

Tennessee CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2022 | CUSTOMER FOCUSED ⚡ COMMUNITY DRIVEN

Step Back in Time at Gates Filling Station

Page 20



ALSO
INSIDE

Are You Satisfied With
Your Internet?
Survey Inside
Page 5

PHOTO BY
CAMERON BRASFIELD



We want to hear from our customers ...

Are You Frustrated With Your Internet? Problems With Speed? Reliability?

Imagine ...

- Your life with high-speed, reliable internet service.
- Television streaming or gaming that doesn't pause in the middle of a scene to catch up.
- Being able to work from home without the frustration of having poor, unreliable internet.
- Virtual meetings with family members, friends and business associates across the country.
- Online educational opportunities for your family that aren't interrupted by poor service.
- Speeds that allow you to upload or download large files effortlessly.
- Internet reliability—similar to your electric service—that is always on when you flip a switch and always available when you need it.
- Customer service from your friends and neighbors—people who live in your community.

Why ...

"We're getting enormous pressure from our customers to provide broadband fiber in our service area," said Mike Allmand, president and CEO of Ripley Power and Light.

Ripley Power and Light estimates it will cost \$9.8 million to build the fiber network.

"Our board does not want to put our electric customers at risk for this much of an investment, so it has asked us to survey our customers about their interest," Allmand said. "That's why we're asking our customers to tell us if they want us to do this. Please fill out the survey. We cannot make an informed decision if we do not hear from our customers."



Mike Allmand
President and CEO
Ripley Power and Light

Response from customer surveys ...

The response from our customer surveys will help our board decide whether to proceed with building the fiber. If the response level is too low, the proposal below will not be considered.

Our proposal ...

- Ripley Power and Light Company would build out a fiber-to-the-home and fiber-to-the-business network in areas served by our electric service.
- To increase reliability, our fiber network would be served from both the south and north ends of our service territory, providing ultimate reliability for our customers.
- We would partner with Aeneas—a company based in

Jackson, Tennessee—to provide internet, television programming and phone service on our fiber network. To learn more about Aeneas, its services and pricing, visit www.aeneas.com.

- Ripley Power and Light would own the fiber network and lease it to Aeneas. We would always make sure customers have the best service provider. We can change providers if customers are not satisfied.

NOTE: Because other internet companies are in our service territory, Ripley Power and Light does not qualify for grants to build the network.

We are reaching out to each city in our service area to provide part of their American Rescue Plan funds to help build the network. This is not tax money, but a grant program funded by the federal government to strengthen the country's infrastructure.

We need your help ...

Ripley Power and Light Company and our board of directors need to hear from our customers before we can commit to the expense of building out a fiber network. Customers can show their support by filling out the survey below or going online at www.ripleypower.com.

Would you like Ripley Power and Light Company to provide fast, reliable internet?

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Home/Business Address: _____

Service Type: Residential Business

Current internet provider: _____

Are you happy with your current internet provider?

Yes No

What is most important to you?

Speed Price Reliability

Do you currently get the correct internet speed that you are paying for? Yes No

Do you have phone service with your current provider?

Yes No

Are you supportive of our community project?

Yes No

Please tell us how this broadband connection would benefit you or your business: _____

Important:

Filling out and sending in this survey does NOT commit you to sign up for Ripley Power and Light broadband service if we decide to build out fiber to our communities' homes and businesses. The purpose of this survey is to gauge community interest.

What's in it for our customers ...

- A reliable fiber network that could offer speeds up to 1 gig and more.
- Local customer service, with quick response time to emergencies.
- No frustration due to inconsistent internet.

Return your filled-out survey to ...
Ripley Power and Light Company, 150 S. Main St.,
Ripley, TN 38063; drop it off at our Halls or Ripley office;
or fill it out at www.ripleypower.com.

Read more from Ripley Power and Light, pages 20-21

RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY



ABOVE: John Hutcherson restored his gas station to the way it looked in the mid-1950s. BELOW: The interior also has the look of a bygone day.

Restored Gas Station in Gates Takes You Back to the 1950s

Just past the only red light in Gates, on Second Street, sits a restored gas station that takes visitors back in time. John Hutcherson, owner of the station, has made it his mission to restore the building to its former glory and make it something everyone can enjoy.

The filling station is a time capsule of relics and memorabilia from decades past. John notes many of the items are local to the area and were bought within a 75-mile radius of Gates.

The walls and shelves are lined with a variety of items, including Tonka trucks, spark plugs, a toy Elvis Presley guitar and 1929 to 1930 annuals from Halls, Tennessee.

John houses several restored vehicles in the station, including a 1969 Rallysport Supersport Chevrolet Camaro, a

1971 Honda 175 motorcycle and a 1935 Chevrolet pickup.

The building itself is original. John believes it was built around 1955-1956.

Since buying the station in 2019, he has replaced the parking lot, roof and sidewalks. He replaced the original gas pumps with pumps he restored to look like they would have back



when the station was new. He set the prices as they would have been in the 1950s.

