High-Speed Update, 1 March 2008

Verizon now offers high speed internet access to Great Cranberry Island only (not Islesford.) The service is available at two levels, with your choice of speed and cost -- of course, both choices are much faster than classic dial-up telephone internet access.

The service is implemented via ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) which transfers the data over the existing copper telephone wires you already have installed to your house (if you have ordinary home telephone service.)

The internet connection is "always live" and does not interfere with your existing telephone service, meaning you can get or make a phone call while you are on-line.

You can find more info, and sign up, at Verizon.com

High-Speed Update, 16 Jan. 2008

A third node was installed today on Richard Beal's wind-power tower. Jim McKenna, of RedZone, himself climbed the tower and installed it, despite temperatures below freezing and chilling winds. Due to its excellent height and position, this node promises to cover a substantial portion of the island.

photo above courtesy of Richard Beal

High-Speed Update, 12 Sept. 2007

A second node has been installed on Great Cranberry Island on the top of Bob LaHotan's old studio, at the Heliker-LaHotan Foundation. This will allow people near the Pool to pick up the service.
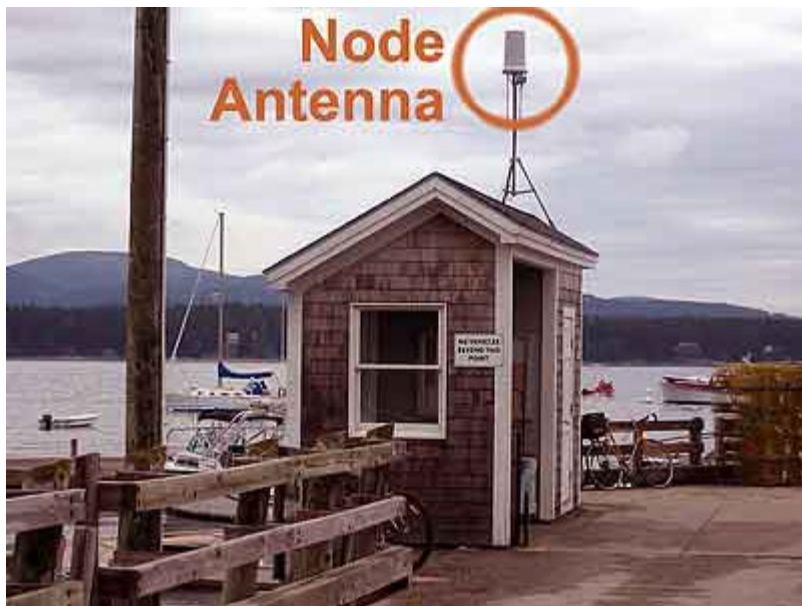
High-Speed Internet Update, 18 July 2007

High-Speed internet service was passed at the special town meeting, and work is underway to construct the wireless network.

The system consists of several antenna "nodes" arranged in a mesh network, like knots in a fisherman's net. Radio signals passing between the nodes could be likened to the strings between the knots. The nodes pass internet traffic to and from other nodes, and also to and from smaller antennas on subscribers' houses.

The first node has been installed on the package shed at the end of the Great Cranberry Island town dock. It will bounce two-way internet traffic between the Cranberry Isles and a similar node atop the public school in Northeast Harbor.

The second node was installed July 8 on the Parrish tower on Islesford.

Islesford photos courtesy of Greg Theriault

High-Speed Internet Update, 24 April 2007

A Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at 11:00am. The Hearing will be about high-speed internet for the Cranberry Isles. Jim McKenna, head of RedZone wireless, will be on hand to answer questions about his company's offering of wireless mesh internet capability for the islands. This meeting will follow the regular Selectmen's Meeting on Great Cranberry. A similar Public Hearing will also be held later the same day on Islesford, at 2:00pm.

A Special Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 to seek approval from the voters to go ahead with this system.

High-Speed Internet Update, 12 Jan 2007

Greetings!

The purpose of this short letter is to inform the community that we are actively pursuing the process of bringing high-speed wireless internet to the Islands.

Currently a group is working with a number of wireless internet service providers (WISPs) to find the most reliable, cost effective, safe, and appropriate technology for our community. This process has involved extensive research, contact with WISPs statewide, site visits, and thorough analysis of the many alternatives available to us. As a result of this work we will be testing signal strengths this month and will more than likely have service available by April or May!

Why are we doing this? The main objective is faster and more reliable internet connections of approximately 1Mbps (20x faster than dial-up) and greater. Benefits of high-speed internet on the Islands include:

1. Opportunities for telecommuting and videoconferencing
2. Entertainment options like high quality video and internet radio
3. Support for internet based and internet dependent businesses
4. Tele-medicine

5. Many other economic development and quality of life improvements

Next steps in the process will include continued meeting and negotiation with WISPs to determine terms of service, monthly fees, and other details. Ultimately one WISP will be chosen to bring us service and at that time we'll all have the choice of subscribing or not. Information will be passed along as we receive it.

If you have any questions please contact Eric Dyer, our Island Institute Fellow who is working on the project at 244-5852, or edyer@islandinstitute.org.

Sincerely,

Dan Lief
Bill McGuinness
Eric Dyer