

June 8, 2021

# Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

## Director's Update:

### The Heart of the Library

People are at the heart of the library. Our staff serve people in and out of the library, acting as a service hub for patrons. Patrons need help to access resources. Patrons also look to our staff to provide a welcoming, professional, and safe environment. This includes contacts in-person, by phone, by email, by social media, with our press releases and articles, our e-newsletter, and even with the design and content of our website. Staff communication skills are just as important as their technical knowledge. This also involves volunteer management. We rely on our volunteers, but this does require management of their help. Patrons frequently comment at how well ESPL staff succeeds in their roles.

Unfortunately, all this federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) money does little to provide additional staff, which is

*Continued on page 2*

## ShoreCat Lists A Helpful Feature

ShoreCat offers ESPL readers many helpful features, including a tab devoted to lists of recommended items curated by ESPL librarians. The lists can be found on the home page of ShoreCat under the blue tab labelled "List" in the top left area of the screen. There you'll find two sets of lists: one for adults and one for younger readers.

Clicking on a list title will direct you to a detailed listing of items in the ESPL collection that relate to that particular list's subject. For example, the "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" list includes 64 books that would be helpful to anyone seeking to better understand societal inequi-

*Continued on page 3*



what we truly need. Technology and equipment are supported, but we cannot use funds to pay for staff.

In the last few months as we have phased into broader hours of in-person services, the strain of living in a “persistent poverty” area has really shown. The pandemic has highlighted how rural areas have less access to medical care, child care, senior care, and support services. For example, having a simple medical test may



Staff work weekends at outreach events, adjusting desk and family schedules to meet this need.

take months to have scheduled and can require distance travel. It requires planning and you certainly do not want to miss it. Providing desk coverage poses many challenges when, on the same day, one person has one of these valuable appointments,

another gets sick, and another has to provide transportation for their student. We have had several of these “perfect storms” of coverage in 2021 and I am extremely proud of how our team works together to resolve these challenges.

Most of our staff have been unable to take the valuable time off needed to recharge and catch up on domestic responsibilities, which weighs on our personal health. Workers across the United States are just plain tired, which affects

our performance. I liken it to having a constant ringing in the ears that slowly drains you as the weeks have passed by since March 2020.

This is replicated in other nonprofits and businesses, further emphasizing the need for organizations to reevaluate our workforce environment, which includes policies and compensation plans. This must be part of the discussion when we develop our new strategic plan.

At the Accomack County Town Hall meeting June 2, I left somewhat discouraged. While it was great to see that 65 attended, over two thirds were there to talk about broadband access, most of whom were from one development. Issues that are at the base of our persistent poverty: housing, literacy and education, transportation, health, and workforce development, were hardly mentioned. The Chamber of Commerce is to be applauded for pushing for a regional approach in planning the use of the ARPA funding. I briefly spoke with their new Executive Director, Robert Sabatini, afterwards to compliment and support that approach. We are also a regional organization and, as I have said in the past, exemplify the benefits of working together to serve our community.

In the current frenzy to determine how to capture what money ESPL might receive over the next few months, I am keeping that perspective in mind as well as the local needs highlighted during the pandemic. After all, we are building the first regional library for the Eastern Shore right now and it is in the heart of the Shore!

# Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

*Continued from page 1*

ties associated with race, gender, class, age, neurodiversity, and disability.

The “Reading Group Resources” list includes all things book club related. Included are annually published Reading Group Choices that highlight titles ideal for book groups and include discussion questions, as well as books that recommend reading plans for book club use. These titles are also valuable for those who prefer solitary reading as they can be used to build an individual reading plan.

The List tab also includes several lists for children featuring seasonal selections, books about outer space, and a list of gardening books that is perfect for this time of year.

Because the lists are located within ShoreCat and contain items already in the ESPL collection, it is very easy for anyone with a library card to request items with just a few clicks of the mouse. Once you’ve logged into ShoreCat and are viewing one of the curated lists, click on the title of the item you are interested in, then click Go to Reserve, and then click Reserve. It’s that simple!

Be sure to check the Lists periodically as our librarians have plans to add additional content over time. In conjunction with her work on the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Healthy Communities work group, Charle Ricci plans to add

more lists focusing on diversity, such as a list of fictional works on the subject as well as a list of resources for children and teens.

