RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

June 26, 2019

West End Branch Library 5420 Patterson Avenue Richmond, Virginia 23226

11:45 a.m.



Richmond Public Library Board

101 E. Franklin Street Richmond, VA 23219 (804) 646-4256 / fax: (804) 646-7685



Library Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, June 26, 2019 11:45 a.m.

AGENDA

Call to order: 11:45 a.m. Mr. Butterfield Mr. Butterfield **Consent Agenda:** Approval of Agenda Approval of Minutes Approval of Pending Gifts Approval of Statistical Report **Public Comment Period: Reports:** 12:00 p.m. Library Friends Ms. DeBoer/Mr. Dishon Library Foundation Ms. Hansen Mr. Firestine **Administration Reports: Board Committee Reports:** 12:10 p.m. Chairman Mr. Butterfield Ms. Weaver **Finance Committee Facilities Committee** Ms. Zwirner Mr. Lydiard Governance Committee Mr. Butterfield **Unfinished Business:** 12:30 p.m. Book Discussion - Final Chapters **New Business** 12:40 p.m. Mr. Butterfield Adjourn

Next Meeting:

July 24, 2019 East End Branch Library 1200 North 25th Street Richmond, Virginia 23223

Library Board Meeting Minutes - DRAFT May 22, 2019

PRESENT: Vice Chair William Yates, Barbara Burton, Danita Green, David Lydiard, Larry Olanrewaju,

Daisy Weaver, Gail Zwirner

STAFF: Scott Firestine, Clay Dishon, City Attorney Laura Drewry, Cheryl Clarke, Natalie Draper,

Karin Hansen, Tori Nunnally, Shatabra Powell

ABSENT: Chair Kevin Butterfield, Tanya Francis, Gianna Pack, and Friends of the Library

Chair Ruth DeBoer

Meeting of the Richmond Public Library (RPL) Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) was called to order by Vice Chair William Yates at 11:45 a.m. at the Westover Hills Branch Library located at 1408 Westover Hills Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23225.

Consent Agenda Amended	Approve the April 24, 2019 meeting minutes, Statistical Reports, and the Pending Gifts Report as submitted.
7 Interior Co	Motion: Daisy Weaver, Second by David Lydiard – Approved Unanimously.
Public Comment Period	No one from the public was present.
	Mr. Firestine introduced HR Liaison Shatabra Powell, Library Community Services Manager Tori Nunnally of the Westover Hills Branch, and the new Library Community Services Manager for the Main Library Natalie Draper who were also in attendance.
	REPORTS
Friends of the Library (FOL)	 Clay Dishon on behalf of Ruth DeBoer: The Friends will be holding a Member's Only Book Sale from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 29 for current members and anyone who joins the Friends at the sale. The Friends are looking forward to having a table promoting the Friends at the Main Library Summer Reading events. We currently do not have the volunteer base to have a presence at each Branch for the Summer Reading events, but is something to be considered doing in the future. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 15 at 2 p.m., with a talk given by local critic and writer Ed Slipek. Plans for other events for the Friends 60th Anniversary this year are being finalized. The Friends next newsletter will be ready and mailed in early June.
Library Foundation	 Ms. Hansen: Budget: Ms. Hansen reported on the RPL Teen Space and Main Library Renovations. Funds expended as of May 2019 equates to \$15,000 contributed by the Foundation for the Innovation Lab. Categories are general. The only funds that were very time sensitive were funds provided from the Memorial Foundation for Children, which was used for the Innovation Lab. Communication: The first e-communications has gone out for the year. There will be an e-invite going to Board Members for the June 12 Annual Foundation Full Board Meeting Social. During the social, there will be demonstrations and tours in the new innovation lab. Mr. Lydiard inquired to the cost of the hard solicitation versus the e-solicitation. Ms. Hansen explained the e-solicitation is much less in cost.

	DEDODTS (CONTINUED)
Administration	Highlights and Additions to Director's Report: Mr. Firestine did a brief summary of his Director's Report that was submitted in the Board Packet with discussion emphasizing on: Website: Hired Jonah Butler from the West End Branch Library to assist Nancy Buck at the Main Library on web presence and maintenance. Collection Relocation: Relocation transition is running smoothly. Moving company is in the process of moving the Children's area and the Law Library as well as shifting the non-fiction collection around. The innovation lab is now open. Community Connector Social Worker Rex Huff started on May 15 at the Main Library. His office is located on the second floor and will have office hours to assist patrons who may be experiencing social challenges, such as addiction, homelessness, etc., to find assistance. He will also travel around to the Branches should any of their patrons need assistance. Mr. Huff will collect statistics on how many people he meets with, assistance given, successes, etc. to use for future consideration to make a permanent position for the Library. Cell Phone Charger: Currently broken. Ms. Clarke is in the process of researching companies that can fix or replace the cell phone charger. Location for personal belongings of patrons to be stored: Currently on hold. Master Plan RFP: Ongoing. In Legal. Integrated Library System RFP: Still in process. The Foundation Chairperson suggested a letter may need to be sent to the CAO and/or the City Attorney's Office inquiring to the issue of why it is taking so long to complete. The current plan is for Mr. Firestine to reach out to Mr. Jackson to obtain a status report first, then compose a letter if necessary. Also, City Attorney Laura Drewry mentioned that she would reach out to the attorneys that are working on the RFP and report back. Hoopla Advertising: At the May 22 LBOT Meeting, Mr. Lydiard asked if RPL can do some advertising on the Hoopla splash page. They have been contacted and responded at this time no advertising can be done. It may
	BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS
Chair	William Yates for Kevin Butterfield: No Report.
Finance	Daisy Weaver: Ms. Weaver reported there was a brief Finance Committee meeting prior to the Board meeting. It was reported that during the Budget cycle, RPL's budget was decreased \$44,000 from the vacancy funding and the CIP was impacted. Mr. Firestine is awaiting a response on the total CIP impact amount.
Facilities	Gail Zwirner: No Report.
Governance	David Lydiard: Mr. Lydiard stated there was one interested person who would like to be considered for the Library Board of Trustees. He will follow up with the Clerk's Office to check if anyone has also applied for consideration.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Book discussion tabled to next meeting June 26, 2019.
- Inventory Discussion: The LBOT had time to review the handouts from the April 24 meeting to prepare for the inventory discussion. Mr. Yates started the discussion stating the handout materials depicted an inventory is very costly and a big undertaking of time and labor as well as an inconvenience to our patrons with closing the location. Mr. Firestine reported staff is using a missing list when items cannot be found and working with Unique Management to recover missing items.

