

June 8, 2021

Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

Director's Update:

Unheard Voices

The people reading our system report, primarily volunteers, are already sold on the value of public libraries and use the library regularly. There are individuals in our community, however, who do not have the public library as part of their life. Is it because our libraries are not welcoming enough?

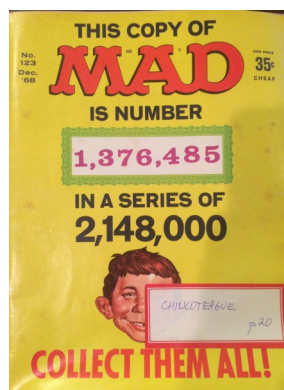
A few weeks ago, a lab technician was chatting with me while I was getting some labwork done and her coworker, overhearing that I work at the library, asked "How much does it cost to join the library?" This was a modern, young adult who must have gotten some education above high school. My first thought was, "Wow, we have a lot of work to do to teach our citizens about public library use!"

This past weekend, the ESPL Friends held a book giveaway of discarded library books. One of the volunteers commented that a woman took bags of books, selecting them as if choosing a special treasure. I emphasized that this is why book sales and giveaways are so important: some people are afraid to

Continued on page 2

The Acquisitive Character of the Collector

The wide scope of the Kirk Mariner Collection becomes more apparent every day. Having completed the processing of close to 2,000 books from Mariner's personal Eastern Shore library, staff is now indexing and packing up the periodicals. (Over 1,500 issues so far, and we're only about halfway through the alphabet.) Like with his book collection, Mariner made it a point to acquire any magazine, journal or newsletter that contained even the slightest mention of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. In some cases, such as Chesapeake Bay Magazine, he seems to have kept an entire run even if the ESVA wasn't mentioned, with issues containing a mention placed in the front of the cabinet and the other issues relegated to the back. But we can't be sure because the only place they are indexed is in his card catalog, and there only by title of the article.



This 1968 issue contains the word "Chincoteague."

A magazine from the Kirk Mariner Collection.

Continued on page 3

use the library. Public libraries are overwhelming to some because of all the choices that need to be made in selecting a book. Negotiating the stacks and Dewey Decimal System to find a subject area or a particular title requires skills that some do not have. We expect people to



Book events provide staff and volunteers the opportunity to listen to potential library users.

use the computer or an app to identify materials and their location. People may feel uncomfortable asking for help and intimidated. They may not feel it is worth the effort or they may have too much pride.

The staff, the arrangement of furniture, the lighting, the flooring, and other environmental elements in the library also affect whether someone feels welcome. They may just think that the library has nothing to offer if they think that the people managing the library or working in the library are different from them and do not have their interests in mind. Charle Ricci and Stacia Childers have been working hard to ensure our collection development for both library and archival materials is being accomplished with best practices for DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion). Tiffany and I work to

ensure programs follow DEI practices.

As the young lab technician indicated, a barrier to using the library is the misconception that it costs money to have a library card. For many, the money it costs for transport to the library is burdensome, if they even have the means to get there. ESPL has been working to minimize any costs incurred at the library, such as eliminating overdue fines and faxing fees. Upgrades in technology have allowed this to happen without being burdensome to ESPL's budget. Still, there is much misinformation about library access that ESPL needs to overcome, which requires outreach.

As we move forward with our Strategic Plan, we must realize that the people referred to here are the **"unheard voices."** They do not easily provide input into what services we should be offering or how we offer them. Their opinions have historically been marginalized in most facets of community decision making. For the past five years, staff and I have interacted with nonprofits that provide services to our community, therefore, indirectly gaining an understanding of their needs. We have attended many community events and listened. Board members act as ambassadors in the community when they talk about the library and listen. Decisions we make as a public library needs to include input from all voices in the community. Let's listen up!

As we move through the Strategic Planning of ESPL, we need to continually ask ourselves "are we welcoming enough?" Big letters saying "WELCOME" need to be over our entrance and we need to live up to that invitation.

The Friends of ESPL sent 1,311 books weighing a total of 1,793 pounds to Better World Books in the past 6 months, making for a good fundraiser and giving the books a second life.

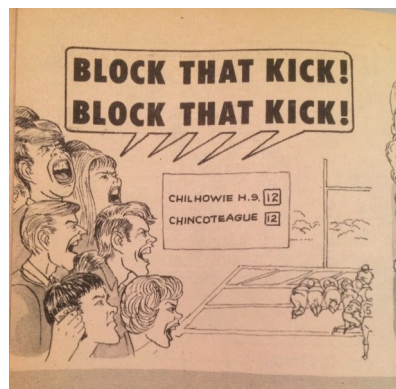
Heritage Hub

Local History Services

Stacia Childers, LH Specialist

In comparing the existing Eastern Shore Room collections with those of the Mariner Collection a slight difference in focus has emerged. Though there is much overlap between Mariner's library and that of the Eastern Shore Room (approximately 30% of the items were duplicative to our existing ESR collections and will serve as much needed backup copies), the distinction seems to fall along the lines of collector versus scholar. While Mariner was certainly a keen and astute student of Eastern Shore history, he also possessed the acquisitive character of the collector, where even the slightest mention of something related to the Shore—the name “Chincoteague” popping up in a single frame of a MAD Magazine comic from 1968, for instance—was worthy of inclusion.

