



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

June 2024



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

All libraries will be closed in observance

Upcoming July Highlights

- 4th: Non-motorized parade - Chincoteague
- 8th: Juju Bae Book Signing
- 12th: Nature Hike & Story Time
- 16th: STEM - Seashell Fossil Making
- 17th: Smash Brothers Tournament
- 17th: VA Space Port Tour
- 18th: Inborn Strength II: Revolutionary Women of Northampton County
- 18th: Adult Craft - Seashell Windchimes
- 20th: Special *Llama Llama* Storytime
- 25th: Open Mic Night
- 25th: FBI Forensics Basics (tweens/teens)
- Tech Help: Every Tuesday - Northampton
- Storytime Anytime: Every Monday & Wednesday

For locations, start times, and more information: espl.org;
espl@espl.org; (757) 787-3400

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
System Director

As you will read in the following pages, June was a banner month for all libraries in the Eastern Shore Public Library System. The month began with an all-staff in-service training on June 4th. Ideally done quarterly, in-service days allow for all ESPL staff to meet new colleagues, participate in professional development, discuss new initiatives, learn more about current library services, and share some time in fellowship. This month also allowed us to build in concerted office cleaning time. Of course there is downside: all four libraries need to close to the public for the day,



DIRECTOR'S UPDATE CONTINUED

which is another reason why to limit it to four times yearly. This month also allowed for me address the staff as a whole for the first time as interim director. I would retain that title for only the next two weeks. On June 11th, the ESPL Board of Trustees voted unanimously to appoint me as the permanent System Director. I am humbled by this appointment and honored to be able to lead the amazing staff here at ESPL. Their dedication to our mission, our patrons, and the communities of the Shore is inspiring, and we strive to deliver on the promise that libraries serve to the best of our abilities all those that walk through our doors. I look forward to learning from them and you as to how we can best serve our constituents.

SummerFest was a smashing success. Programs and Outreach Librarian, Tiffany Flores, did an amazing job organizing the event and the turnout was impressive. You can read more about it her report.

Heritage Center staff attended Juneteenth celebrations in Northampton and Accomack Counties. Jazmine Collins represented us at both events, and I was happy to join her at Accomack's celebration at Mary N. Smith Cultural Center.



ESPL & HC was honored to host the GHOTES Conference from June 26-29. With the invaluable assistance of Collins, I presented to the group of 70-plus genealogists and historians of the Eastern Shore about the resources available in the Heritage Center to all researchers.

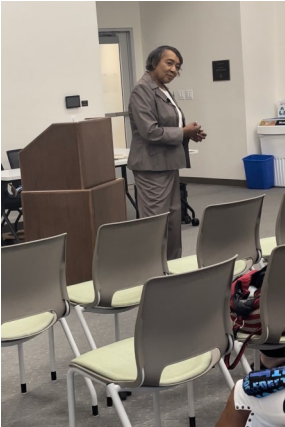
June also marked the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Eastern Shore Room. Long the purview of Brooks Miles Barnes, the Eastern Shore Room (ESR) was the dedicated space in the Accomack facility for all things Shore history & culture. The materials gathered by Barnes are the fruit of a labor of love and decades of dedication that provided the community with the seeds of the Heritage Center. The ESR, named in honor of Katharine H. S. Edmonds, is now the heart of the Heritage Center, and, in recognition of his service to the community, the archives that contains the thousands of pieces of information gathered by Barnes, is named in his honor. Future staff, donors, and researchers will all be aware of this legacy from whence the Heritage Center was built .



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Heritage Center

esplheritage.org



June was eventful for the Heritage Center. On June 18th, Dr. Clara Small, retired professor from Salisbury University engaged listeners with "The Life and Times of Harriet Tubman." Dr. Small shared details from her involvement in the recreation facilities at a Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park in Dorchester County, funded by the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund. This lecture was part of a "It's A Conversation" series of dramatizations of African American historical figures which are followed by open discussion with attendees. The series was hosted at locations in both Northampton and Accomack Counties by the Center for Community and Family Development and funded in part by a grant from Virginia Humanities.

