



BLAND COUNTY

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2021

Volume 5 Issue 3

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Board of Supervisors

Stephen Kelley, Chairman
Seddon - District 2

Randy Johnson, Vice-Chairman
Mechanicsburg - District 3

Adam Kidd
Sharon - District 1

Karen Hodock
Rocky Gap - District 4

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COUNTY OFFICIALS EXTEND GRATITUDE TO RESIDENTS FOR OUTSTANDING PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL BROADBAND SURVEY

On November 13th, 2020, Bland & Pulaski Counties announced a regional initiative to study broadband internet accessibility and capacity. This study is part of a larger three county project, which includes Montgomery County, in correlation with Appalachian Power and private internet service providers in the deployment of fiberoptic and other broadband infrastructure to unserved and under-served areas of the three localities. The survey of residents was the first step in the study, which has concluded with significant participation from residents, with 1,346 completed surveys (667 Bland /679 Pulaski).

"We are excited to be working with our citizens, Appalachian Power, and with our neighboring counties on this project," stated Adam Kidd, Chair of the Bland County Board of Supervisors. "This is a united initiative to improve connectivity in our communities that will have lasting positive impact into the future." Residents of the two counties were asked to complete a survey to assist in obtaining information for the regional broadband study. The main goal of the study is to identify those areas of need in which a plan can be developed with Appalachian Power and internet service providers to develop the appropriate infrastructure to rectify broadband needs. The response rate of the surveys were 20% of the households in Bland County (667/3,356) and 4% of the households in Pulaski County (679/17,302). "We were hoping to have strong citizen participation with the surveys, so we were very pleased when we received such a high level of citizen response," stated Joseph Guthrie, Chair of the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors. "The amount of completed surveys and the data they yielded will go a long way to understanding our need for broadband, and perhaps be the key to deploying services across our rural counties. At this time, we remain quite optimistic that we can advance this project, and we look forward to our continued work with Appalachian Power and our regional partners."

The first step in this regional broadband initiative is the study of existing infrastructure and to determine the capacity of download and upload speeds available to residents and businesses. Montgomery County has already completed its comprehensive broadband study and Bland and Pulaski Counties are working together with the same consultants as Montgomery County, Thompson & Litton/ Blue Ridge Advisory Services Group, to analyze the current broadband capacity. Now that the survey portion is completed, consultants will begin working with Appalachian Power over the next couple of months analyzing the data and developing potential network designs.

The project involves installing fiber optic cable on Appalachian Power's utility poles, with the added benefit of providing a more robust communications platform for the company's deployment of new electric meters and distribution automation (DA). The new smart meters and DA equipment improve service reliability for power customers. Space on Appalachian Power's middle-mile fiber infrastructure is then leased to internet service providers. Appalachian Power's pilot broadband projects are made possible by the 2018 Grid Security and Transformation Act, 2019 Broadband Pilot Program legislation.

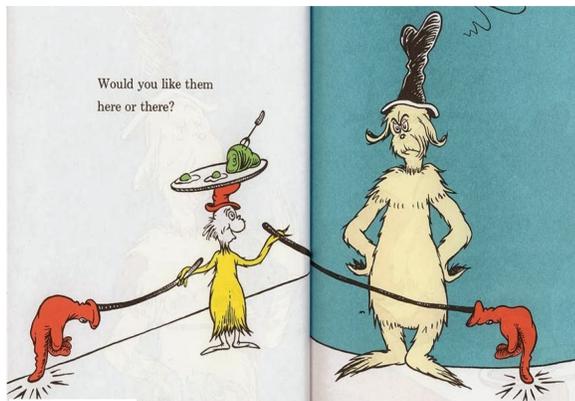
Appalachian Power is currently developing a preliminary middle-mile fiber design. Following the broadband study of Bland and Pulaski Counties, Appalachian Power's intention is to file an application seeking project approval from the Virginia State Corporation Commission in the first half of 2021. The three-county project is projecting to serve approximately 15,000 unserved broadband customers. This pilot project will require approval from the Virginia State Corporation Commission. State and federal grant funds may be available to assist the localities and internet service providers with the last-mile infrastructure buildout.

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NEED INTERNET AT YOUR HOUSE?

Or with a mouse? Do you need internet here or there?

Do you need internet anywhere?



Verizon Wi-Fi Hotspots
are now available for
checkout at the
Library!



For details call 276-688-3737 or visit www.blandcolibrary.org

National Crime Victims' Rights Week • April 18-24, 2021



SUPPORT VICTIMS.
BUILD TRUST.
ENGAGE COMMUNITIES.



Contact: Sara King at 276-688 - 4111 or by email: sara.king@dss.virginia.gov

National Crime Victims'
Rights Week
April 18-24, 2021

"Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities."



The Bland County Public Library

Winter Storytime 2021

A New Program Available Weekly Online

For Your Preschool Child Every Thursday 10:00 !

January



14th- My Humongous Hamster

By Lorna Freytag



21st- Ducks Don't Wear Socks

by John Nedwidek

28th – Go to Sleep Groundhog

By Judy Cox



March

4th- If You Take a Mouse to

School By Laura Numeroff



11th- What Pet Should I Get?

By Dr. Seuss

18th- The Book Hog by Greg Pizzoli



25th- Crash Bang Donkey!

By Jill Newton



February

4th- Dog Breath By Dav Pilkey



11th- Sweet Hearts

By Jan Carr

18th- If You Give
a Cat A Cupcake

By Laura Numeroff



25th – Who is Driving?

By Leo

Timmers



April

1st- Pete the Cat Big Easter

Adventure By Kimberly and James Dean

8th- A Book of Babies

By Il Sung Na

15th – Guess How Much I

Love You By Sam McBratney

22nd – A Dog Named Doug

By Karma Wilson and Matt Myers

29th – Noni the Pony By Alison

Lester



May

6th- Animal Strike at the Zoo

By Karma Wilson



**Available
Here!**



EVENTS CALENDAR

4

MARCH 2021

March 1—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

March 9—EDA Meeting @ 5:00 pm

March 18—Children's Services Act Meeting
@ 9:30 am

March 23—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

March 23—Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

APRIL 2021

April 1—Wireless Authority Meeting @ 5:00 pm

April 2—Holiday—Good Friday
County Administration Offices Closed

April 5—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

April 13—EDA Meeting @ 5:00 pm

April 14— Library Board of Trustees Meeting
@ 5:30 pm

April 15—Children's Services Act Meeting @ 9:30 am

April 27—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

April 27—Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

MAY 2021

May 3—Planning Commission Meeting @ 6:00 pm

May 11—EDA Meeting @ 5:00 pm

May 20—Children's Services Act Meeting @ 9:30 am

May 25—Service Authority Meeting @ 4:00 pm

May 25—Board of Supervisors Meeting @ 5:00 pm

May 31— Holiday—Memorial Day
County Administration Offices Closed



Meeting dates and times are subject to change due to COVID 19.

Please call Bland County Administration for more information: 276-688-4622

www.blandcountyva.gov

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