



Phone: 785-296-0843

Email: [kan-ed@ksbor.org](mailto:kan-ed@ksbor.org)

<http://www.kan-ed.org>

## Kan-ed

Where Kansans  
Access the  
Information Age

### Lane County Library

Serves:  
1,700+ patrons

Kan-ed member since:  
October 21, 2002

# Rural Community Relies on Public Library for Kan-ed Video Services

Lane County Library in Southwest Kansas is a small library that relies on Kan-ed video services for its patrons throughout the surrounding area. Ruby Martin, Library Director, and Charlene McGuire, Technology Consultant at Southwest Kansas Library System, discussed the usage and impact of Kan-ed services on the community, which have become even more essential in the current economic situation.

Lane County Library is an ELMeR library, meaning it received grant funds from Kan-ed to create an Enhanced Library Meeting Room that contains videoconferencing capabilities. This room has opened up many opportunities for the library, school district, and community members, who frequently use it to connect to distant locations to receive educational programming and take place in meetings.

Students from the local school come to the library to use ELMeR videoconferencing for Interactive Distance Learning (IDL). It allows students to connect to places they otherwise wouldn't be able to visit. Students can see and talk with the connecting person or group and interact with them in much the same way as if they were actually in the same room. Martin shared, "With the budget cuts, our schools have done away with all field trips." Now, students walk to the library, which is only 3 blocks away, to take virtual field trips. For example, elementary students connected by video with the principal in Greensburg. "He talked about the day the tornado happened. He had pictures of it, and then how they've rebuilt Greensburg, and what their school looks like. The kids were able to ask him questions, and they just had tons of questions to ask. Tornadoes are so fascinating to kids. It was really a neat experience for the kids." Martin said. Elementary students also connect annually with the Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City. Martin commented, "There's no way these kids would have a bus trip to that zoo." High school students connect with Salina Public Library for resume writing classes. Teachers use video to maintain accreditation. The possibilities of the videoconferencing capabilities for Interactive Distance Learning are endless. For rural schools with few resources, videoconferencing provides an alternative way to provide more varied opportunities to students.

Martin also shared examples of the community using the video room, "The library has connected with the Kansas Cooperative Commission for a public hearing. They wanted to raise the rates of electricity for the rural areas. Scott County, Lane County, and Ness County all came here and we hooked up [by video] with them at Topeka. If people objected, that was their time to speak. People could testify." A court hearing also was held over video at the library. "The lawyers weren't able to travel to Topeka so they held the court right over there in [the library]. They were from Scott County, so they came over here and used our room." Community groups also come in to connect for book clubs and programs such as quilting and computers, and organizations use video to conduct job interviews from a distance.

When considering what the library would be like without the Kan-ed video services, Martin remarked, "We wouldn't have a lot of what we have now. We wouldn't be able to provide anything...besides what's just in the library."