While describing the extraordinary cunning Harriet Tubman possessed and the importance of secrecy in being involved in the Underground Railroad, Dr. Small also discussed methods of communication of the enslaved and those helping them escape to freedom. One such method of communication, which Small noted is a fascinating idea although it is much debated in scholarly circles, was by encoding warnings and messages through quilt patterns. This story was explored in the book *Hidden in Plain View, the Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad* by Jacqueline L. Tobin and Raymond G. Dobard. Dr. Small encouraged attendees to explore the mesmerizing story by browsing the Heritage Center's recent gallery installation, a series of posters depicting some of the common quilt patterns discussed in the book. The posters, on loan from Brenda Holden, will remain on the Heritage Center's gallery wall through July.

Heritage Center staff attended the Eastern Shore Museum Network quarterly meeting held at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in the historic Brownsville House. Ian Post of the NAAB Center in Salisbury along with other staff and two interns presented information about the NAAB Center's projects and resources, specifically the Delmarva's Enduring Connections database and its connection to the research that TNC began into Brownsville Plantation's enslaved residents and history. The Heritage Center Advisory Committee and Bibbins-Latimer Working Group also met this month.

For outreach, staff attended the Juneteenth festivals for both Northampton County on June 15th at Exmore Town Park, and Accomack County on June 22nd at Mary N. Smith Cultural Center, to promote our local history and genealogy collections and resources. The events are coordinated by each county's NAACP and are usually held on the same day. Northampton's Juneteenth festival has a long history and is well attended and is one of the yearly outreach events that the Heritage Center prioritizes for outreach, and staff were grateful to be able to attend Accomack's for the first time.

Ladies from the Eastern Shore of Virginia Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, visited the Heritage Center to donate a copy of *A History of the Virginia Daughters of the*



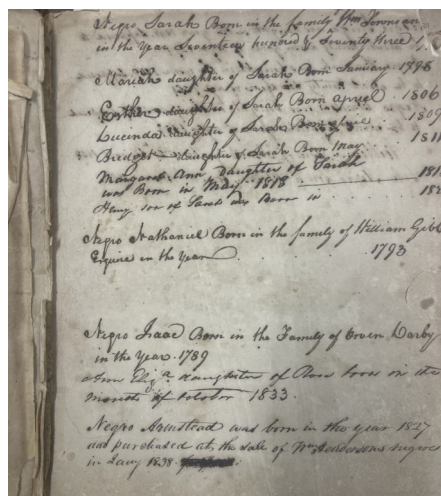


EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Heritage Center

esplheritage.org

American Revolution, 1891-2022, on June 21, and discussed potential future donations. In addition to a framed map from Worcester County Public Library, a family bible was also given to the Heritage Center. The bible, found in the attic of Randy Lewis' home in Wachapreague, contains births, marriages, and deaths recorded by the Fisher family, of Accomack County with connections to Delaware, Maryland, other parts of Virginia, and a few relatives from the mid-1700s to mid-1800s. The bible also contains the names of several enslaved individuals and lists the birth, ages, and rare details that will be useful to genealogical researchers. Writing on the inside cover states that the list was given as evidence in a chancery case. While the Heritage Center is not able to keep and preserve bibles, the genealogical and historical information contained therein can be extraordinarily valuable and will be preserved in perpetuity.



At the end of the month, June 26-29th, the Heritage Center hosted the Genealogy and History of the Eastern Shore (GHOTES) Conference. GHOTES members from around the country attended the 4-day event to learn, share, and conduct research into their Eastern Shore roots and to explore the area. The agenda included "Old Homes and Architecture of Northampton" by David Scott, "Tales from DNA Findings" by M.K. Miles, "Stories from the Colonial Records of Virginia's Eastern Shore" by Jenean Hall, "Eastern Shore Stories of the Revolution and How to Find Yours" by Kellee Blake, "Tracing the Paths of the Custis Enslaved and Searching for Descendants," and more.

