

Access to Internet Needed

Looking for amenities in rural communities.

In the Rural Life Issues part of the March 2011 newsletter, Joyce Sasse wrote a thoughtful piece entitled “Hampered Communications”, wherein she decried the slowness of providers in extending high speed internet to rural residents. To me, this failure strikes at what I have long considered to be a hallmark of Canadian society. It is what is sometimes called ‘postage stamp’ pricing. The idea is based on the premise that it costs the same amount to mail a letter to anywhere in Canada, regardless of location. In other words, all Canadians are to be treated equally, in spite of where they live. This principle was once extended also to such things as telephone and bus service, but this seems to be eroding away piece by piece. So here goes an important part of our equality.

But there is one other matter at stake here: It is an equality of opportunity. A radio program a while back was talking about how many urban dwellers are retreating to the country, and many more should as well, if only the proper conditions prevailed in those rural communities.

What were they looking for? Five things: a feeling of community and belonging, a sense of safety, ready access to health care facilities, access to airports and major transportation hubs, and access to internet. The commentator was saying that rural communities with these facilities were poised for great things.

(Something to think about. Michael Stonhouse)

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