

EXHIBIT 4  
DATE 1/22/13  
HB 203

## FLATHEAD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

247 First Avenue East • Kalispell, Montana 59901  
(406) 758-5820 • Fax (406) 758-5868

Rep. Duane Ankney, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

22 January 2013

Dear Representative Ankney and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

My name is Kim Crowley and I am the Director of the Flathead County Library System as well as the immediate Past-president of the Montana Library Association. I am writing today in favor of HB 203 to revise direct State aid to libraries.

In 2010 the national average revenue per capita for public libraries (from all sources) that serve a population of 50,000 – 100,000 was \$48.01. The average per capita revenue for all public libraries in Montana was \$23.40 at that time. For Flathead County in FY 2012 our per capita revenue was \$14.55 (from all sources), less than 1/3 of the national average and well below the Montana average. Flathead County Library System serves the 90,928 residents of this large county from a Main Library in Kalispell and branches in Bigfork, Columbia Falls, and Marion.

The increase in per capita state aid would allow us to enhance service to the residents of the Flathead. We are currently raising private funding for a new library in Columbia Falls where our business has increase 56% over the past five years. Our Main Library sees an average of 750 people per day walk through the door. We hope to put “maker-spaces” in both the Main Library in Kalispell and at a new Columbia Falls branch. Maker-spaces include do-it-yourself engineering design projects, crafts, science, technology, engineering and math projects, 3-D printers, and basic electronics and design. With the help of maker-mentors, youth and adults can create and innovate using simple tools provided by the library. The library has always contributed to local economic development, but the maker-spaces would increase that in a big way, allowing citizen entrepreneurs to invent and build right here at the library.

Dollars invested in libraries have a huge return. Other states claim that for every dollar invested in libraries the return is anywhere from \$4.48 (South Carolina) to \$6.54 (Florida). I urge you to vote in favor of HB 203 to increase direct state aid to Montana’s Public Libraries. In these tough economic times our libraries are busier than ever but funding has not increased. The overall state investment of \$494,707 (an increase of less than \$392,000) will garner a huge return by giving all Montanans better opportunities to succeed.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this measure,

  
Kim Crowley

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS  
TESTIMONY, JANUARY 22, 2013**

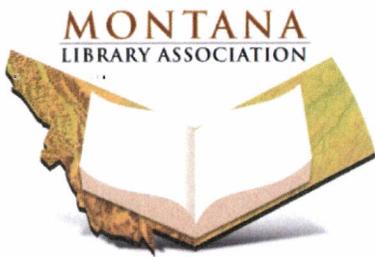
Chairman Ankney and Members of the Committee:

I am Cheryl Hester, Director of Rosebud County Library in Forsyth, which serves both Rosebud and Treasure Counties. I also have been very active in positions which include communicating with libraries of all sizes in counties with varied economic and population situations and advocating for those with the most needs. When I testify, I am including input from library directors in counties like McCone, Prairie, Petroleum, Powder River and Garfield Counties, whose budgets barely cover limited staff hours, utilities, some supplies, and limited new materials.

If I were a member of your committee, I would definitely be asking this question: What would increased State Aid funds be used for?

- First, I know that education is a priority for our Governor and this legislature. Libraries are the first resource for parents for Early Childhood Literacy, which has been linked strongly to school and professional success. Equipment and supplies for programs for babies and young children definitely can come from State Aid, and of course for Summer Reading Programs, teen programs, and on up.
- Second, libraries are working on outreach for people of all ages with special needs. Such items as handicapped accessible computers and iPads with apps for special needs all the way from coordination challenges to poor eyesight to autism are items which can come from State Aid. In our library we discovered that the iPad with apps for teens with educational challenges is also popular with elderly patrons who prefer the “soft touch” to clicking and manipulating a mouse.
- Third, the need for public access computer areas for job searching, on-line accounts, and other essentials for adults is growing. Many small libraries are in heavy need of computer furniture, computers, peripherals, and other items which can come from State Aid.
- Fourth, furniture such as bookcases, tables, chairs, and children’s furniture have long been items which State Aid can cover.
- Fifth, many librarians including myself are responding to the growing social and educational gathering needs of our patrons, something noted in recent Rosebud County long-range planning as in other counties. Special program and display items, all the way from crafts materials and cabinets to projectors, microphones, and large screen TV’s can come from State Aid and can enhance the very important public outreach function of libraries.
- All of these items are often not feasible in the county-, city-, or district-provided budgets of public libraries but can be made possible by an increase in per capita/per square mile State Aid for Montana libraries.

