



# Library System Report

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

November 2022

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

## Archive Work Moves Forward

By Christopher Pote, CA



### DIRECTORS' UPDATE

The infrastructure in Onley is complete. Telephone, wifi, shelving, workspace, photocopier, etc. is all installed. All the material previously stored in Parksley is now safely in the old Farmers & Merchants Bank space. Seventy-five percent of the archival material from Accomac has been relocated with the remaining material soon to follow. Although labor intensive and time consuming, this move has provided great benefits to me in terms of learning about the collections. Organizing a move and having to physically handle every box forces me to become familiar with the materials. Unlabeled boxes have to be investigated, and "What's in here?" becomes the unofficial mantra for the day. But questions lead to answers and discovery and all of this work will benefit the researcher in the long run. Thank you, Jazmine Collins, for your invaluable assistance with this most recent move.



One of my initiatives of which I am most proud of is my **Nonprofit Capacity Building**. The goal of this was to use our strategic position as a regional library with ties to the Library of Virginia to help support local nonprofits. This included getting ongoing financial support for being a Funding Information Network (formerly under the Foundation Center, now Candid). As a "FIN" location we are able to provide the online Foundation Directory within our libraries and access to free grantwriting training. Thankfully, the **Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation** has supported this financially.

Initially, I held some wonderful training sessions held at the Eastern Shore Community College, because we did not have the meeting space. These sessions also provided an opportunity for non-profit leaders and volunteers to network with each other. With our increased space capacity, the new regional library will have that needed space and technology.

The time and resources of participants was strained during the pandemic, but we were able to provide access to the

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Foundation Directory with a temporary off-site login. That ended several months ago, but for a while, it provided easy access for ESVA nonprofits to perform grant research while in lockdown.

I truly enjoy working with nonprofit leaders and volunteers. It makes me feel helpful if I can direct them to resources and share my experience as a nonprofit leader and grantwriter. Unfortunately, ESPL's own capacity has been limited and I have not been able to develop this initiative more; it is not reaching my goals fast enough. Nonprofits on the Shore are struggling.

If anything, this Nonprofit Capacity Building initiative was successful in that it raised awareness for the need to do it. Ironically, our work on ESPL's strategic plan took a lot of time away from this training, redirecting my time. ESPL has been able to achieve other nonprofit support projects, such as the Emergency Connectivity Fund grant. This provided new technology equipment to area nonprofits. Jazmine Collins has managed the implementation of the distribution with phenomenal organizational skill.

Another part of nonprofit capacity is succession planning. Too often an organization can be in a good groove, chugging along on projects, and then its director or board chair leaves. Hopefully, this comes with some notice, but sometimes it does not. This is where succession planning bears fruit.

In my nonprofit management, succession planning starts the day I start work. This should be for any position in an organization. Whenever I make a decision or start a project, I ask myself, "How will my actions today affect the person in my role after I am gone?" I am always very cognizant that someone may need to pick-up where I left off. It is my responsibility to ensure my co-workers are not left in the lurch. When you care about your employees and volunteers, you work hard to ensure they can fairly easily pick-up where you left off to complete projects.

Succession planning is a long term process. It is not

sitting around the table at one meeting, like an exit interview. Such planning involves staff training, recordkeeping, and organization. Good communication is a priority. Frequent team meetings and email summaries help to ensure that more than one person has needed information.

Low capacity can mean no succession planning. The Catch-22 is that the organization with staff that are over-stretched have the staff that do not have time for these succession planning tasks. This creates a downward spiral. Staff may start leaving the organization because they are overworked. Oftentimes, it is the staff with a good work ethic that get most frustrated when they are in a situation where they cannot perform the job to their expectations. A cycle of high turnover and an increasingly dysfunctional organization can take place. Sometimes what is seen as poor performance is more a rather of not having the resources, which includes time, to do the work. Each new leader has to be a superhero to overcome the challenges.

That is why I felt it important that the Accomac location takes this point in time to stop and organize, not only for the move, but because we are in a transition period. Stepping back and looking at workplace weakness, including the work environment, are important to help the organization be healthy and able to "get its house in order."

