



Library System Report

EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA • PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM • Cara Burton, System Director

Regional Library and Heritage Center • Cape Charles Memorial Library • Chincoteague Island Library • Northampton Free Library

Making Archives Accessible

By Christopher Pote, CA

As an archives, we are responsible for the long-term storage, care and preservation, and discoverability of the historical materials we possess. The benefit of a large, modern space is that it better allows for the many activities required to meet these core responsibilities.

The Heritage Center is largely a paper-based repository. Although we do preserve digital collections and other materials, the bulk of the collection needs proper, physical storage space. Currently, the physical collections equal roughly 600 linear feet of paper-based materials. The Accomac facility is only capable of holding 275 linear feet. It would be beneficial for the eventual organization of the permanent facility to house of all these materials under one roof. More physical space can house all of this material and allow us to begin accepting collections again.

Proper storage also includes maintaining adequate, stable environmen-



Pote reviews the location of the HVAC units and potential water threats to archives in storage.



DIRECTORS' UPDATE

LIBRARY NEEDS MATCH ESVA WORK NEEDS

The ESPL Trustees recently approved a thorough, well-thought-out Strategic Plan for library staff to execute in the next five years. The Plan addressed the community's expectations expressed in our many outreach events and meetings. Expectations increased with an eye on operations in a new, modern facility. One of the greatest challenges I see in meeting these goals is employing the skilled staff needed to execute the needed programs and services.

It seems nearly every business on the Eastern Shore has a "Help Wanted" sign posted. The staff shortage is apparent when one sees only one cashier at a store instead of two, boxes of merchandise in the aisles at retail stores waiting to be shelved, and busy signals when calling offices for appointments. Some places have cut hours, including ESPL.

A skilled workforce is one of the top issues many businesses cite when talking about critical needs. Not only are the number of

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applications down when jobs are posted, but the applicants are often not qualified. The applications we receive at the library are from people that love the concept of working in a place with lots of books, but they do not understand what is involved with working in the modern public library.

One of the chief barriers people have indicated to me, which reflects in the lack of qualified applications, is that working in a public library can be intimidating. There are many misconceptions about what it is like to work in a library. After all, don't you have to be well-read and knowledgeable of all literature? Don't you have to be "super smart?"

Another reason people may not want to apply is because working at the library involves working with the public. Many people just do not want to do this. A reality of the workforce today is that working from home is very appealing for many and it better fits their family needs. Also, the aggressive, demanding behavior of today's general public is just not appealing to job seekers. Public service workers balance the fear of not saying the "right" thing to a patron and the patron saying inappropriate things to staff.

Ironically, the "public" is what is turning off the workforce applicants that need to service the "public." A clear, effective Patron Rights Responsibility Policy is an important tool in defining the expectations within our sphere of operations. While most of our patrons are kind, thoughtful visitors, we do get some that are challenging to service, if not just plain rude to the point of harassment. Libraries' behavior policies define expectations and are used by patrons and staff to hold each other accountable.

Communication and technology skills are the primary job skills needed to work in today's public library. What I look for in a prospective employee is someone who can look a library patron in the eye and welcome them into the library with an articulate, cheerful greeting. How well does the applicant interact with other people?

The applicant needs to competently be able to use the computer *and* be capable of instructing others how to

complete basic computer tasks and troubleshoot basic technology issues. Helping someone print from a computer or make a photocopy is often the assistance most requested by patrons.

I do not need employees that have read the classics or know all the popular authors. Working at the library is not for heavy readers that want to hide behind a book. We do welcome these reading enthusiasts as volunteers. They make excellent shelvees and can help with preparing books for circulation or book sales.



Improving patron service by updating the behavior policy was a group discussion at the July Staff Development Day.

Recruiting professional staff is even more challenging. Developing engaging, purposeful programs that meet the literacy goals of the library is not an easy task. Not only must the staff person be an organized planner and marketing professional, but the librarian also needs to be able to stand in front of a group of strangers, welcome them to the program, and ensure the program is executed safely and effectively. The Librarian may not have to be the presenter or educator, but is certainly the Masters of Ceremony.

Professional staff are also expected to work with our community partners and volunteers, which requires interpersonal skills, participation in meetings, and expertise in writing in different formats. Librarians are life-long learners, always eager and curious to build their knowledge. Obviously, a skilled librarian must be able to multi-task; to rise to the occasion of each day's new adventures.