Thank you for your consideration.



Supporting Montana's libraries  
from the mountains to the prairies

## LIBRARY STATE AID PER CAPITA/PER SQUARE MILE

Judy Hart, MLA Government Affairs  
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Your Montana public libraries are in critical need of an increase in state aid funding. Funding for libraries at the federal, state and local level has declined, yet demand for library services continues to rise. The per capita, per square mile funding is the **only source of state aid** that local libraries can use to address the individual needs of their libraries, whatever they may be.

Following are responses from Montana libraries that reflect their most pressing needs and how additional state aid funds would be applied in their community.

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The Joliet Public Library is situated in a small rural community and has seen an incredible increase in patrons and usage over the past 5 years. The additional funding that would result if HB203 were passed would be a welcome increase to our yearly budget and could be best used by this facility in the following ways:

- JPL would update & streamline its website to better allow our rural patrons to better access our collection via the internet to reserve, renew & place holds on library materials.
- Add additional staffing to assist with our ever-increasing after school student book clubs.
- Extend library hours during the summer months

Debbie Hronek, Director  
Joliet Public Library  
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In terms of Per Capita/Per Square Mile, our library previously used these monies for our OCLC subscription cost. Since we became an independent library district, this cost is now assumed by our General Fund so I can repurpose Per Capita/Per Square Mile monies for enhancement such as online tools. This year we used it for our HeritageQuest/Ancestry.com subscription and had enough left over to purchase World Book online. Since the beginning HeritageQuest was paid

with private monies and/or donations. With our change this year, we were able to add Ancestry.com and World Book online. Increased Per Capita/Per Square Mile revenue would help us to continue to provide the three current online subscriptions we have in place and add additional ones such as Novelist, etc. –

Marilyn Trosper  
North Lake County Public Library District  
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406-883-8225  
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The additional funds would benefit the Havre-Hill County Library by being able to:

- purchase books, DVDs, etc. to expand and update our collection
- replace, repair and update our computers for public access
- purchase a higher speed internet connection to be more user friendly for patrons and staff and to increase efficiency of time
- purchase newer technology such as Kindle, Nook, iPad, etc. to stay current with technology to better serve our patrons & train staff to utilize this technology and assist patrons in the use of the technology

Book budgets have decreased over the past years and book prices continue to increase so our buying power is decreasing. We constantly struggle to maintain a diverse collection to meet our patron needs.

Our technology equipment is quickly becoming outdated and in need of more servicing. We are behind on the newest technology and how to use it due to lack of funds.

Maintenance and repair of the library facilities and equipment, utilities and supplies take larger amounts from our budget, as well.

We have a small staff who do amazingly well helping our patrons and providing the services they need. However, they need the resources to provide changing needs in technology, print and audio/visual media. Additional funding is critical to meet these needs.

Betty Thompson  
Havre-Hill County Library Director  
402 3<sup>rd</sup> St  
Havre, MT 59501

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[library@havrehill.org](mailto:library@havrehill.org)

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We plan to apply extra monies to supplement our summer reading program with outside speakers, movie licensing, and purchase of craft material.

We have a strong summer reading program that enables our children to spend time in the library one afternoon each week over a 6-8 week period in the summer months at a cost of \$25-35 per child. Parents and children look forward to the library's summer reading program which keeps children engaged in reading and being together over the summer months.