On Thursday evening, GHOTES welcomed the public to "A yDNA Discovery for Descendants of James the "Indian

Boy" (Accomack)," with Marie Rundquist and Wesley F. Revels, who shared the remarkable findings of DNA testing that traced the male chromosome of Revels and two other men. DNA testing proves their Native American lineage from a Matomkin Indian, James. With this, and historical records, Wesley detailed the journey of James' progeny into the Carolinas along common Native American trading routes, then westward and showed connections with other non-white families such as the Jacobs family that descended from the enslaved of the Custis family. Studies of the yDNA and the most recent common ancestors several haplogroups provide a footprint of Native American migration from Asian origins into and throughout the Americas and gives evidence of ancient seafaring abilities.

Thanks to meticulous planning by M.K. Miles, the Dennis Custis Lecture Hall held accommodated more than 70 attendees. Staff gave a summary of the resources available, provided access to material and assistance throughout the conference, and consulted on several potential donations. The GHOTES Conference is a realization and testament of what the Regional Library and Heritage Center can provide to its constituents and the community.

Jazmine Collins, Circulation and Reference Manager



Just in Time for Summer – A Video Game Collection

While video games may not be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about traditional library collections, modern libraries focus on providing access to information and stories through all kinds of material types. Video games offer more than just entertainment, and can lead to improvements in cognitive thinking, decision making skills, communication, and collaborative abilities.

With guidance from the American Library Association's Games & Gaming Round Table and a presentation from the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), ESPL has created a starter collection of approximately twenty video games to test the waters of circulating gaming cartridges. All items in this collection can be used in a patron's Nintendo Switch gaming console, which is the most affordable of the major console systems and is very popular with people of all ages who enjoy video games. A majority of the ESPL's games are rated "E" for Everyone, with a few being rated "E10+" for Everyone Ages 10 and Up.

The new game collection includes familiar characters such as Pokemon, Mario, and Zelda, and the ever-popular worlds of Minecraft and Animal Crossing. ESPL has also purchased two copies of Nintendo Switch Sports, which feature a leg band. Using the Switch controllers and the leg band, players can kick, spike, swing, and bowl in games such as badminton, soccer, volleyball, and bowling. While the game itself is digital, Switch Sports can get the whole family up and moving.

The video games will be located at the Regional Library in Parksley, but a binder with information about each title will be available at the libraries in Nassawadox, Cape Charles, and Chincoteague so that patrons can easily reserve the games from any ESPL location (or through ShoreCat, the library catalog). ESPL librarians are excited to expand our circulating materials collection with this new way of sharing entertainment and information, and to see the creativity and imaginary fun our patrons experience as they play these games.



Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores



ESPL's first SummerFest was a massive success with 80 children signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge and roughly 350 attendees in total. Despite being held on the same day as the Exmore Town Park's Juneteenth Event, SummerFest had a steady flow of people who enjoyed the games, activities, and food trucks. Many people came from the Juneteenth event to participate in SummerFest because of the bounce houses. Others would come for the food and then stay because of all the activities the library provided. For the first year, this event went incredibly well. The bounce houses, face painting, and beaded bracelets were the most popular activities with the participants. This was incredible for the inaugural event. Tiffany looks forward to next year's event being even more successful.



Thank you to all the ESPL staff, Friends of the Library members, and volunteers who attended and assisted with the event. Without this support, the event would not have been as successful as it was.

Summer is in full swing, bringing many kids, teens, and adults to our programs. All programs in June saw good attendance. This year, the library and the Community Service Board are collaborating to bring storytime to the Regional Library on Mondays at 11 am. While this program has just begun it has had 17 participants. Additionally, this year's performer, The

Amazing Mr. B, was well-attended at both locations. Northampton Free Library's show was held offsite at the Northampton County Parks and Recreation Department in Machipongo VA. This was a great choice as it allowed the opportunity for the summer camp kids to attend. There were 71 attendees including a few library patrons outside the summer camp group. This was a wonderful event with a lot of engagement. Thank you to Northampton County Parks and Recreation for hosting.

