



The Talbot County Free Library is an integral part of the community, fostering a spirit of exploration and discovery.



2023
ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2023

Dana Newman

Director

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Main Library:

100 W. Dover Street
Easton, MD 21601

St. Michaels Branch:

106 Fremont Street
St. Michaels, MD 21663

WWW.TCFL.ORG

Director's Report



The Talbot County Free Library (TCFL) has been busy this year offering a wealth of wonderful library programming, books, and resources on which our community enjoys and has come to depend.

Libraries are changing, and while you'll still find the items you'd expect at the library such as books, magazines, DVDs, computers, eResources, and a wealth of fun and educational programs, you will also find non-traditional resources as well: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum passes, garden seeds, iPads, Wi-Fi hotspots, ukuleles, and much more.

Programs too are evolving. Mainstays like the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival continue to bring well-known and creative authors to Talbot County. Newer initiatives and programs re-imagine how the library can serve the community. Free digital literacy classes and one-on-one sessions invite members of our community to learn and build their digital skills to use a computer and the internet in daily life, employment, and education. STEAM and other innovative programs inspire a curiosity in all ages to learn more about the world around them.

The reason for these changes is simple: literacy is no longer just about being able to read. It takes many forms: cultural, social, civic, environmental, and digital, to name just a few. We want our library patrons to have access to materials and programming that help them become well-rounded, fulfilled citizens.

Expanding the role of the library helps us do just that. In 2024, we'll celebrate the Talbot County Free Library's 99th birthday as well as the Library Foundation's 27th year and the Friend's 50th year of supporting the library and its patrons. As we celebrate these anniversaries, highlighting how the role of the library and its partners has changed and evolved, we will also be focused on the start of construction for the expansion and renovation of the St. Michaels Library.

Please read the article about this exciting expansion included in this report. Each of you as well as our staff and volunteers have contributed in a meaningful way to help TCFL thrive. Thank you!

Yours in Service,

Dana K. Newman

By The Numbers | FY23

Services

- Library Cardholders | 24,645
- Public Service Hours Per Year | 5,356
- Total Circulation of Materials | 303,946
(Includes Downloads and E-Resources Use)
- Reference Questions Answered | 16,315
- Physical Visits | 112,084
- Library Computer Use | 10,454
- Library Wireless Sessions | 24,969
- Meeting Room & Study Room Use by Outside Groups | 1,414
- Virtual Visits | 453,267
- Number of Covid-19 Tests Distributed | 2,000
- Number of Seed Packets Distributed | 3,000



Library Collections

- Physical Collection | 140,993
- E-Books, E-Audiobooks | 91,309
- Wi-Fi Hotspots | 75
- iPads & Laptops | 20
- 24/7 E-Resources | 28



Library Programs

- Adult, Teen and Children's Programs | 594
- Total Attendance at Programs | 27,078

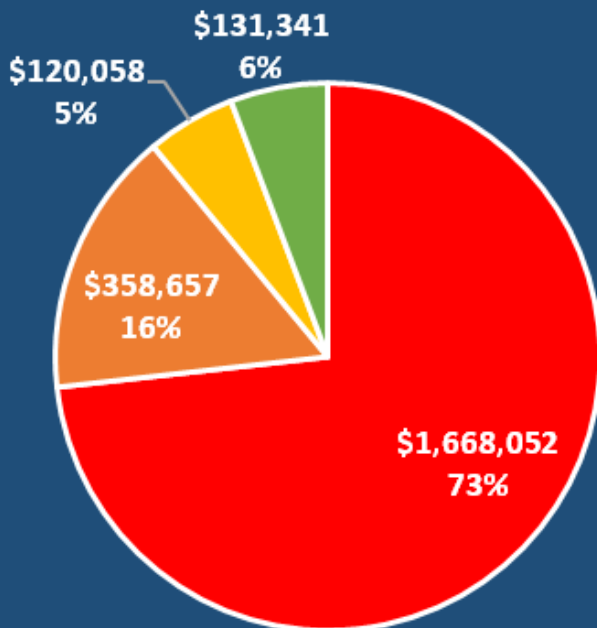
Staff & Employees

- FTE employees: 24
- Volunteers | 50
- Volunteer Hours | 5,592
- Total ROI on Volunteer Hours | \$189,623*



*Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer Time for Maryland 2022

Talbot County Free Library Funding Sources

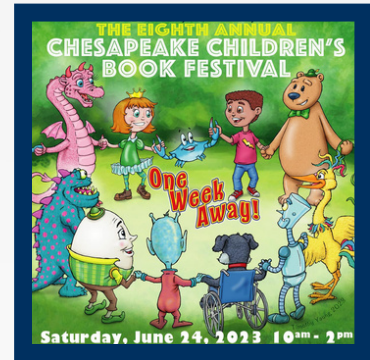


- Talbot County and Other Local
- Grants and Friends Support
- TCFL Foundation and Donations
- Maryland State

2023 TCFL Highlights

Chesapeake Children's Book Festival

Over 1,800 people attended the 8th annual Chesapeake Children's Book Festival (CCBF), which was the kickoff event for the library's 2023 summer reading program. Three hundred vouchers for a free book by one of the 25 authors at the festival were given out to children. There were author readings and a wide-range of fun activities. Many community partners helped make the festival a great success.



2023 Summer Reading Program (SRP)

657 children participated in SRP which supports early literacy. The library ran 78 programs for children with over 6,149 attendees, and 3,500 books were given away. Free tickets to Maryland Science Center, National Aquarium, Baltimore Orioles games, and Maryland State Fair were given out to families.



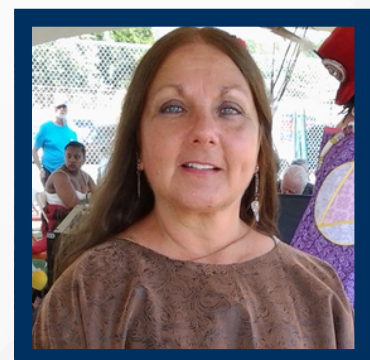
Frederick Douglass Day

The celebration of Frederick Douglass' legacy included a welcome ceremony, children's village, and geocaching. in partnership with the Frederick Douglass Honor Society, TCFL was also a unique venue that housed artifacts from the famous abolitionist in the Frederick Douglass room. This Year's Keynote speaker, Dr. Derrick R. Spires, discussed His first book, "The Practice of Citizenship: Black Politics and Print Culture in the Early United States." His book discusses how Black writers articulated an expansive, practice-based theory of citizenship.



Native American Historical Programming

This year's One Maryland One Book selection was "There There," by Tommy Orange. Both branches had the opportunity to facilitate book discussions including the challenges facing many Native Communities in the U.S. today. In addition, the first female Chief of the Nause-Waiwash Tribe, Chief Donna Wolf Mother Abbott, visited TCFL in the fall to discuss the Eastern Shore's Native American history and culture in front of a large audience. This program was funded by Maryland Humanities.



TCFL Highlights (Continued)

Raising A Reader

Raising a Reader is an evidence-based family engagement literacy program designed specifically for young children. Talbot County Public Schools hosts the program in partnership with Talbot Library. In 2023, 600 pre-school and kindergarten students from five public schools participated in the program. In May 2023, all the pre-school classes traveled to the Talbot County Free Library to participate in the big, end-of-the-year Raising a Reader Blue Bag Celebrations. Other community partners include The Judy Centers of Easton and St. Michaels, Critchlow Adkins Childcare Centers, the University of Maryland Extension Office SNAP-Ed, Chapel District Grandparent's Club, and Tilghman Area Youth Association.



123 Andrés

Both branches had the opportunity to move, sing, and play in Spanish and English. Guests went on an exciting cultural exploration of Latin America through an introduction of language, music, and dance. Program was funded in part by Talbot Arts with revenues provided by the Maryland State Arts Council and the governments of Talbot County, Easton, Oxford, and St. Michaels.