Mr. Firestine reported gates are a strong visual deterrent. He then summarized the cost of a new RFID system and costs of maintaining the existing gate system; both being very expensive. After the inventory discussion was completed, the LBOT were in agreement to continue to think about an inventory process with future discussions when needed.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve the Library Card Renewal Policy and the Library Card Registration Policy to add Fine–Free Youth Library Cards for Youth 0-17 years.

Motion: Gail Zwirner, Second by Larry Olanrewaju – Approved Unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m. by unanimous consensus by the Library Board of Trustees present at the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 26, 2019, at 11:45 a.m. at the West End Branch Library, 5420 Patterson Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23226.

Approved:	
	Mr. Kevin Butterfield, Chair

Recorder: Gianna Pack Executive Assistant

Director's Report

June 2019

Director Activities for May 18 through June 21, 2019:

May 21	RPS-Rotary Meeting
May 22	Foundation Executive Committee Meeting
May 26-27	All Branches Closed – Memorial Day Weekend
May 30	RVAH2O Internal Stakeholders Meeting
May 31	Dr. Matt McCarthy Author Event – Gellman Room, CSPAN filmed to broadcast.
June 3	Conference Call VPLDA Legislative Committee
June 5	RPLF Finance Committee Meeting
June 5	Review of Council Ordinance 2018-030 Meeting – City Hall
June 5	RPL Friends Board Meeting
June 6	Office of RPS Engagement Meeting – City Hall
June 9	Charles City County Library Celebration
June 12	RPL Foundation Full Board Meeting and Social
June 14	Attended the CALD Meeting-Central Rapp. in Fredericksburg.
June 17	5th District Community Office Hours with Mayor-Randolph Community Center
June 18	7th District Community Office Hours with Mayor-Peter Paul Development Center
June 20	Administration Retreat with CAO
June 22	Arthur Ashe Street Renaming Celebration

Hiring Update:

- Hired Chiquita Dawson, Library Assistant II/FTE North Avenue May 28
- Interviews for Library Associate PTE/Main June 12
- Hired Meg Raymond, Library II FTE/Main July 8.

Collection Relocation Update: Main Library started moving the Law Library and Children's collections on May 21. The departments are switching places. This switch allows more room and open space for the Children's area and the Law Library has a quieter area for patrons to do research. Also during the move, the Young Adults section was moved adjacent to the new Makerspace. Although the major part of the move is completed, we continue to update the spaces with new furniture, technology, and resources.

Ginter Park Branch Library Closure: The Branch closed June 1 due to a power outage. The Branch re-opened on June 2.

West End Branch Library Patio: The original renovation plan included tables and umbrellas for the patio. These items were cut as the renovation needed the funds for other projects. Ms. Crisman was able to first purchase tables, benches, planters, and a trash can through the generous donations of patrons.

September 2018, for our 40th Anniversary, Ms. Crisman put together a raffle with items donated by local businesses. This was the beginning of the "shade fund" which continued through the fall and winter of 2018. One patron volunteered to donate half the cost of the shade (\$6,000) and made a challenge to others to match that donation. All donations were deposited with the RPL Foundation in a special account for the West End Branch Library. In May of 2019 RPL West End Branch Library met its goal and the order was placed. The shade is truly the finishing touch to an excellent renovation. Patrons love the new umbrellas and are taking advantage of the early morning shade.

Westover Hills Branch Library: Westover Hills Branch Library will be celebrating its 60th Anniversary. On July 8 at 5:00 p.m. with cake and an acapella concert at the Branch. Also, there will be a week-long event starting on July 8-13 with various programs.

Director's Report June 2019 (Continued)

Fine Free Library Card: Launched June 15 on the first day of Summer Reading. Press Release and Frequently Asked Questions are listed in the handouts of the Board Packet.

RVAH2O Update: RPL continues to work with James River Association, DEQ for the 419 grant awarded in October 2019.

RFP for the Main Library Facilities Master Plan Update: Legal has completed review and moved the document to Procurement for re-processing. Re-issue date is July 1, 2019.

RFP for the Integrate Library System (ILS on-line catalog): Legal is working with Sirsi/Dynix to resolve terms and conditions that will be acceptable for all. A final draft is being reviewed and target for completion is July 2019.

Community Connector: Since Social Worker Rex Huff, started on May 15 at the Main Library, he has made tremendous progress in his training and integration with the Library and the community. The position is reaching out to our patrons in need of assistance. Mr. Huff has assisted six individuals in locating shelter assistance, assisted a patron to obtain a Virginia ID Card, and provided other resources.

Events:

- C-Span was at the Main Library on May 31 to record author Dr. Matt McCarthy presenting his book on *Superbugs*. Dr. McCarthy is a physician, professor of medicine and New York Times best-selling author. He shared the story of the race to find the new treatments against antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- June 9 at 2:00 p. m. at the Main Library showed the documentary, *The American South as We Know It*. This film explored stories of Jim Crow South through oral history interviews conducted by director, Frederick Murphy. Eighty (80) people came to the presentation of the film, discussion, and Q&A. There was an article in the Style Weekly prior to this event.

