



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

February 2025

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
System Director

As a bi-county system, budgets requests need to be presented to both the Northampton and Accomack Supervisors, and I made the library system's case to both this month. The request is modest, just 5% increase from the previous year, and is mainly to go towards supporting our staff, as well as other initiatives. The ESPL staff is amazing and dedicated to serving the Shore; it is important staff can afford to continue working here as basic costs such as food and health care are constantly rising. Thank you to both county's supervisors for your continued support of ESPL, our staff, and the communities we serve.



WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

Upcoming March Highlights Eastern Shore Public Library System

- **6th: Tea Craft - ESRL**
- **12th: National Plant a Flower Day - CCML**
- **13th: Grayson Chesser "Eastern Shore Decoys & Their Makers" - ESRL**
- **13th: Adult Craft, Yarn Birds - NFL**
- **14th & 15th: Search for the Shamrocks - CIL**
- **18th: Ted Corbett, "Four Virginia Women in the American Revolution" - ESRL**
- **20th: STEM Night, Popsicle Catapults - NFL**
- **20th: Fairy Party and Crafts - ESRL**
- **22nd: Jigsaw Puzzle Competition - ESRL**
- **25th: Family Movie Night, *Migration* - ESRL**
- **27th: Author Talk, C. Christian Chandler - ESRL**
- **Tech Help: Every Tuesday - NFL**
- **Teen Gaming Night: Every Tuesday - ESRL**
- **Storytime Anytime: Every Monday & Wednesday - Northampton Free**

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

CIL = Chincoteague Island Library

CCML = Cape Charles Memorial Library

ESRL = ESVA Regional Library & Heritage Center

NFL = Northampton Free Library



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Heritage Center

esplheritage.org

Jazmine Collins, Reference Manager & Local History

In February the Heritage Center received the second half of the large photograph collection mentioned in the January Report. This portion included over 200 black & white and color photograph prints, dozens of negatives and contact sheets, and several hard drives containing a total of eight terabytes of digital images! In addition to the landscapes, landmarks, and wildlife pictured in the first half of the collection, the second half has even more photographs that capture the Eastern Shore way of life. The photographer took a series of photos with aquaculture companies like JC Walker Brothers, farmers planting and harvesting crops like at Chatham Vineyards, and local events such as the Cape Charles Boat Docking Contest.

This month also gave archivist Luke Kelly the chance to learn and explore the collection more. Several days were spent reorganizing the boxes of the Kirk Mariner Collection. The collection is comprised of boxes arranged by the type of material in each box, i.e., periodicals, books, maps, etc. The Non-Book category includes Mariner's original research

that he compiled when writing articles and books. Opening the lid of a Non-Book box is like opening a treasure chest of Eastern Shore knowledge. A lot of the materials in these boxes includes research that Mariner never published. The Heritage Center is excited to make this material, and the rest of our collections, more accessible to the community.

The Heritage Center hosted its first Eastern Shore Black History Trivia Tournament on February 25th. The tournament aimed to engage students in local Black History with trivia questions based on Frances Bibbins Latimer's *Life for Me Ain't Been No Crystal Stair*. Team Lower Northampton's Legacy, coached by Bill Dyas represented the Kiptopeke Elementary 6th grade and Team Black Excellence, coached by Subrina Owens Parker and Leo Owens, represented Northampton and Nandua High Schools. Team Shore Kids and Team BGC Brainiacs, coached by Karen Hatch, represented the Boys and Girls Club. Prize money and pizza were provided through donations from community sponsors, including Dr. Paul Bibbins and Betty Bibbins, M.D., Richard and Karen Hatch, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald and Polly Boyd the Center for Community and Family Development, Lankford Highway Truck Stop, and the Family of the late Solomon D. Spady. Jazmine Collins moderated the event.





EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

Heritage Center

esplheritage.org

Jazmine Collins, Reference Manager & Local History

A large audience and nervousness created initial hesitancy, but students' enthusiasm grew throughout the competition. Spectators, including several family members of individuals named in the book, were just as involved, silently guessing the answers along with the students. After 6 games and a lot of fun for all, Team Black Excellence came in 1st place, Team Shore Kids won 2nd place, Team BGC Brainiacs won 3rd, and Lower Northampton's Legacy came in 4th. Contestants received cash prizes totaling \$660. The Heritage Center plans to expand the competition next year by including Bibbins Latimer's book *Landmarks*.



Due to weather conditions, Grayson Chesser's lecture "Eastern Shore Decoys and their Makers" was rescheduled for Thursday, March 13th at 6:00. Ted Corbett will also be presenting a lecture entitled "Four Virginia Women Confront the American Revolution" on Tuesday, March 18th, at 5:30 PM.

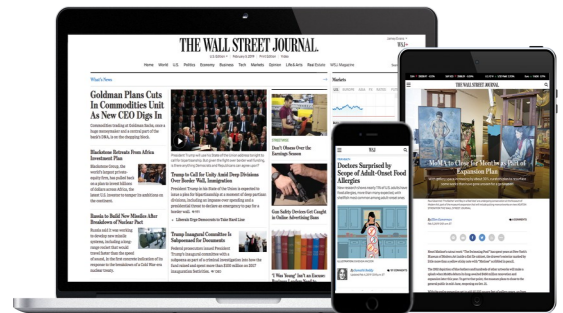


New Electronic Resources for Library Patrons to Read and Enjoy

ESPL is pleased to announce the launch of two new electronic resources that will expand our community's access to information and entertainment. Library patrons already enjoy selections of electronic books, audiobooks, and magazines through Libby, Freading, and Magzter, and now there are even more collections to read and explore.

Wall Street Journal

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) is the definitive source of news and information through the lens of business, finance, economics and money, and global forces that shape the world and are key to understanding it. Library patrons can now access the electronic Public Library edition of WSJ while they are in the library or from the comfort of their own home. The digital version of the WSJ includes unlimited access to the daily newspaper, a four-year archive, newsletters, informative videos, and podcasts.



By visiting the Read, Watch, Listen page on the library's website <https://espl.org/read-watch-listen/> and clicking on the Wall Street Journal access link, patrons can create an account and start using wsj.com immediately and with access for the next three days. After three days, returning patrons can simply login as an existing user with the same username and password they originally created to receive access for three more days.

Comics Plus



Comics Plus is a digital platform and app offering thousands of comics, graphic novels and manga. Readers can access titles using a smartphone, tablet, or web browser. There is never a waiting list to read a title, as every item in the Comics Plus collection can be read by an unlimited number of patrons simultaneously.

This resource is a valuable supplement to the ESPL's collection of physical graphic novels and manga, one of the most popular areas in the library. There are three collection access levels: the Children's Library (curated for ages 5 - 12); the Teen's Library (curated for ages 13- 18); and the Full Library (All content, including Children's and Teen's Collections). Readers are automatically directed to the most appropriate collection based on their age.

Comics Plus can be found on the Read, Watch, Listen page on the library's website <https://espl.org/read-watch-listen/> and is also available as an app through the App Store or Google Play.

Whether you're keeping an eye on the state of the world or just looking for a good story to read, be sure to check out these two new resources.



Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores, Programs and Outreach Librarian

Winter storms do not stop programming at the Regional Library. February Story Times had 53 attendees between 4 programs, making February the month with the highest attendance so far. Due to the success, story times will be relocated to the open space in the kids' area to allow more space for more people. While the teen craft had to be postponed to the following week, the teens made a lot of unique pompom creatures the following week. Even adult programming saw success. Romance Book Club and the Paper Roses craft were well attended and both received positive feedback, especially the craft. In addition to our typical evening program success, 11 am on Fridays seems to be a good time slot for adults. The stitch-a-long program attendees enjoyed the program and are excited for the Yarn Club starting in March. Many of our February lectures faced rescheduling needs, fortunately, the presenters were willing to move their programs. Grayson Chesser's lecture on the history of Eastern Shore decoy carving has been moved to March 13th, and Gebel's Pinocchio lecture was moved to April 10th.



