



e-VT Vergennes Re-Cap

The e-Vermont Community Broadband Project is a partnership between seven statewide organizations and leaders in two dozen Vermont towns to help close the digital divide through innovative use of Internet tools and training. Initiatives in Vergennes were spearheaded by the Vergennes Partnership, Bixby Library, city government, and other individuals and organizations. In just over a year, this team succeeded in bringing the following accomplishments to the Vergennes area:

- A mesh network that provides free Internet access throughout a downtown district that includes the Main, School, Green, and East Street blocks and directs web traffic to community resources by using Vergennesdowntown.com as a landing page for all network users;
- Fifty netbook packages for Addison Central School, including Dell netbooks, netbook cases, printers, USB cables, extra ink cartridge, and Microsoft Office Pro 2010 to ensure that every student in grades 4, 5, and 6 receives a 21st century education;
- Weekly training with community-based, NETS-S coordinated technology lessons for students and teachers in grades 4, 5, and 6;
- A free community e-newsletter at frontporchforum.com that 268 subscribers in Vergennes (out of 990 households in town) have used more than 470 times to buy and trade household items, promote local events and volunteer needs, share wildlife sightings, and recommend local businesses;
- One iPad, one Nook Color, one Kindle Fire, two HP laptops with Microsoft Office and Deep Freeze, extended warranties for the equipment, four Kodak PlaySport digital cameras, and a subscription to the Vermont Online Library for the Bixby Library to help more community members and visitors access the Internet, find social services and jobs, and connect to research and educational opportunities;
- An Internet Intern from Vermont State Colleges has been available to Bixby Library patrons, providing assistance with Web searches and other basic computer task;
- A new platform for the Front Porch Forum e-newsletter that includes a comprehensive web-based community calendar, synthesizing all community events into one central place and freely allowing them to be displayed on Vergennesdowntown.com and other local websites;

- For teachers, a complete program of lesson and unit plans, worksheets, Internet links, advice, instruction, video tutorials, and grant writing resources so that cutting edge classroom education can continue in 2012-2013 and beyond;
- Ongoing webinars for businesses and individuals, available at e4vt.org;
- A tool kit of case studies, lessons learned, and best practices, available at e4vt.org;
- Regional workshops, a statewide conference, and continuing programs of e-Vermont partner organizations.

e-Vermont congratulates the Vergennes team for its collaboration and accomplishments over the past year and wishes them well in continuing to close the digital divide, use Internet tools to advance local goals, and serve as a model for rural towns all over Vermont and across the United States.

Please stay posted on future developments by visiting e-Vermont at www.e4vt.org and by following e-Vermont on Facebook (e-Vermont).

-Seán Sheehan, e-Vermont Community Director
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