

## Wireless Internet Access at Hope Branch Library

The Hope library has just set up a wireless system, and users can bring laptops into the library and use the internet anywhere in the building.

It's becoming a common sight to see a sign in a truck stop, coffee shop, or other destination that offers "Free Wi-Fi Access". Those places are offering a wireless internet connection. A signal is broadcast throughout that building, and if a laptop receives that signal, it is connected to the internet through that signal. This allows laptop users to use the provided internet connection as if they were plugged into the wall. Now the library offers that service, too.

One of the disadvantages of living in and around a small community like Hope is internet access. It's expensive, and in many cases, the best available option is dial-up access.

Increasingly, web designers create internet sites assuming that the majority of users have high speed access. The sites sparkle with video clips, animation, and large graphics. They look good, but they take a long time to load. That makes the problem of dial up access even worse, making the slow connection seem even slower. In short, we are being left behind in the technological age.

A recent survey shows that 39% of internet users own a laptop, and the vast majority of those machines are capable of using a wireless signal. With this new service, we are now able to give those who do own these machines an easier, cheaper connection to the internet than they now have.

*Dave Miller is Supervisor of Hope Branch Library, Bartholomew County Publix Library*