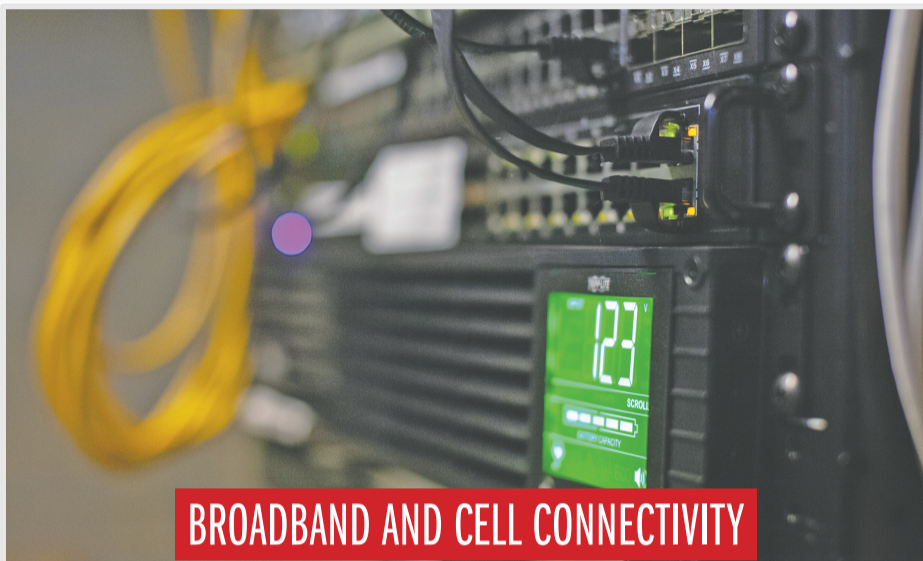


# RAPPAHANNOCK SNAPSHOT

Foothills Forum and the Rappahannock News revisit our past reporting projects to see where the county stands on...



BROADBAND AND CELL CONNECTIVITY



FIRE AND RESCUE



COMP PLAN AND LAND USE



THE RAPPAHANNOCK ECONOMY



HEALTH CARE



TRANSPORTATION

BY ROGER PIANTADOSI

**T**his shiny new calendar of 2019 marks Foothills Forum's fifth year of raising community support for reporting on Rappahannock County.

We start Year Five by revisiting ... looking back ... checking in on the status of six different research and reporting projects on the front-burner issues as identified by residents. Spot reporting by the Rappahannock News has updated some of these developments, but this presentation ties them into one package.

This Rappahannock Snapshot brings us up-to-date on trends, unresolved items and remaining concerns. Each contribution by Randy Rieland and Sara Schonhardt is a refresher, a quick look at the status of everything from broadband (noticeable progress) to the local economy (much promise amid lingering concerns about tourism). The striking, award-winning graphics and data presentation you see

here have been a constant highlight of this unique working arrangement between the owners of the News and the nonpartisan nonprofit led by local residents and volunteers. We're grateful to Dennis Brack, John McCaslin, Laura Stanton, Luke Christopher and Roger Piantadosi for their top-notch contributions. But we're also grateful to you, the community, for the consistent financial support that makes all this possible.

The benchmark Foothills Forum Survey, conducted with guidance from the University of Virginia's Center for Survey Research, helped start us down this path, though much has changed locally – and nationally – in the three years when it was in the field. Residents across the county – every household – shared thoughts on 25 randomly presented local issues, plus services and quality of life. The resulting reports have twice won top awards at the Virginia Press Association.

We're grateful for the hundreds of county residents

who shared their thoughts with our reporting teams. We're gladdened that so many of you turn out regularly for the forum gatherings held after each reporting project to discuss and consider the findings. We've heard and absorbed scads of comments, ideas and critiques and have benefited from them all.

And now, here's another opportunity for YOU to weigh in. The survey validated a universal sentiment: We love Rappahannock, and we want to preserve and maintain it. Beneath that protective canopy lies an understorey of varying concerns, realities and perceptions.

Add your voice. What else can you add to these updates? What are your biggest concerns right now? What are your views on the county's future? Weigh in with a comment at [editor@rappnews.com](mailto:editor@rappnews.com).

— LARRY BUD MEYER | Foothills Forum Chair