February's passive programming was also successful. For Valentine's Day, the library sat out take-and-make literacy-themed Valentine's cards for patrons to take. This was wildly popular, with roughly 100 patrons engaging with this program. The table was easily cleared twice because patrons were taking cards at a rapid pace.



Additionally, the public finished the winter-themed sticker poster. An estimated 20 people participated this month. Another one will be hung up for the Spring since many people have voiced their enjoyment of the activity.

The time for Outreach is slowly returning. This month, Tiffany was invited to Literacy Night at Occohannock Elementary School and has been invited to their Bookfair event in March. Accawamacke also invited us to their Career Day in March, which library staff will be attending. Additionally, events in April are already beginning to roll in, including the 'Return to our Roots' event, which the library attended last year. Finally, in preparation for SummerFest, Tiffany Flores, Christopher Pote, and Jamie Johnson met with the community college to begin the conversation for SummerFest. This meeting focused on plans for how to use the outdoor space more effectively.





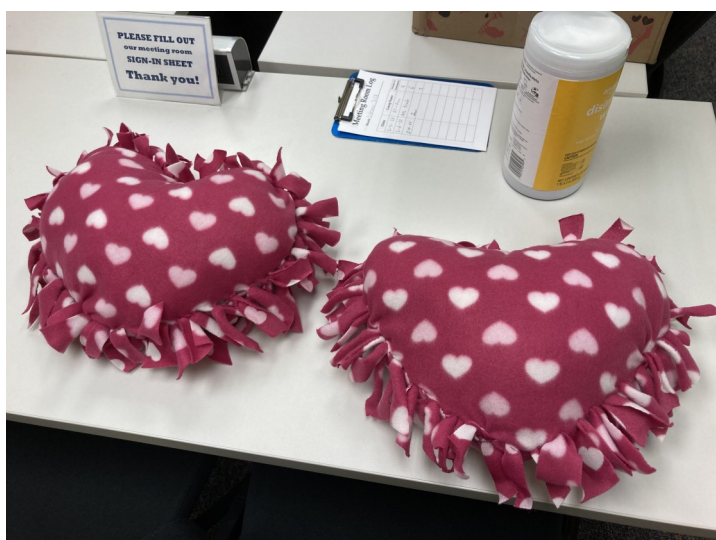
Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



February was a short and quiet month at Northampton Free Library. Despite a few snow days, the library hosted several public programs. Tech Help continued to be offered on every Tuesday on an on-demand basis. The library also hosted a children's after-school story-time on February 7th and an adult no-sew heart pillow craft on February 14th. A children's circuit-building STEM program was scheduled for February 20th but unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the snow storm.

Library staff also got a head start on spring cleaning this year with organization and downsizing going on behind the scenes in Northampton Free Library's storage areas. A large part of the fiction section was also combed through to find under-used items and make more space for exciting new titles to be added in the future. This project will continue into March.



The library is planning on jumping head-first into spring with a full calendar of public programs in March. Tech Help will continue to be offered on every Tuesday throughout the month. Library staff will be on site all day long to try and answer your technology questions. Kids are invited to join us for an after-school story and snack on Thursday, March 6th starting at 4:30 PM. Grown-ups can stop by the following week on Thursday March 13th for an adult craft activity at 6:00 PM. This month we'll be learning how to craft handmade yarn birds. Finally, March's STEM program for children will take place at 6:00 PM on Thursday the 20th. This will be a fun one - we'll be building and firing popsicle stick catapults!

As always, Northampton Free Library's programs are free and open to the public. Please note that space for the adult craft is limited and sign-up in advance is required. Keep an eye on the Northampton Free Library Facebook page or ask at the front desk for more information.

