

November 4, 2010

Martins Ferry Public Library Continues Fundraising for Grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

The Martins Ferry Public Library was selected by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for a matching grant to replace patron computers. The first year part of the grant is finished and new computers were installed at Bridgeport, Shadyside, Powhatan Point, Bethesda, Flushing and the Main Library in Martins Ferry. The second year grant totals \$36,400 with a 50% match of \$18,200. The second year of the grant will enable the library to purchase additional computers as specified by the grant and continue to maintain and upgrade the computers at all locations. The library has placed donation jars at all locations to help raise money for the second year match from the local communities in accordance with the wishes of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The foundation's Opportunity Online hardware grant program is designed to help the library provide free access to computers for library patrons long into the future. So far the library has received over \$10,200 in donations but still needs \$8,000.00 more to match the grant. The library wishes to send out a special thank you to all those who have donated to this fund. All the monies from all locations have added up to a significant amount that is helping us reach this goal! Thank you to everyone who has helped with fund raisers in the different branches! To complete this goal, the library has increased the time to donate to the library through December. Check the web site to see the specific amounts donated by branch location.

All locations are wireless, and all have new printers with color, and miscellaneous hardware to support the new equipment. New software including Windows Office 7 is available for use.

Due to the state budget cuts, state funding for the library has been decreased, and does not look likely to improve during the next biennium. In fact, it could decrease if the state income tax is eliminated. Reduced hours and staffing have presented difficulties in every location. To receive this grant means that the library can still offer quality computer service at all locations to keep the digital divide away from our area.

Check the Martin Ferry Public Library's web page at mfpl.org. Donations to the library are tax deductible; and if you wish to donate to this project, you may use Paypal on the web page, give donations to your local branch, or send a check to the library at P.O. Box 130, Martins Ferry. Call the library at 633-0314 for additional information. Please help us reach our goal!