

Connecting You

FOCUS
BROADBAND

Thank You for Celebrating With Us!



Thank you to everyone who attended our Customer Appreciation Day. We hope that you enjoyed the food, festivities, and prizes! It was a pleasure to see familiar faces and connect with new ones, creating a sense of community that defines the spirit of what it means to be a cooperative.

Our members are truly the best, and we are incredibly grateful for your continued loyalty and support of FOCUS Broadband!



Grant Helps Bring Wi-Fi to Southport Parks

A \$10,000 Connect Grant awarded by FOCUS Broadband is helping the City of Southport bring Wi-Fi access to Southport city parks. FOCUS Broadband allocates \$25,000 annually to the



Kris Ward, FOCUS Broadband Director of Business Development & Bonnie Therrien, Southport City Manager

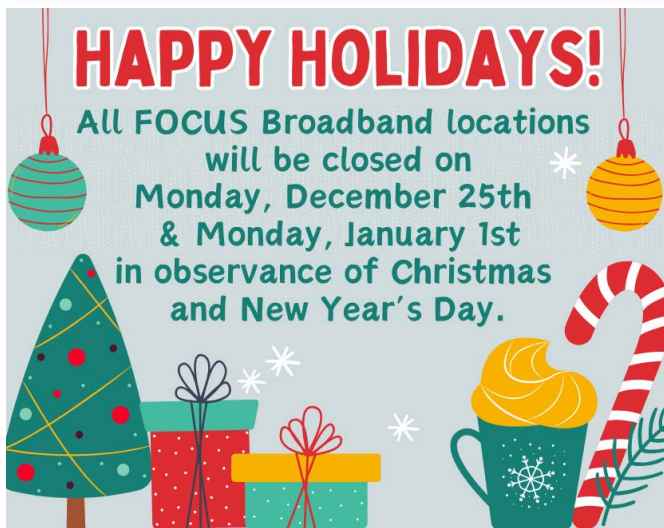
Connect Grant program which aims to help organizations cover broadband services and installation costs.

Once completed, both visitors and vendors will be able to access the new Wi-Fi connection. "It's great that with FOCUS Broadband's assistance, we are able to achieve the goal of helping people meet their Wi-Fi needs throughout downtown and at each of our parks. This is a project the city has talked about doing for quite a while," said Bonnie Therrien, Southport City Manager.

This is the second Connect Grant awarded by FOCUS Broadband this year. In September, the Town of Leland also received assistance with a project that brought Wi-Fi access and security to Founders Park.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

All FOCUS Broadband locations
will be closed on
Monday, December 25th
& Monday, January 1st
in observance of Christmas
and New Year's Day.



ACP Makes Internet Affordable

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal program that was established to help bridge the digital divide within rural communities and ensure that everyone can participate in the digital age. Those who qualify for the program are eligible for free or discounted internet service from FOCUS Broadband. Eligibility can depend on factors such as participation in programs like Medicare, SNAP, SSI, WIC, Lifeline or the free and reduced-price lunch program in public schools. Signing up is a straightforward process. To get started, visit focusbroadband.com/acp or call 888-367-2862. Simple as that!

Accepting Applications for Community and Education Grants

Now through February 29th, FOCUS Broadband is accepting applications for our 2024 Community Connections and Smart Connections Grant programs. Each category will award \$40,000 in funds to nonprofits and educators in the counties we serve, and these funds should be used to benefit residents in our service areas. Community grant funds will be awarded in the spring, and education grant funds will be awarded in the fall. To download a grant application or for more information on eligibility and exclusions, please visit focusbroadband.com/giving-back.

Grant Helps High School Start a Food Donation Table

A FOCUS Broadband Smart Connections grant has helped North Brunswick High School start a food donation program called The Share Table which allows students to share any unused or unopened food with other students and local food pantries in the Leland community.

“The FOCUS Broadband grant allowed us to buy food collection baskets and a refrigerator to help us keep items cool. The Share Table program engages students and helps them understand the impact they can make on their community in an enjoyable and innovative manner,” said Gray Connelly, North Brunswick High School teacher and program sponsor.

FOCUS Broadband awards \$40,000 annually to educators that make a difference in the lives of students in our service areas. To see a complete list of this year’s recipients or to find out how to apply for a Smart Connections Grant, visit focusbroadband.com/educationgrants.



Navigating the Wave of Change:

The Impact of Rising Cable TV Costs and Retransmission Consent on FOCUS Broadband

Over the past decade, the cost of cable TV programming has surged, driven by demands from media giants who own most of the cable networks. This is an industry-wide problem that not only impacts FOCUS Broadband but also every company that provides cable TV channels.

The dramatic surge in cable TV bills is also caused by Retransmission Consent, a process that requires cable providers to pay local broadcasters to air channels that are otherwise free over the air. The exclusive rights of local stations in Wilmington for the Brunswick, Columbus, and Pender County markets provide them with significant leverage, resulting in fees soaring by over 500% in the past decade.

Cable TV costs go up each January because of increasing programming expenses, the requirement to carry low-rated channels, and the flawed Retransmission Consent process. In January, FOCUS Broadband will adjust our rates to cover these increased content expenses.

We understand the concerns about rising cable TV costs. We don’t like it either. To address this, we suggest combining FOCUS Broadband’s high-speed internet with streaming services like YouTube TV, Sling TV, Hulu, and other apps or an over-the-air antenna. This approach may offer you greater flexibility, more choices, and the potential for cost savings.

We want to be honest about the things that impact your monthly bill and why it is happening. So that you can make an informed decision on where your entertainment dollar may be best spent, we invite you to check out www.focusbroadband.com/cutthecord.