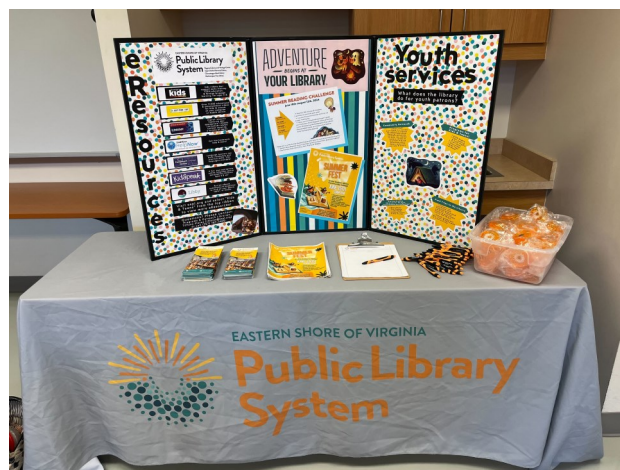
At the end of the month, Tiffany hosted another Lego Competition. This had 6 attendees who competed to build the best place to visit! Historically this included a McDonald's, a café, a schoolhouse, and an ocean. Additionally, teen programming has been going well. After the teens requested additional activities on game nights, Tiffany has been bringing a variety of puzzles and crafts for them to try. All have been well received. In some cases, the video games are left unplayed so that they can spend time doing the activity instead.





Programs & Outreach Report Continued...

Tiffany Flores



In addition to heavier programming, June's calendar was full of many outreach events. Not including Summer Fest, the library attended 3 outreach events and engaged with at least 370 people between all the events. Events varied from family events to Juneteenth celebrations and provided an opportunity for the library to promote services, engage with the community, and advertise the Summer Reading Program. This year, the library celebrated Juneteenth in both Accomack and Northampton counties and advertised Heritage Center resources. On Saturday, June 29th, Tiffany will be attending the Neurodiversity Day event at the Historic Onancock School.

The last STEM Community of Practice meeting was held on June 24th. During this meeting, participants were taught some best practices on how to catalog the STEM kits and questions were answered on how to make these kits. While the meetings are over, there is work to be done. With Summer in full swing, Tiffany can switch gears and focus on developing STEM kits and STEM programming for the Fall.

ADVENTURE — BEGINS AT — YOUR LIBRARY™





Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



Northampton Free Library kicked off the Summer with lots of fun programs for all ages. Patrons were invited to stretch their artistic muscles in our rock painting craft on June 6th, and the following week the library hosted the first of several special Evening Story Times that will continue throughout the summer. On June 18th, library staff and patrons met off-site to enjoy a magic show by children's performer The Amazing Mr. B at Northampton County Parks & Rec. in Machipongo. On June 27th, kids were invited back to the library to complete a group engineering challenge with K'nex building blocks. Attendees built a working solar-powered car and enjoyed a quick snack. Story Time Anytime continued on Mondays and Wednesdays and Tech Help continued on Tuesdays. Northampton Free Library will also have an ongoing game for the rest of the Summer – a treasure chest will be hidden in the children's section every morning and can be exchanged for a prize at the front desk.



July is shaping up to be an even more exciting month packed with library programming. There will be another Evening Storytime and snack on Thursday, July 11th starting at 4:00 PM. The next morning, at 10:00 AM on Friday, July 12th, kids and their grown-ups are invited to meet library staff off-site for a nature hike and story time at Brownsville Preserve. Feel free to stop by the library afterwards to check out some books of your own! July's adult craft will take place the following Thursday, July 18th, at 6:00 PM, and will see library patrons assemble sea-shell wind chimes. This event is free, but registration in advance will be required. On Saturday, July 20th, the library will host a special story time starting at 12:00 PM – kids are invited to enjoy a Llama Llama book reading and then adopt a stuffed llama to take home. Finally, another children's STEM craft night is scheduled to start at 6:00 PM on Thursday, July 25th – come learn about paleontology by creating your own seashell fossils to take home! This event is also free, but registration in advance will be required. As always, watch the Northampton Free Library Facebook page for more details about our upcoming programs. Also feel free to ask library staff at the front desk.

