



# 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



## Upcoming October Highlights Eastern Shore Public Library System

- Find the Jack O'Lantern - ESRL & NFL
- 13th: LIBRARIES CLOSED - Columbus Day
- 14th: Ghost Stories of the Eastern Shore - ESRL
- 16th: Teen Creative Writing - ESRL
- 21st: 3D Printer Training-Makerspace Certification - ESRL
- 21st: Tea Bag Bookmarks and Fall Tea Blending - ESRL
- 22nd: Virginia Department of Treasury: Unclaimed Property Presentation - ESRL
- 24th: Sewing Machine - Makerspace Certification - ESRL
- 28th: Teen Game Night & Manga Book Club - ESRL
- 30th: Family Movie Night - ESRL
- Tech Help: Every Wednesday - NFL
- Ancestry Help: Every Wednesday - ESRL
- Heritage Center Reference Assistance: Every Thursday - NFL
- Storytime Anytime: Every Monday & Wednesday - NFL

For times & more information: [espl.org](https://espl.org); (757) 787-3400

CIL = Chincoteague Island Library

CCML = Cape Charles Memorial Library

ESRL = ESVA Regional Library & Heritage Center

NFL = Northampton Free Library

September 2025

## Director's Update



**Christopher Pote,**  
System Director

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library and Heritage Center in Parksley celebrated its second anniversary in September. To this day, we continue to hear comments about what a wonderful space this is and how excited people are to have this facility and all of its services on the Eastern Shore. As we continue to expand our services and programming, we plan to continue growing our patronage and leveraging our resources for the benefit of all the libraries within the system so that all Shore residents can enjoy what we have to offer. Thank you to all that have supported ESPL, our libraries, and Heritage Center. We are just getting started!



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

# Heritage Center

[esplheritage.org](http://esplheritage.org)

Jazmine Collins, Reference Manager & Local History

On September 9th, 2025 The Heritage Center hosted a lecture by Laura Smith of Sunday Historical. Smith presented about Cape Charles first black woman business owner, Laura Lewis, who operated a bar and saloon in the early 1900s. Smith's documentary evidence included newspapers articles, land and tax records, and census documents along with historical context that crafted a story of a pioneering woman with a keen business sense that moved from the rough waterfront of Norfolk to the growing "Cape Charles City," where she prospered.



The Heritage Center celebrated 25 years of hosting the MilesFiles on our website with a reception on September 30th, 2025. At the reception, the Heritage Center previewed the new MilesFiles logo (shown below) which was designed as a gift for Moody K. "M.K" Miles, the creator and editor of MilesFiles. After light hors d'oeuvres and opening remarks by System Director Pote, Dr. Brooks Miles Barnes gave a heartwarming background of M.K. Miles' engineering career and foray into genealogical research and the beginnings of the MilesFiles. David Scott informed attendees of some of the aspects of the MilesFiles and how easily documents like survey maps can be added and used to glean genealogical and family information. Kellee Blake spoke of nationally recognized scholars, including herself that have used MilesFiles as a vital tool in their research and the many possible applications of MilesFiles in future research. She also presented M.K. Miles with a Lifetime Achievement Award from Virginia Humanities in recognition of all of the years of relentless work that M.K. Miles has put into the development of the database as well as the compilation and publication of several source materials and records. The event culminated in the official signing of the Deed of Gift of the MilesFiles to the library to make it accessible in perpetuity.

Next month, the Heritage Center will host Andy Nunez on October 14th to share a few haunted tales from Accomack and Northampton, such as those found in his *Ghosts of the Eastern Shore* books.



EASTERN SHORE GENEALOGY

# MilesFiles



## A Library Software Update and Popular Authors

ESPL utilizes the Atrium Integrated Library System software for both the library catalog and the staff circulation management modules. Recently, Atrium released an update that included many long-awaited improvements. The new functionalities will allow library staff to better serve our patrons and more easily navigate through workflow processes.

The reports module in Atrium has always been flexible and robust, but the recent update has increased our ability to analyze circulation and collection data. The update included a new report that calculates circulation activity by author. Not only can this information help to guide collection development decisions, it also happens to be rather interesting.

Many of the authors with the highest circulation are not surprising, given their record of best-selling titles year after year. There are a few newcomers to the list, however, that have emerged relatively recently and quickly gained a strong readership.

For the past year, here are the top fifteen authors in order of circulation counts:

Author Name	Circulation
James Patterson	1042
Nora Roberts	391
Danielle Steel	373
Frieda McFadden	347
Kristin Hannah	329
David Baldacci	321
Debbie Macomber	254
John Grisham	251
Stephen King	239
J. D. Robb	208
Nicholas Sparks	206
Fern Michaels	196
Susan Mallery	175
Agatha Christie	172
Elin Hilderbrand	172

As with all data, there are some qualifiers that should be noted. While James Patterson leads the author list, he is very prolific (twelve titles so far in 2025 alone), which would give him an advantage in accumulating circulation counts.

