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**Photo Provided**

**Surf Internet Connects First Ever Fiber-Optic Customer in Knox, Indiana**

**Holds Ribbon Cutting to Celebrate High-Speed Fiber Internet Available Soon to 1,200 Homes**

ELKHART, Ind. (October 31, 2023) – Surf Internet<sup>SM</sup> is proud to announce the connection of the first-ever fiber-optic internet customer in the City of Knox, Ind. To celebrate this significant milestone, Surf held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, October 25. The event marked the beginning of the project aimed at connecting all residents, including those in rural areas, to Surf’s high-speed, fiber-optic internet.

Augie and Paige Gappa in Knox are the first 1 gig customers to be connected to Surf’s cutting-edge fiber-optic network in the city. Their home is the first of roughly 1,200 addresses Surf plans to connect this year, with further expansion to serve over 1,600 homes in 2024. Surf is investing nearly \$2 million of its own capital to provide service for the close to 3,000 addresses, leveraging grant funding to connect to an additional 20 rural addresses that would be otherwise difficult to reach. The \$79,500 grant was awarded as part of the Indiana Connectivity Program’s 6th round of funding.

“For communities like Knox, bringing fiber doesn’t mean merely offering more competitive options, it brings a new way of living, working, and learning,” said Surf CEO Gene Crusie. “Previously underserved areas will now have access to lightning-fast internet through a network that will support even faster speeds down the road. It’s transformative for all, including homes that were once thought unreachable by advanced internet technologies.”

“Our rural communities face a variety of obstacles that urban communities do not, including the lack of high-speed fiber internet,” said Lisa G. Dan, Executive Director of Starke County Economic Development Foundation. “We are working hand-in-hand with Surf to bridge that divide and make high-speed internet more accessible to all Starke County residents. By starting with our most populous areas, we expect in the next few years everyone who wants high-speed fiber broadband in Starke County will have access.”

Residents who are connected will enjoy up to 1 gig download speeds, with the fiber infrastructure allowing Surf to introduce multi-gig speeds in the future, giving residents even faster options to suit their connectivity needs.

On the transformative potential of fiber-optic internet, Dan added “Fiber broadband will improve lives through job creation, improved health care, and educational opportunities, growing our economy as a result. Our communities will be more attractive to potential companies looking to locate, which in turn will create a positive ripple effect on our economy.”

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“This is one of the tools that will really drive growth going forward,” said Starke County Commissioner Mark Gourley. “As we’ve seen over the last three years, a high-speed internet connection is essential to building a fully connected life and staying connected with your neighbors.”

The work in Knox is part of Surf’s overall commitment to build an advanced fiber-optic network serving rural communities across the Great Lakes Region of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. To see if Surf Internet services are currently available for a specific address, visit <https://surfinternet.com/> and click “Check Availability.”

### **About Surf Internet**

Surf Internet is an innovative fiber-optic internet company that serves as the essential gateway to connectivity across the Great Lakes region of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The company is building a bridge to the wide-open future by delivering high-speed, reliable internet to homes and businesses in underserved, rural communities. Surf’s 170-plus person team is local, giving them an edge when it comes to customer care and advocacy for the region. Headquartered in Elkhart, Ind., Surf also has offices in La Porte, Ind., Byron Center and Fowlerville, Mich., and Coal City and Rock Falls, Ill. Learn more at <https://surfinternet.com.>

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PHOTO CAPTION: [Photo courtesy of GreatNews.Life] Representatives from Surf, the City of Knox, the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and Surf’s first Knox customers pose for a photo at the ribbon cutting event held on October 25 to celebrate fiber-optic internet services coming to the City of Knox, Ind.



PHOTO CAPTION: [Photo courtesy of GreatNews.Life] Augie and Paige Gappa, the first customers to be connected to Surf's high-speed fiber-optic internet network at 1 gig speeds pose as they cut the ribbon during the celebration in Knox, Ind.