

EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 15, 2021, 1:00 PM

Meeting Location: Accomack County Airport, 29194 Parkway, Melfa, VA

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comments
3. Approval of Minutes of December 14 and January 11, 2021
4. Finance Committee (Bloxom)
5. Financial Report
6. Branch and Friend's Reports
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library
 - b. Chincoteague Island Library
 - c. Northampton Free Library
 - d. ESPL Friend's Reports
7. Library Director's System Report
8. Facility Committee (Valentine)
9. Personnel Committee (Pittman)
10. Grand Opening Committee (Bloxom and Holland)
11. ESPL Foundation (Davenport)
 - a. Capital Campaign Update
12. Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)
13. Old Business
 - a. Strategic Planning (Davenport)
14. New Business
 - a. Approval of 2022 Closings
 - b. Approval of Foundation naming opportunities
 - c. Email correspondence
15. Additional Comments
16. Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 1:00 pm, Accomack County Airport
17. Adjournment

**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

January 11, 2021 at 1:00 pm

(Meeting held electronically due to spike in local Covid-19 case numbers.
The Governor declared a state-of-emergency on January 10.)

Virtually present: Joyce Holland (Chair), Patricia Bloxom (Vice-Chair), Jay Davenport, Tim Valentine, Althea Pittman, , Carl Rose-Jensen, Gerry Ryan. **Absent:** Dennis Custis.

In attendance: Cara Burton, Director. James Lilliston, Accomack County Treasurer. **Staff:** Jazmine Collins, Tiffany Flores, Charle Ricci, Hannah Swimley. **Friends of the ESPL:** Janet Rochester. Auditor: Michael Aukamp. ESPL Foundation: Al McMath, Colette Nelson

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Holland at 1:00 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Minutes held for approval until next in-person meeting. Bloxom asked about an unclear sentence in item 13 regarding responsibility for overseeing onsite installation for the Capital Project. Burton recommended the sentence be removed from the minutes and Holland agreed.
4. **Finance Committee (Bloxom)** – No updates presented.
5. **Financial Report.** Burton spoke with Bloxom earlier in the week about budget modifications resulting from the delays in moving to the new library. Burton will present modifications at February's trustee meeting. Ryan inquired about pandemic pay that was granted to ESPL staff in December 2021. Holland clarified this was approved at a prior meeting.
6. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. Burton noted that CCML is not providing any pandemic-related change in services because the CCML follows the direction of the Town of Cape Charles. All other ESPL libraries are participating in either full curbside service or a hybrid combination of curbside and open hours. Ryan inquired about the risk of the hybrid combination model. Burton explained that the hybrid model was implemented successfully earlier in the pandemic, that the model still allows community access to public computers, and does reduce risk to and stress on library staff. Poyer appreciated Ryan's concerns and supported Burton's decision based on experience and perceived risk. Holland recognized that Burton will continue to monitor the situation as it develops and encouraged Burton to reach out to the Board if changes are needed.
 - b. Chincoteague Island Library –Included in system report.
 - c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report. Burton has identified a contractor to carry out needed repairs on the siding. Burton is awaiting a bid on landscaping, and Poyer expressed a preference for native plantings. Previously submitted comments regarding accessibility will be taken into account when landscaping quotation and plan is received.
 - d. ESPL Friends Reports – Included in system report.
7. **Library Director's System Report** – Burton had emailed trustees earlier about concerns regarding the storage of the Heritage Center collections in storage. The metal shelving in storage will also need to be moved. Burton is looking into alternative storage sites. A cybersecurity audit has been provided to third-party vendors, such

as the library's bookkeeper, internet provider, IT consultant, and copier vendor. This audit was included in the list of steps recommended to improve cybersecurity. Burton sees this as an opportunity to reevaluate existing technology, systems, and networks. Poyer requested to be included in any future cybersecurity decisions. Burton will share the audit with all of the trustees.

8. **Facility Committee (Valentine)** – Valentine noted that the County has contacted the bonding company agents to look into steps that can be taken to find another contractor or some other form of resolution. The contractor will not meet the completion deadline of January 28, 2022. Bloxom asked whether the County Supervisors will be pursuing this before the end of the January. Valentine understands that nothing can proceed until January 28, 2022, but the County has asked for direction from the bonding company which can then be acted upon on January 28. McMath explained that January 28 is when liquidated damages of \$1,500 per day begin to be applied, and will probably be the point at which the contractor is released or walks away. The County has been requesting a final schedule from the contractor of everything that needs to be completed, even if it runs past the 28th, but that has not yet been provided. Bloxom noted that the architects have also been unable to get a response from the contractor. McMath added that the contractor did not attend a mandatory meeting last week between the County and architects. McMath and Bloxom attended a site meeting this morning to review the progress on the roof. McMath thinks it is realistic to expect that the roof will be completed by the end of January. All interior work remains to be completed. McMath noted Burton's discovery of a potential issue regarding whether the contractor had increased the bonding amount to include the change orders. Davis Bacon wages were required of the contractor through a change order. The Foundation has asked the County to determine whether or not the contractor has been keeping appropriate records of payments of wages, and whether the Davis Bacon wage increase change order was included in the bond.
9. **Personnel Committee (Pittman)** – Pittman explained that the committee met in December and is planning another meeting.
10. **Grand Opening Committee (Bloxom and Holland)** – No updates presented.
11. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**
 - a. **Capital Campaign Update** – McMath reported that the Giving Tuesday campaign raised over \$10,000, and that the donor wall campaign at the end of 2021 raised approximately \$20,000. The Foundation continues to work on grants.
12. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – Valentine read a statement from the letter that Accomack County wrote to the bonding agents that asked, "What options are or will be available" after January 28, 2022. Valentine interprets this to mean that the County is waiting for a response from the bonding company before the Supervisors can take action.
13. **Old Business**
 - a. **Auditor** – Regarding the handling of contributions sent directly to the library, Allcamp recommended that if the contribution was sent to the ESPL, it should be deposited by the library, where it would show up in financial reports. The ESPL could then issue a payment to the ESPL Foundation for the same amount. From an audit standpoint, the ESPL's handing the contribution directly over to the Foundation is not preferable. Holland asks that this be referred to the finance committee to draft a clear procedure that takes into account good auditing practice. Allcamp noted that the audit went smoothly this year with no issues noted, and that Burton and staff were very helpful. The organizational controls in place are very strong, and the County provides an additional layer of control. Holland thanked Burton and staff for taking care of things in an appropriate manner.

