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Cobb County News and Notes

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Chattahoochee Valley news and notes

Mildred L. Terry Public Library, a branch of the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries, has more than doubled the amount of computers at its branch - significantly expanding residents' access to the Internet - thanks to a \$200,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

With Knight Foundation support, the Mildred L. Terry Public Library has been able to create a "community center" environment where patrons have access to the Internet and an ever-growing range of activities and applications. "The communities served by the Mildred Terry Public Library have already benefited greatly from the new technology," says Claudya Muller, director of the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries. "In addition to helping individual library users, local businesses have been taking advantage of the computers, copiers, printers and projection systems in the meeting rooms as well."

"The library has always been about information and making it accessible to everyone. Today's libraries are the greatest providers of free Internet - offering residents access to the critical news and information they need to make decisions about their lives," said Beverly Blake, Macon program director for the Knight Foundation. "Through this partnership with the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries, we hope to augment libraries' roles as vital community centers while helping to create engaged and informed communities."

The \$200,000 grant is part of a \$5.5 million Knight Foundation initiative benefiting library users in 20 communities across the United States. The effort reinforces the sweeping recommendations by the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, a project of the Aspen Institute. In a report issued earlier this year, the commission asserts that democracy in America is threatened by the lack of equal access to quality information. Funding public libraries, as centers of digital and media training, is one key to filling the gaps, the commission says. Its report is available at www.knightcomm.org. ►►

Cobb County news and notes

The Merchant's Walk Library closed Jan. 22 and re-opened as the East Cobb Library, Feb. 1 in its new location. A ribbon-cutting ceremony took place March 9.

The Cobb County Public Library System's East Cobb Library is located at 4880 Lower Roswell Road in Marietta



Left: East Cobb resident Nancy Clark volunteered to unpack books Jan. 21 at the new East Cobb Library opening Feb. 1. Clark, a volunteer with the Cobb County Public Library System for four months, said it is her way to give back to the community. Right: Marcy Nader, the former Merchant's Walk Library branch manager, now a library volunteer, shelves books Jan. 21 in the new East Cobb Library. Nader said, "It is so nice to move into a nice, clean, spacious library, and I am so glad to be a part of it." (Photos by Erika Ruthman/CCPLS)

in the Parkaire Shopping Center, less than two miles from its previous location.

The East Cobb Library, designed to meet the current and future library needs of the community, is 16,684 square feet. The facility includes a multipurpose room, children's activity room, teen space, study rooms, vending area and self-checkout.

For information, visit the Cobb County Public Library System Web site at www.cobbcat.org. ►►

Northwest Georgia news and notes

More than 3,000 people from Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama recently attended the Department of Labor's (DOL) North Georgia Career Expo and Job Fair at the Northwest Georgia Trade and Convention Center in Dalton. Tags from as far away as Houston County in Georgia were spotted in the parking lot. Deputy Regional Director Nick Fogarty and Dalton-Whitfield Public Library Manager John McPhearson represented Northwest Georgia Regional Library at the event, which the DOL called one of the largest ever held in North Georgia.

"During the four-hour event, we talked with nearly 300 people, ranging from as young as high school students to as mature as retirees looking to supplement their retirements," said Fogarty. "There was no 'typical' job seeker. The need for a job has cut across all ages and professions. Although we were there to discuss using library computers and resources for job searching and applications, there were those that expressed interest in library careers - both professional and support staff."