



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

## BUILDING FOR THE NEXT CENTURY



# FISCAL YEAR 2024

**DANA NEWMAN**  
DIRECTOR

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## VISIT US

### Easton Branch

100 W. Dover St.  
Easton, MD 21601  
410 822 1626

### St. Michaels Branch (Temporary)

1013 S. Talbot St., Suite 11  
St. Michaels, MD 21663  
410 745 5877

[www.tcfl.org](http://www.tcfl.org)



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

### TCFL: Where Our Community Connects

The Talbot County Free Library is a gathering space for all, where community members can meet, read, work, learn, create, and connect. The Library is a public space where our dedicated staff help community members find books and materials, build workforce development and technology skills, support small businesses and entrepreneurs, and provide life-long learning opportunities for everyone. Through our engaging programs and collections, our staff help our youth build early literacy skills, succeed in school, and prepare for college, careers, and life.

This year, we celebrate the Talbot County Free Library's 100th anniversary with all of you! We will host exciting programs and activities as we get closer to our big bash coming in October of 2025. As we celebrate, we will also be focused on the construction of the St. Michaels Library renovation starting in late January. We expect to celebrate the opening of this new library in early 2026 and hope you will join us for the opening as well as all of our 100th anniversary events in 2025. I want to thank our community members, staff, trustees, partners, volunteers, and donors who support the library as a welcoming gathering space, where anyone can connect, relax, learn, and thrive. We would not be able to do what we do without the generous support and advocacy of our Friends of the Library and Library Foundation. We greatly appreciate your support and hope you'll read further to discover all the ways we served and supported our community in 2024.

*Dana K Newman*  
Dana Newman, Director

**This annual report is dedicated to the memory of John Jelich, Library Associate and St. Michaels Branch champion.**

# 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

## SERVICES

- Library Cardholders | **20,360**
- Total Circulation | **362,401**
- Public Service Hours | **5,356**
- Downloads + E-Resources Use | **144,498**
- Physical Visits | **123,670**
- Website Visits | **638,150**
- Reference Questions Answered | **22,763**
- Library Computer Use | **11,893**
- Library Wireless Sessions | **52,919**
- Meeting/Study Room Used | **1,474**
- Number of Books Given Out | **1,500**

## COLLECTIONS & PROGRAMS

- Physical Collection | **130,753**
- E-Books, E-Audiobooks | **111,035**
- Wi-Fi Hotspots | **75**
- 24/7 E-Resource Providers | **23**
- Programs Offered | **601**
- Total Program Attendance | **24,254**

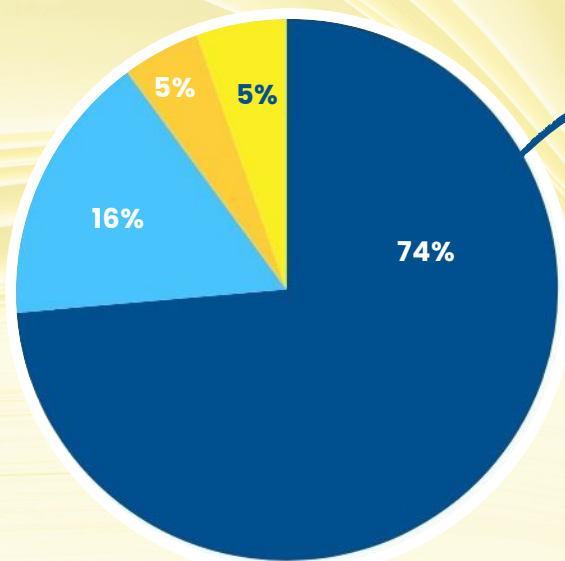
## STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

- FTE Employees | **24**
- Volunteers | **54**
- Volunteer Hours | **3,872**
- Total ROI on Volunteer Hours for Easton & STM: **\$129,673.28\***

*\*\$33.49/hr Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer Time for Maryland 2023*



## Talbot County Free Library FUNDING SOURCES



**TALBOT CO. & OTHER LOCAL \$1,834,862**

**GRANTS & FRIENDS SUPPORT \$406,833**

**TCFL FOUNDATION & DONATIONS \$116,274**

**MARYLAND STATE \$134,701**

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## FOSTERING A LOVE OF READING AND EARLY LITERACY

In 2024, Talbot County Public Schools chose the Talbot County Free Library as their District Community Partner of the Year.

The award states, "The Talbot County Free Library is a cornerstone for literacy for our students and families.

**"The Talbot County Free Library is a cornerstone for literacy for our students and families..."**

The Raising a Reader program, a collaboration with TCPS, has been effective in cultivating a love of reading among the youngest learners.

Their initiatives contribute to a nurturing learning environment for all ages...making the Talbot County Free Library an outstanding partner in fostering educational success and community engagement."