Debbie Benedict  
Meagher County City Library  
15 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SE  
P O Box S  
White Sulphur Springs, MT 59645  
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The passage of House Bill 203 (HB203) would provide critical funds to the Great Falls Public Library. We would see an additional \$31,829.43.

Libraries are essential components of healthy communities. The library supports self-directed personal growth and development, recreational reading and quality of life through the enjoyment of books and provision of information resources. Several recent studies have shown the economic and cultural impact of healthy public libraries. Funding from HB203 would allow the Great Falls Public Library to better meet three critical community needs.

Funding Priority #1: Increase broadband access (\$12,000 - \$15,000/year)

Our current broadband is inadequate to meet demand. We are the only resource in our area to provide free access to public computers and the Internet. Our public computer connections experience frequent slow-downs because they cannot carry the demand. Last year our public computers provided over 63,000 patron sessions. We are experiencing increases both in the number of patrons using our public computers and the amount of data being downloaded on our system. As websites get more sophisticated, they provide more information in more formats (video, audio, pictures) and that requires more bandwidth. Our wi-fi connections have been experiencing even more slow-downs and outages than our hard-line computers. We now provide check-outs of laptops for use in the library and we continue to experience more and more patron use. At any given time, we have patrons accessing our wi-fi with smart phones, laptops, tablets, iPads and more. This funding would allow us to expand our broadband so that the users of our public computers and our wi-fi will experience excellent service.

Funding Priority #2: Increase access to print materials (\$8,000 - \$10,000)

In a recent community needs assessment, we gathered information from across our community. One of the leading themes of the feedback was “more books, more CD’s and more DVD’s.” Our community appreciates the library and views it as an essential community asset, but wants more materials. As our budget remains flat and prices of books, CD’s, and magazine subscriptions increase, we are able to provide fewer titles. An increase in our materials budget would allow us to keep up with demand.

Funding Priority #3: Increase access to electronic materials (\$8,000 - \$10,000)

Great Falls Public Library participates in the statewide consortium MontanaLibrary2Go. MontanaLibrary2Go is a collaborative project that offers patrons from participating Montana libraries in communities across the state a shared collection of downloadable audio books and eBooks. With support from the Montana State Library, the consortium contracts with Overdrive, a leading provider of digital books, to host the MontanaLibrary2Go website and to provide the appropriate software and digital content for Montana library patrons. Each participating library receives training and technical assistance so that patrons can receive the best service. Library patrons can use any internet connection to find books on the MontanaLibrary2Go website, use their library card to check them out and then download them. Once the digital content is downloaded to a personal computer, it can be transferred to a variety of personal devices such as iPods or MP3 players for audio content and the Sony Reader, Kindle, iPad, Nook or other device for eBook content.

While, libraries have been building their print collections for years, the MontanaLibrary2Go digital collection has just started. The consortium is struggling to adequately meet the demand for popular titles and to meet the diverse needs and interests of our community. Last month MontanaLibrary2Go, received suggestions for purchasing titles costing over \$20,000, but we have a purchasing budget of only \$6,116.26. If each library could contribute more to the MontanaLibrary2Go content purchasing, we could better meet the needs of all of our patrons.

Susie McIntyre on behalf of Kathy Mora, Director  
Great Falls Public Library  
301 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North  
Great Falls, MT 59401  
406-453-0349  
[kmora@greatfallslibrary.org](mailto:kmora@greatfallslibrary.org)

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The Clancy Library would use the additional state aide monies to replace our 3 aged (ranging in years from 5-10 yrs) public access computers in the first 3 years. Then we would use the money to completely pay for MML2Go and maybe some tech tools for our patrons to check out and become familiar with like tablets and e-readers.