On top of the difficulty in recruiting qualified staff, we also have the challenge of having **the space for them to work**. At this time, the new library will have just enough space for the staff and volunteers that work daily

at the library. The new regional library does not have the storage space needed for supplies, much less additional employees.

One solution we have found is to have temporary off-site office space for specific projects. This will work well for the Heritage Center's projects which do not require interaction with the public. Another is to allow some staff to telecommute, which works well with Technical Services. Some staff work at Northampton Free Library when their duties do not require being at the main facility; this also serves to provide back-up support at the branch.

Being an employee is a wonderful experience in teamwork and public service. We carefully screen our applicants to ensure they are a good fit for our work-family and a benefit to the community. As ESPL grows, we continue to ensure the space and resources to support them in the workplace is available.

To Meet the Goals of the Strategic Plan, New ESPL Positions will Include:

- ◆ Local History Reference Librarian
- ◆ Archive Specialist and/or Field Archivist
- ◆ Technology Librarian
- ◆ Administrative Assistant
- ◆ Library Specialist (1.5 FTE)
- ◆ Teen Librarian
- ◆ Volunteer and Events Coordinator

PLANNED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AT THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA REGIONAL LIBRARY AND HERITAGE CENTER

The Library supports the SET Plan of Action by providing business services for entrepreneurs. The new meeting space will be available for area entrepreneurship education and distribution of information to develop businesses (SET Appendix D, Objective B). The equipment and space within the library will act as an incubator to support new business in their planning and startup (SET Appendix D, Objective C). Professional staff can mentor entrepreneurs by providing direction to area resources, organizing relevant programs, and providing technology assistance (SET Appendix D, Objective C). Pilot projects that support and monitor entrepreneurs can collect output measures and survey feedback on the use of the library. The library can tally questions and material circulation related to business.

SERVICES

Library services are financially beneficial to local business and individuals. These services are free, creating more disposable income for personal and business financial growth. For example, ESPL provides free access to Gale's "Small Business Collection" databases that entrepreneurs can access using the free high-speed Internet access in the library. They can print, scan, and email this information using library equipment and use library space and equipment for business planning and development. By making use of these free services, the money saved can be spent on area businesses' goods and services. To measure these cost savings, "library value calculators" can be used that supply the amount of money an individual saves based on their input of library usage.

Other business services ESPL provides includes:

- ◆ High-speed Internet access for public use
- ◆ Space and facilities for holding business meetings
- ◆ Books or other information on starting or managing a business
- ◆ Economic and/or demographic data and statistics
- ◆ Legal information or resources
- ◆ Directories of businesses (local, state or national)



- ◆ Local job postings
- ◆ Resources for non-profit planning
- ◆ Small-business tax information
- ◆ Resources for real-estate related research
- ◆ Other specific business-related databases
- ◆ Business-related programs or workshops
- ◆ Government documents and/or databases
- ◆ Business periodicals
- ◆ Information on patents and/or trademarks



The TalkBox Privacy Pod will be placed at three ESPL libraries: ESRL, CIL, CCML.

FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT RESOURCES

Conference, Meeting, Tutoring and Large Group Instruction Rooms

The Lecture Hall (80 people capacity), 10 person capacity meeting room, and two small meeting rooms will be multi-use large instruction rooms for conferences, programs, and workshops. Attendees can enter the Lecture Hall through a separate side entrance, have access to restrooms and the refreshment preparation room. Broadband and hybrid-classroom technology will provide for public viewing of webinars and streamed content.

Privacy Pod – A sound-proof room with access to broadband is often needed by students and business people for interviews and other confidential calls. The pod is like a sound-proof phone booth.

Office Equipment – Color printers, pc's, fax machine, and copying equipment are available to the public along with broadband access. What home-office workers often need is a large table space to work on a project. These will be available in a variety of places in the building.

MakerSpace

The ESVARLHC MakerSpace is equipped to be a multiuse audio-visual studio. It will include an iMac, recording technology, greenscreen, editing and digitization equipment, and more. Potential uses include:

Podcasts - Scholars, authors, teachers, and entrepreneurs can post audio-recordings online for people to download on their personal devices, usually for free. A sound studio with recording-quality acoustics and equipment can open up opportunities to improve podcast recordings and better enable distribution of knowledge. Individuals can work here on the Shore with these resources.

Video-recordings – Businesses, instructors, and entrepreneurs can create their own video content for advertising, demonstrations, instruction, how-to's, and video-streaming. Students will not only learn to use the technology, but can use it for coursework, interviews, and recitals or applications.