CIRCULATION															
LOCATION	FY	JUL	AUG	SEP	ост	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total	YTD % Change
	FY16	10,263	10,897	9,891	9,684	8,546	8,203	7,784	8,963	8,980	8,301	8,208	10,590	110,310	
Belmont	FY17	12,068	12,314	9,973	9,766	9,727	9,071	9,709	9,715	10,114	9,238	9,446	10,411	121,552	
Demioni	FY18	10,836	10,486	8,290	8,385	7,353	6,096	7,651	7,545	8,099	7,402	7,632	7,864	97,639	-24%
	FY19	8,429	8,074	8,103	7,888	7,303	6,144	7,099	6,630	8,077	6,712	6,436		80,895	-18.58%
	FY16	5,958	5,859	5,765	5,288	4,905	4,931	4,223	4,448	4,834	4,282	3,336	4,401	58,230	
Broad Rock	FY17	4,883	4,773	4,248	4,706	3,966	3,454	3,729	3,192	3,595	3,377	3,851	4,136	47,910	
DIOAU NOCK	FY18	4,574	4,062	3,726	3,809	3,665	3,096	3,308	2,986	3,132	3,304	2,910	3,289	41,861	-14%
	FY19	3,910	3,609	2,671	3,217	2,505	2,086	2,488	2,801	2,843	2,389	2,419		30,938	-20%
	FY16	4,119	4,565	4,313	3,747	3,411	3,375	3,653	3,286	3,303	3,206	3,822	4,629	45,429	
East End	FY17	4,572	4,371	3,581	3,420	2,945	3,029	3,463	2,981	3,529	4,977	3,515	3,460	43,843	
East Ellu	FY18	3,635	3,481	3,033	2,948	2,632	2,281	2,698	2,574	2,838	2,637	2,865	3,325	34,947	-25%
	FY19	2,996	2,648	2,614	2,820	2,587	2,176	2,915	2,451	2,249	2,046	2,087		27,589	-37%
	FY15	2,942	402	469	481	144	440	40	354	512	586	292	1,238	8,265	
Ginter Park	FY16	6,247	5,924	5,374	5,770	5,031	4,517	4,812	4,582	5,401	4,641	4,868	5,310	62,477	
Giller Falk	FY17	5,751	6,070	5,338	5,152	4,854	3,898	4,327	4,370	4,522	4,653	4,023	5,263	58,221	-7%
	FY19	5,211	5,163	4,864	4,278	3,762	2,812	3,864	3,653	4,408	3,384	4,174		45,573	4%
	FY16	4,172	3,508	3,727	4,159	3,901	3,776	3,252	3,318	3,280	2,845	3,158	3,459	42,555	
Hull Street	FY17	3,174	3,245	3,088	3,131	3,400	2,477	2,816	2,962	2,989	2,348	2,766	2,843	35,239	
Hull Street	FY18	2,947	3,155	2,178	2,106	2,202	1,772	2,218	2,304	2,241	2,034	1,824	2,147	27,128	-30%
	FY19	2,010	2,305	3,323	1,844	1,838	1,852	2,287	1,870	1,854	1,828	1,976		22,987	8%
	FY16	12,022	11,975	8,749	11,056	10,376	10,221	10,620	11,464	11,338	11,585	11,658	12,075	133,139	
Main	FY17	12,103	12,264	10,330	10,655	9,611	9,049	9,629	9,600	10,821	8,969	9,826	10,528	123,385	
IVIAIII	FY18	10,304	11,144	9,794	9,946	9,126	7,750	9,149	8,706	9,223	8,069	7,769	8,155	109,135	-13%
	FY19	8,719	8,877	8,655	9,774	9,099	8,202	9,418	8,749	9,621	9,177	8,795		99,086	12%

CIRCULATION	(CONT	INUED)													
LOCATION	FY	JUL	AUG	SEP	ост	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total	YTD % Change
	FY16	5,048	4,863	4,990	5,133	4,410	4,830	4,300	4,239	4,267	3,927	3,708	4,024	53,739	
North Avenue	FY17	4,235	4,448	3,768	3,564	3,308	3,260	2,972	2,943	3,186	2,714	3,017	2,985	40,400	
North Avenue	FY18	3,112	3,455	3,238	3,802	3,011	2,562	3,094	3,328	3,093	2,580	2,271	2,269	35,815	-13%
	FY19	2,979	2,493	2,709	2,918	2,390	2,059	2,604	2,264	2,367	2,887	2,243		27,913	-1%
	FY16	13,330	12,920	11,542	11,076	9,860	9,475	9,940	10,262	10,600	10,194	10,044	6,429	125,672	
West End	FY17	983	1,070	785	752	628	604	647	568	745	502	591	613	8,488	
West Lilu	FY18	826	3,012	7,426	8,165	7,940	6,974	7,981	7,390	8,641	8,882	9,802	11,202	88,241	90%
	FY19	11,660	11,438	10,076	10,172	8,539	7,313	9,145	7,434	9,007	8,380	8,746		101,910	-12%
	FY16	9,531	9,735	11,638	8,747	7,425	4,424	7,991	7,874	9,497	8,201	8,610	9,047	102,720	
Westover Hills	FY17	9,530	9,400	8,231	8,065	7,407	7,223	7,564	7,848	8,405	6,798	8,059	8,058	96,588	
Westovei Hills	FY18	8,685	8,571	7,262	7,133	6,933	6,324	6,895	6,548	6,576	6,660	6,186	7,501	85,274	-13%
	FY19	8,071	7,787	7,566	7,102	6,120	5,364	7,072	6,155	6,511	6,120	5,793		73,661	-7%
	FY16	3,902	4,065	3,902	3,767	3,840	3,701	4,311	3,969	3,916	3,735	3,978	3,787	46,873	
Econtent	FY17	4,107	3,770	3,470	3,611	3,568	3,899	3,962	3,701	4,370	4,102	3,906	4,494	46,960	
Econtent	FY18	4,676	4,689	4,042	4,125	3,923	3,874	4,566	4,224	4,835	4,935	5,409	5,320	54,618	14%
	FY19	5,985	6,407	5,683	5,581	5,278	5,874	6,375	5,874	6,532	6,132	6,424		66,145	16%
	FY16	56,905	53,327	50,782	49,707	44,861	41,798	45,042	45,928	48,244	45,355	44,784	44,460	571,193	
RPL Total	FY17	59,644	60,356	53,498	53,685	48,876	46,061	47,568	47,645	51,795	44,958	48,914	54,186	617,186	
IN L I Olai	FY18	57,515	60,843	56,558	57,424	54,326	48,350	54,710	52,552	55,906	55,332	53,155	59,017	665,688	7%
	FY19	59,970	58,801	56,264	55,594	49,421	43,882	53,267	47,881	53,469	49,055	49,093		576,697	-8%

NEW PATRON CARDS													
FY2019	JUL	AUG	SEP	ОСТ	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total
Belmont	141	148	138	108	88	76	122	75	105	99	103	-	1,203
Broad Rock	155	148	141	136	107	85	126	130	159	151	136	-	1,474
East End	123	121	114	96	102	78	100	107	103	110	106	-	1,160
Ginter Park	142	151	162	117	68	41	60	46	63	55	108	-	1,013
Hull Street	95	121	129	64	60	90	98	95	98	115	110	-	1,075
Main	294	339	341	276	250	192	355	274	341	251	314	-	3,227
North Avenue	116	124	94	90	99	64	93	95	112	123	111	-	1,121
West End	143	128	95	80	79	41	100	76	94	78	88	-	1,002
Westover Hills	150	140	114	120	78	94	118	121	100	92	79	-	1,206
Online Reg E-Card	333	302	295	241	186	150	149	131	146	138	165		2,236
Total 2019	1,692	1,722	1,623	1,328	1,117	911	1,321	1,150	1,321	1,212	1,320	-	12,481
Total 2018	1,251	1,488	1,573	1,229	1,018	871	1,216	1,198	996	1,138	1,067	1,161	14,206