In other news, our little free seed library has just been re-stocked with brand new wildflower seeds by the Eastern Shore of Virginia Master Gardeners. The seed library will be accompanied in March by a fresh display of gardening themed books. Stop by to pick up some free seeds and check out some books to help you plan your own garden!



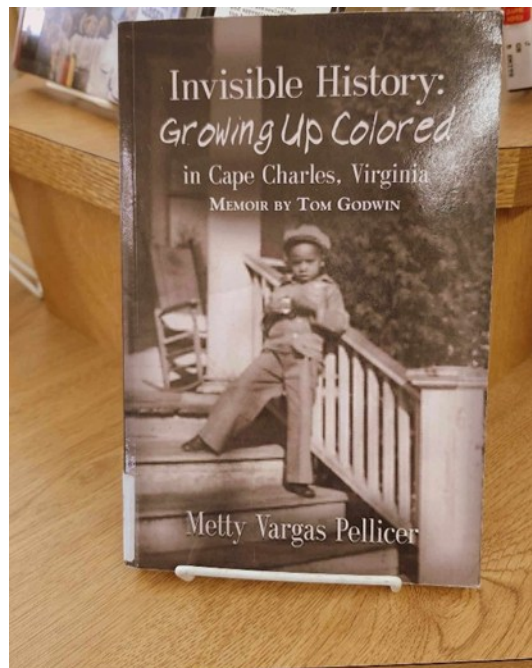
Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



February is already a short month but quickly became shorter with snow days, holidays, and sick days. We certainly are excited for Spring to arrive!

During the month of February, staff created a "Love Your Library" raffle to encourage patrons to sign-up for one of ESPL's many online digital resources which include Kanopy, Libby, Freading and Magster. For each new sign-up, participants were entered into a drawing for a \$25 Cape Charles gift card.



Cape Charles Memorial Library celebrated Black History Month with several book displays acknowledging the many contributions and stories of African Americans, both locally and nationwide. One piece of a display included the "March" trilogy, a graphic novel series telling the life story of John Lewis. Mr. Lewis was a Civil Rights icon, a politician who served in the United States House of Representatives for seventeen terms, and later an author. Each book of the "March" series received numerous awards, with "March: Book Three" being the first graphic novel in history to win a National Book Award.

"Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America."

John Lewis, speaking atop the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on March 1, 2020.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



We are in the process of preparing our Seed Cart for the warmer weather! This month, CCML received the bulk of our native flower and non-GMO seeds (vegetable, fruit, and herb) and staff have been working hard spooning the tiny seeds into individual envelopes. On March 12, we are hosting "Let's Celebrate National Plant a Flower Day". Eastern Shore Master Gardeners will be in attendance to answer questions and visitors to the program will be able to select 4 seed packets to take home. Our Seed Cart is available during regular business hours and is open to all.

CCML SEED LIBRARY est. 2023

CAPE CHARLES MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Let's celebrate

National Plant a Flower Day

**MARCH 12, 2025 (WEDNESDAY)
10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM**

Visit our Seed Cart Library and check out:

- Native Flower seeds
- Non-GMO Vegetables seeds
- Non-GMO Fruit seeds
- Non-GMO Herb seeds

**Limit 4 seed packets per household/month.*

Eastern Shore Virginia Master Gardeners will be on site to answer gardening questions.



Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



Once again, the snow and cold weather resulted in some closures and canceled programs. Our library web cam which was put in place by Chincoteague.com, was one of the most popular views on our Facebook page. Board member, Nancy Cunningham, maintains this page which is very active. Many of our programs and events are publicized using our Facebook page. Nancy keeps us very current.



Tales 4 Tots Storytime: The themes for February story times were penguins, bears and hibernation, Valentine's Day, and Ice Cream. We had to reschedule a visit from the Chincoteague Field Station due to the snowstorm. Each week we sang songs, read stories and made crafts related to the themes. We wrapped up the month with a field trip to The Island Creamery where owner, Kelly Conklin, showed the children how ice cream was made. We then read two books about ice cream, and then the children each received an ice cream cup of their choice.