On the other hand, the Eastern Shore Room collection developed over the course of nearly 40 years by Dr. Miles Barnes followed the primary criteria outlined by Barnes in “A Bibliography of the Eastern Shore of Virginia,” published in 1976: “Works dealing with the Eastern Shore of Virginia are included provided they expand knowledge of and/or provide insight into the history of the Eastern Shore.” The focus here has been more specific, geared more toward the substantial rather than the ephemeral.



Reflecting his upbringing in northern Accomack County, Mariner's book collection also includes more items related to the Eastern Shore of Maryland. And, in line with his wider scope, more books about the Chesapeake region as a whole. There is much overlap here with ESPL as well though. The difference is that many of these titles were only available in ESPL's circulating collections, not in the Eastern Shore Room. Often this was simply because of the lack of available shelf space in the Eastern Shore Room. However, with the retirement of Dr. Barnes (and his extensive and personal knowledge of both the circulating and ES Room collections) and the acquisition of the Mariner collection, the decision was made to move these titles to the Eastern Shore Room with Mariner's copies serving as back up.

Since much of the Mariner Collection is being integrated into the existing Eastern Shore Room collections, it is not really a standalone collection like Latimer. Therefore, Mariner's acquisition philosophy may have an effect on the collection development policy of the Eastern Shore Room moving forward. It is important that staff has an understanding of how the two are similar and where they diverge.

Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian

On June 19th, Youth Service Librarian Tiffany Flores attended the Juneteenth festival at Exmore Town Park with Cara Burton and Jazmine Collins. During this event, library services such as Youth Services, Genealogy, and our resources were promoted. While at this event we were able to reach many people about our resources especially about Summer Reading and the programs going on at the library throughout the next few months. It was a successful event that reached over an estimated 300 people.



Books were given away at the Juneteenth festival.

Summer Reading has officially begun! June 21st we celebrated the beginning of Summer with a visit from Salisbury Zoo and their Zoo4U program. 20 kids and adults joined us outside at Eastern Shore Public Library for an educational program showcasing many animals. The Zoo brought with them a snack, a painter turtle, a barn owl, and a chinchilla; each accompanied with a presentation full of exciting facts. Kids and parents alike got to learn a lot about these animals then come inside to sign up for our Tails and Tales Reading Challenge. So far, we have 11 kids registered for our challenge with hopes of more signing

up. All in all, it was a successful kick-off.

During the end of June, both Nassawadox and Accomac locations began distributing Grab and Go lunches to hand out to children as they come into the library. While each location has seen different results in attendance, we are proud to be distributing food to children who are in need. Since beginning in Accomac, we have successfully distributed upwards of 13 meal kits on distribution days. However, Northampton has seen much lower numbers with only upwards of 3 meals if any at all. While it is disappointing to see such low numbers, it is important to note that schools are also giving out food during summer school which may have contributed to such low numbers.



Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager



CIL is experiencing a very busy beginning to Summer! Our circulation, new cards and patron/visitors are increasing. For the month of June, CIL has had 1,039 patron/visitors! We have created 25 new cards, however our computer usage has been low at 27.

As re-opening began, CIL has had, and will continue, to hold events. On June 17th, we held a Island Library Sunset Cruise to benefit the library. It sold out with 60 enjoying the beautiful weather, great company, music, food and drink. The cruise set sail on the Martha Lou with her crew, including Captain Scott and Carla Landolt. The music was provided by Clara and Troy Outten and the Grazing Boxes were by Gail Beard.



On June 21st, CIL was host to Zoo2You which was held at the Island Theatre. About 100 were in attendance and everyone experienced a great time seeing and learning about the animal ambassadors. Some of the animals visiting us were Clack-Clack the barred owl, a ball python named Lucy and her mate, Ricky, Stormy the chinchilla, and an Eastern Painted turtle. Much thanks go out to the Zoo2You handlers, Dawna Spangler and Journie Drew-Hargrow, and to the CIAO (Chincoteague Island Arts Organization) for the use of the Island Theatre!



CIL's Young Explorers (3rd - 5th Grade) held their first get-together at the Theatre Annex on July 1st. With about 7 explorers and parents in attendance, Susan Birch, a retired Kindergarten teacher and CIL Board Member, presented "Bees and Bee Keeping". At the same time, parents with younger children met in the library for reading by their parents, to check out books and for coloring.