DOOR COUNT FY19	Jul-18	Aug- 18	Sep- 18	Oct- 18	Nov- 18	Dec- 18	Jan- 19	Feb- 19	Mar- 19	Apr- 19	May- 19	Jun- 19	TOTAL
Belmont	6,612	6,824	6,242	6,544	5,408	4,738	6,278	5,945	6,520	6,361	6,255		67,727
Broad Rock	7,042	7,205	6,046	7,302	5,356	4,513	5,374	5,678	5,909	5,689	5,540		65,654
East End	7,418	8,274	7,070	6,668	5,665	5,823	7,026	6,056	6,613	6,591	7,620		74,824
Ginter Park	6,765	5,940	4,278	4,981	4,189	3,364	4,823	4,350	5,202	4,927	5,165		53,984
Hull Street	10,678	10,946	9,371	8,486	12,574	5,686	7,241	7,499	8,487	10,094	10,284		101,346
Main	14,277	15,263	13,877	14,752	13,491	11,006	14,839	14,305	16,479	16,427	14,529		159,245
North Avenue	6,785	6,946	5,140	5,822	4,422	4,524	4,998	5,179	5,859	5,591	5,877		61,143
West End	4,778	4,757	4,199	4,495	3,544	3,341	4,439	4,294	4,824	4,492	4,566		47,729
Westover Hills	6,286	7,256	6,752	7,180	7,608	5,430	8,121	6,953	7,659	8,690	7,563		79,498
TOTALS FY 2019	70,641	73,411	62,975	66,230	62,257	48,425	63,139	60,259	67,552	68,862	67,399		711,150
TOTALS FY 2018	62,057	74,617	69,494	70,700	63,466	55,560	63,750	65,351	68,782	69,881	70,586	71,037	805,281
TOTALS FY 2017	72,398	78,366	68,881	69,394	61,547	52,517	49,906	64,911	71,163	64,777	69,506	68,301	791,667

PROGRAMS FY19	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	TOTAL	TOTAL
													FY19	FY18
Belmont														
Adult Programs	29	19	19	23	19	13	27	24	23	20	19	0	235	197
Adult Attend	133	84	57	155	69	60	129	138	132	169	118	0	1,244	1,071
Young Adult Programs	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	10	7
Young Adult Attend	0	3	5	0	0	2	0	4	9	0	0	0	23	17
Juvenile Programs	22	4	0	8	6	2	8	6	5	9	6	0	76	243
Juvenile Attend	421	38	0	219	124	44	161	172	132	265	223	0	1,799	4,984
Total Attend	554	125	62	374	193	106		314	273	434	341	0	3,066	6,072
Total Programs	52	24	20	31	26	16	36	31	29	31	25	0	321	447
Broad Rock														
Adult Programs	14	5	11	25	33		12	29	34	30	28	0		265
Adult Attend	63	108	52	213	97	20	62	211	206	124	153	0	1,309	1,310
Young Adult Programs	2	6	5	7	5	3		4	3	4	5	0	48	8
Young Adult Attend	11	49	62	89	69	25	55	74	37	40	113	0	624	79
Juvenile Programs	34	18	18	24	15	27	31	22	32	32	34	0	287	244
Juvenile Attend	239	255	134	554	284	124	175	455	227	541	397	0	3,385	2,135
Total Attend	313	412	248	856	450	169	292	740	470	705	663	0	5,318	3,524
Total Programs	50	29	34	56	53	37	47	55	69	66	67	0	563	517
East End														
Adult Programs	32	21	32	28	28	25		31	41	39	41	0		264
Adult Attend	217	147	178	308	218	213	219	367	347	527	404	0	3,145	2,125
Young Adult Programs	2	0	5	7	4	8	3	8	8	4	4	0	53	12
Young Adult Attend	29	0	25	21	20	23	10	37	25	4	9	0	203	155
Juvenile Programs	16	18	10	12	13	11	3	8	10	11	17	0	129	100
Juvenile Attend	315	85	82	151	113	93	71	41	89	235	170	0	1,445	2,121
Total Attend	561	232	285	480	351	329		445	461	766		0	4,793	4,401
Total Programs	50	39	47	47	45	44	25	47	59	54	62	0	519	376

PROGRAMS FY19 (CONTINUED)	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	TOTAL FY19	TOTAL FY18
Ginter Park														
Adult Programs	16	10	24	25		13	22	35	30	22	26	0	246	190
Adult Attend	216	192	226	288	147	121	226	312	317	263	177	0	2,485	1,741
Young Adult Programs	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	8
Young Adult Attend	29	0	0	0	1	0	0	14	12	0	0	0	56	181
Juvenile Programs	16	8	7	10	7	6	9	8	5	18	16	0	110	197
Juvenile Attend	315	125	35	81	24	48	108	45	21	111	242	0	1,155	7,788
Total Attend	560	317	261	369	172	169	334	371	350	374	419	0	3,696	9,710
Total Programs	34	18	31	35	31	19	31	44	36	40	42	0	361	395
Hull Street			40	4.5									70	
Adult Programs	9	7	10	15		4	4	8		7	5	0	79	104
Adult Attend	64	80	106	164	19	30	69	56	249	83	35	0	955	1,267
Young Adult Programs	10	3	1	2	0	2	1	1 -	2	1	2	0	25	52
Young Adult Attend	237	15	13	25	0		0		7	0	13	0	319	446
Juvenile Programs	13	12	11	16		4	6	8	/	9	6	0	96	155
Juvenile Attend	682	323	198	261	21	55	156		59	69	37	0	2,017	3,782
Total Attend	983	418	317	450	40	89	225	217	315	152	85	0	3,291	5,495
Total Programs	32	22	22	33	8	10	11	17	15	17	13	0	200	311
Main							,							
Adult Programs	0	0	14	0			13			17	17	0	106	358
Adult Attend	0	0	420	0	_		626	737	698	748	434	0	4,067	8,986
Young Adult Programs	5	2	1	6		3	9	7	5	7	9	0	58	8
Young Adult Attend	46	95	1	108	81	41	152		40	47	59	0	715	441
Juvenile Programs	31	0	19	26			28	24	28	29	30	0	238	169
Juvenile Attend	726	0	373	464	0	495	642	413		564	629	0	4,697	4,649
Total Attend	772	95	794	572	81	940	1,420	1,195	1,129	1,359	1,122	0	9,479	14,076
Total Programs	36	2	34	32	4	37	50	44	54	53	56	0	402	535