The library supports the education and enrichment of all its patrons through its excellent collections, partnerships, classes and programs. **Currently,**

**7,676 children and teens in the county have library cards. Last year, the**

**library offered 223 programs and classes to children and teens with an attendance of 8,350.**

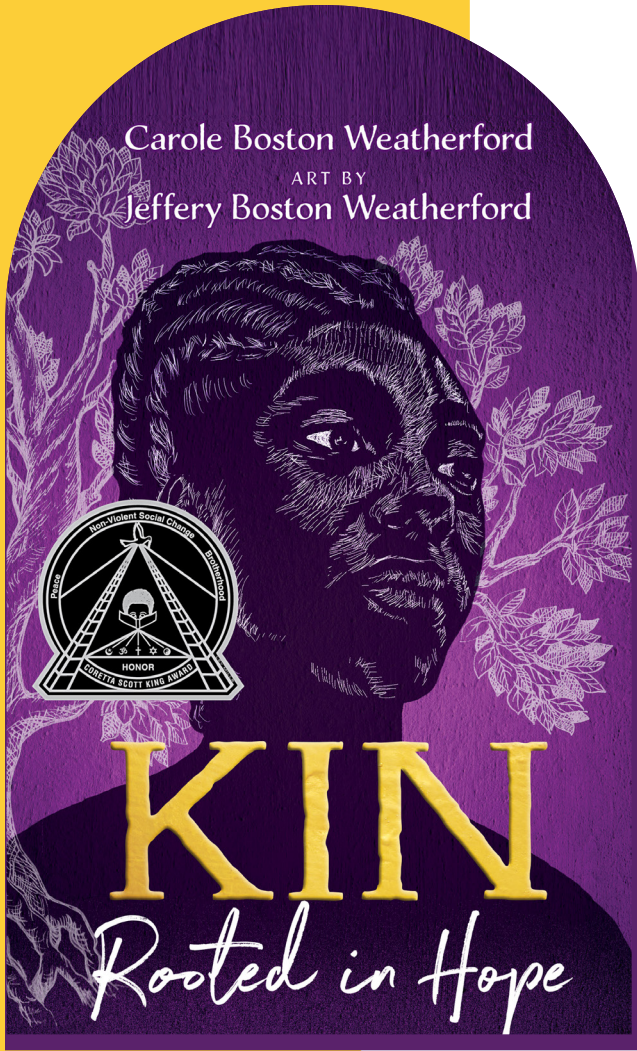
The Children's department has added more VOX books, our most popular collection, to its shelves. A VOX book is a type of audio book that provides a read-along experience for youngsters between the ages of 2 to 14 and supports learning to read. The library's 24/7 e-resources also offer a wide variety of free, top quality, reliable research and entertainment resources, from tutoring services to downloadable e-books, magazines and audiobooks for students of all ages. We work closely with our partners, in our community and across the state, to bring the highest level of services and the best collections to both our youngest and oldest patrons.



# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION -- KIN: ROOTED IN HOPE

On February 24, 2024, at the Avalon Theater, author Carole Boston Weatherford and her son, illustrator Jeffrey Boston Weatherford, discussed their book, KIN: Rooted in Hope. The Bulletin of the Center for Children called KIN “gorgeously rendered,” and one Kirkus Reviews described as “a striking work that reshapes the narrative around enslavement.” KIN, which is set in Talbot County, was awarded a Coretta Scott King Honor, the Claudia Lewis Award from Bank Street College of Education and the Boston Globe/Horn Book Award. The Weatherfords’ Avalon presentation was sponsored by the Talbot County Free Library, The Country School, The Avalon Foundation, and the following community partners: Academy Art Museum, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Dorchester County Tourism, Easton Economic Development Corporation, Frederick Douglass Honor Society, Maryland Public Television, ShoreRivers, Talbot Arts, Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, Talbot County Public Schools, Talbot Historical Society, WHCP FM 91.7 Music Discovery, NPR for the Midshore, and the Dock Street Foundation.



## DIGITAL LITERACY/DIGITAL ACCESS

Talbot County Free Library has been building on a series of initiatives begun in 2020, funded in part by grants and other revenue sources, that have provided our rural community with improved access to, and training on, the internet and other digital literacy resources and technologies. Two of these initiatives include the creation of a Community Wi-Fi Center at Cordova Park, in Cordova, Maryland and the second, offering computer classes and programs related to new technologies. **In 2024, people used the library’s wireless network 52,919 times, and our extensive e-resources and downloadables were used 144,498 times.** The library also conducted 79 digital literacy classes, with a combined instruction time of over 206 hours with 381 students attending. The library continues to work with our partners across the state to provide improved access to the internet and provide instruction on a wide range of digital technologies.





# SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

## ST. MICHAELS BRANCH EXPANSION

Your investment is vital to the success of the St. Michaels Library expansion.



The St. Michaels Library has been a place of renewal and growth for so many in the St. Michaels and Bay Hundred community. We have exciting plans to transform and expand the library to meet the future needs of residents and visitors. Once the expansion is completed, the library will be an

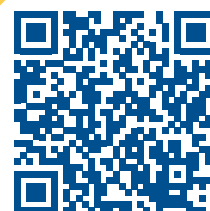
innovative combination of resources, collaborative spaces, technology, and cultural experiences. Improvements include enhancements to ADA access, adding study rooms and a quiet reading room, expanding meeting and youth spaces, and adding technology offerings.

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 literacy and learning goals.