John enjoys talking about the details of his station—everything inside and out—because it was a big part of his childhood.

Born in 1956, John and his family lived in the Dry Hill community until their home burned down in 1964. They then moved to the Concord community.

It was then John began to form a connection with the service station. He would ride his bicycle there to hang out

with his friends. They loved seeing the cool cars that would drive by, stop to fill up with gas or were worked on.

He says his favorite part about owning the station is remembering the times he was able to be there as a kid.

“That’s what provokes me to have the cars I have and to have this



memorabilia and stuff,” John said. “It’s just something that’s always intrigued me. I’ve just always wanted to have my hands on it, and when I see it, I still get excited.”

Just about everything in the station has a story—even a blue toy Mustang sitting on top of a wooden display case. When John was a boy, he bought the car for \$8.50 with money he had earned chopping cotton. After he took it home, he was disappointed because it didn’t run as fast as he thought a Mustang should. His mom told him to take it back. He did so reluctantly.

James Jones, the store owner, gave the car to his son, Jimmy.

Several years ago, Jimmy gave John a bunch of stuff from his attic. It included the toy Mustang.

John knew there was something odd about it, but he didn’t remember it originally had been his until he started to clean it up.

“When I opened it up, this unique feature about it brought all that back to me,” John said. “The bulbs right here shine light into these glass tubes, which light the



A 1967 Honda CA160 Dream motorcycle sits in the restored building.

headlights and taillights up. When I saw that, I remembered it all. The conversation came back—me standing there feeling guilty about carrying something back.”

Restoring the station is John’s hobby, and he continues to add to it, buying items that interest him.

He enjoys spending his free time there, cleaning his car or rearranging his displays.

“It’s just a place I come to hang out, and it’s where I can put my stuff, and people can see it,” John said. “Some of my buddies came down and call it ‘Gates, America.’ They made me a sign to put on the pole over here.”

But John isn’t stopping with the service station. Recently, he hauled in a building on an 18-wheeler and put it just past the service station. He is renovating it to give it a country store look. His goal is to create a little village, displaying items he has collected and to give the community something to enjoy.

“It’s funny how you live in a small community, and you don’t see a lot of people you went to school with,” John said. “But since I’ve had this, a lot of them have stopped by.

“I’m not trying to run any type of business down here. I’ve just got this so I can enjoy it myself and my friends can enjoy it.” ■

People interested in seeing the gas station can email John Hutcherson at hutchersonsupply@bellsouth.net or call him at 731-460-5967 to set up a time to visit. He works nearby at his own business, Hutcherson Industrial Supplies. You might also catch him at the gas station late in the day or on weekends.



Vintage signs and memorabilia are featured.

Heat Pumps Are A Good Choice for Heating and Cooling Homes

Did you know your heating system has the most impact on your utility bill each winter?

An energy-efficient, electric heat pump is the most economical way to heat and cool your home in West Tennessee’s climate.

An efficient heat pump can save you hundreds of dollars each year in heating costs, depending on the type of heat you have now.

A heat pump’s performance is rated by its SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio). The higher the SEER, the higher the efficiency of the heat pump and the lower the cost to operate it.

Financing Your Heat Pump

To make your heat pump purchase more affordable, Ripley Power and Light offers low-interest financing for heat pump purchases.

You can pay for your heat pump on your monthly utility bill with no money down, with as long as 10 years to repay the purchase, and with no prepayment penalty.

To qualify for financing, you must buy your heat pump through a member of Ripley Power and Light’s quality contractor network. This is to ensure you get the correct-sized heat pump for your home’s heating and cooling needs, and that it is installed correctly.

Learn more at ripleypower.com under “Save Energy, Save Money.” ■



RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

www.ripleypower.com

Ripley Office

731-635-2323 • 150 S. Main St.

Halls Office

731-836-7595 • 409 S. Church St.

Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

You can pay your bill:

- At www.ripleypower.com.
- Through bank draft.
- At our Ripley & Halls offices.
- In the office night deposit boxes.
- At the kiosks at our offices.

If you have not been receiving your bills, call us so we can verify your mailing address.



Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed:

- Friday, December 23, and Monday, December 26, for the Christmas holidays.
- Monday, January 2, for New Years.
- Monday, January 16, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Monday, February 20, for Presidents Day.

TN-200

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FRANKLIN, TN
PERMIT No. 351

Do we have your number? ALL of your numbers?



Ripley Power and Light encourages customers to ...

✓ STEP ONE:

- Update all phone numbers in your household: landlines and cellphone numbers.
- Visit www.ripleypower.com under the "Report an Outage" tab or call 731-635-2323.

✓ STEP TWO:

- Save our number—888-655-1841—in your cellphone.
- To opt in, text #RIPLEY to 888-655-1841.
- You'll receive the message, "Welcome to Ripley Power and Light's text msg service..."

HAVE AN OUTAGE?

The next time you have an outage, just text #OUT to 888-655-1841.

Ripley Power and Light's Outage Management system will know your location, and we'll immediately begin our efforts to locate the cause of the outage and restore your power.