- b. Strategic Planning (Davenport) – Holland reports that the committee is making progress toward completing the strategic plan and will be meeting in the next week. Burton is working on financial projections to assist in the planning process. Burton noted that the Virginia Humanities SHARP grant was approved, which will pay for a financial consultant to develop a sustainability plan for the Heritage Center. A meeting with the consultant has been bumped out towards the end of February. Hopefully by that point, a new Heritage Center manager will be on board and in attendance. There will be several small focus groups assembled to meet with the consultant as well.

14. New Business

- a. Approval of 2022 Closings and Paid Holidays – Burton noted that the list follows the dates in the personnel manual. Burton plans to hire a mover to move things internally within the Accomac library to make things safer for the public and staff. It will be a two day project and will most likely require closing the library for one-half or a whole day to complete the move.
- b. ESPL Re-branding – Burton presented a selection of re-branding images from TGD Creative Strategies & Solutions, who has provided their services at no cost. The rebranding will allow the library to be more consistent in its messaging and design. Burton showed how the logo will be used throughout the building and for different purposes such as library cards and letterhead. Burton feels that the rebranding will generate interest from the community and will hopefully benefit fundraising efforts as well. The trustees were favorably impressed with the design and found it to be upbeat, exciting, and well-thought-out.

15. Additional Comments – None.

16. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 1:00 pm, Accomack County Airport.

17. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 2:17 pm by the Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Burton, Secretary

**EASTERN SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

December 14, 2021 at 1:00 pm

(Meeting held in-person at the Accomack County Airport, Melfa, and electronically)

Present: Joyce Holland (Chair), Patricia Bloxom (Vice-Chair), Jay Davenport, Tim Valentine, Althea Pittman, Carl Rose-Jensen. **Absent:** Dennis Custis, David Poyer, Gerry Ryan.

In attendance: Cara Burton, Director. James Lilliston, Accomack County Treasurer. **Staff:** Jazmine Collins, Tiffany Flores, Charle Ricci, Hannah Swimley. **Friends of the ESPL:** Janet Rochester.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Holland at 1:01 pm.
2. **Public Comments.** None.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Valentine motioned to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2021 meeting. Bloxom seconded. Motion approved.
4. **Finance Committee (Bloxom)** – Lilliston provided an update regarding ACH controls. The County cannot move forward with these changes until after February 2022 when the BB&T and Sun Trust Banks complete their merger. Bloxom inquired about the best way to explain the FY 2022/23 proposed budget request to the Supervisors. Burton and the finance committee will need to discuss what to include in the budget request presentation over the next couple of months. Bloxom emphasized the importance of each trustee speaking with their supervisor and explaining the financial commitment necessary based on the regional agreement.
5. **Financial Report.** Burton is working with the bookkeeper to determine which reimbursements from approved grants have been received, which, in most cases, arrive by ACH. The expenditure for the children's shelving appears on November's financials, as does the Community Foundation grant that covers that expenditure. Davenport motioned to approve the financial reports as submitted. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
6. **Branch and Friend's Reports**
 - a. Cape Charles Memorial Library - Included in system report. Cape Charles is conducting a town-wide read. ESPL has participated in a regional Tidewater event similar to this in the past, and is currently offering digital community reads throughout the year using Overdrive's Libby.
 - b. Chincoteague Island Library – Both October and November activity included in system report.
 - c. Northampton Free Library - Included in system report.
 - d. ESPL Friends Reports – Included in system report. Rochester reported that Santa's visit was a success with participating children receiving a book and a candy cane.
7. **Library Director's System Report** – The library is distributing a significant number of free COVID test kits and Collins has excelled with rolling out and administering this program. Holland echoed the importance of the library as a "Third Place" and the role of trustees as mirrors of the community served by the library as mentioned in Burton's article. Holland congratulated Collins on her promotion to Circulation Manager, Tiede on her circulation position, and expressed thanks and best wishes to Kelly and Childers in their future ventures.
8. **Facility Committee**