PROGRAMS FY19 (CONTINUED)	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	TOTAL FY19	TOTAL FY18
North Avenue														
Adult Programs	17	13	21	33	21	16	23	29	32	42	36	0	283	313
Adult Attend	244	171	110	271	84	149	167	119	215	916	163	0	2,609	2,796
Young Adult Programs	3	3	1	0	7	6	8	4	7	8	4	0	51	64
Young Adult Attend	11	15	34	0	41	35	26	21	36	75	24	0	318	583
Juvenile Programs	29	18	24	21	39	26	23	24	27	20	18	0	269	297
Juvenile Attend	594	795	329	430	267	519	163	436	472	473	299	0	4,777	4,484
Total Attend	849	981	473	701	392	703	356	576	723	1,464		0	7,704	7,863
Total Programs	49	34	46	54	67	48	54	57	66	70	58	0	603	674
West End		ا م												
Adult Programs	10	13	11	16		9	15			14		0		279
Adult Attend	101	110	81	118	54	49	70	65	115	98	103	0	964	715
Young Adult Programs	2	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	12	7
Young Adult Attend	0	0	31	5	0	0	0	0	2	7	5		50	109
Juvenile Programs	15	20	15	20		15	18	17	22	13	21	0	188	175
Juvenile Attend	288	341	283	526		237	417	12	230	152	369	0	,	2,625
Total Attend	389	451	395	649	367	286	487	77	347	28		0	4,182	3,449
Total Programs	27	33	28	38	22	24	34	34	34	257	33	0	564	461
Westover Hills														
Adult Programs	4	14	12	13	17	12	18		33	30		0		81
Adult Attend	68	143	71	89	177	123	330	253	1,237	528		0	- /	754
Young Adult Programs	3	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	1	3	2	0	. •	1
Young Adult Attend	14	2	8	6		0	3	2	11	44	15			1
Juvenile Programs	30	21	21	32	18	18	16	20	23	21	16			142
Juvenile Attend	334	358	252	607	331	224	238	574	570	371	317	0	4,176	1,897
Total Attend	416	503	331	702	508	347	571	829	1,818	943		0	,	2,776
Total Programs	37	36	34	47	35	30	35	45	57	54	42	0	452	224
Grand Total Attend	5,397	3,534	3,166	5,153	2,554	3,138	4,275	4,764	5,886	6,225	4,850	0	49,171	57,366
Grand Total Programs	367	237	296	373	291	265	323	374	419	642	398	0	3,985	3,940

COMPUTER USE FY19	Jul-18	Aug- 18	Sep- 18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	TOTAL
Belmont Workstation	1,397	1,518	1,288	1,314	1,135	947	1,234	1,071	1,246	1,249	1,268		13,667
WIFI	367	371	376	1,054	962	867	1,169	1,066	1,035	879	1,210		9,356
Broad Rock Workstation	2,500	2,489	1,865	2,147	1,766	1,512	2,097	2,099	2,252	2,004	1,968		22,699
WIFI	586	592	601	1,026	814	674	850	870	833	829	993		8,668
East End Workstation	1,628	2,064	1,709	1,805	1,558	1,233	1,888	1,666	1,776	1,563	1,657		18,547
WIFI	377	381	386	1,050	864	842	1,184	1,117	1,004	1,123	1,278		9,606
Ginter Park Workstation	1,435	1,637	1,447	1,554	1,182	1,009	1,363	1,244	1,517	1,540	1,421		15,349
WIFI	160	176	179	1,078	819	707	1,087	972	988	1,055	1,217		8,438
Hull Street Workstation	1,660	2,151	1,894	1,627	1,508	1,360	1,784	501	1,889	1,811	1,844		18,029
WIFI	93	94	95	950	960	983	1,142	911	809	745	1,169		7,951
Main Workstation	3,144	3,634	3,413	3,535	2,843	3,947	2,554	3,396	3,994	3,465	3,483		37,408
Childrens Workstation	216	239	167	192	182	149	157	178	133	209	125		1,947
WIFI	2,748	2,775	2,817	4,687	4,006	3,947	5,070	4,227	5,211	4,099	5,036		44,624
North Avenue Workstation	1,501	1,472	1,377	1,392	1,197	999	1,319	1,319	1,325	1,429	1,289		14,619
WIFI	324	327	332	1,031	648	739	752	809	816	728	975		7,481
West End Workstation	778	818	716	735	623	575	741	671	902	870	748		8,177
WIFI	324	327	332	542	514	494	542	540	643	588	743		5,589
Westover Hills Workstation	1,487	1,697	1,436	1,571	1,234	967	1,364	1,464	1,421	1,341	1,334		15,316
WIFI	416	420	426	813	678	614	771	643	697	578	819		6,876
TOTALS FY 2019	21,141	23,182	20,857	28,103	23,493	22,565	27,068	24,764	28,491	26,105	28,577		274,347
TOTALS FY 2018	15,815	21,725	22,930	24,159	20,415	10,066	22,675	23,448	21,326	22,134	22,591	20,439	247,723
TOTALS FY 2017	18,053	20,329	18,204	17,496	15,525	12,916	6,925	15,994	17,966	21,582	23,985	20,701	209,676

TECHNICAL SERVICES - ITEMS BY LOCATION													
FY19	Belmont	Broad Rock	East End	Ginter Park	Hull Street	MAIN	North Avenue	West End	Westover Hills	OverDrive	Monthly Total Added	Monthly Total Discarded	
Jul-18	309	155	167	243	175	506	168	346	309	0	2,378	79	
Aug-18	340	190	172	233	153	569	175	413	359	158	2,604	216	
Sep-18	208	130	144	142	84	388	139	276	235	79	1,825	168	
Oct-18	365	172	165	204	98	707	221	451	363	62	2,808	236	
Nov-18	198	118	113	134	91	356	145	244	248	1	1,648	88	
Dec-18	117	65	49	79	30	326	54	158	124	239	1,241	118	
Jan-19	199	99	118	157	95	430	127	244	222	110	1,801	540	
Feb-19	237	101	161	158	65	384	111	260	226	223	1,926	367	
Mar-19	190	90	137	137	67	404	115	237	189	0	1,566	661	
Apr-19	338	183	189	233	121	596	180	384	354	54	2,632	1,090	
May-19	492	251	271	341	155	772	245	549	507	212	3,795	533	
Jun-19													
Branch Total FY 2019:	2,993	1,554	1,686	2,061	1,134	5,438	1,680	3,562	3,136	1,138	24,224	4,096	
Branch Total FY 2018:	3,247	2,040	1,972	2,414	1,985	5,549	1,890	3,480	3,292	1,673	21,846		
Average:	272	141	153	187	103	494	153	324	285	103	2,019		