Story Time Anytime will continue to be offered on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Tech Help will continue to be offered on Tuesdays, throughout the month of July.

The library will open late at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, July 2nd, and will be closed in observance of Independence Day on Thursday, July 4th.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



The month of June is always full of good stuff!

Cape Charles Memorial Library started the month by attending the Cheriton Family Fun Day where staff had a table and met with our community. We shared information about our summer reading challenge and all the amazing programs we are hosting this summer, as well as handed out free books and seed packets from our Seed Cart.



During the next few weeks, staff was busy preparing for upcoming programs. Staff created and prepared summer program brochures, summer reading packets, grab & go bags, and in-house passive programs totaling almost 200 giveaways!

CCML was able to close for two days this month to get much needed "spring cleaning" and organizing completed. We also added bookshelf dividers throughout our collection, re-organized both vaults, and shifted many (many) books to increase ease of use in our adult non-fiction area. Though it was a lot of work, we are excited about these improvements and thankful for patron compliments.



We hosted a STEM "Fool's Gold" Pop-Up Program where participants learned about Fool's Gold and the differences between real gold and pyrite. Participants received their own "gold" bar and tools to excavate their own pyrite specimens. Lots of fun and learning by all!

Additional programs this month included an owl prowl, a camping program with rangers from Kiptopeke State Park, a visit from the PBS Literacy van, several story time and craft gather-



Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



Vacation season is underway which means many more visitors in the library. We wrapped up the school year with the presentation of our Reading Awards at the Chincoteague Elementary School. Each marking period, one child from each class is chosen by their teacher to receive a certificate and a \$10 gift certificate to Sun Dial Bookstore. The award is presented by one of our board members at the school's award ceremony.



Our summer reading program, Lubbock's Learners, began on June 17 and will run through August 12. To date, we have 46 students registered. All students who register prior to July 1 will be eligible to enter our drawing for 2 Maui Jack Waterpark gift certificates. Winners will be announced next week. Informational materials are available at the library for students to keep track of their summer reading. For every 100 minutes of reading, students may fill out a ticket for the end-of-the-program raffle for a Kindle Fire or they may choose a prize from our prize box. Our STEM project which began during Summer Reading Registration was a 3-D puzzle on which the students enjoyed working.



Painting began this month on the exterior of the library. In addition, we are getting estimates to repair the front windows in the "barbershop" building which faces Main Street. Window displays this month were provided by the Eastern Shore Literacy Council.

And, of course, we are busy gearing up for our July 4th non-motorized parade. Following a short introduction, program and the parade, there will be prizes for the oldest participant, the youngest participant, and the family with the most participants. Cupcakes and bottled water will also be available.

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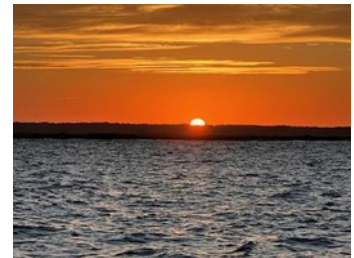


Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



On June 20, we hosted the annual sunset cruise. Seventy people enjoyed a beautiful boat ride with music and refreshments. A wonderful time was had by all.



Each child who obtains their first library card will have the opportunity of having their picture taken and posted on the library's Facebook page with our new "My First Library Card" (pictured below).



Tales 4 Tots preschool story time and Young Explorers will be starting up again next month. We have tentatively scheduled a STEM program for children above the age of eight and adults to visit the Space Authority on July 17 at 1 p.m. Registration will be limited to 30 people. Summer 2024 is shaping up to be a special time for our library, its patrons and visitors.