- a. Archive Room Door – Burton inquired if a wood door would be appropriate for the archive room that is kept at a steady temperature and humidity, while the connecting room will have variations in climate. McMath recommended a fiberglass door. Valentine is not sure that the differences in temperature between the archive room and the local history room will be significant enough to warrant this change. The consensus of the trustees is to proceed with the wood door that was specified in the original plans.
 - b. Request to Steering Committee to approve additional \$1,000 for higher grade solid surface window sills – Burton displayed two material samples, one of which was specified by the architects for circulation desk counter, cabinetry counter surfaces, etc. No grade was specified for the window sills in the bids. A request to the Steering Committee for a change order to use the higher grade material for the window sills as well would need to be approved by the trustees. A plain solid surface was included in the submitted and approved bid. There is no difference in the durability or quality of the two samples, only a difference in appearance. To upgrade to the higher grade would cost an additional \$1,000. The consensus of the trustees is to proceed with the material included in the original bid by the builder, with no need to upgrade to a higher grade sill material.
 - c. Circulation Desk – Burton updated the trustees about the finish on the circulation desk. The builder provided samples of the wood used in the desk, a rift cut oak with clear finish, which matches the newly purchased children's shelving. The circulation desk looks very nice and Burton is requesting an additional quote for hutches to be installed on the circulation desk to increase functionality. Sneeze guards will also be needed. The circulation desk has a variety of counter heights to accommodate different ages, heights, and abilities of patrons. Staff can either sit or stand. However, the circulation desk design details were not available to the construction committee until the project had already gone out to bid, and some modifications will now need to be made to the circulation desk design to make it possibly for staff to sit comfortably at the desk. Fortunately, the desk will be on casters and is constructed in segments that can be reconfigured as needed.
9. **Personnel Committee (Pittman)** – The personnel committee is planning to meet on December 20 with Burton and Collins to discuss the projects to be accomplished over the next six months.
 10. **Grand Opening Committee (Bloxom and Holland)** – No updates presented.
 11. **ESPL Foundation (Davenport)**
 - a. **Capital Campaign Update** – Davenport reviewed a memo to the trustees from Colette Nelson. The plan to approach incorporated towns is on hold until a commitment is gotten from the Town of Parksley. The winners of the basket drawing are being contacted. A planned giving newsletter will be sent out before the end of the year. The letter campaign urging donors to increase their gift to the next contribution levels has been successful, with an additional \$22,500 raised, as was the response to the Chairman's letter with over \$16,000 raised. Giving Tuesday also resulted in an additional \$10,000 raised, with \$5,000 from the public and a matching amount provided by the Foundation Board.
 12. **Capital Project Update – Steering Committee (Valentine)** – The roof is coming along but is not complete at this point. Burton noted that the alarm installation is scheduled to begin tomorrow, December 15th. At Holland's request, Bloxom will be representing the library in Ryan's place at the weekly construction meeting each Tuesday. Bloxom and Valentine noted that progress is being made on the exterior parking and sidewalk portions of the project.
 13. **Old Business**
 - a. Strategic Planning (Davenport) – The process is proceeding and the committee plans to meet December 15th.

14. New Business

- a. Audit and Annual Report – With the auditor unable to attend, this item will be discussed at the January trustee meeting.
- b. Naming Opportunities – Burton is compiling a list of additional naming opportunities beyond those already in the building contract, for the purpose of additional fundraising by the Foundation. Davenport noted that one item on the current naming opportunity list is for the Employee Lunch area. Davenport asked the trustees to approve his acquisition of the employee lunch area. Bloxom approved. Valentine seconded. Motion approved.
- c. USDA Rural Development Grant – Compact Shelving – Compact shelving is needed in the archives room. Several NEH grants have been applied for unsuccessfully. It was decided to use \$100,000 from this year's Northampton County allotment, and apply for matching funds from USDA, and the remainder to be paid for by the Foundation. If the shelving is applied for and ordered now, it should arrive approximately in April. A resolution authorizing Burton to apply for the USDA grant is necessary to proceed with the application.

RESOLUTION OF GOVERNING BODY OF the Eastern Shore Public Library

The Board of Trustees of the Eastern Shore Public Library, consisting of nine members, in a duly called meeting held on the 14th day of December 2021, at which a quorum was present **RESOLVED** as follows:

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that in order to facilitate obtaining financial assistance from the United States of America, United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (the Government) in the purchase of library equipment, the Governing Body does hereby adopt and abide by all covenants contained in the agreements, documents, and forms required by the Government to be executed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of the Eastern Shore Public Library be authorized to execute on behalf of Board of Trustees, referenced agreements, documents, and forms and to execute such other documents including, but not limited to, debt instruments, security instruments, and/or grant agreements as may be required in obtaining the said financial assistance.

This Resolution is hereby entered into the permanent minutes of the meetings of this Board of Trustees.

The grant would be used to purchase compact shelving for the Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center in Parksley library. The library would expend \$119,000, of which \$100,000 is an allocation from Northampton County, and then receive \$21,000 in matching funds. Davenport motioned to approve the resolution. Rose-Jensen seconded. Motion approved.

Closed Meeting

Motion was made by Pat Bloxom, seconded by Tim Valentine, that the Board enter closed session to discuss personnel performance as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-371(A)(1): "Public bodies may hold closed meetings only for the following purposes:

1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals.”

All members were present with the exception(s) of Dennis Custis, David Poyer, and Gerry Ryan and voted “yes.” The motion was unanimously passed.

Certification of Closed Meeting:

Board Chairman: “Do you certify that the matters discussed in the closed session just held were covered in the motion by which the Library Board entered closed session, and were excluded from the open meeting requirements of the Freedom of Information Act?”

