

Pineland Celebrates 75 Years of Connecting Communities

On September 8, 1951, citizens from Emanuel and Candler counties gathered with a common goal: better telephone service for rural Georgia. That meeting led to the purchase and merger of four small telephone exchanges serving Midville, Adrian, Twin City and Stillmore—and marked the beginning of Pineland Telephone Cooperative.

In March 1952, the Rural Electrification Administration approved a \$625,000 loan to purchase the exchanges and construct new telephone facilities. It was the fourth REA telephone loan approved in Georgia and the first awarded to a telephone cooperative in the state. During Pineland's first year of operation, the Metter exchange was added, and in 1953, the cooperative moved its main office to Metter, where Pineland remains headquartered today.



Over the decades, Pineland grew alongside the communities it served. By the end of 1983, more than 13,000 telephone lines were serving ten exchanges, and the days of party lines had come to an end. In 1989, all ten exchanges were converted to digital electronic switching.

Then came the internet. Pineland introduced dial-up service in 1996 with speeds up to 56 kilobits per second. Broadband over copper followed in 2001, offering speeds from approximately 256 kilobits to 1.5 megabits per second.

In 2005, Pineland took another major step forward, beginning a Fiber-to-the-Home project in Adrian. The transformation continued community by community for more than a decade. In 2018, Pineland completed the conversion of its traditional service territory to a 100% fiber-to-the-home, gigabit-capable network.

Pineland's reach also continued to grow. By 2011, service had expanded into the Swainsboro city limits, followed by expansion into Claxton, Vidalia, Louisville, Wrens, Sandersville, part of Jenkins County, and more recently Americus and Sumter County. Today, every location in Candler and Emanuel counties has access to Pineland's fiber-to-the-home broadband network.

Nearly 14,000 broadband customers now rely on a network that supports homes, businesses, schools, healthcare, entertainment and countless connected devices. Pineland continues to evolve with new ways to keep customers connected, including streaming television and mobile service.

From party lines to fiber, 75 years have brought extraordinary change. But the purpose that brought neighbors together in 1951 remains at the heart of Pineland today: local people connecting local communities and building for their future.

75 years. Generations of technology. One local connection.

AI Is Changing What We Ask of the Internet

Artificial intelligence is quickly becoming part of everyday life. It helps us write, create, learn, solve problems, protect information and work more efficiently. Yet every AI-powered tool also depends on something happening behind the scenes: the rapid movement of enormous amounts of data.

In that sense, AI is part of the solution that has created the problem.

The more capable our technology becomes, the more we ask of our internet connection. Homes now support cloud applications, remote work, streaming, gaming, smart devices and AI-powered tools—often all at the same time. It is no longer simply a matter of making data move faster. We also need larger digital lanes capable of carrying much more traffic in both directions.

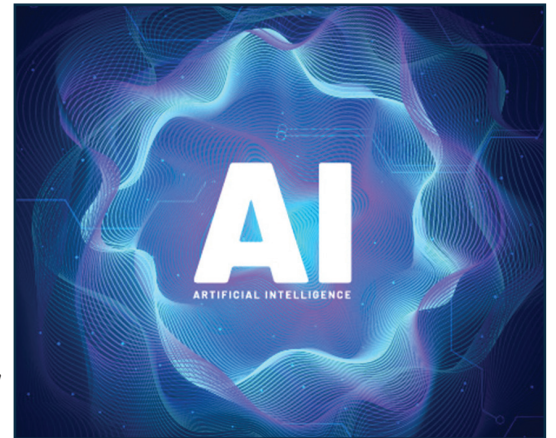
Think of it like a highway. Speed matters, but so does capacity. A fast vehicle cannot reach its potential when the road is crowded. Wider lanes and greater capacity allow more information to travel smoothly, even as the number of connected devices and data-intensive applications continues to grow.

That future is one reason Pineland has taken a significant step forward—from broadband speeds once measured at 100 and 500 Mbps to a new generation of symmetrical, multi-gigabit connectivity reaching as high as 8 Gig. This advancement is about more than today's internet use. It is about creating room for technologies, opportunities and ideas that are still emerging.

Interestingly, AI may also help networks meet the demands it creates. As the technology evolves, it can help identify patterns, anticipate congestion, strengthen reliability and address potential issues before customers ever notice them.

We may not know exactly what the next generation of connected technology will bring. We do know that it will require greater speed, larger lanes and a network prepared to carry our communities into the future.

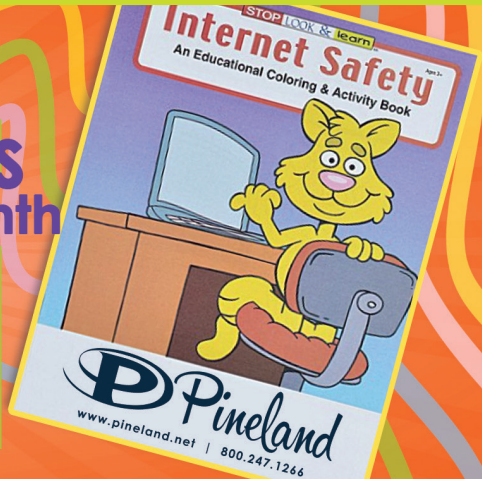
At Pineland, that preparation is already underway.





October is CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS Month

Help your little ones learn the basics of staying safe online with a **FREE Internet Safety Coloring Book**, available at your local Pineland offices while supplies last.



The cover of the 'Internet Safety' coloring book features a cartoon yellow cat sitting at a desk with a laptop. The text on the cover includes 'STOP LOOK & learn', 'Internet Safety', 'An Educational Coloring & Activity Book', and the Pineland logo with the website 'www.pineland.net' and phone number '800.247.1266'.