



Library System Report

EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA • PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

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

April 2024



THE ADVENTURE BEGINS!

Come out and celebrate the beginning of our first summer in the brand-new building

- What: ESPL's first-ever SummerFest
- When: **June 15, 10AM–2PM**
- Where: Eastern Shore Community College
- Why: To kick off the **Summer Reading** Program and encourage families to sign up and participate in this year's challenge
- Who: You!
- Who else: Food trucks and community partners
- Featuring: Bounce houses, face painting, games, and crafts

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
Interim Director

The breadth of services a public library provides for its communities is really amazing. And the library can be the center of community activities, whether organized or not. One example occurred during the solar eclipse on April 8th. In the weeks leading up to the eclipse, ESPL libraries distributed hundreds of eclipse-viewing glasses. The glasses were so popular that we had to start rationing how many we gave away before the 8th. Fortunately, NASA was there to support us. As our supplies ran low they made a large delivery right before the event.



DIRECTOR'S UPDATE CONTINUED

All told, ESPL libraries gave away roughly 2500-2800 sets of glasses so people could enjoy the infrequent phenomenon while also maintaining good eye health. For me, the most enjoyable part was the small, impromptu community gathering in the parking lot in Parksley. Staff, volunteers, and patrons shared the moment and marveled at the beauty together.

ESPL also hosts several community advocacy groups on a regular basis. On Monday mornings, English as a Second Language is taught in the Dennis Custis Lecture Hall. On Thursdays the Eastern Shore Literacy Council holds tutoring sessions. The Legal Aid Society is available monthly at both Parksley and Nassawadox. And the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sets up a satellite office in the Parksley branch on a regular basis. We are grateful for these partnerships. For more information, dates, and locations, please check our calendar: <https://espl.org/events/>.

ESPL not only partners with local organizations, but also on the state and national level. Our main partner on the state level is the Library of Virginia (LVA). They provide support on a myriad of levels, but most importantly, the level of state funding we receive is determined in partnership and collaboration with LVA. They also provide support for library directors throughout the state, and continuing education for all library staff. LVA also assists with programming. We have frequently hosted LVA travelling exhibits, the most recent being *Strong Men and Strong Women of Virginia 2023*. On April 27, LVA was here with their "LVA On the Go" to highlight many of the services they have to offer. They brought with them pamphlets, brochures, magnets, and their very popular blank family trees for your genealogy projects. It was an honor to host them, and come grab these items that remain.

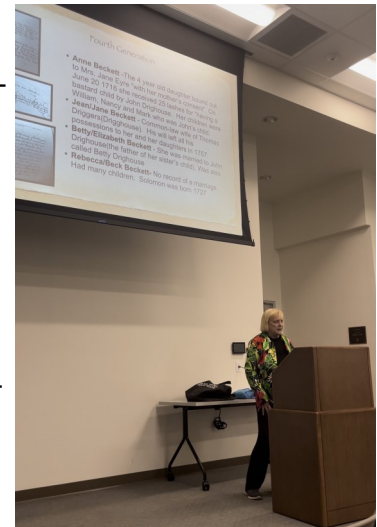


Of course, ESPL still provides traditional library services to our constituents. These services are not possible without our most important partnerships with Northampton and Accomack Counties. As the regional library of the Eastern Shore we strive to serve all people and communities of the Shore, and their support is vital and appreciated. We are grateful for each and every partnership.