Upon being polled individually by a roll call vote in open meeting, each Board member confirmed that these were the only matters of discussion during the closed session.

15. **Additional Comments** – none

16. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 1:00 pm, Accomack County Airport.

17. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm by the Chair. Jay Davenport motioned to adjourn with Carl Rose-Jensen seconding. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Burton, Secretary

Friends of Eastern Shore Public Library
February 15, 2022

The Friends Book Shop at the New Parksley Library -- We are very excited about our Book Shop at the new library. We will have a dedicated room off the entrance foyer opposite the Circulation Desk. The room has an open doorway with a half window on either side. The space is approximately 10 feet by 8 feet with two side walls to hold 10 feet of shelves and a back wall which will have 8 feet of shelves. Thanks to our membership and a very generous donation of \$5000 we have been able to purchase brand new custom shelving for the interior! The shelving is sturdy steel library shelving in a light grey. All the shelves are adjustable, and the lower shelf will angle out making it easier to see the books. It will be so much easier to find and buy your favorite bargain books as we will be able to sort them before displaying them. The room will be open to patrons during library opening hours.

(Left) Some of the 110 children who visited Santa at the library December 2021.
(Right) Families waiting to visit Santa December 2021.



Photos: J.Malarkey



**Regional Library
Building Campaign**

Donations:
ESPL Foundation
P.O Box 554
Accomac, VA 23301

Fundraising Office:
6 College Avenue, B-3
Onancock, VA 23417
757-787-2500
esplibraryfundraiser16@gmail.com
www.ESPLFoundation.org

Foundation Chairman

John Willis Edmonds, IV

President

Albert J. McMath

Vice President

Jay Davenport

Recording Secretary

Carol Callander

Treasurer

Frank Hall

Corresponding Secretary

Kitty Hall

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Katherine C. Grier, Ph.D.

Brenda E. Holden, Ph.D.

J.T. Holland

Ronald Matthews

Keith M. Miles

Colette M. Nelson

Tom Rakowski

Philip L. Whaley

Ex-officio

Cara Burton

Library Director

Joyce Holland

Chair

Library Board of Trustees

Currently, one part of the mission of the Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation is to raise funds to complete construction and interior furnishings of the new Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library and Heritage Center. After completion of the new facility, the Foundation will continue its mission to support the needs of the regional library and its affiliates in perpetuity.

As part of this mission, we developed a "Naming Opportunity and Plaque Attribution" list. Rooms can be named as a donor wishes to acknowledge their donation. Equipment and furniture will have attribution plaques assigned to each piece according to the donor's instructions.

Please consider helping us to complete equipping the new Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library and Heritage Center. For more information, please contact our office at 757-787-2500 or email us at esplibraryfundraiser16@gmail.com.

Best regards,

Albert J. McMath
President

Rooms – Naming Opportunity	Donation Level
Archivist Office	\$25,000.00
Archivist Processing Room	\$25,000.00
Children's Program Room	\$50,000.00
Computer Area	\$50,000.00
Gallery	\$25,000.00
Group Study Room	\$50,000.00
Lecture Hall	\$100,000.00
Public Service Area	\$50,000.00
Reading Room	\$100,000.00
Equipment & Furniture – Plaque Attribution	
Archive Prep Room Equipment – freezer, tables, tools, cabinets	\$14,000.00
Assistive Hearing Equipment	\$5,000.00
Community Information Display	\$20,000.00
Computer Station	\$5,000.00
Copier	\$10,000.00
Digital Film Reader	\$10,000.00
End Range Panels (for shelving) to upcycle existing steel shelving	\$14,000.00
End Range Panel refinishing (9)	\$14,000.00
Flag Pole	\$20,000.00
Gallery Wall Exhibit Hanging System	\$7,000.00
Inside Book Return	\$3,000.00
Interior Signage	\$35,000.00
LED Chandeliers – each – 5 available	\$7,500.00
Map Case (2) each	\$7,000.00
Outdoor Information Kiosk	\$3,000.00
Projection Equipment for Meeting Rooms	\$7,000.00
Sculpture	variable
Shelving	\$2,000.00
Slatwall Information Board – hallway and kids' area	\$3,500.00
Storage Shed – Outdoors	\$5,000.00
Study Room Equipment	\$5,000.00
Table (small)	\$2,000.00
Tech Kiosks, Recharging Stations	\$10,000.00
Trash Cans – Outdoors	\$7,000.00
Virtual Reality Equipment	\$10,000.00
Visual Assistance Technology	TBD

Library System Report

Cara Burton, System Director

Director's Update:

While everyone is disappointed ESPL is not in the new regional library and Heritage Center yet, library staff press on to ensure the Accomac library remains functional, despite its limitations. Over the past year, new equipment and the relocation of the Foundation's office required furniture and devices to be stored in the front area of the Accomac library. After all, it was only for a few months. After recent construction change news, the decision was made to reorganize the Accomac library for improved appearance, safety, and access.