Carly Delsigne, Director  
North Jefferson County Library District  
3 North Main St  
Clancy, MT 59634  
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[clancylibrary@bresnan.net](mailto:clancylibrary@bresnan.net)

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Basically for Ronan City Library, it will help keep our doors open. Our budget has been cut so much over the years that we are on the verge of closing if our Library District endeavor does not work out. February 6th is our Public Hearing with the County Commissioners and then, hopefully, it will go to ballot. If this does not pass, more state aid would ease the burden of fundraising to keep our doors open. If the District does pass, this money could supplement our materials budget, help with children's programming, allow us to offer more adult programming, the possibilities are endless, but it would definitely help improve our services to our community.

Michelle Fenger  
Library Director  
Ronan City Library  
203 Main St SW  
Ronan, MT 59864  
(406) 676-3682  
[ronancitylibrary@gmail.com](mailto:ronancitylibrary@gmail.com)

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The proposed increase in Per Capita/Per Sq. miles funding would allow us (Big Horn County Public Library) to take a stronger position in promoting wireless access. We currently have good wireless access in our building but not in our community. The extra funds would help us move to **Industrial strength wireless to meet the changing needs and expectations of our patrons and citizens.**

Eric G. Halverson, Librarian  
Big Horn County Public Library  
419 North Custer Avenue  
Hardin, MT 59034

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I use a great portion of that money for our summer reading program. We do not have very many kids (around 12-15) and I usually buy them all something special at the end of the program - one year book bags with our library name, one year caps - one year mugs so any increase would be welcome to bring the kids into the library. I have used it to purchase books for summer reading also.

Emmie Loberg, Director  
George McCone Memorial County Library  
PO Box 49  
Circle MT 59215  
406-485-2350  
mcl@midrivers.com

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The Darby Community Public Library relies on governmental revenues, grants, private donations and contributions to continue our service to the community. This increase in state aid supplies a crucial need for our library as we struggle to continue community services at the present level. We currently receive only 70 % of our revenue from governmental sources. With a yearly operating budget of less than \$100,000 and a staff of two FTE, we persistently struggle to provide access, materials, information, and educational programs for a population of 4000 residents.

Wendy Campbell  
Library Director  
Darby Community Public Library

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Extra funds would be used to help defray the cost of Montana Library2Go and Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) Our patrons love that they can log on at home and download e-books and audios. We also have a download station that gets quite a bit of usage. Being in MSC and the 4 Rivers Sharing Group gives our patrons about 300,000 items to choose from. Here the convenience of being able to place holds, renew material from home is a big plus. We are all about improved service for our patrons.

Kathleen Knack  
Madison Valley Public Library  
PO Box 178/ 210 E Main St.  
Ennis MT 59729  
Phone: [406-682-7244](tel:406-682-7244)  
Fax: [406-682-7669](tel:406-682-7669)  
[ennislib@3rivers.net](mailto:ennislib@3rivers.net)

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Having that additional money would mean a lot for our small budget. Our critical needs right now are

- building maintenance and upgrades.
- improving staff salaries
- hoping to expand hours (which also means additional hours for current staff or new part-time staff positions).

The additional money would most likely assist with the building maintenance and upgrades that we have continually put off. Our FOL group has some money ready to use for a larger project, so we are investigating possibilities. We are working to get a quote from our service provider for an HVAC upgrade which is desperately needed. (When the building was expanded in 2005 a new HVAC system was put in, but just tied into the old system including the old boiler in the Carnegie part of the building. After the fact, it was realized that this was a horrible mistake. Heating and cooling are a constant problem for us.) Another thing we are looking into is whether it is possible to reallocate space in the library to better use what little we have (especially for storage and staff workspace which are both woefully inadequate). This would involve some renovation, but the extent of this potential project has not yet been determined.

On a smaller level (cost-wise), we would like to have more outreach services, especially to shut-ins and care facilities. Additional funding such as this might really make it do-able!

