



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

August 2025

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
System Director

Normally in this space I would provide a brief recap of the prior month, but as it's Back to School season, I want to highlight some of free eResources that are available to all students and educators: HelpNow; Gale in Context; Read It!; Digital Learn; Access Video: Just for Kids; Libby; Digital Learn; KidSpeak; Transparent Languages; Universal Class; ComicsPlus; and so much more. We are here to help support the youngest members of our community thrive, and these free resources are available on demand to all library card holders. Please visit <https://espl.org/kids-and-teens/> for access and more information!



Upcoming September Highlights Eastern Shore Public Library System

- **ALL MONTH: SPCA Shelter Supply Drive - ESRL & NFL**
- **8th: Library Card Sign-up & ESRL Anniversary - ESRL**
- **9th: Women Supporting Women - ESRL**
- **9th: Lecture: Cape Charles' Woman Owned Saloon by Laura Smith - ESRL**
- **11th: Adult Craft Decoupage Boxes - NFL**
- **17th: Memory Café - ESRL**
- **18th: Kids Craft Pasta Necklaces - NFL**
- **18th: Family Game Night - ESRL**
- **25th: Movie Night: *A Minecraft Movie* - ESRL**
- **30th: Teen Gaming & Manga Bookclub - 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; (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

The Heritage Center recently entered an agreement with Re:discovery to use their software Proficio Elements as the Center's collections management software (CMS) of choice.

Proficio Elements is primarily an archival management software that can also handle records for photographs, rare books, and objects. This makes it an ideal choice to manage a mostly paper-based collection with some multidisciplinary materials such as ours. Custom fields are included that allow us to tailor records to our specific needs.

The records of the Frances Bibbins Latimer Collection that were stored and digitized on PastPerfect were successfully migrated to Proficio. We will also work with Re:discovery to develop a public user portal so our patrons can search the catalog as it grows. This portal will link out from the Heritage Center's website as well as be searchable from the Library's homepage.

With a CMS in place the archivist will focus much of his time on cataloging the collection and making it easier to access for researchers. A Fall intern will be assisting with this work via the Joyce Brown Milliner Internship- established and funded by the ESPL Foundation.



The previous, and first, Milliner Intern, Theresa Petroni-Conaway, wrapped up her work with the Heritage Center in August. Theresa worked on several projects during her time at the Heritage Center, which began as a volunteer in the summer of 2024. These projects included inventorying the collection of maps and oversized documents, scanning newspaper articles in Kirk Mariner's Subject Files, and most recently processing family genealogy sheets from the Doughty Files. Theresa is returning to Simmons University where she is pursuing a dual graduate degree in Archives Management and History. The Heritage Center is appreciative for all of Theresa's work and wishes her the best in her studies and career in archival management!

The Heritage Center participated in the 2nd Annual Samuel D. Outlaw Memorial Blacksmith Shop Shoe Box Lunch fundraiser on August 23, and the event had steady attendance throughout the day. In addition to live blacksmith demonstrations in the historic building, there were several other vendors and a performance by Tidewater African Cultural Alliance (TACA) that was well enjoyed.

The Heritage will host a lecture by Laura Smith on September 9; she will discuss Cape Charles's history, focusing on the first business owned by a woman and black women in Cape Charles, which was Laura Perkins bar and saloon.





Wondering What To Read Next?

The Library Can Help!

Even the most avid readers can sometimes find that their “To Be Read” pile has dwindled down to nothing. Those who are more occasional readers can find it difficult to know which title to choose when ready to jump back into a good book. No matter the type of reader, the library offers several tools to help everyone find just what they are looking for.

Throughout the year, ESPL releases lists of **Upcoming Bestsellers** for the coming months. The lists contain books that are generating a buzz in the publishing world, as well as new titles from popular authors. Because the books on the list have not yet been released, readers have a chance to reserve a copy in advance and be one of the first to read the book once it is published.

The Upcoming Bestsellers list has recently been revamped and has a clean new look and layout, which allows staff to include many more titles than before. The list is available at all four ESPL locations as a printed flyer to take home and peruse, as well as in digital form on the Read, Watch, Listen tab on the library’s website, espl.org. ShoreCat, the library catalog, also now features a “Coming Soon” book river that includes the titles on the Upcoming Bestsellers list. By clicking on the cover image of an item of interest in the book river, patrons can easily add a reserve for that item to their library account.