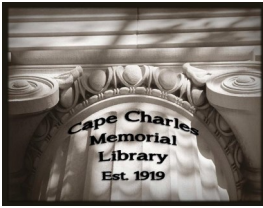


CIL has the following events coming up:

Young Explorers Summer Schedule, 10AM to 11AM-

- July 8-Wildlife Refuge Program
- July 15-Walking Tour by Cindy Faith
- July 22-Behind the Scenes @ the Island Theatre
- July 29-Chincoteague Pony @ the Library 1PM, no formal program
- August 5-Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS)

Continued on page 6



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Ruttledge Library Manager

Our Summer Reading Program, *Tails and Tales* began on Monday, June 21 with a big bang! Our favorite performer, Hoopo the Mime, happened to be in the area and he was able to provide us with a great show. We capped the attendance at 50% for safety and we had a total of 45 people. It was great to see all the children and to hear laughter in the library again.

We have had over 50 children to sign up to participate in the Summer Reading Program. Each child who signs up gets a safari hat or an animal headband for signing up. After they have read for 100 minutes, they receive another prize, and they are entered into our monthly drawing.

The library has been very busy this month with locals returning to use the library and tourists viewing our beautiful building.



Chincogueague, Continued from page 5

*During this time, 10AM to 11AM, parents with younger children may meet in the library to read to them, check out books, and for coloring.

Other upcoming events:

- July 12th @ 7PM-Magician Rob Westcott will perform at the Island Theatre.
- August 2nd @ 7PM-Barefoot Puppet Theatre will be performing at the Island Theatre.

All programs are free and open to the public.

Registration continues until July 8th for CIL's "Lubbock's Learners" Summer Reading Challenge either at the library or on-line.

The CIL Board meeting will be held in-person at the library on July 9th.

Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

World's Largest Digital Book Club and Eastern Shore Public Library Hunt for the Truth

Local book lovers joined thousands of readers around the world in reading a debut mystery/thriller eBook during the Big Library Read, the world's largest digital book club. From June 28 through July 12, patrons of the Eastern Shore Public Library were able to borrow and read copies of this summer's selection, S.F. Kosa's "The Quiet Girl," with no waitlists or holds.

The Big Library Read is an international reading program that connects millions of readers around the world with an eBook through public libraries. *The Quiet Girl* could be read on all major computers and devices through Libby or libbyapp.com, including iPhone®, iPad®, Android™ phones and tablets, Chromebook™ and Kindle®. The title automatically expired at the end of the lending period, and there were no late fees.

Each year, the Big Library Read offers three opportunities for library patrons to enjoy simultaneous, community-wide access to a digital version of a book club using Libby (Overdrive). The ESPL was excited to offer this program to local readers and hoped to generate excitement and raise awareness about the library's digital collections through this event. The next Big Library Read will occur in November 2021.

ESPL readers solved the mystery by visiting <https://espl.org/how-do-i/audiobooks-and-ebooks/> to download the Libby app on their desktop or mobile device. The Big Library Read also offered an online discussion board and a live author interview on July 7th (registration required) at biglibraryread.com. This free program ran for two weeks and only required an ESPL library card to get started.



5 ESPL patrons took advantage of this program. By promoting the Big Library Read, ESPL provided a passive program for our patrons that required minimal staff time.

Northampton Free Library

Coming Soon! A new Branch Manager



June 30th was Barbrielle Roger's last day as Branch Manager at NFL. We appreciate the vivacious atmosphere she brought to the Library and her hard work as manager. She also assisted with outreach and technical services. Of note was her role in implementing the online card registration when the pandemic started. She also helped connect us with Northampton Public Schools, such as involving ESPL with their community events, and we wish her success as she returns to work for NHS.

A Librarian is in the process of being hired as the new Branch Manager. Local challenge with housing is causing the delay in the start date.

In the meantime, Roger's absence is felt with a reduction in service hours. The NFL Friends and some patrons have expressed dissatisfaction with this situation. They have been informed that every effort is underway to expedite a return to five days a week. Reopening on Saturdays will be challenging as it is difficult to find staff that can work those hours. The goal is to return to pre-pandemic hours with staff qualified to provide the level of service expected, which means computer use and customer service competency.

In the meantime, new computers for NFL are on order as well as tables and chairs. Grounds maintenance with pruning is scheduled. The search for a contractor to repair the building leakage is underway.

Muddy Toes Public Library, Tangier

Director Cara Burton visited Tangier's Muddy Toes Public Library in June to deliver Summer Reading Program packets, books, and supplies. The library re-opened on June 30! Some seating, donated by ESPL, was delivered via Captain Mark Crockett's ferry in time for the opening.

