

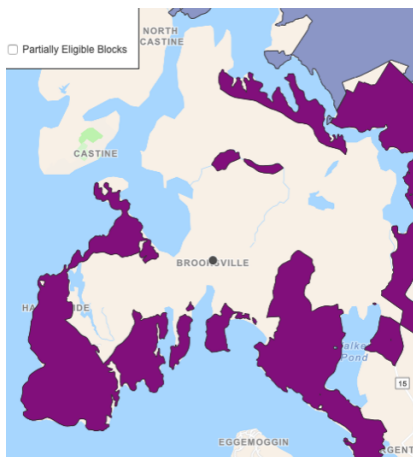
#13...Apr 28, 2020

Hello all. Hope you are all well, and enjoying your internet connection. (Sincere with the well wishes, but just kidding about the internet.)

Everyone is looking to hear about your internet experiences during this epidemic. Island Institute is collecting your stories. Has your internet been of significant assistance in, for example, keeping in touch with loved ones, ordering groceries and other essentials, keeping busy with work and entertainment? On the other hand, has your internet been a source of pretty much constant frustration, with slower than the usual slow speeds making downloading and uploading a challenge? What about those days when there was no electricity and no internet and you had spotty cell phone service? Did you (like I) feel that you might as well be living in the 1800s? If you write something up for Island Institute, **PLEASE send me a copy**, because I am also collecting stories for the Brooksville Historical Society. Your story does not have to be limited to internet issues, just anything documenting your experiences with the pandemic. Here's the Island Institute address: broadbandstories@islandinstitute.org.

Speaking of the pandemic, I have been making reusable face masks and have some extras. Email me with your needs.

You may see some news about a forthcoming gigantic \$16B FCC “reverse auction” of federal funds to build broadband in underserved areas (less than 25/3). (A “reverse auction” is simply a government procurement bid process, where the lowest-cost bid usually gets the job, or in this case, the funds to serve a particular service area.) Here's a picture of the FCC current map of eligible parts of Brooksville. We hear that this map may be refined at some point before the auction, expected to take place this year but with significant uncertainty in when the actual buildout might occur. For more info see <https://potsandpansbyccg.com/2020/04/13/are-you-covered-by-the-rdof-grant/>. If GWI is awarded the Re-Connect grant to build fiber to the premises, I suspect the areas GWI proposes to serve will be excluded from FCC's future refined map. I'm in discussions with GWI to see if there are still gaps that would not be covered by either the Re-Connect grant or this new “reverse auction”.



Finally, one of our own, Bea Gates, has been interviewed by CNN to tell her story of trying to make a living here, in the era of terrible internet. The contact came about because I forwarded her story to Peggy Schaffer at the state agency ConnectME, and the CNN reporter contacted Peggy. Your stories matter! You never know their eventual impact. In chaos theory, it's called the "butterfly effect" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect.

Be well, send your stories and your face mask requests.