



HRLS

Director's Report and Highlights

May 2025

Families "Rally for Reading"

For the first time the Library's **Summer Reading Program** is becoming a "family affair" with joint youth and adult reading program dates and events like the Rally for Reading kick-off celebrations at the Handley and Bowman libraries that took place in May. (*Clarke County Library would have its kick-off June 6th*)

This year's theme "**Color Our World**" was in evidence throughout the rally activities. Hundreds of participants enjoyed author presentations, music, arts & crafts, and even a color burst festival.



The Summer Reading Program starts on June 1st and runs through July 31st. Everyone, kids, teens and adults are encouraged to sign up, record their reading and become eligible to receive rewards and to win prizes. It's also a time for special, interactive programs with entertaining presenters. All in all, it's great summer fun for the whole family.

New Bike Rack at Handley

Handley High School students, along with the **City of Winchester** and **Winchester Public Schools** personnel, cut the ribbon for a new bike rack that was fabricated by Handley students and installed for the community's use at Handley Library in Old Town. The rack is one of 10 that will be placed throughout the city over the next two years.



Reviewing Over 7,000 Images



Archives' summer intern, Rin, has begun work on reprocessing the **Rudy Roger Aerial Photographic Collection**. Donated in 2002, the collection contains over seven thousand negatives and prints of the Shenandoah Valley from the air starting in the 1980s through the early 2000s. Rin has been identifying and eliminating the many duplicates in the collection, which will save considerable processing time and space. Her expertise as a visual arts student has been immensely helpful with this initial part of the project. Rin is also improving upon the simple card file index that came with the collection to create a more detailed index that will be added to the Archives online finding aids for the benefit of researchers.

Supporting Staff

At their annual meeting in May, the Friends Vice-Chair, Lani Westendorff presented Bowman staff member Gwen Huff with the **Barbara Dickinson Scholarship**, named after the former Executive Director of the organization. Any HRLS staff member pursuing a degree in Library Science or an undergraduate degree can apply for the \$2,500 scholarship. This was the third year for the scholarship awards.



“Growing” Partnerships

On May 17th, the Clarke County Library was joined by the **Virginia Cooperative Extension Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardner Association** to host the library's very first plant swap. Patrons were invited to bring seeds and plants to share, and the Master Gardeners gave informational presentations and answered questions from Clarke County's gardening community. The well-attended event saw 48 participants donating, learning, and taking new plants home to their gardens.

Ongoing Collaboration

May saw the successful continuation of the collaboration between the Handley Regional

Library System and the **Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement** through the department's "**Virginia Works**" program job fairs. Thirty-seven job seekers attended the May Job Fair at the Bowman Library. The job fairs provide information about available training and employment services and offer an opportunity for job seekers to meet with local employers with positions to fill.



Sharing Good News

The Public Relations and Outreach Department was on the move in May with three school visits and participation in the new **Community Kindness Fair** sponsored by the **Valley Interfaith Council**. At **Gainesboro Elementary**, library staff shared information about the Summer Reading Program and all the special programs and activities available throughout the summer. Best of all, the visit provided the perfect opportunity to sign up for a library card.

Contributors:

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The Handley Regional Library ... handleyregional.org