Another wonderful resource for keeping track of new arrivals at the library is **Wowbrary**. Wowbrary is a free weekly email newsletter, which features all of the newest additions to the library’s collections, and is ideal for both regular library visitors and those who don’t visit the library often. Not only can library patrons see what’s new, Wowbrary makes it easy to reserve items from the library’s catalog, ShoreCat. Clicking “Borrow” beside each title of interest in Wowbrary connects directly to that item in ShoreCat. Once in the catalog, patrons can place a reserve on any of the titles featured in that week’s Wowbrary newsletter.

Wowbrary makes it easy to scan quickly through what’s new and then request your favorites. To sign up, visit espl.org and click on the Read, Watch, Listen tab. Next, click on the “Sign up for Wowbrary eNewsletter” button and enter your email address. After signing up, all that’s left to do is to look forward to receiving your newsletter each Wednesday, and to enjoy being in the know about everything new at the library.

NoveList Plus is yet another tool that the library provides to help readers find the perfect book. Using the Story Elements of Appeals, Themes, and Genres, patrons can find a selection of titles bound to appeal to their own individual interests. Searches can be broad (Literary Fiction) or super specific (Well-Crafted Dialogue and Space Opera). The NoveList home page also offers excellent curated lists of recommended reads.

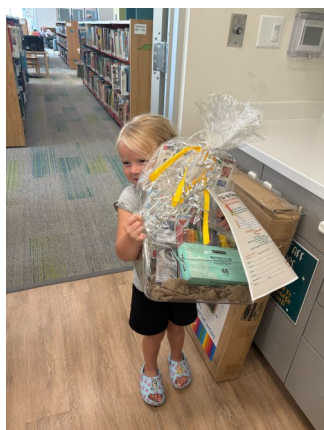
All of the resources covered here can be found on the Read, Watch, Listen tab of the library’s website, espl.org. Be sure to take a look at any or all of them—your next great read awaits!





Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores, Programs and Outreach Librarian



Summer Reading has come to a close! It was an amazing year for participation with 150 participants in this year's reading challenge and active engagement in library programming. On August 8th the Regional Library celebrated the end of Summer with a pizza party. Eleven people attended including this year's Grand prize Winner: Ginny Nethery. In addition to a good summer, Teen programming kicked up in participation with an average of roughly twelve per week. In addition to the usual craft and games, two of the girls even asked for impromptu crochet lessons. During Teen Night the teens would express their excitement for the upcoming Makerspace and programming including the machines. Adult Crafternoon was also popular this month. Attended by both older

teens and adults, the attending participants beaded bracelets. During this program there was a lot of discussion about other potential Crafternoons and activities that could occur on Saturdays. This included more bookmark crafts and another Craft Supply Swap. In collaboration with Karen Crumb, these programs will be scheduled as there is demand for it.



August was an active month for Outreach as the shore celebrates Summer and prepares for Back to School season. On August 2nd, Tiffany and Connor participated in the Be Well Block Party in Parksley and saw 203 participants. This event had perfect weather and a great crowd learning about healthy choices and participating in activities. Tiffany tabled at the Parksley Ice Cream Social on August 9th and had about 50 people at her table. Many families came out for a sweet treat and enjoyed playing outside. On August 24th, Connor and Willow attended the Back-to-School Event hosted by Telemon. Held in Sawmill park, this event had huge participation with about 300 people. Everything the library brought for students was gone by the end. Kids received various school supplies from the library and free backpacks from Telemon in addition to information about local resources in the area. This success will continue in the Fall months as schools and organizations gear up for their Fall events.



At the American Library Association Conference in Philadelphia, PA, Tiffany learned a lot about libraries and companies providing services to libraries. One of the things she discovered was 'Egal', a company who creates low cost sanitary napkin dispensers. Due to their accessible cost, Tiffany took initiative and got approval to outfit both the Regional Library and Northampton Free Library with dispensers in staff and public restrooms. Her hope is that the availability will help provide sanitary napkins for individuals who need access.





Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



Northampton Free Library finished up the summer with a series of well-attended public programs. Tech Help continued to be offered all day on demand on every Wednesday. The Library hosted another children's story time and snack on Thursday, August 7th. On the following Thursday, our adult patrons were able to come to the library for a special adult craft and tea mixing activity. Attendees were able to build their own custom herbal tea blends using ingredients like rose petals and verbenas, and were also invited to paint a mug to drink their tea creations out of at home. Finally, Northampton Free Library hosted one of our best-attended children's craft activities so far on August 21st. Kids had fun putting together a line of watermelon-swiping ants out of plastic spoons and pipe cleaners... and also enjoyed a snack of their own.