Webinars - Audio-visual equipment and broadband access will enable local businesses and consultants to conduct webinars in a professional studio.

Self publishing - Today's writers can go beyond rigid black and white text to convey their stories and research with graphics and engaging formats. Self-publishing now enables individuals to easily create their own books, if they have the equipment. Scanning of documents can enhance content creation and visuals in publications.

STEM training - Library Youth Services staff and teachers can use all the Makerspace equipment to teach physics, computer science, coding, engineering, math and other disciplines. For example, audio equipment can teach about sound waves and related math.



Heritage Center

Christopher Pote, Heritage Center Manager



Archives—Continued from page 1

tal conditions year-round, namely temperature and relative humidity. Ambient temperature should always remain in range of 60°-70°F. The acceptable range for relative humidity is 45%-55%. This is the first step in proper preservation, and these parameters are difficult to maintain in Accomac during the summer. The collections will benefit greatly by being relocated as soon as possible.

Discoverability refers to the ease of finding the information sought and providing access to it. This is done through the processing of collections and writing of finding aids to gain intellectual control of a collection. If we are processing a collection of personal papers, for example, we need the space for large tables in order to spread out the collections, assess preservation needs, learn about everything that is in the collection, and then organize it all in a logical manner. The materials then need to be placed in archives-safe folders and boxes. All folders and boxes are labeled with their contents and other data. The finding aid is subsequently produced to provide the researcher with the descriptive data informing what information is contained therein. A good finding aid will provide biographical and historical information about the donor, the complete contents of the collection, and the subjects these contents cover.

Processing is meticulous work that needs dedicated, trained staff, and more staff require more space. In order for the Heritage Center to provide the services we promise to the community, we need to increase the staff to handle much of

the processing work. Staff also need desks and work stations separate from the processing space. Being able to physically support more people will allow for the organizational and descriptive work of the collection to be performed simultaneously with the reference, outreach, and managerial duties. The sooner we can accommodate more staff, the sooner we can make more material available to our constituents.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center is being constructed with these responsibilities in mind. Good stewardship on our end will ensure the materials arrive securely and ready to serve the community.



Tangier History Museum's Nina Pruitt recently loaned her yearbook collection to be digitized.



Chris Pote and Jazmine Collins train staff on basics of Heritage Center services.



Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian



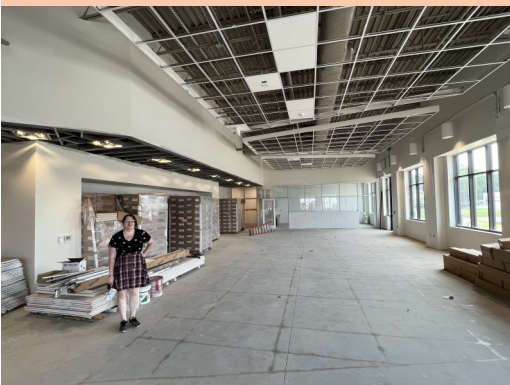
Throughout the spring and summer months, Tiffany has been working hard to distribute the excess Read Every Day (RED) books that were leftover from a project done in the Summer of 2021. These books have been distributed to various organizations to support the community.

About 120 books were given to The Friends of Eastern Shore Public Library for their July 4th event and their Santa event. Eastern Shore Rural Health has taken 240 books to distribute among their youth patients. Similarly, The Eastern Shore of Virginia Health District has taken 896 books to use for a program they are doing for children. 180 went to the New Beginnings United Methodist Church and 114 went to Grace United Methodist Church for their events. Between both Headstart organizations, 1290 books were distributed to their children and Migrant Headstart took 540 for theirs.

We also distributed a selection of 20 books to the Muddy Toes Library on Tangier Island to add to their collections in addition to rehoming items removed from Accomac's shelves. Additionally, these books were offered to the schools about a year after they were officially distributed in hopes that new kids would receive these books. Only Accomack Elementary responded with interest and retrieved 270 books.

The remaining books have been used for various

Flores looks forward to having program space inside the library.



Outreach events. Over 146 books went to the Wachapreague Carnival, and a total of 2817 were used at other outreach events such as Juneteenth

Fest, The Latino Festival, Halloween in the Park at Parksley, and many more. At this point, only 287 books remain to be distributed and will be distributed at outreach

events or to any organization that may need them.

