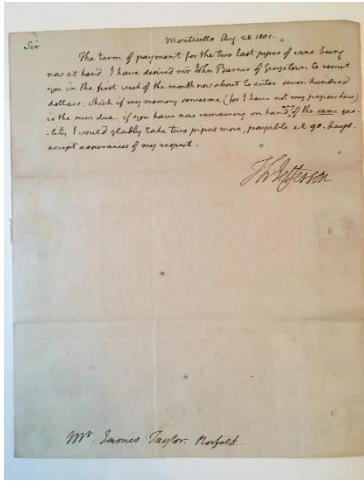


SONAL RASTOGI EXECUTIVE SUMMARY A YEAR IN REVIEW JANUARY 2020-2021



**Library Board Meeting
Norfolk Public Library**

Although 2020 was a year like no other and full of challenges, at Norfolk Public Library we have continued to adapt, and work toward accomplishing our goals, including advancing our vision to “create a city of readers.”

I started the year with a presentation to City Council at the Norfolk City Council Retreat on February 10, 2020. I discussed the impact of NPL on the community and talked about the following:

- NPL’s Strategic Directions as our guiding force that is helping to propel the organization toward its vision, mission and values.
- NPL’s Centers of Excellence, which are programs, facilities and collections
- The value of the Bookmobile being used as a community outreach vehicle to serve the underserved and people of all ages
- NPL Branches are destinations for the community
- The Value of Libraries Study, and that for every dollar invested in the library, our residents in Norfolk enjoy an economic return of \$4.72 in the way of programs, services, and resources.

NPL celebrated Park Place Branch Library’s 50th Anniversary on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. We welcomed a packed audience to the Park Place Branch. Guests included: Dr. Kenneth Cooper Alexander, Mayor for the City of Norfolk; Dr. Chip Filer, City Manager for the City of Norfolk; Mamie Johnson, Norfolk City Councilmember; Angelia Williams, Norfolk City Councilmember; Jean Swartz, Friends of the Norfolk Public Library; James Rogers, Deputy City Manager for the City of Norfolk; Charles Johnson, Norfolk Public Library Board; Sonal Rastogi, Director of Libraries for Norfolk Public Library; Dr. Julia James, Principal of James Monroe Elementary School, school children from James Monroe Elementary School; Rosean Lindsey, poet and Park Place community representative; and Keycentric, musicians.

We expect 2021 to be a year of growth and expansion with the completion of construction for the new Richard A. Tucker Memorial Library, and the installation of a new Randi Marston Peterson Maker Studio at the Mary D. Pretlow Anchor Branch Library with the gift of a \$200,000 donation to the Norfolk Public Library Foundation.

We also continue to serve our patrons during the pandemic. We currently have five locations that are open for Grab-N-Go services, and to assist patrons virtually, we are offering 24/7 public Wi-Fi connections from the library parking lots, and outside of our library buildings through ConnectNorfolk. We are also purchasing 10 additional Wi-Fi hotspots that our patrons can check out with a \$6,000 gift from the Johnny Carson foundation to the Norfolk Public Library Foundation.

After libraries closed to the public, we pivoted to online programs. From March 10 to December 10, 2020, we offered 506 programs that included multicultural, Youth, and Adult programs. Staff committed more than 500 hours to designing, filming, and editing virtual programs that have been viewed over 47,000 times. We also started mobile delivery service on July 6, 2020, and as of mid-December, have circulated 811 books and served 293 patrons. And over the summer, we partnered with Norfolk Public Schools to hand out 1,893 books at our Grab-N-Go locations along with 674 free books courtesy of the Friends of the Norfolk Public Library.