ESPL's Strategic Planning process was a time to put on the brakes and devote to planning our future. Now is the time to pause and look at that plan, now that it is six months old. Are we working on its goals? After all, planning its successor needs to start now.



*Thank you to the Eastern Shore of Virginia  
Community Foundation  
for its ongoing support!*



# Heritage Center

Christopher Pote, Heritage Center Manager



The infrastructure in Parksley is still taking shape. SpaceSaver was able to access the space and install high-density shelving in the archives room. This greatly increases the holding capacity compared to standard shelving. I met with donors Janet and Haydon Rochester to measure walls in the gallery space for an integrated exhibit wall-hanging system. In the meantime, we are developing policies and procedures for the new spaces and programming opportunities. When the Parksley facility is ready, the work of the Heritage Center will be well underway.



Map Cases



SpaceSaver work crews installing the subfloor.

This work cannot be done by one person, so I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Jazmine and lean on her when necessary. And we are in the process of hiring an Archives Assistant to commence work in November. The two main duties of this position will include conducting preservation assessments of archival and framed materials and processing collections to facilitate ease of access for researchers.

I am seeing the vision of the Heritage Center coming into shape, and it's an exciting time.

Jenean Hall recently donated copies of her new book, "An 'Uncertain Rumor' of Land," to the ESVA Heritage Center. The Eastern Shore Room has a local author collection with the goal to collect books by ESVA authors. Hall's research will add to the historical narrative of the Shore and emphasizes the need for methodical research and the need for continual research as new documents and findings alter or add to our knowledge of history.







Since July, Tiffany Flores has been running Facebook ads for the library's e-resources, showcasing a different resource every month. By doing so, she has been able to see if advertising on Facebook is an effective method or not. In late June, JobsNow was advertised and reached 2,138 people and received 38 likes. In August, Gale Legal Forms was advertised and reached 3,449 users and received 108 link clicks. In September, Universal Class reached 3,431 users and received 115 clicks. For October, Tiffany decided to advertise Magzter, the brand new magazine resource in hopes to introduce users to this brand new resource. This reach 3,610 people and received 124 clicks. Facebook advertising has proven to be an effective method to spread the word about library resources and get people to, at the very least, visit Eastern Shore Public Library's website. More data collection and comparative analysis will be done in the future.



Tiffany Flores and Sharon Silvey attended this year's Agricultural fair at Northampton County Parks and Rec. This proved a very successful event where they were able to do a lot of successful outreach. Throughout the day, they had about 500 people visit the table, take books, sign up for the library's e-newsletter, and stop and ask questions about the library. All in all this outreach event was a huge success.



Tiffany Flores and Wendy Johnson thrilled over two hundred children with new books and treats at Accawmacke Elementary's fall event.





## Rightsizing the Collection

Over the past several years, Collection Management Librarian, Charle Ricci, has been working to right-size the materials collections of the Accomac Library. It has been important to ensure that the collections will be ready for the available space at the new library building in Parksley. Despite the fact that the Parksley facility will be spacious and new, the addition of the Heritage Center, multiple meeting rooms, the lecture hall, and the Makerspace to the overall floor plan has resulted in a smaller area available for the materials collection than in Accomac.

Under guidance from Library Director, Cara Burton, to reduce the collection size by one-third, Ricci began to examine the materials with a critical eye. Utilizing best practices of the library field, knowledge of the local community's information needs, and circulation data, Ricci systematically worked through each area of the collection to identify outdated, damaged, unused, and irrelevant items.

Volunteers from the Friends of the Eastern Shore Public Library, community members, and retired librarians, were vitally important to this process. Assisting with the identification of items needing to be withdrawn, as well as with removing these items from the library catalog database, these volunteers amplified the effectiveness of Ricci's work, and allowed the project to proceed at a faster pace and with greater efficiency.