Bates Moving, the Salisbury, Maryland company ESPL plans to use for moving to Parksley, was contacted for the reorganization project. The plan was to clear out a large "alcove" near the bathrooms that could easily be blocked off. This area would store the equipment and furniture not being used at this time. This required relocating books on wall shelves and five large nonfiction 92 inch shelving ranges. The Bates representative reviewed our plan and recommended a faster, more efficient, and less expensive way to accomplish what we wanted. He could

Continued page 2

LIBRARY INTEGRATION OF NEW LEARNING TOOL

The Eastern Shore Public Library system has partnered with Niche Academy to bring a new learning tool to patrons. Through the use of Niche Academy, learning about the libraries eResources will be easier than ever. Niche Academy utilizes different mediums to bring to the public more information about resources offered by the library system. These mediums include instructional videos and written guides.

Our eResources are there to help patrons' access information online 24/7. These resources include genealogy resources such as Ancestry and FamilySearch, as well as resources

Continued page 6



move the ranges without removing the books!

The added benefit of the internal move was to provide the moving experience to ESPL staff to better prepare them for “the big move” to Parksley. None of the staff, except for me, have participated in a professional library move, much less one of this size. It requires a lot of planning to ensure the moving day goes smoothly and so that additional work is not required to reorganize after the move, realizing a previous decision just didn't work out as expected. Such situations happen, but you try to prevent them.

When the big day arrived, Bates decided to double-up his staff due complete the project in one day due to a big snow storm then day after. The library was closed to allow for this increased, expedited activity to ensure the safety of our patrons and so that staff could focus on the moving. Staff had a fun time both working and learning together as a team and watching the amazing work of the movers. Videos of the move are available to watch on our Facebook page.

Peninsula Floor Service was then hired to give the floors a good cleaning. This not only helps appearance but also the health of staff, patrons, *and* the books. Books on low shelves deteriorate quicker with the dust and grime that kicks up.

The irony of the situation is that our new, red children's shelving is now being used for the Large Print collection. It just goes to show that equipment, planning, and spaces need to be flexible!

BEFORE



AFTER



Special wheeled racks can move shelving with books remaining on shelves, saving time and moving expense. This method is only for internal relocations.

Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

Audiobooks: How Library Patrons Listen

Evaluating circulation statistics over time can aid in identifying long-term trends in patron interests, behaviors, and information needs. As the world approaches the two-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic, assessing library patron's borrowing activity, and how it may have changed because of restricted or reduced daily activities, is worthwhile.

Recently, Collection Management Librarian, Charle Ricci, conducted an analysis of the ESPL's audiobook circulation, with a goal of determining if the pandemic had significantly impacted patron borrowing of physical audiobooks. If circulation data revealed a large decrease in physical audiobook circulation that corresponded with a large increase in eAudiobook (digital audiobooks on the Libby/Overdrive) usage, then a shift in amounts budgeted for these two material types would be advisable.

Using circulation reports from the library's software, Atrium, and from Overdrive, Ricci collected monthly physical and electronic audiobook circulation figures for a nearly two year period: February 2020 through December 2021. This data was then converted into a bar

graph to create a visual representation of the listening patterns of ESPL library patrons. (*see next page*).

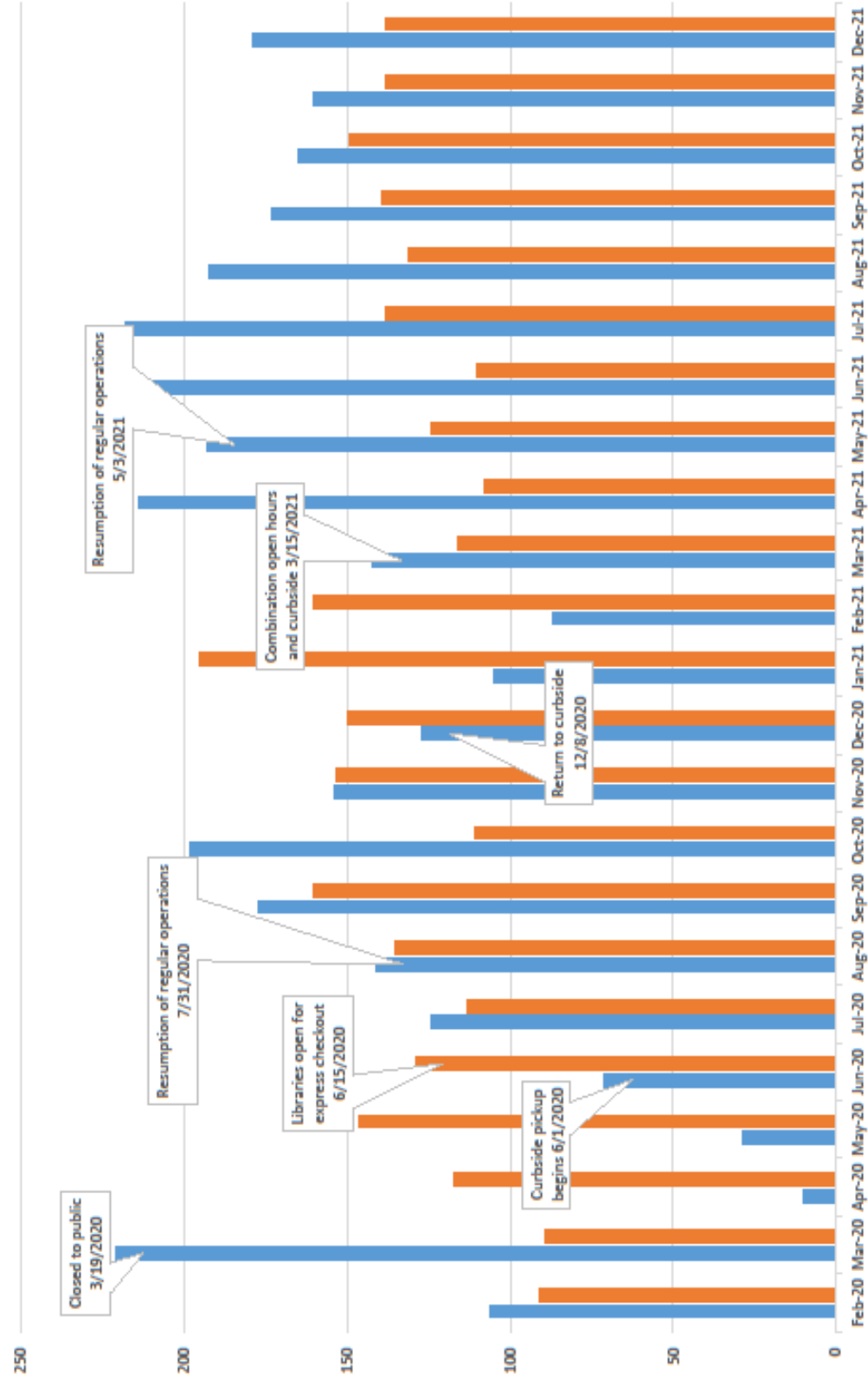
Data points were added to the bar graph to identify periods of pandemic-related library closures or reductions in normal operations, such as operating under curbside service only. With this additional layer of information, it immediately became clear that eAudiobook circulation increased whenever the Eastern Shore was experiencing a spike in COVID case numbers, which brought about restricted access to visiting the library in person.