Additionally, Charle Ricci and Tiffany Flores have worked diligently to



Books were distributed at Praise in the Park on July 31.

weed Eastern Shore Public Library's collection in preparation for the move to the new building. All withdrawn books are being distributed throughout the community. So far the Virginia Health District has taken 20 books for their program. Accomack Elementary School took about 50 books for their students. Then Headstart took about 75 to 100 books to distribute to their children. The remaining 600 books have either been used for Outreach events or have been set out at Eastern Shore Public Library to be distributed for free.

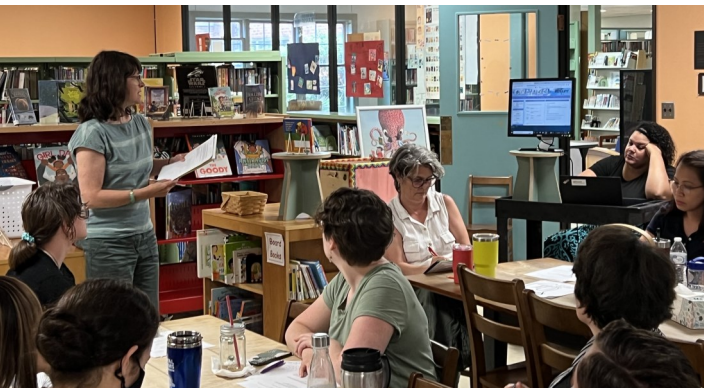
Tiffany Flores recently purchased an AWE computer for the children's space at Eastern Shore Public Library. In doing so, she also located the computers closer to the entrance to the kids' room in hopes to increase use. This has proven quite effective as there has been an increase in usage. From January 1st to May 1st the older modeled computer had 14 sessions total. Once the computer was relocated, it saw 11 sessions in June and a total of 45 sessions in July. The new AWE Learning Computer has also seen a lot of use seeing 12 sessions in June and 43 sessions in July.



Clearing out the Cobwebs from Previous Library Software Migrations

Anyone involved with a company's or organization's software migration has most likely experienced the issue of data not always translating fully or correctly between the old and new systems. The ESPL faced this problem when migrating the library's software system from Auto-Graphics into Evergreen in 2013, and then from Evergreen into Atrium in 2020.

During each of these migrations, circulation, catalog, and patron data were collected by the software provider and converted into the new databases' structure and format. Historic patron information, such as long expired accounts and fine and fee balances were transferred into the new system, but, unfortunately, often with limited or missing details.



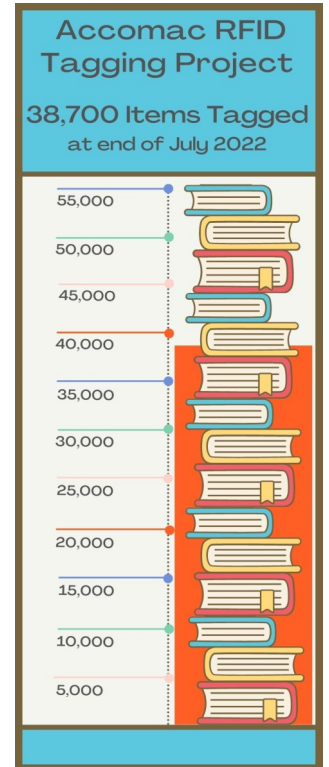
Ricci reviews planned updates to ShoreCat and the procedures for updating patron accounts.

Because these remnants of patron accounts and balances were not fully accessible, they lingered at the edges of the database, not visible in many of the library's regular reports, yet still present when searched for at the individual patron level. An overwhelming majority of these fine balances were incurred more than five years ago, and were no longer collectible under Virginia law.

As the ESPL prepares to launch a rebranded logo and issue beautiful, newly designed library cards, it is time to make sure that all of these bits and pieces of patron accounts and old balances be cleared away. Not only will the data cleanup create goodwill among patrons returning to the library after a long absence, it will make patron registration and account maintenance much more straightforward for library staff.

Technical Services manager, Charle Ricci, took a deep dive into the far reaches of the patron database and, with some creative report building, identified over 14,000 instances of overdue fines to be removed. Totalling over \$100,000, these non-collectible balances cluttered up the library software system and created barriers to efficient customer service. Connor Buyn, Northampton Free Library Manager, is now systematically examining patron accounts and waiving the long-standing fines.

