



All About Brownsville – The Little Website with the Big Heart

Name:

AllAboutBrownsville.net

Internet:

www.allaboutbrownsville.net

Products/Services:

Informational resources for Haywood County residents

Location:

Brownsville/Haywood County

Founded: 2005

Innovative Insight: *“I have to say that all the subscribers have ownership in this site. If it weren’t for them keeping me informed and sharing their ideas, suggestions and news, I could not do it. There would be nothing to post.”*

The Importance of

Broadband: *“Broadband availability will have a huge impact on our industrial recruitment and will no doubt be a deciding factor for retirees and newcomers who are looking to relocate to Haywood County.”*

Broadband vs. Dial-up: *“The difficult part is the time factor. Depending on what I am adding to the site, I have seen it take longer to upload the file than to create it.”*

Brownsville, TN - Ask just about anyone in Haywood County how they learned about a community event, and they’ll answer, AllAboutBrownsville.net. The website that got its start three years ago as a newsletter sent out by one community member to a handful of people on her personal email list has since become a one-stop shop for residents of Haywood County.

Sonia Outlaw-Clark first visualized the concept of a community-based website while working for the local newspaper several years ago. “I hadn’t realized that not everyone was getting the news and information that I was seeing every day,” says Sonia. “Then a friend made the comment that it would be great if they could get an e-mail reminder about upcoming events.” Sonia took the idea and ran with it. Since she had taught herself graphic design and multimedia on the computer, and had also designed a newsletter for another community organization, she decided to start with a weekly newsletter. “After several months of playing with formats and testing layouts, I sent the first All About Brownsville to a handful of people on my personal e-mail list,” Sonia explains. Over time, the popularity of the newsletter grew and grew, until Sonia finally decided to launch a website mirroring the content of her newsletter. In 2005, www.allaboutbrownsville.net was officially born.

Today, community members can access a community calendar of events, local news, info about area attractions, a local business directory, coupon page and much more. “The feedback from the community had been outstanding,” says Sonia. “There’s not a day that goes by that someone doesn’t mention All About Brownsville.” The site receives an average of 4,000 visitors each month, a number Sonia attributes to the group effort nature of the website. “I have to say that all the subscribers have ownership in this site,” she says. “If it weren’t for them keeping me informed and sharing their ideas, suggestions and news, I could not do it. There would be nothing to post.”

Unfortunately, Sonia lives in an area of Haywood County where broadband is not yet available, so she is only able to edit the website using dial-up, which often presents challenges. “The difficult part is the time factor,” she explains. “Depending on what I am adding to the site, I have seen it take longer to upload the file than to create it. It’s hard to cull pictures because you don’t have time to wait for them to upload.”

With the first eCommunity Strategies meeting set to be held in Haywood County on April 1, Sonia is hopeful that change is in the air. “Broadband availability will have a huge impact on our industrial recruitment and will no doubt be a deciding factor for retirees and newcomers who are looking to relocate to Haywood County,” Sonia says. “I’m excited about Connected Tennessee and its efforts.”

About TN 95:

Citizens across the state are using technology in innovative ways to ensure that Tennessee remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. Connected Tennessee is profiling businesses and Tennesseans in each of the state's 95 counties to identify lessons learned on the path to successful innovation. For more information visit our Web site at www.connectedtn.org or call 615-242-9508.