In September, Northampton Free Library will kick off the fall season of programming with a children's story time and snack on Thursday, September 4th starting at 4:30 PM. The following week on Thursday, September 11th, the library will host our monthly adult craft starting at 6:00 PM. Attendees will be invited to decorate their own memory boxes using decoupage. This program is free, but sign up in advance is required. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for a signup link or just ask at the front desk. Finally, September's kid's art night will take place on Thursday, September 18th starting at 6:00 PM. This time we'll be stringing together festive pasta necklaces using different shapes, sizes, and colors of pasta. In addition, Northampton Free Library will continue to offer tech help on demand on every Wednesday through the month of September. 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 public restroom is now stocked with free sanitary pads and a defibrillator locker has been installed in the building.

Northampton Free Library will be closed on Monday, September 1st in observance of Labor Day.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



The month of August saw the end of another exciting and fun summer at Cape Charles Memorial Library. We had an amazing summer, hosting 60 programs with attendance of over 1,600.



As we have done in the past, CCML took a hiatus from our scheduled programs during the last two weeks of August. These two weeks allow staff to take a breath and begin preparations for our fall programs. We will resume Lil Sprouts story time (for ages 0 to 4) on Tuesday, September 2 at 10:30am as well as a monthly STEAM program (the second Wednesday of each month at 10:30am). We are also excited for two celebrations in September, Library Card Sign-up Month and National Hispanic Heritage Month. Stay tuned for special pop-up programs for each of these festivities!

Cape Charles Memorial Library staff attended active shooter training, led by Chief Pruitt of the Cape Charles Police Department. Town officers also visited the library and advised staff on safety procedures.

The glass in the front door of the building and surrounding framed glass was replaced with safety glass, new fire extinguishers were installed, and our Automated External Defibrillator (AED) device was reviewed, and supplies were updated.





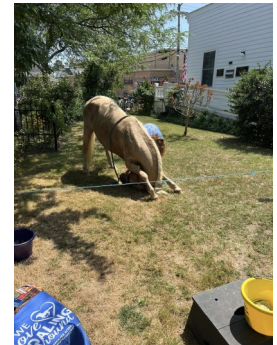
Chincoteague Island Library

Linda Ryan, for the Board of Directors



As we wrap up summer on the Island, we are looking forward to extended hours and additional staff thanks to the support of the ESPL Board. We had a really exciting August for our patrons and visitors.

Pony Swim Auction Day: A descendent of Misty was at the library for a meet and greet with adults and children on Friday August 1st. It's always a very exciting day when the ponies visit the library! That same day, Susan Friedland, the author of Marguerite, Misty and Me, presented an energetic talk on the life and legacy of Marguerite Henry to a capacity audience.

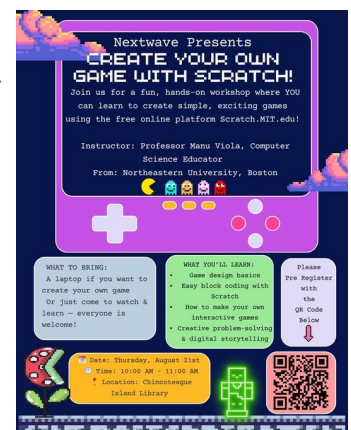


Young Explorers Shell Painting and YMCA visit: The young explorers had a great time painting shells and going on a field trip to the YMCA.



NextWave "Create Your Own Game From Scratch" workshop: Our library hosted a workshop that brought tweens and teens together to explore coding, creativity, and game design.

We're looking forward to offering more NextWave programs for tweens and teens... This is just the beginning of programs to explore Science, Technology, Reading, Arts, Engineering, and Math!



Continued...

Summer Reading Wrap Up and Pizza Party: The **Summer Reading Challenge** finished with a pizza party, prizes including a drawing for 2 Kindle Fires tablets. Each student who registered received a bag of back-to-school supplies. Sofia Shields was the winner of the child's tablet, Vera Breland won the Kindle Fire 10 tablet. Gift certificates for Refuge Golf were donated by the owner, Steve Kasetos, and vouchers for the special Shore Birds Baseball game on August 24th were included in the bags of school supplies.



Tales 4 Tots: The fall program will begin September 18 with a visit from the school bus. We're busy planning lots of activities, including a visit from the folks at the Virginia Space Authority and the Chesapeake Bay Field Station. Field trips are planned to the Beebe Ranch as well as The Island Creamery and the David Landsberger YMCA.

Newsletter Annual Appeal. Our target date for this important fundraiser is early October. And, the drawing for the Annual Basket Raffle will take place on Monday, October 13.