the Library Journal Online Winter Summit: Building the Next Normal. This program provided some helpful information about library services during COVID-19. Staff also attended the Kids Count Forum entitled It's Our Nature-Healthy Outdoors. This yearly program sponsored by Smart Beginnings offers suggestions for outdoor activities for children. With COVID-19 restrictions still in place we will be using our outdoor space for programs and the forum provided timely information and resources.



CML celebrated Valentines' day with more Grab and Go bags. These bags contained a Valentine craft and activity sheets.



A security camera was installed in the Library this month to cover the circulation desk.

CIL from page 7

- CIL's Homework Club has resumed as Paul Miller, Board member/Volunteer/Volunteer Tutor, has received both of his COVID vaccinations. Our young student and his parents were anxious to resume his tutoring.
- Lastly, the Board has ordered additional masks and gloves in anticipation of
- reopening our library as soon as we deem it is safe for patrons, staff, volunteers and visitors. Prior to reopening, cleaning out closets, discarding unused items, maintaining COVID cleaning and procedures, and hiring our seasonal cleaning service.

Submitted by Linda Ryan, CIL Board President