The bar graph also revealed that whenever Shore libraries returned to regular operations, the circulation of physical audiobooks not only rebounded, but surpassed pre-pandemic rates of circulation. eAudiobooks have also circulated at higher rates than before the pandemic, even when the ESPL is operating without restrictions or reductions in service.

Ricci concluded that while eAudiobook usage increased greatly during COVID waves, and has continued to remain higher than pre-pandemic levels, the long-term trend of significant increases in physical audiobook circulation negates any need to reallocate budgeted amounts for the two types of audiobooks. As ESPL patrons continue to enjoy listening to audiobooks, the library will strive to provide materials in their preferred formats, guided by circulation activity and data analysis.

Audiobook Circulation

■ Physical Audio ■ eAudio



Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian

Throughout December and until January 15th, Youth Services ran a 'Holidays around the World' Challenge on Beanstack. This challenge featured a drawing for various prizes. Youth were able to earn tickets which were used to enter a drawing for each specific prize. This challenge saw some success. We had a total of 11 kids participate and 5 winners were selected out of those winners. After doing various challenges, it seems that raffle or drawing challenges see less participation than regular prize challenges. Notably, this is still high participation for this type of challenge compared to previous ones.



Throughout January, Youth Services Librarian Tiffany Flores continued working extensively on the Summer Reading Program. This year's theme is 'Oceans of Possibilities' which is a fitting theme for the shore. As part of this month's planning, Tiffany worked predominantly on promotional items and developing programming for the tween/teen age groups to provide better services to the community. In addition to summer planning, she also got together all the craft takeaway kits for spring. Many exciting things are still in the works for this year.

ESPL still lacks a dedicated Adult Services Librarian, who would work with book clubs and develop programs for the majority of our service population. Instead, it is done piecemeal. Staff creatively take advantage of low-time investment activities, like the "Together We Read" community virtual reading activity.





Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager

Although January was very cold our attendance was up! Sharon has been working on the 2022 Summer Library Reading Program. She was also able to get a free Paper Bag Princess event kit from Annick Press and an Inclusive Financial Education Programming Kit sponsored by the American Library Association and the Financial Industry Regularity Investor Education Foundation. This information will allow us to provide additional free programs in the future. I put together a Wish List for the friends of the library for the upcoming year.

Cape Charles Memorial Library happily presents

Paper Bag Princess Day

Saturday, March 5 11:00 am



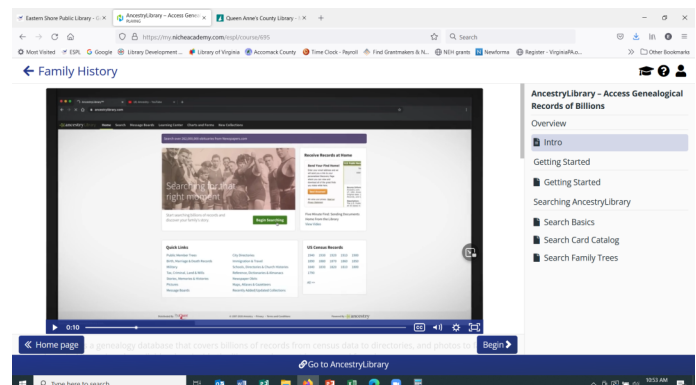
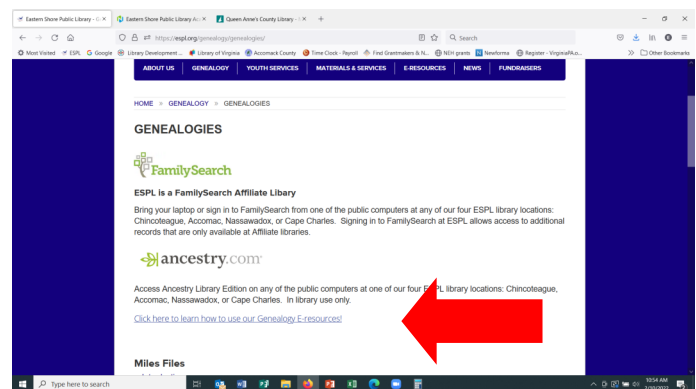
When the fiercest dragon in the world smashes Princess Elizabeth's castle, burns all her clothes, and captures Prince Ronald, Elizabeth takes matters into her own hands (wearing only a paper bag!) Join us for a story time, creative crafts, and fun giveaways!