Visiting the library and browsing around in the stacks can be an excellent way to find something to read, but for those who appreciate a guiding hand, the lists on ShoreCat provide a means by which ESPL librarians can offer Shore readers a professionally curated experience from their computer or mobile device.



Director Burton recently joined the ESVA Rails to Trails Committee on a fieldtrip to learn about the Somerset County, MD trail. The Parks and Recreation Director gave an overview of the planning involved. Burton is promoting how the trail will tie three of the ESVA libraries together and provide many programming opportunities, like StoryTrails and ESVA Heritage interpretive signage.





# Northampton Free Library

Barbrielle Rogers, Branch Manager



This month, NFL staff Rogers and Flores participated in the Family Resource Fair held by the Northampton County Public Schools. This was an outdoor family event, where attendees learned about local agencies that are available to families on the Eastern Shore. Along with



COVID-19 protocols we were able to safely interact with approximately 300 attendees. Staff gave families free books, bookmarks, water bottles, and information about library services. During this event, library cards were also issued, the Walking classroom kits were promoted and displayed, and the “1,000 Things before Kindergarten” program was presented to parents.

NFL continues to assist patrons as safely as possible with COVID restrictions, as well as offer curbside pickup throughout the day. Even though our doors are open we continue to receive online library card registration requests. There is an “apply for a library card” option on our webpage, as well as the ShoreCat page. This online option is still available. Patrons are also able to come inside the library to verify their information.



Master Gardeners continue to tend their beautiful pollinator garden.

A new fire alarm system was installed supported with funding from the Friends of NFL, the ESPL Foundation, and a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant.

# Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian



Manga, a genre of graphic novel, was moved to a special display to highlight the collection for fans.

On May 1st, 2021 Youth Services Librarian Tiffany Flores and Library Director Cara Burton attended the Franktown Methodist Church Fair in order to promote the library, various walking trails, and Youth Services. The day was an exciting success! Kids made squirrel puppets and playing with some of the activities placed around to get them moving. Eastern Shore Public Library was able to reach many people about The Walking Classroom, walking trails, and various other services. In total, Cara and Tiffany were able to reach about 300 people.

Exciting opportunities come suddenly with little warning! In early May Youth Services Librarian attended a sudden meeting with the Library of Virginia about the Read Every Day (RED) Program. This program aims to give every Kindergartener and first-grader their at-home library by providing them with ten books during their first ten days of school. Eastern Shore Public Library jumped on this opportunity. Cara Burton and Tiffany Flores have begun discussions with the schools to determine their level of interest and determine how many books would be needed. As of right now, it seems like the project is a go.



Burton and Flores attended a pizza party at Arcadia Middle School to recognize winners of the ESPL Time Capsule Contest. Details will follow next month.





# Chincoteague Island Library

**Karen Sharp, Library Manager**



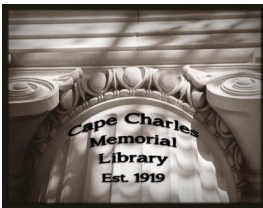
Chincoteague Island Library is experiencing a “new” normalcy as time progresses. There have been changes and adaptations made in order to meet our patrons’ and the community’s needs. The “fruit” of which continues to blossom. CIL has an increase in our patron/visitor counts that average about 32 per day. However, CIL’s patron computer usage has been low. Circulation has increased.

“Lubbock’s Learners”, CIL’s Summer Reading Challenge Program, held a kick-off party on May 27<sup>th</sup> from 3 to 6PM. There were 27 in attendance, with about 20 young readers who signed up. Before the party, we had 20 signed up on-line. The following day, we added 5 more.

In addition to our Summer Reading Program, CIL will be featuring other interactive programs for children. For Pre-Schoolers, the library will be open for parents to read to their children. CIL will be offering coloring pages and crafts to enjoy. Young Explorers, in grades 3 through 5, will be meeting in the Theatre Annex located across from the library. These programs will begin July 1<sup>st</sup> through August 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 to 11AM. CIL has some special programs scheduled over the Summer: ZOO 2YOU on June 21<sup>st</sup>, Magician Rob Westcott will be performing July 12<sup>th</sup> at 7PM at the Island Theatre (joining the library with this venture is CIAO), and the Blue Sky Puppets may perform on a Monday evening during the Summer with details in discussion with CIAO.

