



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

July 2024



Upcoming Highlights for August @ Regional Library & Northampton Free

- 7th: Crochet Stitch-A-Long - ESRL
- 8th: Tech Help - ESRL
- 8th: Teen Creative Writing - ESRL
- 8th: Evening Story Time - Northampton Free
- 10th: Author Talk - Rebecca Freeman discussing *How to Capture a Women's Heart & Keep It!* - ESRL
- 13th: Teen Gamin & Craft Night - ESRL
- 15th: Romance Book Club - ESRL
- 16th: Craft: Embroidery Bookmarks - ESRL
- 17th: Crafters' and Hobbyists' Supply Swap - ESRL
- 27th: Teen Gaming & Manga Book Club - ESRL
- 29th: Craft: Embroidery Bookmarks - Northampton Free
- Tech Help: Every Tuesday - Northampton Free
- Storytime Anytime: Every Monday & Wednesday - Northampton Free

For more information: espl.org; (757) 787-3400

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
System Director

July marks the beginning of a new fiscal year, and therefore, the compilation of all things year-end for the past fiscal year. This work provides the opportunity to look over the past year and assess the successes and failures. Highlighted by the opening of the new Regional Library & Heritage Center, the Eastern Shore Public System also saw changes in leadership and growth in our core services across the system. Before diving into the reports of specific departments and the branch and affiliate libraries, the following page provides a snapshot of how ESPL serves our communities.



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Public Library System

FISCAL YEAR 2024 USE SNAPSHOT

Circulation

106,306

Books

83,386

Audio

1,603

Video

8,113

In-House Use

2,984

Internet Use

50,270

Computer Use

7,479

iPad Use

676

AWE Computer use

691

WiFi Connections

41,424

Database Use

54,542

MilesFiles

28,700

Libby

11,304

Past Perfect

2,459

Magster

2,295

Other

9,784

Visits

107,010*

Card Holders

11,375

New Cards Added

2,104

Program Attendance

10,668

Social Media Reach

121,073

*Figure submitted for FY23 was miscalculated: FY24 represents 45% increase in patronage across the entire system



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Heritage Center

esplheritage.org

The Heritage Center hosted Kellee Green Blake's lecture More Inborn Strength on July 18th, the second part of a lecture series about women of the Revolutionary era. Part one, Inborn Strength, highlighted three women of Accomack County. In part two, Blake helped the audience understand the lives of three Northampton County women of different social stations; Anne Eyre Mifflin Roberts, Betsey York, and Elizabeth Southall, using details gleaned from various primary source records and her research and the backdrop of the War for Independence to create a narrative of their lives and struggles.



In July, Heritage Center staff reviewed our statistics for the previous fiscal year that ended June 30th. The Heritage Center had a 43% increase in reference assistance to patrons compared to the previous year. This statistic specifically applies to researchers or individuals using the Eastern Shore Room and Archives; it does not include attendance of Heritage Center events or programs in the Lecture Hall. Even though access to the Heritage Center was unavailable for several months during the library's relocation, and access to the archives was further limited, visits to the Eastern Shore Room increased by 20% percent and the number of email contacts has doubled compared to the previous year. Although some patrons do not require help when visiting the Heritage Center, our staff provides direct reference assistance or research help to more than 75% of the Heritage Center's visitors. Some of our online resources, such as Ancestry, decreased in usage. This confirms the Heritage Center's need to prioritize promotion and marketing through social media and highlighting collections on our website.

Jazmine Collins, Circulation and Reference Manager



Technical Services

Charle Ricci, Collection Management and Acquisitions Librarian



All about Patron Requests

Patron requests are one way that the library keeps a finger on the pulse of the community's interests. By knowing which titles our customers are interested in, our librarians can customize our book orders and prioritize our cataloging queues to get in-demand items into the hands of our readers as quickly as possible.

Patron requests arrive through multiple sources: by email, through the request form on the library's website, and through the library catalog, ShoreCat. Over the past year, 12,596 items were requested from the collections of the four ESPL libraries. Books were the most requested material format, with 11,786 requests for the printed word. 601 video recordings and 192 audiobooks were requested.

