

January 11,



Director's

Subject Headings Matter:

Tackling Exclusion, Racism, and Bias in the Library Catalog

It can take a certain kind of nerd to enjoy statistical data. Perhaps because my library school's Statistical Analysis course trained me to better appreciate gathering and reporting data, or perhaps Professor Mark Monmonier's course, "Information Graphics," for which the textbook was called How to Lie With Statistics, taught me how to better interpret, analyze, and present information, I am inclined to get very excited when I can create an Excel chart. The recent Financial Analysis for Nonprofits course I took helped me appreciate ratios in evaluating data. I do know that technology has made data collection and presentation incredibly easier than in the early 1980's when I was in library school.

Each fall library staff all over the country log into an annual report data portal to record library use, collection status, and financial information. The only reason that I get aggravated over this State Aid requirement is that other library duties

In November 2021, the Library of Congress (LOC) announced changes to its official catalog subject headings of *Aliens* and *Illegal Aliens*. For many years, librarians had advocated to have these catalog headings replaced, as they were not reflective of the institutional values and messages that make up modern library service to our diverse population.

The new LOC headings, *Noncitizens* and *Illegal Immigration*, are an improvement, but there is still much to be done. Many library professionals would prefer the term *Undocumented Immigration* to *Illegal Immigra-*

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do not allow me to focus on this process as much as I would like. The reward is when we can use this data to compare our status with that of other public libraries. This provides us with valuable benchmark data.

Because of our geographic isolation, it is more difficult to network with other libraries and develop collaborative relationships and to visit other libraries to compare. Data, however, can



We can compare with other libraries to ensure our goals are realistic and equitable for our citizens. Here is the Central Virginia Regional Library's Buckingham County branch - opened October 2020. It's a renovation of part of an old school. The other part of the school was made into a community center.



be used to compare, though it is not always apples to apples.

It is important to keep in mind the difference between municipal (county and city) library systems and regional library systems. The biggest difference is that municipal systems have access to County resources, including Human Resources staff, custodians, facility maintenance, etc. That is why it is helpful to compare to the other seventeen Virginia regional library systems. Some regional systems, however, are in well-to-do areas, such as Williamsburg and Charlottesville. They can skew comparison but highlight disparities in library equity. We can also compare with all libraries within a selected population area range. That can more helpful when comparing output measures like circulation.

With the new Heritage Center, we will need to develop other benchmark sources, such as historical societies or museums. Our Heritage Center will be very unique being under a public library system. The Nabb Center, as part of a university system, provides a similar model, though again, the scale is not the same. This is why ratios are helpful.

The Strategic Planning Committee has chosen a template that includes accountability. Setting goals based on library standards and benchmarks will be useful to ensure we are setting realistic goals and will be the best we can be. Our goals are also to ensure that we are providing equitable library services to our community in comparison to other Commonwealth communities.

Technical Services

Charle Ricci, TS Manager

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tion. Additionally, in order to provide appropriate access points for materials related to African American history, librarians have requested the addition of new subject headings for terms such as *Jim Crow Laws* and *Sundown Towns*, which are

Library catalog language is an important component in creating a safer, more welcoming, and inclusive space for patrons, in both the physical and digital worlds. If, when searching our catalog, library patrons find derogatory language describing their identity, culture, or history, they may question the library's philosophy and goals related to equity, diversity, and social justice.

ESPL Technical Services staff are working to replace outdated and offensive catalog subject terminology to better reflect our library's values.

Staff will continue to monitor the work of larger organizations, institutions, and projects, such as the American Library Association, the New York Public Library, and the African

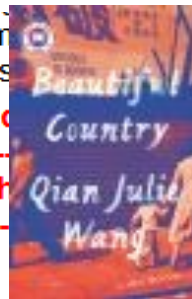
American Subject Funnel Project, who are all working to improve the current state of cataloging and classification.

With continuing advocacy to create respectful and equitable subject headings and classification systems at all levels, the library profession as a whole can move towards a catalog that aligns with our entire community of patrons.