Maintenance: After having a building contractor inspect the older library building, he determined that there was standing water under the building which needed to be remedied. The board approved the contractor to order soil to fill the area. Also, he suggested that the front windows be glazed and painted as soon as possible. We have contacted Dino Johnson to do the work. There were a few other area of concern which will be addressed.

Continued...



Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



"Death By Chocolate" Event: This event is held each year on the Friday and Saturday closest to Valentine's Day. It is sponsored by the Historic Downtown Merchants' Association of which our library is a member. We use this event to kick-off sales of our annual basket raffle. Over 700 friends and visitors came into the library to get their playing card stamped. Many of those who came in purchased raffle tickets. We look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting new people. We will be participating in a similar event in March: "Search for the Shamrock."



Our Annual Basket Raffle runs from February 14 through October 14.

**CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY PRESENTS
2025 CHILDRENS BASKET FUNDRAISER**

- \$25 ISLAND CREAMERY GIFT CARD
- BREYER HORSE RIPTIDE (BILLY REED JR CONSTRUCTION)
- ELEPHANT CANVAS PICTURE (THE BRANT)
- BOYD BEAR (CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY)
- STACKING GAME
- AMERICAN GIRL DOLL "TRULY ME" (LINDA & GERRY RYAN)
- LEGO ROLLER SKATE
- LEGO RABBIT
- BRIXTON COHEN COWBOY HAT (BARBARA MASON)
- STEM PIPE CLEANER ART KIT
- MAGNETIC ART
- 2 ISLAND THEATER MOVIE TICKETS W/ CONCESSIONS (CIAO)
- SURFER DUDE HARDBACK BOOK (CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY)
- KIDS 16GB KINDLE OCEAN THEME (HARRIET LONERGAN)
- LEGO FORTNITE BATTLE BUS (BILLY REED JR CONSTRUCTION)
- HANDMADE PONY (DAWN SIMPSON)
- PINK FLAMINGO (TERESA WRIGHT)



**CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY PRESENTS
2025 ADULT BASKET FUNDRAISER**

- \$25 ISLAND CREAMERY GIFT CARD
- YETI COOLER (ACE HARDWARE)
- TORY BURCH TOTE
- \$50 VILLAGE RESTAURANT GIFT CARD
- BRUMATE 40oz WATER BOTTLE (BARBARA MASON)
- TWO GARDEN FROGS (THE BRANT)
- TRAVEL BAG (THE BRANT)
- \$25 ACE HARDWARE GIFT CARD
- CANVAS BAY PAINTING (KATHY OSTRANDER)
- SAND CLOUD BEACH BLANKET (BARBARA MASON)
- STEAM POT W/ 100 FRESH LITTLENECK CLAMS (TOMS COVE AQUAFARMS)
- TOADFISH OYSTER SHUCKING BUNDLE (H&H PHARMACH GIFT SHOP)
- 16GB KINDLE (BILLY REED JR CONSTRUCTION)
- MISTY OF CHINCOTEAGUE BOOK (CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY)
- TWO ISLAND THEATER MOVIE PASSES W/ CONCESSIONS (CIAO)
- LIGHTHOUSE CANVAS PICTURE (PATRICK HENDERSON)
- YOGA MAT (LINDA & GERRY RYAN)
- BREYER HORSE RIPTIDE (DIANE FISHER)
- HAMPTON INN & SUITES GIFT CERTIFICATE (HAMPTON INN)
- PAINTING OF LIBRARY BY LOU BENDER (LOU BENDER)
- HANDCRAFTED INDIAN BY KORY VAN SICKLE (CHURCH STREET PRODUCE)
- CARVED REGGIE BIRCH CATTLE EGRET (HARRIET LONERGAN)
- HANDPAINTED LIGHTHOUSE SWITCH PLATE (TERESA WRIGHT)