



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

October 2025

Director's Update



Christopher Pote,
System Director

Thank you to all veterans and service members. As we pause this November 11 in gratitude to the sacrifices you've made for us, please know that Eastern Shore Public Library stands ready to serve you. One way we do this is by offering VetNow to our patrons for free with your library card. VetNow offers VA benefit navigation assistance; resume, job, and interview help; live tutoring for students; skills building; as well as other resources for our veteran community. Your free library card also gives you access to all of our wonderful resources: books, movies, video games, magazines, internet, study rooms, research assistance, and so much more!



Upcoming November Highlights Eastern Shore Public Library System

- **6th Family Game Night - ESRL**
- **11th CLOSED for VETERANS' DAY**
- **12th Kids' Crafternoon: Paper Plate Dinosaurs - ESRL**
- **13th Adult Super Smash Bros Tournament - ESRL**
- **14th Bracelet Making & Taylor Swift's Chai Cookies - ESRL**
- **19th Memory Café - ESRL**
- **20th Family Movie Night - ESRL**
- **21st Brother ScanNCut Machine - MakerSpace Certification - ESRL**
- **27th & 28th CLOSED for THANKSGIVING**
- **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

With new archival management software comes the need for a new search term database. Over the past month the archivist has created an initial database based on search terms that our patrons are already familiar with such as: the placenames in Countryside Transformed, topic terms from the ESPL Finding Aid and Kirk Mariner Collections, and family names from the MilesFiles. The database has a thesaurus and "See Also" features, meaning search terms can be standardized yet include similar results. This is useful for terms that have multiple spellings, like family names, or places that have gone through more than one name historically, like Accomack which used to be called Drummondtown. The goal is accessibility so that researchers will be able to find the information they are looking for in a quick and reliable way. Combing through the multiple variations of names for places, families, and places can be a tedious task, but creating a robust search term list from the onset will save time for catalogers as less search terms and variations will have to be added during the cataloging process. Milliner Intern Ethan Ross began cataloging sections of the Mapp-LeCato Collection that he processed at the start of his internship. Cataloging work will continue to ramp up in the Heritage Center once the initial search term database is completed.

Heritage Center staff noticed an increase in genealogy related reference requests garnered by the MilesFiles reception. The Heritage Center Advisory Committee met this month and Heritage Center staff attended the Eastern Shore Museum network meeting hosted in Chincoteague. An updated Museum Network brochure will be completed in time for the 250th Anniversary of the Nation next year. Staff also promoted the Heritage Center's collections and cultural importance at the Franktown Fall Arts and Crafts Festival.



Andy Nunez, an Eastern Shore author gave a talk about mysterious stories from Northampton and Accomack. He shared tales about the Yahoo of Craddockville, the haunted Hill House in Chincoteague, and the Red Hills Devil near Atlantic, which a guest in the audience claimed to have encountered. He also shared stories from nearby Maryland, mentioning Big Liz and the haunted Pocomoke Forest, as well as few other stories from his series *Ghosts of the Eastern Shore, I-IV*. The Map exhibit on the Heritage Center's gallery wall will be taken down the first week of November and a Virginia Folklife Program exhibit on Food Culture will be installed. A reception event for the exhibit is schedule for November 14th, from 11 to 2.



Upheaval in the Library Book Vendor Landscape

In Mid-October, Baker & Taylor, the largest supplier of books for U.S. public and academic libraries, announced it was shuttering operations. This sudden, unanticipated closure shocked the book industry and libraries nationwide.

While our library ordered only a small percentage of our library materials from Baker & Taylor, the related upheaval in the library vendor landscape is having a significant effect on our order delivery times.



Our primary suppliers are experiencing unprecedented order fulfillment delays while adjusting to a tidal wave of increased demand, as former Baker & Taylor customers scramble to find a replacement source for materials. This redistribution of book supplies and customer demand has resulted in a tremendous disruption of book vendor shipments for libraries across the country.

It will take some time for our suppliers to ramp up staffing and operations in order to handle the new volume of orders, and we have already noticed a significant slowdown in the rate and quantity of ordered materials being delivered. These delays will impact the arrival of newly released items, as well as books that have been ordered to fill requests by library patrons.

ESPL Technical Services staff will be communicating with library patrons through newsletters, webpage messaging, and in-building signage to explain why the arrival of new and requested items may be delayed. Staff are also increasing the number of catalog records entered before new items arrive so that patrons can place reserves on delayed or soon-to-be released items in advance.

While waiting for shipments, Technical Services staff are working diligently to provide alternatives to delayed items for local readers. Featured book lists on ShoreCat, the library catalog, and library displays will help to highlight hidden gems that are already in the library's collections and ready for borrowing. In addition, the library's collection of eBooks on Libby and Freading includes many new titles that are available right away.

Once our vendors increase their capacity for processing and shipping orders, staff will be ready to quickly prepare the materials for circulation as they arrive. As staff try to make the best of an unfortunate situation and minimize the disruption to local readers, we sincerely appreciate the patience and understanding of our patrons. While we navigate through these delays, it is our hope that patrons will discover some new favorites from the library shelves.



Programs & Outreach Report

Tiffany Flores, Programs and Outreach Librarian

In celebration of Halloween, the library threw their first Kid's Spook-tacular Craft Party! Maria and Tiffany planned a handful of kids crafts and activities including mask painting and bobbing for apples for families to enjoy. This went extremely well with 32 individuals participating in the activities. Additionally, the wooden bead doll craft was extremely popular. Teens used wooden beads and pipe cleaners to make a variety of creatures including worms, people, tree creatures, dogs, and horses. This month's Adult Craft featured painting round glass vases to be Halloween can. Finally, the library hosted their 3rd Annual Candy Parade. Staff, Friends of the Library, and ESPL Foundation members gave out candy while children trick-o-treated around the library in their costumes. This year there were 50 participants.