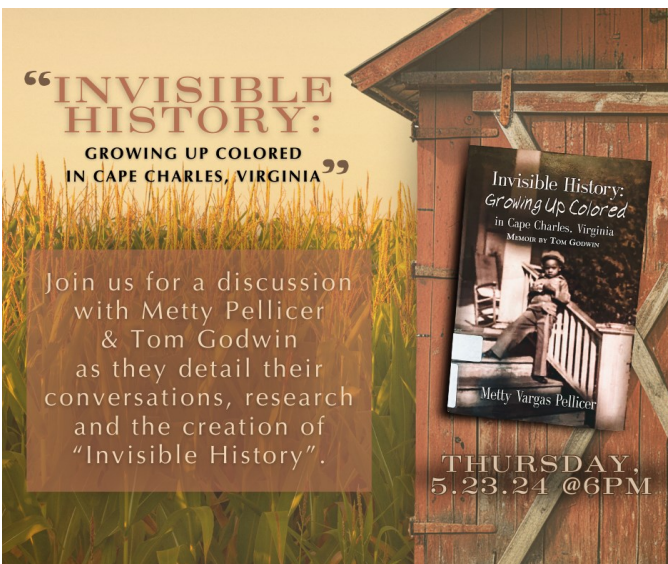
Jazmine Collins will be authoring the Heritage Center Report while Christopher Pote is in the Director's Office:

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center hosted Carolyn Adams for a lecture on the genealogical research she and her late husband William Samuel Crawford Adams conducted on his ESVA ancestors which was published in the book *Free Born: 350 years of Eastern Shore African- American history - the Adams/Beckett family / William Crawford Samuel Adams*. Adams detailed the sources and research process during a time when many resources were not available online, and some of the deductions that were made when clear source material was not available. Turn-out for the lecture did not reach the numbers of March's lectures on Revolutionary Era history, but those who did attend showed enthusiastic interest.



The Library of Virginia visited the Regional Library and Heritage Center to on Saturday, April 27th, to provide information and promote their archival material and digital collections related to African American research. The Chancery Records Index is of particular use for tracing enslaved ancestors in the court records of divided estates of intestate slaveholders. The Heritage Center has a guide to these resources available.

Also on April 27th, the Heritage Center began our outreach season by tabling at the "It's a Conversation" dramatization of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. This program was hosted by the Eastern Shore Center for Community and Family Development and sponsored in part by a grant from the Virginia Humanities Latimer Fund. Our staff provided information for the attendees on the local history resources that the Heritage Center has.



**“INVISIBLE HISTORY:
GROWING UP COLORED
IN CAPE CHARLES, VIRGINIA”**

Join us for a discussion with Metty Pellicer & Tom Godwin as they detail their conversations, research and the creation of "Invisible History".

**THURSDAY,
5.23.24 @6PM**

The Invisible History lecture with Metty Pellicer and Tom Godwin, originally scheduled for April, will be on **Thursday, May 23rd at 6PM** in the Dennis Custis Lecture Hall, Parksley branch.

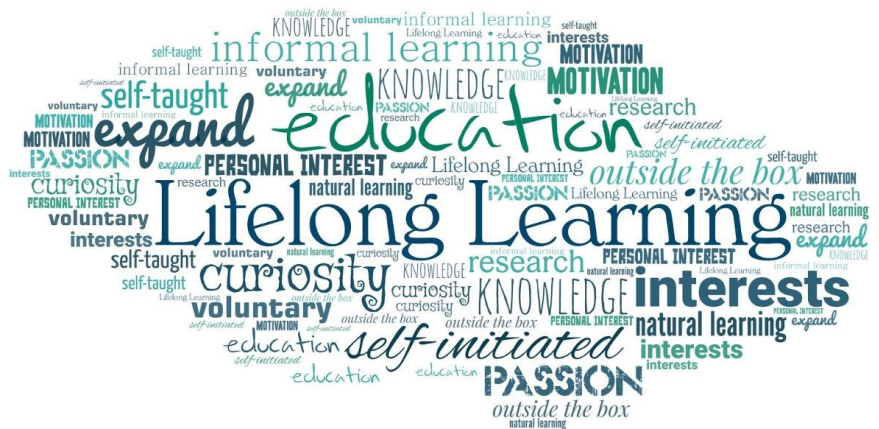


Lifelong Learning at the Library

On April 25th, six students from the Academy for Lifetime Learning (ALL) visited the Regional Library and Heritage Center in Parksley to learn how to get the most out of their library card. While the group was small in number, their interest in all that the library has to offer was anything but, which was evident from their enthusiasm and curiosity.

