

## The Peru Public Library Fund

The Peru Public Library has been an invaluable resource for its community since its establishment in 1897. One of the most important resources that the library offers is its computer lab, an important tool for students or other community members looking to do research, finish schoolwork, or communicate with others.

In 2012, the Miami County Community Foundation granted the Peru Public Library with \$20,000 to upgrade their computer lab. Since their first grant of computers from the Indiana State Library in 1997, the library had kept its computer lab updated by purchasing a few computers each year out of their own funds. By 2010, however, the library found that its computer fund was slowly diminishing. Not only that, but with twenty-three thousand users the computers were being used to their capacity, and between breaking from over-use and viruses, they were dropping off one by one.

“We just weren’t able to serve our public well,” says library board president, Barrie Rassi, “and it’s because of a lack of resources.”

The Peru Public Library had been involved with the Miami County Community Foundation since they began applying for small grants in 2005 to support their Summer Reading Programs. In 2012, however, the Community Foundation offered a larger grant, and the Library saw its chance to solve its computer problem.

When she began the grant application process, Maryann Farnham, Associate Director of the library, felt very overwhelmed because their need was so great. However, with the help of the Miami County Community Foundation, the Peru Public Library applied for a \$20,000 grant to purchase eighteen computers and a new printer—and they got it! When Maryann received the acceptance letter in the mail, she couldn’t believe it.

With the grant money, the Peru Public Library purchased the new equipment. Eleven of the computers will replace the old, out-of-date computers in the lab, and two will be used specifically to create a new research lab in a more secluded, quiet room.

“They say that the key to economic development is education,” says Barrie, “and the library, along with the schools, is the core of that. It is the only community organization that serves everyone; from infant to old age, from the rich to the poor.”

Because of the MCCF, the Peru Public Library not only hopes to restore their electronic resources to their former glory, but also hopes to continue expanding and improving so that they can better serve their community.

The Miami County Community Foundation is an affiliate of the Northern Indiana Community Foundation, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) public trust. The NICF consists of Fulton, Miami, and Starke Counties and collectively holds 23 million in assets.

Want to learn more about the Miami County Community, the NICF, or available grants? Want to talk about estate planning? Contact Patrick Close at 765-475-2859 or visit [nicf.org](http://nicf.org).