It's Autumn festival season which brings with it, Tiffany's favorite outreach event: The Agricultural Fair hosted at the Old Machipongo Middle School. This year Connor and Tiffany attended on October 4th and were astounded by the sheer volume of the event. It was packed with more vendors than ever, ranging from community organizations to small businesses, and everything in between. Throughout the fair, they talked to roughly 200 individuals about the library and its resources. As always this is one of the most successful events that the library attends.

For the second year in a row, Tiffany attended Eastern Shore Community College's Career day where all of the local high schools bring their students to the college to learn about careers. Like last year, Tiffany educated nearly 300 students on what she does in the library and how her job focuses on community engagement, and collaborating with people; the opposite of what most assume a Librarian does. Many teens were interested in Librarianship and one asked how she could start working at the library.

A new member is joining the library family and Tiffany has been working hard to prepare a home for the new arrival. Sitting in the kids' area is an aquarium that has been turned into a vibrant forest environment featuring enrichment for its future inhabitant. This tank will be used for educational programming, a naming contest, and act as a fun and educational display in the library. It is set up to be a bioactive enclosure! Bioactive enclosures are a self-sustaining habitat that utilizes a cleanup crew to take care of unwanted waste such as old food, mold, and other waste material. Our cleanup crew consists of Powder Orange and Powder Blue Iso-pods and Springtails. While it takes a little bit more work to setup bioactive tank, it does make it easier to maintain.



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Northampton Free Library

Connor Buyn, Branch Manager



Northampton Free Library celebrated spooky season in October with several themed public programs. On the first Thursday of the month, the library hosted a children's story time with snacks provided. The following week, adult patrons were invited to join us for a tea mixing and tea-themed bookmark craft. Attendees were able to assemble their own custom autumnal teas, with flavors like cinnamon, apple, and cocoa. Finally, on Thursday October 16th, Northampton Free Library hosted our monthly kid's craft and snack. Together we built cardboard tube dragons and practiced our best dragon roars. Tech Help was offered on every Wednesday throughout the month of October and a self-serve Halloween candy bar was set out for the last two days of the month.



Northampton Free Library will kick off November with a children's story time and snack on Thursday, November 6th starting at 4:30 PM. This month we're celebrating Dino-vember with a dinosaur-themed story. The following week we'll host our monthly adult craft—this time we'll be putting together Taylor Swift themed bracelets starting at 6:00 PM. There are a limited number of slots available for this program and registration in advance is required. Keep an eye on our Facebook page or ask at the front desk for more information. November's kid's craft night will be hosted on Thursday the 20th and will start at 6:00 PM. The library's younger patrons are invited to join us as we get into the dino-spirit by crafting paper plate dinosaurs. Snacks will be provided. Tech help will also continue to be offered all day long on every Wednesday throughout the month of November.

Finally, we're excited to bring back our annual hot apple cider bar! This year hot apple cider, a mulling spice mixing station, and cookies and snacks will be on offer all day long on Wednesday the 26th. Take a break from Thanksgiving prep and stop by!

Northampton Free Library will be closed on Tuesday, November 4th for Election Day, on Tuesday, November 11th in observance of Veteran's Day, and on Thursday and Friday November 27th and 28th in observance of Thanksgiving.



Cape Charles Memorial Library

Sharon Silvey, Library Manager



2025 VLA conference



This past October was full of library joy!

In early October I attended the annual Virginia Library Association (VLA) conference, this year in Richmond, Virginia. "With Libraries, All Rise" was the theme for the 2025 VLA, celebrating the ever-changing and uplifting roles of libraries in our communities.

Mychal Threats, a literacy and mental health advocate, was the keynote speaker. Also known as, Mychal the Librarian, Threats has a large social media presence. His viral videos are positive and support all libraries.

The day before the VLA conference, it was announced he would be the new host of Reading Rainbow!

Banned Book Week was held this year October 5–11, with the theme, "CENSORSHIP Is So 1984. Read for Your Rights". Cape Charles Memorial Library had an interactive display that highlighted books that have been challenged over the years. Books were covered in brown paper bags, with simple descriptions of why the titles have been challenged. As the theme was in reference to author George Orwell, CCML provided free copies of "1984" to any guests and patrons.



Banned Book Week 2025



The last weeks of October saw Halloween book displays, crafts, and goody bags throughout the library. The columns in our building hosted adorable bat decorations, created by our Little Sprout story time friends.



Guest reader, CCML Board member, Richard Burger

Next meetings of Yarn Joy are 11/6 and 11/20. ALL skill levels welcome!





Chincoteague Island Library

Teresa Wright, Library Manager



The month of October began with a visit from NASA Solar System Ambassador Daniel who brought two telescopes to observe the moon on "International Observe the Moon Night".



Tales 4 Tots Storytime: Our fall program continues with visits from the police department, the Virginia Spaceport Authority, a field trip to the fire department, and Halloween fun and crafts.



Adult Programs:: Former County of Accomack Fire Chief and author of Ghosts of Route 13 Nikki Steffes gave a talk on fire safety.

This month, the Writers Workshop group had twenty-two people attend, and the book clubs were well attended.



Youth Programs: NextWave program #2 was held on Saturday, October 25th for teens and tweens to paint their own terracotta pots and take them home with them. Everyone had a great time.