Tiffany Flores, Programs and Outreach Librarian, began the session with a tour of the library. In addition to exploring the library's collection of books, audiobooks, and video recordings for people of all ages, the tour highlighted such features as the Talkbox privacy booth for telehealth appointments and interviews, and the equipment and technology available to the public for entrepreneurial or personal use, such as free Wifi, desktop computers, and meeting rooms.

Next, the ALL class visited the Eastern Shore Room and Heritage Center to receive an overview of the marvelous resources focusing on Eastern Shore history that are available to researchers and genealogists. Interim System Director and Heritage Center Manager, Christopher Pote, led this portion of the tour, which the students greatly enjoyed.



The final segment of the class's library visit took place in the lecture hall where Charle Ricci, Collections Management Librarian, offered a tour of the electronic side of library resources. Beginning with an in-depth look at the library catalog, ShoreCat, the ALL students learned how to carry out catalog searches, place reserves, and suggest items to be added to the library's collections. ShoreCat's virtual book displays found in the Trending, Just Added, Featured Monthly Selections, and librarian-curated Lists portions of the page were also discussed.

After highlighting the reading possibilities featured in the quarterly Upcoming Bestsellers lists and the weekly Wowbrary eNewsletters, Ricci then provided an overview of the many online resources available to library card holders. From eBooks, eAudios, and eMagazines through Libby, Freading, and Magzter, to streaming video on Kanopy, the ALL students discovered a world of information and entertainment. Of particular interest to the class were The Great Courses, Universal Class, and Transparent Language applications, all of which offer a wide variety of courses to take a deep dive into a personal interest, to further develop workplace skills and education, or to learn a new language.

As the session neared its completion, the ALL class participants were energized by the educational and entertainment possibilities available through the library. Library staff who were involved in the tour were gladdened to see the excitement generated by our presentations. Libraries truly are for learning at every stage of life, and partnering with community groups such as the ALL makes that evident.



Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores

This month the regional library programming had consistent attendance. Weekly Kids crafts, Kid's Yoga, and Hometown Heroes all saw usual participation. The Library also collaborated with the Literacy Council to host their first-ever Dolly Parton Imagination Library Graduation event. The Imagination Library is an initiative started by Dolly Parton to inspire the love of reading at a young age (through five years old) by partnering with community advocates and providing books free of charge. Sixty graduates were invited to celebrate graduating from the program, and the goal was to encourage them to keep reading and using the library. While only 1 kid attended graduation, that program went on as planned, and the child had a great time receiving her certificate and participating in the storytime and craft activity. Her mother even signed



her up for a library card. Teen programming is seeing good engagement. The teens made soot sprites on craft night and put them on display in the teen room as "their mascot". On Teen Manga Book Club Night, the teen room had about 20 tweens and teens in the room participating. While this was a little chaotic, there was a lot of engagement, especially with the multiplayer video games.

For adult programming, the Sunflower craft, the Romance Book Club, the Adult Poetry Workshop were successful. This month's Author Talk featured Mark Nuckols who discussed his new book, performed some of his music, and discussed his writing process. Everyone who participated was pleased with the programming.

Northampton Free Library has also seen success with programming throughout April. The STEM program and the Sunflower Craft hosted by Jazmine Collins was well enjoyed by participants. The library will continue to offer programming and adjust as needed. For example, during the summer, Bedtime Storytime will be changed to an evening storytime in hopes of increased participation.





Programs & Outreach Report Continued...

