



HRLS

Director's Report and Highlights

September 2025

A Month of Incredible Community Engagement & Support !

More than fifty local organizations and businesses shared their knowledge and expertise with the community during the **Handley Library Branch "How-To-Fest"** in September. The event was geared to all-ages with activities ranging from "How to Create Balloon Animals" to "How to Apply for a Mortgage". Over three hundred people participated in the hands-on demonstrations and information sessions, and with activities located throughout the building, attendees had the opportunity to explore all four floors of the historic building. It was a fun day of information and exploration. But above all, it was an event where community connections were made.



September also saw the community gather for the **Archives** sponsored presentation by **Peter Stark**, bestselling author of "**Young Washington: How Wilderness and War Forged American's Founding Father**". The picture to the left shows Peter in Handley's West Reading Room under the picture of *The People of Winchester Appealing to Washington for Protection*, a theme which forms a central part of Peter's work. The author also joined the **Friends of Handley** for an after-hours membership event.

In addition to the Peter Stark afterhours event the **Friends** sponsored a bus trip to the **National Museum of American History** in D.C., hosted **Dr. Brent Kendrick** who spoke about the art of writing a memoir and **Dr. Dianne Murphy** who spoke about the history and future of Yellow Fever. The group also shared the acoustic folk music of **Rich Follett** through its "**A Little Noon Music**" program.





At the **Bowman Branch** it was their third **Annual Craft Swap** that brought in the crowds. After staff members collected and organized donated craft supplies, community members were invited to do some “free shopping” at the event, and over three hundred enthusiastic crafters met the challenge.

Bowman Branch also saw an 11-person crew from **Yount, Hyde & Barbour** provide some hands-on maintenance help. The volunteers from the accounting firm washed exterior windows at the branch as part of the local “**Day of Caring**” activities sponsored by the **United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley**.



At the **Clarke County Branch**, it was the **Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association** that provided volunteers to lead a new program at the branch called **Nature Surprises**. The September program was all about sunflowers and included a story time, a learning time, and a craft time. All under the leadership of the Master Gardeners.

And finally, during this incredible month, was the partnership between the Library System and local business that supported the “**Library Perks**” campaign initiated by our **PR and Outreach Staff**. During September Library Card Signup Month thirteen local businesses provided discounts and freebies to their customers when they showed their library card. For its part, the Library promoted the businesses through print and electronic media. It really was a month to “read locally”, “shop locally”, partner locally”, and “succeed locally”.



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The Handley Regional Library ... handleyregional.org