The goal of reducing the collection by one-third was somewhat complicated by the fact that new items are continually being added to the library's collections. Approximately 5,500 items are cataloged and added each year to the Accomac library, which made the final size of the materials collection a bit

of a moving target. Despite this challenge, an average of 8,600 items were withdrawn from the library each year since 2016, leaving a collection size of 71,000 physical items at the Accomac location.

The reduction of the collection has resulted in a stronger, more heavily utilized selection of materials that is tailored to the information needs and interests of the local community. Shelves are not as crowded as they once were, making browsing and finding materials easier. With just a few remaining small tweaks to certain sub-collections, the Accomac collection will be rightsized and ready to move once the Parksley library is completed.



Staff are saving hundreds of thousands of dollars by relocating existing metal shelving, rather than purchasing new.

After the library has relocated, the materials collection will not remain fixed in quantity or content. The rightsizing progress resulting from this project will continue in order to maintain a library collection that fits the space it is housed in. Items will become worn or outdated and be withdrawn, while new, more relevant materials will be added. By utilizing circulation data and patron interests, Ricci will shape a collection that continuously evolves to reflect the Shore community.





# Northampton Free Library



Library staff have been accessing facility needs of the NFL, which is showing its age. It will have its 20th birthday in three years, so needed improvements are planned. Recent projects include plans to:

- ◆ Install security lighting outside and remove inefficient, broken flood lights.
- ◆ Install exterior video surveillance to monitor parking lot and back of building.
- ◆ Replace overly worn carpet in staff work area with vinyl tile.
- ◆ Repair floor electric outlets.
- ◆ Install a new sign to match the rebranding and is made of a material that does not need as much maintenance; has more longevity.
- ◆ Install a "Local History" sign over that book collection, to align with the ESVA Heritage Center.

The ESPL Foundation plans to dedicate its Giving Tuesday fundraiser to Northampton Free Library. The Foundation also has a designated fund for donations to NFL. Checks can be made to ESPL Foundation with "Northampton Free Library" on the memo and/or in a note with the donation.

## GIVING TUESDAY



Function meets art with our new bike racks ! Identical racks are ready to install at the new ESVA Regional Library and Heritage Center.

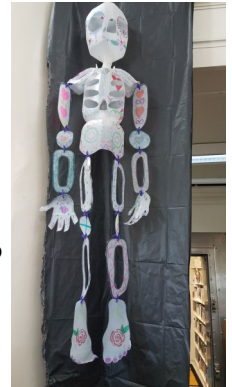


# Cape Charles Memorial Library

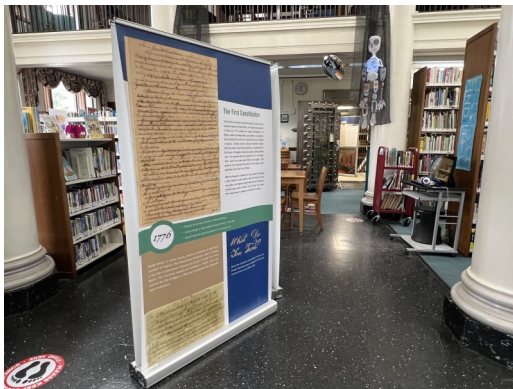
Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



The month of October brought cooler weather and falling leaves. Staff at Cape Charles Memorial Library was excited to decorate our library with festive fall colors, “book pumpkins”, and book displays highlighting fall and Halloween. We also asked our patrons to donate empty milk cartons for an “upcycled” skeleton decoration. The cartons were then cut and decorated with help from local Northampton High School students. Overall, a fun project involving different groups of our community (and lots of wonderful compliments!)