Richmond Public Library FY19 Operating Budget as of May 31, 2019

		Ma	y 31, 2019		Actual		Balance
			Expended			%	Available
ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION		Budget		31-May-19	Spent	 31-May-19
60000	SALARIES - FULL TIME	\$	2,685,757	\$	2,427,630	90.4%	258,127
61000	SALARIES - PART TIME	\$	387,216	\$	232,612	60.1%	\$ 154,604
62000	SALARIES - TEMPORARY	\$		\$	20,308	0.0%	\$ (20,308)
63000	FICA	\$	195,217	\$	158,727	81.3%	\$ 36,490
63001	RET CON RSRS	\$	613,658	\$	525,113	85.6%	\$ 88,545
63002	MEDCARE FICA	\$	45,655	\$	37,122	81.3%	\$ 8,533
63003	GROUP LIFE	\$	16,493	\$	14,952	90.7%	\$ 1,541
63006	H/C ACT TEMP	\$	572,540	\$	473,009	82.6%	\$ 99,531
63008	STATE UNEMPLOYMENT	\$	-	\$	100	0.0%	\$
63011	HEALTH SAVINGS	\$	¥I.	\$	15,875	0.0%	\$ (15,875)
64104	EDUCATION PAY	\$		\$		0.0%	\$
64105	BONUS PAY	\$	-	\$	-	0.0%	\$ -
	Personnel Expenses	\$	4,516,536	\$	3,905,347	86.5%	\$ 611,189
71141	BOOKS	\$	501,332	\$	487,125	97.2%	\$ 14,207
71141	DATABASES	\$		\$	-	0.0%	\$ -
71142	MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTS	\$	6,953	\$	~	0.0%	\$ 6,953
72122	MAGS & NEWSPAPER	\$	36,659	\$	7,085	19.3%	\$ 29,574
	Collection Development	\$	544,944	\$	494,210	90.7%	\$ 50,734
70131	ADVERTISING	\$	1,995	\$	439	22.0%	\$ 1,556
70161	DATA PROCESSING - OCLC	\$	240,645	\$	204,016	84.8%	\$ 36,629
70161	PLANNING MGMT SERVICES	\$	129,032	\$	80,203	62.2%	\$ 48,829
70218	VEHICLE REPAIR	\$	3,154	\$	4,218	133.7%	\$ (1,063)
70311	PRINTED SUPPLIES	\$	1,300	\$	1,258	96.7%	\$ 42
70413	MILEAGE ALLOWANCE	\$	2,760	\$	188	6.8%	\$ 2,572
70551	SECURITY	\$	357,121	\$	341,664	95.7%	\$ 15,457
70552	CONTRACT AND TEMP PERSONNEL	\$	20,000	\$	146,327	731.6%	\$ (126,327)
71012	OFFICE STATIONARY SUPPLIES	\$	13,220	\$	6,611	50.0%	\$ 6,609
71016	ADVERTISING	\$	-	\$	-	0.0%	\$
71143	LIBRARY OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$	17,946	\$	15,916	88.7%	\$ 2,030
72113	POSTAGE	\$	4,569	\$	4,329	94.7%	\$ 240
72121	CONFERENCES & CON	\$	2,092	\$	2,489	119.0%	\$ (397)
72123	MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$	1,352	\$	484	35.8%	\$ 868
72124	TRAINING	\$	1,189	\$	2,229	187.4%	\$ (1,040)
72131	COMPUTER SUPPLIES	\$	28,537	\$	28,779	100.8%	\$ (242)
72153	EQUIPMENT	\$	12,200	\$	1,851	0.0%	\$ 10,349
73104	BANK FEES	- 24	v	\$	6,470	0.0%	(6,470)
76119	PAGERS		¥	\$	1-	0.0%	-
77103	FUEL-D/O VEHICLE		2,200	\$	1,416	64.4%	784
77104	VEHICLE MONTHLY STANDING		493	\$	452	91.7%	41
77201	INTERNAL PRINTING	\$	-	\$	1-	0.0%	-
77501	DIT CHARGES	\$	-	\$	2,153	0.0%	(2,153)
80001	DEPRECIATION		-	\$	-	0.0%	
80004	BUILDINGS & STR		8	\$		0.0%	-
80006	EQUIPMENT & OFFICE MAINTENANCE	100	7,970	\$	3,143	39.4%	4,827
80007	VEHICLE EXPENSES	\$	-	\$	1=	0.0%	-
	Other Expenses		847,776	\$	854,634	100.8%	(6,859)
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND	\$	5,909,256	\$	5,254,192	88.9%	\$ 655,065

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARIES - General Fund Budget

Monthly Budget Report May 31, 2019

General Fund Revenue	FY2018-19 Budget		FY2018-19 Actual YID		<u>%</u> <u>Recognized</u>	<u>Unr</u>	<u>ecognized</u>
Lost and Damage Books	\$	21,782	\$	15,862	73%	\$	5,920
Overdue Book Fines	\$	66,121	\$	41,845	63%	\$	24,276
Reservation - Book Records	\$	500	\$	285	57%	\$	215
Room Rental Fees	\$	300	\$	**	0%	\$	300
Sales Copy Centers	\$	17,476	\$	14,870	85%	\$	2,606
State Library Aide	\$	170,000	\$		<u>0%</u>	\$	170,000
	\$	276,179	\$	72,862	26%	\$	203,317
General Fund Operating	<u> </u>	Y2018-19 Budget	500	Y2018-19 Actual YID	% Expended	<u>Un</u>	<u>obligated</u>
Personnel	\$	3,072,973	\$	2,680,550	87%	\$	392,423
Fringes	\$	1,443,563	\$	1,224,797	85%	\$	218,766
Books/Materials		544,944	\$	494,210	91%	\$	50,734
Operating Expenses	\$ <u>\$</u> \$	847,776	\$	854,634	<u>101%</u>	\$	(6,859)
Total	\$	5,909,256	\$	5,254,192	89%	\$	655,065
Encumbrances YTD			\$	230,939			

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARIES - Special Fund Budget

Special Fund Revenue		Y2018-19 nticipated	FY2018-19 Actual YTD	<u>%</u> Recognized	<u>Un</u>	recognized
00314 - Gift to the Library	\$	105,000	\$ 103,276	98%	\$	1,724
00308 - Verizon E-Rate Grant	\$	137,500	\$ 66,074	48%	\$	71,426
00309 - Public Law Library	\$	400,000	\$ 1,561,165.00	390%	\$	(1,161,165)
00311 - Gates Foundation	\$	~ =	\$ 2000 E	0%	\$	= 1 m
00312 - RPL Foundation	\$	40,000	\$ 16,200	41%	\$	23,800
00313 - Friends of the RPL	\$	30,000	\$ 6,875	23%	\$	23,125
00000 - Grade Level Reading	\$	= =	\$ 1 1	0%	\$	9:
	\$	712,500	\$ 1,753,590	246%	\$	(1,041,090)

