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Television shows such as "Street Scene," "Loose Change," "Simple Living" and "Locally Speaking" will be calling Armstrong Neighborhood Channel their new home.

Armstrong Neighborhood Channel has been in the works for several months and will remain on channels 20 and 100, said Megan Ellashek, Armstrong's community marketing manager. Since Armstrong is a family-owned business that delivers high school sports, community events, parades and local music, the new name encompasses what the business is about, she said. "Our programmer here locally, Greg Rhoton, will schedule with people in the community," she said. "He does 'Out and About' and 'Street Scene' with Rick Gurrera. They go out to all of the car shows locally and they rotate." All proceeds from the show go to the Second Harvest Food Bank, she noted.

When employees found out The Vindicator was closing, Rhoton took the time to get creative with the channel, even adding local obituaries for people to view. Armstrong serves more than 52,000 homes in the area. "People look for that," Ellashek said. "He's worked with funeral homes and it's got the pictures, the write ups and things you wouldn't think of."

Armstrong came up with the Armstrong Neighborhood Channel brand after "extensive surveys, brainstorming and customer feedback," said Adam Daniels, field marketing manager, in a statement. It also identified for producers the programming viewers find interesting, he said. "They know the people and places that matter," he said. "They know the school spirit and town pride that fills the backyards and front porches in our local communities. We bring that straight to our viewers in all of our neighborhoods."

Plans include further developing the sports show to include new ways to cover top teams, Ellashek said. "We're used to getting that paper and here's everything laid out," she said. "[Rhoton is] getting very creative with filling that gap and thinking of new ways of how he can do it, and you don't even have to leave your home." Goals to keep people watching are also in the works with the rebranding because there's always going to be new shows to watch, Ellashek said. "You might be able to see your grandchildren or music at noon and what happens at YSU, so it's very widespread," she said. "It's fabulous the way technology has evolved."

Armstrong Neighborhood Channel content can be found at [ArmstrongNeighborhood.com](#) or by following @followArmstrong on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. As of 2018, Armstrong is the United State's 11th largest cable television provider, according to SNL Kagan, an offering from S&P Global Market Intelligence. Service is provided to residential and commercial customers in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, West Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky. — **Youngstown (OH) Business Journal**

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Atlantic Broadband has been feverishly deploying DOCSIS 3.1-based gigabit Internet, with at least four announcements last month alone, and five more since its declaration in the spring that it would push its reach to 90% of its serviceable homes and **businesses** by the end of August. The company has 875,000 serviceable homes and businesses across 11 states.

The company put its product roadmap for gigabit Internet into place more than five years ago to keep up with the exponential growth in data usage it was seeing from its residential customers and the demand for higher-capacity speeds from its small-to-medium business (SMB) customers. Its first deployment was in 2014 in the greater Miami area, followed by a launch in Connecticut in 2016. At the time of that deployment, only 4% of U.S. homes had access to gigabit speeds.

Along the way, there has been an amount of consumer education required to explain what gigabit Internet is and what it can do to benefit daily life in the home and business. "Our focus has been coupling the obvious speed benefits of our broadband services with attributes that are equally if not even more important, including consistency of performance and reliability, which are essential for residential and business customers who depend on these services," said Heather McCallion, VP, product and programming, for Atlantic Broadband.

Gigabit deployment is an instance in which technological developments and industry innovation were a step ahead of customer demand, but they still produced an immediate and tangible benefit to the company and to consumers, even those who have not yet chosen to subscribe to the service. "For example, the steps taken to ready the network for gigabit Internet ... all mean more efficient use of available spectrum, while enhancing performance of the legacy products, even as it creates the technological environment for **DOCSIS** 3.1 product deployments," McCallion said.

The challenges faced throughout deployment have to do with the nature of DOCSIS 3.1. "Bandwidth reclamation via channel realignment, the need for more physical space and power to house CMTS and related hub-based equipment, the need to enhance the backbone and transport to ensure the CMTSs have sufficient bandwidth, the need for extensive training to acclimate technicians to deploying and troubleshooting the DOCSIS 3.1 technology, even the investment in new meters and test equipment to read and monitor the 3.1 signal have been required as readiness steps for deployment," McCallion said.