CIL has scheduled a Sunset Cruise for Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 6PM. Tickets are \$50 per person which includes refresh-

*Continued on page 7*



# Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager

On Monday, May 10, the library began opening from 10:00-4:00pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday and on Tuesday, CCML was open until 6:00. Beginning on June 1, the library will now be open 10:00 -5:00, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; 10:00 to 6:00 on Tuesday and 10:00 to 2:00 on Saturday.



We have spent the last month getting ready for the 2021 Summer Reading Program and finishing up the Litter Grant.

Staff will have a table at Cape Charles Day on June 12. We will have information about the Summer Reading Program and will display upcycled crafts, give away books on the environment, and give away “try it for a month” items to encourage people to use less single-use plastic (reusable metal straws, wheat straw cutlery, and reusable muslin produce bags.)

Now that we are open to the public our curb side service is not being used but is still available, if wanted.



This month we provided storytime and crafts for the Cape Charles Christian school. A Staff member visits the school to present the storytime and craft. We were also invited to provide stories at a Campfire Storytime at Kiptopeke State Park on a Saturday night.

Another new service we are offering is providing mini book reviews to be posted biweekly on social media. These book review gives suggested reading with a small blurb.

It is great to see all of our old patrons and meet our new patrons now that we are open!

---

*Chincogee, Continued from page 6*

ments and music performed by Troy and Clare Outten. Reservations are being made directly by calling Daisey's Island Cruises at 757-336-5556.

CIL's Board will meet on Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>. Board President, Linda Ryan, has sent a board report to share.

## Grant Update

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** has several streams of potential funding we may receive. We cannot use the money for construction, however, equipment that falls within the ARPA guidelines will lessen the “outfitting” of the ESVARLHC. Most funding opportunities involve Internet and digital resource access. All are applied for through ESPL (not the Foundation).

**Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)** – This ARPA money is distributed to the Library of Virginia which is allocating it in two ways: (1) additional e-Resources for all Virginia public libraries, contracts of which are now under negotiation, and (2) grants to libraries. Burton is currently exploring possible projects for funding that fall within the speculated guidelines and is working with the Library of Virginia to identify creative, practical, and effective projects.

**National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)** – ESPL has several applications to NEH at the moment: (1) NEH ARPA with Nabb Center for archivist support—September announcement, (2) a Preservation Assistance Grant—August announcement, and (3) Sustaining Cultural Collections Grant —August announcement. The latter one will pay for compact shelving.

**Virginia Humanities (VH)** – Proposals for the Heritage Center website are under review. The US250 planning consultant is working on interviewing Museum Network members.

**Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** – Emergency Connectivity Fund. A E-rate Central webinar was attended on June 3 by Burton. Both County schools administrations were contacted, but neither have replied, to a query asking about their plans for applying. Targeted non-profits were contacted about possible programs, but only two replied with simple thank you for the information. Additional planning will take place for the July 1 application date.

**County ARPA funding** - Supervisor Paul Muhly presented a case to use ARPA funds to replenish the library construction contingency fund and reimburse the Foundation for some losses at the County Town Hall meeting on June 2.

### **Awarded:**

**USDA Rural Development Communities Assistance Grant** – two grants were awarded for a variety of technology and equipment. Paperwork and purchasing taking place now. Purchasing is time consuming. Most of the NFL equipment has been ordered.

**ESVA Community Foundation (\$50,000)** – This will be the match for the Accomac USDA RD grant and will support children’s shelving and the Digitization Lab. Awarded to the ESPL Foundation. Burton has to obtain quotations for the Digitization Lab equipment.

**Northampton County Tourism Grant (\$1,000)** - This will pay for printing the Nassawadox History Walking Trail printing and the fee for placement at the CBBT Visitor Center

**Being Researched:** Heritage Center Strategic Planning. Several Foundations are being explored by the ESPLF Grant Committee to support the needed planning consulting firm.