<u>Special Fund Expeditures</u> <u>FY18 Rollover & FY19 Receipts</u>				FY2018-19 Actual YTD	% Expended	U	<u>Inobligated</u>
00314 - Gift to the Library	\$	188,983	\$	113,066	60%	\$	<i>75,</i> 91 <i>7</i>
00308 - Verizon E-Rate Grant	\$	(34,364)	\$	16,980	-49%	\$	(51,344)
00309 - Public Law Library	\$	418,339	\$	345,456	83%	\$	72,883
Personnel	220		\$	46,606		0.04	
Fringes				12,942			
Books/Materials				283,842			
Operating Expe	enses		\$	2,067			
00311 - Gates Foundation	\$	12,576	\$		0%	\$	12,576
00312 - RPL Foundation	\$	(45,162)	\$	37,692	-83%	\$	(82,854)
00313 - Friends of the RPL	\$	47,048	\$	1 <i>7,</i> 019	<u>36%</u>	\$	30,029
	\$	587,420	\$	530,213	90%	\$	57,207
Encumbrances YTD	s	48.950					

Richmond Public Library Foundation, Friends, Groups and Individual Donations FY 2018-2019

Consent Agenda: Pending Library Board Approval - Wednesday, June 26, 2019

		Current Month				Y	nce		
Date	Donor Name	Am	10unt	Purpose/Location	Gift		Foundation	Friends	
13-Mar-19	Friends of the Richmond Public Library	\$	240.00	Graphics	\$	240.00			
	~		Ĭ	100					
			·						
	Monthly Total	S	240.00						
		N74			4.5				
	YTD Total	\$ 17,	,630.00	Year To Date Total	\$	1,430.00	\$ 16,200.00	\$.	3

Richmond Public Library

Richmond, Virginia – Starting June 15, 2019 Richmond Public Library will stop charging overdue fines to youth cardholders (0-17 years) when they return materials late.

The Fine Free program will allow youth who are Richmond Public Library cardholders to have increased access and use of the Library and its materials at any of its locations. Eliminating overdue fines for our young patrons will help remove barriers to their use of the Library.

Scott Firestine, Library Director says "The Fine Free program will help our children and teen readers keep their accounts automatically clear of fines from now on. Too often, fines penalize our most vulnerable families and individuals who can least afford them. We want to reverse this trend and get community members back into our buildings to use materials and enhance their quality of life and education. If you haven't come to the library in a while, we want you back. If you are new to Richmond, come join us."

This change applies to overdue fines only. Charges related to lost or damaged materials will continue to apply. The fine free status applies solely to Richmond Library cards issued to patrons ages 0-17. This does not apply to youth or teen materials checked out to an adult library card.

Access has a dividend for Richmond - we all benefit from a curious and engaged community. Increasing library use and increasing material circulation is a win-win for all.

Fine Free Q&A

What's the difference between fines and fees?

Fines are a daily penalty assessed for late return of library items.

Fees are replacement charges assessed for true material loss for unreturned or damaged items and may include fees resulting from collection referral. Fees are still included as part of our return policy.

Is everyone now fine free? Am I included?

Overdue fines for late returns have been eliminated for youth (0-17) and only youth at this time. Existing fines will be waived for youth 0-17. However, youth patrons who have lost or damaged materials or collection fees will need to settle their account to reinstate borrowing privileges. The easiest way to find out if they have a remaining balance is to login to the library card account at RVAlibrary.org or stop into your local branch and talk with a staff member. Please be sure to bring your photo ID or library card. At age 18 borrowers will move up to the adult card that will have overdue fines.

What happens if youth don't return their items by the due date?

Youth will be blocked from checking out more items until you return or renew items on their account.

Will I be charged anything?

Youth won't be charged overdue fines for late returns. Keep in mind though that items are considered Lost on the 30th day overdue and youth will be billed replacement fees for those items at that point.

What if the youth didn't really lose these items, can they still bring them back?

Yes! Please do so ASAP. Those replacement fees will automatically drop off the account and they'll be back to borrowing.

So, no matter how late our youth cardholders return items, they'll never be charged a fee?

Well, no. If they wait too long, their account may be referred to a collection agency. We want our stuff back so other patrons can use them, too! Accounts are referred to collections on the 45th day overdue. At that point, a non-negotiable \$10 fee is assessed to cover costs we incur pursuing collection action.

Borrowing privileges may be curtailed for youth patrons who are habitually late returning library items.

How much money did the library make from late fees?

In 2018, fine revenue for everyone (youth and adults) accounted for \$66,121 in citywide revenue. Fine revenue is returned directly to the city's general fund; it is not returned to the library. Library fine revenue accounts for less than 0.02 percent of all fines collected by the city.

How was the decision made to go fine free?

The mission of the Richmond Public Library is to inform, enrich and empower. Overdue fines have not aged well or proven to be an effective tool for materials management in libraries. Fines are a negative influencer that do not promote a positive culture of discovery and learning. We wish to join other libraries across the country that are going fine free. The decision by our Library Board of Trustees was not taken lightly, but they unanimously agreed it would be beneficial and build a better, stronger Richmond.

Outreach Library Report: Community Outreach Specialist Report Date Period: 5/14/19 through 6/14/19

Position Start Date: 5/14/19

Weekly Schedule: 20 hours/week; Monday 10am to 3pm, Wednesday 12pm to 5pm, Thursday 12pm to 5pm,

and Friday 10am to 3pm.

Staff Training:

- 5/14/19: Daily Planet Onboarding (1.5 hours)
- 5/15/19: Library Tour/Onboarding (1.5 hours)
- 5/17/19: Best Practices Conference sponsored by Homeward (8 hours)
- 5/20/19: Homeless Services Onboarding with Outreach Coordinator (1.5 hours)
- 5/23/19: Coordinated Entry Training @ Homeward (1.5 hours)
- 6/05/19: HCIS (Homeless Management Database) Training (6 hours)
- 6/07/19: Solution Providers Training @ The Healing Place (2 hours)

Data Figures:

- Contacts/engagements: <u>14</u> client engagements
- Shelter placements/referrals: 9 shelter connections
- Medical Services: 5 connections to Daily Planet Health Services
- Medicaid: 1 referral to DPHS Medicaid enrollment specialist, Client enrolled for Medicaid
- Richmond Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA): 1 connection to RBHA Case Management services

Success Story:

From the Community Outreach Specialist Rex Huff:

I met Mr. B earlier in the year at Daily Planet Health Services Medical Respite Program while he was recovering from his most recent stroke. Mr. B's stroke left him to struggle with his speech and resulted in difficulty communicating with others. As Mr. B shared his life story with me, he began to paint a picture in full color of a journey of alcoholism, human tragedy, and homelessness. He shared that he had his first stroke March of 2018 and lost everything during his hospitalization. He explained to me that he was discharged to homelessness and did not know what to do. After months of living here and there, he shared that one of the places he would seek shelter during the day was the public library on Franklin Street. He stated that it was his safe place and he could get what he needed from the surrounding neighborhood.