Tammy Brawn  
Livingston-Park County Public Library  
228 West Callender Street  
Livingston, MT 59047-2618  
Library Phone (406) 222-0862  
Fax (406) 222-6522  
E-mail Address [tammy@livingstonpubliclibrary.org](mailto:tammy@livingstonpubliclibrary.org)

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Twin Bridges Public Library has a need for consistent funds to hire an assistant. This money will not fill that need, but it will provide \$300 dollars that will pay occasional substitute librarian salary.

Betty Humbert, Library Director  
Twin Bridges Public Library  
Twin Bridges, MT 59754  
[twin@3rivers.net](mailto:twin@3rivers.net)

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The Prairie County Library would like to use our funds for postage for ILL since those continue to be an important service to our library patrons. We would like to see some funding for a courier service if it could be better utilized in Eastern Montana. We would also like to see more content added to MontanaLibrary2Go. Our patrons are just now discovering this service and they are extremely excited to use it. As with any small library in Montana, even small amounts of funding have huge rewards in our small communities.

Rolane Christofferson  
Prairie County Library  
Box 275  
Terry, MT 59349  
(406) 635-5546  
[rolane@midrivers.com](mailto:rolane@midrivers.com)

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The Children's books and the Juvenile sections are the largest needs we have. These areas need to be updated extensively. Teaching a child to become interested in reading at this age is vital for future success.

Jackie Strandell  
Wedsworth Memorial Library  
13 N Front St  
Cascade, MT  
406-468-2848  
[wedsworth.library@gmail.com](mailto:wedsworth.library@gmail.com)

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I can tell you that any additional funding my library receives will most likely go toward an outreach program that I'm trying to get started here. It's called the North Valley Storyline, and it's very similar to Marilyn Trosper's (North Lake County Library in Polson) Story Shuttle. Following is a proposal that I sent to a local car dealership with a request for a donation of a vehicle. Feel free to use the information in the proposal any way you see fit.

#### **North Valley Storyline**

The *North Valley Storyline* is an early literacy outreach initiative by the North Valley Public Library. *Storyline* will bring library services right to the front doors of child care centers in Stevensville, Lone Rock and Florence. A library staff person will drive a van to each child care center on a weekly basis to read a story to the children and engage them in a fun and enriching educational activity. We will provide a tub containing books, puppets and toys for the child care provider to use while presenting their own storytimes between *Storyline* visits. Additionally, we will leave a bag of books for the children to borrow and enjoy. The process repeats once a

week, with the library staff person switching out storytime tubs and book bags during each visit. *Storyline* will also act somewhat like a bookmobile, picking up and delivering library materials to two convenient locations on the edges of our service area. This will increase use of library materials and save residents who live in outlying areas a trip into Stevensville. Further, the *Storyline* may be able to provide a pick-up and delivery service directly to homebound residents in our district.

Several child care providers in our service area have expressed interest in bringing the children they care for to the library for storytimes and special events. Unfortunately, due to the high cost of insurance, vehicles and car seats, they are not able to safely transport groups of children from their businesses to the library. Lack of transportation prohibits many children from important library experiences, which are especially impactful on toddlers and preschoolers. This age group is at significant risk of not being "reading ready" unless given enriching language and literacy learning tools. Research shows that children need wide exposure to high-quality books of various topics and perspectives in order to acquire literacy skills. Child care centers often do not have the ability to continually purchase new learning materials. The library can facilitate effective dissemination of high-quality books, toys and activities to toddlers and preschoolers in our community through the *Storyline* program.

Many of the people who reside within our library district live and work on the outer edges of the service area. This creates a disadvantage for patrons who cannot easily drop off and pick up library materials. The elderly, disabled, single parent households and those unable to drive in winter weather are impacted by late fees, inadequate access to materials and even a lack of knowledge of the library. A mobile library service such as *Storyline* will positively impact those in the community who have limited access to the bricks-and-mortar library.