Spaces, furniture, and other aspects of the Easton and St. Michaels libraries may be "named" in honor or remembrance of someone special. In addition to the naming opportunities listed on the right, the Director is always available to work with individual donors to create additional opportunities for meaning recognition.

### TITLES OF TRIBUTE: DEDICATION PROSPECTS

- LIBRARY CAFÉ
- FOYER
- YOUNG ADULT AREA
- CHILDRENS AREA
- EXHIBIT HALLWAY
- STUDY ROOM
- BOOK SHELF
- COMPUTER AREA
- OUTSIDE BENCH
- EARLY LITERACY CENTER
- DELUXE READING CHAIR
- NEW BOOK DISPLAY
- EXTERNAL BOOK DROP
- DEDICATION BRICK
- IPADS
- STEM KITS



SCAN FOR A  
COMPLETE  
LIST OF NAMING  
OPPORTUNITIES



# TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Every year, nearly 25,000 children and adults are reached through library programs and this year alone over 360,000 items were checked out. For 100 years, the library has provided much needed programs and resources to our community thanks in large part to crucial funding provided by the Talbot County Free Library Foundation. Your generous support ensured the library experiences for people of all ages such as story times, digital literacy classes, book clubs, library visits to schools, and cultural programs continued to be offered regularly.



## IN 2024, OUR LIBRARY FOUNDATION

- ◆ Raised funds from generous donors for the St. Michaels Library renovation, which will go toward the purchase of new library materials, furniture, and other enhancements for the newly expanded spaces.
- ◆ Made an annual contribution of over \$75,000 for children's and teen programming, books, equipment, and more.
- ◆ Held several functions, including a fundraiser sponsored by Lyons Rum which raised funds for the St. Michaels Library expansion.

The Foundation's capital campaign, Building for the Next Century, has raised over \$100,000 in the last year to 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 and furniture for the expanded library. More information about naming opportunities can be found at [tcfl.org](http://tcfl.org). This annual report illustrates the powerful role your generosity has made in bringing positive social impact to all of our patrons. We thank all our generous donors for helping the library to serve others.

## FRIENDS OF TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY



The year 2024 held special significance for the Friends of the Talbot County Free Library, which celebrated its **50th anniversary** as a champion for our Library. The all-volunteer, non-profit organization was created in 1974 with the mission to advocate for the Library and to promote its value and services for the enrichment of the community. Through annual membership donations, book sales, and fundraising events, the Friends are able to sponsor the annual Chesapeake Children's Book Festival,

the Summer Reading Program, STEAM Day Camp for youngsters, book giveaways at the Easton Farmers Market and other community events. The Friends Council also actively promotes the Library in County budget hearings and grant requests.

The president of the Friends Council, Emilie Knud-Hansen, emphasized that recent fundraising has been dedicated to the expansion and renovation of the St. Michaels Branch. She states that, **"It has been so successful the Friends celebrated their 50th anniversary with a \$50,000 gift to buy new library materials for the St. Michaels Branch."** Library Director Dana Newman adds, "Without the generous support from the Friends, the library would not be able to provide as many new titles in the wide variety and range of fiction and non-fiction topics that we would like to offer in the newly-renovated library. This gift is such a meaningful way to celebrate the Friends 50th anniversary."

With 2025 marking the library's 100th anniversary, Emilie says the Friends will be active in sponsoring the Centennial celebration.



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

Academy Art Museum  
Avalon Foundation  
Blackbeard Biologic  
Bluepoint Hospitality  
Blood Bank of Delmarva  
Blue Crab Coffee  
Building African American Minds  
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum  
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  
Easton Economic Development Corporation  
Easton Farmers Market  
Easton Police Department  
Easton Rotary  
Eastern Shore Regional Library  
Easton Star Democrat  
Easton Utilities  
For All Seasons  
Flying Cloud Booksellers  
Frederick Douglass Honor Society  
Friends of the Talbot County Free Library  
Hunger Coalition  
Imagination Library of Talbot County  
Judy Center- Talbot County Public Schools  
Lyons Rum  
Maryland Humanities  
Maryland Library Association  
Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled  
Maryland Opera  
Maryland Public Television  
Maryland State Library Agency  
Maryland STEM Festival  
Neighborhood Service Center  
Pickering Creek Audubon Center  
SEEDCO Maryland Health Connection  
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  
Talbot Arts Council  
Talbot County Chamber of Commerce

Talbot County Circuit Court  
Talbot County Council  
Talbot County Humane Society  
Talbot Interagency Council  
Talbot County Department of Corrections  
Talbot County Department of Emergency Services  
Talbot County Department of Human Services  
Talbot County Economic Development & Tourism  
Talbot County Free Library Foundation  
Talbot County Garden Club  
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  
Tilghman Farmers' Market  
Tilghman Island Youth Athletic League  
Town of Easton  
Town of St. Michaels  
Town of Trappe  
Toys for Tots  
University of MD Extension Service  
Master Gardeners  
Upper Shore Aging  
Waterfowl Festival  
WBOC Channel 16  
Water's Edge Museum  
Waterman's Museum  
WCEI Radio 96.7  
What's Up? Media  
Working Artists Forum

