

Carla Maine

HughesNet® Gen4 Brings “Dead Zone” to Life on the North Carolina Coast

The Albemarle Sound region of North Carolina is a varied quilt of farms, elegant old plantation homes, and small towns formed by crossroads.

Waterfront communities line the 55-mile sound and the rivers that drain into it, giving way farther inland to country towns crisscrossed by the Heritage Trail, a series of historical sites that pepper the area. As the trail attracts history buffs, the sound's waters attract boaters and anglers looking for flounder, croaker, large-mouth bass, striped bass, white perch, crappie, and trout.

For those who come to stay, the Albemarle Sound offers a variety of waterfront and country living. As residents for the past 20 years, Carla Maine and her husband, Tony, chose the latter. They live in the unincorporated inland town of Belvidere located in the interior of Perquimans County. It offers them the space for gardening and caring for animals. With HughesNet Gen4 satellite Internet service, it also offers Carla the ability to pursue her lifelong passion for learning skills such as graphics and veterinary science by connecting her to online education services.

Belvidere is home to just over 1,200 people and a well-known country store called Layden's that sells its own sausages and smoked hams, and the Nicholson House, a restaurant located in an historic Victorian mansion. Belvidere was home to the famous disc jockey Wolfman Jack, and Major League Baseball great, Jim “Catfish” Hunter made his home in the neighboring town of Hertford.

Belvidere is largely a farming community, though many residents also commute to the Norfolk-Virginia Beach metro area in neighboring Virginia. Residents enjoy a church-going and family-friendly lifestyle. Social life revolves around middle



and high school softball, football, and soccer games, and local dinner theater at The Onley Place, a local barn converted into a performance venue.

“It’s small and friendly,” Carla said. “I love our community!”

Carla and Tony Maine are both US Navy veterans who moved to Belvidere after leaving the military. Carla is a self-proclaimed “constant student” who taught herself graphic design, earned her bachelor of fine arts degree, and landed a position of a lifetime at a Fortune 500 company. She left the fast-paced corporate world to become an administrator at the US Coast Guard Base in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

The Maines care for five farm cats and one dog. Since getting HughesNet service, Carla has successfully taken online courses to become a veterinary assistant.

“When you love animals as much as we do, it helps to have some basic animal care knowledge,” she said. “Without HughesNet I wouldn’t have been able to do any online training. It’s great knowing I can attend any classes I’m interested in if they are offered online.”

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HughesNet Gen4 helps the Maines avoid one of the few downsides to living in the Albermarle Sound region—spotty Internet service. For more than 17 years, they made do with dial-up Internet access from a local provider, which was the only service available.

“Our county is in an area where there is no cable and no DSL,” Carla said. “It’s very strange. I call it a dead zone. I’ve talked to the local ground line phone company and they would always say “we’re trying to get DSL in your area but it’s not there yet. Please check back. After 17-plus years of that they still don’t have DSL in our area. There are cable companies that reach out to some of our neighbors, but their property is in Hertford, which is a little bit more populated than Belvidere.”

In addition to Carla’s studies, the Maines use Internet access for shopping, Web surfing, online auctions, home schooling, and especially to keep up with news of the world beyond Belvidere, which can be hard to come by. When Carla ran a graphic design business from her home, she used HughesNet Internet access for Web design and to Skype with clients who lived overseas.

“Until you have talked to someone on the other side of the world using the Internet, you don’t realize the power of the technology,” she said. “We depend on the Internet tremendously



to stay in touch. We are seldom able to catch the news on television and the newspaper doesn’t cover everything. We depend on HughesNet for information and research.”

Carla checked out HughesNet in 2010 after a commercial caught her eye. She called for more information and discovered that she could have the HughesNet service installed on her property in just a few days—after 17 years of waiting to be saved from dial-up access. She upgraded to Gen4 in 2013.

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“Our dial-up service provider has since upgraded their service, but now my house sits in an area that they call ‘the umbrella’ and we still can’t get a decent signal from them,” she said. “I love HughesNet. I have had no problems at all. The customer service is always excellent. We very seldom lose a signal due to a storm, and if we do, it’s only for a couple of minutes. Since we got Gen4 I like HughesNet even more.”

About Hughes

Hughes Network Systems, LLC (Hughes) is the world’s leading provider of satellite broadband for home and office, delivering innovative network technologies, managed services, and solutions for enterprises and governments globally. HughesNet® is the #1 high-speed satellite Internet service in the marketplace, with offerings to suit every budget. To date, Hughes has shipped more than 3.3 million systems to customers in over 100 countries, representing over 50 percent market share. Its products employ global standards approved by the TIA, ETSI, and ITU organizations, including IPoS/DVB-S2, RSM-A, and GMR-1. Headquartered outside Washington, D.C., in Germantown, Maryland, USA, Hughes operates sales and support offices worldwide, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of EchoStar Corporation (NASDAQ: SATS), a premier global provider of satellite operations and digital TV solutions. For additional information about Hughes, please visit www.hughes.com.

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