Tiffany Flores

ESPL was invited to participate in the Nature Conservancy's Open Farm Day at the Brownsville Preserve. Tiffany Flores and Connor Buryan attended, bringing with them library resources, informational brochures, and free books. This was a good event to attend as there was a steady stream of people. In addition to tabling at the event, Tiffany provided storytime during the lunch hour and was able to interact with about twenty children. Overall, they engaged with about 100 people during this event. In addition to Open Farm Day, the library attended the "Return to Your Roots" Earth Day event in Exmore Town Park on April 20th. This event was massively successful with at least 600 attendees. The busy crowds meant a lot of chances for Jazmine and Wendy Johnson to promote library programs and services.

With the Eclipse in full focus in early April, the library focused STEM programming on the Eclipse. On April 4th both locations provided children with the opportunity to create eclipse viewing boxes. Both Parksley and Nassawdox libraries saw good attendance. At this event, participants learned how to view the eclipse safely and were encouraged to use their boxes on the 8th. At Parksley, Chincoteague Bay Field Station is scheduled for monthly visits up until December. And, both locations have STEM activities planned for the summer including visits from NASA.

ADVENTURE
— BEGINS AT —
YOUR LIBRARY™





Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



April was a busy month at Northampton Free Library, with a variety of public programs and improvements inside and outside the building. Things were off to an astronomical start with the partial solar eclipse on Monday, April 8th – the library offered a children’s STEM program on the preceding Thursday night in which kids were invited to visit the library and build and decorate eclipse viewing boxes. NFL also participated in distributing free eclipse glasses to ensure that patrons were able to view the eclipse safely. On the morning of April 8th, more than 200 people visited Northampton Free Library – about a quarter of our usual monthly total!

Tech Help Tuesdays and Storytime Anytime on Mondays and Wednesdays continued to be offered through the whole month, with Tech Help Tuesdays being particularly popular. There was also a Bedtime Storytime offered on April 16th. Northampton Free Library also hosted two adult craft programs in April, both focusing on using recycled pages from retired library books – patrons were invited to visit the library to craft sunflower wreaths on April 11th and learn how to produce blackout poetry on April 25th.

Outside the building, an area of siding that had been damaged by an overflowing gutter was replaced and painted. The pollinator garden maintained by the Eastern Shore Master Gardeners is lush and green, and some brand new plants have been added.



May is shaping up to be one of Northampton Free Library’s most programming-packed months yet. The month is off to a quick start with the first meeting of a new crochet club on Thursday, May 2nd at 6:00 PM and a LEGO building competition for children on Saturday, May the 4th at 11:30 AM. Snacks will be provided and prizes awarded at the latter. The next program will be held on Thursday, May 9th at 6:00 PM and will be an arts and crafts program for children where attendees will build and paint their own birdhouses. May’s children’s STEM program will take place on Thursday, May 16th at 6:00 PM – participants will learn about watersheds by building their own landscapes out of modeling clay. Finally, May’s adult craft will be hosted on Thursday, May 23rd at 6:00 PM and will focus on building glass bead sun catchers. This event will be free, but registration in advance will be required.

Northampton Free Library will be closed Monday, May 27th in observance of Memorial Day.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



April was a month bursting with activity at Cape Charles Memorial Library!

We hosted five story time and craft programs, including special visits from two local authors - Nan Carlton and Gail Scott. Each of the special author programs filled up quickly and were enjoyed by all!

Erin Morgan with Northampton Cooperative Extension visited CCML early in the month and hosted two programs for children. The first program was designed for younger children to learn about space and to create an edible rocket, made with marshmallows, orange slices, and chocolate kisses. The second program was geared towards older children to learn about the upcoming eclipse. As it happens, the older children took notice of the edible rockets and convinced Ms. Morgan to include them in the second program as well. Big thanks to Ms. Morgan for coming down to the library!



And then, the eclipse! Way back in December of 2022, we registered with STARnet, a "hands-on learning network . . . that focuses on helping library professionals build their STEM skills by providing science-technology activities and resources (STAR)." STARnet provided CCML with 500 pairs of solar eclipse glasses to give away. During the week leading up to the eclipse and the morning of the eclipse, all 500 pairs (plus an additional 250 pairs shared with us by the Regional Library in Parksley) were handed out.