Pricing for residential customers starts at \$79.99 per month with a one-year price guarantee and Pro GigaEdge for Business starts at \$329.99 per month for three years. Atlantic Broadband has partnered with Extreme, Cisco, Fujitsu, and Ciena to help deliver backbone throughput required to feed the Cisco CMTSs. CPE comes from both Hitron and ARRIS. While Atlantic Broadband doesn't disclose subscriber data, McCallion did say that the gigabit product continues to experience month-to-month growth and that its gigabit subscribers have more than doubled in the last year.

The company is also experiencing increased demand for higher speed Internet tiers below Gig, including for the Premier (250 Mbps) and Extreme (400 Mbps) products, which saw "extreme" growth in the last year. "This is indicative of interest among a growing segment of customers for substantial speeds for home and business applications, and these customers will be prospects for Gig upgrades in the future," McCallion said, noting that Atlantic has a "Test Drive a Gig" promotion so that customers can trial the gigabit service. – ***Broadband Technology Report***

The president and CEO of **Pennsylvania Cable Network** will be stepping down. Brian Lockman (**left, receiving the BCAP President's Award in 2014 from Dan Tunnell**) has announced that he will retire from his position with the network effective March 31, 2020, completing 20 years in a leadership role with PCN. Lockman has served as president and CEO of PCN since 1999, and prior to that was the vice president and chief operating officer since 1994.

Lockman was also one of the original four employees of C-SPAN, where he worked for more than 15 years. While with C-SPAN, he pioneered live television coverage of the Iowa presidential precinct caucuses, as well as producing the network's coverage of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions and the 1991 military coup in the Soviet Union. According to the statement issued by PCN, Lockman had guided PCN during his tenure into the C-SPAN model, helping to revitalize the then-struggling network. The board of directors for PCN has established a search committee to select Lockman's successor. – ***Harrisburg Patriot-News***

Pennsylvanians who will not be able to vote in person this fall can apply online for absentee ballots for the first time, officials announced Monday. The Wolf administration said voters can begin next week to use the new process to obtain absentee ballots for the Nov. 5 election.

Voters will still have to mail or hand-deliver completed ballots to elections offices by 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 1. Applicants will need a PennDOT driver license or ID number, although that is expected to change next year. The program will also be expanded in 2020 to military and overseas voters. The online option will add convenience to an existing system that requires applicants to fill out paper forms and deliver them by hand or mail to county elections offices.

Critics of the existing system have argued that changes to Pennsylvania's **comparatively strict** absentee voting rules would make voting easier and more widespread. The administration says more than 1.4 million voter registration applications have been made or registrations changed since August 2015, when the state began to offer online voter registration. Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf said the changes will make the absentee ballot application process faster and more accessible for thousands of voters.

House Republican spokesman Mike Straub said GOP state representatives support "lawful absentee ballot access." "While the current effort by Gov. Wolf falls within the scope of existing law, any further changes would necessitate legislation," Straub said. Wolf's office said he has authority to make the absentee application change because the Election Code allows the secretary of state to create the application form for absentee ballots, and another state law permits electronic signatures to be used wherever a written record is required.

Senate Republican spokeswoman Jennifer Kocher called the new procedure a step toward improved access to absentee ballots. "We still believe meaningful legislative changes such as the ones vetoed by the governor earlier this year still need to be made in order to significantly improve the commonwealth's voting practices," Kocher said. In July, Wolf **vetoed** legislation that would have loosened absentee voting deadlines and helped counties purchase new voting machines **because, in part**, it also would have ended the straight-party ticket option. Wolf supports letting people vote by absentee ballot even if they don't have an excuse about why they can't vote in person.

Absentee ballot applications will be accepted starting Monday, Sept. 16. The deadline to apply this year is 5 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 29. Absentee ballots are **allowed** for voters who are sick or disabled, who will be away out of town on business on Nov. 5, or who are Pennsylvania students attending out-of-state colleges or universities, among others qualifications. – **Associated Press**