I re-engaged Mr. B in my new role as the Daily Planet Health Services Community Resource Specialist. Newly trained, highly motivated, and equipped with the tools to help serve Mr. B as a homeless citizen of Richmond. I began to inquire more about Mr. B's journey and patiently listen to what Mr. B felt he needed help and support with. Mr. B shared with me that he was born and raised in Richmond. At one time in his life, he was married with children. He shared that he once was a homeowner and worked for Phillip Morris as the supervisor of a contracted janitorial service company for many years.

He talked about how he never would have imagined that he would be homeless and dependent on others to help him. Mr. B, from every encounter I had with him, was always jovial and greeted you with a pleasant smile. So, when I understood his needs better, I began to connect the dots. Using Homeward's Service point networking database used by outreach workers and agencies across the City, I was able to update Mr. B's information and notate that he needed shelter and support with finding permanent affordable housing.

My data entry work of Mr. B's information on a Friday morning led to Mr. B securing a shelter bed at the Salvation Army's Men's Shelter for 30 days on a Monday morning. Mr. B continued to come to the Library, and I continued to engage him by asking how he was doing and assisting him with temporary housing searches. I was able to successfully navigate him through the Virginia Supportive Housing Application process and within less than 30 days, Mr. B shared with me that he had an appointment to complete his housing application for their waiting list.

Through these small moments of outreach, Mr. B was able to communicate his needs without judgment. Mr. B stated because of the difficulty he has with speaking "so many before you just dropped the ball because they couldn't hear my voice. Thanks, my buddy Rex!"



Page 23 of 25

Screening Jim Crow

Documentary "The American South as We Know It" explores the stories of black Americans in the Jim Crow South.

BY <u>KAREN NEWTON</u> AT <u>https://www.styleweekly.com/richmond/screening-jim-crow/Content?oid=14698101</u> Style Weekly, May 28, 2019



Welton Jones, the 1st African American firefighter to retire in the City of Raleigh, talking to the audience about his experiences during a North Carolina State Capitol building screening of "The American South as We Know It."

Welton Jones was the first black firefighter to retire in Raleigh, North Carolina. More importantly, he and his peers sued the city of Raleigh for not sending service trucks to black neighborhoods during his career and won.

Jones is just one of the black Americans interviewed by Frederick Murphy for his documentary "The American South as We Know It," screening at the main branch of the Richmond library. The award-winning film explores the lives and experiences of blacks during the Jim Crow era,

recalling incidents during a time of sustained racial tension.

The project came to life when Murphy began collecting oral histories from blacks with memories of life under Jim Crow laws, but he soon realized that given the visual nature of the 21st century world, a documentary had the potential to reach more people. "I was finally coming to grips with all of the propaganda taught in the school system — and society as a whole — about the history of people of African descent," he says.

To find people to interview, Murphy Googled "civil rights activists in Mississippi" and eventually landed on the name Hermon Johnson Sr. in Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Mound Bayou was notable for having been founded by formerly enslaved people as an independent black community in 1887. After his first interview with Johnson, Murphy put a few snippets of the interview online and soon people were providing him the names of others worth speaking to.

Because Murphy had never made a film before, he enlisted the assistance of a young crew from a local film company called Nova Initia Productions, founded by Andrew Smith, a recent graduate of Johnson C. Smith University. Traveling through Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama and Virginia, the crew set out for a year and a half to document those who were eager to contribute to a comprehensive narrative of what life was like for blacks in the South.

Murphy was convinced that gathering the stories was important because history often repeats itself.

"The reality is, Jim Crow in its entirety never left," Murphy explains. "It's such a fine-oiled machine that it's found a way of manipulating itself to appear different generation after generation. Some of the ways people of color are being treated now is a direct reflection of then."

He cites actions such as over-patrolling neighborhoods, voter intimidation, predatory lending, red-lining and school zoning as prime examples of oppressive acts that continue to occur. "Same script, different cast, ya dig?" Murphy continues. "People have to understand what it meant historically so they can actually feel empowered enough now to name it and advocate against it." Library and community services manager Natalie Draper decided to include the documentary in the library's Books for a Better World series, a local author series that focuses on social justice, history, healing and memory.

"We like to include a few documentaries in the series and this one is especially relevant to the themes we've been exploring," Draper says. "The series invites the public to engage in a conversation with the author, and with each other, about their work."

As a licensed professional counselor, Murphy understands the importance of providing people a safe space to vent, discuss and process their feelings after watching such an emotional film. But it's also important to him that audiences finally learn about the people who brought about change in their local communities by fighting for civil rights.

"We often get caught up on big names during the Civil Rights era, forgetting about the people who were in our own towns," he says. "My hope is to keep sparking interest in the underdogs of this beautiful thing called black history."

Often after the talk backs, he's approached by those seeking to discuss their personal stories and how historical trauma still affects them today.

"Some individuals haven't talked about these things in decades," he explains. Sometimes the reason for their silence is as simple as no one has ever asked them.

Richmond figures into the documentary because of its pivotal location during the Civil War. During Murphy's genealogy research, he was able to identify an enslaved grandmother and enslaved uncle who took the surname Keesee and were sold from Richmond to a Tennessee slaveholder. Negro League Hall of Famer Larry LeGrande from Roanoke is shown in the film and provided much information about Roanoke's Jim Crow days.

As encouraging as the election of Barrack Obama was, Murphy offers a reminder that Obama was admired much the way black office holders were during Reconstruction: as a beacon of hope.

"But one must understand this country was built on a hierarchal system and that system is one that ultimately defines the outcome of economic mobility, equal rights and equity," Murphy explains. His own optimism is based on seeing blacks taking matter in their own hands by becoming entrepreneurs.

"When we become less dependent on someone's corporation paying us, the more empowered and self-sufficient we become to create new legacies," Murphy says. "Just as our ancestors did prior to integration."

"The American South as We Know It" screens Sunday, June 9, at 2 p.m. at the main Richmond Library, 101 E. Franklin St, 646-7223