



*Inspiring and nurturing a vibrant community through exceptional library services.*

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# WRL NEWS

*April - June 2024*

Welcome to the latest edition of WRL's quarterly newsletter! I'm thrilled to be selected as the new library director by the WRL Board of Trustees and look forward to continuing WRL's tradition of outstanding community service.

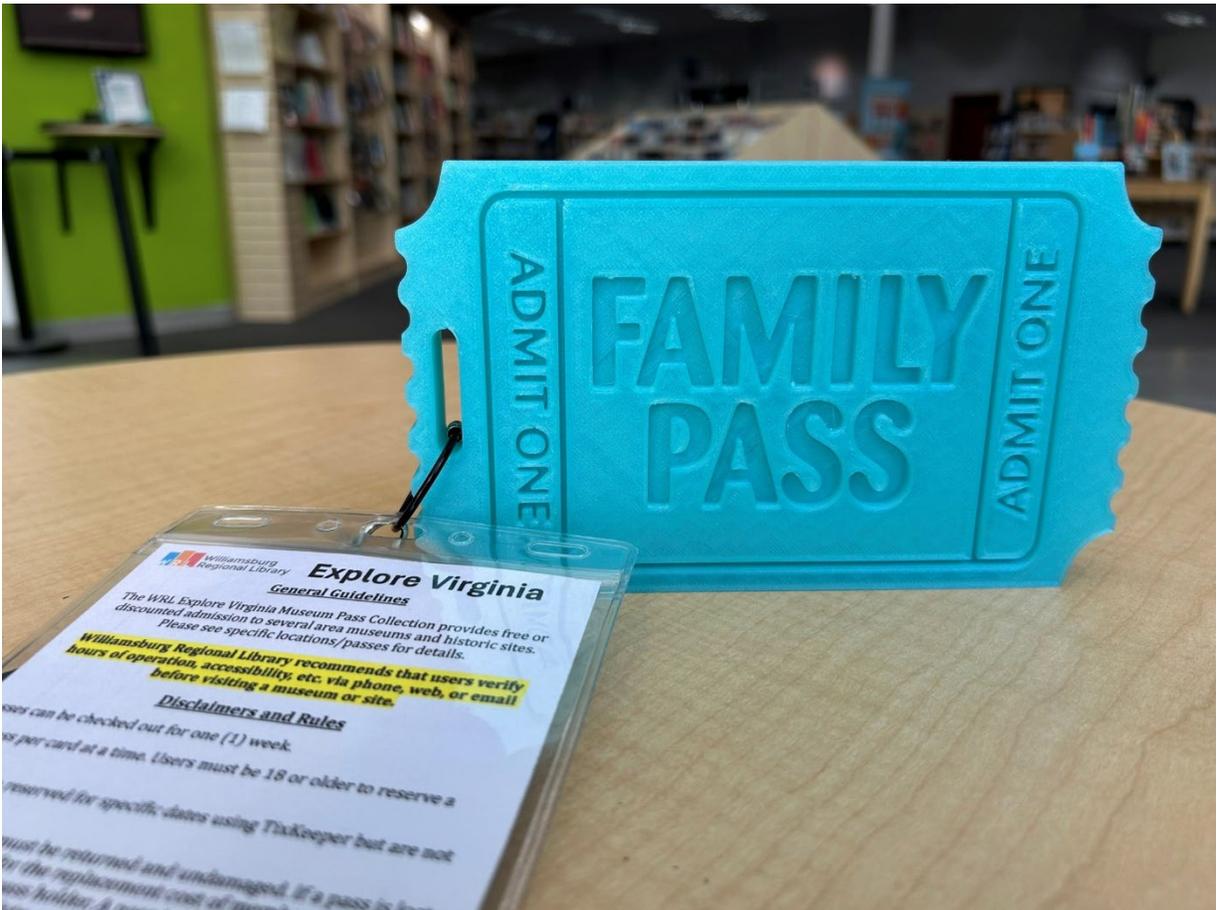
In April, WRL launched the Explore Virginia collection, offering free and discounted admission to museums, historic sites, and experiences throughout Virginia, including Mount Vernon and the Science Museum of Virginia. Dive into the full story below to discover all the amazing places you can explore.