Cape Charles Memorial Library also celebrated Earth Day with free educational Grab & Go bags for children that included a free book about taking care of our Earth. Adults also received a free "goody bag" with Earth friendly items such as reusable grocery bags, reusable produce bags, a bamboo toothbrush, bamboo utensils, and a reusable stainless-steel tumbler. All items were purchased with a Litter Prevention and Recycling Grant through Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

April is National Poetry Month, which we celebrated with a display of poetry books and a Poetry Night at the library. Local poet, Ken Sutton (aka The Bard of Machipongo) attended our program and shared several poems from his book, *Manhattan to Machipongo*. Also in attendance were a few brand-new poets who shared their works in public for the first time. Poetry Night is always a lovely evening.





Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



April began with a bang! Our board publicity/social media volunteer, Nancy Cunningham, put up an April Fool's post on our library's Facebook page. The post indicated that our library would be changing from the Dewey Decimal System to a new system of arranging books by the color of their covers. As a result, we received 6,500 "likes," 3,565 "comments," and 690 "shares." Nancy continues to post upcoming events for our library as well as other local organizations. Our board of directors feels that the Facebook posts contribute to our participation in our programs and events.

Volunteer Recognition Luncheon: Each April, during National Library Week, our library board recognizes the dedication and value of our volunteers. As our library only has one paid staff member for a total of 24 hours/week, without their help, we would not be open 6 days per week/year-round. This year, the volunteers were honored at an afternoon tea at the Channel Bass Inn on Chincoteague. A wonderful time was had by all who attended. A special thank you to Harriet Lonergan who manages our volunteers and to our library manager, Teresa Wright for helping them adhere to ESPL guidelines and procedures, and to our volunteers who plan, organize, and execute our children's programs without whom there would be no Tales 4 Tots.



Tales 4 Tots Storytime: Our story times for April revolved around dinosaurs, Disney princesses and princes, April showers, and Earth Day. We averaged eighteen children each week. In addition to songs and finger painting, the children listened to two stories and made crafts to coincide with the theme.



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Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



STEM Programs: The Library hosted an Eclipse Program on April 8th from 1:30 p.m. until 4 p.m. A display table was set up with supplies and instructions for making viewing boxes. Informational packets and special viewing glasses were handed out. Special temporary eclipse tattoos were a big hit with children and adults. We distributed over 200 glasses that day with many patrons viewing the eclipse in the Town Park adjacent to our library. The program was a big hit for both children and their families. More STEM programs are planned for May and June.



Monthly Book Clubs: Nancys' Thursday Book Club, named for its founders—Nancy Roberts and Nancy Schmidt, discussed books about libraries, librarians, and books. They had a lively discussion about the Morgan librarian, Bella da Costa Green as well as the Pack Horse Librarians of the 1930's. Next month's topic is books either by or about William Shakespeare. The Island Readers' Book Club, which meets on the third Tuesday of each month, discussed the book, *The Measure*, by Nikki Erlick.

Book and Window Displays: Marguerite Henry's birthday, Autism Awareness Month, National Library Week, and the Solar System were just a few of the highlighted April book displays.

Upcoming Programs: Thursday evening, June 20 at 6 p.m., the library will be hosting its annual Sunset Cruise. This year, weather permitting, we should have a moon rise as well as a sunset while we are cruising. Music by David Nees and refreshments by the Channel Bass Inn will be provided. Tickets will be \$65 each and registration will begin shortly.

The Library Board decided at its April meeting to hold another non-motorized Fourth of July Parade on Thursday, July 4 at 10 a.m. in the Town Park. This event was a huge success two years ago. There will be prizes for the oldest and youngest participant as well as the family with the most participants. More details will follow.

Registration for the Summer Reading Challenge will begin in May. Tales 4 Tots will be wrapping up the winter/spring program on May 30. Children's summer programs will begin on June 27.