Of the 12,596 requests, over 8,000 were entered directly into the ShoreCat catalog by library patrons themselves. Library staff entered the remainder on behalf of library users, but the rate at which patrons are searching the catalog and submitting their own requests speaks to ShoreCat's ease of use and the digital skills of library patrons.

Items from the library's Fiction collection were requested the most with over 3,000 requests. New Books followed closely with over 2,800 requests. Nonfiction titles were requested over 1,500 times, Mysteries 790, Video Recordings 533, Large Print 433, and Graphic Novels 215.

Titles from the Children's Collection were also frequently requested, with over 600 Picture Books, 470 Fiction, 340 Nonfiction and 211 Graphic Novels reserved by and for our young readers.

Analyzing the request data reveals another pattern of library use on a Shore-wide scale: over 6,900 of the patron requests required the transfer of the requested items from one ESPL library location to another. The strength of our regional system is evident as our shared resources allow each of the four libraries to better meet the needs and interests of Shore readers than it would be possible to do alone.



Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores

July was a good month of programming filled with a lot of collaborations and successful events.

Chincoteague Bay Field Station's monthly story time attendees made fish suncatchers. On July 12th Tiffany went to the Brownsville Preserve for a special story time featuring a nature walk. Attendees were able to learn about local insects and flora by taking a walk at Brownsville's Pollinator Trail. They even managed to find a frog! This month's STEM programming focused on making fossils using Plaster of Paris and modeling clay. The children that attended used shells to make a variety of neat fossils.

The Regional Library hosted its first-ever Smash Brothers Tournament on July 17th! The participants were able to play Super Smash Brothers Ultimate competitively for prizes. Even after the competition, the kids wanted to continue playing. Tiffany looks forward to hosting regular video game competitions. Maria Burns hosted a Beaded Earring craft program. The attendees greatly enjoyed the craft.



With the summer heat at its peak, outreach opportunities greatly slowed down throughout July. Even so, plans were made for August, September, and October as many opportunities arose throughout July. August is already packed with seven outreach events we will be tabling at and promoting library resources.

Tiffany has been able to focus a lot of her time and energy this month on planning the Makerspace and creating the policy for it. Most of her time has been researching, drafting, and editing the policy so that it can be reviewed. On top of the policy, Tiffany has been making headway on plans to organize the space, purchase supplies, and ensure procedures are in place for when it opens.



Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



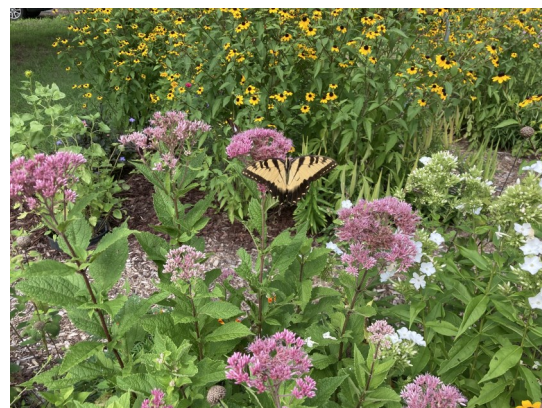
Northampton Free Library offered a full calendar of public programs in the month of July, with Story Time Anytime available on every Monday and Wednesday and Tech Help available by request on every Tuesday. The library also hosted an adult seashell wind chime building craft night and a children's STEM activity focused on make-your-own seashell fossils. A nature hike and story time was also offered at the nearby Brownsville Preserve. The month's most popular event was the special Llama Llama Storytime hosted on Saturday, July 20th – the program was well attended and each child got to adopt and take home their own stuffed llama.



August will see another exciting lineup of programs for patrons of all ages. There is already a bit of a buzz about the make-your-own banana cream pie cooking program scheduled for 6:00 PM on the very first day of the month. This event is free, but space is limited and pre-registration is required. Visit the Northampton Free Library Facebook page or ask a member of library staff for more information.