Nora Roberts, in the number two spot, also writes as J. D. Robb (number 10), so her combined total is actually 599. Also, it's nice to see Agatha Christie holding her own against more modern writers.

For our younger readers, here are the top five children's authors:

Author Name	Circulation
Kim & James Dean (Pete the Cat)	505
Mo Willems	415
Dav Pilkey (Dog Man)	381
Jane O'Connor (Fancy Nancy)	312
Lincoln Peirce (Big Nate)	232

It's fascinating to take a high level view of all of the items that head from the library into our reader's homes and back again, and to be able to capture trends and patterns of patron favorites. The next time you're looking for a good book, why not try something by one of these authors and see for yourself why they are so popular.





# Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores, Programs and Outreach Librarian



As part of the Regional Library's goal to support the community, we hosted another tour through the Adult Lifelong Learners Academy. Tiffany and Charle led the class where engaged learners got to tour the library and learn about all the resources we offer. All of them were pleased with the library and the number of resources they could access. Tiffany also collaborated with the Nature Conservancy for a nature hike featuring journaling. The attendees enjoyed learning about the marsh and all of its inhabitants. Movie Night continues to be of great success! This month twelve people attended and watched *A Minecraft Movie*. This month's adult craft of decoupage trinket boxes brought in four attendees, and was highly complimented. Additionally, the Memory Café continues to see active use with about fifteen attendees per month.

Autumn brings opportunities for outreach as the schools call for vendors for their events to support the community and its learners. For the second year in a row the Regional Library was invited out to the STEAM Community Day hosted by the Mary N. Smith Alumni Association on September 6th. This event focuses on inspiring youth to explore STEAM by exposing them to various organizations and schools who focus on STEM education. Tiffany and Willow attended and brought STEAM toys to encourage children to learn and play. This was immensely successful with the children because they were able to get on the floor and explore STEAM through interaction. The Regional Library was also invited to Accawmacke Elementary School's Otterfest on September 20th. This event is always good for reminding parents that the library is here to support them and their students. About 150 parents and students attended and went around to the various tables at the event. Finally, on September 23rd, Tiffany attended the annual Nurse Family Partnership Graduation for the two-year-olds who are graduating out of the program. This is always a nice opportunity to encourage parents to get a library card and visit the library. About ninety people attended this event.



While Summer may be over, there is never a dull moment for Tiffany in the programming department. The Makerspace is preparing to open and as part of this, Tiffany is scheduling training classes for the equipment in the room. Additionally, she is working on preparing a tank for a future library pet which will be used for educational programming. Tiffany has also been assisting Charle with the STEM Kits by finishing up the printables for some of the kits. Additionally, she has ordered additional STEM toys to add to both the Kids' Program Room and the STEM Kits.





# Northampton Free Library

Connor BuYrn, Branch Manager



Northampton Free Library welcomed Autumn and the start of the new school year with a range of public programs for all ages in September. Tech Help continued to be offered all day on demand on every Wednesday. The Library hosted our children's story time and snack on Thursday, September 4th. The next week on September 11th, the library hosted an adult memory box craft. Staff and attendees decorated their own memory boxes by applying cutouts from old books and magazines with decoupage. The library's monthly craft activity for kids took place on Thursday the 18th. This was a quick and easy colorful macaroni necklace craft, with snacks and juice boxes provided.



Northampton Free Library will usher in the spooky season with a children's story time and snack on Thursday, October 2nd starting at 4:30 PM. The following week, adult patrons are invited to sign up for a cozy tea blending and bookmark decoration craft starting at 6:00 PM on Thursday, October 9th. This time we'll have a whole new set of herbs and flavors to pick from. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for a signup link or just ask at the front desk. October's last scheduled program will take place on Thursday, October 16th starting at 6:00 PM. Stop by to hear a dragon story and then make your own paper roll dragons that breathe fire! This program is free and no sign up is required. Northampton Free Library will also be open to trick-or-treaters until closing time at 5:00 PM on Halloween Friday. We'll have a bowl of candy out all day long! As always, Northampton Free Library will also continue to offer tech help on demand on every Wednesday through the month of October. Patrons are welcome to ask a member of staff for assistance at the front desk—no appointments are required.

In other news, Northampton Free Library's security and fire detection systems have been updated.

*Northampton Free Library will be closed on Tuesday, October 7th for staff training and on Monday, October 13th in observance of Indigenous Peoples Day.*





# Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



Every September, the American Library Association celebrates Library Card Sign-Up Month. According to their website, *The campaign started in 1987 as a response to then Secretary of Education William Bennett, who stated, "Let's have a campaign ... Every child should obtain a library card and use it."* This year, each new card registrant was entered into a raffle to win a Friends of CCML tote bag.

We are also celebrating the historical and cultural contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans during Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15—October 15). Throughout our building we have several book displays highlighting books by Hispanic writers, history and geography of Latin American countries, bilingual puzzles and flashcards for students to learn a few words in Spanish. The front desk has a basket full of Mexican candies to sample. One of the book displays includes flags from many of the countries we are celebrating as well as a colorful map on the vault door for matching the flag to the country. Patrons who check out any item celebrating Hispanic Heritage is entered into a drawing for a \$10 gift card for El Ranchito in Cherriton.