When this project is complete, the library patron and circulation databases will accurately reflect active and current library users, and the residual cobwebs from previous software systems will be gone. New and returning patrons will have the opportunity to open or renew their library account (and receive a striking new library card) without the barrier of outdated account information interfering with the process.



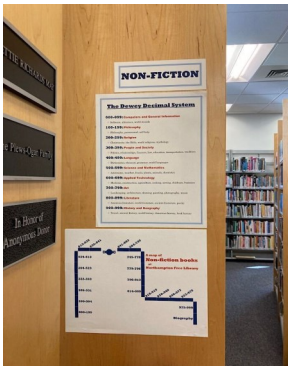


Northampton Free Library



By Connor Buyn, Interim Branch Manager

A survey of the library's attic in July revealed that it had become an unapproved gathering place for local birds, and so repairs were made to the attic's vents to prevent any risk of wildlife becoming trapped or causing damage. More visible improvements were made outside, as the library's side yard was expanded by clearing overgrown brush and the entrance was further enhanced with two new planter pots. There are ongoing discussions about how we can expand opportunities for patrons to benefit from the library's outdoor spaces.



Inside the library, work was completed on reviewing the science fiction and mystery sections. These areas of shelving will now be shifted to bring down the highest books and bring up the lowest books, with the goal of improving accessibility to the collection for all patrons. Updated signage has also been posted in the main area of the library, including a new map of the non-fiction section to help patrons navigate to the items they need.

Landscaping Plans

In addition to the accessibility improvements at the front entrance, Library Director Cara Burton continues to work to improve the green space around NFL, the only one of the system's four libraries that has significant outdoor greenspace. One goal is to create a children's nature trail in the wooded area. The greenspace can be used for a variety of programs as well as nature and well-being education.

Outdoor STEM activities have taken place in the past at NFL and can be enhanced with more useable space. The additional property acquired by a donation and the future RailTrail with proximity to The Nature Conservancy—Brownsville is additional motivation to improve the space.

VDOT will be contacted concerning the right-of-way maintenance.

ANEC has been contacted to determine the process for installing a security light on the telephone pole discovered when brush was cleared away.



Work begun to reclaim NFL's green space!





Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



The month of July came and went in a flash! Cape Charles Memorial Library welcomed over 2000 visitors, checked out more than 1500 library items, and hosted 12 programs (which saw close to 300 attendees!)



Friends of CCML booksale.



CCML Library Board president, Richard Burger, volunteering at story time.



CCML had over 200 guests attend programs this July.



Virginia Living Museum program at Cape Charles Civic Center



Burton ensured ESPL had an entry in the "Christmas In July" tree decorating event at Grace Methodist Church in Parksley. A personal collection of reading figurines was used to decorate the tree to promote the joy of reading.



New bike racks have arrived for NFL and the new library.



Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager



July has been very busy here at CIL. Although there has been an increase with tourists and the Pony Penning activities, the library has been very busy with numerous programs, adding New Patrons, assisting our existing Patrons, public computer/WiFi usage, and many requests for reference/general information from both visitors and patrons.

The Chincoteague Island Library celebrated their 27th anniversary on July 4th. A non-motorized 4th of July Family Parade took place around the walkway of the Robert Reed Downtown Park which is adjacent to the library. Strollers, bikes, trikes, wagons, ponies and those walking participated. Prizes were given for the Best Patriotic-Dressed Family,

Best Patriotic-Decorated "Vehicle", the oldest participant and the youngest participant. There was a great turnout and everyone enjoyed the parade, patriotic music and refreshments. Thanks to Amy Stewart and her daughter Harper for their beautiful rendition of "God Bless America", Mayor Leonard, Pastor Woodburn, Doug Mills of the CIAO, "Uncle Sam" (AKA Lou Bender, volunteer and CIL Board member), and all the library volunteers and Board members who were on hand to help and celebrate.

CIL Board member and volunteer, David Ingold, has created a great window display titled, "Staycation or Vacation. Home or roam. We have books for you!" Thank you, David!

The library's Young Explorers programs, for children ages 5 and up, have been a great success! These programs have been held each Thursday in July at 10AM with two more scheduled for the first 2 Thursdays in August.

On July 7th, Miss Ann from the Chincoteague Bay Field Station visited, with 13 children participating. Miss Ann brought with her a spider crab, a sea urchin and a welk. The children were invited to touch each creature as Miss Ann explained a little about each. Afterwards, the children were asked to draw a picture of a coastal habitat. Then the children cut out shapes of a horseshoe crab and made a mobile. CIL would like to thank the Chincoteague Bay Field Station, Miss Ann and all the library volunteers who made this event a success!