Register today by calling 757-331-1300 (limited seating)

Niche Academy, Continued from page 1

for family and children such as Novelist Plus and Prep guides for information about careers. There are many more eResources that can be accessed. All that is needed is a library card and a PIN number, which is set up when patrons sign up for a library card. Niche Academy informs users why and how to use these valuable free eResources.

Niche Academy is free to access on the espl.org website at any time, just look for "Click here to learn about this resource" throughout the website to access the informational videos. For questions and additional details, please email Librarian Hannah Swimley at nfl@espl.org or call 757-414-0010.





Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager

The Chincoteague Island Library has been busy despite the cold and snow. As CIL began the New Year, our patrons have been using the library more and more. From the checkout of materials, reserving materials, to questions about e-resources and about ShoreCat catalog, helping them achieve resources available to them such as job searches and the printing out of important information needed.

As COVID cases began to soar, The CIL Board made the decision to return to Curbside Pick-Up Only on January 10th. We continue to assist patrons with their library needs. Many of the afore-mentioned needs have increased and are very encouraging. Take-away bags with craft supplies were created for the young ones, in which they could decorate a picture of mittens, and given out.

Beginning February 7th, CIL will re-open to the public! Due to COVID cases easing up now, The CIL Board has decided that it is safe to re-open.



February is National Library Lover's Month. It is dedicated to those who love and are devoted to reading, finding, studying and otherwise loving books. And to those who seek out libraries that house, gather, collect, organize, and categorize books and materials to fulfill that love of reading. CIL has created a display to express the mutual love of books and reading. We have placed hearts for our patrons to write a "love note" and receive Hershey Kisses. A favorite book/author, a thank you for help given, a request, what they love about our library/libraries are just some of the suggestions given. A huge thank you to Nancy Cunningham and Linda Ryan, CIL's Board members, who helped with the creation of our display.



On Friday, February 11th, The CIL Board will hold their monthly meeting. They will be finalizing the plans for CIL's Baskets Fundraiser. Tickets have been made and the baskets are ready. There will be two baskets: one for Adults and one for Children that contain items Chincoteague-related. Now the final planning stages to finish. Stay tuned...

Northampton Free Library

Hannah Swimley, Branch Manager



Clarke and Sons Inc. came to the library and re-wired the inside and outside accessibility door buttons. There had been a problem since installation with these two buttons working properly. According to the company, they were wired incorrectly upon installation, as the factory had not explained the different wiring system that was being used. This was causing the buttons to be constantly 'on' and draining the power, instead of only using power when the buttons were pushed. The buttons should now be working properly, which will allow for easier accessibility for our patrons.

Northampton Free Library introduced curbside pickup from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday through Friday, for three weeks during the month of January. Patrons were allowed inside the building from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday, and from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays. This was a direct result from the rise in COVID-19 numbers on the shore, and was decided upon to help prevent staff and patrons from possibly catching the virus while utilizing the space.

The library is also undergoing some exciting renovation projects. To begin, the meeting room in the library will be painted a calming shade of light green to help promote creativity. The external trim will also be re-painted white in order to refresh the outside of the

building. Everyone here at the library is ready for this change, and are hopeful that patrons will enjoy it as well.

There are also many external projects in the works around the NFL building. These projects range from removing the dead and/or dying plants and bushes from around the building, and removing the juniper plants and stones from the front walkway of the building, as well as replacing the aforementioned section cement blocks to assist with accessibility. The lighting around the building will also be replaced, and a new seating



A gutter and flashing was installed to mitigate water damage to the siding.

area in front of the building will be introduced. These are not all of the projects that are currently in the works here at NFL. These projects are to assist those who may need an easier time accessing the building, as well as refreshing the overall look of the building.

Making the Most of Genealogical Databases

As the new surge in the COVID-19 pandemic, compounded by winter weather, limits travel and access to the library's *physical* resources, *online* genealogical resources are always available. Time at home can be well spent by taking a look at the Ancestry and Family Search genealogical databases. Whether delving into ancestral research for the first time, revisiting an old hobby, or wanting to supplement continual research, both Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org offer access to vital records, census information, military records and more.

Ancestry.com has over 11 billion searchable name records. Many of those records are free to view and save to family trees, however, some require paid subscription or can be accessed using Ancestry Library Edition on one of the public computers at any branch of the Eastern Shore Public Library system. During most of the pandemic, Ancestry allowed library patrons to remote access to Ancestry Library Edition at home, however, this pandemic accommodation ended in December of 2021.