Are you ready to unleash your inner podcaster or music star? The WRL Recording Studio at the James City County Library opened in June, providing a state-of-the-art space for all your creative projects. Find out how to reserve your spot and get started in the story below.

Looking ahead, WRL is collaborating with local jurisdictions on essential building and maintenance projects, including the construction of a new Williamsburg Library facility. The City of Williamsburg is currently soliciting proposals for the design and construction of this new library. This eagerly awaited development promises to significantly enhance our service to the community in the coming years. Stay tuned for more exciting updates from WRL!

- Sandy Towers, Library Director

## Explore Virginia



**“WRL hopes to provide more opportunities for library users to learn from and engage with the rich cultural experiences that museums have to offer.”**  
- Sandy Towers, Library Director

If you love visiting museums, WRL has a new offering you're sure to enjoy! The Explore Virginia collection offers passes to ten popular Virginia museums including George Washington's Mount Vernon, the Science Museum of Virginia, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, the six historic sites of Preservation Virginia, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, and more. WRL is excited to connect our community with these fascinating cultural and historical destinations across Virginia. Keep an eye out for more exciting locations being added to the collection soon! Start planning your visits now by checking out all the available locations at [wrl.org/explore-virginia](http://wrl.org/explore-virginia).

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## Outstanding Service for Neurodiverse Users

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In April, WRL received the Outstanding Service Innovation award from the Virginia Public Library Director's Association for its expanded offerings for neurodiverse users. The award recognized the library's programs, services, and accessibility features like a custom-built sensory corner in the Kiwanis Kids Idea Studio in the James City County Library and Quiet Time for the Spectrum, a monthly program for users to come to the library before it opens for a less stimulating experience. Users also enjoyed more services and programs for neurodiverse users including sensory toys available for checkout from the popular Learning to Go collection, sensory-friendly movie showings, and the Next Chapter Book Club, a book group for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (Pictured above is Youth Services librarian Linda Niedzwick who helped spearhead these efforts in the library.) *Special thanks to the **Friends of WRL**; the Kiwanis Club of Colonial Capital; the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg; the Kiwanis Club of Toano; and Shoofly Dairy Bar for their generous support for the sensory corner.*

## New Recording Studio

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**“The recording studio reflects our commitment to offer diverse resources that support the creative and professional work of library users.” - Sandy Towers, Interim Library Director**

Take your content creation to the next level in the new recording studio at the James City County Library! The studio opened in June as a special space for podcasting, virtual meetings, and other sound-recording needs. Users enjoy a pristine audio environment with acoustic treatment and cutting-edge technology including Shure microphones, high-quality headphones, a nine-channel podcast production mixer, and Audacity multi-track audio editing software on a dedicated laptop. The recording studio is available by reservation only. Book your slot today to start creating outstanding content at [wrl.org/create](http://wrl.org/create). *Special thanks to the [Friends of WRL](#) for funding this project.*

## Culinary Literacy Classes

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This spring, the Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL) proudly launched its inaugural series of culinary literacy classes at the Abram Frink Jr. Community Center, generously supported by the [Friends of WRL](#) and Sentara Health. These classes focused on several aspects of culinary literacy and were led by instructors including dietitians from Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center, a retired chef from Colonial Williamsburg, and members of WRL staff. Attendees enjoyed learning about topics that related to healthy living like plant-based diets, home gardening, following recipes, and meal planning and preparation.

Those who completed all six classes received a certificate to celebrate their achievement, and goodie bags from James City County to take home. Exciting news for the young chefs in your family—this summer, WRL is offering a series of culinary literacy classes designed just for kids. Discover why WRL continues to be recognized as an award-winning library!

## Want More?

Follow us on social media for all the latest happenings.



### **Williamsburg Regional Library**

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