

ESSEX
PUBLIC LIBRARY

2020 Annual Report



Yearly Highlights 2020

- Implementation of curbside service offerings for materials checkout, printing, and faxing.
- Offered COVID-safe children's program alternatives, including an online summer reading program, monthly Take & Make activity kits, The Storywalk on Prince Street, book giveaway events, and virtual preschool storytimes.
- Launch of a Book Bundles service to make materials checkout easier for those unable to come into the library.
- After updates to the children's area, juvenile materials checkouts increased 33 percent last year.
- Added thousands of new titles to our e-book collection to boost availability for readers spending extra time at home.
- Digitized archive of historic local newspapers, making them available to search and browse on our website.
- Completed an inventory of collections to make our catalog records more accurate.



Message from the Director

Dear library supporters,

Like other organizations in our region and around the world, we faced unparalleled challenges in 2020. There were so many things to learn as we navigated new ways to safely provide library services during the COVID-19 era. Even now, one year after the start of the pandemic, each day seems to bring a new puzzle to solve as we operate under changing public health guidance, technology developments, and best practices for meeting our community members wherever they are during this hard time.

Many of our programs and services were put on hold as we tackled new critical needs. We implemented curbside service, socially distanced public computer use, virtual programs and events for all ages, Wi-Fi hotspot lending, and much more.

One thing I know for certain after this year of uncertainty is that, though books and technology and a welcoming building are undoubtedly important, the essence of our library is our outstanding staff. With tremendous flexibility, determination, and commitment to service, they worked hard to meet our patrons' needs throughout these demanding months.

When our patrons can come into the library again with faces unmasked, I know there will be big smiles reserved for the wonderful people behind our service desk. Yes, there are many marvelous things in a public library. But the very best thing about our library is our staff, the people who have worked tirelessly to make library magic happen, even during a global pandemic.

Your Library by the Numbers

(Fiscal Year 2019-20)

PHYSICAL BOOKS	25,350
E-BOOKS	36,475
WI-FI SESSIONS	12,245
PUBLIC COMPUTER SESSIONS	6,814
VISITS TO THE LIBRARY	31,158
CHECKOUTS	26,821
LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS	7,353
PROGRAM/EVENT ATTENDEES	1,151
VISITS TO LIBRARY WEBSITE	13,146
TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENDITURES	\$305,975
EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA	\$28

Our building closed in March and reopened in June. Staff continued to provide curbside and virtual services during this time. We saw 28% fewer visits during fiscal year 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.

Dana Smook

Dana Smook

Library Director



2020-21 Board of Directors

Julie Strock, *Chair*
Kevin Dolan, *Vice Chair*
Suzanne Derieux, *Treasurer*
Robert LaFollette
Latanya "Shelly" Weeden
Isobel Swinson

Friends of the Library Board

Isobel Swinson, *President*
Cynthia Carter, *Treasurer*
Betty Anne Garrett, *Secretary*
Hannah Tiffany, *Programs Chair*
Bess Haile
Cyanne Yates
Chris Bowden

Our mission:

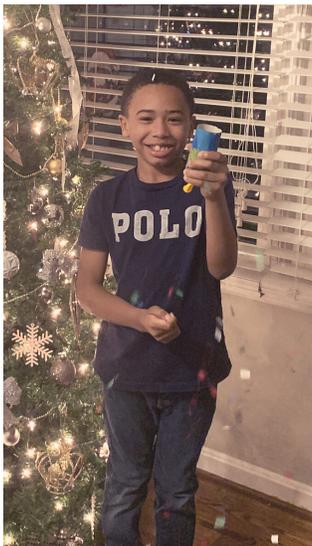
We connect people to ideas and information to improve lives and strengthen our community.



Our vision:

A strong, inclusive community where lifelong learning is celebrated and all citizens have access to ideas, information, and technology.

Are you interested in getting more involved with our community library? Visit EPLVA.org or call Dana Smook at 804-443-4945 to learn about volunteering and board service opportunities.



We were happy to provide safe activities for local families this year. Children enjoyed programs like Take and Make Kits, the Virtual Pumpkin Parade, and our December Drive-Thru Book Giveaway.

ESSEX PUBLIC LIBRARY

117 N. Church Ln. Tappahannock, VA 22560
(804) 443-4945 EPLVA.org