This month we also welcomed our new Library Assistant, Karen Crumb, to Cape Charles Memorial Library. Her enthusiasm is contagious and we are so excited to have her join our team

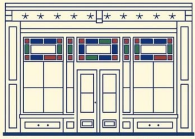


# Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



## NEW HOURS Starting September 2.



Chincoteague Island Library

Monday, Tuesday,  
Wednesday & Friday:  
9 AM – 5 PM

Thursday:  
1 PM – 6 PM

Saturday: 10 AM – 2 PM  
Sunday: Closed

Fall is always a special time of the year at our library. After a busy summer season, we all look forward to cooler weather and a more relaxed pace.

This year, we are excited to welcome our new staff person, Jodi Novak. As a result, we have extended our hours of operation. We are so very grateful to the Eastern Shore Regional Library Board of Trustees and administrative staff.

Teresa, our library manager, and Jodi are working tirelessly to continue to increase our programs and outreach within the community.

**Tales 4 Tots Storytime:** Our fall program began with a bang! School bus driver, Ellen Richardson, brought one of the Accomack County school buses to the library. Twenty-two children and their caregivers listened to Miss Ellen tell them about school bus safety. We then went into the library for songs, school bus stories, and a stop/go sign craft. Following the craft, Miss Diane took the children outside to play games with the stop/go sign. A good time was had by all!



**Adult Programs:** The Virginia Spaceport Authority presented a special program for adults at the library! Representatives shared exciting insights about rockets, spaceports, and how Virginia plays a key role in space exploration. Participants experienced a real rocket launch up close in virtual reality.

PNC Bank presented a program about budgeting and taking charge of your money. Island Readers' Book Club discussed The Book of Lost Names by Kristin Harmel and Nancy's Thursday Book Club discussed banned books. Next month, the Writers' Workshop will begin meeting monthly.

**Library Card Sign-up Month:** During September, special displays and promotions encouraged residents and visitors to obtain a library card.



SEPTEMBER  
**LIBRARY CARD**  
SIGN UP MONTH

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A LIBRARY CARD?  
YOUR LIBRARY CARD GIVES YOU FREE ACCESS TO SO MUCH MORE THAN BOOKS!

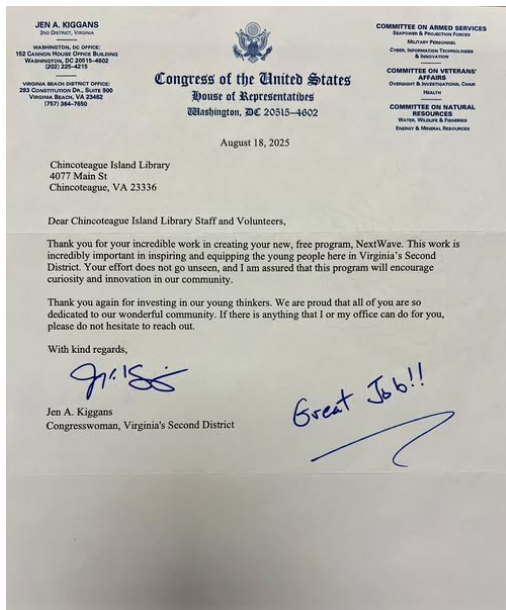
- ✓ BORROW BOOKS, MOVIES & AUDIOBOOKS
- ✓ STREAM TV SHOWS, FILMS & DOCUMENTARIES WITH KANOPY
- ✓ READ & LISTEN ON THE GO WITH THE LIBBY APP
- ✓ USE FREE WI-FI, COMPUTERS & PRINTING SERVICES
- ✓ JOIN FUN EVENTS, CLASSES & STORYTIMES FOR ALL AGES

**T SIGN UP IN SEPTEMBER FOR SPECIAL PERKS!**  
♦ PRIZE DRAWINGS FOR NEW CARDHOLDERS



Continued...





Library staff and volunteers who planned the **Next Wave** program in late August were so pleased to receive this letter of encouragement from our United States Congresswoman, Jen Kiggans.

**Interior & Window Displays** reflected the fall season.



**Facebook Wish List & Other Donations:** As a result of a suggestion by our new staff member, Jodi, the board decided to post a "wish list" of items on our library Facebook Page. The response has been great with packages arriving daily. Additionally, we received a generous donation of two boxes of new children's books from Rebecca Bardwell. The books were purchased through a fundraiser that she organized.



Library staff, board members, and volunteers are looking forward to a vibrant fall with many new innovative programs planned. Our annual basket raffle drawing will be held in October, STEM programs are being planned, as well as many new offerings for adults. We all are so very appreciative for the support and encouragement we receive from the administrative staff and Board of Trustees of the Eastern Shore Public Library System.