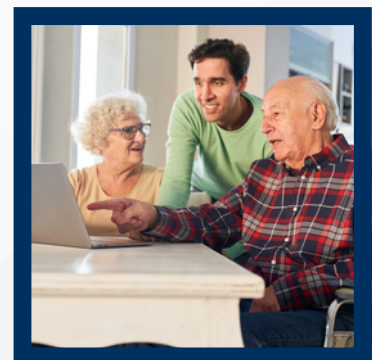
Free Community Wi-Fi Center

TCFL has created a free Community Wi-Fi Center at Home Run Baker Park in Trappe to provide access to high-speed internet for Talbot County students and residents. There are two access points for Wi-Fi at the Home Run Baker Park, one at the Concession Stand and one in the parking lot. The library is has also recently launched a community center in the town of Cordova.



Computer Help Sessions

The Easton branch of the Talbot County Free Library (TCFL) is now offering a digital specialist to help the community to navigate through the basics of computer, internet, and online forms and applications. The one-hour sessions are free. Plans are in the works to expand the one-on-one computer sessions to the St. Michaels Branch. The sessions are also being offered at the Senior Center in St. Michaels and will soon be offered at other locations.



Friends of the Talbot County Free Library

In 2023, the Friends of the Library (FOL) generously supported the Talbot County Free Library (TCFL) with fundraising events filled with laughter and fun including a Trivia Night, a cruise on the Patriot, and an improv show. The Friends also held three separate book sales, each one a roaring success.



The Friends are very appreciative of our donors and Friends whose support helps the library to provide rich and educational resources and programs such as the Chesapeake Children's Book Festival, STEAM programs, and many other events that enrich the lives of its patrons. The Friends are currently raising funds for the expansion of the St. Michaels Library.

As TCFL prepares for breaking ground in 2024, there will be many opportunities for us to support and build awareness of this important project. In May of 2024, the Friends will be celebrating our 50th anniversary. We are always welcoming new Friends and hope that you will consider serving on our Council or volunteering at one of our book sales or other events. The Friends looks forward to an exciting new year in 2024.



Talbot County Free Library Foundation

In 2023, your support of the Talbot County Free Library Foundation ensured that library experiences for people of all ages such as storytimes, digital literacy classes, book clubs, library visits to schools and cultural programs continued to be offered regularly. In addition to advancing lifelong literacy, your contributions strengthened the library's ability to improve accessibility to library resources and empower our patrons.



Thanks to you, the Foundation was able to provide almost \$75,000 to engage our youngest readers with diverse, age-appropriate materials, offer ongoing education for adults, and create opportunities for social interaction for older residents. Each summer, we encourage readers to keep learning and discovering new stories. Our staff supports families with young children to develop life-long reading habits essential for school and life success. Science, technology, engineering, art, and math programs inspire kids to learn about topics essential for 21st century jobs. TCFL checks out Wi-Fi hot-spots and iPads and provides free access to resources and computers to help folks find jobs, grow new skills, and explore entrepreneurship. The library helps to support small business owners by connecting them with online training, local grants, and how-to guides.



The Foundation's capital campaign, *Building for the Next Century*, will ensure that the new St. Michaels Library will serve as an innovative and collaborative community learning center for future generations. Please consider giving a gift or sponsoring a naming opportunity which will enable us to purchase new library books for the expanded library. More information about naming opportunities can be found at tcfl.org. Remember your QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution) is a wonderful, tax efficient way to provide the support for the ongoing programs and community engagement the library provides. This annual report illustrates the powerful role your generosity has made in bringing positive social impact to all of our patrons. On behalf of the Foundation, thank you for caring about our library and the community it serves.



Thank you to our Partners

AARP Tax-Aide Program Volunteers
Academy Art Museum
American Job Center
Avalon Foundation
Blackbeard Biologic
Bluepoint Hospitality
Blue Crab Coffee
Building African American Minds
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum
Chesapeake Children's Book Festival
Chesapeake College
Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center
Christmas in St. Michaels
Citizens for Maryland Libraries
Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers
Daughters of the American Revolution
Delmarva Blood Bank
Delmarva Community Services
Easton Airport
Easton Economic Development Corporation
Easton Farmers Market
Easton Police Department
Easton Rotary
Eastern Shore Regional Library
Easton Utilities
For All Seasons
Flying Cloud Booksellers
Frederick Douglass Honor Society
Friends of the Talbot County Free Library
Habitat for Humanity Choptank
Hunger Coalition
Imagination Library of Talbot County
Jan Kirsh Studio
Judy Center- Talbot County Public Schools
Maryland Humanities
Maryland Legal Aid
Maryland Library Association
Maryland Library For the Blind and Print Disabled
Maryland Public Television
Maryland State Library Agency
Maryland STEM Festival
Master Gardeners
MYTech
Neighborhood Service Center