Use the **ADVANCED** search option and choose "SUBJECT" as your Search Type to use the Library of Congress office Subject Headings.

slice of pizza, "shopping days" when the family and unforgettable, Beautiful Country is an es

Subject: 1. Wang, Qian Julie, 1987---Childhood and Immigrants--New York (State)--New York--Noncitizens. 9. Immigrants. 10. Shijiazhuang (State)--New York. 14. New York (State)--



Titles like *Beautiful Country* have had their subject headings changed to be more inclusive and user-friendly.

not present in approved LOC lists. Librarians have also identified subject headings that need to be updated, such as *Blacks* and *Slaves* (updating to *Black People* and *Enslaved People*).

In addition to faults in the Library of Congress subject heading system, the Dewey Decimal Classification system also has come under scrutiny in recent years for sexism, racism, and marginalization. The system includes the personal biases and prejudices of its creator, Melvil Dewey, and reflects the social mores of the Victorian era in the ways subjects are organized, highlighted, or suppressed.

Youth Services

Tiffany Flores, Youth Services Librarian

Friends of the Eastern Shore Public Library and Youth Services Librarian Tiffany Flores planned and organized this year's Santa event which was held on December 4th. Due to Covid-19, we held this event outside with chairs for children to sit on to avoid sitting on Santa's lap. Fortunately, this worked very well as we experience mild temperatures, perfect sunny skies, and very understanding families. Everyone arrived wearing their masks and followed our instructions throughout the event. It was a huge success! About 108 kids came to see Santa exceeding the previous year's numbers by quite a bit especially after experiencing relatively low numbers the year before.



Once again, Eastern Shore Public Library partnered with Accomac County Parks and Recreation for their yearly Books and Bikes event where the library provided books for every child receiving a bike. Throughout December, Tiffany Flores worked with Wayne Burton to distribute applications, share the information, and make the proper preparations for the event on December 18th. This event went well, providing about 36 children with brand new bikes and books for Christmas.

Tiffany Flores hosted her first storytime and craft event during winter break! This program was held at both Northampton Free Library and Eastern Shore Public Library and proved to be very successful at both locations. NFL had three kids and a parent while ESPL had eight kids and six parents.

For her first program during the pandemic, this proved to be very successful. It also served as a method of seeing what families did during events and how safe it was. At NFL, there were not too many children at the event and everyone wore masks making it perfectly safe to do more events like this in the future. At ESPL, numbers were higher but not to the point of being unable to spread out. However, there was less mask-wearing which means, when this is done in the future, we may need to advise mask-wearing especially if attendance numbers grow higher. This event provided insight for what to do in the future to continue to remain safe. More programming will be done in the future.



Flores and a volunteer hand out books at Books & Bikes.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Ann Rutledge Library Manager

December 2021 was another quiet month, even though we still had numerous tourist visitors. Due to Covid we did not present any programs, nor did we participate in Festive Friday. What we did do was hand out two Grab and Go Bags – a Penguin Pack and a Holiday Pack. Also, our book displays last month featured books about the holidays and books on penguins for children.



Our biggest service to adults this month was the distribution of no cost, rapid COVID tests. We gave out 92 tests until we were out and at this time, we have not gotten any additional tests. These tests were provided by the Virginia Department of Health, and distributed through the Eastern Shore Public Library.

We were notified this month that we had again received the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality non-competitive Litter Grant (2021) This grant allowed us to provide a well-received program on recycling last year and we look forward to using it in conjunction with the Summer Reading Program, Oceans of Possibility.

Cape Charles Memorial Library




POP on over to Cape Charles Memorial Library and PICK up a PENGUIN PACK (craft) and a book & movie! Free family learning fun on a chilly day.



CAPE CHARLES MEMORIAL LIBRARY
201 MASON AVENUE, CAPE CHARLES, VA

December Grab & Go Bags

Now available - while supplies last!

Each bag contains a snowman craft, cool coloring sheets, Family Fun games, candy cane pen, wiki stix, holiday scratch art, organic gummies and candy cane, and maybe a bit of this and that.