The FamilySearch database allows users to access from any location with a free account. While FamilySearch has less searchable records, the site has a collection of un-indexed digital images that can be browsed. Some search results may contain attached images that can only be viewed at a FamilySearch affiliate library, such as ESPL. A helpful aspect of FamilySearch is the shared family tree. When users build a family tree, each relative that is entered is given a profile, where details are shown and can be edited and sources can be attached. With the shared family tree, other people who identify that individual as an ancestor can also contribute to the ancestor's profile. By clicking on the person who contributed to the profile, Family Search gives the option of viewing the relationship, allowing users to connect with unknown relatives. Some may dislike the potential of any user viewing and editing profiles, however, only relatives who have been listed as deceased are made public. Living relatives on a user's family tree are private.

As of January 2022, new Virginia County Marriage Records, 1771-1989, have been added to FamilySearch. Nearly all features of FamilySearch.org are also available on the Family Tree mobile app. Users that are interested in preserving family history will find the Memories feature espe-

cially useful. Using the Memories feature, as well as the Memories mobile app, users can organize new and old family photos with Topic Tags, create slide-shows with audio which can be shared on social media apps, create albums, and Bookmark important memories from shared albums. The Memories feature is an excellent for storing family photos, documents, and audio recordings in one place, and easily share with family and friends. FamilySearch Memories app is also a platform for creating oral histories from any location.

Another Family Search free feature is RootsTech, a virtual family history conference and year-long learning platform. RootsTech offers hundreds of video sessions from each year's conference from notable historians and genealogists covering topics such as DNA testing; tips for searching records; connecting with family; website tools and apps; and activities for getting the entire family involved in learning family history. Sessions can be saved to the user's playlist for easy access all year. RootsTech also offers an ExpoHall, where users can see new products and updates for new features from a variety of exhibitors and sponsors, including Ancestry, MyHeritage, National Genealogical Society, Library of Virginia, and dozens of other companies, genealogical societies and institutions. RootsTech 2022, scheduled for March 3-5. Registration is still open and is completely virtual and completely free. RootsTech 2022 will share a different set of keynote speakers each day, discovery content, and sponsor content. Attendees can join anytime and watch what is playing on the main stage, watch one of over 900 sessions, visit the virtual Expo Hall, connect with other attendees, or get research help. Creating a schedule is as easy as adding the class to the playlist. The 2022 schedule will be added a few days before the conference. Each session will have chatrooms for questions answered by the presenters or moderators or for making connections with other attendees. FamilySearch's Relatives near me feature will also connect with Relatives at RootsTech platform, where attendees will be able to initiate connections with family members in attendance. Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask questions get research help from FamilySearch researcher helpers virtually during the conference, either at the virtual Expo Hall FamilySearch booth or the Ask Me Anything Button. While session videos will remain accessible year-long, session and research chatrooms, as well as Relatives at RootsTech are only available during the length of the conference. FamilySearch users can still check out video sessions from RootsTech2021, which will remain up until just before the 2022 conference begins.

While the Eastern Shore Public Library encourages patrons to visit the Eastern Shore Room, and validating online source information is always wise, the online genealogical databases may prove helpful. New source material, research guidance, and hints provided by these services may help streamline new users' genealogical research or provide previously missing connections, or at the very least, another platform for interaction with others of shared interest.

ESPL Grant Update - February 2022

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) – This ARPA money is distributed to the Library of Virginia. \$28,709 based on the state aid formula. Original budget: RFID installation (due to construction delay) - \$10,000; security system - \$1,950; Video monitoring - \$9,186; HC website - \$6,000, phase 2; tech consultant - \$1,573. Due to construction delays and the timing of the grant deadline, a revised budget is being developed of actions that can be completed now, such as the purchase of Niche Academy and the reorganization of shelving. **Therefore, new funds will need to be secured for: RFID installation (due to construction delay) - \$10,000; security system - \$1,950; Video monitoring - \$9,186.

NEH Challenge Grant – The expenditure budget of remaining funds needs to be updated and approved.

Virginia Humanities (VH) – 2 grants (1) Continue to work with US250 consultant, paid for with VH grant. Consultant, John Verrill, has interviewed a couple more members and will present a final copy by the February 2022 meeting. (2) SHARP grant for the purpose of a Heritage Center planning consultant was awarded and the consultant has been retained. Bryan & Jordan Consulting, LLC, www.bryanandjordan.com, has been retained to provide consulting services for this project. The B&J consultants will be at ESPL in late February interviewing preselected focus groups. The visit was delayed due to spikes in COVID-19.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – Emergency Connectivity Fund. Application submitted that will support technology for area nonprofits, namely wifi hotspots, ipads, and ChromeBooks. No word yet on approval.

United Way of ESVA – ESPL Foundation applied for the FY22 grant for an outside information kiosk. (around \$2,000)

USDA Rural Development Communities Assistance Grant – We do not receive the USDA money until all equipment has arrived and all matching funds expended. Accomac grant (children's shelving and Digitization Lab): All reimbursement funds have been received from USDA. The grant is complete and closed out. There is an issue with the ESPL Foundation's SBA loan confusing the Treasury Department's database which says ESPL has a Federal debt. The Foundation is working to resolve.

Parksley (compact shelving for Heritage Center): Total project \$140,000. 99% of application submitted for \$21,000. Match will be \$100,000 from Northampton County FY22 capital funds and \$19,000 from ESPL Foundation. Hope to hear in April 2022 if grant is awarded. Equipment order on hold until new schedule is made for the construction. It is hoped the timing for all works together.