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Laramie County Library System Awarded Grant to Extend WiFi Access in Rural Branches

Laramie County Library System was awarded the Public Library Association and Microsoft Corporation's "Public WiFi Access Micro Grant." The grant was created to provide libraries in rural localities with the needed hardware to expand WiFi access on or near library grounds. Laramie County Library System's IT team recently installed the new hotspots in both the Burns and Pine Bluffs branches.

The WiFi access at the Burns Branch Library now extends into the park across the street, while WiFi access at the Pine Bluffs Branch Library now extends across the street and down the block from the building. The WiFi is available 24/7, is free to use, and does not require a library card or account to access. Laramie County Library System encourages anyone who needs WiFi to utilize the service, whether they access it from within the building during open hours, from their vehicles, or from the surrounding access area.

Laramie County Library System recognizes the importance of internet access, especially during a global pandemic where many work and school-related activities have moved online. Executive Director and County Librarian Carey Hartmann said, "The COVID-19-related problem for our citizens who do not have internet, or who have only a smartphone, is that many of our parents, students, employees, and job seekers were at a huge disadvantage when schools, colleges, job applications, and work went online and libraries closed. We are constantly working to find ways in which to help alleviate this problem, and expanding WiFi access in our rural branches was a big step."

The new WiFi enables Laramie County Library System to provide internet access whether or not the organization's facilities are open, better preparing the library for future closures such as the one brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The expansion and improvement of the Burns and Pine Bluffs Branches' WiFi are all part of the library's mission to "serve the people of Laramie County by encouraging and supporting lifelong learning and adventure."

Contact

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