On July 14th, the Young Explorers enjoyed a visit from the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Miss Debbie and Yolanda. They asked the children what kind of birds they saw on the refuge and were given a handmade booklet to either draw birds, use stickers or stamps of birds. After that was completed, they walked over to the library with a sheet of different birds listed and went on a scavenger hunt to find the birds that were placed in well-hidden bushes and trees. Thanks to Miss Debbie and Yolanda and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge!

Diane Frey presented a wonderful Young Explorers program on July 21st titled, "Music in the Garden". She brought



Chincoteague, from previous page.

books and talked about the different sounds birds make and sounds one hears outside. Ms. Diane then challenged the children to take a garden music walk and check off on the list all the sounds we hear. The children learned how to make a garden music wall using household items. At the end of the program, Ms. Diane passed out pinwheels and a take-home craft to paint and create a wind chime. Thank you, Ms. Diane!

On July 28th, in continuing to celebrate Pony Penning week, the library held pony stories inside the library. Outside, Kendy Allen brought her pony, “Misty’s Heart of the Storm” and pony handlers from the Chincoteague Pony Drill Team. The children and adults could feed carrots to the pony and have their pictures taken with the pony. As it was a hot and humid day, CIL thanks Kendy Allen, the Chincoteague Pony Drill Team and their helpers, and Kendy’s pony for coming!

There are 2 more Young Explorers programs planned before wrapping up: August 4th-Chincoteague Island Theatre Tour given by Doug Mills and August 11th-A Walking Tour given by Cindy Faith.

Chincoteague Island Library was one of the locations in the “Virginia is for Adventurers 2022 Scavenger Hunt”. This event took place on Sunday, July 24th. Tara Z. Fisher, the author of “Virginia is for Adventurers”, was on hand to host the scavenger hunt to find Mystery Boxes. The book was written with 4th graders in mind. They could participate in a scavenger hunt all across Virginia either by reading the book and/or actually going to the scavenger hunts planned throughout Virginia. Participants were given a play sheet listing places to go to and have their sheets stamped. The goal was to help the students learn about the great state of Virginia. All the Mystery Boxes were found and frisbees were also handed out. It was a great turnout! Thank you to Tara Z. Fisher!

Monday, July 25th, the Chincoteague Island Library presented Rob Westcott, Magician, who appeared live on stage at the Chincoteague Island Theatre. He performed illusions and feats of magic that delighted both young and old. It was a full house! Thanks to Rob Westcott!

On July 26th, CIL hosted a fascinating lecture, “The Battle

of Chincoteague: New Evidence of a Fantastic Story” by Kellee Green Blake. She offered authentic details revealed after years of research. Kellee serves on the Executive Board of Virginia Humanities and is writing a book about the Eastern Shore of Virginia in the Civil War. There were 42 in attendance. Thank you, Kellee Blake!

CIL’s Summer Reading Program, “Lubbock’s Learners” Oceans of Possibilities will be ending on August 12th. The Reading Incentive Wrap-Up will take place on August 18th in the library.

The Chincoteague Island Library Board will meet on August 12th to discuss general business and progress on special projects/maintenance.

ESPL Grant Update - August 2022

Cara Burton, Library System Director

LVA ARPA from Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) – This ARPA money is distributed to the Library of Virginia (LVA). \$28,709 based on the state aid formula. The 3rd quarter report was submitted satisfactorily. The Privacy Pod grant is part of the ARPA funding and is to be treated as the same grant. The pods are on order and hopefully will arrive to meet the grant deadline.

NEH Challenge Grant – The expenditure budget of remaining funds was updated and reviewed by Kasey Grier, Cara Burton, and Chris Pote. The team presented the budget at the July ESPL Foundation meeting along with how other grant funds might be allocated to meet deadlines and grant requirements. The Challenge Grant will be mainly spent on equipment. Burton noted that RH Construction did include Davis Bacon wage costs, a grant requirement, in its pay application to the County. Besides David Bacon costs, the grant funds expended have only been for archive supplies.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – Emergency Connectivity Fund. awarded \$148,000. Devices are in the process of being distributed to nonprofits in the project. Jazmine Collins has done a phenomenal job of organizing and managing the inventory and distribution.