FACILITIES/CIPs/ENHANCEMENTS

- **Richard A. Tucker Memorial Library:** NPL is pleased that building construction is moving along for the new Richard A. Tucker Memorial Library.
- Public Works corrected the drainage problem around the Van Wyck Branch Library and the Barron F. Black Branch Library parking lot and sidewalk underwent major repairs and improvements.
- **THE NORFOLK LIBRARY FOUNDATION** has donated Norfolk Public Library in the amount of *\$200,000 for the Maker Space Studio @ Pretlow.* With this generous contribution, we will be able to develop the studio which will feature eight stations with an estimated completion late summer. Funding came from one donor; therefore, we will be naming this space the **Randi Marston Peterson Studio @ Pretlow.** The Studio @ Pretlow will bring the powerful innovation of component-based flexibility to the library. This will allow us to respond to community needs by establishing the library as the destination for lifelong, multigenerational creativity and connection, supplying not only a space, but also mentors, materials, and support.
- **The Hampton Roads Community Foundation** has awarded the NPL Adult Programming Office the amount of \$3,845 for a partnership project with the Norfolk Public Schools. Through the generous contribution of the Baron F. Black Fund, Norfolk Public Library and Norfolk Public School will be able to purchase 10 Wi-Fi Hotspots and several Laptops for adult learners in the Adult Enrichment Program.
- **Sargeant Memorial Collection – Recent Donations: Thomas Jefferson Letter to James Taylor.** This donation by Jane Hudgins Frazier of a letter from Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) at Monticello to James Taylor (1737-1814) of Norfolk, dated August 28, 1801 is about paying for a wine delivery. Jefferson was serving as president of the United States at the time. Dr. James Taylor served as Norfolk's mayor in 1766,

1777, 1782, and 1790. He and his brother, John, were partners in the firm of Phripp, Taylor and Co. from whom Jefferson is likely buying wine. The letter has been in Ms. Frazier's family for generations.

- **Sargeant Memorial Collection – The Virginian Pilot Newspaper Donation**
Virginian-Pilot Media Companies, LLC donated 10 pallets of printed photographs from the *Virginian-Pilot* Brambleton Building. With the *Virginian-Pilot* leaving an iconic downtown Norfolk building that it had occupied for more than 80 years, the opportunity arose for the City to discuss disposition of *The Virginian-Pilot* photograph and film negative collections from the mid-1950s through 2000. The Sargeant Memorial Collection ready has 40,000+ images of *The Virginian-Pilot* and its affiliated publications primarily from the 1920s through mid-1950s. This donation will create continuity of the collection from the 1920s through 2000 and enhances its utility and provides the community access to the entirety of the photographs. The City accepted the contingent donation June 23, 2020. SMC will take possession once the recently approved shelving is installed, expected by year's end.
- **Sargeant Memorial Collection – Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters**
SMC received 79 boxes of archival materials from The King's Daughters, the founding organization of Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD). It is a branch of The International Order of The King's Daughters and Sons (IOKDS). This women's group started in 1895 and have been active ever since. The records received document their untiring service to this region to ensure children got the best medical care. The collection is currently housed in 79 boxes and the records date from 1895 to 2020. Geographically, the group has circles in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, and Suffolk.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

NPL's Centers of Excellence are: Collections, Programs and Facilities. We will continue to focus on each of these core functions and offer an extensive collection of books and materials and high-quality programs, and, make improvements to our facilities while also becoming more customer focused. Providing top level service and ease of access to our branches will propel us even further in our journey to "create a city of readers" and lifelong learners.

EXPANDED VIRTUAL OFFERINGS --- NEW PROGRAMS ONLINE

NPL pivoted to virtual programming after libraries were closed. Virtual offerings have included youth, multicultural and adult events. Programs included Babygarten, Build Bash, KinderRead, Storytime, Science Time, Yoga, concerts, author visits, and a variety of virtual events hosted by vendors and performers. Events were either pre-recorded and watched on-demand on Facebook or hosted live via Cisco Webex or Zoom. As of mid-December, there were more than 47,888 program views. One of the most successful programs was “Rainbow Puppets – The Night Before Christmas” which ran on Facebook from December 12 through December 24th. The program reached more than 19,000 people in the state of Virginia, and had nearly 8,000 views.

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