

Have you been wanting to brush up on your computer skills? Would you like some help learning how to navigate the internet? If so, you are in luck because Hastings Memorial Library is partnering with Mid-Plains Community College to offer computer classes in the month of December. On Dec. 8 the library will host a class on Computer Basics. This will be followed by a class on Internet Basics on Dec. 15. Both sessions will last approximately 2-3 hours and are free of charge. Space is limited so please call the library today at (308) 352-4894 to reserve a spot.

These classes are the result of a partnership between Mid-Plains Community College and the Nebraska Library Commission and have been made possible through a combination of federal and grant funds. This is the same funding source that has provided new computer equipment for the library over the past couple of years.

The U.S. Department of Commerce awarded the Library Commission a \$2,416,403 grant to fund Nebraska's public computer center project, Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities. The three-year project is designed to expand broadband capacity; upgrade public computing resources in libraries; and advance access to employment, learning, health information, and E-Government services.

The Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, provides funding to expand broadband access and adoption in communities across the U.S.

In addition to the federal grant, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will provide \$1,251,786 in matching funds, including a grant and technical assistance to support the project. The total project budget is \$3,668,189. Funding for this Kickoff launch meeting was provided by Connected Nation through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Every day libraries serve people who use public access computers to find jobs and fill out job applications. Individuals are looking for authoritative medical information for themselves and their family members. They are using state government services (E-Government) to apply for various programs, gain access to court documents and legal assistance, etc.

Hastings Memorial Library's computer center is open to the public during regular library hours. Those with questions are encouraged to stop by the library at 505 Central Avenue in Grant or call (308) 352-4894.