Chincoteague Island Library

Karen Sharp, Library Manager



With Christmas time, CIL has been very slow. However, we continue to add new patrons, assisting our regular patrons, and welcoming visitors.

CIL's "Tales4Tots" held every Thursday at Brianna's Kindness Park will resume sometime in January with the date TBD. CIL would like to give a special thank you to Diane Fisher for organizing the program and to all our volunteer readers: Lou Bender, Susan Birch, Diane Fisher, and Barbara Mason.

We would like to thank all of the "elves" who worked so hard to make the library look festive and welcoming for the holidays!

At the CIL's December Board Meeting, new officers for next year were elected.

The Board presented outgoing President Linda Ryan with an aerial photograph of the library from Patrick Hendrickson (Highcamera Aerial Photographic Service) as a thank you for her 15 years as president and 21 years of volunteering! Linda will be remaining on the board and will continue volunteering in the library!



Our good friends at NASA Outreach brought these activity bags to our library to hand out to children, 5 years old and up. It contained fun activities and had information on NASA's Webb Telescope.

The CIL Board of Directors will meet Friday, January 14th at 9AM. There have been new additions to the Board and some changes. The newest members are David Ingold and Kathy Michaelian. We would like to congratulate Paul Miller, who is our new President. Lisa Reed will continue as Vice President, Aubrey Kurtz as Secretary and Carrole Welsh as Treasurer.



The Board will be working on the budget for 2022, will present a power point to the Chincoteague Town Council on January 20th, and are just about ready for our Raffle Baskets. There will be two Baskets to raffle, one for adults and one for children. The theme is "Celebrating Chincoteague". Stay tuned for more details!

Chincoteague Island Library wishes everyone a Happy New Year!

Northampton Free Library

Hannah Swimley, Branch Manager



Christmas decorations were put up around the library this month. The Friends of Northampton Free Library put up the annual Christmas tree in Early December. The tree really brightens up the library and brings in some holiday cheer! There were also multiple other decorations put up around the library, all to help with the festivities surrounding this time of year.

The majority of the Christmas reading selections was displayed. It has been very popular, with patrons checking out a large number of the books. This display also makes it easier for patrons to find holiday books, as they are in specific places instead of mixed in with the collection.

Air-printing is properly up and running now at NFL. In the past, there have been quite a few problems with getting this specific feature to work. Air printing is being able to directly print off of a patron's phone to the big Xerox printer. For a patron to print off of their electronic device, all that must be done is be connected to the public Wi-Fi, ESPL-AC, and select the Xerox printer. Everyone here is relieved to have this resolved, and patrons are happier than ever.

New Internet networking equipment was installed by Eastern Shore Communications.

This will ensure faster, more reliable connectivity.

We at Northampton Free Library hope that everyone had holidays which were cheery and bright! Happy Holidays!



Heritage Hub

ESPL is in the process of hiring a Heritage Center Manager. Jazmine Collins, Circulation Manager, is currently responding to local history inquiries and completing the Latimer digitization project.

ESPL is also working with ESPL Foundation volunteers in developing a Sustainability Plan for the Heritage Center. Bryan & Jordan Consulting, LLC, www.bryanandjordan.com, has been retained to provide consulting services for this project. Their work is being funded by a Virginia Humanities SHARP grant. The plan will be completed in the Spring of 2022.

ESPL Grant Update - January 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. Purchasing underway for: 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. **Note: We are in jeopardy of losing these funds due to the delays in the construction project. IMLS is being consulted.**

Virginia Humanities (VH) – 2 grants

(1) Continue to work with US250 consultant, paid for with VH grant. Museum Network members were provided a draft for review and edits. Consultant, John Verrill, has interviewed a couple more members to work toward 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. Meetings are planned to start in January or February.

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. Accomack County Schools were awarded their grant.

United Way of ESVA – ESPL Foundation plans to apply 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.

Accomack grant (children's shelving and Digitization Lab): Shelving received. Microfilm and book scanners ordered (totaling around \$16,000). Foundation received \$50K match from ESVACF, which they have given to ESPL. This grant is in the process of being 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. Burton needs 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.