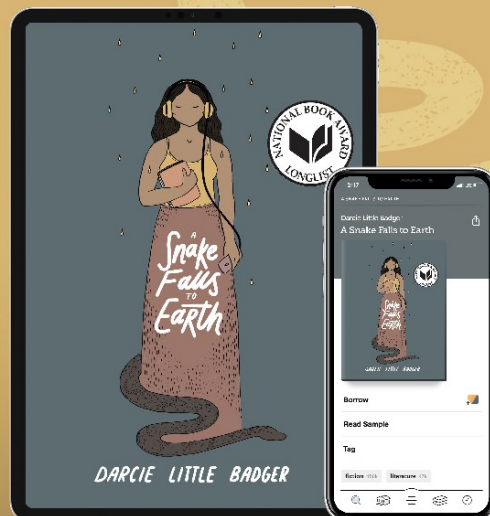
During October we began asking for book suggestions for the Cape Charles Town Wide Read, an event started several years ago by a member of the Cape Charles Memorial Library Board. Each fall, books (that have also been adapted to film) can be suggested by anyone who wishes to participate. There will be a gathering to discuss the book and in February 2023 the film adaptation of the book will be shown in the Historic Palace Theater. Please contact CCML with any questions and/or suggestions.



CCML is hosting the Library of Virginia traveling exhibit, “Virginia’s Constitutions.” It will then move to Tangier Combined School the week of November 7 for a week. Stay tuned for its next location!

ESPL is participating in this national event.

Patrons can download this ebook for free!



This award-winning title draws on traditional Lipan Apache storytelling structure to weave an unforgettable tale of monsters, magic and family.

**Libby.**  
The library reading app





# Chincoteague Island Library



**Tales 4 Tots in the Park**



September has been a challenging month for our library board and volunteers since our library manager, Karen Sharp, left with no prior notice. Fortunately, we have been able to maintain our hours of operation due to our library volunteers increasing their hours and some part-time help sent from ESPL. We are very appreciative for the prompt response from Cara Burton for posting and filling the position. We are looking forward to working with our new library manager, Candy Perdue.

As we reported last month, our summer was extremely busy with many visitors and programs. Fall continues to be busy with many visitors.

Our Tales 4 Tots children's program began on September 15 and will continue Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. until December 15. This program is currently being held in Brianna's Kindness Park, but in the cooler weather will be held in the library. To date, seventeen to twenty children have come to play with one another, sing songs, listen to stories, and to take home activity/craft bags. Tales 4 Tots is run entirely by volunteers.

On Wednesday, October 5, the board of directors is hosting a POETRY SLAM at 7 p.m. in the library. This program is organized by board member, Harriet Lonergan and will feature poet Matt Spireng.

On Saturday, October 29, from 4 – 7 p.m., library volunteers will be handing out treats and books on the library front porch for the Downtown Merchants' Halloween Main Street Trick or Treat Event.

Our basket raffle drawing will be held on Saturday, October 10 of Columbus Day Weekend. To date over 700 tickets have been sold. We will be putting together another basket raffle after the first of the year in time for the Downtown Merchants' Death by Chocolate Event to run through the summer months.

Our library board is very appreciative of the continued support of the Eastern Shore Public Library administration and the Board of Trustees.

Linda J. Ryan  
On behalf of the Board of Directors





**Basket Raffle**

**Halloween Trick or Treating on the Library Porch (2021)**

## ESPL Grant Update

*Cara Burton, Library System Director*

**USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant – “Parksley2”** – This is a new application that will provide 15% matching funds for equipment. Trustees approved start of application. The USDA portion is up to \$50,000. ESPL match would be \$275,000 with a total project cost of \$325,000. NEH funds cannot be used as match, but state, county, and private funds can be. The grant is dubbed “Parksley2” as this is the second USDARD grant for the Parksley location.

**LVA ARPA** from Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) –The TalkBox pods on order have been delayed due to a glass shortage. LVA acknowledged that a November 28 delivery is acceptable.

**NEH Challenge Grant** –Pote reviewing the grant completion timeline, ESPL capital budget, and delivery dates in relation to the construction delay with Burton and the NEH grant team.

**Federal Communications Commission (FCC) –Emergency Connectivity Fund.** Awaiting response from eRate consultant as to ability to order additional equipment. Holdup is approval from USAC. J. Collins is to send the two nonprofits requesting equipment the few devices we have in stock.

The ESPL Finance Committee continues to review grant budgets as part of the overall finances for the ESPL.