North Valley Public Library strives to be an exemplar for early childhood education by acting as a resource as well as providing outreach to the community. The *Storyline* is a perfect combination of the two, physically going out into the community to provide children with early literacy resources and to foster the love of books and learning. The *Storyline* will increase partnerships with fellow early childhood educators. This alliance will bring increased awareness of the importance of literacy development as well as the resources available to parents and the community.

Providing a mobile service to the outlying service area will make our services more convenient and easier to use. And by bringing library services to those who are physically unable to come to us, the *Storyline* van will fulfill the obligation of a library to provide equal access of information to the entire community. Driving a van full of books around to the residents of our community will have tremendous positive impacts on everyone involved.

Desiree Dramstad, Director  
North Valley Public Library  
208 Main Street  
Stevensville, MT 59870  
406-777-5061

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Here in Hot Springs we would like to use the additional funds for Montana Library-2-Go - a service we are currently not able to utilize due to insufficient funding. That being said - I would have to clarify that we would only use the additional funds if we were open! Our budget is so tight that the reality of possibly having to close our doors is always in the back of our minds. Last year we operated 5 days a week on just under \$30,000.

Preston Hot Springs Town-County Library  
Kimberly Brooks, Director  
203 East Main  
PO Box 850  
Hot Springs, MT 59845  
(406) 741-3491  
[hslibrar@hotspringsmt.net](mailto:hslibrar@hotspringsmt.net)

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Where do I start? We have NO technology budget to upgrade, maintain or expand technology in our library. These funds could be allocated to help our struggling library meet today's needs!

Gale Bacon, Director  
Belgrade Community Library  
106 N Broadway St  
Belgrade, MT 59714  
406-388-4346  
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We could probably use the money to join Partners for the Montana Shared Catalog (pending Board approval, of course), and we are currently having to drop our subscription to the Wall Street Journal because of expense. This would allow us to continue to offer a national newspaper to our patrons.

Sarah Milligan, Director  
Stillwater County Library  
27 N 4<sup>th</sup> St  
Columbus, MT 59019  
406-322-5009  
[slibrary@mtlib.org](mailto:slibrary@mtlib.org)

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We would use the extra money to add services to the public. There are so many new services offered by libraries by we are maxed out on funding and we would be able to offer some of those new services if we had extra funding.

Honore Bray, Director  
Missoula Public Library  
301 E. Main Street  
Missoula MT 59802  
[hbray@missoula.lib.mt.us](mailto:hbray@missoula.lib.mt.us)  
406-258-3860

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Additional state aid funding for the Lewis & Clark Library would be applied directly to our branch libraries to support and help sustain outreach throughout Lewis & Clark County, serving a geographic area of just under 3,500 square miles. This includes our new mobile branch that brings library services and technology directly to our users in rural areas such as Canyon Creek, Canyon Ferry, and Wolf Creek, the Milford Hutterite Colony, where young adults, particularly young women, who have already completed their 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, continue to have access to books, educational materials and a link to life-long learning; to assisted living and nursing home facilities; to the county detention center. Access to computers and training for veterans to access the online My Healthy Vet Program, where they can enter VA prescription refill requests; view VA wellness reminders, and connect with their primary care provide via e-mail.

Judy Hart, Director  
Lewis & Clark Library  
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It is our responsibility to serve the entire County. It has been our goal to improve the services we offer to our unincorporated communities- We have stations in Cameron, Harrison, and Pony. Cardwell needs a station. Alder was just added in early December. The rural patrons that these stations now serve use it extensively- we need new materials to keep up with demand. Our Harrison and Pony stations need Internet connection ability. This would give non computer owners the ability to download e-books, turn in unemployment forms etc. We have saved an extra computer and laptop that we wish to find a home location for and this could be our chance. The two communities would have the access to use them as the wireless capability is already there. Our County has a very large service area inside this area. This extra funding we allow us to reach our goal.

Joanne VanDeRiet, Director - Thompson-Hickman Madison County Library  
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