

Rural high speed internet

Anna Moscardelli - October 2020

Ah life is good. Finally, after a lot of letter writing and meetings, those of us in what is known as rural areas, have made one stride. High speed internet!

Our area, many times referred to as paradise, sometimes lacks competition in services such as cable tv, internet, and cell phone. When they say “paradise ain’t cheap” we chuckle because of what we tend to pay for services due to a lack of competition.

We are left with companies whose attitudes are “Be happy with what you got”. Many of these companies could sure use a couple courses in customer service. They feel that because they are huge companies, they believe they will be around for a long time. Sadly, they fail to look at history with companies such as Sears, Woolworth, PG&E, etc. All multi giant companies that eventually crashed.

Many small communities have been calling on internet service upgrades for years. SWIFT was given millions of taxpayer dollars to bring in upgrades. A couple years ago many of us complained of how we had to fill out online surveys about our internet. It was a joke to many. A 45-minute survey that was difficult to fill out, and you were lucky if your internet service lasted that long for one to fill the survey out. But some in government felt it was needed. To me, I felt it was a total waste of taxpayer’s money. I always asked, “How much was spent on those surveys?” I have never been given a response. All they (government and SWIFT) needed to know was are you happy with your internet? Why or why not?

I have my own opinion on SWIFT that has been passed on to government which has fallen on deaf ears. Moving forward, more taxpayer dollars were put out. Sound familiar?

Merlink is a new company that has recently started setting up equipment to bring high speed internet to communities that lack in internet services. YEPPIE. Some communities such as mine were given approval by those who played a part. Thank you, CAO Caroline Tripp, IT Robert Wilkes, and Deputy Mayor Muriel Wright for your responses and involvement. Thank you to Special Assistant Eric Nixon, and Warden Bill Weber for your information. We have heard numerous times that fiber optics would be in many rural areas by the end of 2020, however after speaking to reps on numerous occasions at Execulink and other companies, fibre optics isn’t coming to the areas by the end of the year. Instead they state that maybe by next spring, if we are lucky, and then it is a matter of getting those companies in here after that. Maybe by then, Eastlink might change their corporate attitudes. I just cancelled my Eastlink services and oh, what a great feeling. Sadly, the rep was trying to get me to stay with Eastlink and asked me to go back to them if it did not work out with Merlink. NO THANKS. Unfortunately, it is not until businesses lose customers that they decide to change their attitudes. What a shame. And why is that?

For those who are living in areas where services are lacking such as internet, give Merlink a call or send them an email. Many do not want to pay out the hook up fee, but the way I see it, I’ll pay the hook up fee and toss the crappy service and inconsiderate attitudes to get better customer service and quicker speeds. I went from up to 10 mbps to up to 67 mbps. Next is the cell phone companies that are on my list. I was going to say “hit list” but I am Italian, and someone may take it in the wrong way.

Take care all and I hope everyone is adjusting to being back at school and adjusting to the many changes.

Oh, and thank you to all the city councillors who did not support Mike Stark’s motion to introduce a second land transfer tax on resale homes. What a relief.