On the following Thursday, August 8th, there will be another afternoon story time for children starting at 4:00 PM. Snacks will be provided. Finally, there will be an adult craft on Thursday, August 29th at 6:00 PM. Attendees will learn how to cross-stitch their own yarn bookmarks. This program will also be free, but registration will be required. But that's not all! Each attendee to a Northampton Free Library program during the month of August will be entered into a raffle to win a back-to-school gift basket.

In other news, the pollinator garden outside Northampton Free Library is now bursting with color at the height of the summer season. Bees, butterflies, and birds of all kinds have been visiting the garden daily to enjoy native wildflowers like Joe-Pye weed and black-eyed Susan. In addition to maintaining the pollinator garden, the Eastern Shore Master Gardeners are continuing to partner with Northampton Free Library to host a book display and a free seed box inside the building.





Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



Cape Charles Memorial Library set an all-time attendance record during the month of July 2024 with over 4,100 visitors and more than 850 attendees to our summer programs! Staff has done an incredible job creating and leading our programs, with lots of smiles and laughter!



RECYCLING PROGRAM
with Northampton Extension 4-H
July 9, 2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Storytime with Barrier Islands Center
7.16.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



US COAST GUARD - CAPE CHARLES
7.18.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Community Helpers
7.11.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Creature Catch, ID, & Release
6.25.2024
Coastal Research Center &
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Storytime
7.16.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library

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Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



Juu Bae
The Book of JUUU (Author Chat & Book Signing)
7.8.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Community Helpers
7.11.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



STEM (Coding) Program with PBS Education
7.10.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Mollusc Egg
(unknown species)
hiding in slime

Creature Catch, ID, & Release
6.25.2024
Coastal Research Center &
Cape Charles Memorial Library



NATURE DETECTIVES
Virginia Living Museum
7.2.2024
Cape Charles Memorial Library



Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



July on Chincoteague Island: Ponies...seasonal visitors...movies...concerts...programs. The Island and our little library have been experiencing record numbers of adults and children enjoying this special time of the year. Our July activities began with the 4th of July Parade and ended with having one of Misty's descendants visiting our library and a performance at the Island Theatre by magician Rob Westcott.



July 4th Family Parade was a tremendous success. Board President and Master of Ceremony, Paul Miller, welcomed everyone and thanked Lou Bender (Uncle Sam) who helped to organize the event. Following the parade, prizes were awarded to the oldest participant, the youngest participant, and the family with the most participants. Cupcakes and bottled water were also available.



Library Displays and Author Visits: The library has been decked out with patriotic bunting for Independence Day. Chincoteague Ponies and Misty's Birthday are the main themes of the indoor displays. Special thanks to Christopher Pote for sharing these special posters from the Heritage Center.

Lettie Teague, author of Dear Readers and Riders, visited the library and enjoyed the displays. Allison Clark read her book, Pony Swim, to our Tales 4 Tots children; and author, Kris Barnes, entertained library patrons and visitors with excerpts from her book, Kelly's Pond.

Summer Reading: Forty-nine students have enrolled in the summer reading program, Lubbock's Learners, which began on June 17 and will run through August 12. The students are busy reading and filling in their slips to enter the drawing for Kindle Fires which will take place at the wrap-up party on August 22.

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Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



Tales 4 Tots Storytime and Young Explorers: Sea Creatures, shell painting, pony stories and pony visits have been keeping our Island children and visitors entertained. On July 11, twenty-two children attended Young Explorers and twenty-one children attended Tales 4 Tots. On July 18, thirty-three children attended Young Explorers and thirty-two children attended Tales 4 Tots. On August 1, both groups of children will be visiting the Museum of Chincoteague. These programs will wrap up on August 8. Tales 4 Tots will begin again in September.



STEM Program for Adults and Children 8 years old and older: Field trip to the Virginia Spaceport on Wallops Island on July 17 at 1 p.m. Many thanks to our library manager, Teresa Wright, for organizing this special event. Twenty-one people were given an informational tour of the facilities. Plans are in the works for another tour at the end of August.



Additionally, we are all so pleased to be the recipient of a grant from the Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation to upgrade our computers and tech services. Thanks to volunteer, Maureen Teague, and library manager, Teresa Wright, for preparing the grant materials.