Shore Legal Access
ShoreRivers
St. Michaels Art League
St. Michaels Business Association
St. Michaels Community Center
St. Michaels Farmers Market
St. Michaels Museum at St. Mary's Square
St. Michaels Police Department
St. Michaels Running Festival
St. Michaels Rotary
SEEDCO Maryland Health Connection
Talbot County Arts Council
Talbot County Chamber of Commerce
Talbot County Circuit Court
Talbot County Council
Talbot County Department of Emergency Services
Talbot County Detention Center
Talbot County Economic Development & Tourism
Talbot County Free Library Foundation
Talbot County Garden Club
Talbot County Government
Talbot County Health Department
Talbot County Historical Society
Talbot County Parks and Recreation
Talbot County Public Schools
Talbot County Senior Centers
Talbot County Sheriff's Department
Talbot Early Childhood Advisory Board
Talbot Family Network
Talbot Goes Purple
The Talbot Spy
The Star Democrat
The Working Artists Forum
Town of Easton
Town of St. Michaels
Town of Trappe
Toys for Tots
Upper Shore Aging
Waterfowl Festival
What's Up? Media
YMCA of the Chesapeake



St. Michaels Library

Expansion Update

In 2025, TCFL celebrates a century of service as a place of renewal and growth for residents and visitors to the County. The St. Michaels Library has been a place of restoration and empowerment for so many in the St. Michaels and Bay Hundred community. The expansion and renovation of the St. Michaels Library, set to be complete in late 2025, will transform and expand the library to meet the future needs of residents and visitors. Once completed, the library will be an innovative center for top-quality collections, collaborative spaces, technology, and cultural experiences.

Responding to the dynamic shift of libraries from places of quiet study to vibrant centers of community collaboration, the design done by the architecture firm, Davis, Bowen, and Friedel, reimagines the St. Michaels Library as an innovative community hub and learning center. In addition to being able to offer state-of-the-art library services and resources, the new library will sustain an inclusive and empowered community with the space to realize their aspirations and achieve their educational goals. Modern program spaces will include a larger meeting room, study rooms, and breakout spaces. Individualized spaces for children, teens, and adults make sure that everyone feels at home. A themed children's area will spark wonder and curiosity. It will include bright designs, interactive play activities, reading nooks, and appropriately-sized furniture. Teens will also have an engaging space that provides a place for them to socialize, learn, and explore.

The expansion adds 3,700 square feet to the facility, enlarging the meeting room by 40% and providing new spaces such as a quiet reading room and a library-style-café. Enhancements will also include improvements to ADA access, exhibit space, interactive green spaces, technology, and environmentally-friendly features. The project will also remedy current facility problems, including a deteriorating infrastructure and outdated mechanical and lighting systems.

In May of 2023, the Talbot County Free Library applied for a third year of matching funding from the Maryland Library Capital grant program. The third year of grant funding, if awarded, would be used for the construction phase of the St. Michaels Library. The grant requires a 50% match from the County which the library will request as part of the budget request process in early 2024.

The Friends of the Talbot County Free Library and the Talbot County Free Library Foundation are both currently raising funds for new library materials, furnishings, and technology upgrades for the expansion of the St. Michaels Library.

The Library Foundation has also started a capital campaign, *Building for the Next Century*, which will ensure that the new library is able to function as an innovative and collaborative community information and learning center. Please consider giving a gift in the coming year or sponsoring a naming opportunity at tcfl.org.

Timeline

- Finish Design (2023)
- Meet with potential donors (2023 & 2024)
- Capital Campaign continues (2022-2025)
- Construction begins (2024)
- TCFL's 100th anniversary (2025)
- Ribbon cutting (2025)

